ABHIDHA

ASHIN JANAK

# ABHIDHAMMA in DAILY LIFE

ASHIN JANAKĀBHIVAMSA

Just as you look at your image in the mirror daily and tidy yourself, so you should read this treatise and reflect on yourself every day.

~Ashin Janakābhivamsa

ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE has been acclaimed as the best introduction to Buddha's Noble Teaching, especially as a useful guide to the knowledge of Abhidhamma. The Venerable Sayadaw had written in a clear, effective style for the benefit of lay readers as well as for serious scholars. This English version, I hope, will provide basic Buddhism, not only for academic knowledge but also to help one to become a good person in daily life.

~Professor U Ko Lay

Having gained useful knowledge from this treatise, it is the duty of the general reader to put the knowledge so gained into practical use by developing mindfulness, self-restraint and earnest endeavour.

-Ashin Janakābhivamsa



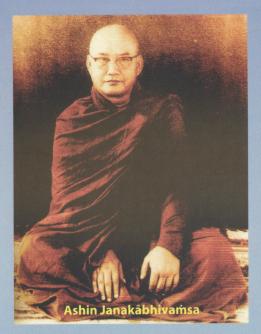
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Chaţţhasaṅgīti Bhāraniţţhāraka, as an editor of Pāļi Texts, Chaţţhasaṅgīti Pāļipaţivisodhaka; and a Reader of Texts which have reached the final stage of redaction, Osānasodheyyapattapāţhaka. He was the Abbot of the famous Mahāgandhārāma Monastery of higher Buddhist learning Amarapura, Mandalay.

Wrote a total of 74 books, made up of 11 books on Pāļi grammar, 14 books on Vinaya, 14 books on Abhidhamma, eight books on Suttanta Piṭaka and 24 books on miscellaneous subjects dealing with all aspects of Buddhist Teaching and Sāsana; he managed to publish 50 of them (mostly in Burmese language) before he passed away at the age of 78 at 4:30pm, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> waning of Nattaw (Tues, 27 December 1977). (more details see page v to x)

#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Sayadaw Ashin Janakābhivaṁsa was born on Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of Tabodwe 1261, ME. (27<sup>th</sup> February 1900). The son of U Zaw Ti and Daw Ohn Hline in Tha-yine villege, Wetlet township, ShweBo district, Sagaing Division.

First ordained as a novice monk at age five and again at age 14, received his higher ordination in 1919.

Studied with prestigious teachers in Mandalay and Pakhokku centers on advanced courses in the Pāļi Canon, the Commentaries, Sub-commentaries, exegeses and expositions. Passed a number of high level Buddhist examinations and earned the title Pariyattisāsanahita Dhammācariya in 1927. He was among the first recipients of the title of Aggamahāpaņdita, the Superior Learned One, bestowed by the first President of Independent Myanmar.

Served in various distinguished position during the Sixth Buddhist Council (1954) — as an advisor, Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Ovādācariya Saṁgha Nāyaka; as Performer of various duties at the Sixth Council,

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## ABHIDHAMMA <sup>in</sup> DAILY LIFE

SHIN JANAKADHIVASAM

## Translated S. Ented from Burnese by

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Sayādaw U Sīlānanda

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#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE



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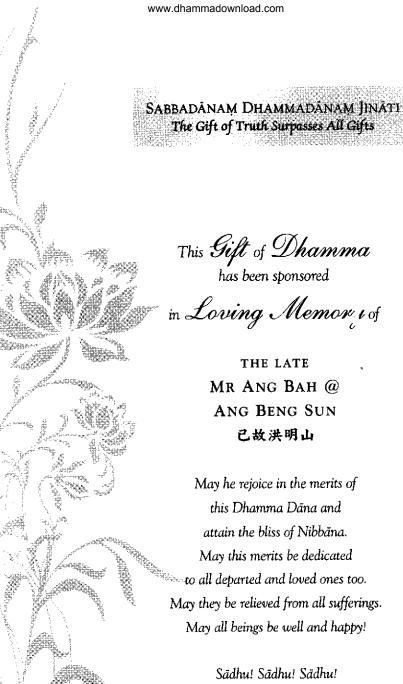
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in Loving Memory of

THE LATE MR ANG BAH @ ANG BENG SUN 已故洪明山

May he rejoice in the merits of this Dhamma Dāna and attain the bliss of Nibbāna. May this merits be dedicated to all departed and loved ones too. May they be relieved from all sufferings. May all beings be well and happy!

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

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"Imagine someone is searching for some understanding, some answers to the confusion of life. This person knows that things aren't quite right. There must be better ways to live one's life than this. He or she searches and picks up yet another book and lo and behold finds the answer to his or her quest. --THAT'S IT! -- and life changes forever."

- Venerable Nāņadassi

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THE BOY WHO was to grow up to become a celebrated teacher of Pāli Scriptures and the Abbot of the famous Mahāgandhārāma Monastery of Amarapura, Mandalay Division, was born on Tuesday the fourteenth waning day of Tabodwe 1261, M.E. (27th February 1900) of U Zaw Ti and Daw Ohn Hline in Tha-yine village, Wetlet township, Shwebo district, Sagaing Division.

In 1266, when he was five years old, he was sent to the local monastery and was mitiated for the first time in accordance with traditional custom into the Order of the *Samgha* as a novice, *sāmaņera*. Nine years later in 1275 when he was mitiated for the second time into the Order, it was to spend his life-time as a disciple of the Buddha in His Dispensation.

At the age of eighteen in 1279 M.E. (1918) while he was still a *sāmaņera*, he passed the Government examination at the higher level *Pathamagyi*.

When he came of age he was ordained a full-fledged Buddhist monk with the title of U Janakā on the Full-moon day of Tabaung 1280 M.E. (1919). He had the distinction of being ordained thrice in his life, the second time on the Full-moon day of *Nayon* 1281 M.E. (1920) and the third on the Full-moon day of *Tabaung*, 1281 M.E. (1920).



### ASHIN JANAKĀBHIMSA of Mahagandayone Monastery, Amarapura Writing and Preparing the Scriptures

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

His preceptor saw to it that he studied under the best teachers in the two most prominent centres of *Pariyatti* learning in Myanmar, namely, Mandalay and Pakhokku. The advanced courses in the Pāḷi Canon, the Commentaries, Subcommentaries, exegeses, and expositions were thoroughly learned from the most distinguished teachers of these centres where he was afforded the opportunity of acting as a probationary teacher himself under their guidance.

Thus to pass the Government *Pathamagyaw* examination in 1287, standing first, and to gain outright success in the specially difficult *Sakyasiha*-Lecturership examination in 1289 for the title of *Pariyattisāsanahita Dhammācariya* were for him just matters of routine.

By that time he had already started launching his whole time job of writing books were to be useful guides and manuals for his thousands of students who later gathered round him till he passed away. He also wrote many small manuals for lay Buddhists who have no opportunity to study the Teaching of the Buddha directly from the Pāli Canon.

It was at the time when the rumblings of the World War II began to reach the shores of Myanmar and the Japanese forces began to appear at the eastern border that the Venerable Janakābhivamsa who had already become a noted teacher and writer began to settle down in his own monastery at Amarapura, about 6 miles south of Mandalay. It was an old monastery called Mahāgandhārāma which belonged to his mentor the First Mahāgandhārāma Sayadaw. There were only three dilapidated buildings with five resident monks including himself when he decided to settle down there and bring it up to be prosperous monastic educational institution.

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#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

That he had succeeded in his endeavor even beyond his expectations was evidenced by the fact that when he passed away in 1977, there were over 500 *bhikkhu* and *sāmaņera* disciples under his charge as residential students of Tipiṭaka, strictly following the Vinaya (Disciplinary) Rules as laid down by the Buddha, and 97 monastic dwellings donated by devotees. He had managed to provide residential accommodation for all his students and early morning meal for all of them. The midday meal was collected by the students by going on alms-round. He was among the first recipients of the title of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita*, the Superior Learned One, bestowed by the first President of Independent Myanmar.

For full thirty five years between 1942 and 1977, he was intensely and incessantly active in the cause of purification and propagation of the  $S\bar{a}sana$ , conducting courses of instruction in Pitakas, writing text books and sub-commentaries and many religious handbooks for lay people.

At the time of the Sixth Buddhist Council which was begun in May 1954, he was busily engaged in various committees: as an advisor, *Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Ovādācariya Saṁgha Nāyaka*; as Performer of various duties at the Sixth Council, *Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Bhāraniṭṭhāraka*, as an editor of Pāḷi Texts, *Chaṭṭhasaṅgīti Fāḷipaṭivisodhaka*; and a Reader of Texts which have reached the final stage of redaction, *Osānasodheyyapattapāṭhaka*.

Throughout all these years while he was actively engaged in teaching, in administration of his fast growing monastery with attendant supervision of constructions and provision of accommodation and meals for increasing number of students and attending to duties incumbent upon being appointed a member of many committees of the Sixth Council, he never failed to continue writing books and managing their publication.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

He wrote in all 74 books made up of 11 books on Pāli grammar, 14 books on Vinaya, 14 books on Abhidhamma, 8 books on Suttanta Pițaka and 24 books on miscellaneous subjects dealing with all aspects of Buddhist Teaching and  $S\bar{a}sana$ ; he managed to publish 50 of them before he passed away.

He started writing books from the time he became a Thera of ten years standing at the age of thirty (1930) and continued to do so till 5 days before his death on 27th December 1977. He had great desire to help the bhikkhu students of Pāli Canon master easily the teachings of the Budhha including their expositions in the Commentaries and Sub-commentaries. He also had in mind to give as much Buddhist education to the lay disciples who are incapable of devoting entirely to the study of scriptures, by writing popular books such as this one, "Abhidhamma in Daily Life", for example. "The Last Ten Months of the Buddha" was another book written for the benefit of laymen. It was a strange coincidence that as the Revered Savadaw was coming to an end of his discourse on the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, Mahāvagga of Dīgha Nikāya and its Commentary in December, 1977, eleven months away from his demise he started writing "The Last Ten Months of the Buddha".

It was also during these eleven months that he compiled an autobiography "Tabhava Samsāra" dealing with all aspects of his life, touching on his struggles, pains, hostilities, jealousies, triumphs and above all on his mettā, karuņā, cetanā for all beings with the greatest kindness for Myanmar people. He managed to complete his autobiography up to 13 days beofre he expired, the last gap being filled and completed by his devoted disciple Bhaddānta Candobhāsa.

#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

The illustrious author, the Venerable Bhaddānta Janakābhivaṁsa passed away after a short illness, at the age of 78 on the 2nd waning of *Nattaw*, 1339 M.E., 27th December 1977, a great loss for all Myanmar and the *Buddha Sāsana*.

FORWARD

IT WAS A DAY in January, 1996 that U Kyi Nyunt, President of Theravāda Buddhist Organisation, Myanmar, Deputy Minister of Religious Affairs (Retired) came to see me on behalf of U Sein Lwin, Ex-President of Myanmar.

They had worked together in their respective capacities in the previous governments of Myanmar in the cause of purification and propagation of Theravāda Buddhism.

U Sein Lwin was greatly interested in the works of the late Venerable Bhaddānta Janakābhivamsa of Amarapura, especially treatises meant for lay devotees. He was particularly eager to have the work entitled "Abhidhamma in Daily Life" to be translated into English. He fully believed that an English translation of the book would facilitate wide circulation of the good advice given by the noble author for the welfare and happiness of mankind. U Sein Lwin was assured of financial and other help needed for the translation and publication of the translated book by his good Dhamma friend U Chu Shein of 290/E U Wisara Road, Yangon who already had donated a Jivitadana hospital for Buddhist monks in Mandalay and who was also a devoted *dayaka* (lay supporter) of the Venerable author of "Abhidhamma in Daily life".

#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

The two of them, after envisaging the translation project, approached the five *Nāyaka* Sayadaws who form the Board of Trustees of the late Sayadaw's works and are in charge of the Mahāgandhārāma Monastery of Amarapura. Upon informing the Board of Trustees Theras of their intention, they were told of a previous proposal by a lecturer of Yangon University while the author was still alive. The author did not approve of the proposal at that time as he felt doubtful whether the translation could be faithful to the substance and mood of what he would like to convey.

The Trustee Theras however did not object to the present project and gave them full permission for translation provided it would reproduce the great Sayadaw's expositions as well as the style, the language and the tone in, which they are rendered.

The project appeared to have been started about five years ago, 1992, the original translation being undertaken by Kaba Aye U Chit Tin and U Han Htay, retired officials of the Department of Religious Affairs. U Kyi Nyunt showed me the bulky bundle of translation manuscript and made the request to me on behalf of U Sein Lwin and U Chu Shein to edit the translation and give necessary assistance for its publication.

U Kyi Nyunt was well acquainted with my literary commitments and preoccupations. Since 1989, I have been engaged in translating into English the six volumes in eight books of the Great Chronicle of Buddhas in Myanmar which is based on the Pāļi Text, Buddhavamsa and written by the Most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddānta Vicittasārā-bhivamsa. I am also working as a guest professor at the State Pariyatti Sasana University, Kaba Aye, Yangon.

#### FORWARD

In spite of his understanding of my position, U Kyi Nyunt pressed on me the task of editing the manuscript, writing the biography of the author and the necessary foreword, saying that he wanted to give the assurance to the Trustee Sayadaws and U Sein Lwin that the translated book represents a faithful rendering of the author's work in English.

I had but to accept his entreaties with the proviso that I would have an assistant of mine go through the translation manuscript first before I would do the review with him as a final editorial supervision. The young assistant was the late U Khin Maung Kyi, a graduate of the Military Academy with a master's degree in English Literature and also with a Master's degree in Journalism from Chicago. I was coaching him to succeed me as a translator of Myanmar treaties on Buddhism authored illustrious Myanmar Theras.

But alas! An unfortunate fatal car accident on a journey back from Pyin Oo Lwin to Yangon dashed all our hopes and plans for future literary works together.

U Khin Mg Kyi left behind him a complete draft of the corrected translation manuscript which he had gone through with some meticulous care but over which we had had no opportunity to discuss, deliberate and decide together. I had no alternative but to eke out my scarce free moments to go over the whole translation again by myself.

Although the initial translation and editing of this work had been undertaken by respective writers, as stated above, the final redaction has been carried out entirely by myself. I alone am responsible for any short comings that may be found in the final published work.

#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

The burden of bring this book out had been thrust into my hand by my good Dhamma friend, U Kyi Nyunt, but I am pleased to say that I had looked upon it and undertaken it as a labour of love, devotion and merit. After all the Most Venerable Sayadaw was no stranger to me.

In my last years at the High School in Sagaing, I kept hearing about this up-coming Sayadaw U Janakābhivamsa of Mahāgandhārāma Monastery of Amarapura, which was just across the river from our Tagaung Ward in Sagaing. He had been bringing out student hand books on Pāli Grammar and numerous sub-commentaries on Piṭaka Texts for guidance and assistance to novices and *bhikkhus* who were studying the Tipiṭaka in various monasteries all over Myanmar, preparing themselves for examinations held annually by the State and many religious organisations.

The first book specially written for lay devotees appeared in 1293 M.E. (1932) when he was at the age of 32 and had been in the Order for 13 years. It was Ratana Gon-yi, The Attributes of the Three Jewels, which deals with incomparable virtues of the Buddha, his Teaching the Dhamma and his disciples, the *Samgha*. It has gone through over twelve editions; I still have the copy of the first edition given me as a gift by a nun who was supported by my parents. And I still remember the words she said, "Read this book, Ko Lay, carefully all the time to become a devoted Buddhist."

"Ratana Gon-yi" is the first of the three most popular books written by the Sayadaw, specially for the lay disciples whom he so ardently desired to understand the attributes of the Buddha, the essence of his Teaching and to put into daily practice the exhortations of the Master.

#### FORWARD

The second book "Kokyint Abhidhamma", or "Abhidhamma In Daily Life", was first published 1294 M.E. (1933) and has gone through thirteen editions by January 1995. Of the three Piṭakas, consisting of Vinaya, Suttanta and Abhidhamma, the last Piṭaka, consisting of Vinaya, Suttanta and Abhidhamma, the last Piṭaka, Abhidhamma, is the most abstruse, the most difficult one dealing as it does with the absolute, the ultimate truths. It's subject matter requires deep, careful study guided by competent teachers and belongs to the sphere of learning of *bhikkhus* and nuns, who have devoted their lives to pursue the Pariyatti Studies.

Nevertheless, as it forms the core of the Buddha's teaching, it is essential that every devoted follower of the Teacher should have a basic understanding of the Abhidhamma and should be able to make use of the essential exhortation in all their dealings in daily life. Out of great compassion for the lay devotees, the Sayadaw had employed portions of his precious time in preparing an Abhidhamma treatise in Myanmar intermixed with Suttanta teachings in easy, understandable language, ready for practical application to daily life.

The third important book meant for the *bhikkhus* as as the laity is "Anagat Thathana-ye, The Future of the Sāsana", which was published in 1310 M.E. (1948), when he had become a senior Thera and gained mature experience as the head of a big institution turning out future leaders of Buddhist religion. Intensely patriotic, full of novel ideas for developing Myanmar into a modern state, he finished writing this book on the eve of declaration of Independence of Myanmar. He had outlined therein how Myanmar could achieve progress and prosperity through practical applications of Buddha's teaching and how



Professor U KO LAY

#### FORWARD

Sāsana could be maintained, purified and propagated through many new reformations he had proposed.

I had the good fortune of becoming quite close to Sayadaw when I founded the University of Mandalay, the first one established in Independent Myanmar. Inspired by the same motives and same ideas of bringing up Myanmar to the modern era through education and through following basic principles of Buddhism, from 1947 till 1963 when I retired from the University service, I made many a trip to the Sayadaw's Monastery to discuss with him on many educational and spiritual reforms which should be brought about in Myanmar and Myanmar society.

Hence when U Kyi Nyunt brought to me this task of bringing out the revered Sayadaw's book into English, it was not altogether a fresh assignment for me, but rather an activating of one of the many projects I used to discuss with the late author whom I most respectfully revere and honour.

"Abhidhamma in Daily Life" has been acclaimed as the best introduction to Buddha's Noble Teaching, especially as a useful guide to the knowledge of Abhidhamma. The Venerable Sayadaw had written in a clear, effective style for the benefit of lay readers as well as for serious scholars. This English version, I hope, will provide basic Buddhism, not only for academic knowledge but also to help one to become a good person in daily life.

I have kept close to the original as far as possible in the matter of substance, the style of presentation and use of simple language, I venture to hope that my task may prove useful to all who wish to follow the Path of Righteousness in their daily life.

#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

May the noble wishes of the revered author, namely, Supreme Peace and Happiness for all be accomplished throughout the world.

U Ko Lay Guest Professor, State Pariyatti Sāsana University Kaba-Aye, Yangon Myanmar.

The Full-moon day of Tagu, 1359 M.E. 22nd April, 1997.



Pajā sabbā sussayantu, Vuṭṭhahantu sumaṅgalā. Dūsentu duggatiṁgāmiṁ, Pūrentu sabbapāramiṁ.

May all beings residing in their respective dwellings sleep soundly and have pleasant dreams! Being blessed in glory, may they awake early in the morning with auspiciousness! May they be able to abstain from evil deeds which lead to the four woeful abodes. May they be able to fulfil the thirty Pāramīs (Perfections) incessantly and attain spiritual maturity stage by stage!

TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION the situation of the present day, we find that the first three of four moral virtues called Brahmavihāras, namely, loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuņā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) appear to have ceased to flourish, to have dried up in the human mind. The element of 'heat' generated by beings through such cessation of virtues incinerates even the virtuous, who now find themselves on the verge of drying up.

#### What is meant by the 'Heat Element'?

The 'heat element' is nothing but greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), conceit (*māna*), jealousy (*issā*) and avariciousness (*macchariya*), that leave no room for sympathy or compassion for one another. That 'heat element' causes drying up of virtuous elements not only in the present but also in the coming existences in the round of rebirths (*samsāra*). Therefore people should endeavour in this very life to the best of their ability to extinguish the 'heat element' and seek to reside steeped in the cool elements of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity which are the four sublime states of living (*Brahmavihāras*).

#### What is Saṁsāra?

The material world in which beings live is not to be mistaken as samsāra. The continuous coming into existence of consciousness (citta), and mental factors (cetasikas) together with matter (rupa) in succession is called samsāra in the ultimate sense. [sam = in succession; sāra = going, wandering.]

#### What Are Human Beings, Devas, and Brahmas?

Consciousness (*citta*) and mental factors (*cetasikas*) are collectively called  $n\bar{a}ma$ , the mind. The successive coming into existence of this  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$ , the material element, in combination is nominally called human being, *deva* and *brahma*, or person, being, I, he, she, man, woman, etc. In the ultimate sense, there are no humans, *devas* or *brahmas*, or other beings apart from  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$ .

#### AUTHOR'S PREFACE

#### Why Do Nāma and Rūpa Come Into Existence?

 $N\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  do not come into successive existence without causes. They arise because of external objects experienced at the present and the *kamma* done in the past existences preserved in one's continuum. Hence, note that the two root causes of  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  are external objects and past *kamma*.

#### **The Important Causes**

Of the two causes, the external objects experienced are not so important, because they only serve as images that bring about various internal states of mind (consciousness). The important thing is for one's (internal) mind to be wholesome when perceiving various external objects, good or bad.

"If the (internal) mind is always good, all the  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  of future existences will also be good." Even though one has passed away from one existence, good  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  will appear again, as good humans, good *devas* and good *brahmas*. If their internal minds are wicked, beings will be reborn in hell (*niraya*) or become ghosts (*petas*), or animals with ugly minds and bodies.

#### Proper Attitude (*Yoniso Manasikāra*) will Produce a Good Mind

Only when there is *yoniso manasikāra*, will the mind be good. Judicious consideration of whatever one comes across is called '*yoniso manasikāra*'. Nowadays people tend to abbreviate '*yoniso manasikāra*' into '*yoniso*'. Due to proper attitude, unwholesome mind will not appear; only wholesome mind will arise. Wrongful consideration will not foster a good mind even under favourable circumstances for its arising. Correct

#### ABHIDHAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

mental attitude is, therefore, the most important for all beings to acquire a good mind.

Causes for having or not having proper attitude are (1) reading or not reading good books, and (2) learning from the wise or not. Those who read good books and those who learn from the wise will amass useful knowledge. If those who have thus amassed knowledge, make resolution as "I will always have good mind arise in me", they tend to have rightful consideration regarding circumstances they meet with.

Those who neither read good books nor learn from the wise will not amass useful knowledge and will not be able to better their mind or to cultivate good thoughts.

Therefore, a new treatise entitled "Abhidhamma in Daily Life" is written for the welfare of people, with a view to assist them in acquiring good conduct.

#### The Author's Aim can be Summarised as follows:

- For the readers to develop rightful attitude regarding the circumstances he or she encounters, to be always broadminded, to live the way of noble living (*Brahma-vihāra*), and to conduct a harmonious life.
- 2. For the readers to be always in good mood, to develop an unwavering attitude towards life and to be able to live in grace whether they are wealthy and happy being successful and prosperous, or whether they are poor and unhappy meeting with failure and calamity.
- **3.** For the readers to be those who are making effort to fulfil the *Pāramīs* (Perfections) such as *dāna* (charity), *sīla* (morality), etc., in this existence so that they may elevate

#### AUTHOR'S PREFACE

themselves gradually from the next existence till the attainment of *Nibbāna*.

Maxim Just as you look at your image in the mirror daily and tidy yourself, so you should read this treatise and reflect on yourself every day.

According to tradition, the essence of the ABHIDHAMMA was formulated by the Buddha during the fourth week after his Enlightenment. Seven years later he is said to have spent three consecutive months preaching it in its entirety in one of the *deva* realms, before an audience of thousands of *devas* (including his late mother, the former Queen Maya), each day briefly commuting back to the human realm to convey the Sariputta threesence of what he had just taught. Sariputta mastered the ABHIDHAMMA and codified it into roughly its present form. Although parts of the ABHIDHAMMA were recited at the earlier Buddhist Councils, it wasn't until the Third Council (ca. 250 BCE) that it became fixed into its present form as the third and final Pitaka of the canon.

(adapted from www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/abhi/index.html)

#### CHAPTER ONE

#### PARAMATTHA (THE ULTIMATE) AND THE MIND

#### **The Four Ultimates**

PARAMATTHA IS A PĀĻI TERM which means lofty intrinsic nature. Lofty does not mean high, noble or good, but it means that which is upright and firm being unchanging by way of intrinsic nature. [Parama + attha = lofty + intrinsic nature]

The four Ultimates (*paramatthas*) are consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasikas*), matter ( $r\bar{u}pa$ ) and the only absolute reality (*nibbāna*).

#### How They are Unchanging

The mental factors include *lobha*, greed and *dosa*, hatred or anger. *Lobha* never changes its intrinsic nature of greed whether it arises in the mind of the wise and virtuous, or the wicked, or of dogs. *Dosa* also never changes its hard nature of hatred or ill will in whomsoever beings it arises. It should be noted that other Ultimates also maintain their intrinsic natures in the same way.

The Ultimates are free from bias or partially, and they always manifest by themselves on their own nature. The intrinsic nature of things should be earnestly digested and understood as explained here, so as to know the mental states of other people as well as one's own.

## Maxim 1. The real essence, being constant, steadfast and unchanging is called *Paramattha*, the Ultimate.

2. There are four kinds of Ultimates, namely, consciousness, mental factors, matter and Nibbāna.

#### CITTA OR CONSCIOUSNESS

#### That which is Conscious of Object is Consciousness

We are conscious of objects all the time. This nature of awareness of objects is called consciousness. Here awareness does not mean comprehension by knowledge or wisdom. It means ability to take in objects through sense organs.

Six objects of senses, Six forms of consciousness:

1.	All forms of sight	=	rūpārammaņa
2.	All forms of sound	=	saddārammaņa
3.	All forms of smell	=	gandhārammaņa
4.	All forms of taste	=	rasārammaņa
5.	All forms of touch	=	phoțțhabbārammaņa
6.	All other perceptible objects	=	dhammārammaņa

On seeing a visible object, consciousness of sight appears. On hearing a sound, consciousness of sound appears, On smelling a scent, consciousness of smell appears. On sampling a taste, consciousness of taste appears. On feeling a touch, consciousness of touch appears. On perceiving those five objects of senses and all other perceptible objects, consciousness of mind appears. Thus, the capability of taking in an object concerned is called consciousness (*citta*).

#### PARAMATTHA (THE ULTIMATES) AND MIND

#### The Nature of Mind

"Mind can travel afar, it wanders alone. It has no material form and it generally dwells in the cave", according to the Dhammapada. It will be explained in detail as expounded therein.

#### Mind can Travel Afar

The mind does not move physically away like a man walking. But, as it can take in an object at a distance far way from where you are, it seems as if it has gone there. For example, while you are in Mandalay and think of something or someone in Yangon, your mind does not actually travel to Yangon, but registers its awareness of Yangon while still in Mandalay. As it can perceive an object at a distance, it is said, "Mind can travel afar".

#### **Mind Wanders Alone**

Consciousness appears and vanishes very swiftly. More than one million million (or one thousand billion) units of consciousness can appear and vanish within one snap of fingers. The appearance and vanishing are so swift that two or three units of consciousness seem to be able to arise and perceive two or three objects at the same time. As a matter of fact, two or three units of consciousness never appear at the same time. They appear one after another, and only after taking one object do they take another object.

While sitting on a scented bed, eating, and watching singers and dancers, we notice that there are five sense objects present, namely, sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. The mind does not take in these five objects all at the same time. Only after perceiving the object which we prefer most, do we perceive other

#### ABHIDRAMMA IN DAILY LIFE

objects one after another. Thus, two or three or many units of consciousness do not appear at the same time. Consciousness appears one at a time, so it is said, "Mind wanders solitary."

Moreover, the word "wander" here does not mean real 'going about', but means it can take in an object at a far away location. In perceiving a sense object a single unit of consciousness is not enough for full comprehension. A good number of units of consciousness is required to appear one after another in succession. As many billions of such units can appear and vanish within one snap of fingers we think that we perceive a form as soon as we see it; we know a sound as soon as we hear it; or we sense an aroma as soon as we smell it or we feel a touch as soon as we come into contact with it.

#### Mind has no Material Form

The mind has no form or shape. So, we cannot say that it is white or black or fat or thin. It is only the perceptibility, the capability of cognising an object.

#### **Dwelling in the Cave**

Consciousness of seeing originates in the eye; consciousness of hearing originates in the ear; consciousness of smelling originates in the nose; consciousness of taste originates in the tongue, consciousness of touch originates in the body. Though some forms of consciousness originate thus in the eye, ear, nose, etc., most forms of consciousness originate in the cardiac cavity. Therefore it is said, figuratively, "dwelling in the cave."

In brief, it should be noted that consciousness has no form; it can perceive a sense object; it has the nature of cognising an object. While in the process of cognition it does not go out of

### PARAMATTHA (THE ULTIMATES) AND MIND

its dwelling even for a hair's breadth, but it can perceive objects far away. Two or three units of consciousness do not appear simultaneously. Each unit appears only one after another in succession.

## Maxim The mind can take in senses objects; it travels afar; wanders alone; has no physical forms; dwells in the cardiac cavity.

## How Good and Bad States of Mind Mingle with Each Other

As consciousness appears and vanishes very quickly, the good and bad or the wholesome and the unwholesome units of consciousness mingle even in a short time of five minutes. Getting up early in the morning, you pay homage to the Buddha and acquire a good mind. At that time when you hear someone calling you to go shopping, you develop greed. As someone comes and says something provocative, you tend to get angry.

Even when you are involved in greed while doing some trading, if you happen to think of giving in charity, that is a wholesome thought of *saddhā* (belief in beneficial effects of charity). When you are angry with someone or something, you happen to remember your teachers' advice or admonition and good mindfulness appears again.

While the husband and wife are chatting with lust in mind, they may become angry because of some misunderstanding. When one of them makes an apology and proposes reconciliation, the mind becomes tender and lustful again. As consciousness changes very quickly, you should carefully differentiate between good and bad units of consciousness whenever they appear and try to cultivate many units of wholesome consciousness.

### Minds are Different as are Material Properties

Just as the form or shape of a man is different from that of another, so the mind of one person is also unlike that of another. Just as a heavy, clumsy body is quite different from an animated, sprightly one, so an obtuse, stolid mind is quite different from a vivacious, sparkling one. There are beautiful and lovely persons who outdo others in beauty and charm. In the cases of ugliness also, there are ugly persons who are as base as petas (hungry ghosts) or demons. Concerning different kinds of good and sharp minds, there are minds of varying grades from the ordinary to the unique. Likewise concerning different kinds of bad or evil states of mind, there are varying degrees of wickedness and abject stupidity. Just as there are differing degrees of gracefulness in physique with those wining the laurels of beauty and charm at the top, so there are different classes of unsightliness, with petas and demons at the bottom step of ugliness. Similarly, there are different grades of wholesome group of minds ranging from the ordinary to the most noble spirits with the sharpest of intellects, and different levels of unwholesome category of mind stretching from the wicked, evil, repulsive types to the most heinous with abject stupidity.

## Mind can be Tamed

If someone born and brought up in the country emulates the vogue and way of living of the urbanites, trains himself physically and mentally, his  $r\bar{u}pa$  (physical appearance) will also change, become fashionable and stylish within one or two years beyond recognition by their old acquaintances. Thus if physical forms which are slow to change can be made to improve, why shouldn't it be possible to tame the mind which changes quickly

### PARAMATTHA (THE ULTIMATES) AND MIND

and is easy to improve, if one really wants to improve it? If one monitors one's mind everyday and tames one's unruly mind, one will soon become a man of noble mind, and after two or three years, will have developed enough self-esteem to have respect for one's mind.

## Why Mind should be Reformed

There are many reasons why we should reform our minds. We ourselves know best the weaknesses and foibles of our minds. Even though some wicked people attain high status in worldly affairs, if they are mean or base in moral character, they will be reborn in lower abodes in their next existences. For this reason they should reform their minds and become noble.

The wicked will lose self-respect. Their brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, *bhikkhus* (monks) to whom they make offerings and their intimates will not love, revere and respect them. Lest they should thus be looked down upon by their intimates, they should reform their minds and become pure, honest and noble.

Moreover, people cannot believe that the wicked will be honest and sincere even when they give away in  $d\bar{a}na$  (charity), observe  $s\bar{s}la$  (precepts) and practise  $bh\bar{a}van\bar{a}$  (meditation). Because of their wickedness their kamma will not bring wholesome benefits. Thus, out of fear of getting unwholesome consequences they should reform their minds and become pure, honest and noble.

Moreover, the wicked will be wicked not only in this present existence, but their evil nature will continue to prevail successively in a great many future existences. Because their entire physical and mental continuum have been suffused with

wicked minds, it is impossible for them to attain sufficiency in accumulating virtues. Therefore for fear of not becoming mature in  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections), they should discipline their wicked minds immediately. These are the reasons why people should reform their minds.

## How King Milinda Disciplined His Mind

Having asked the Venerable Nāgasena some questions, King Milinda thought of asking more questions which would be very important for the *Sāsana* (the Teaching of the Buddha). However, he waited for seven days and disciplined his mind to get concentration. This is quite a good example to the virtuous to follow.

## How He Prepared Himself

He rose early in the morning, took a bath, attired himself in a dyed yellow dress and put on a head-dress concealing his hair to resemble a shaven head. In other words, he attired himself like a *bhikkhu* though he was not one, and observed meticulously the following eight principles for seven whole days.

- 1. I will not perform regal duties for seven days.
- 2. I will restrain myself from rāga (greed).
- 3. I will restrain myself from dosa (hatred).
- 4. I will restrain myself from moha (delusion).
- 5. I will be humble and modest in dealing with my subjects and courtiers and restrain myself from conceit.
- 6. I will carefully restrain my words and actions.

### PARAMATTHA (THE ULTIMATES) AND MIND

- 7. I will restrain my sense organs, i.e., eyes, ears, etc., to be free from unwholesome thoughts when seeing, hearing and experiencing sense-objects.
- 8. I will radiate loving-kindness to all living beings.

He observed these eight principles for seven days, and on the eight day he rose early in the morning, and in a cheerful, cool and calm attitude he asked the Venerable Nāgasena questions on the profound Dhamma.

## A Good Example

Following the example of King Milinda, good people should often practise restraining their minds even if it is for one or two days or just one morning so that evil thoughts that habitually arise shall not appear. By repeated practice of restraining their minds, evil thoughts will get diminished and they will become noble and virtuous with development of faith and knowledge. Evil thoughts that usually occur will not appear for many days.

> The mind guides the world. The mind leads the world. All beings have to submit to the will of the mind.

Maxim Just as you prepare yourselves properly before posing for a photograph so as to get a good one; just so you should control your series of thoughts daily as a preparation for your journey to the Royal City of Peace, Nibbāna.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON CONSCIOUSNESS]

### CHAPTER TWO

# CETASIKAS (MENTAL FACTORS) AND AKUSALA CETASIKAS (THE UNWHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

### MENTAL FACTORS OR CONCOMITANTS (CETASIKAS)

### **Cetasikas Determine the Mind**

IN THE CHAPTER on *Citta*, the concepts of good and evil minds have already been explained. But as the only function of the mind is to know the objects, it cannot by itself be good or evil. Since it arises together with different mental factors or *cetasikas*, it becomes good or evil depending on the associated mental factors being good or evil. What is meant is this: "Mental factors associated with the consciousness induce it to become good or evil."

Example: Even though water is in itself colourless it becomes red, yellow, blue or black respectively on addition of red, yellow, blue or black dye. In like manner consciousness behaves. Therefore, you should next pursue the study of mental factors so that you may understand good and evil minds.

Maxim Mind can only know objects; it by itself cannot determine good or evil. It is on account of the different *cetasikas* (mental factors) that the consciousness becomes good or evil.

# 14 UNWHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS (AKUSALA CETASIKAS)

14 unwholesome (akusala) mental factors that influence the mind:

1.	Moha	=	delusion,
2.	Ahirika	=	moral shamelessness,
3.	Anottappa	=	moral fearlessness,
4.	Uddhacca	=	distraction, restlessness,
5.	Lobha	=	greed,
6.	Dițțhi	=	wrong view,
7.	Māna	=	conceit,
8.	Dosa	=	hatred, anger,
9.	Issā	-	envy,
10.	Macchariya	=	jealousy, selfishness,
11.	Kukkucca	-	remorse,
12.	Thina	=	sloth,
13.	Middha	=	torpor,
14.	Vicikicchā	=	doubt, scepticism

(a + kusala = opposite of + wholesome = unwholesome)

# MOHA (DELUSION)

## Two Kinds of Moha

Not knowing (delusion) is moha. It is of two kinds, namely, anusaya-moha and pariyutthāna-moha. The term anusaya means inherent tendency or lying latent. The term pariyutthāna means rising up. Therefore, delusion, which lies latent in the mind of beings, is called anusaya moha, the latent delusion. The delusion that occasionally arises together with the consciousness is called pariyutthāna moha, the rising-up delusion.

### a. Anusaya Moha

Just as there is poison in a tree that bears poisonous fruits; just so in the mind-continuum of beings, there is an element, *dhātu*, which keeps hidden the Dhamma that ought to be known. That element is called *anusaya moha*, the latent delusion. Because of the concealing action of *anusaya moha*, worldlings, *puthujjanas*, are unable to realise penetratingly the three characteristics of *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkhā* (suffering) and *anatta* (non-self): neither do they grasp the Four Noble Truths nor *Pațiccasamuppāda* (the Law of Dependent Origination), in a comprehensive manner.

Worldlings cannot identify the latent delusion with their limited knowledge. Nowadays, even though people claim to know about anicca, dukkhā, anatta, etc., through book learning, their knowledge is superficial; it is not clear, penetrative realisation. Even when one becomes a Streamwinner (Sotāpanna), Once-returner (Sakadāgāmī) or Nonreturner (Anāgāmī), anusaya moha only becomes thinner and thinner. Only when one attains Arahantship, is the anusaya moha dhātu, the latent delusion, completely eliminated. Therefore, even at the moment of performing good

deeds or wholesome actions before becoming an Arahant, anusaya moha is present; it is only lying latent and quiet.

# ь. Pariyuțțhāna Moha

When *moha* rises together with the mind it is said that the bad mind, the unwholesome one, has appeared. Because of the concealing nature of this *pariyuțthāna moha*, evil consequences which one may suffer in future are not understood. And the evils of unwholesome actions of the present are also not understood. Therefore, even the learned and virtuous cannot see the evils of *moha* and will commit wrong deeds when *moha* arises. This *moha*, in the domain of evil, is the most wicked. In this world all wickedness and stupidity originate from *moha*; *moha* is the tap root of all evil.

## The Wise Overwhelmed by Delusion

The Bodhisatta, Haritaca by name, having renounced the world, abandoning his immense wealth of eighty crores of money, became a hermit and attained the great supernatural powers, *jhānas* and *abhiññās*. Then, as the rains were heavy in the Himalayas, he came to Bārāṇasī and stayed in the king's garden. The king of Bārāṇasī was his old friend who was fulfilling the *Pāramīs* (Perfections) to become the Venerable Ānanda. Therefore, as soon as he saw the hermit, he revered him so much that he asked him to stay in the royal garden and supported him with four requisites; he himself offered the hermit morning meals at the palace.

Once, as a rebellion broke out in the country, the king himself had to go out to quell it. Before setting out with his army, he requested the queen again and again not to forget to look after

the hermit. The queen did as told. One early morning, she took a bath with scented water and put on fine clothes and lay down on the couch waiting for the hermit.

The Bodhisatta came through space with his supernormal power, *abhiññā*, and arrived at the palace window. Hearing the flutter of the hermit's robe, the queen hastily rose from her couch and her dress fell off her. Seeing the queen divested of her clothes, the *anusaya moha* which lay dormant in his mindcontinuum, rose to the stage of *pariyuțthāna moha*, and filled with lust, he took the queen's hand and committed immoral transgression like a monster ogre.

Note We should consider the stupidity arising through moha in this story seriously. If such moha did not appear in him, he would not have committed such an evil deed even with the king's consent. But at that time, being overwhelmed by the darkness of delusion, he was unable to see the evil consequences of his deed in the present and the future existences throughout the samsāra, and consequently, committed that improper transgression. The jhānas and abhiññās, which he had acquired through practice for all his life, were also unable to dispel the darkness of moha; instead, being overwhelmed by moha the power of jhānas and abhiññās themselves vanished from him.

But the hermit, being already quite matured in the *Pāramīs* (Perfections), learnt a bitter lesson and greatly repented his deed on the return of the king. He endeavoured again to gain his *jhānas* and *abhiññās* and contemplating: "I have done wrong because of dwelling in close proximity with the people," returned to the Himalayas.

### Not Knowing is Not Always Moha

As moha is explained as not knowing, some people think that not knowing a subject which one has not studied, not knowing places where one has not been to, not remembering names which one has not been acquainted with, are also moha. Such kind of not knowing is merely lack of knowledge; it is not real moha at all; hence it is not an unwholesome mental factor; it is merely the absence of recognition, or perception, sañña, that has not perceived it before. Even Arahants have such a kind of not-knowing, let alone ordinary common worldling.

Even the Venerable Sāriputta, who is second only to the Buddha in wisdom, taught a meditation practice inappropriate to a young *bhikkhu*. Thinking that the young *bhikkhu* was at the lustful age, he prescribed *asubha kammaṭṭhāna*, meditation on unpleasant objects (e.g., decaying corpses) which did not go with his pupil's disposition. Even though the pupil meditated for four months, he could not get the slightest *nimitta*, sign of concentration.

Then he was taken to the Buddha who created and gave him a lotus blossom suitable to his disposition, and he was delighted. And when the Buddha showed him the lotus flower withering, he felt *samvega*, a religious sense of urgency. The Buddha then gave him the discourse designed to make him realise the characteristics of *anicca*, *dukkhā* and *anatta* and he became an *Arahant*. Herein note the infinite knowledge of the Buddha; and also note that there are things not known even to the Venerable Sāriputta who was already free from delusion.

Thus, even the Venerable Sāriputta did not know things beyond his ken. Thus, not knowing things which have not been taught and those which belong to the domain of the Buddhas is

not *moha*. It is merely the frailty of their knowledge or learning. For example, take the case of a man who cannot see a far away object in broad daylight. It is not due to a barrier concealing the object from eyesight; it is only because of the weakness of his eyesight.

## Gross and Fine Moha

The *moha* which cannot discern between what is unwholesome or vice and what is wholesome or virtue is rather gross. The *moha* which prevents realisation of *anicca*, *dukhā*, and *anatta* nature of mind and matter, the Four Noble Truths, and the Law of Dependent Origination, is comparatively fine *moha*. The mind which is accompanied by *moha* is called "delusive mind, foolish mind" and one who is overpowered by delusion is called variously "the fool, the nincompoop, the dumb, the dull, the wild, the stupid, the useless."

"This world is in utter darkness. Only few people in this world can perceive extraordinarily. Just as only a few birds can escape from the net, people who can be reborn in the abode of devas after death are very few in number."

~ DHAMMAPADA, V. 174

# 2 AHIRIKA (MORAL SHAMELESSNESS)

Lack of moral is called *ahirika*. All immoral, unwholesome deeds are like faeces. Shamelessness, *ahirika*, is like a village swine. Faeces is very disgusting; being soiled with it, is embarrassing in the presence of people. But for the swine faeces is fine food. It is not disgusting and so there is no need to be

embarrassed when soiled with it. Swine surely enjoy rolling about in faeces and partaking of it.

In the same way, *duccaritas*, wrong deeds, such as taking life, etc., are detestable deeds for the virtuous. Even when such deeds are committed unwittingly, it will be regarded shameful by the virtuous. But *ahirika* is not having detestation to do wrong deeds and not feeling ashamed of the wrong act. As a matter of fact, the shameless among themselves regard wrong deeds as something to take pride in.

When moha arises, it leads to ahirika (shamelessness): so even the wise do wrong shamelessly when deluded. Therefore, those who are acclaimed to be wise should judge with their own experiences the truth of what is said.

The story of Haritaca (see previous section on *moha*, pg 13) — In the misbehaviour of the hermit Haritaca, shamelessness is very prominent. The hermit was a holy man of the first grade virtue who had already attained *abhiññās* (the higher knowledges). What the hermit did was a shameful act of lust committed in the presence of the attendants of the queen in the upper chamber of the palace. Such a mean and degrading act was committed because of utter delusion, *moha* and shamelessness, *ahirika*.

### **Every Unwholesome Deed is Shameful**

Not only dishonourable acts like that of the hermit but also acts of hatred such as abusing other, fuming and shouting, using coarse vulgar language, being puffed up with vain conceit, looking down upon others with foolish pride, decrying others in an indirect, allusive manner out of malicious envy, *issā*,

etc., are also disgusting and shameful. Therefore we should bear in mind that all unwholesome deeds are shameful. The mind which arises together with this *ahirika* (shamelessness) is called "a shameless mind", and the doer of evils is called "a shameless man".

## **3** ANOTTAPPA (MORAL FEARLESSNESS)

Lack of moral dread is having no fear, no dread (*anottappa*). In other words *anottappa* means devoid of moral dread. Evil deeds are like an open flame. *Anottappa* is like the moths. In fact the open flame is to be very much dreaded. However, moths do not think the open flame as dreadful and recklessly fly into it. Just so, evil deeds cause a variety of sufferings; so they are indeed to be dreaded. But *moha* (delusion) conceals those resultant sufferings; and *anottappa* does not see them as dreadful. Those factors prompt the doing of evil deeds boldly. With regard to evil deeds, the following dangers are impending.

a. Attānuvāda-bhaya — the danger of blaming or accusing oneself, losing self-respect and having no self-esteem. Such a person will be oppressed by the thought, "Though many people think I am a virtuous gentleman, I know myself: I am not a virtuous man as they think. I am a wicked man who does evil deeds stealthily."

 $(att\bar{a} = oneself + anuvada = blame, accuse)$ 

**b.** Parānuvāda-bhaya — the danger of being blamed, being accused by others in this way, "You are a wicked person, doing unwholesome, evil deeds."
(parā = by others; anuvāda = blame, accuse)

- c. Danda-bhaya the danger of suffering and punishment such as being killed by others for having committed murder; being beaten by the owner for having stolen his property; being killed for committing adultery; being imprisoned for various criminal acts.
- d. *Duggati-bhaya* the danger of suffering from great remorse over one's evil deeds on one's deathbed and the prospect of being reborn in the four woeful abodes in the next existence.

Through artfulness, guile and cunning, one may be able to avoid the first three dangers brought about by one's evil deeds, but one will not able to avoid the dangers of falling into the four planes of misery in the next existence. Hence evil deeds are very dreadful indeed. However, when *anottappa* steps in, even the wise who normally dread evil acts are inclined to commit fearful deeds without shame or dread.

The story of Haritaca (pg13) — Herein, the case of the Bodhisatta (the hermit Haritaca) should be reviewed. There are so many dreadful things in the story. Needless to say, the hermit suffered from the danger of blaming himself and losing self-respect (*attānuvāda-bhaya*). As the bad news, "The king's teacher, the hermit, had done wrong with the queen", spread over the whole town during the absence of the king, he suffered from the danger of being blamed by others (*parānuvāda-bhaya*).

If the king, the would-be  $\bar{A}$ nanda, were not a virtuous man fulfilling  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections), he would not have cared for

the hermit's life as much as a blade of grass for his transgression. It was on account of the king's virtue that he narrowly escaped from being sentenced to death. As *anottappa* came in, the hermit dared to commit such an immoral act without fear of capital punishment. The mind which arises together with this recklessnes is called *anottappa-citta*.

"Just as the village swine does not abhor faeces, so the shameless man is not ashamed of his evils. Just as the moth does not fear the open flame, so the man void of ottappa (dread of sin) does not fear evil deeds."

 $\sim from \, \rm VIBH\bar{A} \rm VIN\bar{1} \, \rm T\bar{I} \rm K\bar{A}$ 

# UDDHACCA (DISTRACTION, RESTLESSNESS, WAVERING)

*Uddhacca* means distraction. It may also be called the unsettled state of mind. Just as minute particles of ash fly about when a stone is thrown into a heap of ash, the mind which cannot rest quickly on an object but flits about from object to object is said to be distracted. The mind arising together with *uddhacca* is called the distracted mind. When one is overpowered by distraction, one will become a drifter, a floater, a loafer, an aimless person.

## Nanda Thera's Inability to Concentrate

When Nanda, the young prince, was about to marry Janapada Kalyānī, Buddha took him to the monastery and ordained him a *bhikkhu*. He was so distracted that he could not concentrate on the Dhamma, his mind wandering back often to Princess Janapada Kalyānī. In this story, Prince Nanda's state of mind

which is unable to concentrate on Dhamma is a good example of *uddhacca*.

## The Feeble Power of Uddhacca

*Uddhacca* is the inability to concentrate on any object steadfastly. Being distracted, one's mind wanders from this object to that object. Although *uddhacca* is *akusala*, of unwholesome nature, because it does no evil deeds effectively, it has no power to throw one into *apāyas*, (the four woeful worlds), as greed, hatred and delusion do.

# **LOBHA** (GREED)

Lobha is greed, i.e., craving for sensual pleasures. But wanting to attain Nibbāna, wanting to get Dhamma, wanting to be learned, wanting wealth for giving in charity to the poor, are not *lobha*. They are called *chanda* (desire) which will be dealt with later.

## **Other Terms for Greed**

Lobha is also termed pema or tanhā or rāga or samudaya. The term pema is used for the love exchanged between sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives or members of the family, relatives, etc. Therefore pema means sincere love. This kind of sincere love is also called samyojana, which means binding. Samyojana binds one person to another as a rope does. It makes one inseparable from the other.

The five kinds of object, namely, sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, are sensuous objects; desired and cherished by people they are called  $k\bar{a}maguna$  ( $k\bar{a}ma =$  desirable + guna = cords).

Like hunger and thirst, intense desire for these desirable objects that surpass ordinary wish is called  $tanh\bar{a}$ , craving. One who hankers after another of the opposite sex is labelled "mad with lust'.  $Tanh\bar{a}$  means craving or hunger. Of the five sensuous objects, bodily touch (sexual union) is the most longed for, when it is called  $r\bar{a}ga$ , lust.  $R\bar{a}ga$  also means clinging or attachment to something. Just as colour fastening on dyed cloth,  $r\bar{a}ga$ is *lobha* which clings to a person.

# **X***ptc* These are not literal meanings; they are classified according to common usage.

In the classification of the Four Noble Truths, *lobha* is termed *samudaya*. It means the cause of suffering or sufferingto-be. All beings who cannot do away with *lobha* have to wander round and round in the cycle of rebirths accompanied by suffering.

The suffering, immense or petty, being undergone now by all beings, originates in this *tanhā*, *lobha* or *samudaya*. Therefore the more intense the greed, the more severe the suffering, and the less intense the greed, the less there is suffering. If there is no greed, there is no suffering at all. The mind which arises with *lobha*, is called the greedy mind, craving mind, lustful mind, or bonded mind. Persons with such minds are called the greedy, the craving, the lustful or the fettered.

## **Greed Does Not Get Diminished**

If greed which is called craving or lust is not controlled by Dhamma, and allowed to go on by itself, it will never get diminished. As the protruding horn of a calf grows longer and longer as it grows older, the greed of a man which accompanies him

since the embryonic stage increases with age. The aged who cannot control greed are blamed with the words "The hair-knot droops with size; foolishness grows with age."

## **Drinking Salty Water**

Since birth children begin to love their parents, relatives and friends, etc. As they grow older they develop fondness and affection for playmates and friends. As they are being led by basic instinct, they become thirstier and thirstier for love as if they had drunk salty water. Then they drink it again and again and become more and more thirsty. Being thirsty for sensual pleasures, they indulge in them as they are unable to see the impending sufferings; they swirl about merrily in the sea of love.

"Love! Love! The more they love, the more they are insatiate, just as they cannot quench their thirst by drinking salty water. Love, pema or taṇhā, turns a blind eye to one's defects; expecting happiness through love, one nurtures love. This is the way of love, the nature of love."

~ AN ANCIENT MYANMAR POEM

## How Lobha Leads to the Four Woeful Abodes

Just as the smallest particle of a stone sinks in water, even petty greed can lead to the four woefu Just as the smallest particle of a stone sinks in water, even petty greed can lead to the four woeful worlds if not supported by wholesome deeds. Therefore, there are many people who have become *petas* (hungry ghosts) because of attachment to their spouses, sons, daughters or wealth while on the death-bed. At the time of our Lord Buddha,

a *bhikkhu* became a louse after his death because of attachment to his new robe. It is said that he was emancipated from the life of being a louse only after seven days.

# *Lobha* will not Lead to the Four Woeful Worlds, if Supported by Wholesome Deeds

Even though there is attachment, *pema* and  $tanh\bar{a}$ , for each other people will not be thrown down to the lower woeful worlds if they get support of wholesome deeds. For example, a stone sinks in water, but will float if carried on a boat. Therefore, in the Jātaka stories, there are instances of those who were not yet free from  $tanh\bar{a}$  and *pema* becoming close partners to fulfil *Pāramīs* (Perfections) together.

## Point to Ponder

Having established a harmonious relationship, husband and wife do not want to part with each other; they want to fulfil  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections) together and attain Nibbāna. A good lady, Sumittā by name, made a wish to be always together with the Bodhisatta Sumedha; Mahākassapa-to-be and Bhadda-to-be did the same. They fulfilled their  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  together for many aeons. Are these instances of *chanda*, wish, (which will be dealt with hereafter) or of *taņhā-pema*? It needs to be pondered upon.

## Verdict

Indeed, the persons in the stories were good virtuous people. The wish to associate with the virtuous is *kusala-chanda*, (wholesome wilful) desire. They were also persons of morality who were practising *Pāramīs*. In the Pāli Canon, mention

is made thus: "The wish of the virtuous is always fulfilled. Through *chanda* everything is accomplished." Therefore, even though they might have had *taṇhā* and *pema* which bind them together, because of their strong *chanda* (wholesome wish) the Bodhisatta, etc., became partners in fulfiling *Pāramīs* together as determined by the wholesome deeds they had performed.

"Ijjhati bhikkhave sīlavato cetopaņidhi, visuddhattā. — Bhikkhus, the wish of the virtuous is fulfilled because it is pure."

~ AŃGUTTARA NIKĀYA

## Nakulapitā and Nakulamātā

At the time of the Buddha there lived a wealthy man, Nakulapitā and his wife, Nakulamātā. They had been together for many existences. They had become *Sotāpannas* (Stream-winners) since they first paid homage to the Buddha. This couple had been the parents, or elder uncle and aunt or uncle and aunt of the Bodhisatta in many previous existences. They were very fond of the Buddha as though he was their own son and were so intimate with him that they asked him any question. Once the wealthy man said: "Venerable Sir, I took Nakulamātā as my wife since my youth. Since then I hadn't even thought of infidelity, let alone actually doing it. I had always wanted to be in the presence of Nakulamātā in the present life and I always want to be so throughout the *saṁsāra.*"

On hearing the words of Nakulapitā, his wife also said frankly, "Venerable Sir, I came with him to his house since my youth. Since then I hadn't thought of anyone else. I had always wanted to be with him in the present life; and I always want to be with him throughout the *samsāra*."

The Buddha said:

"If man and wife, who are leading a harmonious life, wish to be together in the next existences, they should have the same faith, saddhā, the same morality, sīla, the same liberality, caga and the same level of knowledge, paññā".

As the husband has pure faith, just so the wife should have the same. As he has pure morality, just so she should have. If one of them wishes to give charity, the other must comply. If she donates, he should encourage her. If he donates, she should be delighted. Their wisdom and knowledge must be same too.

For further clarification, the passage from Pañcavudha Pyo (a Myanmar poem) is translated as follows:

"In the human abode, if husband and wife are in harmony and willing to be together, if they have the same liberality, morality, faith and confidence, they will be together in samsāra like glorious devas and devīs who are together in the heavenly abodes all along the cycle of rebirths."

**Note** In the story, the love between husband and wife, who had already become *Sotāpannas* (Streamwinners), should be considered first. As they loved each other sincerely enough, they did not think of being unfaithful. As their minds were so pure they held each other in high esteem and did not want to be separated from each other. They always wanted to be together in *samsāra*. Although such a wish to be together is *chanda* based on *lobha*, the *taņhā*, *pema* and *lobha* of these virtuous noble people would bind them to each other, and all their meritorious actions would lead them to a good destination.

## Māyā

In some cases,  $tanh\bar{a}$ -lobha is also called  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ . Therefore, the nature of  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  will be explained herein.  $M\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  is like a magician, a conjurer. Just as the magician picks up a stone and makes the audience believe it to be a gold nugget; just so does  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  conceal one's faults. It means one who exercises  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  pretends to be flawless though one is not.

## Woman's *Māyā*

Once there was a professor and his student. The student's wife used to do wrong with another man. On the day of doing wrong she waited upon her husband more tenderly than ever. But, on the day of doing no wrong, she treated him as a slave. The student was unable to understand the peculiar mood of his wife. He was confused and related his experience to his professor. The professor had to expound to him the nature of women.

Note

In the story, as she wanted to conceal her faults on the day of adultery, she pretended to be very affectionate to her husband. That artfulness, craftiness, is māyā. In some cases it is also called taṅkhaṇuppatti-ñāṇa, instant wit (taṅkhana = at the moment; uppatti-ñāṇa = knowledge that appears). It is not real knowledge, but only spurious knowledge or simple cleverness. Real knowledge is concerned with only good matters.

## A Crafty Wife

A housewife used to do wrong with her manservant. Once her husband saw her kissing the servant. As she noticed that she had been seen, she went to the husband and said: "Darling, this

lad is dishonest. He had eaten your share of cookies. When I asked him, he denied. So I sniffed his mouth, and got the smell of cookies. We should not let him stay in our house."

Note In the story, the act of kissing the servant was a grave offence. The clever, sudden thought of deceiving and concealing her misdeed is none other than *māyā*. Not only woman but also men have such *māyā* (trickery or pretences).

## The Hermit's Māyā

Once there lived at a village a hermit revered by a layman donor. For fear of robbers, the layman donor hid one hundred pieces of gold in a hole near the hermit's monastery and said, "Venerable Sir, please take care of it." The hermit said, "Devotee, it is not proper to ask a hermit to do so."

Then a thought occurred to the hermit: "One hundred pieces of gold will be sufficient for me to live in comfort", and he dug up the gold and hid it in another place close to a chosen footpath. On the next day after having his breakfast, the hermit said, "My donor, I have been living here for so long that I am inclined to be attached to you. So I must move to another place." The donor requested him again and again not to do so, but his pleadings were all in vain. All he could do was to see the hermit off at the village gate.

After travelling some distance, the hermit returned and said, "Devotee donor, a blade of thatch from your roof is entangled in my hair. It is improper for a hermit to take things which are not given to him." The simple donor thought him to be so virtuous that he revered him even more.

However, at that moment, a very wise guest putting up at his house said, "Have you ever asked the hermit to keep anything under his care? If so please go and see." When he did so he could not find the gold, so together with the guest he pursued the hermit and caught him red-handed.

**Note** In the story, the hermit returned a blade of thatch to the devotee, in order to hide his theft; this wily act amounts to *māyā*. Thus, as deceit, stratagems (*pariyāya*, *māyā*) can be employed even by some hermits or *samaņas*, there is much trickery and cheating amongst the laity these days. Few people can be trusted; to associate with honest people is possible only as a result of wholesome deed done in the previous lives.

### Varieties of Mâyā

Apart from stories about the concealment of one's faults, there are many other tricks such as show of indignation by trampling rudely to pretend innocence; concealing one's guilt by way of threatening the accuser or by way of flatteries, etc.

Cunning people as such are commonly found in dwellings, houses, etc., where many people reside together. If during the night someone has discarded filth, night-soil, at an unsuitable place, he will pretend to have done nothing in the morning, If he releases foul wind, he will produce a similar sound by rubbing the leather rug so as to mislead others, i.e., (he will make others think it to be the sound of the leather rug). Thus, there are many kinds of  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ . So, the old folks used to say; "One thousand stratagems (*pariyāya*), a hundred thousand artifices ( $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ ), an infinite number of tricks. Grains from nine mats of

sand and leaves from nine cutch trees are needed to reckon the number of tricks called *māyā*, or *pariyāya*."

## Sāțheyya

Along with  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ ,  $s\bar{a}theyya$  should also be understood. When one pretends to have certain qualities and make others think highly of him, such kind of *lobha* is called  $s\bar{a}theyya$ .  $M\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ conceals one's faults and pretends to be faultless, whereas  $s\bar{a}theyya$  pretends to have non-existent qualties. Both of them are trickery or deceptions.

## Monks' Sāțheyya

Pretending to be virtuous though not; pretending to have good practice though having none; pretending to be learned though not; such pretences are called *sāţheyya*. So long as his pretensions are not dicovered by clever lay donors, the pretentious *sāţheyya* monk may feel safe. Even when they see through the deceptions, they would opine "That is not our concern, whether he deceives or not." The monk continues to enjoy the fruits of his *sāţheyya*.

## Sāṭheyya in the Laity

 $S\bar{a}theyya$  means pretending to be virtuous though not; pretending to have mental concentration though having none; pretending to have ability though not; pretending to be a graduate (B.A., M.A. etc.) though not; pretending to be rich though not, etc. — these are the  $s\bar{a}theyya$  in the laity.

## Evils of Sātheyya

*Māyā* and *sāṭheyya* are more wicked than *lobha* (common greed). The following will clarify this fact. Monks, who have no morality, concentration and wisdom, pretending to have them, will boast to be like the virtuous who have real morality, concentration and wisdom. As a result of such pretensions, they will suffer in *samsāra*. The laymen, who happen to take refuge in such monks, will not gain knowledge; offerings given to them will not be of much merit to the donors. There are also cunning people, who pretend to have morality and concentration; many girls come to grief on account of them. Due to the indecent livelihood and the misdeeds of the so-called gentlemen, many people in towns and villages come to lead immoral lives.

Not only do the so-called leaders, who pretend to possess good leadership ability though having none, squander the lives and property of their followers but they also bring about loss of sovereignty and finally the country itself. Some girls put their trust in the men who pretend to be rich and prestigious; when they happen to marry such men their marriage would in no way be blessed and auspicious but end in disaster.

Moreover, if one or both parties conceal their faults with  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  and pretend with  $s\bar{a}theyya$  to be wealthy, they will be exposed soon after marriage. Then can they love their cheating spouses (or their relatives)? Will they be happy if they live together without sincere love? To be a happily married couple, not only carnal desire but also true, sincere love is essential.

A marriage between Buddhists is not meant for the present life only. If they live in harmony, together they will go to temple and monastery, make offerings and do good deeds; they are then likely to enjoy the resultant benefits in the cycle of

rebirths. If marriages are tainted with  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  and  $s\bar{a}theyya$ , the couple will do good deeds unwillingly, and consequently be unable to enjoy benefits not only in this life but also in  $sams\bar{a}ra$ . Therefore, people should be free from  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  and  $s\bar{a}theyya$  if they ever intend to live a married life together.

Thus, as  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  and  $s\bar{a}theyya$  deceive one or many people or even the whole country (as in the case of sectarian leaders who pretend to be Buddhas) or the whole world, they should be categorised as very wicked. However, people who regard themselves to be virtuous and have fulfilled  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections) should take care that dishonest and wicked states of mind do not appear in them and in the people who are related with them; and they should all strive to be pure, intelligent, active, righteous and noble-minded personages.

# 6 DITTHI (WRONG VIEW)

Wrong view or wrong understanding is called *ditthi*. It may also mean wrong belief. *Ditthi* sees or understands wrongly what is absent to be present, what is present to be absent, what is right to be wrong and what is wrong to be right; it also dogmatically takes one's wrong view to be right and other's right views to be wrong.

Believing in the almighty creator of the world and beings when there is none; believing that there is an *atta* (soul) in the body of beings when there is not; these wrong beliefs are *ditthi* which believes what is absent to be present. Falsely believing that neither good nor bad deeds will bring forth results later on, when they do so in reality; falsely believing that there are no results of *kamma* when beings do enjoy or suffer the results of *kamma* in many ways; falsely believing that there is no

Nibbāna, even though there is Nibbāna, the cessation of mind, matter and suffering; falsely believing that there are no next existences even though there is an endless cycle of rebirths before the attainment of Nibbāna. Such wrong beliefs are *ditthi*, which believes what is present to be absent.

The following beliefs are *dițțhi*, which sees what is false to be true:

- a. Killing beings for sacrificial offering is a meritorious deed. Bathing when it is very cold, heating one's body amidst four fires at noon when it is very hot and behaving like cows and dogs are good practices for purification of defilements. Washing away unwholesome deeds in the River Ganges at a suitable time is also good practice.
- b. Believing that charity, morality and mental development (dāna, sīla, and bhāvanā) do not lead to the realisation of Nibbāna is dițthi which takes what is true to be false.

In this way, wrong view, *ditthi*, is of many kinds. The mind which is soiled with *ditthi* is called *ditthicitta*, and one who adheres to wrong view is called a *micchaditthi*, a heretic. (With regard to the remaining mental factors, please note how minds and persons are named in accord with the accompanying *cetasikas*.)

# 🗱 MĀNA (CONCEIT)

Haughtiness is called  $m\bar{a}na$  (conceit). Those who posses  $m\bar{a}na$  tend to be haughty and mean, turning their nose up at others. When they excel others in status, wealth, knowledge, health, etc., they think highly of themselves and look down upon others. When they are equal to others in status, wealth, etc., they

reason thus: "Others are not different from us; we, too, have such things" and will be puffed up with pride nevertheless. When their position, wealth, knowledge, health, etc., are lower than others, they reason thus: "We needn't heed their higher position, wealth, etc., we eat only what we have; we get only what we work for. Why should we kowtow to others?"; though inferior to others they will still be conceited.

### Common Forms of Conceit, and How to Dispel Them

## a. Jāti-māna

Being conceited of birth or caste is called *jāti-māna*. Nowadays there still are fairly good people known by birth. However, their birth is not reason enough to be conceited, to boast about, to think of others as being despicable, as inferior or of low caste. Even though one is born of a noble family or of royal blood, if one is kind, polite and gentle to the poor, one will be loved and respected all the more. Some could argue, "Familiarity breeds contempt"; true, some rude persons may show disrecpect to you. If so, it is their own fault and they will encounter unpleasant consequences. Thus you should be considerate and be careful not to be conceited of your birth.

## ь. Dhana-māna

The conceit of the rich is called *dhana-māna*. Nowadays, there are many people possessing some wealth who seldom associate with the poor. They may think of themselves to be immensely rich or wealthy as the Myanmar saying goes, "Having never seen a river, one thinks a creek to be the great river." But, if they are broad-minded and kind

towards the poor, won't they be honoured more than ever? Won't they even get help from them when in danger? The smiling face and the gentle speech of the rich can be the most effective elixir for the poor.

Therefore, wealth, which has been acquired for this existence because of charity done in the previous lives, should not be the basis of  $m\bar{a}na$  which would lead one to lower strata of life in future existences. The wealthy should strive to be of dignified manner to win the trust of the people and to render assistance to them. The immense wealth in this life faces many dangers. Even if there are no such dangers, it is good only for the present existence.

"The wealth of the king, dwelling in a golden palace, complete with regalia, surrounded by ministers and courtiers, is like a bubble appearing for a moment on the surface of the ocean."

~ THE MINISTER ANANTASŪRIYA

## c. Paññā-māna

The conceit of the educated is called *paññā-māna*. Knowledge is an asset meant to teach people what is proper and what is not and how to be civilised in cultural and social relations. However, it is a great shame to be conceited because of one's education and academic qualifications. Education is something learnt from others and not an extraordinary achievement. Anyone can acquire formal education given the chance to learn from a good teacher.

When we come across illiterates and very dull persons, we should not be conceited and proud and look down upon

them, we should instead be kind to them and teach them what we can. Once there was a learned venerable abbot who was famous in both worldly knowledge and Dhamma scriptures, because he had taught others with great patience in his past existence. Hence, we should make use of our education to the benefit of ourselves in *samsāra*.

## Two Paths of the Acquisition of Learning

Since vocational training is meant for livelihood, it needs no further explanation. However, for *bhikkhus* who are studying the Pāļi canon, there are two paths to follow.

## a. The Lower Path

Learning Pāli scriptures with greed, hatred and conceit in mind; learning with the hope: "When I become learned, I shall be famous; my donors will increase in number; I shall get good alms-food, robes, and monasteries; I shall excel above others; I needn't care for anybody and I can do as I wish, etc." Having finished his education, he follows the set path of acquiring gains and fame and of flaunting his learning with conceit. Such learning of Pāli scriptures to pursue gains and to boast is evil and will lead one to the woeful abodes. This is indeed the lower path. One had better pass the time snoozing rather than learn with the wicked intention, said the scriptures.

## ь. The Higher Path

A *bhikkhu* learns Pāļi scriptures with the hope: "If I have digested the Pāļi scriptures, I shall truly understand the Dhamma and I shall teach others; I shall always look at

the mirror of the Pitaka literature and correct, purify and straighten my mind and become noble"; he learns not to pursue gains and impress donors; instead, he tries to learn as he nobly aspires to. His way of learning will lead to the higher abodes. This is indeed the higher path.

Some *bhikkhus* learn the scriptures with the intention to pass prescribed examinations, to gain academic fame. But they will change their mean objectives and become noble-minded when they actually become learned. Just as water in a halffilled jar laps about but is stable when it is full to the brim; just so when they get adequate learning, they will follow the higher path. May all young learners get on the higher path and become learned and noble!

## **Conceit of Physical Beauty**

The conceit of physical beauty is also called the conceit of personal appearance. Because of being free from *dosa* (hatred) in the previous existences, offering flowers, cleaning the pagoda and monastery precincts, etc., one becomes famous for beauty in the present existence. One may well take pride in such pleasant appearance.

However, on reflecting one's past, recalling how one had been free from hatred and had been virtuous donors of water, flowers, etc., one should not feel conceited in this life. One should try to culture good thoughts and be gentle and virtuous.

### Note

The virtuous, who had attained Nibbāna could have taken pride in themselves and their conceit could have risen sky-high if they had wished to. Some

had been of royal blood. In the realm of wisdom, a Bodhisatta, the wise Mahosadha was world-famous. Among women, there were the virtuous and beautiful such as Uppalavaṇṇā, Khemā, Yasodharā who were of high birth, of great wealth and knowledge and also of great beauty and charm.

Such men and women were not conceited for their wisdom, caste, virtue or beauty. On the other hand, people of inferior status are conceited for their caste, knowledge, petty wealth and common beauty as in the Myanmar saying: "In a grove of shrubs the castor-oil plant reigns"— it is indeed a great shame.

One who is conceited, one with vain pride, one who is haughty, will be hated by others and having lived in vain, will be reborn in the lower woeful abodes in successive existences. Hence you should uproot your conceit and be as humble "as a snake whose fangs are removed, as the bull whose horns are broken, as the doormat stepped on with dirty feet", so that you may soar higher and higher in status in future existences.

## BOSA (HATRED)

Anger or violence of mind is called *dosa* (hatred). *Dosa* is not only violent but also soils the mind. It is not only wild and rude, but also depressive resulting in inferiority complex and living in fear; they all belong to the category of *dosa* or hatred (ill will).

In brief sorrow, grief, fear, depression, anger, grudge, frightening others with abusive language, attacking, planning to kill other people — all of these are *dosa*.

Since *dosa* is with both fear and violence, the angry, violent person is also easily frightened. Be aware of such persons. (Violence is called ascending hatred, whereas fear is called descending hatred.)

### The Story of a Lass

In India, there once was a young lady who suffered from the evil consequences of hatred. The story is related here not only to clarify the concept of *dosa* but also to remind the parents who used to force their sons and daughters into marriage without the their consent, without love between bride and bridegroom.

A young lad and a young lady in this story were not acquainted with each other before. They were betrothed and married by arrangement of their parents. Though the young lady, being a daughter of a good family, did her chores dutifully, the young lad neither appreciated her services nor loved her sincerely. She began to be disappointed because he did not care for her in spite of her amiably attending to him. She was unhappy and was often lost in despair. Her husband, having no love lost for his wife, when seeing her cheerless behaviour hated her more and more and became violent. Although she was unsatisfied with her husband's behaviour, there was no choice for her but to carry on with her household duties.

However, she being not a lifeless rock, but a living being with a sentiment, often attempted suicide. Although she suffered much from disappointment, unpleasantness, unhappiness and fear, she bore the suffering till she got two children. But at last she could not bear the burden any more and wrote a letter to her husband away on business which runs thus:

"My lord, though you had become my husband married by order of my parents, I really loved you and tried to win your love. But it was all in vain. I was accused of cheating and concealing my faults; and I was so disappointed that I often tried to resort to suicide, but it was a failure because of my children. Anyhow, it is of no use to live any more. After writing this letter, I will take my own life after putting poison in my children's food."

Having read this letter, the husband reflected over her goodwill and returned home quickly, only to find three dead bodies. He also shot himself in remorse. (In this story, hatred is prominent.) When one happens to fall into such a situation, one should try to be broad-minded and treat one's wife kindly.

## Makkha

In conjunction with dosa (hatred), makkha, palāsa, soka, parideva, dukkhā, domanassa and upāyāsa which are common to lay life should also be studied. Of them, makkha means ingratitude or being blind to the good turns of others; it is a kind of dosa. There are many good deeds done by others to a person since his childhood such as the good deeds of his parents, teachers, good friends, etc. If he does not regard the good deeds as such and does not thank them and is ungrateful to them saying, "No good deed have they done to me. I need not be grateful to them," and becomes blind to them, this is makkha.

Some people are not only blind to the benevolence of their benefactors, but also do wrongs to them. They are called mittadubbhī (the wicked who have done wrong to their friends). Gratitude is similar to a debt, a deferred payment. Although

you cannot yet return benevolence to them, you should regard your benefactors as benefactors. When you get a chance to repay the gratitude you should do so with all your heart.

### Dhamma If you take shelter under a tree, don't break its boughs and branches. Those who break its boughs and branches are the wicked ones.

### The Grateful Son

In a certain town there once was a lad who worked hard as a common labourer and looked after his widowed mother. His mother was immoral and was having affairs secretly. His friends who knew about the mother felt pity for the lad and disclosed the affair to him. However, he said, "Let my mother be happy; whatever she does, I shall attend to her." (Good sons and daughters are as rare as good parents.)

In this story, the immorality of his mother is her own Note burden. The work of attending on her is the duty of the son. In attending to such a single mother, the sons and daughters need not regard themselves as looking after her as a mother, instead, they should bear in mind that they are repaying their old debts of gratitude to a great benefactor. Therefore, every good man or woman who wishes to gain benefit in the present and next existences throughout sa§sdra, should try to repay his or her old debt of gratitude to great benefactors. The Bodhisatta, when he was an animal, repaid the gratitude of his mother elephant. (A white elephant looking after his blind mother elephant was captured by the king. He refused to take food in protest, told the king about his mother, and was released.)

### Palāsa (III will)

*Palāsa* is a kind of *dosa*, ill will, which competes with superiors. A person cannot tolerate those who are superior to him in morality, concentration, knowledge, wealth, beauty or civility, so he competes with them saying "What's the difference between him and me?" This he says in spite of knowing that they are better than he is. But if he is sincerely mistaken that he has such qualities in him and competes with others, it cannot be called *palāsa*.

### Soka (Sorrow)

Soka means sorrow, domanassa-vedanā, (mental factor of suffering) which will be discussed later on. The state of being unhappy on coming across unpleasant incidents, is called *soka*, sorrow. Wherever sorrow appears, hatred will also accompany it. Therefore sorrow should also be understood in conjunction with hatred. Sorrow arises frequently in the hearts of people nowadays. Sorrow arises due to the deaths of their relatives, due to loss of wealth, due to mishaps of their friends — all such sorrow is called *soka*.

### A Kind of Domanassa (Mental Suffering)

There is also a kind of *domanassa*, (mental suffering) which is mistaken to be sorrow. One is at times anxious about health of dear ones; anxious about beloved ones not returning in due time after a journey; anxious about one's offspring in many ways. Such anxiety is not sorrow. Anxiety encoded in the thought, "They will be in trouble when I pass away," is not sorrow; it is merely *domanassa* (mental suffering).

### Can You Benefit from Sorrow or Anxiety?

The above mentioned sorrow or anxiety are really uncomfortable states of mind; they endanger the mind, creating heartfelt sorrow and intense anxiety. They are painful forces and influences; one in no way gains anything from these. In reality they burn the heart and harm the mind without yielding a single benefit. Therefore a wise person will avoid great anxiety or sorrow with steadfast mindfulness (*sati*) and prepare beforehand to meet adverse situations. For example, parents who are anxious of the health of their children should take caution in nutrition, mode of travel, etc., in daily life. If unavoidable illness occurs, the only reasonable action is to call in a doctor, not to be unnecessarily anxious.

If there is impending danger along a particular journey, parents should stop their children going on that journey. If they have to travel to such places, precautionary measures should be taken for them beforehand. Parents should place a reliable person in charge of their children to protect them. Even after taking such safety measures and precautions for them, should the children meet danger or even death, for not following the guidance of parents, no sorrow should be shown; they deserve no sorrow or remorse at all. If parents still feel sorrow for the loss of their children despite adequate precaution, they are very foolish indeed. Indeed in this age, many youngsters do not follow the discipline and guidance of their elders and most of them encounter great danger and harm. So, is it reasonable and proper to feel sorrow at these situations? Teachers and parents should ponder over these facts.

### Parideva (Weeping or Lamentation)

Weeping or lamentation is called *parideva*. But at the root of these lamentations lie *dosa* and *domanassa* (mental pain). Most people feel sorrow and grief when they see the coming of the fall in status, office, fame, power, wealth, etc. They also feel downhearted, which is *soka*, a form of *domanassa*. When they cannot keep *soka* under control, there occurs the sound of weeping which is called *parideva*, lamentation. What people call 'the fire of *parideva*' is actually not the sound of weeping, but the burning of *dosa* and *domanassa* extreme enough to cause the sound of weeping occur.

### Can One Benefit from Weeping?

Like anxiety, weeping also is usless without any benefit at all. As it is natural to cry over the sudden loss of relatives and loved ones, one should not blame them. Even the Venerable Ānanda wept when the Buddha passed into Nibbāna. But today quite a number of people are seen to weep aloud and show extreme distress to attract the pity of others. When one hears melancholic crying and grief, one also becomes sorrowful and all happiness fades.

So, seeing the impact of grief and loud crying on others one should not do so. Loud weeping, in fact, displays one's lack of self-control. Therefore even if people should lament being overcome by grief, they should exercise self-control and try to wipe out the tears quickly. And people can conquer lament by taking the examples of noble persons who can restrain their intense grief and severe losses. And people can get consolation by means of wise sense of urgency (*samvega*), i.e., sense of weariness in the sufferings one is faced with.

#### How the Bodhisatta Consoled Himself

In one of their previous existences, the Bodhisatta and his spouse (the Yasodharā-to-be), after renouncing their immense wealth, became hermits and dwelled in a forest. The hermitess was very adorable, and her cheerful appearance won respect and admiration from all who saw her.

After sometime in the forest, she became weak and ill because she had to eat raw fruits and alms-food instead of the tasty dishes she used to relish as a laywoman. She suffered from dysentery and was feeling very weak. The Bodhisatta helped her along till they came to the city gate. She was gently made to take rest in the road-side shed while the Bodhisatta went into the city for alms-round. She died before the hermit returned from the alms-round. When the townspeople saw the corpse in the roadside shed, they all lamented at her sudden demise though they were no relatives of her. Then they prepared to perform funeral rites.

At that time, the Bodhisatta hermit returned from almsround and saw the great and sudden loss. Instead of showing intense grief and weeping aloud, he just sat near his wife's corpse and ate his morning meal. He was calm and composed while others shed tears and wailed. After his meal he preached to them a suitable discourse to extinguish the fire of *parideva* burning fiercely in them.

### Mallikā, Wife of General Bandhula

Another interesting story is about Mallikā, the wife of General Bandhula. This couple, during the reign of King Kosala, had sixteen twin (thirty-two) sons. These sons, together with their followers, used to come to the palace for royal audience.

Seeing their numerous followers, some ministers got envious and told the king made-up stories. They falsely informed the king that Bandhula and his sons would one day conspire against the king, who, lacking due intelligence and wisdom, believed in the slanders. So he ordered his men to trick Bandhula and his sons into a house and burn them alive. The king's men killed them all by setting the house ablaze.

The next day, when Mallikā was about to offer alms to the Venerable Sāriputta and his follower *bhikkhus*, the bad news arrived. Mallikā stayed composed and showed no sign of grief. Indeed the loss was really great, but she did not suffer from lament at all and carried on with her meritorious deed.

.\ote Of the above two instances, in the case of the Bodhisatta hermit, there is no wonder for his stoicism because he had been fulfilling progressive Paramis (Perfections) in his every existence. He already had ample moral maturity to control himself. But in the case of Mallika, people should emulate her noble ways. She was of the weaker sex, and yet controlled herself by the good thoughts of the meritorious deeds at hand. In our lives we have to face hundreds of problems although we could not live a hundred years. Therefore everyone should try to subdue pain and sorrow, grief and lamentation by all means. For example, when in the face of great sorrow, one should reason like this, "How complete is my fulfilment of Paramis (Perfections)?" A sorrowful experience should be taken as a test of one's Pāramī.

### Dukkhā and Domanassa

Physical suffering is called  $dukkh\bar{a}$  and mental suffering, doma-nassa. Everyone feels the impact of earning a living, and other hardships related to it. These impacts cause physical suffering or weariness. In this world people moan "Oh!  $Dukkh\bar{a}$ !  $Dukkh\bar{a}$ !" whenever they suffer from physical pain. But it is possible to escape mental suffering whilst experiencing physical suffering. For example, during the countless lives while accumulating  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{n}s$  (Perfections), the Bodhisatta had experinced physical pain. He had to suffer physical suffering as Mahosadha and Vessantara. But he had a determination to deliver all kinds of beings from  $sams\bar{a}ra$ . With great compassion and his resolution to achieve enlightenment, he had been free from mental pain.

These mental suffering such as anxieties, depressions, disappointments and despair pertain to the mind and they are collectively termed domanassa. This is a kind of illness that inflicts the mind. Someone will react like this: "Oh, don't talk about this fellow, I don't want to hear! It gives me much pain." Such suffering commonly referred to as mental pain, may or may not be accompanied by physical suffering. In this world there are many persons who, although affluent and prosperous, abounding in material wealth, are suffering from mental pain called domanassa. This shows the truth of suffering as taught in the Dhammacakka Sutta which declares, "Yam piccham na *labhati, tampi dukkhaṁ* = suffering due to not getting what one wants as well as not wanting what one gets." Actually this mental suffering is more intense, more severe than physical pain. Thus even a person living a luxurious life cannot endure mental suffering. He would leave his big luxurious house and all his property, and move to a small hut to live happily with the

one he loves. He can endure physical poverty but not the pain of mental suffering, that is, separation from his loved one.

Indeed, there are many ways to overcome sorrow, depression, anxiety or disappointments in life and keep oneself in a happy state. But we can be sure that these ways of adapting oneself to changing circumstances are not easy to follow for the not so wise. In a nutshell, people should be far-sighted and plan ahead for the future. And one must be diligent and industrious in carrying out one's plans. Yet, if there be failures and disappointments despite one's efforts, one should not despair. These are due to the effects of bad Kamma. (Try again with more vigour for, should one really strive hard, one can become even a Fully-Enlightened One.) It is important that one should maintain one's integrity and remain calm and composed in the face of the ups and downs of life, known as Lokadhammas, which are eight in number.

a,	Lābha	=	Acquiring wealth, requisites, etc.
b.	Alābha	=	Not acquiring wealth, requisites, etc.
c.	Yasa	-	Having followers
đ.	Ayasa	=	Not having followers
e.	Nindā	=	Being blamed
f.	Pasaṁsā	=	Being praised
g.	Sukha	=	Happiness
h.	Dukkhā	=	Suffering

These are four good and four bad circumstances in life. When you encounter the four good conditions, you must not be elated and proud. When you encounter the other four you must not be distressed. If you feel either elated or distressed,

you are getting perturbed, you are being tossed about in the sea of worldly storms. Those who are emotionally unstable and easily moved from a state of elation to one of depression are the victims of *domanassa*. Those who want to get mental peace in the ups and downs of life must have a steadfast mind.

### Läbha and Aläbha

Everyone should honestly earn a living and work for material gain by lawful means. In doing so, one may accumulate wealth, which should not be the cause to be elated or boastful. On the other hand some people, while earning a livelihood, encounter material loss, and get poorer and poorer. In such a case one must not cry over it; instead, one must remain composed and calm. It must be understood that even a king may have to give up his sceptre and crown, bringing the country into servitude. Therefore, one should build up fortitude to remain calm and composed under the stress of vicissitudes of life.

### Yasa and Ayasa

Teachers, leaders and great men ought to have a retinue of followers. As a fence protects a building it encloses, so followers usually protect their leaders and render service to them. In turn, leaders should reward their followers. Generosity brings in large number of followers; and they should be treated with due respect. Leaders must have the good will to enhance the life of the followers. Even servants and menials should be treated like co-workers and friends. As a result they will give full protection and good service. If, in spite of one's goodwill, one has few or no followers, there is no need to be worried. On the other hand, when one is surrounded by many followers one should not be conceited and haughty.

Fame is an asset not only in this one life but also in the future lives. Great and noble tasks can be accomplished only by persons of great fame and quality. A saying goes, "*Gunavante passanti janā* = People revere persons of rank and status." Everyone should cultivate wisdom, intelligence and perseverance to attain great fame. One should not conceited for one's fame; nor should one be depressed for not being famous.

### Nindā and Pasamsā

Envious and jealous persons and fault-finders are in abundance everywhere. In this life, therefore, it is very difficult to be praised and very easy to be blamed. Nevertheless one should try to live righteously by means of mindfulness. No one is immune from blame. Even the bull created by Sakka, King of *Devas*, was blamed for the softness of its dung. So there is a saying, "Hate sees only faults; love sees only praise; fondness leads to trust." In this life ill will is prolific and fault-finders are abound.

But those who blame others should ask themselves "Are we free from faults? Are we flawless?" No one is flawless like the Bodhisatta Mahosadha, King Vessantara, Venerable Kassapa, Venerable Sāriputta, or Venerable Ānanda. In the case of women they are far from being faultless like Amarā, Kinnarī, Maddī, and Sambulā, the four exemplary ladies.

In a village, a young boy told his father that a neighbour falters in speech. He stuttered: "Oh father! Our neighbour ...ah, has...has...fal...ter...ing spe...ech. He was probably oblivious of the fact that he himself had the same defect.

Some fault-finders cover up their own faults and conceal their shortcomings. They are hypocrites who do steal but pretend to be innocent, like a wily cat.

Sometimes, due to envy and jealousy, people blame others but usually they emulate their ways. Gossips slander a young girl when a young man frequently visits her but these gossips actually want the young man to visit them.

Such are the ways of the world. It is only natural to come across the eight vicissitudes already mentioned. A victim of slander may not be as blameworthy as critics make out to be. Sometimes a trivial fault may be exaggerated. So it is best to appraise one's fault by oneself in the light of *ottappa* (moral fear) and *hirī* (moral shame).

Those who are afraid of ghosts dare not go into the dark; when they do, they might see a tree-stump and yell "Ghost! Ghost!" Since their minds entertain the fear of ghosts constantly, they imagine that ghosts are chasing them.

Some people are too much preoccupied with the possible onset of blame so much so that fear plays a dominant part in their lives. In the Samyutta Nikāya, the Buddha said, "One who is too overcome by fear of criticism is like a deer that startles and takes flight at the slightest sound; he is one who is timid, faint-hearted and irresolute." People too overcome by fear have nothing to gain. They only encourage critics and fault-finders. The timid make easy prey for fault-finders.

On the other hand, criticisms, comments and condemnations are in a way signs of fame; nobody cares to talk of littleknown persons. People take notice of only the prominent. For example, the tallest tree is most subject to the impact of strong winds. As you soar higher and higher in society, you are more and more liable to face the eight *Lokadhammas*, vicissitudes. Therefore you should be indifferent to them bearing in mind that such things are the signs of your fame and success.

Just ask yourself: "How steadfast am I?" Only then will you be able to withstand unjust condemnations and false comments with equanimity. And you must try to live a faultless life.

Just as you ought to be indifferent to blame, you should also be unmoved in the face of praise. You should not be elated by praise. You must be aware that benefits are the fruits of good work or good deeds. Continue to nurture *mettā* (lovingkindness); and share merits thus: "May others receive recognition like me! May they enjoy praises like me!"

Summing up, among the eight worldly circumstances, four are desirable and others undesirable. Since time immemorial all sentient beings had done good and bad deeds in countless past lives, they all will have good and bad effects, or ups and downs, in this life. Situations desirable and undesirable are periodic phases of life. Unflinching, try to withstand the ups and downs and sail across the ocean of *samsāra* through storms and winds towards the peaceful shore of Nibbāna where all sufferings cease.

For example, captains of ocean-going vessels cannot always expect calm and smooth seas in their voyages. They are bound to encounter rough seas, turbulent winds and storms, or rolling waves that may even endanger their ships. Under such circumstances, skilful captains use their intelligence and industry to steer their ships through perilous seas and storms to drop anchor at a safe haven.

> Katattā nānākammānam, iṭṭhāniṭṭhepi āgate, Yoniso tittham sandhāya, tareyya nāviko yathā.

Due to deeds of good and bad *kamma* in past existences, we encounter situations both desirable and undesirable. Come what may, we must be like the captain of a ship; with confidence, zeal and skill, we must face storms and gales and overcome difficulties and dangers. We must be unmoved by the eight worldly conditions to steer straight to drop anchor at the Port of Nibbāna.

It is natural for everyone to face the eight worldly conditions. We should try to practise mental concentration and nurture a stoical mind.

### Upāyāsa (Intense Anger)

When one comes across material losses, death of loved ones, downfalls or failures, there arises  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$ , intense anger. It means extreme wrath. Ordinary anger leads to violence or even killing, while  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$  gives you superlative anxiety and ire. The flame of anxiety and fury in the heart boil the blood circulating in the body. So a person with intense anger will get lapses or fits, or even lose consciousness.

On the demise of a loved one, a person weeps aloud. This is parideva. When parideva intensifies, he can no longer wail; he will get fits and fall unconscious. But  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$  is even more intense than parideva. Anxiety, soka, is like hot oil in a frying pan. Parideva is like the boiling over of the heated oil.  $Up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$  is like the complete burning and evaporation of the remaining oil.

Upāyāsa effects persons who have weak minds and those who depend too much on others. The weaker sex is more prone to suffer from upāyāsa. Feminine mind and physique are not as strong as the masculine and are often inclined to depend

on others due to inadequate wisdom and knowledge concerning strengthening of mind. They easily suffer from *soka* and *parideva* which overwhelms their subtle physique easily and develop into the state of  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$ . This in turn causes one to faint.

Even males, when they are physically weak, cannot withstand excessive anxieties. Therefore one needs nutritious food to be physically strong and to bravely face the sufferings arising from  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$ . Everyone should first extinguish soka and parideva quickly. Only then will they not pass on to  $up\bar{a}y\bar{a}sa$ . (Methods to extinguish soka and parideva have been mentioned earlier.)

### 9 ISSĀ (ENVY)

When one hears about or meets an individual superior to one in beauty, wealth, education or morality one often feels envious. This unwholesome thought is *issā* (envy). There are many who do not appreciate good tidings of others. They would comment "All birds are as beautiful as owls", "Such rabbits are found in every bush". These condemnations and comments grow out of *issā*. Some in their envious state of mind, say, "Similar toddy shells can be found under every toddy palm".

There are proverbs which say, "Envy arises when someone excels you. Having similar objectives breeds hostility." Envy mostly exists in workers who feel inferior to co-workers. Especially persons of same rank or status are affected by envy. For example, a fish-paste monger does not usually feel or show envy to a jeweller. But among fish-paste sellers and among jewellers, being subject to competition, there are many who feel or show envy towards one another. So also among *bhikkhus* envy

can arise. Even some preachers and abbots are not free from slandering and envy.

By feeling envious and by fabricating slander, one only ruins oneself because the wise condemn one as a worthless person. And the envious shall fall into woeful abodes in *samsāra*, whereas the envied will not be affected at all. Since *issā* is an unwholesome (*akusala*) mental factor, everyone should abhor and eliminate it.

### Hogs and the Emerald Cave

Once upon a time, a big lion has his den in an emerald cave in the Himalayas. Near this cave lived a herd of hogs; and they live in constant fear of the fierce lion. They blamed the emerald glow of the cave for their woe. So they first rolled about in a muddy lake and rubbed the emerald cave with mud. However, the emerald cave grew more and more radiant and shiny. Likewise, those who slander, envy and belittle others, actually get opposite consequences. Only they themselves will suffer from hardship while the others are propelled further into prosperity.

### Attukkamsana and Paravambhana

Attukkamsana means praising one's own self either in speech or writing (atta = self + ukkamsana = elevate, praise). Paravambhana means belittling or down-grading others (para = others + vambhana = down-grading, belittling; denunciation).

In the case of *attukkamsana* people will feel *māna* (vainly proud) and *lobha* (naively pleased) of their status. In the case of *paravambhana*, *issā* (envy) and *dosa* (hatred) will burgeon.

### Ostentation

Some people proclaim their ability in a boastful manner. They would say they are learned and well-versed, that they are wealthy, that their relatives hold high positions, that they are academically highly qualified, that they excel others, etc. They might also say that although they now are in low positions, once they were the cream of society. Even some monks say that they are powerful, dignified, have wealthy donors, pass many religious examinations, preach and teach well, can make gold and silver by alchemy, etc. Thus many persons are fond of making ostentations statements whether true or false; the ignorant may perhaps be taken in by such pretensions whilst the wise will surely not. In both speech and writing, one should abstain from *atthukkamsana* with *sati* (mindfulness).

### **Timely Proclamation**

However, there are opportune occasions when you should proclaim your ability and virtue, with a view to gain due respect for the work you are occupied with, for your words and your ideas. Otherwise, people may look down upon you for not grasping the true situation. This is not  $m\bar{a}na$  (conceit), but a timely plan that befits the occasion.

### Blame

Some people heap blames on others when they write criticisms or comments in print-media due to lack of *sati* (mindfulness). This is malicious practice because someone is unjustly hurt through it. On the other hand if it is essential to criticise, you should do so and give right information to others. When it is mandatory to expose evil people, blame and criticism are of

course necessary. Bad people deserve blame and the public should be told the truth to avoid misunderstanding. But you should blame and criticise cautiously, with supporting proofs and reliable evidences when you pit yourself against a personage, highly regarded by people.

Once a devotee who has donated the monastery, and his wife used to hold the abbot in very high esteem. One day the devotee, by chance, saw the abbot himself frying eggs for an evening meal. So he told his wife the abbot's singular behaviour. But as his wife had great faith in the abbot, she did not believe his words. She thought her husband had lost his mind. She told her neighbours so and jeered at her husband. So her husband had to remain in silence. At bedtime he repeated the news and still his wife would not believe him. So he had to take back his words lest his wife should again proclaim him mad.

A true, factual blame may get bad response from others because of inappropriate time, circumstance, place, etc. Therefore it is important that you launch your blame according to time and circumstance, accompanied by supporting evidence. But it is also important to tell unpleasant truths about really evil persons to your close friends and relatives whether they believe you or not when a timely warning is necessary and blame is justified.

### MACCHARIYA (JEALOUSY, SELFISHNESS)

Jealousy or selfishness, an unwholesome mental factor, is called macchariya. Nowadays some persons are reluctant to give to others or to practise  $d\bar{a}na$ . This is mistaken to be macchariya. But actually macchariya means wishing other persons to get nothing. Those with macchariya are jealous of others.

They do not want to see others acquiring wealth. Stinginess is just attachment to money and property, and is merely *lobha* (greed). In the case of *macchariya* it means a jealous outlook, not wanting others having promotion, money, fame, beauty, etc.

In the Pițaka mention is made of five kinds of macchariya:

### a. Āvāsa-macchariya

*Macchariya* concerning houses, dwelling, monasteries, schools, beds, etc. In the case of monks, some do not want visiting monks to reside in the monasteries they came to possess. But preventing bad monks entering their places does not amount to *macchariya*. The act of selfishly preventing others from getting something is *macchariya*. Those monks who have *āvāsa-macchariya* will be reborn in their very abode as a *peta* (hungry ghost) or reborn in niraya (hell).

### b. Kula-macchariya

Macchariya as regards donors and relatives, etc. Some monks do not want to let their regular donors to support other monks except themselves. But to prevent evil monks making acquaintance with one's friends and relatives is not *kula-macchariya*, because evil monks can contaminate their faith and morals. *Kula-macchariya*, jealousy, burns the viscera when one sees one's relatives in the company of other people, causing internal haemorrhage and diarrhoea. Or such a person will be in impecunious circumstances in the next existence.

### c. Lābha-macchariya

*Macchariya* based on material gain. There are people who do not want anyone to prosper except themselves. Such ill will is *lābha-macchariya*. But to prevent bad monks from getting requisites which they will put to improper use and to wish good monks to receive them are not *lābha-macchariya*. Those who have *lābha-macchariya* will be reborn in filthy hell and will have to eat filth.

### d. Vaṇṇa-macchariya

*Macchariya* based on beauty or fame. A person who has this form of jealousy does not want others to be more beautiful or more famous than himself or herself. Such a person becomes an ugly person in forthcoming existences in *sathsāra*. He also will be denied of fame.

### e. Dhamma-macchariya

Macchariya based on learning, education, or knowledge. Thus a person who will not impart knowledge or information to others is guilty of *dhamma-macchariya*. Such people fear that others may excel them in learning and refuse to answer questions. They do not teach others willingly, But to deny teaching malicious persons who will misuse knowledge does not amount to *dhamma-macchariya* because such persons will ruin the Buddha's Teaching. He who feels *dhamma-macchariya* will be reborn a dumb person or an idiot. After he dies he will suffer in the hell of burning ash.

### Points to be Considered

Regarding the five kinds of *macchariya*, considerations should be made as to who will be most exposed to these evil attitudes. Most probably monks and nuns who depend on alms for their sustenance are most liable to accommodate these evil traits. In the case of lay people too, *macchariya* arises when they do not wish others to acquire better house or land, when they wish to be more wealthy and beautiful, to excel others in power, status, knowledge, wisdom, and so forth. Such jealousy is called *macchariya*. But the sufferer with regard to *macchariya* is the jealous person and not the victim. Such persons expose themselves as possessing a foul mind. When they die they are reborn as *petas* (hungry ghosts). Therefore, everyone should totally and completely annihilate *macchariya* so as not to fall into woeful abodes.

# **T** KUKKUCCA (REMORSE)

When a bad deed has been done, it is usually followed by *kukkucca* (remorse). Remorse occurs as a result of bad deeds. It is repentance over wrong things done and right things neglected. So there are two kinds of remorse.

### **Repentance of Four Rich Youths**

There is a well-known phrase 'Du-Sa-Na-So' which are the four syllables uttered by each of the four rich lads. They were very rich young men, yet they did not perform any meritorious deeds; they did only unwholesome deeds. For example, they transgressed moral precepts and engaged in sexual misconduct. As a consequence when they died they fell into *Lohakumbhī niraya* (hell of hot molten metal) for sixty thousand years. As

they floated upwards in the molten metal for a short moment, they tried to speak of their repentance for their wrong deeds. But each one could utter only one syllable because of their great pain. They uttered "Du," "Sa", "Na" and "So" respectively.

What they wanted to say were: "In my past life I was born of a rich family. But I did not follow the way of merit. Instead, I had engaged in sexual misconduct."

He felt intense remorse for his evil deeds. But he could utter only "Du" and sank to the bottom of the infernal cauldron. This man repented for having not done good deeds.

The other wished to say: "Painful consequences seem to be endless. I had done evil deeds as a human being". But he could not complete his sentence. He uttered only one word "Na". This man repented for having done unwholesome deeds.

The painful consequences of bad deeds do not wait to materialise in the future existences as in the case of the four rich lads who said, "Du", "Sa", "Na" and "So". In the present life too the doers of bad deeds will be gnawed away by thoughts of their evil deeds. They will feel as if their bodies are burning to the extent that they perspire profusely.

### Don't Leave Room for Remorse

Regrets over past wrong deeds will not expel your worries. Regret or remorse will not deliver you from painful consequences. Such repentance will only serve to develop *kukkucca*, another form of unwholesome mental state. The correct way to overcome remorse is to avoid doing evil deeds again, to make a firm resolution to refrain from *akusala*, evil action. If the evil deeds are not too serious, you will escape their evil results by virtue of your restraint, as taught by the Buddha in the Mahāvagga Saṁyutta.

#### Strive Hard while there is Ample Time

Everyone has to acquire education, wealth, and merit according to ability and skill. For such acquisition, opportunities and time are available only when one is young. If he has squandered away the good opportunities and time, he will come to wreck and ruin. There is a saying, "Strike while the iron is hot." The country folk say, "Sow the seeds when there is rain". If the rainy season is gone you cannot plough the fields and sow seeds and so you fail to harvest the grains.

Even if you realise too late that you have not done meritorious deeds, you should not lament for it. It is never too late to mend. Belated mindfulness is better than total neglect.

There is the story of an executioner who carried out death penalties during the time of the Buddha. He served the king in this way until old age when he was unable to discharge his duty and resigned from his office. The Venerable Sāriputta happened to meet him when he was close to death and preached the Noble Dhamma to him. But the old man could not concentrate on the Dhamma because there was too much a contrast between what unwholesome deeds he did and the Noble Dhamma he was hearing.

Knowing the true situation, the Venerable Sāriputta asked, "Did you execute the condemned criminals on your own will or by the orders of the king?" He replied: "I had to carry out the commands of the king. I did not kill them on my own will." Then the Venerable Sāriputta said, "If so, is there an offence?" and continued his preaching. The old man began to think that he seemed to be free from guilt and his mind became calm. While listening to the Dhamma, he reached the stage of  $C\bar{u}|asot\bar{a}panna$  (a Junior Stream-winner) and he was reborn in the celestial plane (*Deva Loka*) after his death.

(According to the Dhamma, actually, both he and the king were guilty of these executions even if he was carrying out the orders of the king. But the Venerable Sāriputta, in order to calm him and create a clear mind to attend to his teaching, used a good strategy to ask questions that seemed to make him innocent.)

**Note** The old executioner, admittedly, had taken many lives. But the Venerable Sāriputta had asked helpful questions to extinguish *kukkucca* (remorse). When remorse disappeared the old man was able to concentrate his mind on the true Dhamma attentively and was reborn in the abode of celestial beings. Taking lessons from this story, people should not regret for the evil deed they have done and the wholesome deeds they have not done, but try not to let fresh unwholesome *kamma* to arise, and make effort to perform good deeds from the time they come to know of this fact.

# 2 & 1 THINA (SLOTH) AND MIDDHA (TORPOR)

Thina means sluggishness of mind and body, and middha means torpor or dullness of mind and body. These two mental factors arise together. They deprive one of zeal and vitality, inducing laziness as can be seen in a person about to fall asleep or in one dozing off while listening to a sermon.

But not every sleepiness is *thina-middha*. Sometimes, due to overwork and bodily weariness, one becomes sleepy. Even an *Arahant* may feel sleepy, just as a plant wilts and shrivels under the burning heat of the sun.

Note that only the sluggishness, inertia and torpidity of citta and *cetasikas* in various activities are described as *thina-middha*. Nowadays, those who are lazy and unwilling to work are said to be under the influence of *thina-middha*.

### **34** VICIKICCHĀ (DOUBT, SCEPTICISM)

*Vicikicchā* is doubt or scepticism on the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the *Samgha*. It is wavering between belief and disbelief. Examples of sceptical doubts are:

- a. Is there the Omniscient Buddha?
- **b.** Can one attain Nibbāna if one follows the Eightfold Path?
- c. Is he a *bhikkhu* of good conduct? (In spite of seeing a bhikkhu of good conduct.)
- **d.** Can we get any benefits from observing wholesome moral precepts?
- e. Do we have past existences? Or are we created in this life by an Eternal God?
- f. Are there future lives? Is death the termination of everything?
- **g.** Can one's moral and immoral deeds influence the forthcoming series of *khandas*? (Doubt about *kamma*.)
- **h.** Can one enjoy the consequences of good deeds? (Doubt about results of *kamma*.)
- Is it true that due to *avijjā* (ignorance) there arise sankharas, volitional actions or mental formations? (Doubt about *Pațiccasamuppāda*, the Law of Dependent Origination).

Therefore only scepticism about the Buddha and so on should be understood as *vicikicchā*.

### Doubts Which are Not Vicikicchā

Doubts in the meaning of words and sentences, or doubts as to which route to follow on a journey, etc., do not constitute *vicikicchā*. Even *Arahants* sometimes have doubts on the meaning of Vinaya Rules, whether such an act is in accordance with the Vinaya or not. In this case it is not *vicikicchā*. It simply is conjecturing or discursive thinking, *vitakka*. Only scepticism on the Buddha, the Dhamma and the *Samgha* amounts to *vicikicchā*.

When scepticism or doubts arise they should be dispelled by asking the learned. Only then can there be complete faith and reverence in the Three Jewels.

### CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with the *akusala cetasikas*. (unwholesome mental factors) that contaminate the mind. The *akusala cetasikas* are present in the stream of consciousness of everyone. We often hear or see the evil power of greed, hatred, pride, etc. The whole world, due to *akusala* mental factors, is full of turmoil and atrocities. We even come across such evils ourselves.

By virtue of my efforts to clarify the nature of bad *cetasikas* that soil the mind, may I be able to lessen the forces of unwholesome mental factors in my own self. May my associates and acquaintances irrespective of age or status, be able to cultivate good minds! May readers of this books nurture good minds, good attitudes and good thoughts.

Due to my exposition of unwholesome mental factors I hope many people will change their minds (attitudes) from bad to good. May I be able to get rid of all unwholesome mental factors, the evils, the impurities in forthcoming existences. May my acquaintances be able to cultivate good minds and realise Nibbāna in the shortest possible time.

> [HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON AKUSALA CETASIKAS THAT INFLUENCE THE MIND]

#### CHAPTER THREE

# KUSALA CETASIKAS (THE WHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

IN THIS CHAPTER kusala *cetasikas*, wholesome mental factors, will be dealt with. The following mental factors are those that make consciousness wholesome:

**1.** Saddh $\bar{a}$  = faith, confidence

2. Sati

3. Hirī

- = mindfulness, awareness
  - = moral shame
- **4.** Ottappa = moral fear or dread
- **5.** Alobha = non-greed, generosity
- **6.** Adosa = non-hatred, good will
- **7.** Amoha = non-delusion, wisdom
- **8.** Mett $\bar{a}$  = loving-kindness
- 9. Karuņā = compassion
- **10.**  $Mudit\bar{a}$  = sympathetic joy
- **11.** Upekkhā = equanimity
- **12.** Sammāvācā = right speech
- **13.** Sammākammanta = right action
- **14.**  $Samm\bar{a}$ - $\bar{a}j\bar{i}va$  = right livelihood

These fourteen good mental factors enhance the mind to be pure and wholesome.

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# SADDHĀ (FAITH)

If you believe what is logical you will develop  $saddh\bar{a}$  (faith). It has two characteristics, belief and clarity of mind.

a. Belief

Wrong belief rejects the truth of *kamma* and its results, the truth of existence of the past and the future lives, the Omniscience of the Buddha, a human personage, who knows all these truths, his teachings, the Dhamma and his disciples, the *Samgha*. Such rejections are total disbelief which is different from *vicikicchā*, the sceptical doubt with partial acceptance.

Here faith (*saddhā*) means belief in *kamma* and its results. *Saddhā* is also called "*Saddhādhimokkha*", decision based on full faith. Thus, only faith in things of real nature is called real *saddhā*, a wholesome mental factor.

### ь. Clarity of Mind

The second characteristic of  $saddh\bar{a}$  is clarity of mind. While giving alms or observing precepts, or meditating, one's mind becomes filled with faith and clear. Just as a ruby of the Universal Monarch, when put in muddy water, will cause the impurities and sediments to sink and make the water to become crystal clear, so also  $saddh\bar{a}$  will eliminate all doubts, scepticism, and other mental defilements and purify the mind. Such is the characteristic of  $saddh\bar{a}$ .

Even children and some pet animals, even though they cannot understand the first characteristic of *saddhā*, will perform good deeds in emulation of their elders and teachers. So they will pay homage to the Three Jewels of Buddhism (*Ti-ratana*), offer alms, and do service to others.

#### KUSALA CETASIKAS (THE WHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

While doing such good deeds they enjoy the fruits of the second characteristic, clarify of mind. Even unbelievers sometimes do acts of generosity such as donations to social services like hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, etc., and enjoy clarify of mind.

Please study about true *saddhā* in detail in the chapter on *carita* where *saddhā-carita* is further explained.

#### **False Faith**

True faith consists of purity of mind and belief in the truth of Dhamma. But there are also false beliefs in the world. For example, some unscrupulous persons may proclaim that a Buddha statue or a pagoda is emanating radiance in order to lure people to give donations. People who are made to believe in bogus sacred relics, heretics who believe in their erroneous doctrines, etc., do not have true faith. They are just misled due to their ignorance, stupidity, naivety or simplicity, and this is to be categorised as delusion (*moha*) which is an unwholesome mental factor (*akusala cetasika*).

People who have faith in good orators, or in monks and hermits with elegant appearance and pleasant voices who can dispense good magic, charms, or medicines, are not true believers. This is delusion (*moha*) based on lust and intimacy. Such false faiths are classified in the books as *muddhappassana*, deluded devotion.

"Yo balavatiyā saddhāyā samannāgato avisadañaņo, so muddhappasanno hoti na avecca pasanno; tathā hi avatthusamim pasīdati, seyyathāpi titthiyā."

~ EKANIPĀTA AŅGUTTARA ŢĪKĀ

#### A Note of Warning

Today, the world is abound with liars and swindlers. In some religions new and singular doctrines are affluent; in Buddhism also some impersonators invent novel doctrines, new modes of meditation and mystic medicine to trick ignorant devotees and naive persons. When people give alms and money to such liars, such cheats, their acts stem from lust and delusion, not genuine faith. Because wise persons do not care to go against these tricksters, they become more and more popular day by day.

Nowadays, women often take the leading role in matters relating to charity and religious rituals, without pondering whether this is appropriate or not. One must not believe blindly. Careful reasoning should precede faith and devotion. So everyone should endeavour to better their knowledge in religious affairs, including female devotees.

#### **Confusion between Faith and Love**

Today even virtuous persons confuse faith with love or affection. Many a devotee will revere Dhamma teachers with pleasant voices and personalities who give good instructions. If they respect and honour them only for their good ethical conduct, it is *saddhā* (faith). But if they become attached to such teachers like their own relatives it is mixture of faith and love.

In Gotama Buddha's time, disciples such as the Venerable Vakkali, and Minister Channa not only revered the Buddha but also loved him personally. So although faith was present in their hearts, there also was attachment (*samyojana*) which is unwholesome.

#### KUSALA CETASIKAS (THE WHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

Some people accept doctrines and instructions through personal attachment; such attachments sometimes can promote knowledge and wisdom and enhance fulfilment of *Pāramīs* (Perfection). If wholesome mental factors are cultivated on account of personal attachments, then it is beneficial.

In the Pațțhāna it is said, "Akusalā dhammā kusalassa dhammassa upanissaya-paccayena paccayo. Unwholesome mental states support the wholesome mental states by way of Natural Decisive Support Condition (a particular Pațțhāna condition)."

So even small unwholesome attachments can lead to good states of mind. In this view, teachers and preachers should teach the Dhamma with sincerity and goodwill to promote such developments. And disciples and devotees, on their part, should properly practise what is taught, so as to get beneficial results.

# 🕱 SATI (MINDFULNESS)

Recollecting, remembering or heedfulness are definitive terms for mindfulness which is known as *sati* in Pāli. There are various forms of *sati*. For example, one recalls the meritorious deeds performed in the past; one listens attentively so that one can remember the Dhamma discourses. While meditating, one concentrates deeply not to lose the object of meditation. Such is the nature of *sati*.

Sometimes you look forward to meritorious deeds to be done tomorrow or in the future. You take care to observe  $s\bar{l}a$  (moral precepts) and not to breach any precepts. You are mindful to restrain the arising of greed, anger, pride and ignorance. You recall the counsels of your teachers. Only such forms of mindfulness concerning wholesome matters are called *sati* (mindfulness). Such true mindfulness is also called

 $appam\bar{a}da$ , non-remissness, watchfulness, vigilance. Therefore when a *bhikkhu* administers precepts to lay devotees, he always reminds them to observe  $s\bar{s}la$  diligently with due mindfulness. He reminds them thus at the end of giving precepts:

"Appamādena sampādetha = accomplish the meritorious deeds with non-negligence or diligence."

The Buddha also taught thus:

"Satiñ ca khvāham bhikkhave sabbatthikam vadāmi = O Bhikkhus, I declare mindfulness to be essential in every act."

Though there may be instances of being overfaithful, there can never be overmindfulness. When the Buddha was about to enter Parinibbāna, he said: *"Appamādena sampādetha."* 

### Mere Remembrance is not Sati

When a person remembers his relatives, when lovers yearn for one another, when friends remember to keep appointments, when one recalls some precious moments, etc., all such remembrances have the nature of attachment  $(tanh\bar{a})$ . When one remembers to take revenge for injuries done to one, when one keeps in mind atrocious plans, when one pays heed to possible dangers that may befall en route to a destination; such cases reveal hatred (*dosa*) as the base. Any form of the aforesaid mental factors, being accompanied by attachment or hatred, cannot be classified as true mindfulness (*sati*).

The above are the examples of "saññā", memory, minding or vitakka (purposeful thinking); they are not to be mistaken for sati. The natures of saññā and vitakka will be explained in the chapters to come.

#### KUSALA CETASIKAS (THE WHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

## & & HIRĪ (MORAL SHAME) AND OTTAPPA (MORAL FEAR)

To feel ashamed to do evil is  $hir\bar{i}$ ; dread or fear to do evil is *ottappa*. *Hirī* is evident in those who value their honour and dignity. *Ottappa* is evident in those who respect their parents, teachers, friends and relatives.

Further clarification is as follows:

- a. When one reasons; "I belong to a good family. So, I should not indulge in unwholesome deeds, nor earn my living as a fisherman or as a hunter." Thus he feels ashamed to resort to indecent livelihood and maintains the honour of his family or clan.
- **b.** The educated will reason thus: "We are learned persons; we should feel ashamed of unwholesome acts of doing bad deeds. We must refrain from killing, stealing, etc."
- c. The aged will reason thus; "We are old, and ought to be mature and wise. If we commit evil we will come into shameful situations."

These three instances show the dominance of  $hir\bar{i}$ , a wholesome mental factor, in those who value their honour and dignity.

Those who are considerate of others will reason: "If I do evil, my parents, friends, relatives, and teachers will be blamed because of me. Therefore I will not do any evil. I will avoid misdeeds." This is a fine example of *ottappa*. So a persons acquires *hirī* and *ottappa* by means of sympathetic considerations for others and by upholding the honour and dignity of his close acquaintances. But if you have no sympathetic consideration for your family, teachers, etc., you lack both *hirī* and *ottappa* and you will do many evil deeds in your life.

 $Hir\bar{\iota}$  and ottappa protect you from immorality putting restraints on sons from misconduct with mothers as well as on brothers from committing sin with sisters. They are regarded, therefore, as two great guardians of the world — Lokapāla Dhammā, protecting you from immorality. So they are pure and wholesome ideals, known also as "Sukka Dhamma". These two Dhammas keep human beings in moral discipline and moral restraint that distinguish them from animals.

Without  $hir\bar{i}$  and ottappa, mankind will sink into evil depths, and be reduced to the state of animals. Today many people are void of moral shame and moral dread so that they dress, eat and behave indecently. If this moral decay continues to proliferate, the world will soon end in complete ruin. For mankind will then turn into animals.

### False Hirī and Ottappa

Although moral shame and moral fear are wholesome mental factors (*kusala cetasika*) there also are false ones. Shame or fear to do evil deeds, abstinence from evil actions (*duccarita*) are due to true *hirī* and true *ottappa*. Shame and dread to keep *Uposatha* observance, to visit pagodas and monasteries, to listen to Dhamma talks, to speak in public, to do manual labour (not being ashamed of being unemployed and starving to death), or boy meeting girl, etc., are false *hirī* and *ottappa*. In fact they are pretensions and vain pride. According to Abhidhamma they all are collectively taken as a form of "*taṇhā*".

#### KUSALA CETASIKAS (THE WHOLESOME MENTAL FACTORS)

### Four Cases Where Shame Should be Discarded

In the books mention is made of four cases where one should discard shame:

- a. In trade and commerce
- **b.** In learning under a competent teacher
- c. In partaking of food
- d. In making love

These cases are mentioned to emphasise the point that one should be bold doing something of benefit. No commitment is made on whether they are moral or immoral.

Other instances of  $hir\bar{i}$  and ottappa are fear of courts and judges, reluctance to visit the lavatory while travelling, fear of dogs, fear of ghosts, fear of unknown places, fear of opposite sex, fear of elders and parents, fear of speaking in the presence of elders, etc. These are not genuine fear or shame. Indeed they are mere lack of nerve or confidence, a collection of unwhole-some (*akusala*) states propelled by *domanassa*.

### The Middle Way

The above explanation will clarify the fact that only genuine shame and fear are to be cultivated. There should neither be shame nor fear doing deeds that are not unwholesome. But this does not mean one must be reckless and bold in every case. Recklessness leads to disrespect for elders, anger, hatred and conceit. While moral courage and fearlessness are to be praised, recklessness and disrespect are to be blamed.

Fruitless boldness, disrespect and vain courage are undesirable; one should be bold and fearless only in doing good deeds. Excess of shame and fear are equally undesirable. There

is a middle path for all to follow. One is not to be fearless in circumstances that one should have fear; and one should fear evil deeds.

The Buddha said:

"Abhāyitabbe bhāyanti, bhāyitabbe na bhāyare = Most people fear what should not be feared and become fearless of what should be feared."

# 😹 ALOBHA (NON-GREED)

Not wanting is *alobha*. It is non-attachment to things, and is the opposite of greed, or wanting something; *lobha* and *alobha* are just like fire and water. Whereas *lobha* wants things, *alobha* does not want anything at all because its nature is non-greed, generosity, charity. In daily life too we may notice the contrasting behaviour of a greedy man and a contented man.

### A Greedy Bhikkhu

A greedy monk is always after alms and offerings. Therefore he preaches persuasive sermons for the sake of getting offerings. When he gets some, he is very much attached to them and does not think of giving them away in charity. He even becomes conceited and thinks highly of his gains. But he does not know that he is degrading himself by having to be nice and polite to potential donors.

### A Greedy Man

A greedy man is not much different from a greedy monks. He seeks wealth by hook or by crook because his mind is overcome by greed. He is not satisfied with whatever he has gained. Being

greedy, he is always after amassing more and more wealth. He would say: "This is mine. That is mine. I own this and I own that. This is my property." When he dies, he will be reborn in the realm of miserable ghosts (*petas*). His greed will push him down to *apāyas*, the woeful planes. Such are the evils of greed.

# A Greedless Bhikkhu

A greedless *bhikkhu* will have no attachment to material gains. When he gets offerings he will not feel proud as he well understands that alms and offerings come from the goodwill of donors and well-wishers. Let alone a *bhikkhu* who is the disciple of the Buddha, even a lay person will be ashamed of clinging to alms and offerings. A virtuous person is never greedy; instead he is generous and charitable. Likewise, a greedless *bhikkhu* places no importance in material wealth.

## A Greedless Man

Among the lay people a greedless one earns his living by fair and just means only. He practises right livelihood. He avoids sensual pleasures as much as possible. He has pity for the poor and is generous to them. In alms-giving he is never hesitant. Such goodwill is called  $muttac\bar{a}g\bar{i}$  in Pāli which means giving freely and without reluctance. Such virtuous persons can even renounce crown, wealth and power and become a religious recluse with a contented mind dwelling in a sylvan hut.

Therefore you will see the difference between the greedy and greedless like two men running back to back in opposite directions. Those who believe themselves to be Bodhisattas or righteous persons with  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{s}$  should first analyse their mind

thus, "Am I greedy or greedless?" If they are greedy they should reform their minds right in the present existence. If one can assess oneself as greedless one should still do more good deeds because one now has an excellent foundation. So all persons should cultivate *sati* (mindfulness) in order to become greedless generous people.

# ADOSA (NON-ANGER, LOVING KINDNESS, FORGIVENESS, HARMLESSNESS)

Adosa is non-ferocity or non-savageness. It is the direct opposite of dosa just as snakes are of geckos. Those who are with adosa are polite as much as those who are with dosa are ferocious. They can pacify themselves even when other people talk to them with dosa because their minds are peaceful. Not only are they peaceful in mind, their facial expressions also is pleasant and beautiful like the silvery moon whereas that of those who are with dosa is stern. Moreover, they look glorious for their pleasant speech and nobody who ever meets them can hate them. Thus the innate nature of being with adosa is full of benefits. In fact adosa is synonymous with mettā (loving-kindness), which is welcome everywhere in the world.

[The nature of mettā will be dealt with soon.]

## The Bodhisatta's Alobha and Adosa

Once the Bodhisatta was a son of King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī. When the chief queen died, the king promoted a young, beautiful queen to the title. Crown Prince Mahāpaduma, the Bodhisatta, took responsibility of the capital city when the king marched out to suppress a rebellion. When his father the king was about to arrive back at the palace, the Crown prince

had an audience with the young chief queen for the purpose of announcing the monarch's return. At this time she was alone and she, out of lust, tried to seduce the prince three times. But the Bodhisatta by refusing to give in to her enticements embarrassed the queen and made her very furious. So she, in revenge, fabricated an accusation that the Crown Prince Mahāpaduma tried to molest her. The king believed her false accusation.

In fact, the queen employed all her wiles  $(pariy\bar{a}ya \text{ and } m\bar{a}y\bar{a})$  to bring Paduma to ruin.

The thoughtless king immediately sentenced his son to death. Since the prince was popular with the people, he feared that they would take him away. So the king himself led the procession of executioners to the top of the mountain from where he pushed down his son. However, due to the power of *mettā* of the prince, he was rescued by the guardian spirit of the mountain.

#### Comments on the Jātaka

In the first part of the Jātaka, when the young chief queen met Prince Paduma, she was overcome with lust (tanha). But the prince cultivated *alobha*, the opposite of greed and lust. Later on, the young chief queen, in order to cover up her wickedness, made up stories against the prince. This was the application of maya combined with musavada, falsehood. Then the king was overwhelmed by anger from the time he heard the fabricated story of molestation till the time he sentenced his own son to death. The character of Prince Paduma reveals the characteristics of non-greed (*alobha*), non-grudge, patience and loving-kindness. In this Jātaka, the prince was Bodhisatta, the young chief queen was Concamanavika-to-be, and the king was Devadatta-to-be.

## **Action and Reaction**

After he was pushed down from the top of the mountain, the prince was conveyed by the serpent king to his kingdom where he stayed for a year. Then he returned to the human world where he lived the life of a recluse. After some years, a hunter saw him and reported the matter to the king. The king, his father, came to him and asked him to return to the palace but Prince Paduma refused and remained a hermit. The king now learnt the truth and flung down his young chief queen from the top of the mountain. She suffered greatly for her evil deeds before she died.

# 💓 AMOHA = PANNĀ (NON-DELUSION, WISDOM)

Amoha means intelligence, knowledge, wisdom. This mental factor enables one to dispel the darkness of ignorance and delusion which conceals the truth. *Moha* (delusion) and *amoha* (knowledge) are two extreme opposites.

## The Wisdom (Pańńā)

Wisdom is of two categories, real and unreal. True wisdom is knowing and understanding the action (*kamma*) and results thereof (*vipāka*); knowing and understanding the scriptures and the Dhamma; knowledge of insight (*Vipassanā-ñāņa*); knowledge of the Path (*Magga-ñāṇa*); knowledge of Fruition (*Phala-ñāṇa*), and the Buddha's Omniscience. All these forms of faultless knowledge are called wisdom (*paññā*).

## False Wisdom

Some so-called 'clever' persons are well versed in oration, persuasion, lying, swindling and pretensions. Such kinds of cleverness are not true wisdom. They are fake knowledge or  $va\tilde{n}can\bar{a}-pa\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\bar{a}$ , false wisdom, meaning knowledge of deceiving others. They are in ultimate reality unwholesome mental states dominated by attachment ( $tanh\bar{a}$ ). Some people excel in warfare or in making and using sophisticated weapons. Such knowledge is nothing but an unwholesome good thinking which is *vitakka*.

It should be noted, however, that false wisdom cannot be found in the stupid, the dull and the low IQ persons; it can be found only in highly intelligent or educated persons. That is to say, the true wisdom is a condition for false wisdom by way of Natural Decisive Support Condition (*Pakatūpanissaya Paccaya*) taught in the Law of *Paṭṭhāna* Conditions. Accordingly intelligent persons may follow the right path and attain the highest positions in doing *kusala*, moral deeds, just as they may excel in doing evil and cause harm to the greatest extent possible.

## Inherent Wisdom and Acquired Wisdom

Real wisdom may be divided into

- a. Jāti-paññā
- **b.** Pavatti-paññā

Those who are born with *alobha*, *adosa*, and *amoha* are called *tihetuka puggalas* (three-rooted persons). Since their birth they are blessed with three good roots. So their *amoha* (wisdom or non-delusion) starts with their birth. Therefore they learn and understand quickly and are able to think profoundly even at a young age. Such wisdom is *jāti-paññā*.

Pavatti-paññā means the intelligence and wisdom acquired at a later age through training and learning. They ask questions, attend lectures and try their best to accumulate knowledge. This acquired wisdom at a later time is called *pavatti-paññā*. He who lacks *jāti-paññā* can develop *pavatti-paññā* by learning diligently under a competent teacher. Those who are endowed with *jāti-paññā* at birth and amass *pavatti-paññā* later will crown their lives with all-round success.

## How to Cultivate Jāti-paññā

Wisdom gained at birth not only brings worldly success and benefits but also produces good results in meditation or Dhamma practice. Only persons with *jāti-paññā* can win Enlightenment or *Magga-* and *Phala-ñāṇas*. Therefore a person should cultivate *jāti-paññā* right now for future existences. To do so, one must first cultivate a strong will to acquire wisdom in this existence. Inspire your mind to acquire intelligence and knowledge. After getting this noble inspiration, you must read good books, and discuss with learned teachers and wise sages. Seek advice from them. Such efforts will augment ample *pavatti-paññā* and make you a rational and comprehensive person and sow the seeds of wisdom for the future lives in *saṁsāra*. However, you must not rest content with your present achievements.

In order to gain knowledge and wisdom you must be habitually neat and clean in dress and manner. Whenever you perform  $d\bar{a}na$  (giving), or other meritorious deeds, you must make a noble wish and say "May I gain intelligence and wisdom due to these deeds." When you make offerings to the *bhikkhus*, you must propagate goodwill thus: "May the *bhikkhus* be able to teach and learn the noble Dhamma everyday and be crowned

with wisdom". If possible you should build and establish monasteries where monks can learn the Dhamma, and revere and support able teachers who would promote the teachings of the Buddha.

You should, if possible, give aid to schools, colleges and such institutions, with a view to support the education of the country. You must always be willing to impart what you have learnt. Propelled by such efforts, you will be a wise sage while you roam about in *samsāra*, the cycle of rebirths. These are a few guidelines on how to be blessed with *jāti-paññā* in the existences to come.

## The Difference between Saddhā (Faith) and Paññ (Wisdom)

The nature of faith  $(saddh\bar{a})$  is to be content with just giving and practising charity with a view to be blissful in the *samsāra*. Such a devotion seldom contains inspiring thoughts for the advancement of one's country, race and religion. *Paññā* (wisdom) develops good deeds with serious thoughts for one's country, race and religion and does not put in the fore the welfare of one's own future existences, knowing full well that good deeds will produce good results. Thus wisdom and faith are fundamentally different.

One's own country of Myanmar can be viewed through the eye of faith or through the eye of wisdom or both. If either faith or wisdom goes to the extreme, one's views and judgements will be biased. It is imperative that one must have a balanced attitude that synthesises wisdom and faith to the best results. There is a saying, "Faith in excess becomes  $tanh\bar{a}$  (lust), while wisdom in excess ends in  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  (deception)."

## In this book I have not attempt to elaborate on the balanced approach because a separate treatise will be needed to cover this topic.

#### **An Exhortation**

O citizens! Whether knowledge is real or unreal, the importance lies in the nature of one's mind. Just as the heart is vital for living organisms, a good attitude is always of paramount importance here and hereafter. Wisdom determines the prosperity of the present as well as the future existences. Only the wise can understand fully the benefits of  $d\bar{a}na$  (charity),  $s\bar{s}la$  (morality) and other  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{s}$  (Perfections). Only through wisdom can one fulfil the  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{s}s$ .

In worldly affairs, happiness of family life solely depends upon the wisdom of the man and wife. In family management and prosperity also, wisdom leads to diligence and hence to desired goals. In public congregations, only the wise will be held in high esteem. Those who are unwise and uneducated, will not rise to top place in society even if they are immensely wealthy.

Knowledge is the dominant force in the modern world. The rich accumulate wealth because of the know-how of the intellectuals and technologists with whom they work in collaboration. From the smallest conflict to global wars, victory is always on the side of the intelligent, the technically advanced. In the Catudhamma Jātaka the Bodhisatta monkey emerged victorious over a huge crocodile in its own territory, the river, by means of a clever tactic.

## Although this tactic cannot be said as true wisdom, it proved that wisdom can bring forth victory in worldly affairs; this is the moral of this Jātaka.

In the Mahosadha Jātaka the Bodhisatta's country was attacked by a mighty army led by King Cūļani and his Minister, Kevaṭṭa. By means of his intelligence and tact, Mahosadha repelled the mighty foes who finally fled in disarray.

In the past, Myanmar was left behind in science and technology. So she fell to the imperialists who finally occupied Myanmar for over 100 years. Myanmar, being rich in natural resources, had been fat target of many aliens some of whom are today making good use of their superior technology to exploit our wealth of oil, minerals and forests.

Even up to present time some foreign merchants and traders, through perseverance and diligence, are doing very well in Myanmar. We are the victims of foreign aggressions because we cannot respond to the pressing demands of time. We lack industry and vigilance. In fact we are still "slumbering and snoring like an acolyte under a banyan tree with his basket beside him".

O Citizens! A nation with an inferior technology and knowhow will spiral down in status in the family of nations. Patriotic teachers and educators should guide the people on to the right path. Students should seek knowledge earnestly. The virtuous wealthy and the *bhikkhus* should contribute to the betterment of education and intelligence. Only with such endeavours on a national scale will we able to 'recuperate' (nurture a new breed of intellectuals and intelligentsia) in this life, and become wise sages (possessors of *jāti-paññā*) in the lives to come.

# 8 METTĂ (LOVING-KINDNESS)

There is no particular mental factor (*cetasika*) as *mettā*. The *adosa-cetasika*, when it is meant to connote wishing others welfare, peace and progress, is known as *mettā*. Therefore, note that *mettā* is the sincere will to help others to be well and prosper.

## False *Mettā*

There is also a form of *mettā* which exists among relatives, lovers, husbands and wives. Such *mettā* also constitutes wish and deeds of helpfulness to each other. They are said to be "in love" with one another. They also use the word *mettā* for this type of attachment. But it is actually lust or attachment termed *gehasita-pema*, (love for the household already treated under "lobha"). This is not true or sincere *mettā* (loving-kindness).

Once a layman approached his reverend *bhikkhu* and asked him the proper way to practise *mettā-bhāvanā*. The *bhikkhu* said; "Start radiating *mettā* on the one you love best". So, as he loved his wife best, he started *mettā* meditation on her that night just outside her room. After some time he became so overcome with love that he rushed to her room. As the door was bolted shut he bumped his head at the door and received bruises. This kind of love is called *gehasita-pema*.

## A Cow's Love for Her Calf

One cannot say such forms of *pema* never develop into true *mettā*; even a cow's love for her calf can bring about the arising of wholesome consciousness (*kusala citta*). Once upon a time, a cow was breast-feeding her young calf with true *mettā*. At

that very moment a hunter threw a spear at her. But, due to her immense  $mett\bar{a}$  for her calf, the spear became flaccid like a palm leaf and caused her no harm at all. This is the evidence that love between relatives, friends, husbands and wives, parents and children can develop into true  $mett\bar{a}$ .

## The Mettā of Queen Sāmāvatī

In the ancient kingdom of Kosambī, King Utena had three queens, namely, Sāmāvatī, Māgaņdī and Vasuladattādevī. While Sāmāvatī was devoted to the Three Gems (*Ti-ratana*), Māgaņdī, since her maiden days, bore a grudge against the Buddha. She used to find fault on Sāmāvatī, who always practised *mettā-bhāvanā*. King Utena rotated his visits to the three chambers of his queens respectively; and he was very dexterous with the harp.

One day, when the turn to visit Sāmāvatī's room came, Māgaņdī put a poisonous snake which she got from her uncle, into the cavity of the king's harp and placed many garlands so as to stop the snake from coming out. Then she told the king not to go to Sāmāvatī's chamber as she had a horrid nightmare to be interpreted as a bad omen. But the king, heedless of her warnings, went to his beloved's chamber. Māgaņdī followed him as if she was very concerned about the king's safety.

When the king reclined on Sāmāvatī's couch after dinner, she secretly removed the garlands to let the snake out of the cavity. The snake being full of fury, made a hissing sound and approached the king. Māgaṇḍī pretended to be shocked, scolded Sāmāvatī and her attendants and blamed the king for not listening to her warnings.

King Utena, being ignorant of Māgaņdī's sinister plot, got very angry and picked up his bow and arrow to shoot the innocent queen and her attendants.

At that moment Sāmāvatī told her attendants not to feel hatred or anger against the king and Māgaņdī, but only to propagate *mettā* (loving-kindness) to them, as they have always been doing. She said except *mettā* there was no saviour in sight at such a time. She urged all to emanate *mettā* thoughts to both the king and Māgaņdī as much as possible, and dispel all thoughts of grudge, anger and revenge.

So the attendants, well-trained under the guidance of Queen Sāmāvatī, cultivated loving-kindness to King Utena and Māgaṇḍī. The angry king could not conquer his anger and released an arrow. Due to the power of  $mett\bar{a}$ , the arrow turned back towards him. At once the king recovered his senses and, kneeling in front of Sāmāvatī, begged for forgiveness. He now realised his own thoughtlessness.

## **Moral of the Story**

Queen Māgaņdī was envious and jealous of Queen Sāmāvatī who was more beautiful and popular. She was infested with *issā* and *dosa*. So she plotted evil schemes with  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ . King Utena, on seeing the snake, was overcome with *dosa*. When the arrow boomeranged, he experienced great fear under the influence of *dosa* and *domanassa*. Queen Sāmāvatī and her attendants being basically good-natured, propagated *mettā* even towards their enemies.

In this age, those who want to live a highly virtuous life should emulate the attitude and behaviour of Queen Sāmāvatī. In the face of envy, jealously and ill will one should improve

one's mind and extinguish the desire to avenge others. Given the opportunity to do service to others, do so even to those who had been malicious to you. Make good use of the priceless weapon known as *mettā*. *Mettā* is water; *dosa* is fire. The more the water, the easier it is to fight the flames. Therefore, one ought to try to diminish one's anger and foster loving-kindness to all beings.

# KARUŅĀ (PITY, COMPASSION)

Karuṇā means great pity for the less fortunate beings. Karuṇā incites the will to save unfortunate sentient beings, and to alleviate the sufferings of others. When one sees a person in misery, there arises the wish to help him. If he cannot do so, he will be uneasy and concerned. This is not true karuṇā. It is only domanassa (mental suffering) based on pity, which mostly occurs in the hearts of good people. Therefore, although it is a domanassa, this akusala is not a great evil. This in fact is natural to good, compassionate people.

## Unreal Karuņā

Sometimes a man will feel pity for his relatives and friends who are in trouble, and wish to save them. Actually this mental factor is *soka* (sorrow) and not true pity. Real *karuṇā* gives rise to pity and compassion whilst the unreal gives rise to worry and anxiety.

## The Mentality of the Virtuous

All good-natured persons will feel karuna (pity) for the less fortunate ones when they actually see them. However, they will radiate *mettā* (loving-kindness) only on their friends, relatives

and kith and ken. But the true virtuous persons who are fulfilling the ten  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections) and those holy persons already accomplished in  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$ , particularly the Bodhisattas, have great compassion for all sentient beings feeling greatly concerned for the danger of  $ap\bar{a}ya$  and ill consequences of their evil deeds falling on them, just as parents feel pity for their poor, suffering children. They can extend their *mettā* to all sentient beings without discrimination. They can be compared to parents who love their children equally, even the naughty ones.

Mettā and karuņā had acquired firm roots in mental and physical continuum of the Bodhisatta in every existence while fulfilling  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  and they became fully matured at the time of Supreme Enlightenment. By virtue of this, Gotama Buddha looked upon Māra with unshaken mettā to conquer him when Māra imposed great interference and hindrances on him on the eve of Buddhahood. The Buddha did this by emanating mettā incessantly with supreme forgiveness to Māra who was bent on destroying him. In the same way, the Buddha conquered Devadatta who plotted to kill him.

In the present day, those who strive to be virtuous and noble should emulate the good examples of Bodhisattas. They should reject the concept: "I will be good only if the other people are good. I will return good only to the good." Instead they should replace it with the attitude: "Although they are bad, I will return only good to them. Whether they are good or bad, I must do them good". And they should bear in mind to bestow sincere *mettā* and *karuņā* on everyone.

# 10 MUDITĂ (SYMPATHETIC JOY)

The feeling of sympathetic joy at the success, welfare and prosperity of others is called *muditā*. In life, evil-minded people experience envy, jealously, greed, etc., when someone gains popularity, promotion, wealth, education, status, position, etc. But noble-minded people, when seeing or hearing of such events, feel glad; they applaud the success of other people with sincerity. They reason like this: "Oh, they gain wealth, power, success and popularity because they have sown the seeds of good and noble actions (*kusala-kamma*) in the past, and they are now reaping their due harvest." This is true *muditā*.

## False Muditā

False *muditā* means excessive joy and gladness at the wellbeing of one's own relatives and friends. This gladness resembles *muditā* but actually it is a false one. Such extreme joy even to the point of tears, is known as *pīti-somanassa* which is associated with *taṇhā* and *lobha*. But all such gladness and joy must not be taken as false, because there can be genuine *muditā* too.

# UPEKKHĀ (EQUANIMITY)

*Upekkhā* is equanimity or even-mindedness on all beings. In Abhidhamma texts, *upekkhā* is referred to as *tatramajjhattatā*-*cetasika*.

*Upekkhā* is unlike loving-kindness, for there is no love involved; it is unlike compassion, for there is no pity involved; it is unlike sympathetic joy for there is no gladness involved; it is also unlike anger, for there is no hatred or malice involved.

It dwells on the fact that *kamma* brings about good or bad consequences accordingly. The theme of *upekkhā* is *kammassakā*: One's own *kamma* is one's own property.

But today we often use this word *upekkhā* concerning naughty children or pupils. That means, people remain indifferent to the welfare of their children or pupils whether they behave well or not. It amounts to sheer neglect of duties. In the case of *upekkhā*, the persons concerned are taken into consideration with an unbiased mind free from extremes of love and hate. *Upekkhā* can occur in the mind of ordinary people. But *jhāna-upekkhā* can be attained only after the mastery of the three fore-runners, namely, *mettā, karuņā* and *muditā*.

# The Four Divine States of Mind (The Four *Brahmavihāras*)

Mettā (loving-kindness), karuņā (compassion), muditā (sympathetic joy), and upekkhā (equanimity) are collectively called the Four Brahmavihāras, the four divine or noble states of mind. [Brahma = divine, and vihāra = living.] That is to say, 'to dwell emanating thoughts of either loving-kindness or any one of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity towards beings is the noble living.' Living such a life is not arid with the heat of hatred, envy and jealousy. It is a life steeped in and imbued with the moisture of four Bramavihāras.

In Myanmar such noble states of mind are collectively classified as *Brahmaso* (saturated and filled with divine thoughts). But some say the word *Brahmaso* is derived from the Pāļi word *Brahmacariya*.

## Developing Mettā

Keep your mind incessantly occupied with *mettā* and you will really develop *mettā* for all. In other words *mettā* must be developed so that your mind becomes enriched with lovingkindness.

## Radiating Mettā

When you radiate *mettā* directed to someone while concentrating your thoughts on that person and wishing, "May so and so be prosperous", your *mettā* will communicate with the person on the receiving end. It happens as if your *mettā* has reached that person's mind. Therefore when you radiate *mettā* directed to someone, people today say "you send *mettā* to someone".

## The Common Mode of Sending Mettā

Recite (in Pāli):

"Sabbe sattā averā hontu, Abhyāpajjā hontu, Anighā hontu, Sukhī attānaṁ pariharantu"

This means:

- a. May all beings be free from danger.
- **b.** May all beings be free from *domanasa* (mental suffering) and have peace of mind.
- c. May all beings be free from physical sufferings and be well.
- **d.** May all living beings be prosperous and maintain themselves to live a long life.

## Effective Sending of Mettā

Only when you earnestly wish the well-being of someone or some beings can we say that *mettā* has been radiated properly. If you just say *averā hontu*, etc., by rote learning with wandering mind and without concentration, then you are not sending *mettā* as you intend to do. It is better therefore to recite in one's own vernacular rather than in Pāli so that you really comprehend what you are uttering. You should mention a person by name when you send *mettā*.

For example, "May my mother be free from dangers and difficulties; may she attain mental and physical happiness; may she be in good health and may she live long."

You should say these words with great enthusiasm and sincerity. The same holds true for your father, teacher, etc. In the case of *mettā* for all living beings also you replace "my mother" with "all living beings".

In short, you can just recite: "May my mother be free from danger and may she be well." "May my father be…" "May my teacher be…" The only essential point is to have keen interest and enthusiasm for their welfare, peace and progress.

## How to Send Karuņā

Karuņā-cetasikas means loving compassion for all beings suffering from misery. The essence is the sincere wish to deliver them from their present woes. Therefore in propagating karuņā people recite in Pāli: Dukkhā muccantu which means "May they get free from prevailing woes". Real karuņā is the profound wish for others to be free from suffering and come to happiness. Wishing "May so and so die quickly" so as to bring his suffering to a quick end is not only not true karuņā, but is

in reality *byapada-duccarita* (evil conduct in thought that is ill will).

Real *karuņā* means noble attitude of pity for a suffering person or a being. Merely uttering "Dukkhā muccantu" will not constitute true *karuņā*.

## How to Send Muditā

*Muditā* is sympathetic joy (altruistic joy) at the success, prosperity and achievements of others. It is the sincere wish to let others continue enjoying their wealth, position, progress, happiness, fame, and so on. To send *muditā*, one should recite wittingly *"Yathāladdha-sampattito mā vigacchantu,"* which means *"May they not lose the success or happiness they have achieved" and radiate sympathetic joy when you witness the well-being of a person. A mere recitation of Pāļi words does not constitute real <i>muditā*.

## How to Send Upekkhā

*Upekkhā* is equanimity, which is viewing rightly and having no partiality. To send *upekkhā* is to reflect, "People have *kamma* alone as their property; whatever good or bad that happens to them is due to their *kamma*."

That is to say, one should reflect: "Even though I send  $mett\bar{a}$  for his happiness, he will be happy only if he had good kamma; even though I feel compassionate for him, he will be free from suffering only if he had good kamma; even though I am happy with his prosperity, and do not want him to lose this prosperity, he will be able to maintain this prosperity and his life only if he had good kamma. Therefore, I should not be concerned about him; he has his kamma as his own property."

These Four Divine States of mind, the four Brahmavihāras, have different projections. Mettā projects loving-kindness and affection on all beings. Karuņā projects pity and compassion on beings suffering from misery. Muditā will take successful beings as its objects and project sympathetic joy. Upekkhā views all beings as subject to kamma, and projects equanimity on them.

Therefore, it should be noted that one cannot project the four Brahmacariyas at the same time onto all beings or onto a single person. When you wish to radiate *mettā* thought-waves effectively, you ought to recite the four lines in Pāli, *Averā hontu... pariharantu*, or their vernacular with great concentration of mind.

Similarly you can project karuna onto suffering beings in Pāli or in your language. Merely uttering Pāli sentences without understanding their meaning or with no sincere wish, will not be effective. Perfunctory rituals are common among Buddhists nowadays. Therefore the pious and the faithful are duty bound to put more emphasis on setting good examples for the new generation to emulate.

# 12 13 & 14 THE THREE ABSTINENCES (Sammmāvācā, Sammākammanta, Sammā-ājīva)

When one is studying the three *viratī-cetasikas*, one should first possess the knowledge of ten duccaritas (evil conducts). This book will make no elaboration on these.

The ten evil conducts may be categorised into two groups, i.e., those concerned with one's livelihood and those which are not. For instance, killing in order to rob, to assassinate a person because one is paid to do so, or to earn one's living as a hunter or a fisherman, and such like, are evil deeds which are concerned with earning a livelihood. Taking life due to anger or hatred is *duccarita* not related to livelihood. Likewise all other evil deeds can be divided into two classes.

Appearing as false witness in a court, advocating for unjust causes, earning income by telling tales and fables as a narrator, etc., are unwholesome deeds related to livelihood. False speech, verbal rudeness, making up false statements, etc., with no hope of acquiring anything are *vacī-duccarita* not related to livelihood.

## Abstinences (Viratīs)

Abstinence from  $k\bar{a}ya$ -duccarita (evil conduct in deed) and  $vac\bar{i}$ duccarita (evil conduct in speech) is called *virati* (abstinence). If you refrain from telling falsehood even though you have the chance to lie, it is sammāvācā-viratī if it (telling falsehood) is not related to livelihood, but it is sammā-ājīva-viratī if it is related to livelihood.

The abstention from killing even if you get the chance is *sammākammanta-viratī* if it is not related to livelihood. But if the killing is concerned with livelihood, it is *sammā-ājīva-viratī*.

## Other Good Deeds Not Belonging to the Class of Virati

In life there also are other good deeds which are not of the nature of the three abstinences mentioned above. They are *kusala* (good actions) not associated with these *viratī-cetasikas*. Such deeds as saying good words without the occasion for abstinence, reciting Pāļi formula for observance of precepts such as *Pāņātipātā veramaņisikkhāpadam samādiyāmi*, etc., could be called *sammāvācā* (good speech). They form wholesome *cetanās*. Almsgiving, pay-ing homage to the Buddha, listening to the Dhamma, etc., without the occasion for abstinence could be called *sammā-kammanta* (good deeds). Such good deeds are wholesome *cetanās*. Traditional occupations such as trade and commerce without the occasion for abstinence could be called *sammā-kammanta* (good speech, etc., cannot be called *sammā-ājīva* (good livelihood). But in all these cases, as there is no abstinence involved, the good speech, etc., cannot be called *viratī-cetasikas*. They should be known as just *kusala-cetanās*.

## Virati In Three Actions

There are three practical aspects of each of the three viratis mentioned above. They are samādāna-viratī, sampatta-viratī and samuccheda-viratī. The first, samādāna-viratī, is abstinence by means of observing sīla (precepts). If you get a chance to kill a cow but spare it because you have taken the precept of abstention from killing, you gain samādāna-viratī merit.

Once there was a layman, who after taking precepts from a *bhikkhu*, went to the fields to search for his lost cow. While he was ascending a hillock, a big python entwined his leg.

As he was about to kill the snake with his sword, he remembered he had taken *sīla* (precepts) from his teacher, and so he

did not harm the snake. Due to the power of  $s\bar{\imath}la$ , the snake let him free and went away. This is the story of  $sam\bar{a}d\bar{a}na$ -virat $\bar{\imath}$ because abstinence was made because the man had taken the precepts. Thus abstinence at the time of taking precepts or after doing so amounts to  $sam\bar{a}d\bar{a}na$ -virat $\bar{\imath}$ . [ $sam\bar{a}d\bar{a}na$  = observance of precepts; virat $\bar{\imath}$  = abstinence from evil]

Incidental abstinence is classified as sampatta-viratī. For example, in ancient Ceylon (Sri Lanka), a lay-devotee named Cakkana was tending to his sick mother whose physician recommended the fresh meat of a rabbit as a cure. So the layman went in search of a rabbit. He caught a small one in a paddy field and was about to kill it when he suddenly felt pity for the timid animal and set it free. Back home he told his sick mother the incident and then made a solemn utterance: "Ever since I came to know what was right and what was wrong, I had never taken the life of any living being with a will to do so." Due to this noble, solemn truth his mother recovered from her ailment. In this incident, the layman had not observed any sīla beforehand. But at the time he caught the rabbit, instant compassion made him refrain from killing. This is a case of sampatta-viratī. [sampatta = from incidental wrong doing;  $virat\bar{i} = abstinencel$ 

The abstinence that is associated with *Magga-citta* (path Consciousness) is called *samuccheda-viratī* (abstention by way of total eradication of latent defilements), because when *Magga-citta* is attained, the abstention at that moment is for the sake of total cutting off of mental defilements. [*samuccheda* = by way of totally cutting the latent mental defilements; *viratī* = abstention]

In this way, each basic *viratī-cetasika* is further divided into three sub-classes.

## CONCLUSION

Here ends the chapter on *kusala-cetasikas*, good or wholesome mental factors which influence our mind. *Akusala-cetasikas*, bad or unwholesome mental factors, which contaminate our minds had been covered in chapter Two. Now we should consider deeply which type of *cetasikas*, good or evil, occurs most in our minds.

We have known that good mental factors or *cetasikas* have their evil counterparts such as unreal faith, unreal mindfulness, unreal shame, unreal fear and so on. But in the case of unwholesome mental factors, you will notice that there are no good counterparts for them. Therefore you must have realised now that evil and good states interspersed with each other or just the evil states by themselves mostly arise in our minds.

Now you know that unwholesome thoughts, unwholesome mental factors and evil deeds are the cause of long duration of *samsāra*, the cycle of births and deaths. As a human being endowed with intelligence and wisdom, if you continue to allow evils or misdeeds outnumber good deeds, you will not achieve Nibbāna, the supreme bliss, no matter how often you pray for it.

I would therefore exhort everyone to become a member of the community of really good noble persons, with self-respect rather than a hypocrite pretending to be a good person.

As for me, I wish to be able to nurture a noble, flawless and pure mind in all future existences; and to be free from

pariyāya, māyā and sāțheyya. May my associates, friends and acquaintances walk on this path of righteousness and become truly virtuous personages.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON KUSALA CETASIKAS WHICH HAVE GOOD INFLUENCE ON THE MIND]

### CHAPTER FOUR

# CETASIKAS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH GOOD AND BAD CITTAS (MIND)

CETASIKAS THAT ARE common to both good and bad *cittas* (types of consciousness) are as follows:

1,	Phassa	=	contact, touch
2.	Vedanā	=	feeling, sensation
3.	Saññā	=	perception, recognition
4.	Cetanā	=	volition
5.	Ekaggata	=	one-pointedness or concentration on one object
6.	Jīvitindriya	=	controlling faculty or principle of life
7.	Manasikāra	=	attention
8.	Vitakka	=	initial application, thought
9.	Vicāra	=	sustained application
10.	Adhimokkha	=	resolution, determination
11.	Vīriya	=	effort
12.	Pīti	=	joyful satisfaction
13.	Chanda	=	will

They are all mental factors which can associate with either good or bad states of consciousness.

#### CETASIKAS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH GOOD AND BAD CITTAS (MIND)

# PHASSA (CONTACT)

*Phassa-cetasika* is touch, or contact between mind and its object. Here it means not physical contact, such as touching by hand or body or collision between two objects, but the contact between mind and object. It is a kind of 'touch' which looks like real touch when mind (consciousness) and object meet together. In some cases such mental contact is as prominent and perceptible as physical contact.

Let us elaborate: When a recuperating man sees a boy eating a lemon, he will salivate profusely. A timid person when he sees two men in brawl, trembles with fear. When an adolescent girl hears the voice of a boy of the same age group, she feels a peculiar flutter in her heart. The same applies to boys. In these instances the mind comes into 'contact' with a lemon, etc., and thus salivation, trembling, etc., occur. This form of contact is the nature of *phassa*.

*Phassa* comes into contact with those objects that have to do with wholesome states and also with those that have to do with unwholesome states, and so, it is a common associate with both good and bad states of mind, like salt that makes both good and bad dishes salty. Other *cetasikas*, such as *vedanā*, which will be dealt with later, are also common to both good and evil minds.

#### Note

*Phassa-cetasika* is also present in *Vipāka-cittas* (Resultant Types of Consciousness) and *Kiriya-cittas* (Functional Types of Consciousness) which are neither good or bad.

# 2 VEDANĀ (FEELING)

The next *cetasika* is *vedanā* which means feeling. The six kinds of objects such as  $r\bar{u}p\bar{a}rammana$  (sight) have already been mentioned in the section on *citta* (consciousness). Each of these same six objects can be subdivided into *iţţhārammana* (desirable object), *aniţţhārammana* (undesirable object) and *iţţhamajjhattārammana* (moderately desirable object). Sense objects that are desired or sought after by people are termed *iţţhārammana*. [*iţţhā* = desired and liked + *arammana* = object] Beautiful appearance, sweet sound, enticing smell, relishing taste, sensual touch, good names, excellent buildings are all *iţţhārammanas*.

An object that is not desired, liked or sought after by most people is classified as anițthārammaṇa. [anițthā = undesired + ārammaṇa = object] Ugly appearance, horrid sound, oppressive smell, insipid taste, unwelcome touch, bad names and squalid buildings are all anițthārammaṇas. An object which is not included in either good or bad objects — desirable or undesirable objects — is called *ițthāmajjhattārammaṇa*. An appearance which is neither beautiful nor ugly, for instance, is *ițthāmajjhattārammaṇa*.

Vedanā is of five kinds, namely:

i.	Sukha	=	pleasure
ii.	Dukkhā	=	suffering
iii.	Somanassa	=	mental well-being
iv.	Domanassa	=	mental suffering
v.	Upekkhā	=	neutral feeling

#### CETASIKAS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH GOOD AND BAD CITTAS (MIND)

There is a kind of good taste in the objects that are desirable. The vedanā that enjoys that good taste is called sukhavedanā (sukha = pleasant + vedanā = feeling). It is also called somanassa-vedanā because when people enjoy that good taste, they do so joyfully (somanassa = joyful + vedanā = feeling). Somanassa-vedanā becomes prominent while enjoying sensual pleasures such as rūpārammaṇa, saddārammaṇa, and so on. Somanassa-vedanā also becomes prominent on seeing objects of devotional reverence such as the Buddha, the Dhamma, etc.

There is a kind of bad taste in the objects that are undesirable. The vedanā that experience that bad taste is called dukkhā-vedanā (painful feeling — dukkhā = painful + vedanā = feeling). It is also called domanassa-vedanā (unpleasant feeling). The various characteristics of dukkhā-vedanā and domanassa-vedanā in association with dosa-cetasika, namely, soka (sorrow), parideva (anguish), dukkhā (suffering), domanassa (mental pain) and upāyāsa (anxiety) have already been mentioned in a previous chapter. Physical pleasure and suffering arising from bodily contact are termed sukha and dukkhā respectively. Pleasure and suffering of mind in connection with eye, ear, nose, tongue, and consciousness are termed somanassa and domanassa respectively.

In *ițțhāmajjhattārammaņa* there are tastes that are not evidently good or evidently bad. The *vedanā* that enjoys that taste is called *upekkhā-vedanā*, neutral feeling. Because enjoying or experiencing the taste of this *vedanā* is not evident, one may not be aware of it when one is enjoying or experiencing it. But while experiencing many objects when one is sitting, walking, going or coming, many *upekkhā-vedanās* that are not evidently experiencing the taste of the objects, are arising.

This vedanā (i.e., vedanā in general) experiences the taste of objects that have to do with wholesome states as well as those that have to do with unwholesome states. Since it can experience the taste of both good and bad objects, note that when people say, "He enjoys sensual pleasures," or "He enjoys the taste of the Dhamma," this vedanā is meant.

## 3 SAÑÑĀ (PERCEPTION, RECOGNITION)

Sañña is making marks or noting. This making marks is evident only in those who are unintelligent and not well-informed. When children are told, "This is your father, this is your mother," they store in their memory "Papa and Mama"; when children see an aircraft they note with sañña that this is an aircraft, those are wings, this is the fuselage, etc. When they visit a strange town they note everything that is strange to them. So, for everybody sañña functions in diverse ways.

Saññā affords two advantages: when a child comes to know a person as his father, he comes to know him as his father at that time. At later time too he remembers that person as his father. So saññā serves two purposes.

Saññā is different from paññā which recognises only what is correct. But saññā makes notes of what is wrong and what is right. Due to false saññā one will mistake a tree-stump for a ghost at night. This is wrong recognition. People who believe the wrong to be right, the immoral to be moral are misled by dițthi-cetasika as well as saññā-cetasika. Those who have very strong saññā regarding what is wrong are difficult to correct.

#### CETASIKAS ASSOCIATED WITH BOTH GOOD AND BAD CITTAS (MIND)

## The Wide Range of Saññā

Saññā that takes wrong to be right is of very wide range. It is not only dițthi (wrong view) and tanhā (lust) but also saññā that takes wrong to be right that causes long wandering in samsāra. For example, human beings rightly find faeces disgusting. Yet for maggots and worms faeces is good food. Another example is the vulture which relishes on decaying dead bodies.

Only Buddhas and *Arahants* see the actual, truthful nature of all phenomena. Only such individuals realise that all sensual pleasures are loathsome, and disgusting. The Buddha declares all sensual pleasures as vile and base, being the concern of common folk, indulged in by ordinary common worldlings, not pursued by the Noble Ones, and not tending to one's own interest. The Noble Ones positively denounced all forms of sensual pleasures.

Yet many people do not follow the teachings of the Buddha. Most people are hotly pursuing various versions of sensual pleasures. Due to the misconception of their *saññā*, they are prolonging their suffering in *saṁsāra*.

## Saññā Mistaken as Sati

Recalling one's virtuous deeds is due to *sati* (mindfulness), as well as to good *saññā*. But true mindfulness occurs only in the realm of *kusala* (good deeds). However there are also false *saññā* and unreal *sati* too. Remembering one's first love for many years is *akusala* (unwholesome); it is not real *sati* (mindfulness). It is just the function of *saññā* in the disguise of *sati*. Please refer back to the function of false *sati* as mentioned in the relevant chapter.

# 🍝 CETANĂ (VOLITION)

Cetanā is that mental factor (cetasika) which marshals the consciousness (citta) and other mental factors (cetasikas) that arise together with it.

A detailed explanation is a follows: when consciousness takes on some kind of object, *phassa* (contact) makes contact with the object; *vedanā* enjoys or experiences it; *saññā* makes a mark of it. Other mental factors such as *ekaggatā*, *jīvitindriya* and *manasikāra* which will be explained later, perform their respective functions and occur simultaneously with consciousness. When the mind takes on a certain object, good or whole-some factors such as *saddhā* and *sati*, or unwholesome factors such as *lobha* and *dosa* are also involved.

When consciousness with its concomitants (*cetasikas*) takes an object, not any *cetasika* must lag behind, nor must it fail to perform its function. All *cetasikas* along with consciousness must take the object thoroughly so that they all are as it were stuck to the object. The marshalling force which prompts the consciousness and the mental factors to be always engaged together on the object is none other than *cetanā* (volition).

Further explanation: Since no one mental state must not lag behind when consciousness with its concomitants (*cetasikas*) takes an object, take the *cetasikas* along with the consciousness that arise together as an association.

In this association, consciousness (*citta*) is the president, while *cetanā-cetasika* is the secretary. The secretary of an association is usually very busy working hard; he has to urge other members not to neglect their respective responsibilities while at the same time he discharges his own duty diligently for the good of the group, so also is *cetanā-cetasika*.

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Therefore, the secretary has twice the amount of responsibilities as do other members. *Cetanā* in the same way has to make effort to marshal the other states — consciousness and mental factors — so that they are as it were stuck to the object, while at the same time it has to perform its own function. It may also be compared to the commander of an army in the battlefield.

Therefore, if the *cetanā*, the will or the inner urge is feeble, the *citta* is also feeble, and so are other *cetasikas*. But when the *cetanā*, the will or the urge is forceful and eager, consciousness and all other *cetasikas* will follow suit. When consciousness and *cetasikas* are forceful and eager, the physical body will also become alert and active. Thus *cetanā* is the one that is supreme in the function of taking whatever object there is.

#### Cetanā is Kamma

Suppose a man was brutally attacked and killed by a mob. In this atrocious deed, the blows of most of the attackers were ineffective; only one member of the mob, prompted by a strong will, cruelly gave blow after blow which resulted in the victim's death. So only this man will be the culprit of the murder. In the same way, when *citta* and *cetasikas* as a group perform a wholesome deed such as giving ( $d\bar{a}na$ ) or observance of precepts ( $s\bar{s}la$ ), or an unwholesome deed such as killing ( $p\bar{a}n\bar{a}tip\bar{a}t\bar{a}$ ), *cetanā* among them is the most potent and the most energetic. Therefore, only the potential of *cetanā* remains in the mental continuum of a being. So, when we try to find out the one that is truly responsible for the act, our verdict will fall on the *cetanā* as such. That is why the Buddha, assigning the responsibility on *cetanā*, said: "*Cetanāhaṁ bhikkhave kammaṁ* 

 $vad\bar{a}mi = Bhikkhus$ , I declare *cetanā* to be *kamma*." Following this statement, note that when the *cetanā* is forceful, *kamma* is strong; when the *cetanā* is feeble, *kamma* is weak.

## S EKAGGATĂ (ONE-POINTEDNESS OF MIND)

*Ekaggatā* is the state of being calm or steady. It is also called *samādhi* (concentration). When consciousness takes objects, it is with the help of this *ekaggatā* called *samādhi* that it can take the objects repeatedly and for a long time. That is to say, *ekaggatā* is being still and concentrated on an object like the stillness of the flame of a candle lit in still air.

In the practice of meditation, when the mind can be fixed on one object constantly for a long time, people say, "Samādhi is attained", or "Samādhi has become strong." When someone achieves some degree of samādhi he attains calmness and steadiness in thought, word and deed. He becomes upright, free of erratic behaviour, in social dealings also. However, he can become too engrossed in or obsessed with one particular object.

## **5** JĪVITINDRIYA (VITAL FORCE)

All *cittas* and *cetasikas* are collectively classified as  $n\bar{a}ma$ . The life force or life principle of  $n\bar{a}ma$  is called  $j\bar{i}vitindriya$ . All *cittas* and *cetasikas* can function actively because of this life force or principle. If this  $j\bar{i}vitindriya$  is absent, mind cannot function at all. In short it is  $j\bar{i}vitindriya$  that prompts *cittas* and *cetasikas* to continue arising according to *kamma*. There also is a living part called  $r\bar{u}pa$ - $j\bar{i}vitindriya$  among the material elements. The vital force of mind and matter therefore are termed

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 $n\bar{a}ma$ - $j\bar{i}vitindriya$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$ - $j\bar{i}vitindriya$  respectively. These two in combination form the "life" of a being. Apart from these two, there is no such thing as eternal soul, or ego. There is no atta (self) at all.

# MANASIKĀRA (ATTENTION)

Giving attention is classified as *manasikāra*; its function is to call something to mind. But it does not mean the actual bringing of outside sense-objects into the mind. It is only because of the attentive power of *manasikāra* that one or the other object is constantly present in the mind. So figuratively speaking, it is said *manasikāra* brings something to mind.

# Seven Mental Factors Accompanying Each Arising of Consciousness

These seven types of *cetasikas* ranging from *phassa* to *manasikāra* are always present in all types of consciousness. Other factors, such as *saddhā* (faith), *sati* (mindfulness), *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (hatred), etc., appear with respect to appropriate objects in addition to the seven mental factors. *Vedanā-cetasika* is predominant while feeling a sensation. *Saññā-cetasika* is predominant while memorising something. When you do a good deed or a bad deed *cetanā* is predominant. When you concentrate on something *ekaggata* (*samādhi*) is predominant. The remaining three *cetasikas* — *phassa*, *jīvitindriya* and *manasikāra* — are never too prominent.

# **8** VITAKKA (THINKING OR INITIAL APPLICATION OF THE MIND ON THE OBJECT)

Vitakka is thinking or planning. The three evil vitakkas are:

a.	Kāma-vitakka	=	thinking about sensual pleasures
	Due a da vitalda		thinking with batrod

- **b.**  $By \bar{a} p \bar{a} da$ -vitakka = thinking with hatred
- **c.** *Vihimsā-vitakka* = thinking about harming or ill-treating others

The three good *vitakkas* are:

- a. Nekkhamma-vitakka = thinking about renunciation
- **b.** Abyāpāda-vitakka = thinking about loving-kindness
- c. Avihimsā-vitakka = thinking about compassion

## Kāma-vitakka and Nekkhamma-vitakka

When thinking is related to getting and enjoyment of sensual pleasures such as physical beauty, sweet sounds, etc., or when thinking about getting material wealth and how to get them, you have  $k\bar{a}ma$ -vitakka, associated with lobha (greed).

But if your thoughts are concerned with renunciation, to become a recluse or a *bhikkhu*, to give charity, to observe the *Uposatha* precepts, to meditate, etc., they belong to *nekkhamma -vitakka* because you are planning to escape from the clutch of greed.

## Byāpāda-vitakka and Abyāpāda-vitakka

Byāpāda means ill will to destroy others, or to kill others. Thoughts associated with dosa are called Byāpāda-vitakka. The direct opposite of ill will, dosa is loving-kindness, mettā.

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Thoughts of wishing others well and planning to help them constitute *Abyāpāda-vitakka*.

## Vihiṁsā-vitakka and Avihiṁsā-vitakka

*Vihimsā* means ill will, *dosa*, to persecute, to do harm or to torture others. Motivated by *dosa*, when one thinks of or plans to persecute or kill or cause harm by any means, it is called *Vihimsā-vitakka*. On the other hand, *avihimsā* means karuņā (compassion or pity) which is the opposite of *dosa*. Thinking of delivering others from suffering is *Avihimsā-vitakka*. One can clearly see that *vihimsā* is *akusala* and *avihimsā* is *kusala*.

Therefore we all should suppress the three immoral *vitakkas* and promote the three moral ones.

## VICÁRA (SUSTAINED APPLICATION OF THE MIND ON THE OBJECT)

*Vicāra* is sustained application of mind on the object. Although *vitakkas* makes the mind reach the object, it does not stay fixed for long on the object; but *vicāra* captures the object reached by dint of *vitakka*, does not let it go for some time and sustains the application on the object repeatedly as though it was rubbing it.

## 30 ADHIMOKKHA (DETERMINATION)

The *cetasika* which decides to do something is called *adhimokkha*. Deciding to do or not to do a deed or deciding between good and bad is the role of *adhimokkha*. This *cetasika* decides whether to do good deeds such as *dāna* (giving charity), observing *sīla* (the Five or Eight Precepts, etc.) or to do bad deeds such as killing.

Believing in fraud or falsehood perpetrated by someone is not the function of *saddhā-cetasika*; it is *adhimokkha* which decides wrongly to believe in such lies.

## 11 VÍRIYA (EFFORT)

 $V\bar{i}riya$  means effort or endeavour. An industrious person exerts effort decisively and boldly to realise his aims. Persons who lack  $v\bar{i}riya$  (effort) are the lazy, the timid; they have excuses in store. One who shuns work or is afraid to take responsibility and one who gives lame excuses such as being too early, too late, too cold, too hot, too hungry, too full, etc., to dodge work, are said to be the victims of *thina* (sloth), and *middha* (torpor). These two *akusala-cetasikas* are the very opposite of  $v\bar{i}riya$ .

A man of  $v\bar{v}riya$  never falter, even in the face of hardships, difficulties and problems. He is not hesitant to sacrifice even his life to realise his aim. For example, as Bodhisatta, Prince Janakā, when his ship wrecked, jumped overboard boldly to safety and swam with great perseverance, to be saved by a good *devī*. His shipmates all died while crying in fear and praying to their traditional deities. They were devoured by fishes and sharks but Prince Janakā swam unflinchingly for the seven days with effort and observed *Uposatha* precepts all the while. This is  $v\bar{v}riya$  endeavour and boldness in face of difficulties.

## **Health** Care

The benefit of  $v\bar{v}riya$  is evident in everyday life. Regular walking, jogging, proper eating habit, personal hygiene, nutrition and medication are good habits, which call for  $v\bar{v}riya$ . Only the persevering and not the lazy can practise health discipline regularly to their own benefit.

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## **Earning a Living**

In the field of trade and commerce, those with  $v\bar{v}riya$  will in every way outdo those without. The lazy will always lag behind in every aspect. See, for example, the  $v\bar{v}riya$  of foreign merchants and traders in Myanmar. They rise early in the morning, tidy their shops, dress smartly and open their shops punctually. In contrast, most Myanmar traders are still in bed at that time. They lazily get out of bed with sullen faces. It is no wonder that they often fail in business. How can lazy people really prosper?

## The Viriya of Myanmar Women

It is found that Myanmar women take leading roles in the business field. Shopkeepers are mostly female; in bazaars and shops Myanmar women play the active part. They can even support their children and unemployed male members of the family with their earnings. But for them Myanmar would be even more retarded in economy. It is due to the  $v\bar{v}riya$  of women that Myanmar could hold such a position in the world. We can surely say that if both men and women put in their efforts in equal scale, Myanmar would be more prosperous than ever.

## Vīriya in Education

Sadly enough, Myanmar males are as indolent in education as they are in business. In the examination results we find that fewer males come out with flying colours than females. In higher education, data reveal a relatively low percentage of success among males. Such poor performance in the academic field is mostly due to sloth and laziness among male students. Although parents and brothers and sisters support them to the

best of their capability, they live extravagantly and do not study with vigilance and effort to repay their kindness; lack of  $v\bar{v}riya$ is the main cause.

Although they enter colleges and universities about the age of twenty, they are found to have achieved little. In history, we may recall that King Tabin-shwe-thi, King Bayin-naung and Prince Min-ye-kyaw-swa, were already at the zenith of their careers at a much younger age; hence they are now enshrined in the hearts of the people. If so, why is it that today's young men are not the diligent and brave youths that they should have been? They should nurture courage and  $v\bar{v}riya$  and become heroes like their forefathers.

The academic level among the *Samgha* is as unsatisfactory as among lay people. In the past, monastic education produced scholar-monks, learned writers and competent Dhamma teachers, from amongst the *Samgha*. These learned and wise *bhikkhus* had always taken the role of teachers of the people. Some of them became advisers to the royalty. As of today, only if educational reforms are made in keeping with the times, will the *Samgha* be able to resume the prestigious role as teachers of the laity. At present no such attempts are made and so the high status of the *Samgha* has plunged drastically; monasteries cannot even recruit new students or helpers. Consequently, the *Sāsana* itself is bound to decline year by year. The causes of such decline needs no elaboration here.

To sum up, the short-comings we are facing in economic, social, health and educational fields are mainly due to lack of  $v\bar{v}riya$ .

It is needless to say that the Buddha attained Omniscience, Sabbaññuta-nana, and became the Enlightened One due to

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his unique  $v\bar{v}riya$ . Even after attainning Buddhahood, Gotama Buddha diligently taught his Dhamma for forty-five years. He always taught all sentient beings that to know the truth comes first and to practise along the true path comes second; both need  $v\bar{v}riya$ . He said:

"Vāyametheva puriso = True men should always be industrious; Na nibbindeyya paņdito = The wise should never be indolent."

## Let Us Reform Ourselves

Today, many so-called Buddhists in Myanmar are inclined to ignore the noble teaching of the Buddha on the benefit of  $v\bar{v}riya$ (perseverance). On the other hand, believers of other faiths are doing their work with great effort and reaping rich harvests to enjoy high standard of living. In fact they are following the advice and admonition of the Buddha as regards  $v\bar{v}riya$ . Therefore, they become men of great wealth and influence in conformity with the teachings of the Buddha. We Buddhists just look back to our past glories and fail to achieve anything substanstial; we take pride in our past achievements in history. We must also work diligently to become a developed nation.

It is now high time to change our attitudes towards life and become industrious and diligent. Remember the words of Buddha:

"Viriyavato kim nāma kammam na sijjhati? = To a person with vīriya, nothing is impossible."

Although we have stressed the significance of  $v\bar{v}riya$ , we should remind our readers that we mean only "effort with intelligence" and not "vain, useless effort."

## 12 PÎTI (JOYFUL SATISFACTION)

 $P\bar{t}i$  is the feeling of joy or satisfaction. It is not the actual experiencing of pleasure. It is just the mental factor of satisfaction, comparable to a thirsty man's state of mind when he hears or sees the availability of water. On seeing water he experiences  $p\bar{t}i$ . On actually drinking water he experiences sukha-vedanā (pleasure). Such is the nature of  $p\bar{t}i$ .

 $P\bar{t}ti$  can be experienced even to the extent of causing the flesh to creep in meeting and talking with the affectionate one, on listening to music or on hearing Dhamma discourses. Once upon a time there was a pregnant woman who was left in her house when all members of her family went to a pagoda festival. She felt a forceful urge to pay homage to the pagoda situated at the top of a hill. So she clasped her hands and concentrated her mind on the virtues of the Buddha. While doing so, a very powerful  $p\bar{t}ti$  overwhelmed her and her body floated in space to finally arrive at the pagoda platform.

 $P\bar{t}ti$  can also arise in the time of doing meritorious deeds, e.g., making offerings of blood, etc. In some cases  $p\bar{t}ti$  arises in seeing people enjoying food offered. In some cases  $p\bar{t}ti$  can be so vigorous as to become *somanassa* associated with  $tanh\bar{a}$ . In such cases, one's countenance beams and one's body becomes agile and nimble. It goes without saying that those with adequate  $v\bar{v}riya$  is assured of reaching their goals one day. Then they may review their achievements and experience  $p\bar{t}ti$ , enjoying the bliss of success.

We might recall that the Omniscient Buddha attained Enlightenment after conquering all *kilesas* while sitting on the throne of victory under the Bodhi Tree. He was so enthralled with  $p\bar{t}i$  that he stood looking at his victory seat for seven days

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without even winking an eye. Those who are engrossed in *Satipațțhāna* meditation, also experience  $p\bar{t}ti$  which encourages them to continue their practice for long periods of time. Such are the noble  $p\bar{t}ti$  of the virtuous and the zealous ones endowed with  $v\bar{t}riya$ .

## 13 CHANDA (WISH, WILL)

Sincere wish is a mental factor called *chanda*. It is unlike *lobha* because there is neither craving nor attainment involved. It is merely a wish to do or to acquire which occurs prominently in all living beings. When an infant has a desire to go to his mother, he will gesture his wish with outstretched arms. The wish to travel, to see, to eat, to touch, to understand, all fall into the category of *chanda*.

When one wishes to realise Nibbāna, to become a great disciple, a chief disciple, a Buddha, a king, a rich man, a *deva*, a *Brahma*, a *bhikkhu*, or a hermit, to give charity, to observe precepts, to do good deeds, etc., all such wishes belong to the realm of *chanda*. Of course there are feeble and vigorous degrees of *chanda*. Because the Bodhisatta's wish was very strong, he exerted diligent effort in fulfilling *Pāramīs* (Perfections) and finally attained Enlightenment and became the *Tathāgata*.

Those without an earnest wish to soar to great heights will not endeavour with due  $v\bar{v}riya$ . In order to instigate an eager wish, we must first think of the beneficial outcomes of a certain endeavour. Only when there is the incentive will there be the propelling force that incites the effort. This first step of *chanda* is also called *asa*. Then we begin to realise that a desire cannot be fulfilled by merely wishing or praying. This finally leads to the diligent effort which actually bears fruits.

Let us suppose you wish to travel to Yangon from Mandalay. This wish alone will take you nowhere. You must be able to pay the fare for the journey. So you must first acquire some money. Getting some money is effort,  $v\bar{i}riya$ . If you wish to realise Nibbāna, or to achieve Arahantship or to attain Enlightenment, you must diligently fulfil the required  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  with zeal and vigour to the necessary extent.

Those at the zenith of society today, whether they be lay or clergy, are not celestial beings endowed with power and ability, who have descended from heaven. They are people who try to have their *chanda* fulfilled through  $v\bar{v}riya$  (diligent effort). It is rare chance to be born a human being. So if you have no wish for betterment of yourself and remain indolent, indifferent, inefficient, you will not be much different from an animal. With wilful *chanda* you can find the key to prosperity in this life and also find the right path to Nibbāna. It in imperative that you must cultivate both good asa and *chanda* everyday so as to reap the highest rewards.

"Chandavato kim näma kammam na sijjhati? = For him who has earnest desire everything is possible."

" $\overline{Asa}$  phalavatī sukhā = A sincere wish if followed by zealous effort and good results can bring happiness."

## CONCLUSION

Here ends the account of thirteen *cetasikas* which are like salt that can be put into dishes tasty or insipid. These *cetasikas* associate with *kusala-cittas* as well as *akusala-cittas*. May all readers of this book cultivate *chanda* and *vīriya* and earnest *cetanā* to the highest degree on the *kusala* path. May I spend my time

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always performing wholesome deeds with sammāchanda and  $v\bar{i}riya$  in every future existence. May all my acquaintances be endowed with *cetanā* (goodwill), sammāchanda (moral desire) and  $v\bar{i}riya$  (diligent effort) at all times.

*Cetasikas* can associate with either good or bad *cittas* as the case may be. *Cetasikas* influence the mind. So let no person live in laziness, in forgetfulness. Instigate yourself by strong will till you attain Nibbāna. Every good *cetasika* can be developed in your mind if you foster *kusala-chanda*.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON CETASIKAS WHICH CAN ASSOCIATE WITH BOTH GOOD AND BAD CITTAS]

#### CHAPTER FIVE

## *CARITA:* NATURE, CHARACTER, HABITUAL CONDUCT

IN THE PREVIOUS FOUR CHAPTERS we have explained the nature of *citta* and *cetasikas*. The consciousness being good or bad is concerned not only with our present lives, but also with the traits and predisposition accumulated in the past existences. Those who had accumulated good traits are blessed with good mentalities in this present life. And it is difficult to tame the bad minds of those who had amassed bad traits in the past lives.

It is true that we can harness our bad predisposition by associating with the wise, but when we are parted from the wise and have our own way, we usually give in to the bad habits accumulated from the countless past existences. We lose our morality when not in the company of the virtuous just as molten lac hardens when it is away from heat. Even if you enclose the tail of a dog in a cylinder softening it with oil for twelve years, with a view to straightening it, you will find your efforts in vain once the cylinder is removed. The tail will curved as it was before.

Habits strongly and rigidity conform to one's characteristics. For example, even if you feed a dog well he will surely nibble on an old worn-out shoe once he gets hold of one. Or at the least he will sniff at the shoe. Likewise a person with bad habits will be mean and base in words and deeds. Even when

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the noble, the wise help him to a high status he will occasionally expose his bad *carita* or  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  (characteristics or traits). He cannot get rid of his rooted habits. Therefore it is important to examine one's own *carita* and of others associated with one. What kind of  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  or *carita* do you have?

## CARITA

*Carita* is a predominant nature in one's behavioural pattern. *Carita* is of six types:

- 1.  $R\bar{a}ga$ -carita = the greedy, the passionate
- **2.** Dosa-carita = the angry
- **3.** *Moha-carita* = the deluded
- **4.** Saddhā-carita = the faithful
- **5.** Buddhi-carita = the intelligent
- 6. Vitakka-carita = the ruminating, pondering nature

The first three are bad tendencies and the latter three, good. A person can have one or a mixture of two or three of these *caritas*.

## How to Judge a Person's Carita

One can generally identify a person's *carita* by watching attentively his gestures and movements, his style of living, the food he likes and his behavioural pattern. Persons with  $r\bar{a}ga$ -carita and those with *saddhā*-carita display common characteristics. The same is true for individuals with *dosa*-carita and those with *buddhi*-carita. And persons with *moha*-carita and those with *vitakka*-carita are similar in nature.

## Persons with Rāga-carita and Saddhā-carita

Both persons are usually gentle and polite. They are generally clean, neat and tidy. They prefer sweet, aromatic and tender food. Yet there are vast differences between these two characters: the one with  $r\bar{a}ga$ -carita, the lustful one, has attachment to five sensual pleasures; he is wily, cunning, proud and greedy. On the contrary, the one with *saddhā*-carita is more truthful and honest. He is generous in nature, and hence is liberal in charity. He is more or less pious, reveres the Three Jewels and enjoys listening to Dhamma discourses.

Both *rāga-carita* and *saddhā-carita* persons are civilised and are fond of luxury. But the former is greedy, stingy, lustful and cunning while the latter is liberal, generous, devoted, honest and pious.

## Persons with Dosa-carita and Buddhi-carita

Both types are crude and unbecoming in deportment. They are usually slipshod and untidy. Both types love sour, salty, bitter, or pungent food. They cannot stand unpleasant sights and sounds. They always react with abusive words, hatred, violence, and wrath. So the *dosa*-dominant person and the *buddhi*-dominant person have these common characteristics which become their second nature (until such times as when they begin to reform).

Yet they differ vastly in many respects. The *Dosa-carita* person always shows grudge, revenge, envy, jealousy, slander, pride and stubbornness. The *buddhi-carita* person is the opposite pole of the *dosa*-dominant. He is free from grudge, jealousy and is amenable to good advice. He does everything with mindfulness and wisdom. He is quite aware of the coming

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existences and so in fond of doing good deeds for fulfilment or *Pāramīs*.

A *Dosa*-dominant person is crude in manner, untidy and undisciplined, loves pungent food and reacts violently to ugly visual forms, and unpleasant sounds. A *buddhi*-dominant person is free from the evils of the *dosa-carita*. He is ready to learn from the wise and is generally mindful. He is farsighted and fond of virtuous deeds.

## Persons with Moha-carita and Vitakka-carita

A *moha*-based person is associated with ignorance, delusion and forgetfulness. He is usually perplexed and confused. He cannot distinguish between right and wrong, good and bad. He is incapable of making his own judgements, so follows the opinion of others in denouncing or praising someone. Since he is devoid of *sati* and *paññā* (wisdom) he wastes his time by being lazy, indolent and sceptic. He is the victim of sloth and torpor.

Like *moha-carita* person, the *vitakka-carita* person also lives in the way of uncertainty and scepticism. He is indolent and incapable of doing normal deeds. He flocks with those of the same feather. He indulges in useless babbles, speculations and imaginations, so he becomes a useless person, squandering his time in vain.

A moha-dominant person is generally idle, confused and deluded. He cannot differentiate vice from virtue and right from wrong. He lacks power of judgement and is void of sati and  $pa\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a$ . As for vitaka person he is incapable of doing moral deeds being very lazy. He talks away his precious time and does nothing substantial.

## The Origin of Carita

*Carita* distinguishes one person from another; people differ in outlook, attitude, habit and tendency. Why? In the previous existences, if his deeds were mostly influenced by greed, then *kamma* and *vipāka* cause him to be *rāga*-dominant. If *dosa* was significant in his deeds in the past lives, his tendency in the present existences would be one of *dosa-carita*. If ignorance surrounded his *kamma* in the past lives, the result now will be a *moha*-dominant person. If a person loved wisdom in the past and did meritorious deeds pertaining to *paññā*, he will now be reborn as a *buddhi-carita* person.

In the same fashion, deeds accompanied by  $saddh\bar{a}$  and vitakka will correspondingly result in  $saddh\bar{a}$ -carita and vitakka-carita. Thus we can now see that past kamma is the root cause of present carita. We ought, therefore, to perform meritorious deeds accompanied by  $saddh\bar{a}$  and  $pa\bar{n}n\bar{a}$  so as to acquire good caritas in our future existences.

## VÁSANÁ (Tendency, Continues Life After Life)

 $V\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  regarding things bad is the force of *kilesas* (mental defilements); but  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  regarding good things is called sammāchanda (wholesome wish). This  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  is inherent in the mind-continuum of all beings. Thus in your past *kamma* actions, if you had cultivated greed along with them, your  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  will now be greedy in nature. If you do not reform this bad tendency in this existences,  $r\bar{a}ga$ -carita or  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  will continue to dominate you in your future births as well. *Dosa*, *moha*, and *vitakka* characters also will continue to dominate likewise. If you are endowed with  $pa\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\bar{a}$ -carita now and if you cultivate wisdom as much as opportunity allows you, this tendency will adhere in you, and as a result of this tendency,

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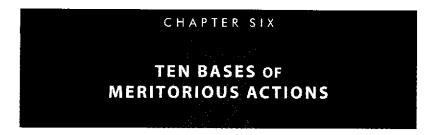
you will be reborn a person with  $pa \tilde{n} \tilde{n} a$  embodied in you in forthcoming existences.

The fact that those who aspire for Buddhahood attain Buddhahood with  $pa\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\bar{a}$  as predominant factor and those who aspire for discipleship attain the status of "the Best Person" (*etadagga*) in the field of  $pa\tilde{n}\tilde{n}\bar{a}$  as the Venerable Sāriputta, is due to this  $v\bar{a}san\bar{a}$  enduring through successive births. Therefore it is of paramount importance that we make effort for duccaritas to be abandoned in this very life and to develop a virtuous noble *carita*.

Those who have  $R\bar{a}ga$ -carita, should, as an antidote, meditate on every object as loathsome and disgusting. Then only will the tendency to lust gradually fade away and disappear totally. As for *dosa*-carita persons, they should practise *mettā*-bhāvanā (loving-kindness meditation) constantly; *mettā* is the cool element which can extinguish the flame of hatred. *Moha*-carita persons should approach the wise and ask questions so as to diminish *moha*. And they should practise  $\bar{a}n\bar{a}p\bar{a}na$ (inhalation-exhalation) meditation regularly. If they develop the habit of asking questions, their knowledge will increase and their tendency of *Moha* will disappear. Those who already possess good traits, *saddhā* and *paññā*, should try to develop these virtues further and further so that they are pleased and satisfied with these virtues.

I will now conclude my discussion on *carita*. May all acquire good *caritas* through my presentation. May my associates expel bad traits and nurture good ones from this existence and hereafter. May the priceless *paññā-carita* dwell in my mindcontinuum for ever and ever. And may *Saddhā-carita* enable me to devote only in the righteous.

#### [HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON CARITA]



IN THIS CHAPTER you should know in detail the Ten Evil Conducts (*duccaritas*), also known as unwholesome course of actions (*akusala-kammapatha*), the Ten Moral Conducts (*succaritas*), also known as wholesome course of actions (*kusala-kammapatha*), and the ten Bases of Meritorious Actions (*puñña-kiriya-vatthus*). Among them, the Evil Conducts and the Moral Conducts have been mentioned in many treatises as well as in "Ratana Gonyi" of mine. Therefore, I will not explain them here, but will explain in detail only the Ten Bases of Meritorious Actions.

## TEN BASES OF MERITORIOUS ACTIONS (TEN PUÑÑA-KIRIYA-VATTHUS)

*Puñña* means that which purifies the mind, which in fact means good deeds. *Kiriya* means that which ought to be done. *Vatthu* means that which is the basis for prosperity and welfare. Thus those actions that should definitely be done because they are the basis for prosperity and welfare (called *mangalas* or blessings) are called Bases of Meritorious Actions (*puññakiriya-vatthus*).

The Ten puñña-kiriya-vatthus are:

1.	Dāna	=	charity
2.	Sīla	=	morality
3.	Bhāvanā	=	meditation
4.	Appacāyana	=	giving due respect to others
5.	Veyyāvacca	=	rendering service and assistance
6.	Pattidāna	=	sharing merits
7.	Pattānumodana	=	rejoicing at and appreciation
8.	Dhamma-savana	=	listening to the Dhamma
9.	Dhamma-desanā	=	teaching the Dhamma to others
10.	Dițțhijukamma	=	right belief

## 🕷 DÁNA (CHARITY)

 $D\bar{a}na$  means giving or charity. There are two types of  $d\bar{a}na$ , namely:

- a. Cetanā-dāna
- **b.** Vatthu-dāna

Offerings of goods, robes, monasteries, etc., are classified as *vatthu* (material)  $d\bar{a}na$ , while the good will in these charitable acts is called *cetanā* (volition). It is this *cetanā* that produces beneficial results here and in the next existences, not the material things that are offered. This mental attitude which is projected onto the offerings produces the good results in future existences. If the offerings are good and noble, so also is the *cetanā*.

A Further Explanation: If, during an offering of alms-food to the *Samgha*, a donor has as his object of awareness the food he offers and the *Samgha* he is offering to, then a continuous stream of *cetanā* (volition) occurs incessantly in his mind-continuum.

That *cetanā* arises and disappears in very rapid succession, but does not disappear totally. The forces created by the *cetanās* just lie dormant to produce corresponding results later.

# Note How the forces of *kamma* remain dormant in the mind-body-continuum will be explained in the section on *kamma*.

Taking into consideration that more than one trillion units of consciousness can occur and disappear within the snap of fingers, one might imagine the magnitude of *cetanā* that occurred during an almsgiving rite which lasts, say, three hours.

## Offerings and Recipient Promote Keen Cetanā

Although offerings such as alms-food and recipients of offerings cannot follow the donor to the next life and bring benevolence, they certainly help to promote a keen *cetanā* in the donors. For example, offering specially prepared alms-food to the *Samgha* incites a vigorous *cetanā* whilst offering ordinary alms-food incites a somewhat feeble *cetanā*. Again, charity given to worthy recipients incite strong *cetanā* whereas charity given to nominal recipients incite a frail *cetanā*. In this way, offerings donated and the persons receiving the charity help promote a keen *cetanā* in the mind of the donors.

## The Quantity of Offerings

The respective efforts exerted to offer different amounts of offering may differ accordingly. For the zealous efforts in procuring a large quantity of offerings, there will arise a strong *cetanā*. Procuring only a small quantity of offerings will naturally call for less effort and the corresponding *cetanā* will be relatively less. In preparing for a large amount of offerings, the *pubba-cetanā* (volition before the moment of giving) will accordingly be immense. Therefore when the *cetanās* in *dāna* of large amount is superior. So *dānas* of large and small amount differ in effects because of the duration of *cetanā* in each case.

If the  $d\bar{a}na$  be grand and lavish so also is the *cetanā*. During the time of  $d\bar{a}na$ , the *muñca-cetanā* (volition at the moment of giving) will also be in proportion to the  $d\bar{a}na$ . After the charity has been made, *apara-cetanā* (volition after the moment of giving) will also be of equal scale whenever you think of this  $d\bar{a}na$  again and again. Such states of mind are of common occurrence.

## Lavish Dāna but Meagre Cetanā

Some donors offer alms-food, buildings, clothes, ritually or perfunctorily. If so, even though  $d\bar{a}na$  may be lavish and grand, their *cetanā* is no match to it; they do not feel appreciative joy because the good deed was done with little volition. Therefore, quantity or quality of offerings alone cannot determine the generosity of a donor. When King Dutthagamani Abhaya was on his death-bed, he did not feel much joy in his merit of building the great Mahāceti Pagoda, instead he felt great joy in

recalling his small merit of offering one meal to a monk in the forest. Due to this great *cetanā* he was reborn in the celestial abode of Tusitā *devas*. Therefore, keep in mind that *cetanā* only will determine your destiny, not the quantity or value of gifts you have offered. *Cetanā* is more important than the lavishness of your charity.

## **Charity is Analogous to Sowing Seeds**

Recipients are the fields, Donors are the farmers, Offerings are the seeds sown, Benefits in future are the fruits.

In the Peta Vatthu (Pāļi text) it is said, "The recipient of the charity is like the land; the donor, the farmer; the offerings, the seeds sown. The benefits accrued later throughout *samsāra* are the fruits that are borne from the plants". Let us elaborate:

- a. In agriculture, the type of soil whether good or bad, determines the yield. Similarly, the integrity and nobility of the recipient determine the nature of beneficial results.
- b. Just as the vitality of the seeds sown determines the growth and productivity of the plants, the purity of offerings, gifts, whether they are procured through right livelihood or not, and the quantity, determine the nature of beneficial results.
- c. Just as farmers will reap harvests in conformity with their skills in farming and efforts, so also donors will enjoy results depending on their level of intelligence, appreciative joy and their sincere effort in giving *dāna*.

- d. Farmers have to prepare to till and plough their fields properly, before sowing the seeds so as to ensure a good yield. Likewise donors must have pubba-cetanā (pre-charity goodwill) before giving dāna. Results will depend on the intensity of their pubba-cetanā.
- e. Farmers need to weed and water their fields; only then the plants will flourish. In the same way, donors need to recall their charity and feel satisfaction for the meritorious deed. This *apara-cetanā* (post-charity volition) of the donor determines the nature of beneficial results.
- f. If farmers, through folly, destroy their sprouts and seedlings they cannot enjoy the product of their labour. Similarly, if donors feel that they should not have done the almsgiving and regret for it afterwards, then they fail to enjoy good results due to their feeble *apara-cetanā*.
- **g.** Even though the land and the seeds are all in good condition, the sowing should be done in the right season, the right time so as to get a healthy crop. In the same way, one should give alms to the needy, at the suitable time and place. Such charity brings about the best results.

There are such valuable lessons and guidance regarding  $d\bar{a}na$  in the Peta Vatthu. Therefore, in giving charity, the correct choice of recipient, the appropriateness of the time and place are very important. The  $d\bar{a}na$  must be done with a blissful mind and cheerful volition. Moreover, one should not do  $d\bar{a}na$  with a view to getting worldly wealth because such a wish is associated with greed and craving. Your *cetanā* should be as pure as possible.

## The Recipient also Determines the Result

In the Peta Vatthu it is mentioned that recipients of  $d\bar{a}na$  are like fields where the seeds are sown. Farmlands, in general, are of three grades: the very fertile, the mediocre and the poor. Likewise, recipients are also of different grades. Just as farms free of weeds and grass are highly productive, so also if recipients are void of greed, hatred and ignorance, the donors enjoy benefits all the more. Just as farms will yield a plentiful harvest when they are rich in manure and fertilisers, so also good results will accrue to donors when the recipients are persons of virtue and wisdom.

## Samghika-dāna (Charity Meant for the Samgha)

The Pāli word Samghika-dāna means offering alms and other requisites to the Samgha or the Order of Disciples. Suppose you donate one kyat to an association; all members, rich or poor, are entitled to that one kyat. Similarly, if a bowl of alms-food or a set of robes is offered to the Samgha, then all members of the order are entitled to those offerings. You need not go around the world to give alms to the Samgha. An offer to any member of the Samgha in general will automatically amount to Samghika-dāna. All members are entitled to such offerings. They can share it between them.

## How to Project One's Goodwill

In offering Samghika-dāna, a donor's mind must be directed to the Samgha in general. Even though you utter "Samghassa demi = I offer it to the Samgha", if you have in mind a particular monk or a particular monastery, your charity cannot be Samghika-dāna. Offering almsfood to any monk on daily

alms-round, or to a certain monk designated by the Samgha can only be classified as true Samghika-dāna, only when the donor's mind is truly directed to the whole of the Samgha.

## Mental Attitude while Offering Alms-food

The virtuous devotee, endowed with great faith in the Buddha, wishing to promote long endurance of his teaching and emergence of succession of good, dutiful *Samgha* who would maintain the prosperity and purity of *Sāsana*, should support the *Samgha* organisation by offering regular alms-food to its members. But when the alms-food has been prepared ready for offering, the devotee must remove any attachment as, "This is my Sayadaw; this is the monk I am devoted to." Instead, he must incline his mind to the whole *Samgha* while making the offering uttering at the same time, "*Samghassa demi*". [*Samghassa demi* = I offer this to the *Samgha*]. I offer this to the *Samgha*. I offer this to the *Samgha*." When the *dāna* performance is made daily in such a manner, the offering becomes a true *Samghika-dāna*.

## The Invited Meal can Become a Samghika-dāna

Going to a nearby monastery, a donor should offer the invitation to the responsible head-monk saying, "Reverend Sir, I wish to make an offering of alms-food at my house tomorrow at 6 a.m. Be kind enough to arrange to send one monk (or two or three monks, as the case may be) to partake of the meal."

#### Note

One should not mention 'including yourself' or 'including the head-monk' in making the invitation.

And, while making preparation for the tomorrow's offering of meals, one's mind should be directed to the whole *Samgha*, not to any particular monk of a particular monastery, and repeating often "*Samghassa demi*."

When the monk arrives the next morning for meal, one must not feel let-down or disappointed if the recipient monk happens to be one of lower rank or junior status. One should remind yourself, "The offering is not made to him in particular, it is meant for the whole *Samgha*" and make the meal offering with genuine respect and due devotion.

If the monk who comes to receive the offering should be the head monk himself, the devotee should not feel exultant either; he should remind himself that the offering is being made not to the head monk, but to the whole *Samgha* of which he is a member. "Thus, when one can incline one's mind towards whole *Samgha*, the offering made to a monk appointed by the *Samgha* can be counted as *Samghika-dāna*, offering made to the whole *Samgha*."

## A Donor's Goodwill

Once upon a time an immoral monk who was disliked by most devotees and donors was assigned by the *Samgha*. But the donor was not disappointed; having his mind directed upon the *Samgha*, he respectfully offered food and other requisites to this bad monk. He treated this immoral monk as if he was Buddha himself, washing the feet of the monk as he arrived, seating him on a well scented seat under a canopy. Since his mind was directed onto the whole community, his charity qualifies as sublime *Samghika-dāna*, although the recipient was a bad *bhikkhu*.

Let us go further. Noticing the reverence he got from this donor, as mentioned above, the bad *bhikkhu* considered to have found for himself a devoted donor. The same evening, the bad monk wanted to do some repairs to his monastery, so he came to his donor to borrow a hoe. This time, the donor treated him with disrespect. He nudged the hoe with his foot and said rudely, "There!"

His neighbours asked him about the two different treatments he accorded to the monk. He replied that in the morning his reverence was directed to the Order of the *Samgha* and not to any monk in particular. As for his rude behaviour in the evening, he said, the bad monk, as an individual, deserved no homage or respect. The lesson is that when offering is made, you should project your mind onto the whole of *Samgha* so as to be able to count it as a *Samghika-dāna*.

## How Good Results Differ According to Dana

Even if you offer alms to one, two or more *bhikkhus*, if you select them in personal terms the *dāna* becomes *puggalika-dāna* (charity meant for individuals). If you do so, even though you offer alms to a thousand *bhikkhus*, you are doing only *puggalika-dāna*. Except *dāna* specially offered to Buddha and *Paccekabuddhas*, *Saṁghika-dāna* excels all other forms of *dāna*. When we talk of *Saṁghika-dāna*, the *Arahants* are also included. In the case of *puggalika-dāna*, *Arahants* may or may not be included. So we can safely deduce that *Saṁghika-dāna* amounts to offering alms to the holiest *bhikkhus* whereas *puggalika-dāna* needs careful selection of the recipient *bhikkhu*. It is quite logical to conclude that *Saṁghika-dāna* is much more powerful and much more beneficial than *puggalika-dāna*.

## **Offerings Directed to the Buddha**

During the time of Gotama Buddha devotees were privileged to offer alms to the Buddha in person. But today the Buddha is no more with us in person. So we have to learn from the books how to offer alms in devotion to the Buddha.

First you must prepare alms-food enough for one *bhikkhu* and place it in front of a statue of Buddha. If there happens to be no statue nearby, you can through reverence create a mental image of the Buddha and offer alms to that image. Then you must dedicate your *cetanā* to the Buddha in person.

After such offering, the alms-food may be given to a devotee who does voluntary service in keeping the pagoda precinct clean and tidy, whether he be lay or *bhikkhu*. A voluntary worker who keeps *Uposatha Sīla* (Eight Precepts) can eat the alms-food before doing any service if the noon time is drawing near.

At the time of great ceremonies charity, if one wishes to offer alms-food to the *Samgha* led by the Buddha, the same procedure should be adopted to make offering of alms-food to the Buddha.

In offering robes in devotion to the Buddha the same attitude should be maintained. Monks who give voluntary service to a pagoda are entitled to attire themselves in such robes. Care should be taken that flowers, incense or joss-sticks, bouquets and water offered at the pagoda should not become a mess in front of statues and images. Your *dāna* must be given with tidiness. Only then will you get good results in this life and hereafter. Only then will your future existences also be clean and flawless.

## How to Pay Homage from a Distance

Usually, most devotees pay homage and offer alms to the Buddha images in their own household because they cannot afford the time to visit pagodas and monasteries everyday. There have been arguments on whether this is a deed of merit or not. Since we have already learnt that the deciding factor is the *cetanā* (goodwill), we can be sure that great benefits will be realised. If your volition is projected onto the Buddha, it is decidedly *kusala-cetanā*, so there is no reason not to gain any merit.

One hundred and eight *kappas* or aeons (worlds) ago, the Atthadassi Buddha attained Enlightenment. One day a layman saw the Buddha and his *Arahant* disciples travelling through the air by supernormal power; he offered flowers and scents from a distance. Due to this single good deed, he was never reborn in the four woeful planes for thousands of years and became an *Arahant* in the time of our Gotama Buddha. He was then known as Desapujaka Thera.

## Pubba-Muñca-Apara-Cetană

All forms of charity call for three types of *cetanās*, namely:

- a. Pubba-cetanā (volition before the moment of giving)
- **b.** *Muñca-cetanā* (volition at the moment of giving)
- c. Apara-cetanā (volition after the moment of giving)

## a. Pubba-cetanā

The good volition which occurs while procuring and preparing for charity is *pubba-cetanā*. Your *cetanā* must be free from vain pride or selfishness such as, "I am the builder

of this pagoda; I am the donor of this monastery; I am the donor of offerings," etc. While you are preparing for the charity, you and members of your family must not indulge in quarrels and disagreements. You must not be hesitant in carrying on with the good deed once you have already decided. When you feel delighted and cheerful during your preparations throughout, you may then rest assured that pure and sincere *pubba-cetanā* will prevail.

## ь. Muñca-cetanā

Muñca means renouncing. Therefore, the volition which arises while one is renouncing or giving — in the act of donating food, the volition that arises when one is in the act of offering to the recipient, and in the act of donating by giving orders, the volition that arises at the moment one says "I donate" — is called *muñca-cetanā*. At the moment of this *muñca cetanā*, if one can prevent unwholesome states mentioned earlier from arising, or avoid attachment to the recipient, or give freely without expecting any return from the recipient, one can rest assured that one's volitions of renouncing have arisen with purity.

## c. Apara-cetanā

This third  $cetan\bar{a}$ , which occurs after the completion of the deed of the merit, is the bliss of accomplishment you enjoy for having done a virtuous act. You feel joyous for your accomplishment of the deed, recall it often and wish to repeat it soon. This is the burgeoning of your *aparacetanā*.

However, at a later time *apara-cetanā* can be contaminated if you feel dissatisfied at the loss of the property donated or if you feel disappointed with the abbot for whom you have donated a monastery. Then you might ponder "May be I should not have given that charity". If so, not only is your *apara-cetanā* spoiled but also you develop an evil attitude of dissatisfaction (*akusala*, *dosa*).

## A Warning

Building monasteries, constructing pagodas, etc., are  $d\bar{a}na$  of great magnitude. There is also  $d\bar{a}na$  of less magnitude when you offer alms or garments or when you give food, water, etc., to the needy. In giving charity of a great magnitude, you are liable to encounter interference from within yourself as well as from malicious elements.

Therefore, if you plan to perform  $d\bar{a}na$  of great magnitude you should not only plan for yourself but also seek good advice from friends and learned teachers. Only then will you get worthy recipients for your  $d\bar{a}na$ . Choice of recipient is not so important in doing  $d\bar{a}na$  of small magnitude; even feeding animals has its own merit. The crucial factor in doing  $d\bar{a}na$  is to have the right attitude. Try to perform *Samghika-dāna* whenever possible. Never be attached to the offerings you intend to donate. Let your mind be filled with complete renunciation of the material things that you have set aside for charity. This attitude is called *muttacāgī* (*mutta* means freely with detachment, and *cāgī* means one who has the habit of giving). So all donors should bear in mind not to be attached to the recipient; not to be attached to the offerings; not to pray or long for worldly luxury in the abode of humans and *devas*; but only to have the

noble desire to attain the supreme bliss of Nibbāna. This will make you the ideal donor.

## The Classification of Good Deeds (Kusala)

In the chapter on *cetasikas* (mental factors) we have come across *alobha* (non-attachment), *adosa* (non-hatred) and *amoha* (non-delusion). These are called hetus or roots. Like the roots of a tree which support the whole organism to be vigorous, these roots cause growth and development of the corresponding *cittas* and *cetasikas*. Therefore *kusala-citta* (good mind) can be classified into two types:

- a. Dvihetuka-kusala-citta, which is good mind associated with two roots alobha and adosa
- **b.** *Tihetuka-kusala-citta*, the good mind associated with all three roots *alobha*, *adosa* and *amoha*

## a. Kusala Consciousness with Two Roots (Dvihetuka-kusala-citta)

When a person fosters a good mind with *alobha* (nongreed) and *adosa* (non-hatred) his meritorious mind is *dvihetuka-kusala-citta*. Among the ten kinds of meritorious deeds *Sammāditthi* (right view) is the belief in and understanding of *kamma* and its results. This wisdom is also called *Kammassakatā-ñāṇa*.

When an infant or an ignorant person who does not know anything about *kamma* and its results gives away something in charity, he feels a certain joy for having done so. But this joy is not accompanied by *Kammassakatā-ñāṇa*, so there is no *amoha* in his *kusala-citta*. There only are

present two roots, alobha and adosa. Hence such citta is termed dvihetuka-kusala-citta.

Today, many Buddhists perform charities and alms giving customarily without proper knowledge about *kamma* and its results. Such generosity is *dvihetuka-kusala-citta*. When the learned do good deeds perfunctorily, their *kusala* falls into the same category. In a nutshell, all good deeds done without wisdom are classified as *dvihetuka-kusala*.

## b. Kusala Consciousness with Three Roots (Tihetuka-kusala-citta)

A good mind associated with the three roots alobha, adosa, and amoha is called tihetuka-kusala-citta. All good deeds done with the accompaniment of Kammassakatā-ñāņa (understanding of kamma and its results) fall into this category.

Today many educated devotees do good deeds for the sake of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the *Samgha* as well as for their parents and elders with good attitude. Since their minds are associated with clear comprehension of resulting benefits in *samsāra*, their deeds become *tihetuka-kusala*. If charity is done with *Vipassanā* thought: "These material things are really material groups ( $r\bar{u}pa$ -kalapas). And they are impermanent (*anicca*), unsatisfactory (*dukkhā*) and non-soul (*anatta*)," it is needless to say that such a mentality is decidedly *tihetuka-kusala-citta* at its best. It is therefore imperative that elders and parents should teach their young about *kamma* and its results, as well as the basic understanding of *anicca*, *dukkhā* and *anatta* nature before doing meritorious deeds and before sharing the merits gained.

## Superior and Inferior Kusala

In Pāļi *ukkattha* means superior while *omaka* means inferior. With both *dvihetuka* and *tihetuka-kusala-cittas*, if they are surrounded by wholesome states at the moment of arising of *pubba-cetanā* or of *apara-cetanā*, the deed is classified as *ukattha-kusala* (superior good deed). If they are surrounded by unwholesome states, the deed is classified as *omaka-kusala* (inferior good deed).

When we say surrounded by wholesome or unwholesome states, we mean only those states that are directly related to the good deed done. If those states are not connected with the good deed done, we cannot say there is accompaniment of either *kusala* or *akusala*. Let us suppose a devotee just before he gives a great *dāna* is furious with a debtor and sues him. This is, of course, *dosa-akusala*. But if his wrath does not affect him with respect to his *dāna* and he feels delighted after the meritorious deed, his *dosa-akusala* arising from his wrath does not adversely affect the quality of his *dāna-kusala*.

Summing up, we have this: *Tihetuka-ukkattha* means good deeds done with both *pubba-cetanā* and *apara-cetanā*. If one of these *cetanās* is missing it becomes *tihetuka-omaka-kusala*. If both *cetanās* are absent, the deed belongs all the more to the *tihetuka-omaka* type.

Similarly, dvihetuka-ukkattha and dvihetuka-omaka should be understood. We can have the same categories of pubba-, muñca- and apara-cetanās, of dvihetuka and tihetuka types and of ukkattha and omaka types in sīla (morality) and other meritorious deeds too.

- i. A meritorious deed accompanied by understanding of *kamma* and its results is *tihetuka-kusala*.
- ii. If such understanding is absent, it becomes *dvihetuka-kusala*.
- iii. If a good deed is preceded and succeeded by kusalacittas, it is ukkattha-kusala.
- iv. If akusala-citta arises before and after a good deed, it is omaka-kusala.

## Another Method of Classification (I)

Dāna may be classified into three levels:

- a. Hīna-dāna (inferior)
- b. Majjhima-dāna (medium)
- c. Paņīta-dāna (superior)

This classification is based on the offerings donated. If the offerings are inferior to what one consumes, it is  $h\bar{n}a$ - $d\bar{a}na$  (inferior charity). If one donates things that are of equal quality to what one uses, it is *majjhima*- $d\bar{a}na$  (medium charity). If one gives away offerings better than what one consumes, it is  $pa\bar{n}\bar{i}ta$ - $d\bar{a}na$  (superior charity).

In another way, dāna can be classified into three as dāsadāna, sahāya-dāna and sāmi-dāna. Hīna-dāna is known as dāsa-dāna, dāna that is of inferior class like a slave; Majjhimadāna is called sahāya-dāna, dāna of medium class like a friend; and paņīta-dāna is called sāmi-dāna, dāna of superior class like a lord.

## Another Method (II)

Feeble desire, effort and volition make *hīna-dāna*; mediocre desire, effort and volition make *majjhima-dāna*; vigorous will, industry and volition make *paņīta-dāna*.

## Another Method (III)

Charity done with the hope of getting praise such as "He is a donor of monasteries or pagodas" or popularity is  $H\bar{n}a$ - $d\bar{a}na$ . Charity performed with speculations of benefits in future existences throughout the *samsāra* is *majjhima*- $d\bar{a}na$ . Charity given without consideration for future benefits but with sincere goodwill in conformity with the custom of the virtuous and the wise is *paņīta*- $d\bar{a}na$ .

**Nate** Good deeds done without any hope for benefits is far nobler than those done with some hope for future rewards. Selfless, altruistic goodwill for the welfare of others belongs only to the noblest personages such as Bodhisattas.

## Another Method (IV)

Charity given with the hope of acquiring worldly luxury is  $h\bar{n}a$ - $d\bar{a}na$ ; charity given with the intention of escaping from  $sa\dot{m}s\bar{a}ra$  is majjhima- $d\bar{a}na$ . Great charities of Bodhisattas who give them as fulfilment of  $D\bar{a}na$   $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}$  in the hope of helping sentient beings to free themselves from  $sa\dot{m}s\bar{a}ra$  are listed as  $pan\bar{i}ta$ - $d\bar{a}na$ . Such are the varying degrees of good deeds dependent upon one's mental attitudes.

#### Note

In other good deeds such as *sila*, etc., also similar varying degrees of good deeds can be found.

## The Benefits of Dana

The benefits of  $d\bar{a}na$  need no elaboration. The good deed of feeding a small animal just once brings about (a) long life, (b) beauty, (c) prosperity (d) strength (e) wisdom for the next one hundred existences. When reborn in human or *deva* world, due to his  $d\bar{a}na$  in this life, he outshines other beings.

In the time of Kassapa Buddha there were two monks who were good friends. One of them was a generous donor while the other was not. Since they both observed *sīla* (precepts), they were reborn as humans and *devas* up to the time of Gotama Buddha. In each and every existence, the generous always excelled the other in status. In their final existences they were both reborn as humans in the court of King Kosala. The generous donor became a prince, and the other, the son of a minister. While the prince slept in a golden cradle under a regal white umbrella, the other slept in a wooden cradle. Although they both attained Nibbāna ultimately the benefits they enjoyed in each existence were quite different.

## Does Dāna Prolong Samsāra?

Some have wrong belief that  $d\bar{a}na$  prolongs  $sams\bar{a}ra$ , the cycle of rebirths. In the story of the two friends, we have seen that the one who gave charity was not late in attaining Nibbāna. Therefore it is illogical to assert that  $d\bar{a}na$  prolongs  $sams\bar{a}ra$ . In fact, the impurity of the mind of the donor is responsible for the round of rebirths. One's lustful greed to enjoy the luxuries of humans and *devas* for the  $d\bar{a}na$  given causes one to linger in the cycle of  $sams\bar{a}ra$ .

Some erroneously say that Buddha himself had to struggle longer in *samsāra* because he cherished *dāna* in every

existence. This is absolutely untrue. Due to  $D\bar{a}na \ P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}$  (Perfection of Charity) an infinite number of Buddhas have attained Supreme Enlightenment while we all are still swimming along the stream of deaths and rebirths. Can we attribute this to our  $d\bar{a}nas$  which far exceed those of the Buddhas? The Bodhisatta Vessantara who gave charity in an unprecedented magnitude attained Buddhahood after only two existences. Therefore it is quite obvious that  $d\bar{a}na$  is not the causes of long sufferings in samsāra.

## Two Types of Kusala (Wholesome Deeds)

A good deed done not with the hope of escape from samsāra but to enjoy the luxuries of humans and devas is known as vaṭṭanissita-kusala. A good deed done with a view to attaining Nibbāna is known as vivaṭṭanissita-kusala. Among these two kinds of kusala, whatever is vaṭṭanissita, whether dāna or sīla, will lengthen one's suffering in samsāra. On the other hand, all forms of vivaṭṭanissita-kusala will propel you to escape from samsāra and assist you to attain your noble desire which is attainment of Nibbāna.

#### How Dana Assists the Fulfilment of Perfections

Generous donors are usually endowed with wealth in their future lives so that they can lead an easy life. The wealthy (who are kind-hearted and who had done *vivattanissita-kusala* in the past life) can observe  $s\bar{s}la$  (precepts) and keep *Uposatha*  $S\bar{s}la$ . The poor and needy, having to struggle for a living, cannot observe precepts. In pursuing education too, the rich have the facilities. Let alone costly schools, even in monastic schools where education is free of charge, the children of the wealthy naturally receive more attention. Thus when one had  $d\bar{a}na$  in the past, education can be obtained with more ease.

A wealthy person can easily practise the virtue of patience when he faces insolence or insult because he can ignore them with his own will power and self-esteem. But a poor person, if he is insulted, is obsessed by the complex that poverty invites injustice or insult and so he reacts vigorously. Since a rich person generally enjoys respect from various sectors he usually shows loving-kindness and compassion to them. A poor man is usually deprived of love and respect from others so he fosters anger or vain pride instead of loving-kindness and compassion. Therefore *dāna* (charity) helps the fulfilment of other *Pāramīs* such as *khanti* (patience) and *mettā* (loving-kindness).

In this world it is difficult for the poor to keep promises. Here too, *dāna* helps one to be honest and to keep promises. Without *dāna*, it is very difficult to fulfil *Pāramīs*. That is why each and every Bodhisatta first fulfilled the perfection of *Dāna Pāramī*. *Dāna* comes first in the Ten Perfections. Our Buddha Gotama fulfilled the required *Pāramīs* starting with *dāna*. As the recluse Sumedha he fulfilled the *Dāna Pāramī* first. And King Vessantara, our Bodhisatta, fulfilled *Dāna Pāramī* as the final stage of all perfections.

#### Those Who Can Do Without Dāna

There is a class of people who do not need to perform deeds of charity. They are the great yogis who strive earnestly to escape from  $sams\bar{a}ra$  in the present existence. They are occupied full time in samatha and  $vipassan\bar{a}$  works. If they spend their time in the performance of  $d\bar{a}na$ , it will only be a waste of time and effort.  $D\bar{a}na$  is not necessary for them as they are fully intent on gaining liberation very soon. They must zealously practise meditation day and night.

Once a *bhikkhu* from Mandalay who was always eager to perform *dāna* came to practise meditation under the guidance of Mahā Gandhayon Sayadaw who was our Preceptor. One morning the Sayadaw saw the *bhikkhu* gathering flowers to offer to the Buddha. The Sayadaw admonished the *bhikkhu* saying, "While undertaking meditation practices, be intent only on your practice; you may offer flowers later on."

The Mahā Gandhayon Sayadaw himself was engaged day and night in the practice of meditation being fully resolved to liberate himself from *samsāra* in this very existence. Whether he achieved his noble aim or not, I am not in a position to know. The Mahā Gandhayon Sayadaw spent all his time meditation alone in his cave. Yet he did not forget to give *dāna*. When he came out of the cave where he had been practising in seclusion, he gave away the offerings in his possessions to other *bhikkhus*. Therefore, there is no need to practise *dāna* when one is engaged in meditation with a view to attainning Enlightenment in the present life. But when one is not engaged in that way, one should definitely do *dāna* as should all other persons.

# The Joy of Giving (Dāna)

Giving  $d\bar{a}na$  is indeed joyful. The generous and the charitable always feel compassion for the poor and needy. This is followed by *mettā* (loving-kindness) towards all beings. Then you cultivate *muditā* (sympathetic joy) to those who are already wealthy and prosperous. So your face beams like the full moon and your appearance suggests tranquility and auspice.

Recipients of charity, in return, will reciprocate lovingkindness and wish your happiness. The more prosperous the donors are, the greater *muditā* the recipients will develop for them. Thus the one  $d\bar{a}na$  leads to the flourishing of the *Brahmavihāras* (the Sublime States of Mind). In this way a sublime, profound  $d\bar{a}na$  paves the way to *mettā*, *karuņā* and *muditā*, and further on to *bhāvanā* (meditation).

# The Generous are the Wealthy

Really wealthy persons who are free from the worry of livelihood are few in number. The poor, destitute and needy are comparatively numerous. The poor are bound to be those who had no credit of *dāna* in their previous existences. And the wealthy are definitely generous donors in their past lives. Should these rich people be contented in being prosperous in this existence? Surely not. For their wealth and possessions cannot follow them to their next life. They will no more be wealthy once they pass away. Therefore the wealthy ought to leave certain portion of their property to their heirs and give away the remaining in charity to the needy. Only then will they be prosperous in the next lives up to the attainment of Nibbāna. The golden rule is that "Generous donor in previous life is the wealthy in this life; generous donor in this life will be the wealthy in the existences to come."

Wealth is but a temporary possession; wealth is for just one existence, one life. We should not regard our wealth as "ours". It should be "ours, for the welfare of the needy".

We should not hesitate to give away our wealth to those who really need it.

### A Rich Person is like a River, etc.

A virtuous rich person can be compared to a river, a tree or rain, as mentioned in Lokanīti. Although a river contains a large amount of water, it does not drink a drop. A river serves only for the good of others. People come to the river to wash, to bathe or to drink. Likewise trees do not consume the fruits they bear. Fruits are borne for other people. Rain falls not only into lakes and wells but also onto barren plains and deserts.

Similarly righteous rich people accumulate wealth, not just for their own use but also to help the needy. They spend their wealth for the welfare of the poor. When they practise dana, they should do it not only to prosperous Sayadaws who are like wells full of water but also to the poor who are like barren plains.

As has already been shown,  $d\bar{a}na$  (generosity) enhances the Sublime States of *mettā*, karunā and *muditā*.  $D\bar{a}na$  causes a person to have a cheerful beaming countenance. The generous are blessed with *kusala* in this existence, and will also be endowed with prosperity in future existences. We all should never neglect the virtue of  $d\bar{a}na$ , which is so powerful as to expedite sentient beings to Nibbāna.

Therefore, how joyous it would be if we, according to the teachings of the Buddha, observing the eight, ten or the

 $\bar{A}j\bar{v}atthamaka$  (eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth  $s\bar{l}as$ ), bathing and wearing clean clothes, developing the three Sublime States of *mettā*, *karuņā* and *muditā* and with the intention of attaining Nibbāna saying with steadfast mind, "Addhā imāya paṭipattiyā jarāmaraṇamhā parimuccissāmi = Surely by this practice of dāna I will get free from sufferings such as ageing, disease and death," could practise dāna with joyful mind to all whoever come to us no matter whether they are righteous or wicked? How can this dāna hold you long in this stream of samsāra? Will it not propel you to the attainment of Nibbāna expeditiously?

# We Cannot Do Without Dana

One must not assume that what is said covers all the benefit of  $d\bar{a}na$ . To enumerate all the benefits of  $d\bar{a}na$  would indeed require a separate treatise in itself. If a person discards  $d\bar{a}na$ according to the belief of some malicious quarters, sociable relations would cease and *mettā* (loving-kindness) will disappear. The rich will no more be charitable to the destitute. They will cultivate an attitude of disregard and say, "Oh, Let them die. Who cares?" Humanity without  $d\bar{a}na$  will in fact be very much uncivilised. And, of course, incivility of mind eventually leads to savagery in physical action.

The Bodhisatta attained Self-Enlightenment and became the Tathāgata after renouncing wealth, power and glory of the crown only with the help and support of numerous donors offering him alms-food, etc. He was then able to preach his noble Dhamma and establish the Holy Order of the *Samgha* to propagate his *Sāsana* with the support of wealthy devotees like Anāthapiņdika, Visākhā, King Bimbisāra, etc. If there had

been no such generous donors there never would have been the Buddha, let alone his  $S\bar{a}sana$ . Not only our Gotama Buddha, but also countless previous Buddhas would not have attained Omniscience if the world were void of  $d\bar{a}na$ . I would thus like to make an ardent wish: "Let there be no persons who denounce and ignore the benevolent deed of  $d\bar{a}na$ , now and forever."

It is not feasible to list completely the benefits you get by generosity, by giving charity. Had there been no *dāna*, there also would be no Buddhas to show us the way to Nibbāna. Bear in mind that the cream of the society the luxurious celestial beings, all of them are attributable to their charity; the poor and the destitute are those without generosity. Should you earnestly wish to escape from *samsāra*, resort to *dāna*.

# 🔰 SĪLA (MORALITY)

It is generally stated, "Morality is more virtuous than generosity". One might not be easily convinced, yet there is a deep significance underlying the statement. To comprehend this requires serious reasoning. In this world, to protect and safeguard others from woe and suffering is a noble deed. To enhance the welfare and prosperity of other is also another noble deed. *Dāna* helps others to be prosperous. *Sīla* (morality) protects others from woe and suffering.

Sila here means observance of Five Precepts and conforming to *Äjīvaţţhamaka Sīla* (Sila with Right Livelihood as the Eighth.) Observance of the Eight Precepts and Ten Precepts will be dealt with separately under a different light.

#### The Function of Dana

One is responsible for one's deeds. Let us suppose that a person is suffering from poverty due to his own *kamma*; giving assistance to this poor person amounts to *dāna*. *Bhikkhus* are not poor persons in a real sense, but they need four requisites for their sustenance; hence they are needy persons. Therefore offering alms and requisites to *bhikkhus* also amount to *dāna*.

Some *bhikkhus* or abbots receive plenty of offerings and are well sustained. Yet if you offer them what they still need, this also is helping the needy. Even if you offer them things which they do not need, this also means helping the needy, because the recipients usually give away the offerings to other needy *bhikkhus* and laity. Whether you help a few, or countless persons, *dāna* is noble, *dāna* is virtuous. Those who really understand the benefits of *dāna* will always find that *dāna* is a rightful deed.

# Abstinence from Killing (Pāņātipātā virati)

As for  $s\bar{\imath}la$  its function is protecting other living beings from suffering. The first of the Five Precepts is to refrain from killing all living beings. Let us imagine the dire consequences of breaching this first precept. Take into consideration the woe that befalls the victim. Imagine the number of marine animals, cattle, poultry, etc., that would be killed through non-observance of the First Precept of  $s\bar{\imath}la$ . Also try to visualise rampant homicide that would eventually lead to war, spreading bloodshed globally. It is a glaring fact that the First Precept should not be transgressed because this would cause catastrophe to one and every inhabitant of this earth.

By observing the precept of non-killing, you save the lives of one, two, three and other countless beings.  $S\bar{l}la$  ensures the safety of all beings and augments the flourishing of *mettā*, *karuņā* and *muditā* towards all living beings. Thus the world will become an auspicious abode where all sentient beings live happily ever after.

### Comparison

Now that you have seen the benevolence of  $d\bar{a}na$  and of the First Precept, you will be convinced that  $s\bar{s}la$  is more virtuous than  $d\bar{a}na$ . We can compare the magnitude of joy felt by a recipient of gifts and that of a man pardoned from death. The latter will surely be thousands of time far more jubilant than the former. In the same way, the joy of a starving man who was given food and the joy of a condemned man who was pardoned from capital punishment are vastly different. The former can in no way compare with the latter.

# Abstinence from Theft (Adinnādāna-virati)

People experience intense distress when their belongings are stolen or robbed. On a large scale the ruling monarch and the royal family together with the citizens of a country feel very much distressed when their land is invaded and conquered by others. The conquered country becomes poorer and poorer because the people of that country cannot use to full extent the natural resources of their own land. So robbing or stealing causes affliction and misery to the victims. If people refrain from stealing, this would be good riddance of such distress from this world. Therefore, *adinnādāna-virati*, abstinence from stealing, is a *sīla* (morality) which frees all human beings

from suffering and woe and creates physical as well as mental peace.

# Abstinence from Sexual Misconduct (Kāmesu-micchācāra-virati)

Ordinary wordlings (*puthujjana*) are usually very fond of sensual pleasures (*kāmaguņa*) especially the pleasure of touch or bodily pleasure. No sensible person would share, let alone give away, his source of sensual pleasure, i.e., his spouse. Every man is very much attached to his better half, and is never hesitant to defend her fiercely. He might be able to tolerate the loss of material property to a certain extent, but not the least the misdemeanour on his wife. Therefore to abstain from sexual misconduct means abstaining from causing pain and suffering to other people. Abstinence from adultery or sexual transgression will thus birng peace and calm to everyone living in this world.

# Abstinence from Lying (Musāvāda-virati)

Those who have had the experience of being cheated, swindled or told lies will suffer from some form of wrath, though somewhat subtle. The adverse effects of being cheated are obvious. Some liars are so well versed in their trade that they can even cheat the whole country. Today, there are many sectarian leaders who propagate their faith professing it to be the absolute truth. Therefore millions of people are led astray, finally encountering an infinite number of catastrophes. To abstain from lying, therefore, amounts to protecting people form suffering. Even among Buddhists there happen to be some bogus preachers who indulge in propagating false beliefs; and the uneducated, sadly enough, have great faith in such person and hold them in high esteem. This is food for thought.

#### Abstinence from Taking Intoxicants (Surāpāna-virati)

One who consumes some form of intoxicant will of course suffer from bad results in his next existences. But if he just drinks by himself and causes no harm to others, it is somewhat tolerable. Yet most drinkers drink alcoholic beverages and when they are drunk, they are no more hesitant to breach the other precepts. They are willing to quarrel, to kill, to steal, or to tell lies. Just as a ringleader will not commit any criminal offence himself, but make his gangsters do the evil deeds, so alcohol or intoxicants cause addicts to commit atrocities without restraint. They would no longer be reluctant to commit murder, rape, arson, theft, etc. Becoming a chronic alcoholic means following the path of abandonment and causing suffering to one's immediate family. Later this alcoholic causes misery to everybody in his community. Those who abstain from intoxicants will free the world from such misery and distress.

After understanding the benefits of observing the five precepts, we can carry on to study, in a similar manner, the blessings of  $samm\bar{a}$ - $\bar{a}j\bar{v}a$  (right livelihood). We have found out so far that the observance of Five Precepts will save the world from misery and anxiety. Now we will fully realise that  $s\bar{s}la$ (morality) is better than  $d\bar{a}na$  (generosity). In this view each and every one should be mindful to observe the Five Precepts. May all readers be able to observe the Five Precepts and propagate *mettā* (loving-kindness) and *karuņā* (compassion) to all sentient beings!

# Uposatha Sīla (Keeping Uposatha)

Uposatha precepts such as the noble conduct (Brahmacariya or abstinence from sex) and refraining from taking food after midday are not the *sīla* like the five precepts, etc., mentioned earlier that one keeps so that other persons do not get hurt; they are kept just to make one's mind noble.

To elaborate: The kind of *Uposatha Sīla* that one keeps seriously and not like the one people usually keep to get attention from the neighbours is called *Ariya Uposatha*.

# Note Different kinds of Uposatha and how they are to be kept have been explained in detail in Ratana Gon-yi.

These who observe *Ariya Uposatha* should, after taking the precepts, dwell practising meditation reflecting on the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the *Samgha*, or on the virtues of their own *dāna* and *sīla*. Consequently they will find that there is less and less *lobha*, *dosa*, *moha*, *māna* and other unwholesome states arising in them. Their minds become purer and nobler day by day. Thus it is clear that *Uposatha Sīla* is not mere *sīla* but also a companion of *bhāvanā*; it is also abstinence from the fundamental five precepts beginning with abstention from killing living beings. Therefore, it is clear that it is much better and nobler practice than the ordinary five precepts.

# BHÁVANÁ (MEDITATION)

*Bhāvanā* means development or cultivation of mind. It is a form of *manokamma* (work of the mind) which purifies your mind. When you earnestly wish for the welfare of all beings and emanate loving-kindness on them, it is practice of *mettā-bhāvanā*.

First you cultivate *mettā* in your mind and then try to develop it so that your whole self becomes suffused with *mettā*.

When *mettā* flourishes in your mind, you feel compassion for helpless and poor beings. Consequently you emanate compassionate thoughts to the destitute. This is called *karuņābhāvanā*. You now develop a strong urge to alleviate the sufferings of the poor and miserable. Since there flourish both loving-kindness and compassion in your heart, you begin to feel *muditā* (sympathetic joy) towards the rich. You feel genuine altruistic joy for them. This is *muditā-bhāvanā*. The three types of *bhāvanā* can be developed by every one with a virtuous mind even in everyday life.

# Buddhānussati Kammaṭṭhāna

With regard to *Buddhānussati Kammaţţhāna* (Recollection of Buddha's Virtues), you need to profoundly concentrate on the three attributes:

- a. Goodness of the past cause
- **b.** Goodness of the results
- c. Being beneficial to all beings

# a. Goodness of the Past Cause

The cause means the fulfilment of  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections) in countless past lives. He performed meritorious deeds and practised  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  with the greatest vigour. His noble deeds throughout the cycle of  $sams\bar{a}ra$  are not for himself, but for the deliverance of all living beings from the sufferings in  $sams\bar{a}ra$ . Let us, for example, recall the performance of  $D\bar{a}na$   $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}$  by King Vessantara, the Bodhisatta.

Most people give charity for becoming famous as a great donor. They even feel they are benefactors of the recipients who should be grateful to them and show their gratitude if possible. They hope for rebirths in luxurious abodes. They wish for attainment of Nibbāna only perfunctorily. As for King Vessantara, he asked his mother, just after he was born, to give him something to donate by presenting his open palms to the mother. As an infant he had no selfish purpose at all. He only had an ardent desire to give charity in conformity with his *vāsanā*.

Accordingly he gave away his jewellery and costumes to his friends. When he became king, he had many charity pavilions built and gave feasts daily. His daily donations amounted to hundreds of thousands of money. He enjoyed the bliss of watching people being well-fed and well-clothed. Here too, he had no selfish desire for fame or good rebirth. His only purpose was to help others. He believed that the duty of the rich was to look after the poor. His desire to save the destitute was really intense.

He gave away Paccaya, the Royal White Elephant, causing tumultuous protests from the citizens. But Vessantara was heedless of everything else but his wish to attain Omniscience, *Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*. One might argue that this aim is for his personal gain. But attainment of Omniscience meant more arduous work for him as he would have to travel thousands of miles under various conditions to teach his Dhamma. So to achieve *Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa* is to serve the suffering beings, not to achieve his personal gain.

In his final stage of fulfilling *Pāramīs* as King Vessantara, he gave away his son, his daughter, and his queen. This is

ample evidence of his selflessness and goodwill for all beings. Let us elaborate. Having a worthy wife and worthy children is the zenith of pleasure in the luxurious abodes of human and *devas*. Without a wife and children, even the Universal Monarch will not find happiness at all. But the Bodhisatta, King Vessantara, renounced the treasures of the heart, his beloved children and wife, and gave them away. This unparalleled charity was surely not for fame or wealth, but for the sake of Omniscience by which he could free living beings from suffering.

With such noble and selfless aim, the Bodhisatta sacrificed his own life for the sake of *sīla* and *khanti* throughout many world cycles. He had also saved the lives of others at the coast of his own to fulfil the various *Pāramīs*. These noble actions and perfections achieved in his past lives are the causes and conditions for becoming a Buddha in this world.

# **b.** Goodness of the Results

With such noble deeds and *Pāramīs* achieved, the results, by their own nature, are sure to be good and noble. Thus in the present existence, as a Buddha, he possessed the most elegant and graceful appearance, the highest wisdom, the greatest power, and the deepest Insight. One should dwell on these attributes of the Buddha, the result of his past meritorious deeds in detail, when one practises *Buddhānussati-kammaṭṭhāna*.

# c. Benefits Enjoyed by Sentient Beings

The noble deeds done and *Pāramīs* fulfilled by the Buddha brought him unique results and finally propelled him to attain *Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*. After he became the Buddha, he did not rest content on his supreme achievement. For forty-five years he preached the Noble Dhamma to all classes of people for their welfare and benefit. Even when he was about to enter *Mahāparinibbāna*, he admonished his disciples thus:

"Handa dāni bhikkhave amantayāmi vo, 'vayadhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādetha'."

"Behold now, bhikkhus, I exhort you, 'All conditioned things have the nature of decay and disintegration. Strive with earnestness and mindfulness'."

His teachings showed the way to escape from suffering and achieve the termination of *samsāra-vaṭṭa*. Thus one should meditate with profound devotion on the three great attributes in Buddha's life, namely; the good cause, the great results, the benefits accruing for sentient beings. Then you will find that you have developed complete faith in the Buddha; and you seek refuge in him saying, "*Buddho me saraṇam*, *aññam natthi* = Buddha is my refuge; there is no other refuge." Consequently your devotion and faith with full comprehension in the Buddha will fructify and flourish in your mind-continuum. This is a brief explanation on *Buddhānussati-bhāvanā*.

Thus the development of *mettā* or *Buddhānussati*, etc., in your mind-continuum is in general called *bhāvanā*. Such *bhāvanā* can be practised in daily life. You can start either with *mettā-bhāvanā* or *Buddhānussati-bhāvanā* as you think

fit. As for more serious and continuous practice of  $bh\bar{a}van\bar{a}$ , fuller details may be obtained from various books such as Visuddhimagga.

# A APPACĂYANA (PAYING RESPECTS)

Appacāyana means paying respects to those who excel you in age, morality, integrity, wisdom, virtue, etc. Paying respects to elderly persons such as your father, mother, uncle, aunt; offering your seat and making way for those worthy of respect; bowing your head and showing humility, clasping your palms in homage to *bhikkhus*; doffing your hat, saluting according to custom, etc., are all signs of respect. However, if you show respect unwillingly to a powerful person out of fear or with some selfish aim, this cannot be called *appacāyana*, because it is pretentious in nature. It only amounts to  $m\bar{a}y\bar{a}$  (trickery).

# **Food for Thought**

Bowing or curtseying is generally accepted as signs of reverence. In Myanmar some people put down whatever load they are carrying and prostrate on the road when they meet *bhikkhus*. Some kneel down on dusty roads in spite of their new attire. Some kneel down on the sidewalk or on the platform of a railway station to pay respects to monks and elderly persons. These actions if done with true sincerity, are not to be blamed. But in these days when people have to rush about in busy places, just a bow or a few humble words will suffice the need of *appacāyana*. Kneeling down and prostrating in worship on meeting a *bhikkhu* on the roads or in busy crowded places in the presence of alien people are not really necessary.

# VEYYĀVACCA (SERVICE)

Helping or giving service in the good deeds of other people is known as *veyyāvacca*. We should offer our services willingly so that the donors may feel at ease, free from worries and the charity be successfully accomplished. We should also help the sick, the infirm and the old. We should offer assistance to people carrying heavy loads, help to remove heavy burdens of our parents and elders. Thus, all forms of voluntary service given to others (provided the deeds are not evil) are listed as *veyyāvacca-kusala*.

If you have goodwill and true *cetanā* in giving voluntary service, benefits may be greater than those of the actual donor. For instance, in Buddha's time there was a governor named Pāyāsi, who was a heretic but became a believer of the Dhamma due to the teaching of the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa. The Pāyāsi performed charity and alms-giving regularly. But he did not do the good deed himself. Instead he delegated Uttara a young lad to offer alms-food to *bhikkhus*. Although Uttara was acting on behalf of the governor, he put all his heart and soul in the alms-giving. When both the governor and the servant died, the former was reborn in Cātumahārājika, the lowest of the six celestial abodes while the latter was reborn in Tāvatimsa, which is higher than Cātumahārājika.

# 💰 PATTIDÁNA (SHARING OF MERIT)

Sharing merits or good deeds with others is known as *pattidāna*. [*patti* = what you have gained + dāna = giving or sharing] A donor will no doubt enjoy the benefits of his dāna. The desire to share with others the merits gained is indeed magnanimous. We all, after doing a good deed, should proclaim, "All those

who can hear me, share my merits. May you all gain as much benefit as I do," and share the merits gained. This is *pattidāna*, which in itself is a separate good deed.

# *Caution* Some donors, just verbally say, "Share my merits" but have no sincere wish to do so. Such perfunctory sharing does not qualify *pattidāna*.

Once upon a time a donor, after taking a sum of money on loan, invited many people to his son's novitiation and gave a lavish feast. Contributions (from invitees) did not cover the expenses of the feast as he had hoped. After the ceremony came the time to share merits. At that time he was mentally calculating how much he would owe. Somebody beside him reminded him to share merits. Oppressed by the thought of a heavy debt, he uttered, "I'm dead broke," very loudly instead of saying, "Share my merits."

# Sharing Merit does not Lessen Your Due

When you have done a wholesome deed and share the merit gained, you might reason that your merit will lessen. We must remember that merits are gained in accord with your *cetanā*. When we give in charity with a true goodwill, we have already done a good deed, and for that we have already gained due merit. So when you share the merits gained with others you gain additional merit for your magnanimity. There is no reason your merits should be lessened.

The sharing of merit is like kindling oil lamps with a lighted lamp. The first oil lamp is of course lighted by striking a match. But this first lamp can be used to kindle many other lamps; the luminosity of the first lamp will in no way be dimished

regardless of how many more lamps are kindled. The combined brightness of all the lamps will be many times more radiant. Sharing merits gained from *sīla-kusala* and *bhāvanā-kusala* is also *pattidāna*.

# 🐲 PATTÂNUMODĀNA (REJOICING AT PATTIDĀNA)

Rejoicing when a donor shares his merits is known as *Pattānumodāna*. When someone shares the merits gained, you ought to appreciate it and proclaim "*Sādhu*" (Well done) thrice. Feeling glad for the good deeds done by others is laudable. It has the nature of *muditā* (sympathetic joy). But to achieve genuine *Pattānumodāna* merit is somewhat difficult. A customary and unwitting proclamation of "Well done" without sincere rejoicing is not *Pattānumodāna* but mere formality. And sometimes one may not really feel glad of meritorious deeds of others. Instead one may even cultivate envy and jealousy which amounts to *issā*.

# The Instant Benefit of Pattānumodāna

People usually give charity and alms in dedication to family members who have passed away. If the deceased who are reborn in woeful abodes receive the sharing of merit from their next life with joy, they will be instantly released from their woes. According to the Texts, if the sharing of merit is after making donation of alms-food, the departed one, on saying "Sādhu," will be instantly appeased from hunger; if the donation is of garments and robes, the deceased will become well-clothed upon saying, "Sādhu." It is of utmost importance that in giving alms in dedication to the deceased, the recipient should be worthy of alms. Once upon a time, the bereaved family members

invited a *dussīla-bhikkhu* (immoral monk) and offered alms in dedication to the departed. Even when merits were shared for three times, the deceased who was a *peta* by then, did not receive his due. So he yelled to his relatives, "The evil monk is robbing my share of merits". So the relatives had to repeat the charity to a virtuous monk. Only then did the *peta* receive his share of merits and was freed from his miserable existence.

# Net: See the Commentary on Dakkhina-vibhanga Sutta, Uparipannasa.

The above incident gives us a lesson. When we dedicate our charity to a departed friend or relative, we must first get rid of our anguish and grief. Then only should we offer food, robes, umbrellas, slippers, monasteries, etc., to the monks.

# Note Offering a monastery is for the peta to get a dwelling place.

For almsgiving, we ought to invite a monk who is most pure in *sīla*; or we should perform *Saṁghika-dāna* meant for the entire Order or *Saṁgha*. Prior to this *dāna*, we should invite the deceased to be present at the merit-sharing. (They will come if they can.) Then we should loudly and distinctly call the deceased by name and share the merits gained.

# Today's Ritual

Most people today, after their bereavement, do not care to choose good *bhikkhus*. Neither do they get rid of their anguish and sorrow. They offer alms or even cash to the monks at the cemetery as a routine duty, just to escape blame and get praise from others. And then they share the merits gained without

thinking deeply of the benefits for the deceased. It is far better to offer alms at home with a mind free of grief than to do so at the cemetery while being afflicted with lament and sorrow. But good deeds done and alms given at the cemetery will also produce merits if performed without grief and lamentation.

# Age The reader is referred to "The Future of the Sāsana" for further exposition on this matter.

# Who Gets the Merits Shared?

The deceased persons who have become *petas* (hungry ghost) can receive the benefits from *pattidāna* (sharing of merit) only when they are present in the vicinity. If they are reborn as humans, as animals or as *petas* in the remote jungles, they cannot receive the share of merits. However, other dead relatives who are now *petas* in the vicinity, can rejoice in these benedictions and can be reborn in other good planes of existence. Therefore, sharing of merits to the deceased is a meritorious deed, and should be kept in practice.

# 8 DHAMMA-SAVANA (LISTENING TO THE DHAMMA)

Dhamma-savana means listening to the Dhamma of the Enlightened One. The five benefits of Dhamma-savana are:

- a. Getting fresh knowledge
- b. Understanding known facts more clearly
- c. Resolving of scepticism and doubt
- d. Acquiring right belief and
- e. Clarity of mind through development of confidence and wisdom.

#### False Method of Listening to the Dhamma

Listening to the Dhamma with a view to getting the five benefits is true *Dhamma-savana*. Some attend Dhamma discourse because they are friendly with the preacher; some for the jokes and humorous anecdotes; some for the fear of accusation as being too lazy; some to assess the ability of the preacher. One can get no benefit from listening to the Dhamma with such ignoble intentions.

Once a Chinaman was crossing a river in a rowboat when a boatman warned him that the boat leaked a bit. The Chinaman thought that this meant the water from inside the boat leaked and oozed into the river; so there was no cause for worry. In a while, he noticed the seat of his pants becoming wet. He was alarmed and exclaimed. "This boat does not leak; it even lets in water!" The true aim of listening to the Dhamma is to let our evil thoughts to ooze out. We should be very careful lest we should let in more evil into our minds.

#### The Benefits of Reading

Today, there are many books which can give us wisdom and knowledge. In Myanmar, a Buddhist country, hundreds of Buddhist treatises appear on bookstands. By reading these books you get the same benefits as by listening to the Dhamma. Therefore reading such books is far more advantageous than listening to contemporary discourses. Even if you cannot read, you can ask someone to read aloud for you. This amounts to listening to the Dhamma.

#### :Vote

I would recommend Jinattha Pakāsanī, Buddhavaṁsa, Five-hundred and Fifty Jātakas, Saṁvega

# Vatthu Dīpanī and other treatises written by famous learned monks as reading material for your benefit.

# 9 DHAMMA-DESANĂ (PREACHING THE DHAMMA)

Dhamma-desanā means preaching the Dhamma. If done with sincerity and magnanimity, preaching the Dhamma excels all other forms of  $d\bar{a}na$ . The Buddha himself said, "Sabbadānam Dhammadānam jināti = The Gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts."

To really achieve true *Dhamma-desanā-kusala* (good deed of preaching the Dhamma), the preacher must not expect gifts, offerings, fame or false pride. If so, the greed (*lobha*) for such material gain contaminates and diminishes the merits gained from preaching. Then the preacher will be like the foolish man who exchanged a hundred-thousand-worth of sandalwood with a pitcher of stale vinegar.

As the foolish man traded a hundred-thousand worth of sandalwood with some stale vinegar, so the ignoble preacher teaches the priceless Dhamma in exchange for some petty material gain.

# **Qualification of a Preacher**

A qualified preacher is no ordinary orator. He must possess a clear and forceful voice; he must have ability to make others understand him clearly. Such a preacher is hard to find. Although there are one thousand cows in a ranch, only one of them will bear forth a flawless bull-calf. Likewise thousands of mothers fail to give birth to a great preacher. A great preacher is indeed a rarity.

### The Disadvantages of Improper Intonation

Qualified teachers should be aware of their virtuous *kamma* of their past lives; when reciting the noble Dhamma taught by the Buddha, the preacher must orate with a clear, manly voice. He must not wilfully attempt to make his voice pleasant by means of improper accent, stress, intonation or elocution.

The Buddha himself pointed out the disadvantages of improper manipulation of speech sound, making them sweet to resemble singing while preaching the Dhamma. They are:

- a. One becomes lustful of one's own voice;
- The audience find lustful pleasure in the preacher's voice;
- c. The preacher is blamed for singing like lay persons;
- **d.** The preacher loses concentration while exerting himself to produce sweet voice;
- e. The next generation of monks will emulate this indecent style.

Nowadays, these disadvantages can be experienced on many occasions. The younger monks are already following the wrong examples set by indecent preachers. The pious are seldom present at discourses conducted by such bogus preachers. Those who attend the lectures only perfunctorily pay attention to the discourses. People of educated class, though desirous of listening to the Dhamma, feel ashamed to be present at the lecture of such vulgar preachers.

It is imperative that preachers should have enough decency not to make melodies out of the priceless Dhamma. It is a shameful mode of oration.

# Simple Ways of Preaching

Dhamma preaching means not only the discourses given to a large audience in a lecture hall. Simple discussions on the Dhamma among two or three persons also is *Dhamma-desanā*, provided the preacher does not hope for any gifts or offerings. Giving admonition to devotees, young and old, teaching academic subjects, handicraft or technology of innocent nature, reading out the teachings of the Buddha, all qualify as *Dhamma-desanā*. *Bhikkhus* today should train themselves to be good preachers; in addition they should study public speaking, proper reading and writing.

# 10 DIȚȚHIJUKAMMA (RIGHTEOUS BELIEF)

Having righteous belief which is just, upright is called ditthijukamma. (ditthi = belief + ujukamma = uprightness). Belief is one's view of things based on one's intelligence. When the view is just or righteous, it is called *Sammāditthi*, (right understanding). If a belief is wrong, it is called *micchaditthi* (wrong understanding). Deeply consider the following:

- a. Good deeds and evil deeds,
- **b.** The good and bad results of such deeds,
- c. The present existence and the forthcoming ones due to one's good or evil deeds,
- d. The devas and Brahmas,
- Those who practise the noble way and attain *jhānas* and *abhiññās* or become *Arahants*.

If after profound consideration, you find that the above five are realities, that they really exist, then you possess Sammādițțhi (right belief). This is also known as dițțhijukamma

and kammassakatā-nana [kamma = action or deed; saka = one's own property; ta = being; nana = understanding; understanding that only the wholesome and unwholesome deeds one does are one's own property that follows one].

If you reject all or one of the above five regarding them as not realities, that they do not really exist, you then possess *micchadițțhi* (wrong belief). Due to the belief that there are no *kamma* and its results, people do not realise that animals are a kind of beings that are reborn as a result of *kamma*. That is why they are not hesitant to take the lives of other beings without compunction. Because people believe that there exist no this life and future lives that are the results of *kamma*, they tend to believe that the world with beings in it is created by one 'Powerful Being'. We have ample evidence of the life of Buddha with historical proof. Are there any such proof of the existence of a person called a 'Powerful Being'?

# **Being a Buddhist**

We have just said *dițțhijukamma* (righteous belief) is also Sammādițțhi (right view). Yet we cannot say that everyone who possesses Sammādițțhi is a Buddhist. Hindus also believe in kamma and its results. Yet they are not Buddhists. Only those who find refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma (His teachings) and the Samgha (His Holy Order) are true Buddhists. One must proclaim, "I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Samgha" either in Pāļi or in any other language. Only after taking refuge in the Three Gem can one call oneself a Buddhist. Those who do not fully comprehend the *Ti-saraņa-gamana* (taking Three Refuges), like children for instances, can be regarded as Buddhists if they devote themselves to the Three Gem following the tradition.

#### Note Refer to Ratana Gon-yi for further details.

#### How to Possess Ditthijukamma

Sammādiţţhi and kammassakatā-ñāņa are synonymous with diţţhijukamma. When you contemplate by yourself on kamma and its results, and the reality of past and future existences, you achieve diţţhijukamma. When you bear in mind while you are about to do dāna and sīla that virtuous deeds such as dāna and sīla bring good results in forthcoming existences, you develop diţţhijukamma. The same holds true when you are actually performing the good deeds. The benevolence of all forms of good deeds is greatly enhanced by the accompaniment of diţţhijukamma.

### The Forty Wholesome Deeds

These good deeds are meritorious deeds not only when you actually perform them, but also when you make others perform good deeds, when you explain the good consequences of good deeds to others and when you feel appreciative joy at other's meritorious deeds, they equally deserve to be called meritorious deeds. The ten *puñña-kiriya-vatthus* (ten wholesome deeds) we have already discussed multiplied by four factors, namely:

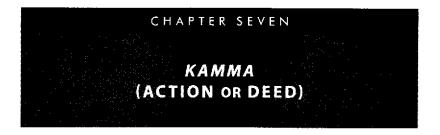
- a. actual performance,
- **b.** exhorting others,
- c. explaining the virtues, and
- **d.** feeling appreciative joy, we get the forty wholesome deeds known as the forty *puñña-kiriya-vatthus*.

## CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have explained in detail the ten wholesome deeds done with good *citta* (consciousness) and good *cetanā* (volition). For this *puñña* (act of merit), may all readers be able to develop their inclination to perform wholesome deeds more so than ever. May all my associates indulge joyfully in wholesome deeds with a view to achieve the supreme bliss of Nibbāna.

May I be able to stand firmly on the foundations of *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā* (charity, morality, and mental culture). May I be able to overcome the reluctance to do good deeds which lead the way to Nibbāna. May I be able to develop the five powers (*balas*), namely, *saddhā* (confidence), *vīriya* (effort), *samādhi* (concentration), *sati* (mindfulness) and *paññā* (wisdom) on my way to the final goal.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON TEN WHOLESOME DEEDS]



*KAMMA* MEANS DEED or action. Action is of three kinds, mental, verbal and physical action. Whatever you do with your limbs is physical action. Take, for instance, killing some being or giving charity, etc.

Verbal *kamma* means the words that you utter. Imperatives such as "Kill that animal" or "Offer alms to the monk", are verbal *kamma*. Others forms of exhortations, lying, preaching, all fall into this category. Mental *kamma* means the thoughts that occur in your mind, short of physical action and utterances by mouth. Evil thoughts such as "How I wish all his property were mine" are mental *kamma*. Pity, compassion, sympathy, appreciative joy, practising meditation are also different forms of mental *kamma*.

#### The One that is Responsible

The three forms of *kamma* do not occur automatically. For instance, in the act of killing the hand gets hold of the dagger. There is bound to be a prompting force for the dagger to strike the victim. The same prompting force makes you to utter certain words. While you are asleep there occurs no mental action even though many units of consciousness are arising. We now come to the conclusion, therefore, that there must be a force, a

potency, which is different from the basic mind; and this force is the one responsible for the three actions. Just as there is always a culpirt in every crimes, there is a potency or a force that impels three forms of actions.

### Cetanā is the One that is Responsible, Cetanā is Kamma

The one that prompts the three kamma actions is nothing but the mental concomitant,  $cetan\bar{a}$ -cetasika which occurs in the mind of beings. This cetanā is the busiest, the most active of all cetasikas. Because cetanā impels you to perform a certain deed, because cetanā is responsible for the completion of every kamma action, cetanā is commonly called kamma.

Netce The prominence of *cetanā* among *cittas* and *cetasikas* and the role of *cetanā* as the responsible one of all *kamma* actions can be found in the chapter on *Cetasika* where *cetanā* is explained in detail.

# **Consciousness that is Not Noticeable**

Through practical experience you find some *cittas* and *cetasikas* are prominent while some are not. Some *cittas* do not show themselves while you are asleep even though the mind continuum is in process. When you are wide awake too, as you unmindfully see, hear, smell or touch, the eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, etc., that arise are not clearly noticeable; as you ponder about this and that absent-mindedly, sense-objects come to the mind only unwittingly. It is due to the prompting of wholesome or unwholesome volition (*cetanā*), that physical or verbal actions take place; but when impulsive force of each *cetanā* accompanying the consciousness that arises is weak no action results. Such volitions without any force of impulsion,

#### KAMMA (ACTION OR DEED)

*javana*, to complete certain acts occur quite numerously in the course of a day.

#### Prominent Akusala Cetanā

When you have a strong will to kill someone, the *dosa-javana*citta and *cetanā* also become very strong and overwhelming. Your thoughts are occupied with plans to carry out the murder. Likewise if you are too overwhelmed by evil thoughts of sensual pleasures, you develop intense greed or lust in your mind and your body becomes aroused and active. At such times when actions, words and thoughts are all intent on evil deeds, the volition inside you is also very powerfully evil. These evil volitions are very dynamic impulses known as *akusala-javanacetanās* and are prominent and quite noticeable when observed carefully vis-a-vis the normal trend of thoughts.

#### Prominent Kusala Cetanā

Moral and virtuous volitions called *kusala-cetanās* are very active when you are practising *dāna*, keeping *Uposatha Sīla*, looking after elderly persons, discussing the Dhamma, practising meditating and abstaining from immoral actions. This *kusala-javana-cetanā* is very potent and dynamic, and so your actions, words and thoughts also become correspondingly active and dynamic.

# The Lingering Potency Effect of *Kamma* on the Continuum of Aggregates

These prominent akusala- or kusala-javana-cetanās (impulses) are collectively termed kamma. They come into being, and then disappear, but their might, influence and attributes do

not disappear. They remain as if embedded in the continuum of aggregates to produce effects presently or later. In the continuum of aggregates countless units of consciousness arise and pass away incessantly. Out of these the weak, inconspicuous *cittas* or *cetanās* will leave no impression at all while the strong, eminent *cetanās* leave their potential in the continuum. For example, children of ordinary common parents do not feel the lingering influences of their parents after their death, while children of notable parents do so. When notable, worthy parents die, their children remain perceptibly under the forceful influence of their departed parents.

### Kammic Force Continues in the Continuum of Aggregates

In the plant kingdom, we observe that seeds of fruit-bearing plants have genetic power to bear flowers and fruit of the same species. This fruit-bearing gene is present in every stage of the species, i.e., seedlings, sprouts, full-grown trees, fruits and seeds. Though we cannot describe this genetic power, we are definitely sure of its presence. Similarly, in the continuum of five aggregates,  $r\bar{u}pa$  and  $n\bar{a}ma$  come into being and disappear in constant succession up to the time of death consciousness. The kammic forces follow in hot pursuit all along till the time of death. Even after death the forces of *kamma* continue to have effect on the next life. These latent forces follow on to the next life beginning with the moment of conception, and so on to yet another existence.

#### :\ote

Here, mention of the forces of *kamma* actions strictly means the dynamic forces of past deeds and not anything material.

# THE DOER GETS THE DIRECT EFFECT

We have seen that beings are reborn in new existences one after another. Since the forces of past deeds done with avijjā (ignorance) and tanhā (lust) from the previous life, propel one into the next, the new being is none other than the one from the past life. One's cetanā (volition) in this life disappears soon after, but the effect, the influence of that cetana, follows one's continuum until the effect has been fully manifested. Thus the benevolent effects of one's good deeds follow one providing good protection just as a shadow follows the shape; and the evil effects of one's unwholesome acts follow one constantly just as the wheel of the cart follows the oxen, awaiting opportunity to produce retribution. Thus we must realise that evil effects of one's misdeeds will directly go to the doer himself and to no one else. We cannot say, "I am in this life so I will enjoy it; another being in the next existence will suffer." A person is responsible for his misdeeds, his evil actions directly. You must well understand that it is you, not another being, that suffer from the ill effects of misdeeds you have done in this life.

# The Same Kamma Effect

In the Jātakas we find two persons did certain deeds together and thus enjoy the same effects in their next existences. Those who had done charity together, observed precepts together, felt appreciative joy even when not doing wholesome deed together, as when the husband earns money and the wife does charity with that money — they all enjoy the good results together. The two persons, doing good deeds together, may develop attachment wishing to enjoy the good company and hear good words of each other — this is a wholesome wish, *sammā-chanda*; or the attachment may arise due to more

intimate feelings towards each other — this is an unwholesome wish, *taṇhā-chanda*. These two wishes may arise with the consciousness either before or after a joint meritorious deed. When such meritorious deeds give results, being tend to meet again in future existences, enjoying the same good results of their past deeds in fulfilment of *sammā-chanda* and *taṇhā-chanda*. This is commonly called "same *kamma* effects."

People enjoying the same *kamma* effects can be seen in the lives of Bodhisatta and their wives. Such couples had vowed to each other to be partners in the noble effort. For example, Bodhisatta (later Gotama the Buddha) and Yasodharā, Venerable Mahākassapa and Bhaddā, King Mahākappina and his queen Anojā, etc., had been partners in countless past lives in search of *Pāramīs* (Perfections). Together with them came the Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Moggallāna, Venerable Anurudha and Venerable Rāhula; and the Theris Khemā, Uppalavaṇṇā, Gotamī (Buddha's aunt and foster-mother) and the Great King Suddhodāna, who in their past existences, had been closely associated with them in doing good deeds.

#### Akusala Kamma Partners

On the other hand, there also are partners in doing evil deeds. When unwholesome deeds are done together they are reborn with evil results. Once upon a time a husband and wife were shipwrecked and stranded on an island. Being hungry they killed birds together and ate them. They suffered together in hell. And, in the time of Gotama Buddha they became Prince Bodhi (son of King Utena) and his consort respectively. As they had together killed and ate the birds in the past life, they were both sterile and thus had no children.

#### KAMMA (ACTION OR DEED)

If the wife or the husband had not agreed to killing of birds, either one or the other could be blessed with the power of procreation. Since both collaborated in the misdeed, they both suffered the fate of childlessness. The unwholesome deeds done together will produce the same evil effects in future existences. In the case of husband and wife, one should stop the other in doing evil, and vice versa. Otherwise, both will suffer together the results.

# The Benefits of Good Deeds Enjoyed Collectively

The benefits of good deeds enjoyed collectively can be seen in families, small communities or in societies, whose members had collectively performed good deeds in the past. For example, in Sri Lanka during the reign of King Bhātika, eaters of beef were fined. Those who could not afford the fines were made to serve as sweepers in the palace. Among them was a beautiful girl with whom the king fell in love. So she was given the name Sāmadevī and kept in the palace as the king's personal maid. Her relatives were pardoned from punishment and were well looked after by royal degree. This is an instance of collective enjoying of benefits, due to the good *kamma* results of one member.

#### Note

Some may assert here that members of the group must also have good kamma results of their own. But their past *kamma* had only very feeble effects, which could not have fructified without the good results of Sāmadevī's past *kamma*.

#### The Indirect Consequences of Akusala Kamma

Sometimes past unwholesome deeds may bring evil effects to other people indirectly. In the time of Kassapa Buddha, an *Arahant* came to stay at a monastery presided by an abbot. The wealthy donor of the monastery was devoted to the visiting *Arahant* and paid great respects but the abbot became very jealous. The donor invited both the abbot and the *Arahant* for morning meal and the abbot, out of sheer envy, went alone to the donor's house. He purposely struck the monastery bell with his finger tips so as not to awake the *Arahant*. He even told the donor that the guest was so fond of sleep that he could not wake him up.

# Note The sign of stinginess, *macchariya*, in his words and actions.

However, the donor saw into the abbot's thoughts and gave him a bowl of food for the *Arahant*. The abbot threw away the food on the roadside out of jealousy. He thought that if the guest received such good food, then he (the guest) would remain for ever at his monastery.

But the guest, being an *Arahant*, knew the abbots's mind and departed through the air (by his *abhiññā*) before he arrived. When the abbot did not find his guest he then felt remorse, anxiety and sorrow. He had done great injustice to the monk due to his extreme selfishness. As he suffered great remorse physically and mentally he soon passed away only to be reborn in hell.

After suffering in hell, he had five hundred rebirths as a demon, another five hundred as a dog; and in all these existences he never got enough to eat.

In the time of the Gotama the Buddha he was conceived in the womb of a poor woman in a fishing village. As his past evil was so strong, the whole village suffered from increasing poverty. Then the village suffered seven great fires and was penalised seven times by the king.

Finally the villagers found out by means of successive eliminative selection process, that it was the household of the unborn child who brought all the ill-luck and drove away the family. The mother looked after the boy for some years and then abandoned him, leaving for his use a begging bowl.

At the age of seven, while begging for food, he met the Venerable Sāriputta who ordained him sāmaņera. He became a monk in due course by the name Losaka Tissa. Then he practised *samatha* (concentration) and *vipassanā* (insight) diligently until he became an *Arahant* because of observance of  $s\bar{s}la$  as an abbot in his past life.

But the puissance of his past misdeed was so severe that he had to suffer even as an *Arahant*. He never got enough almsfood. Seeing his plight, his teacher the Venerable Sāriputta accompanied him in his alms rounds. But in his company the Venerable Sāriputta himself did not get alms-food so that he had to go out alone for alms-round again. After partaking of a meal the Venerable asked his donors to send a bowl of food to Losaka Tissa Thera. The servants who were sent with the bowl ate the food on the way. When the Venerable Sāriputta came to know that the food did not reach the monk, he accepted a bowl of 'four sweet things' (i.e., ghee, oil, honey and molasses mixed together) from King Kosala and fed the *Arahant* with the bowl held in his (Sāriputta's) hand lest the bowl should disappear. The monk partook of the mixture to his content and entered Parinibbāna then and there.

 $\Lambda mc$ In this episode one person's misdeed done during the time of Kassapa the Buddha affected the whole community when he was reborn in a fishing village. Even his teacher the Venerable Sāriputta did not get alms-food because he was accompanied by Losaka Tissa Thera, the doer of the unwholesome deed in the past. This is ample proof that the effects of misdeeds affect not only the doer but also indirectly those associated with him in the series of existences. Therefore everyone should think of their well-being in samsāra, and lest they too should suffer indirect ill effects, take care to distance themselves, at least in mind, if not in body, from evil individuals even if they happen to be ralatives. Only then will one be free from the evil aura of unwholesome deeds and become virtuous persons in the existences to come.

### **EFFECTS ON OTHERS**

There are cases in which some person unfortunately suffered the ill effects in lieu of the doer. In such cases the doer escaped the bad resultant effects due to some form of protection\*, but someone else very close to him such as his parents, teacher, children, servants, disciples or donors had to suffer in his place. People would then say "The poor creature became the victim of *kamma*." The actual doer, who is responsible for the evil, will also feel sorry for the poor victim though he escaped the ill effects of his own misdeed. It may be seen, therefore, he is no altogether free from some suffering.

From the point of view of astrology, if the doer of evil is under his lucky constellation, he would not suffer from the evil effects, which are diverted to some relative, servant or family member.

### Same Kamma, Different Results

In this world there are good virtuous persons as well as bad, evil ones. Let us suppose a good person and a bad one did the same petty evil deed. The good one will not suffer much because his good *kamma* will over-rule the single misdeed. But the bad person, since he has no good *kamma* to cover him, will be fully effected by the evil results.

For example, at night, a richman's son and an opium-addict prowled around to snatch some chicken. The rich man's son actually stole a hen and ran away but was caught by the owner. Seeing the rich man's son the owner let him go because he dared not accuse him as a thief; he even apologised to the lad. But he charged the opium-addict with theft and put him in jail.

If you put in one viss of salt into the Ayeyarwaddy river, the taste of water remains unchanged. In the same way, if you commit a petty evil deed while you have accumulated many good *kammas*, the small evil deed will cause no noticeable ill effect. But if you put one viss of salt into your water pot, the water will go salty. In the same way, if you have accumulated only a few *kusala* (merit), a corresponding amount of evil will nullify your good *kamma* results.

Kusala-kamma and akusala-kamma can counter-act each other. A small evil can in no way hinder a large quantity of good kusala kamma. But if you have only a small amount of kusala, a small evil render your good kamma null and void. The moral lesson for the righteous is to do as many good deeds as possible and accumulate as much kusala as one can.

# SAMPATTI: CONDITION FOR SUFFICIENCY, PROSPERITY VIPATTI: CONDITION FOR DEFICIENCY, MISFORTUNE

If conditions are sufficient and at hand, it is called *sampatti*. When conditions are deficient, it is called *vipatti*. Throughout *samsāra*, in the course of numerous existences, every sentient being has done many deeds, *kamma*, accumulating countless mental impulsions, *javana cittas*, which must produce effects in the future. They do not die out and perish without giving results, but wait till suitable conditions arise for their working out in some future life time. There are four conditions of sufficiency, *sampatti*, as well as four conditions of deficiency, *vipatti*, for all beings in *samsāra* (their cycles of existences). In *sampatti* conditions *kusala-kamma* has the opportunity to produce good results whereas in *vipatti* conditions *akusala-kamma* plays a leading role to produce bad effects.

The Four Sampatti Conditions:

1.	Gati-sampatti =	Being reborn in a good plane of existence,
2.	Upadhi-sampatti =	Having pleasant physical features,
3.	Kāla-sampatti =	Being born at a suitable time,
4.	Payoga-sampatti =	Having means or instruments,
		knowledge, diligence.

The Four Vipatti Conditions:

1.	Gati-vipatti	=	Being reborn in a woeful plane of existence,
2.	Upadhi-vipatti	=	Having unpleasant physical features,

- **3.** *Kāla-vipatti* = Being born at an unsuitable time,
- 4. Payoga-vipatti = Having no means or instruments, knowledge, diligence.

# (1) GATI-SAMPATTI AND GATI-VIPATTI

# a. Gati-sampatti

All higher planes of existence such as human world, the worlds of *devas* and the worlds of *Brahmas* are called *gatisampatti*. Being reborn in such abodes gives opportunity to their *kusala-kamma* to produce desirable results. The human plane of existence is not entirely free from suffering, and in the *deva* and *Brahma* worlds above, there is little hardship or suffering. These beings of good destination enjoy good living with pleasurable sense-objects. Such beings, being reborn in *gati sampatti* are protected from the effects of their past misdeeds. Their bad *kamma* of the past will not get much opportunity to produce its evil effects.

Although the human world is not free from suffering, it is still *gati-sampatti* because, compared with the four *apāyas* (woeful) planes, it is far more comfortable. The human world gives opportunity for *kusala-kamma* results to fructify, opportunity to avoid bad sense-objects and meet with pleasurable sense-objects.

# b. Gati-vipatti

*Gati-vipatti* means the four woeful planes of existence, i.e., hell, animal kingdom, the world of hungry ghosts and the plane of demons. Beings in hell and *petas* (miserable ghosts) suffer great pain and hunger all the time. Therefore they are constantly exposed to the bad effects of the evil *kamma*.

Their lives are always miserable with full opportunity for all past actions to bear unwholesome fruits. In the animal kingdom which is not as woeful as the above two abodes, beings suffer from hunger and thirst; they are constantly weather-beaten and live in constant fear of hunters and predators. These dukkhas show how beings are liable to suffer when opportunities arise for evil *kamma* to produce evil results. Small insects are crushed or trodden to death by human beings and vehicles every day. Although these beings had done *kusala-kammas* in their past lives, these *kammas* can in no way save them because they are in the lower woeful abodes, i.e., *gati-vipatti*, when opportunities are more favourable for their past misdeeds to come to fruition.

# 2 UPADHI-SAMPATTI AND UPADHI-VIPATTI

# a. Upadhi-sampatti

For beings reborn in *gati-sampatti* (in particular, the human world) it is important that they also have *upadhi-sampatti*, pleasant features or good personality. If one has *upadhi-sampatti*, even one is reborn in low class or poverty, one will receive help from others and achieve success in life. Good past *kammas* will get opportunity to produce results. A pleasant look is a great asset. The poor lass Sāmadevī, mentioned earlier, became the chief maid of a king, because of her *upadhi-sampatti*, just as Mrs. Simpson won the heart of King Edward VIII.

Let alone humans, some beings in *gati-vipatti* such as animals receive protection, food and shelter if they have good looks. Beautiful birds, lovely dogs, and colourful

fishes are kept as pets by rich people in their houses. Thus, having good looks and features, i.e., *upadhi-sampatti*, is so important and beneficial.

# b. Upadhi-vipatti

Ugly animals, deformed animals, etc., are subject to both *gati-vipatti* and *upadhi-vipatti*. There is no chance for their past good deeds to bear fruits in such conditions. Human beings, although in *gati-sampatti*, if they are ugly or deformed, cannot enjoy the effects of their *kusala-kamma*. Even the prosperous high society persons cannot win admiration of others if they are ugly. For instance, Princess Pabhāvatī, the beautiful, refused to see or speak to King Kusa, the ugly. *Upadhi-vipatti* paves the way for bad *kamma* to produce bad results. King Kusa the ugly had to work as a cook, as a potter, and as a mat-weaver in order to win the sympathy and love of the beautiful princess. If one partner of a couple is ugly, he or she will look like a servant, not a spouse. Such are the drawbacks of *upadhi-vipatti*.

# 🗱 KĀLA-SAMPATTI AND KĀLA-VIPATTI

# a. Kāla-sampatti

The reign of noble, wise rulers is called  $k\bar{a}la$ -sampatti. Under the leadership of wise regents who care for the social welfare of the people, promoting their prosperity, health and education, *kusala-kamma* results are opportune to take effect. Consequently the people enjoy a good life. They are free from worry and fear, and live in tranquillity. Such a period is  $k\bar{a}la$ -sampatti. In such times, past evil deeds which could result in poverty and famine cannot produce

immediate effects. All forms of *akusala* have no chance to take action during the time of *kāla-sampatti*.

# b. Kāla-vipatti

The rule of incompetent, wicked leaders is called  $k\bar{a}la$ vipatti. Times of war and countrywide disorders are also  $k\bar{a}la$ -vipatti. At such times, akusala-kamma is opportune to produce bad results. Consequently people suffer poverty and famine. Even those endowed with kusala-kamma cannot enjoy their good results at such bad times. People live in catastrophe; the sick die for lack of medical care. Such are the evils of kāla-vipatti.

# 4 PAYOGA-SAMPATTI AND PAYOGA-VIPATTI

# a. Payoga-sampatti

Payoga-sampatti means the combined effect of sati (mindfulness),  $v\bar{v}riya$  (vigilance) and  $n\bar{a}na$  (knowledge). Here knowledge means harmless knowledge as well as vitakka (good reasoning). Vigilance, effort, alertness, insight, wisdom, intelligence and mindfulness — all amount to payoga-sampatti. In the realm of devas and Brahmas, payoga-sampatti is not so prominent. But in this human world it is of paramount importance.

Human beings have no *akusala-kamma* so powerful as to bring immediate effect. The power of past deeds depend on whether there is *payoga-sampatti* or not to produce results and on the degree of *payoga-sampatti*.

In a nutshell, people should not rely only on past kusala-kamma for their well being. They must also rely

on the efforts exerted in this life. This *payoga-sampatti* channels past *kusala-kamma* to flow in the right direction. Of course some wholesome deeds done in the past produce good results at present, such as winning lottery or unearthing a pot of gold. But such events are very rare. In trade and commerce the effect of past *kusala kamma* accounts for only one fourth of the prosperity achieved; the remaining three fourths are due to *payoga-sampatti* in this life.

# Payoga-sampatti Can Stop Akusala Kamma

Akusala-kamma can be divided into two grades:

- 1. Powerful or major kamma;
- 2. Feeble or minor kamma.

Payoga-sampatti cannot stop the bad effects of akusalakamma of the first grade. It can only soften the blow to some extent. For example, King Ajātasattu killed his father. For this serious crime of patricide he was bound to suffer in Avīci Hell. His payoga-sampatti, however vigorous, cannot save his fate. Yet, due to his repentance and devotion to the Buddha, he was reborn in an Ussada Niraya (a lesser hell) and suffered less than his due. Thus even Garu akusalakamma (the greatest evil) can be mitigated by sufficient payoga-sampatti.

Therefore if your evil deeds are not so bad as those of Ajātasattu, you can lessen or stop the coming bad results. If you have done evil deeds such as abusing your teachers, showing disrespect to parents and elders, slandering virtuous persons, you can stop the coming evil consequences by mindfulness and sincere repentance. You can nullify the evil consequences by prostrating in apology before them

or, if they are dead, by doing the same at their graves. Your *payoga-sampatti* will ward off the impending evil results.

Similarly, feeble or minor bad *kamma* can be abrogated by greater good *kamma* here and now. Monks who have transgressed Vinaya Rules of the lesser kind can rectify their misdeeds by following repentance procedures outlined by the Buddha. Thus even the effects of some moderately evil *kamma* can be stopped by the *payoga-sampatti*.

# Payoga-sampatti Brings Prosperity

People who have no faith in the *Ti-ratana* (Three Jewels) also have accumulated merits because they surely had done good deeds in their past existences. Their knowhow, their perseverance and their diligence are praise-worthy. In addition to the welfare of the individual, they exert great effort to defend their country through science and high technology. No one can deny that these efforts bring about economic prosperity and social development (although some Buddhists severely criticise their endeavours as being *akusala*).

Such aliens who come to our country to seek wealth and prosperity are found to be very vigilant, hard working, skilful, intelligent and clever. Their know-how is far superior to ours. With foresight they select appropriate sites and places (*patirūpa-desa*) for their enterprises because they have wide knowledge and experience. With so much *payogasampatti*, their past *kusala-kamma* has very good opportunity to produce effects and accordingly they become rich in leaps and bounds. If we, Buddhist citizens of Myanmar, should follow the path of diligence, *sampatti*, effort, we would also achieve prosperity and progress as they do. We

all should seek knowledge and experience together with *payoga-sampatti* for our national development.

# Health Through Payoga-sampatti

Human beings born to this world are accompanied by *kusala-kamma* which brings good health, as well as by *akusala-kamma* which brings ill-health. Conforming to health disciplines, personal hygiene, regular exercise and sufficient rest and sleep, adequate medical care, all amount to *payoga-sampatti* which leads to good health. For those with such *payoga-sampatti*, their past *kusala-kamma* will also take effect and enhance their physical well-being.

Hence payoga-sampatti is the prime factor for kusalakamma to bear good fruits. Due to payoga-sampatti one gain knowledge, marry a worthy partner, get good friends and teachers and acquire wealth and status. It can also assist in the fulfilling of *Pāramīs* (Perfections) which pave the way to Nibbāna. In the constituents of payoga-sampatti, knowledge is the first requirement. Second comes mindfulness and third, vigilance, in whatever we do.

# ь. Payoga-vipatti

Torpor, laziness, lack of knowledge, forgetfulness, envy, jealously, quick temper and vain pride are all *payoga-vipatti*. They stand in the way of success and prosperity. In the continuum of beings, *akusala-kammas* that are grave enough to give results have already given results although not everybody will have such grave *kammas*. But smaller evils are always present in everyone, waiting to produce effects with the occurrence of *payoga-vipatti*.

For example, children of good families lead good lives by seeking education, right livelihood, observing the Five Precepts; these wholesome acts will prevent the evil results of the past to produce effects. If children are lazy, undisciplined, follow wrong livelihood, and breach Five precepts, they are developing *payoga-vipatti*. This in turn invites the past *akusala-kamma* to take effect.

To sum up, apart from very powerful *kusala* and *akusala-kamma*, other ordinary *kamma* whatsoever may or may not produce results, good or bad, depending on *payoga-sampatti* or *payoga-vipatti*. For people with *payoga-sampatti*, only *kusala-kamma* will prevail and *akusala-kamma* will have no chance to produce effects. On the other hand, for those with *payoga-vipatti*, good *kamma* results have no place; only the evil *akusala-kamma* will prevail. People whose lives are ruined by their *akusala-kamma* due to the prevalence of *payoga-vipatti* are not uncommon. They can be found in almost every community.

### **CAN WE REFORM OR NOT?**

Among the four *vipatti* conditions, some can be rectified and some cannot. There is nothing we can do about the place of existence we are born in. This means *gati-vipatti* cannot be rectified. But some *vipatti* conditions can be improved or rectified. For example, if you are born in poor, ignorant environments you can move to *pattirūpa-desa* (favourable places). We can see many foreigners moving into our country in search of wealth. So also people from upper Myanmar move southwards to lower Myanmar for the same purpose. Scholars are known to move to localities where better education is available. Yet you ought

to possess certain basic qualifications such as intelligence and diligence to win success in other place. Without these, moving to another place will be fruitless.

In the case of *upadhi-sampatti* or *upadhi-vipatti*, the bodily features acquired at birth cannot be changed. But you can improve your appearance by means of suitable and matching attire. The impact of stylish garments can be noticed in the difference between urbanites and country folk. Mothers can, in many ways, improve the bone structure and rectify minor deformities of their babies. Even some form of facial ugliness or dissymmetry of limbs can be improved by proper care and means, and the health of the babies can be well-maintained through proper feeding and dieting. The ignorance and carelessness of mothers cause slight deformities as well as ill health in their infants. The absense of *payoga-sampatti* makes room for *akusala-kamma* to take effect. *Payoga-sampatti* includes knowledge, intelligence and right effort, the combination of which can rectify certain defects.

In the case of  $k\bar{a}la$ -vipatti one person cannot do much to alter the conditions. Only the rulers are capable of doing so. Nevertheless, except in the time of global turmoil, one can move to places where there are capable leaders. Local leaders such as the village headman, community leaders and abbots can make conditions, improve in their localities to some extent. You will, by this time, realise that the three vipatti conditions, namely gati, upadhi and kāla, can be improved and rectified to a certain extent.

The easiest to rectify is *payoga*. If you are lazy you can reform yourself to be industrious. If you are forgetful, you can discipline yourself to be more mindful. If you are short-tem-

pered, you can practise patience and become an affectionate person. If you are vainly proud, you can admonish yourself not to be so. If you lack knowledge and education, you can learn from the wise. In a short time you will accumulate knowledge and wisdom. Those who try to reform themselves, to rectify their faults will benefit not only in the present life but also in the countless existences to come, i.e., in *samsāra*.

# Do Not Always Depend on Kamma

In this world there are four great religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam. Hinduism and Buddhism believe in *kamma* and its results. Christianity and Islam believe in the Creator of the universe. The belief in Creator of the universe will not be dealt with in detail. That this is wrong belief will be easily evident to the reader of this books. Those who believe that past *kamma* or deeds and their results solely determine the destiny of a being are accepting also wrong belief known as *pubbekatahetu-dițthi*. This is wrong belief because it professes that all good or bad effects experienced by all sentient beings are the sole results of good or bad deeds done in the past existences.

Therefore, Buddhists who believe that past kamma actions alone determine the present life are committed to *pubbekatahetu-dițthi*. Keeping in mind the four sampattis and the four *vipattis*, you can be positive that the results of good or bad past kamma are pursuing you all the time. But the effects of evil deeds can produce effects only when *vipatti* conditions prevail. And the effects of past good deeds come to you only when the *sampatti* conditions are ambient. This is right belief or right view.

Even if you have done bad deeds in the past, they will not produce bad effects if you diligently cultivate *payoga-sampatti*. If this life, you strive to fulfil *Pāramīs* (Perfections) such as *dāna*, *sīla*, etc., you will be reborn in a luxurious abode. If you keep on cultivating *payoga-sampatti* in every existence, you will forever enjoy *gati-sampatti*. Then your bad *kusala-kamma* will never get the chance to harm you until the attainment of Nibbāna. Therefore, do not worry about your past *kamma* deeds which you cannot see or recollect. Try to be righteously prosperous in this life; reform yourself and develop *payoga-sampatti* to the highest magnitude so that you will soar higher and higher in the cycle of rebirths.

## SIMILAR EFFECTS

Both *kusala-kamma* and *akusala-kamma* produce reciprocal and similar effects. Someone who had taken life will be killed in one of his next existences; or he will be infested with ailments.

Note See also Ratana Gon-yi for details.

### SIMILAR EFFECTS OF DANA

Generosity, alms giving, charity and the goodwill to help others are all *dāna*. The effect of *dāna* is such that the donor will be wealthy all the more in the next existence. But if you fail to have good *apara-cetanā*, that is, if you feel stingy or remorse after your charity, you will not be happy in your next life in spite of your wealth. You will spend your days in the manner of a destitute even though you are a rich person.

### The Story of a Rich Man

Before the time of Gotama Buddha, there lived a rich man, at whose door a *Paccekabuddha* arrived for alms-food. The rich man at first ordered his servants to offer alms-food to the *Paccekabuddha*. Afterwards he felt that it was just a waste of food to have offered alms-food; he failed to have good *aparacetanā* and was unhappy.

He was reborn as a rich man during the time of Gotama Buddha due to his charity of offering alms-food. But due to his poor *apara-cetanā* he never felt like living a wealthy life. He wore coarse cheap cloths and ate broken rice and vinegar only. He lived like a poor man; all his wealth was confiscated by the king after his death because he had no heirs.

Ponder deeply about this rich man. In these days also there are stingy persons who do not live enjoying their wealth. They do not have the heart to wear good clothes or eat good food. If they donate their money and property to the poor and the needy, it will justify their thrift. But sheer stinginess is evil. In their next existences, their stinginess will pursue them in the form of *vipāka*. They will end their life as a miserly rich man.

# The Best

Bear in mind that the rich should live according to their status and wealth. They should live comfortably, save a portion for inheritance and also give away in charity. Only then can they be said to live a worthy life bringing benefits for this life as well as the forthcoming ones. The Dipeyin Sayadaw admonished as follows: "Food eaten becomes excreta; see that property is left behind when one dies; plant the wishing-tree of *kusala-kamma*; while in the worthy abode of humans, eat what you earn; but save also a portion for inheritance and give away a portion in charity. This is the way of the virtuous."

# SIMILAR EFFECTS OF SILA

Observing the Five Precepts or Uposatha  $S\bar{l}a$  bring welfare to all beings.  $S\bar{l}a$  also enables one to lead a peaceful life free from anxiety and worries. The good effects of  $s\bar{l}a$  may not make one wealthy; but it sure brings peace of mind.

Dāna brings wealth in future lives — "Dānato bhogavā."

Sīla brings health of body and peace of mind — "Sīlato sukhitā."

# SIMILAR EFFECTS OF BHĀVANĀ

Those who wish to practise kammatthana-bhavana ought to do so in remote sylvan resorts, leading a solitary life. When you practise bhavana to attain jhanas, you will achieve jhanas only when you see most clearly the faults of sensual pleasures. When you practise to attain *Magga* and *Phala*, you must go further and develop loath and disgust on aggregates of rupa and nama(body and mind) throughout the whole samsara, the cycle of deaths and rebirths.

When you practise meditation and attain *jhānas*, you will be reborn in the world of *Brahmas* where you will not search for a female consort. You will live there a solitary life developing *mettā*, *karuņā* and *muditā*. You will live in a grand celestial mansion like a *yogi* with dignity and in serenity. But if you have already attained *Magga* and *Phala*, you will not be attached not only to the mansions, etc., but also to your own *nāma* and rūpa, since you are disgusted with and have turned away from

all forms of  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$ . So when you reach Nibbāna, only a particular element that has nothing to do with  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  will remain.

Therefore each types of wholesome deed (*dāna*, *sīla*, *bhāvanā*, etc.) produces corresponding results in equal measure. All forms of *kusala-kamma* bring beneficial results. Therefore, if you have the lofty aim of attaining Nibbāna, you must first get rid of all evil thoughts; then you must pave the noble way along *samsāra* by doing wholesome deeds as much as possible.

# CONCLUSION

Here ends the chapter on *kamma*, its power and its effects. For my good deed of writing this book, may all readers profess true belief, with maturity of knowledge on the effects of *kamma*. May I, together with my acquaintances acquire righteous belief in all future existences and strive for the attainment of Nibbāna.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON THE NATURE OF KAMMA]

# CHAPTER EIGHT

# MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTERS have dealt with classes of consciousness (types of mind) and the nature of deeds (*kamma*) regularly performed. Man is always occupied with these good and bad thoughts and these wholesome and unwholesome deeds. While thus being engaged, death taps him on the shoulder and so he has to leave behind his wealth, property and beloved ones and depart this life for good. Therefore we should know the importance of the time immediately preceding death and how we should face the coming of death.

### THE FOUR CAUSES OF DEATH

Death is due to four causes, namely:

- 1. Expiry of life-span
- 2. The cessation of kammic forces
- 3. Combination of the above two
- **4.** Untimely death due to an interrupting kammic force, *upacchedaka kamma*.

An apt analogy of four causes of death is the extinguishing of the flame of an oil lamp. The possible causes are:

- 1. Exhaustion of fuel
- 2. The burning up of the wick
- 3. Combination of (1) and (2),
- 4. the external cause such as a sudden gust of wind or intentional blowing out by someone.

# THE EXPIRY OF LIFE-SPAN

Different planes of existences have different life-span. In this human plane life-span varies according to the ambient *kappa* (world cycle). If the world system is on the increase gradually, the human life-span also increase to infinity, while in the decreasing world cycle human life-span goes as short as 10 years. When the Gotama Buddha appeared in this world, the average maximum age was said to be 100. Today it is about 75. Persons with ordinary *kamma* cannot exceed this maximum limit; only those born with specially powerful wholesome *kamma* may live beyond 75. Their longevity is attributable to good past *kamma* and powerful medicine such as *'rasayana'*.

During the time of Gotama Buddha, the Venerable Mahākassapa and Ānanda, and Visākhā, the donor of the monastery, lived up to the age of 120; the Venerable Bākula Mahāthera up to 160. Those persons had extraordinary noble past *kammas*. Common people with no such *kusala-kamma* will not live beyond their life-span of 75. Death of this type is called "the expiry of normal life-span", just as the exhaustion of oil extinguishes the flame of an oil lamp even though the wick is still there.

### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

# DEATH DUE TO CESSATION OF KAMMIC FORCES

The kammic forces which conduce one's life will support that life from the embryonic stage onwards until the day the forces cease to exist. There are also other kinds of *kamma* which enhance the principal life-supporting *kamma* and when these kammic forces are exhausted, a person dies even though his life-span has not expired. So if kammic forces cease at the age of 50, that person will die in spite of his life-span of 75. This is analogous to a flame dying out due to the wick burning out even though there still is oil in the lamp.

# **DEATH CAUSED BY BOTH FACTORS**

Some sentient beings die because of expiry of life-span and exhaustion of *kamma* forces, just like a flame dying out due to exhaustion of both oil and wick simultaneously. Therefore some may live up to 75, if they have the support of kammic forces up to that age. The above three types of death are called  $k\bar{a}la$ -maraṇa (timely death).

# M UNTIMELY DEATH

Upacchedaka death means untimely death or unnatural death. Some sentient beings are destined to go on living since their life-span and kammic forces permit them to do so. But if some evil deeds done in the past suddenly come to fruition, evil effects of *kamma* cause them to die an untimely death. This type of death is similar to the dying out of a flame by a gust of wind though wick and oil still remain or intentional blowing out by someone. Such a death is known as death due to *upacchedaka-kamma*, close interruption by powerful evil kammic effect.

The Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, in one of his previous existences, killed his mother. This great evil of his had the opportunity to come to fruition in the existence as Mahā Moggallāna; therefore he had to suffer the attack by five hundred robbers before he entered Parinibbāna. King Bimbisāra, in one of his previous lives, walked on the pagoda platform wearing shoes. For this bad kamma, he died suffering wound inflicted by his son on the sole of his feet. Sāmāvatī and her retinue, in one past life, had set fire to a bush of grass in which a Paccekabuddha was sitting absorbed in samāpatti (jhāna attainment). When the grass was burnt and the ashes fell down, they discovered that they had set fire to a Paccekabuddha. In order to cover up their wrong act (because they falsely thought that they had burnt the Paccekabuddha who, in fact, could not be burnt or harmed while in samāpatti), they piled up more wood on the Paccekabuddha, set fire to him and left, thinking, "Now he will burn." The Paccekabuddha got up and went away unharmed after he emerged from the samāpatti at the end of seven days. That evil kamma got the opportunity to give results and so they died an untimely death being burnt to death. These are instances in which strong akusala-kamma caused untimely deaths.

Some very grave evil *kamma* can produce immediate effect. Dūsī, the Māra, threw stones at the head of the chief disciple of Kassapa Buddha. Nanda, the demon, hit the newly shaved head of the Venerable Sāriputta. The Bodhisatta Khantivādī the Hermit was killed by the order of King Kalābu. All of them, Dūsī, Nanda and King Kalābu, due to their evil *kamma*, were swallowed by the earth in their present lives because their heinous acts produced immediate evil results. In like manner, those insult or humiliate parents, elders and superiors are

### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

bound to suffer from the evil effects of their akusala-kamma and die untimely deaths known as akāla-maraņa before completing their life-spans.

# **Cases of Untimely Death**

The mind-body continuum of every sentient being is accompanied by bad kammic forces of the past. These bad kammic forces by themselves cannot produce effects severe enough to kill that being. But when that miscreant, having no intelligence or knowledge of how to look after himself, is not mindful of his health and daily living, these kammic forces would get the opportunity to bring danger or death to the individual. If, in the past, one had starved, tortured, beaten, burnt, drowned or tormented others, then one is due to meet the same fate. Those who had tortured others in the past suffer from chronic diseases such as asthma, leprosy, debility, etc., and lived out their miserable, unhappy life-spans to die subsequently from those ailments. Negligence in one's living habits invites bad *kamma* of the past to take effect.

The wise men of the past had left many sayings: "Life is safeguarded by foresight and wisdom. Disaster is caused by just one moment; one's life is endangered by just one morsel of bad food. Foolishness to go to a place where tigers frequent is surely courting danger which cannot be averted by luck. Do not jump into fire trusting one's kamma which will not save one from burning."

What these sages of yore mean is — every one has an accumulation of past kammic forces; if they are not too strong, they cannot get opportunity to come to fruition by themselves. If one is vigilant, mindful and careful in one's way of living, they

lack means of causing ill effect. The *upaccheda* kammic forces can take effect only on the negligent and forgetful. Hence the exhortations by the wise to the succeeding generations and the serious reminder that death is just round the corner and will easily jump on those unwary, unmindful individuals who lack fore sight and precaution to look after themselves.

In conclusion among the four classes of death, the last category is common nowadays because most people live recklessly. Negligence in the way of living is the main cause of untimely deaths. Those who wish to live their full life-span must safeguard their lives with mindfulness and knowledge.

# **IMPORTANCE OF THE LAST MINUTE**

When a person is nearing death due to any one of the causes mentioned, it is important that he has good *javana-cittas* (wholesome impulses) about half an hour in advance. If these *kusala* thoughts prevail till the last breath, the being will reborn in happy abodes. If he has *akusala-javana-cittas* (unwholesome impulses) before death, he will surely be reborn in woeful abodes. Therefore, just as the finishing lap is important for a racing horse, so for a being to get a good rebirth, the final moments are of great importance. Whether a person gets good or bad thoughts depends on the kind object that is presented to his mind.

### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

# THE THREE TYPES OF OBJECTS (ARAMMANA)

Just before death, a being will see one of the three objects, namely:

- 1. Kamma
- 2. Kamma-Nimitta
- 3. Gati-Nimitta

Here kamma means goods or bad deeds or cetanās done by him in the past. Kamma-nimitta means the utensils or instruments used in the doing of the deeds good or evil. Gati-nimitta is the vision of the abode or place of existences he will be reborn in.

# HOW KAMMA AS OBJECT APPEARS

When the past kamma or deeds that were performed just a few seconds ago, or just half an hour or an hour, etc., ago, or many births ago, or many aeons ago, get the opportunity to give result as rebirth in the next life, they presently appear to the mind of dying person. Regarding the appearance of past kamma, if that kamma is dana or observance of past kamma, if that kamma is dana or observance of precepts itself as though the dana or observing of precepts are being done right then like in a dream. So there are two kinds of appearance of wholesome kamma. Among the unwholesome deeds, if the kamma is killing a being, the appearance is by kamma being remembered or by it presenting itself as though the killing were being done right at that time. Thus there are two kinds of appearance regarding the unwholesome kamma too. The appearance of other wholesome and unwholesome kammas should be understood in the same way.

# 2 HOW KAMMA-NIMITTA APPEARS

Those who had killed others will see the weapons they had used-swords, dagger, nets, arrows, sticks, etc. — as deathvision. A butcher is said to see prophetic images of a great heap of cattle bones. Those who had done immoral deeds such as stealing, adultery, etc., will see visions that correspond to their evil deeds.

Those who had done meritorious deeds such as building pagodas and monasteries will see visions of the pagodas and monasteries just before death. Or they may see the offerings that had donated in association with their meritorious deeds of construction of pagodas and monasteries, i.e., robes, almsbowls, flowers, oil lamps and incense. For those who had observed *sīla* or practised meditation will see vision of beads, clean clothes, meditation centres, sylvan resorts, etc. Those who had done other pious services will also see appropriate visions.

# 🗱 HOW GATI-NIMITTA APPEARS

At the proximate time of death, prophetic signs appear to indicate one's next life. If you are going to be reborn in the *deva* world, celestial nymphs, mansions and gardens, etc., will appear to you. If you are to be reborn a human being, the red colour of the walls of your future mother's womb will appear to you. If hell is your destiny, then you will see black dogs, hellfire, or hell wardens. Those who will become *petas* (hungry ghosts) will see big forests, mountains, water in the rivers and the coast of the ocean where they will dwell.

#### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

# Facial Expressions

The facial expression of a dying person indicates his next rebirth. If his face is clear and cheerful, he is sure to be reborn in higher abodes. A gloomy, sorrowful or stern face indicates rebirth in lower realms.

# XieteSome will smile in ecstasy of past sensual pleasures.Such smiles cannot be taken as good sign.

### Indication by Muttering

Sometimes a dying person mutter or murmurs indistinct words unconsciously. Once upon a time, an old man, the father of the Arahant Sona, who had been a hunter in his youth was ordained a monk in his old age. When he was about to die, he saw black dogs charging at him in his death-visions. He repeatedly cried, "O son! Drive away the dogs."

The Arahant Sona knew that his father was seeing bad signs and would be reborn in hell. Fetching flowers immediately and spreading the flowers on the terrace of the pagoda, he took his dying father along with the couch to the pagoda and said to him, "O old monk, be delightful. I have offered flowers on your behalf." The father came to himself and was offering the flowers concentrating on the Buddha when he again lost consciousness. In his death-visions he saw now celestial nymphs and so he muttered, "O son, give seats to them; your stepmothers are coming." While the son was thinking, "Now the signs of *deva* realm have appeared," the old monk died and was reborn in the *deva* realm.

### Another Kind of Gati-Nimitta

Some persons on their death-beds happen to see the actual scenes of their next rebirth. In the time of the Gotama Buddha, Revatī, wife of the rich man Nandiya, was a haughty shrew. She had no faith in Buddha and used to abuse *bhikkhus*; her husband was an ardent devotee. When he died he became a *deva*. When Revatī was about to die, two wardens from hell dragged her up to the celestial abode and showed her the luxury being enjoyed by Nandiya. Then they dragged her down to hell to punish her for her evil attitude.

During the Buddha's time, a pious devotee called Dhammika took refuge in the Three Jewels. He led a group of devotees and led a moral life. When his time came near, he listened to the sermons of *bhikkhus* on his death-bed, and saw six celestial chariots waiting overheard to take him to Deva Lokas. He also saw as well as heard the *devas* arguing as to who would take him on their chariot. He soon died and was conveyed in the Tusitā chariot to the heavenly abode where he became a *deva*.

But those who had been swallowed by the earth on account of serious evil deeds, directly felt the heat of Avīci Hell fire here and now. Thus we see now that *gati-nimitta* appears in various modes. In our times too some dying people hear music and get sweet aroma, also heard and smelt by those nearby. These *gatinimittas* together with *kamma* and *kamma-nimitta* generally appear as visions due to the power of the past *kamma* that gets opportunity to give results.

### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

# **Helping Good Visions to Appear**

When people suffering ill health are slowly dying a natural death, teachers, friends and relatives can help good objects to appear in the vision of the dying person. When they are sure that the dying person cannot recover, they should maintain maximum cleanliness in the room and surrounding area and offer scented flowers intending for the Buddha. At night the whole room should be well illuminated. They should tell the dying person to visualise the flowers and candles offered on his behalf and ask him to delight in the good deed. They should also recite Parittas (Suttas) at a time when his mind can still dwell on holy subjects. The patient should not feel disheartened and the people looking after him should show no grief. Recitations and reverential offerings should not be done only at the last moment before death, but should be performed in advance many days ahead. Only then will the dying man be suffused in thoughts of kusala action dedicated to the Buddha and the Dhamma, smelling the sweet scents of flowers, hearing the sounds of Dhamma, words of the Buddha for quite a few days.

Thus, as the dying moment draws near while the dying man is seeing the lights and flowers, smelling the sweet scents, hearing the Dhamma words, the death consciousness will arise before these objects disappear. In consequence of these last minute wholesome thoughts of *kusala* deeds, he is bound to be reborn in good abodes. Therefore teachers, friends and relatives have the responsibility to help good objects appear to a dying person while he is still capable of directing his mind on these objects. Keep in mind how the Venerable Sona helped his father's bad signs to disappear and good ones appear.

# HOW REBIRTH CONSCIOUSNESS APPEARS

Immediately after death consciousness of one life, rebirth consciousness arises in new life. They are mutually related. These two have no interval between them. A new life, a rebirth, occurs instantaneously. Someone who has just departed the human abode is instantly reborn in some plane of existence, whether it be hell or celestial. Right after death, rebirth consciousness appears and conduces to the formation of a new being, a new existence.

# **Two Wrong Views**

We must be very careful lest we should view death and rebirth in the light of two wrong beliefs:

- 1. Sassata-ditthi (wrong belief in soul)
- 2. Uccheda-dițțhi (wrong belief in annihilation)

The belief that there is a soul which dwells inside the body, and that this soul moves to a new body to become another being is *sassata-dițthi* [*sassata* = that the soul is eternal + dițthi = wrong view].

The belief that both  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  of the previous life (including what they thought to be soul) have no continuation in the new life, when a being dies all things in the previous life come to annihilation, and perhaps there may be a new being created by God, is *uccheda-dițthi* [*uccheda* = at the end of one life all  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  in that life come to annihilation; there is no continuation + dițthi = wrong view].

#### MIND PROCESS IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING DEATH

### **The Right View**

For beings to be reborn in a new existence, three things avijjā (ignorance), tanha (thirst) and kamma (deeds) — are of prime importance. When death is approaching, avijja conceals the faultiness of the aggregates of  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  in the next existence.  $Tanh\bar{a}$  now lusts for that existence. Even though bad and fearful signs of next life appear, it thinks that it will get a life free from them. Thus due to not seeing the faultiness (of the aggregates) because  $avijj\bar{a}$  has concealed it,  $tanh\bar{a}$  inclines towards and grasps the new life. In that new life, by the power of kamma,  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  that are called rebirth come to be initially established.

Thus, since the  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  at the moment of rebirth in a new existence arise as the result of  $avijj\bar{a}$ ,  $tanh\bar{a}$  and kamma in the previous existence, the Annihilation View (uccheda-dițțhi) that 'beings arise newly (due to the creation by God, etc.) without any connection with previous existence,' is not correct; nor is the Eternity View that 'the soul from the previous existence transmigrates into the new existence' correct. Let alone for the  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  in the previous existence to transmigrate into a new existence, even in one life the  $n\bar{a}ma$  and  $r\bar{u}pa$  that arise in one place, do not move to another place. They cease immediately after arising. What is called 'the eternal soul' is basically non-existent.

Therefore, we must be very careful not to be misled by the two wrong views. We must understand that in a new existence, conception, the formation of  $r\bar{u}pa$  and  $n\bar{a}ma$ , is the result of  $avijj\bar{a}$ ,  $tanh\bar{a}$  and kamma of the previous existence. This is the only right view. When we shout loudly in the vicinity of a mountain, we hear an echo. This echo is not the original sound

produced by the man; nor is it independent of the original sound. When a candle is lit from the flame of a first candle, the new flame is not that of the first; nor is it independent of the flame of the first candle. Likewise, a new existence is not the transmigration of the old one; nor is it independent of the old. Bear in mind that if past *kamma* is wholesome, the present life will be good, both in mind and matter. If the past *kamma* is evil so will be the present life. The good and bad experiences in the present life are accounted for by two factors — the deeds done in the past, and one's knowledge and diligence in this life.

# CONCLUSION

When we say "one dies" it does not mean that that is all there is to it for a being; it is very important that one is reborn in a good existence since it is to be reborn in a new existence that one dies. And to prepare to have a good frame of mind immediately before death is possible only when one dies with as little pain as possible, as mild an ailment as possible and one has good friends (who know how to help one on one's deathbed). Therefore it is better and more beneficial if that person himself prepares for future life in advance rather than wait for the last moment. One should live morally and prepare for one's dying days so as to have a good rebirth along *samsāra* until the attainment of Nibbāna.

# [HERE ENDS THE ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENS WHEN DEATH DRAWS NEAR]

### CHAPTER NINE

# PAȚISANDHI (THE NATURE OF REBIRTH)

AFTER DEATH THAT occurs according to the process mentioned in the eight chapter, arise *cittas*, *cetasikas* and  $r\bar{u}pas$  for the first time in an existence in accordance with *kamma*. These *citta*, *cetasikas* and  $r\bar{u}pas$  that arise for the first time (conception in the mother's womb) are called *pațisandhi*, which means 'connective occurrence' at the termination of old existence.

# THE FOUR TYPES OF PATISANDHI

Since these *cittas*, *cetasikas* and  $r\bar{u}pas$  that arise at the moment of *pațisandhi* are the results of *kamma*, corresponding to different *kammas* there are four kinds of *pațisandhi*, namely:

- 1. Opapātika-pațisandhi
- 2. Samsedaja-pațisandhi
- 3. Aņdaja-patisandhi
- 4. Jalābuja-pațisandhi

# OPAPĀTIKA-PAŢISANDHI, SPONTANEOUS REBIRTH (REBIRTH AS A WHOLLY MATURE BEING)

Devas, Brahmas, sinners in hell, petas (hungry ghosts) and asurakāyas (demons) are reborn as mature grown-up beings without passing through foetal and infant stages. They do not come out from mother's wombs. As soon as patisandhi-cittas, cetasikas and rūpas arise, they appear right at their dwellings, i.e., celestial mansions, forests, mountains, streams or oceans, full-grown to their normal size. The first human beings were born in this way when this kappa (world-cycle) was formed. They suddenly took their human form without the necessity of conception in their mothers' wombs. This is known as opapātika-pațisandhi.

# 2 SAMEDAJA-PATISANDHI, MOISTURE BORN REBIRTH

Some sentient beings take rebirths in places where the foetus could cling to. Those who have this kind of *pațisandhi* have to develop gradually from the very tiny size. Larvae hatch and grow up in decaying organic matter. Queen Padumavati was conceived in a lotus blossom, and Queen Veluvati in the hollow of a bamboo plant. Ciñcamāṇavikā who slandered the Buddha took rebirth in a tamarind tree. Most insects belong to this type of *pațisandhi*, but human exceptions are not a few in number.

# 3 ANDAJA-PATISANDHI, OVIPAROUS BIRTH

Beings such as birds who conceive in the eggs in their mothers' wombs are those who have this kind of *pațisandhi*. In the Jātakas and chronicles we read about some human males marrying female *Nagas* who bore forth human offsprings by means of *aṇḍaja-pațisandhi*.

# JALĀBUJA-PAŢISANDHI, BORN FROM A WOMB (VIVIPAROUS)

This class of *pațisandhi* includes humans and other mammals. They all are born from the wombs of their mothers. Also some *devas* among inferior *devas* such as earth-deities (*bhummadevas*) and tree-deities (*rukkha-devas*) take Jalābuja-pațisandhi. Both aṇḍaja and jalābuja types are collectively termed gabbhaseyyaka. [Gabbha = in mother's womb + seyyaka = one who lies.]

# THE THREE CONDITIONS FOR PATISANDHI

Living beings born out of *samsedaja*- and *opapātika-pațisandhi* have no parents at all. They are born only out of the power of their own *kamma*. For *gabbha-seyyaka* beings, who are born only after being conceived in the mother's womb, a question arises, "How does conception take place?"

The three necessary conditions for conception are:

- 1. The mother-to-be must have had menstruation just recently.
- 2. There must be sexual union.
- **3.** The child-to-be must have died in his previous existence.

Pregnancy usually takes place within seven or fifteen days of sexual union between parents.

### Some Strange Cases

Although there is no sexual union between parents, there can be pregnancy in some strange cases. The Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma took *paṭisandhi* in his mother's womb when his father caressed her navel with his palms just after her menstruation. The mother of King Candapajjota felt sensual pleasure when a centipede crept across her belly just after menstruation and later she was pregnant. Pond herons or bitterns, feeling pleasure from southern breeze at the beginning of monsoon, become pregnant. In the time of the Buddha a *bhikkhuni* became pregnant when she swallowed the semen from her own ex-husband monk's robe. After drinking urine containing the semen of a hermit, a doe got pregnant and gave birth to a son, Isisiṅga, a human. These are some exceptionally singular cases of pregnancy.

# The Clear Kalala Fluid

Along with the *pațisandhi-citta* and *cetasikas* there arise minute material properties. These are called "*kalala* or clear fluid". This clear fluid takes the form of a droplet the size of a tiny drop of oil clinging to the tip of a hair of a damsel from the Northern Continent. This *kalala*-droplet (the very first stage of formulation of foetus) is formed by the kammic forces of past deeds. It is neither semen nor ovule of his parents, they are only supporting agents of this *kalala*.

# The Support of Semens and Ovule

A *kalala*-droplet is produced by a child's past *kamma* but parents' semen and ovule are essential supports for pregnancy to take place. The *kalala*-droplet is like the seed; semen and

#### PAŢISANDHI (THE NATURE OF REBIRTH)

ovule are like the moist soil or swamp; past *kamma* is like the farmer. Therefore a clean ovary and healthy semen and ovule are essential. Otherwise the foetus cannot develop into a healthy baby.

Reptiles, especially iguanas, living in red-soil burrows are red and those in black-soil burrows are black. In like manner, a baby inherits the genetic features of parents trasmitted through the semen and ovule on which the foetus relies for full development; hence the resemblance between offspring and parent. Even mentalities and characters including intelligence can be handed over to the child.

These similarities or resemblances are due to genetic transfer (transfer of material properties born of utu or temperature conditioned by mind) during the foetal stage. And another reason is that the child, being brought up in the same family environment, emulates the behaviour, mentality, and style of the parents. So good, civilised children are born of worthy and virtuous families while villainous children come from vile and depraved families. Therefore both parents need be of virtuous blood for the chilld to be a worthy one. The *kalala*-droplet which is cultured in pure healthy semen and ovule will produce the best offspring.

## THE FOUR TYPES OF INDIVIDUALS (PUGGALA)

- 1. Dugati Ahetuka Puggala
- 2. Sugati Ahetuka Puggala
- 3. Dvihetuka Puggala
- 4. Tihetuka Puggala

# 🐧 DUGGATI AHETUKA PUGGALA

Some individuals take *pațisandhi* in woeful, unhappy abodes called Apāya. Such beings are known as *Duggati Ahetuka Puggalas*\* — beings in woeful planes without the roots: non-greed (*alobha*), non-hate (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*) accompanying their birth-consciousness.

Ahetuka beings can also be found in the human world and in the minor *deva* realms too; they are called *Sugati Ahetuka Puggalas* — beings in good planes without the roots: nongreed, non-hate and non-delusion, accompanying their birthconsciousness.

\* Note Hetu — Six roots as moral condition of good and bad kamma, viz., lobha, dosa and moha for evil deeds; alobha, adosa and amoha for good deeds. A-hetuka, Dvi- or Ti-hetuka — having or accompanied by no roots, or 2 or 3 roots.

# 😰 SUGATI AHETUKA PUGGALA

## a. Human Being

In this world there are some persons with *sugatiahetuka-pațisandhi-citta* (birth-consciousness of beings in good planes not accompanied by the roots: *alobha*,

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adosa and amoha). They have very weak kusala and so are born blind, dumb, deaf or idiotic. Some are born sexless; some as hermaphrodites.

## **b.** Deities

Due to weak wholesome deeds some are reborn with sugati-ahetuka-patisandhi-citta as devas but without power and without dwellings. They have to seek shelter near the mansions of higher devas such as Bhumma-Devas or Rukkha-Deva. They are never well fed and have to survive on leftovers thrown away by people. Sometimes they scare women and children so as to extort food from them and live on food offered to propitiate them. Such poor devas lead a miserable life although they belong to the Cātumahārājika plane. Just as there are intelligent individuals among poor human beings, so also there may be among poor devas who are not Ahetuka but Dvihetuka or Tihetuka individuals (as explained below). Some poor devas are known to achieve Magga and Phala during the time of the Buddha.

# 😹 DVIHETUKA PUGGALA

In the chapter on *dāna* we have explained *dvihetuka-ukkaţţhakusala* and *tihetuka-omaka-kusala* in detail. Some persons are reborn as humans and *devas* for their good deeds. But since they had done these meritorious deeds without the accompaniment of *amoha* (knowledge), or even if with *amoha* the deed was done with weak *cetanā*, or even if the *cetanā* is keen there was some regret regarding the good deed, they are endowed with

only two roots, alobha and adosa, in their pațisandhi cittas. Hence they become dvihetuka individuals (puggalas).

The two types of *Ahetuka Puggalas* mentioned above and this *Dvihetuka Puggalas* have very feeble *pațisandhi* so that they have no opportunity to attain *Jhāna*, *Magga* and *Phala* in the present life. But if they practise meditation, that practise will be a good cause for them to become *Tihetuka Puggalas* in the future; and they will attain *Jhāna*, *Magga* and *Phala* with ease since they have experience of meditation in the past. Therefore, they should see to it that they endeavour to practise *bhāvanā* in this life even if they cannot attain *Jhāna*, *Magga* and *Phala* here in this life.

# 🐐 TIHETUKA PUGGALA

Due to tihetuka-ukkattha-kusala-citta (already explained in the chapter on  $d\bar{a}na$ ), one can be reborn in the human world or in the abode of devas, as a Tihetuka individual who is intelligent and wise and can achieve  $jh\bar{a}na$ , if they try for it. They can also attain Magga and Phala if they become accomplished in  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{n}s$  (Perfections). Today we can find quite a number of Tihetuka persons. Only laziness and lack of discipline prevent them from becoming Ariya persons. Thus, due to the difference in their pațisandhi-cittas, there happen to be four types of puthujjana persons — Duggati Ahetuka, Sugati Ahetuka, Dvihetuka and Tihetuka.

#### PAŢISANDHI (THE NATURE OF REBIRTH)

## THE EIGHT TYPES OF ARIYAS

- 1. Sotapatti-magga Puggala
- 2. Sotapatti-phala Puggala
- 3. Sakadāgāmi-magga Puggala
- 4. Sakadāgāmi-phala Puggala
- 5. Anāgāmi-magga Puggala
- 6. Anāgāmi-phala Puggala
- 7. Arahatta-magga Puggala
- 8. Arahatta-phala Puggala

That *Tihetuka* person will become (1) a *Sotāpatti-magga Puggala* (person) if and when he attains *sotāpatti-magga* through practice of meditation. In the same way, if and when he attains *sotāpatti-phala*, he becomes (2) a *Sotāpatti-phala Puggala*. As he rises higher in his achievements, he becomes, in order of ascending merit (3) to (8).

The eight type of individual is called an Arahant. Paccekabuddhas and Buddhas are Arahants with very special insight-wisdom (*ñāṇa*).

## KAMMA IS OUR TRUE PARENTS

One's own deeds determine one's *pațisandhi-citta* and thus one's destiny also. *Kamma* determines your next existence not only to differ in *pațisandhi* at the start, but also in physical appearance, in status of parentage, status of wealth, etc. Let us compare two persons. One had done good deeds eagerly with intelligence while the other did not; or if he did he was not very willing. When they die and are reborn in this human world, the

former will be conceived in the womb of a well-to-do mother who cares for her pregnancy in a proper way. The latter will be conceived in the womb of a poor mother who does not know how to care for the pregnancy. So even at the time of pregnancy, there are vast differences between the two babies. At the time of birth too, the former will be born comfortably while the other, with much pain and difficulty. After birth the difference become more and more pronounced. The disparity becomes greater in due course. The rich child is well brought up and educated whereas the poverty-stricken child will experience just the opposite. To sum up, the former will live a life of luxury (cared for and loved by grand parents, and all relatives) whilst the latter will have to struggle strenuously for his survival.

## CONCLUSION

As just mentioned, the *kamma* done in the past greatly influence the destiny of a person right from infancy. Knowing the different effects of *kamma*, we should not blame the people who favour only the rich and the powerful. Fortune favours the wealthy. So you should only blame your ignorance and past misdeeds and try your very best to become the prosperous and the virtuous through performing wholesome deeds.

Being envious or jealous of the well-to-do without striving for yourself is fruitless stupidity. Envy and jealousy will serve only to drag you down into the chasm of suffering to meet more misery in the future existence. May all readers of this book and all my friends and acquaintances commence endeavours right now and achieve good rebirth on the way to Nibbāna.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON PATISANDHI]



SINCE THE MATERIAL body called *Kalala* or clear fluid accompanies the arising of the birth-consciousness, the *pațisandhicitta*, we should understand the course of arising and ceasing of the material body throughout one's life. Hence we propose to deal with what should be known of *Rūpa*, matter, in this Chapter.

# RÜPA, MATTER

 $R\bar{u}pa$  literally means that which changes. The causes of change are many; they include, heat and cold. In very cold climate your skin cracks, and the pigment changes; you catch cold and fall ill. In the group of purgatories called Lokantarika, the sinners drop into very cold water and are crushed to death. In hot climate your skin gets inflamed and redden; you get burns and scalds; you get sunstroke. Moreover you may be bitten by mosquitoes, pests, dogs or snakes; some of these bites may be fatal. Hunger and thirst may also kill you. These are examples of the changing nature of  $r\bar{u}pa$  (matter).

## CLASSES OF RŪPA

Although there are 28 classes of  $r\bar{u}pa$  in all, we shall mention only the important 19.

The Four Fundamental Elements:

1.	Pathavī-dhātu	_	Earth element, the element of extension, solidity
2.	Āpo-dhātu		Water element, the element of fluidity, cohesion
3.	Tejo-dhâtu		Fire element, the element of heat, cold
4.	Vāyo-dhātu	_	Air element, the lement of motion, support

The Five Pasāda-rūpas, Sensitive Parts of the Five Organs:

5.	Cakkhu-pasāda		Sensitive part of the eye
6.	Sota-pasāda		Sensitive part of the ear
7.	Ghāna-pasāda		Sensitive part of the nose
8.	Jivhā-pasāda	_	Sensitive part of the tongue
9.	Kāya-pasāda		Sensitive part of the body

The Five Objects (Arammanas):

- 10. Rūpārammaņa visible form
- 11. Saddārammaņa sound
- 12. Gandhārammaņa smell
- 13. Rasārammaņa taste
- Phoțțhabbārammaņa\* touch, tangible sense.

#### RŪPA (MATTER)

# \* Note Phoțțhabbārammaņa is nothing but the three Fundamental Elements — Pathavī, Tejo and Vāyo because they can be touched. That is why it is not numbered.

14. Itthi-bhāva-rūpa — femininity
15. Purisa-bhāva-rūpa — masculinity

#### Note: These two are called bhava-rūpa.

<b>16.</b> Hadaya-vatthu-rūpa	- seat or basis of
	consciousness
<b>17.</b> Jīvita-rūpa	<ul> <li>the vital force, vitality in matters</li> </ul>
<b>18.</b> Ojā-rūpa	- nutritive essence, ahara
19. Ākāsa-dhātu	— intra-atomic space

#### THE FOUR FUNDAMENTAL ELEMENTS

# 🕷 PATHAVĪ-DHĀTU

The earth element is also called element of solidity. The earth as a foundation supports all other things. Due to its hardness, firmness and strength it is called *pathavī*. The earth, rocks, stones, masses of metals are all matter in which the *pathavī*- $dh\bar{a}tu$  is dominant.

# 🗯 ĀPO-DHĀTU

Just as water enhances the cohesion of dust or powdered materials, so also *āpo-dhātu*, the element of cohesion, makes

aggregates of tiny particles. When  $\bar{a}po-dh\bar{a}tu$  is dominant, it can dissolve other elements and become fluid. Water, urine, mucus, sweat, saliva, tears, etc., are matter dominated by  $\bar{a}po-dh\bar{a}tu$ .

# 🕱 TEJO-DHĀTU

Just as heat of the sun or fire can dry wet things, so also the *tejo* element prevents excessive dampness and viscosity of aggregate matter and maintains optimum dryness. The body of a healthy person is usually cool in summer. This coolness is also *tejo-dhātu*. There are thus two types of *tejo*: unha-tejo and sita-tejo. Utu (climate) is another name for tejo. When the body and environs are cool, sita-tejo pervades the entire atmosphere. When hot, unha-tejo does the same. If this tejo-dhātu is hot when it should be hot and cool when it is the time to be cool, we have healthy climate. In our bodies, if tejo is moderate we are healthy; if not we are sick; if in excess we die.

Therefore those who cannot adapt to the changing *tejo* should live with care. They should avoid travelling in intense heat or extreme cold; they also should avoid eating very hot or very cold food. Water and ice are matter with excess of *sīta-tejo* whereas the sun and fire, of *unha-tejo*.

## Pācaka Tejo-dhātu

This type of *tejo* serves to digest our food. It originates from beneath the stomach. Powerful *pācaka-tejo* helps digest the food eaten, but if it is feeble you cannot digest properly and get stomach disorder. In order to be healthy you need to eat tender digestible food.

#### RŪPA (MATTER)

# 🕷 VĀYO DHĀTU

 $V\bar{a}yo \ dh\bar{a}tu$  is the element of motion. It is seen in the wind blowing about and pushing against things. This  $dh\bar{a}tu$  pushes or moves other aggregate matter. In our body there are six types of wind:

- a. Uddhangama wind that moves upward, causing belching, coughing, sneezing and related illness. When we speak this wind moves constantly upward and cause bowel discomfort. One should not speak with an empty stomach.
- **b.** Adhogama wind that moves downward causing bowel movement and frequent motion.
- c. *Kucchițtha* wind that moves about in the visceral cavity apart from the large and small intestines.
- d. *Koṭṭhāsaya* wind that moves about inside the large and small intestines. Because this wind that pushes down the food eaten, is in the intestines whatever is eaten has to go out through the rectum.
- e. Angamangānusārī wind that moves within the limbs. If this wind does not move freely illness results. In our bodies there are small veins along which this wind moves. Staying in one posture for a long time prevents this wind from moving freely causing blood to accumulate at one location. This leads to stiffness and pain. To prevent this ailment, we should avoid remaining in one posture for a long time, and take walking exercise.
- f. Assāsapassāsa wind inhaled and exhaled by us. It is also known as ānāpāna.

#### **Basic and Secondary Matter**

The four fundamental elements,  $pathav\bar{i}$ ,  $\bar{a}po$ , tejo and  $v\bar{a}yo$ , are the basic matter while other material properties such as the five sensitivities that will be mentioned later are secondary, i.e., they are dependent upon the fundamental elements. Since the four fundamental elements are the basic hardcore properties, the bigger the accumulation of these four elements the larger the bodies. Whatever immensity there is of the inorganic things such as earth, rocky mountains, great expanse of water, a great fire and storms, and of the living organisms such as a big man, a big *deva*, a big fish and a big tortoise, it is simply the greatness of the accumulation of these four elements.

 $R\bar{u}pas$  such as eye, ear, sight and sound do not grow in size. For example, if you add more scent to a cake of soap, it does not increases in size even though its aroma improves. Similarly if you reduce the scent in the cake of soap, the aroma diminishes but the size remains the same. So we must remember that only the four fundamental  $dh\bar{a}tus$  are basic matter.

#### **FIVE SENSE ORGANS**

Radios and televisions can receive audio as well as visual signals. In the same way in our bodies there are sensitive parts of the sense organs called *pasāda-rūpas*, which can receive the corresponding sense objects.

## CAKKHU-PASADA (SENSITIVE PART OF EYE)

The sensitive part in the eye is called  $cakkhu-pas\bar{a}da$ . These sensitive particles of  $cakkhu-pas\bar{a}da$  lie pervading the middle of the pupil in the eye. When various colours and lights called

#### RÜPA (MATTER)

 $r\bar{u}p\bar{a}rammana$  or the sense-object of sight are 'grasped' by this cakkhu-pasāda, the consciousness called eye-consciousness (cakkhu-viñnāna) which sees and knows that visible object arises.

# SOTA-PASADA (SENSITIVE PART OF EAR)

Inside the ear there is a sensitive part that resembles a (finger) ring. The sensitive particles that pervade that part are called *sota-pasāda*. When various sounds (*saddārammaņa*) are 'grasped' by this *sota-pasāda*, the consciousness called earconsciousness (*sota-viññāna*) that hears and knows the sound arises.

# 🐲 GHĀNA-PASĀDA (SENSITIVE PART OF NOSE)

Many sensitive particles that pervade a place in the nose that resembles a hoof of a goat are called *ghāna-pasāda*. When various odours (*gandhārammaņa*) are 'grasped' by this *ghāna-pasāda*, the consciousness called nose-consciousness (*ghāna-viññāņa*) that smells and knows the odour arises.

# 😹 JIVHĀ-PASĀDA (SENSITIVE PART OF TONGUE)

Many sensitive particles that pervade a place in the tongue that resembles lotus petals are called *jivhā-pasāda*. When the tastes (*rasārammaņa*) that are in everything one eats are 'grasped' by this *jivhā-pasāda*, the consciousness called tongue-consciousness (*jivhā-viññāṇa*) that knows the taste arises.

# 🕷 KĀYA-PASĀDA (ORGAN OF TOUCH)

Many sensitive particles that pervade the whole body except the dry areas of skin, etc., are called  $k\bar{a}ya$ -pas $\bar{a}da$ . When whatever that is touched, hit or felt is 'grasped' by this  $k\bar{a}ya$ -pas $\bar{a}da$ , the consciousness called body-consciousness ( $k\bar{a}ya$ - $vinn\bar{n}na$ ) that touches and knows arises. Thus, there are five kinds of sensitive parts ( $pas\bar{a}das$ ) in the body.

# THE FIVE ÂRAMMAŅAS

# **Ārammaņas**

The Pāli word  $\bar{a}rammana$  means that haunt of consciousness. No consciousness arises without contact with any one of the sense-objects; only when there is an object can consciousness arise. Therefore sense-objects are the haunts of consciousness. Among them visual form is called  $r\bar{u}p\bar{a}rammana$ , which is matter. Sound is saddārammana, smell is gandhārammana, taste is rasārammana, and touch, phoṭṭhabbārammana. These five ārammanas are the haunts, the habitats of citta (consciousness).

# Note Dhammārammaņa consists not only of some rūpa but also of all cittas, cetasikas, Nibbāna and panatti (concepts).

# Kāmaguņa

Pleasant sight, pleasant sound, pleasant smell, pleasant taste and pleasant touch are called the five  $k\bar{a}maguna$  [ $k\bar{a}ma =$ pleasurable + guna = bondage]. In fact they are the five objects ( $\bar{a}rammana$ ) we have just discussed. The physique, voice and scent of the female, the taste of food prepared by her, her

#### RŪPA (MATTER)

bodily touch, are the favourite sensual pleasures for men. The converse is also true for the female.

# THE TWO SEXES (BHÁVA-RŪPA)

Right at the first moment of conception, living beings have a kind of matter (caused by *kamma*) that differentiates them into males and females. These particles of matter are dispersed all over the body. Particles that are basis for being a female are called *itthi-bhāva-rūpa*, and those that are basis for being a male are called *purisa-bhāva-rūpa*. Just as branches, leaves and fruits of a tree grow according to the seed, so the physique, organs, behaviour and characteristics in the male and female are dependent upon the *itthi-bhāva-rūpa* and *purisa-bhāva-rūpa* rūpa respectively.

## THE HEART BASE (HADAYA-VATTHU-RŪPA)

This material property is one which pervades and is distributed on the blood in the heart situated in the cavity of the chest. Many types of consciousness depend on this material property for their arising.

#### Note

We translate *hadaya* as "heart" but it is not the cardiac organ defined in anatomy.

## VITALITY OF MATTER (JĪVITA-RŪPA)

Just as there is a vital force called *jīvitindriya cetasika* among the mental states, so there is a vital material force called life among the material properties. But this life called *jīvita* is not found in the material properties caused by *citta*, *utu* (climate

or temperature) and *ahara* (nutrition); it is found only among those that are caused by *kamma*. For living beings mental vitality ( $r\bar{u}pa$ - $j\bar{i}vita$ ) and material vitality ( $n\bar{a}ma$ - $j\bar{i}vita$ ) are of prime importance. Without these two  $j\bar{i}vitas$  one becomes a corpse. The fact that material properties in the body stay fresh and not become rotten is because of the existence of this vitality called  $j\bar{i}vita$ . Material properties in the dead body become rotten because of the absence of this  $j\bar{i}vita$ . This  $j\bar{i}vita$  also is distributed all over the body.

# ESSENSE OF NUTRITION (OJĀ-RŪPA)

In cooked rice there is nutritive essence. This nutritive essence is called  $oj\bar{a}$ ; it is also called *ahara*. In the body too there are particles of nutritive essense. Tastes like sweet, sour, bitter, salty, hot and so on are called *rasa* (or *rasārammaṇa*).  $Oj\bar{a}$  is the essence that exists in those tastes. It helps the growth of new  $r\bar{u}pas$  in the body.

## INTRA-ATOMIC SPACE (ÂKÂSA-DHÂTU)

 $A\bar{k}a\bar{s}a$  means space (space in between).  $R\bar{u}pas$  cannot arise in single units. They arise as groups of at least eight or nine units and so on. Such group is called a *kalapa*. Two adjacent fingers can be kept together; yet there is a space dividing them. Our bodies are filled with tiny *kalapas*, but still there is space in between them. This space is designated as  $\bar{a}k\bar{a}sa$ -dh $\bar{a}tu$ . In fact it is not a real  $r\bar{u}pa$  which exists in reality. It is a mere *pannatti* (concept) which becomes prominent automatically when two groups of  $r\bar{u}pas$  come together.

#### **RŪPA (MATTER)**

## KALAPAS

## How a Kalapa is Formed

A group of people in association is called a club. In Pāļi kalapa also means a group. As said before  $r\bar{u}pa$  (matter) cannot exist in isolation. Units of matter that can arise together combine to exist as a group. Such a group of material properties that arise and perish together, is termed "one kalapa".

## **Matter in Combination**

The four fundamental elements,  $pathav\bar{i}$ ,  $\bar{a}po$ , tejo, and  $v\bar{a}yo$ , together with  $va\tilde{n}\tilde{n}a$  (appearance), ghanda (scent), rasa (taste) and  $oj\bar{a}$  (essence or nutrition) are the eight classes of matter found always in coexistence. A lump of soil is an aggregate of eight classes of matter too. It has a certain appearance and a specific smell and taste; it can be touched and felt. The same is true for water, wind, fire, heat, light, etc. They are all aggregates of the eight classes of matter.

## The Size of a Kalapa

Each *kalapa* is so minute that you cannot see it with your naked eyes. Even the finest dust particle is an aggregate of a very large number of *kalapas*. A bacteria which can only be seen with the most powerful microscope is composed of countless *kalapas* formed by *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* and *ahara*. Therefore the minuteness of a *kalapa* is beyond description.

#### Note

Reference may be made and to treatises on Abhidhamma for classes of *kalapas* and their names.

#### HOW RŪPA IS CAUSED BY KAMMA

#### The Four Causes and Conditions

Let us delve further into the nature of the four  $dh\bar{a}tus$  and how  $r\bar{u}pa$  is caused by kamma, citta, utu, and ahara. Let us think of an earthen doll. Dust or soil particles do not make a doll because the particles will not cohere but be blown away. So we add some water; still a doll does not take shape. The doll must then be baked in the sun. This is an example of how an earthen doll is moulded by a craftsman with the help of dust, water, wind and sun.

#### How Kamma Takes Effect

As in the above example,  $pathav\bar{i}-dh\bar{a}tu$  alone cannot be the body.  $\bar{A}po$  dampens the  $pathav\bar{i}$ ,  $tejo-dh\bar{a}tu$  removes the excess humidity and  $v\bar{a}yo$  presses and holds them together. In the aggregate of four elements, there are physical properties such as appearance, smell, taste and nutritive essence. Then the systematic combination of the *kalapas* thus formed takes the form of human beings as directed by past *kamma*.

Kamma determines the sex and basic traits of the human being in conformity with the deeds done in the past. Some may become *petas*, animals, etc., for their evils. *Kusala*- or *akusala-kamma* manages to form beautiful or ugly beings correspondingly. Evil *kamma* makes one an animal, but certain good *kamma* makes the animal a lovely one. Conversely, good *kamma* makes one a human but evil *kamma* makes him ugly and deplorable. In this way your life from foetus to death is managed by past and present actions, good or bad.

#### :\ote

Rūpa caused by kamma is called kammaja-rūpa.

#### RÚPA (MATTER)

#### HOW CITTA CONDITIONS RUPA

*Citta* (mind) plays a part in conditioning the  $r\bar{u}pa$  caused by *kamma*. The  $r\bar{u}pa$  (body) has to follow the will of the mind. *Citta* commands the body to sit, sleep, stand or move. When the will to move arises, *cittaja-rupa* pervades the entire body. *Vayo-dhatu* is dominant in *cittaja-rupa*, i.e., it is more active than usual. So the body becomes alert.

The number of *kalapas* dominated by  $v\bar{a}yo$ -dh $\bar{a}tu$  increases gradually, causing the body to move according to the dictates of mind. Bodily movements are similar to those of the pictures in motion pictures. One frame shows a man standing; the next shows the raising of one leg; then the putting down of that leg and so on. The quick movement of hundreds of frames is seen as a man walking.

In like manner, when we say "a man walks", the units of matter that are first caused by mind (consciousness) do not walk yet; they are still standing. But by the power of the  $v\bar{a}yo-dh\bar{a}tu$  in the first group of units of matter, they become alert and active. So, the second group of matter does not arise in the place of the first group, but arise in a second place adjacent to the first place. Thus as the groups of matter that arise later arise successively in different places, there becomes evident, in the twinkling of an eye, a shape (a man) walking. (Since trillions of thought moments can arise in the twinkling of an eye, trillions of units of matter also that are caused by mind (consciousness) arise repeatedly.)

There is a saying, "Young at heart, youthful looks". When one is in a happy mood, the *cittaja-rūpas* are cheerful. When in amiable conversation, one's facial expression is that of gaiety. But when one is in despair the  $r\bar{u}pa$  becomes correspondingly

downcast. When in quarrelsome conversation the facial expression portrays wrath.

When a house catches fire, the flames spread to the house nearby. Similarly, when cittaja- $r\bar{u}pa$  is in agony, the  $r\bar{u}pas$  in conjunction, namely, kammaja-, utuja- and  $\bar{a}h\bar{a}raja$ - $r\bar{u}pas$  also suffer from equal agony. So when a person is very dejected his features look very aged; when the anguish is extreme he dies broken hearted. To sum up, the citta (mind) conditions your body from the very beginning of pregnancy.

#### EFFECT OF CLIMATE

Climate also affects  $r\bar{u}pa$ . Under pleasant climatic conditions the inhabitants are cheerful and healthy. Wearing clean cloths and sleeping in clean beds cause clean utuja- $r\bar{u}pas$  to increase; hence the body becomes healthy and jovial. Therefore, cleanliness is the key to good health. The converse is also true. Wearing dirty cloths, sleeping in dirty beds cause filthy utuja- $r\bar{u}pas$  to increase, hence ill health. In rainy season, the favourable climate causes vegetation to thrive. In dry, hot weather, vegetation wilts and withers. In the same way, utu conditions the body since pregnancy. Changes in vegetation are indicators of climatic conditions. We should be aware of how utuja- $r\bar{u}pa$ changes with climatic conditions.

## THE INFLUENCE OF NUTRITION

There is  $oj\bar{a}$  (nutritive essence) in all food you eat, even in water. If you take nutritious food and appropriate medicine you will lead a long, healthy life. Unsuitable food and medicine

#### RŪPA (MATTER)

bring ill-health. The correct choice of food and medicine is obviously conducive to good health.

In a mother's womb the foetus receives the food mother eats. Thus, it develops gradually into a body. Therefore, every mother desirous of the infant's health must avoid unsuitable food that will harm her pregnancy. The baby in the womb absorbs nutrition from the food eaten by the mother through the umbilical cord. Knowing this expectant mother must be very careful with her diet.

This is some useful advice for the expectant mother. Eat nutritious food; avoid abrupt and awkward movements; check up the pregnancy with a doctor; eat and sleep regularly. Only with such care, can a healthy mother bear healthy children. It is the duty of every mother to be careful with her diet since early days of pregnancy.

#### CONCLUSION

Here ends the chapter on  $r\bar{u}pa$ . For the good deed of writing this chapter, may all readers perform good deeds conducive to good health and physical fitness in this life while on the way to Nibbāna. May my close friends be fit and healthy so that they may do meritorious deeds and fulfil  $P\bar{a}ram\bar{i}s$  (Perfections) until the day they attain Nibbāna, the supreme bliss.

[HERE ENDS THE CHAPTER ON THE EXPLANATION OF RUPA]

#### CHAPTER ELEVEN

# THE PLANES OF EXISTENCE

THE ABODES OF living beings are known as *bhūmi*. There are 31 *bhūmis* (plans of existence): four woeful planes, seven sensuous blissful planes and twenty *Brahma* planes.

The four woeful planes are:

1.	Niraya	= Hell
2.	Tiracchana Yoni	= Animal Kingdom
3.	Petas Loka	= Plane of Hungry Ghosts
4.	Asurakāyas	= Plane of Demons

The seven sensuous blissful planes are the human world and the six celestial (*deva*) planes, namely:

1.	Cātumahārājika	=	Realm of the Fours Kings
2.	Tāvatimsa	=	Realm of the Thirty-three gods
3.	Yāmā	=	Realm of Yāmā gods
4.	Tusitā	=	Delightful realm
5.	Nimmānarati	=	Realm of gods enjoying their own creation
6.	Paranimmitavasavattī	=	Realm of gods lording over the creation of others

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In twenty Brahma abodes there are sixteen  $R\bar{u}pa$ -Brahma and four Ar $\bar{u}pa$ -Brahma planes.

## THE NATURE OF HELLS (NIRAYA)

In the world every country has prisons or jails to confine offenders and criminals. In the same way there exist various types of hells for those who have committed unwholesome deeds. These hells are utuja- $r\bar{u}pa$  or matter caused by utu conditioned by one's evil kamma. Hells differ in nature depending on the degree and severity of the evil deeds committed. According to the books, the Lohakumbhī Hell (the hell of hot molten metal) is situated below the earth's crust in close proximity to the human abode.

According to the texts, only the eight great hells that are commonly described will be explained in detail. They are:

- 1. Sanjīva Hell
- 2. Kāļasutta Hell
- 3. Samghāta Hell
- 4. Roruva Hell
- 5. Mahā Roruva Hell
- 6. Tāpana Hell
- 7. Mahā Tāpana Hell
- 8. Avīci Hell

In each great hell there are five minor hells:

- 1. Excreta Hell
- 2. Hot Ashes Hell

- 3. Hell of Bombax Trees
- 4. Hell of Trees with Sword-like Leaves
- 5. Hell of Molten Iron

These five minor hells surrounding each great hell are collectively called Ussada Hells.

## Yāmā, the King of Hell

The king of Vemanika-petas, who belong to gods of Cātumahārājika realm, is called King Yāmā. He sometimes enjoys pleasures of *devas* and sometimes suffers the painful fruits of bad *kamma* (like ordinary *petas*). There are many Yāmās who preside over the trial of sinners (i.e., those who did evil deeds in previous life) in their offices situated at the four gates of hell. Their duties are like the judges of the human world. But not all those who arrive at the gates are subject to trial.

Those who had done grave unwholesome *kammas* and so evident sinners go direct to hells. Those with minor *akusalakamma* get the opportunity to be judged by Yāmās with the expectation that they might escape hell. The trials conducted are not meant to incriminate but to give them chance to escape from being punished if they so deserve. They, Yāmās, are like judges of court of appeal nowadays. So it should be noted that Yāmā, the king of hell, is a just and impartial monarch.

#### :Vote

See Devadūta Sutta, Uparipaņņāsa. The Wardens of Hell

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These hell wardens also belong to the class of Cātumahārājika-devas. They are either ogres or demons. Their regular duties include sending minor sinners to Yāmā for trial and carrying out cruel punishments to serious sinners. Since hellfire is a form of *utuja-rūpa* conditioned by evil deeds, only the sinners and not the hell wardens are scorched by the heat.

#### A Trial Chaired by Yāmā

The following is a brief account of a trial conducted by Yāmā; this episode is taken from Devaduta Sutta. Whenever a sinner is brought before Yāmā, he always asks him about the five divine messengers (*Pañca Deva Dutas*): an infant, an aged, an infirm, a dead person and a prisoner.

- Yāmā : Sinner, while you are a human being did you not see newborn baby wallowing helplessly in his or her own excreta?
- Sinner : I did, Your Honour.
- Yāmā : If so, did it ever occur in your thoughts, "I will be reborn like this helpless baby wallowing in excreta and urine in many future lives. I cannot escape rebirths. It is high time I controlled my thoughts, words and deeds so as not to suffer again like this infant"?

#### Note: Yāmā asked this question with compassion.

- Sinner : Your Honour, I was not at all mindful and thus had no interest in doing wholesome deeds.
- Yāmā : Unwholesome deeds are done by yourself, not by your relatives, parents and friends. Since you are guilty of living thoughtlessly, you must now pay for your evil deeds as is the custom.

Yāmā repeated the same questions four more times, regarding the aged, the infirm, the dead and the prisoner. If after the fifth question, the sinner did not recall any of his past good deeds. Yāmā himself tried to recall if the sinner in front of him had ever shared merits with him when he did meritorious deeds. (Considering this fact, people nowadays share merits with King Yāmā when they do meritorious deeds.) If he, King Yāmā, remembered the meritorious deed he reminded the sinner. If by the reminding of King Yāmā or the sinner himself recalled such an incident, as soon as he remembered his meritorious deed, he escaped from hell and was reborn in the celestial world. There were many of such beings. Only in such circumstances did it become evident that one's meritorious deeds are one's refuge. When it was evident that the sinner had no merits to his credit. King Yāmā kept silent. Then only would hell-wardens come and rage away the sinner to torture him in a deserving hell.

## 1. Sanjīva Hell

Sanjīva means the hell in which the sinners are reborn again and again. In this hell, the wardens cut into pieces the bodies and limbs of the sinners; but the sinners instead of dying there and then are reborn to suffer more because their evil *kamma* still continues to take effect. They have to suffer the dreadful agony repeatedly. The terror of this hell clearly proves that the evil results of bad *kamma* (*akusala*) are really horrible.

## 2. Kāļasutta Hell

 $K\bar{a}|asutta$  means the measuring string (tape) used by carpenters. In this hell, the wardens chase the fleeing sinners, and when they are caught their bodies are marked off

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using measuring tapes. Then the wardens hack their bodies according to the markings. Sinners had to go through this torture many times till their evil *kamma* is exhausted.

## 3. Saṁghāta Hell

Samghāta Hell is where sinners are crushed to death over and over again. Big iron rollers crush sinners who are planted waist-deep into burning iron sheets nine *yojanas* thick. The big iron rollers come from four directions and crush them, back and forth. They suffer this repeatedly till their bad *kammas* are exhausted.

#### 4. Roruva Hell

Roruva is the hell of wailing sinners. Hellfires burn furiously and enter the sinner's bodies from the nine openings. The sinners suffer from intense agony and wail loudly. This is also known as *jala-roruva*.

## 5. Mahā Roruva Hell

This hell is completely engulfed in very thick smoke. Sinners suffer the agony as described in Roruva, except that hellfire is replaced with hell-smoke. This hell is known as Dhuma Roruva Niraya, the hell of smoke.

## 6. Tāpana Hell

Tāpana is the incinerating hell. Here sinners are pierced with burning red hot iron stakes the size of a palm tree.

## 7. Mahā Tāpana Hell

This hell is the greater incinerating hell. It is also called Patāpana. Hell wardens drive the sinners up to the top of a burning iron hill. Then they are pushed downhill by a vigorous storm only to fall onto iron stakes planted at the foot of the hill.

## 8. Avīci Hell

Avīci is the hell with no space to spare. Hellfires burn intensely all over with no room between flames. Sinners are packed in this hell like mustard seeds in a bamboo cylinder. There also is no empty space between sinners. Suffering and agony is ceaseless, with no interval in between. Since the hell is overflowing with fire, sinners and agony, it is given the name Avīci. ( $a = no + v\bar{v}ci = space$  in between.)

## The Agony of Hell

Existence in the eight great hells and the minor hells means limitless and horrid agony. The Lohakumbhī Hell where the four rich lads who committed sexual misconduct had to suffer is situated beneath the earth's crust, near Rājagaha. The hot water river Tapodā, originates somewhere in between two Lohakumbhī Hells, the hells of hot molten metal. The agonies suffered in hell are too horrid to be described in words.

The Buddha himself said:

"Even if I describe the agonies of hell for many years, the descriptions will not be complete. The sufferings in hell are limitless and beyond exposition."

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#### **An Advice**

After thinking about the melancholic sufferings in hell, one should cultivate good *kamma*. It is no use to feel remorse over deeds already done; it is time now to control oneself not to do any more evil deeds. In the past when a young *bhikkhu* had listened to Devaduta Sutta, he asked his teacher not to teach him any more scriptures but to show him the proper way to practise meditation. He practised meditation diligently and became an *Arahant*. Only then did he continue his academic studies. Countless beings have attained Arahantship by practising meditation after listening to this Sutta. It is said that all previous Buddhas preached this Sutta.

#### Nete Refer to Ratana Gon-yi for a brief account on animals, petas and asurakáyas.

#### HOW THE WORLD COMES TO AN END

All things must come to an end one day. This is the impermanent nature of everything, *anicca*. So also the world, the habitat of sentient beings, must one day face destruction and oblivion. The world may end in fire, water or wind. If the world would end in fire, two suns appear, one during day and the other during the night. Water in streams and creeks dry up under the heat. When the third sun rises, rivers dry up. With the appearance of the fourth sun, the seven great lakes in the vicinity of Himavanta evaporate completely. The fifth sun dries up the oceans; the sixth removes all remaining traces of moisture and humidity.

When the seventh sun comes up one hundred thousand worlds are incinerated. Enormous flames rise up to the plane of First Jhāna Brahmas, burning all mountains including Himavanta, Meru, etc., and the jewel mansions located at those mountain tops. Everything is burnt to ashes. Only then the death of the world is completed.

# **X***otc* Visualise for yourself how the world would end by water or by wind.

#### When and How Long

This destructive period lasts for a very long time. When the age-limit of the humans rises from 10 years-span to *asan*-*khyeyya*, infinity, and again dimishes to 10 years, this duration is called *antara-kappa* (World Cycle in between). The burning of the world lasts for 64 such intermediate *kappas*. Then the world stays in this ruined state just like a house burned down by fire, for another such 64 *kappas*.

#### Beings Take Refuge in Brahma Loka

During the destruction of the world, all living beings become *Brahmas* and dwell in Brahma Lokas which are not affected by the fire. On hundred thousand years prior to the end of the world, *devas* who foresee the doom announced the coming obliteration. All beings, on hearing this warning, get rid of their recklessness way of life and practised meritorious deeds. Due to their good *kamma* all beings achieve *jhānas* and become *Brahmas*. Therefore, all beings except those who profess fixed wrong view (*niyata-micchādițthi*) reach Brahma Loka at least once.

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## Those with *niyata-micchādiţţhi*, if their terms in hell are outstanding, have to transfer to hells in other universes to continue suffering.

#### How the World Comes into Being

After the destruction of the world, when the time is ripe, world creation rain starts to fall. First it drizzles, gradually increasing in intensity till the rain drops are as large as houses or hills. The entire world is flooded up to Brahma Loka. When after many years the flood recedes, the burnt higher celestial abodes are rehabilitated. When the water level reaches the human abode, mountains, hills, valleys, rivers, creeks and plains begin to take shape. The creamy upper crust slowly hardens and becomes solid earth and rock. The earth's mass so formed is two hundred and forty thousand *yojanas* thick.

The mass of water in which the earth's mass floats is four hundred and eighty *yojanas* in depth. The water is extremely cold and the mass resembles endless ocean of ice. This immense mass of water can easily support the land mass which is only half its depth. This mass of water is again supported on an atmospheric-mass nine hundred and sixty thousand *yojanas* deep. Below this atmospheric-mass is limitless space or void.

There are countless world systems complete with masses of land, water and air, human, *deva* and Brahma Lokas. These world-systems are identical to ours in constitution. These countless world-systems together form the infinite universe (*ananta-cakkavāla*). One hundred thousand similar universes face the same fate, the same end and the same rehabilitation simultaneously. One Universe is separated from another by a universal rock mountain which serves as a dividing wall.

## The Lokantarika Hell

When three universes meet, there is a space where Lokantarika Hell exists, where neither the rays of the sun nor the moonbeam can reach. Complete darkness reigns there. Those who insulted and ridiculed noble and virtuous persons become *petas* or *asurakāyas* and suffer from hunger in this hell. They cling to the walls of the universe in complete darkness. They mistake the other sinner to be some food, and try to bite each other. On doing so, they fall down into the icy waters and perish.

## **Mount Meru**

In the centre of the universe there stands Mount Meru, one hundred and sixty thousand *yojanas* high. Half of it is submerged in the water, and only the upper half is visible. Sīdā, the icy water, flows around it. Beyond Sīdā stands Mount Yugandhara, half as high as Meru. Another Sīdā winds this amount; again beyond this river is Mount Īsadhara. In like manner, seven mountains and seven Sīdās stand in conjunction.

## **Great and Small Islands**

Beyond the mountains, the vast ocean extends to the walls of the universe. In the middle of this great ocean are big and small islands. That to the east of Mount Meru is called the Eastern Continent. In the same way, there are the Southern, the Western and the Northern Continents in the respective cardinal directions.

## **Devas and Brahmas Planes**

At the top of Mount Yugandhara which is half way up to Mount Meru is the plane of Cātumahārājika-devas. The sun, stars

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and planets are the mansions in this celestial plane, says the texts. At the top of Mount Meru, is Tāvatimsa where Sakka, the King of the *devas*, dwells in the City of Sudassana. The four higher *deva* planes — Yāmā, Tusitā, Nimmānarati, and Paranimmitavasavattī — are situated in space, independent of the earth. All *Brahma* planes are also situated up in the space.

# Note For further details reference may be made to our treatise, "Thingyo Bhathatika".

#### **How Human Beings Come Into Existence**

After the formation of human, *deva* and *Brahma* abodes, some *Brahmas* came to the end of their celestial terms. Some were reborn in lower *Brahma* worlds, some in the abode of *devas* and some in the human world. Those reborn as first humans had no parents. Due to the power of *kamma* they were reborn instantly as grown ups in the fashion of *devas*. The early humans were sexless; they had neither male nor female organs. They could survive without nutrition. There was neither sun nor moon; they dwelt in the light of their own body radiance. They could fly in space like the *Brahmas* they had been.

## **Partaking of Topsoil**

While these human beings were flying about space they happened to discover the creamy topsoil that covered the ground. A curious one, attracted by the cream-like appearance, tried the taste of the topsoil. Being the essence of the earth, this topsoil proved very delicious and so the humans one after another came and helped themselves in mouthfuls. Due to their lust and greed in craving for the delicious topsoil, they all lost their radiance. The whole world was then encompassed in sheer darkness.

#### How the Sun and the Moon Appear

As the early human beings lived in fear in the darkness, due to their remaining good kamma, the sun called Sūriya, meaning 'courage' because it gave them courage, rose from the east. The sun measured fifty yojanas in circumference and its rays gave courage to mankind. When the sun set, darkness again pervaded, and the human again wished for another source of light. In accord with their ardent wish the moon, forty-nine yojanas in circumference, appeared in the sky. Since the moon appeared to satisfy the wishes of the inhabitants of the earth, they call it chanda (meaning wish) from which, the name Canda is derived. Together with Canda (the moon) stars and planets also appeared. This first appearance of heavenly bodies coincided with the full waning of the month of Phagguna (Tabaung in Mynamar) according to the calendar of Majjhimadesa. (Or, the first appearance of heavenly bodies occurred on the New Moon Day of the month of Phagguna.) Therefore, people say that the first moon of this world cycle waxes on the first day of the month of Citta (Tagu in Myanmar).

## **How People Discovered Rice**

Primitive man lived on tasty topsoil (earth-essence). Due to their lust for delicious taste, which is *akusala*, the topsoil gradually got thinner and thinner. Finally the topsoil disintegrated and rolled up into small stalks called sweet stalks (Nwecho in Myanmar). When these stalks were exhausted huskless paddy came into being. These grains, when put in pots and placed over

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a slab of rock called *jotipāsāņa* were automatically cooked, by the heat of slab, which cooled down when cooking was done.

## Male and Female

Primitive people could digest all they ate because their staple food was only earth essence. All they ate became flesh and sinews. Nothing was left over. But when they had change their diet to rice, their bodily organism could not digest all they consume. Undigested matter remained in the bowels. Primitive humans had no opening in their bodies meant for excretion. Yet the vayo element in the body cavity exerted pressure on the excreta within. So body openings such as rectum and urethra had to develop in the human being. This was followed by the development of *bhāvarūpas* by means of which masculinity and feminity are determined. Some became men and some women in conformity with their status before they reached the Brahma realms.

## Marriage

Men and women were lured into sexual acts as they developed mutual lust for each other's physique. The wise forebode sexual intercourse as unwholesome and looked down upon them, but the majority could not resist the sensual pleasure. Couples had to carry out the ignoble vile act in small edifices they had set up in fear of being ridiculed and stoned. (At present in some places this custom of throwing stones at the newly-wed couple's house continues.) In this way human settlements began to take shape. Later on beings with bad *kamma* were reborn as animals, making the world complete.

## THE ABODE OF DEVAS

We have studied the processes of world-systems, the nature of beings in the Niraya (Hell), etc. The sufferings and joys of mankind are known to all and they need no explanation. Here the luxuries of celestial beings in the divine mansions will be described briefly, according to the books.

## **The Celestial Mansions**

The luxuries enjoyed by *devas* are far superior to our human pleasures, just as the mass of the ocean is incomparable to a droplet of mist on a blade of grass. In the place of Tāvatimsa is the City of Sudassana sprawling at the top of Mount Meru. The city itself is ten thousand *yojanas* in extent. The Garden of Nandanavana located to the east of the city is so beautiful a park that even dying *devas* forget their grief when they enter it.

The sight of graceful couples of *devas* and *devīs* strolling about among verdant foliage and flowering plants also adds to the unique beauty of the park. In the middle of the park, there are two lakes, Mahānandā and Cūlanandā; the crystal waters are indeed a sight to look at, especially from the jewelled seats placed around the lakes. There are similar lakes in the other three cardinal directions of the city.

## Devas and Devis

The jewelled mansions where *devas* reside are created by their own good *kamma*. All *devas* look as if they are 20 years old, and *devis*, 16. They never age; they remain youthful and beautiful all their life. They eat only celestial food so their bodies produce no excreta. *Devis* are free from the travail of

menstruation. Mode of enjoying sensual pleasure is similar to the humans but are free of filth. *Devīs* do not take pregnancy. Offspring are born directly as grown ups and appear in their arms or on their couches. There also are servant *devas* who own no mansions.

How *devas* conduct courtship to *devīs* to win favour or affection is a matter for conjecture. Do they follow the human routines or devices? There was the case of love-lorn *deva*, named Pañcasikha, who composed and sang love-songs to the accompaniment of his divine harp. His songs were dedicated to Devī Sūriyavacchasā, the beautiful daughter of Deva King Timbaru.

"Yam me atthi katam puññam, Arahantesu tādisu, Tam me sabbangakalyāni, Tayā saddhim vipaccatam. = All along by myself, I have accumulated much merit by observing precepts and making offerings to the most homage-worthy Arahants, who are always pure, free of defilements. May these accumulated merits of mine come to fruition soon in the form of inseparable partnership for life with you, my love, my beauteous queen."

Though aware of Pañcasikha adoration for her, Sūriyavacchasā had an eye for Sikhantī, son of Deva Mātali. So Sakka, the King of *devas*, because of his services intervened and arranged the marriage between her and Pañcasikha.

Some *devīs* dwelling in their own mansion would feel lonely and long for a partner. *Devas* have different *kusala-kamma* and so some are more beautiful than others; their mansions, too, excel that of others. Naturally there will be inferior *devas* who would harbour jealousy against those who are endowed with more potent *kamma*.

All these divine abodes are full of carnal pleasures, and they are fully enjoyed by celestial beings. But of them, those who achieve Arahantship and those who achieve Anāgāmimagga being wearied of sensual pleasures cannot stay long in Deva Loka. The Anāgāmīs die in order to be reborn as Brahmas. The Arahants enter parinibbāna.

Therefore, we cannot hope to become a yogi and meditate in the abode of *devas*, where divine sensual pleasures engulf us. Only those *devas* who had very diligently practised meditation in the previous human existence, or only those who are opportune to hear the Dhamma of the Buddha in person can improve and augment their virtue in the Deva Abode. Other *devas* are inclined to forget the Dhamma as they enter the gates of Nandanavana Garden.

In Deva Loka, let alone *vipassanā* meditation, even the observance of  $s\bar{s}la$  (precepts) is difficult to perform. The *devīs* would entice the *devas* who soon tend to discard the precepts. Call to mind how Campeyya, the King of Serpents, failed to observe precepts in the serpent abode; and how Sakka had to alight to the human world in order to observe *Uposatha Sīla*. Because of these unfavourable environments, all Bodhisattas perform their fulfilment of ten *Pāramīs* in the human world only. They do not live to their full term in Deva Loka, instead they deliberately terminate their life-span to be reborn as human beings and practise *Pāramīs* (Perfections).

There is, however, a small hope for those virtuous *devas* who wish to perform meritorious deeds in Deva Loka. There is the Cūļāmaņi Pagoda for worship. There also is the Sudhamma Lecture Hall. The Cūļāmaņi Ceti enshrines Bodhisatta's hairs and right upper tooth of Buddha Gotama. It is built of solid

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emerald one *yojana* high. Couples of *devas* who have strong faith in the Buddha come to this pagoda with clear goodwill and offer flowers and other offerings. They devote their efforts to fulfil *Pāramīs* rather than to enjoy sensual pleasures in the celestial gardens.

The Dhamma preaching hall, known as Sudhamma, is beyond description in grandeur and splendour. The whole edifice is studded with glittering jewels. Then aroma of the Paricchattaka (Pinle kathit in Myanmar) tree growing nearby and in full bloom pervades the whole building. In the centre of the hall is the preaching throne covered by a white umbrella. On one side of this Dhamma throne are seats for thirty-three senior *devas* such as Pajāpati, Varuņa and Īsāna. (Comrades of good deeds of Magha youth). Next come the seats for other *devas* in order of their power and merit. (Such Sudhamma Halls exist also in the four higher Deva planes).

At the time for Dhamma meeting Sakka blows the Vijayuttara conch-shell, the sound of which reverberates all over the City of Sudassana which is ten thousand *yojanas* in size. The sound lasts for months in human terms. When the congregation is seated, the whole edifice glows with the radiance of the *devas*. Sometimes Sanańkumāra Brahma comes down and delivers discourses. Sometimes Sakka himself preaches a sermon; or he gives the floor to another eloquent *deva*. Therefore, there is chance for performance of wholesome deeds like paying homage to the Cūļāmaņi Pagoda or listening to the Dhamma discourses in the celestial realms. But these deeds cannot be expected to propel one to the extent of achieving *Magga* and *Phala*. They only serve to sustain virtuous consciousness and reduce the enjoying of the pleasures of celestial world.

In the forthcoming age of decline, there is no hope for monks and laity to be fully imbued with Dhamma. Even the present age is no more decent. If we really dread the impeding sufferings in *samsära*, we all should commence our efforts this very day so that we might attain *Magga* and *Phala* as soon as possible. Those who hope to meet the Buddha Metteyya in person and listen to his teaching to gain enlightenment in the Deva world will have a very slim chance to do so. No sooner had they entered the gate of Nandavan Garden, then they will tend to forget what they have already accumulated. Even if they are fortunate enough to meet the next Buddha in person, they are very much likely to be entranced in sensual pleasures.

So apart from Bodhisattas who are determined to save sentient beings, and apart from Chief Disciples-to-be, each and everyone ought to start endeavouring for attainment of liberation right away. Our revered teacher taught us thus: "While being confronted with dangers you should each endeavour in solitude. But why are you being foolish neglecting the future and putting off the practice of *bhāvanā* (meditation) for this or that time?"

## How Sakka forgot the Dhamma

Sakka, the king of *devas* and *Sotāpanna Ariya*, once visited the celestial garden, riding on his elephant Erāvaņa. At the gate he suddenly remembered a question he had planned to ask the Buddha. The problem was: What was the path taken by an *Arahant* to realise Nibbāna, the cessation of all craving? He was well aware that in the midst of the Garden Festival he would forget his noble plan so he decided to visit the Buddha. He left his elephant and retinue at the garden gate and vanished from there to appear in the human world.

When he arrived at the Pubbarama Monastery where the Buddha was preaching the Dhamma, he asked, "Exalted Buddha, how does an *Arahant* overcome his lust, greed and attachment to attain Nibbāna, which is the cessation of craving?" He requested a brief answer so that he could return to divine Garden Festival in time. Therefore the Buddha replied briefly:

"O Sakka, a monk who is to become an *Arahant* listens to the discourse which says, "All things are not fit to be thought of wrongly as "I" or "Mine". He tries to understand the nature of all things (the five aggregates). When all things are known, he further understands that they all are suffering. After that he dwells viewing all feelings as impermanent. After repeated viewing, he does not cling to anything and attains Arahantship and is able to go freely to Nibbāna, the exhaustion of all craving."

This, in short, was the Buddha's reply to Sakka. He was very pleased with the discourse, proclaiming "Well done (Sādhu)", three times and returned to his celestial residence. The Venerable Moggallāna heard this proclamation from inside the chamber. He wished to know if Sakka really comprehend the discourse or not, so he followed Sakka to Tāvatimsa to find out.

When the Sakka arrived at the celestial garden, he joined the *devas* in the merriment and being enhanced by the pleasures, he forgot the Dhamma he had just learnt. When he saw the Venerable Moggallāna he was embarrassed. But he greeted the venerable with due respect and paid obeisance.

The Venerable Moggallāna asked Sakka about the Dhamma he had just learnt from the Buddha. However hard he tried,

Sakka was unable to recall anything at all because he was so entranced in sensual pleasures. He gave the lame excuse that he had forgotten the discourse as he was very much occupied with the affairs of Deva Loka.

## Xote See Cūļataņhāsańkhaya Sutta of the Mīlapaņņāsa.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

This discourse shows us how objects of sensual pleasures of the *deva* world can make us become oblivious to the noble Dhamma. Even Sakka, a *Sotāpanna Ariya* with great intelligence and vigilance, cannot resist such objects which deaden the conscious mind. He himself asked the Buddha a question, he himself listened to the reply, and yet he could not recall the discourse in a matter of minutes. Such was the influence of the sensual pleasures he experienced in the celestial garden. Therefore the following lessons should be noted:

- 1. Those who are virtuous and know that they are virtuous are very much likely to be reborn in higher abodes, namely human and *deva* worlds, and nowhere else. One cannot be a *Brahma* until achievement of *jhāna*; and one cannot enter *parinibbāna* until one becomes an *Arahant*. Even if one becomes a *deva*, bear in mind that *Ariya* persons like the Sakka are also liable to be forgetful of the Dhamma. If so, we are no exception. We may also forget whatever Dhamma we have accumulated.
- 2. Celestial beings generally spend their time enjoying the sensual pleasures of the *deva* world and tend to disregard the Dhamma. If they pass away while craving for their luxury, they are sure to be reborn in the four *apāyas*. Once, five hundred *devīs* passed away while singing and picking

flowers in the garden. All of them were reborn in Avīci Hell.

- 3. To be born again a human is also no comfort. To be a virtuous person in a worthy fashion (a) one must be born in a period when the Sāsana flourishes, (b) majority of the people are righteous, (c) one's parents and teachers must be virtuous, (d) one must be born not to wretched poverty but to a sufficiently well-to-do family. Only if these essential conditions are fulfilled will it be worth to be reborn as a human being.
- 4. Considering the state of the *Sāsana*, we find that virtuous persons are very rare to find these days. Sensual pleasures are abound; most people pursue vain pride and wealth; charity is done more for fame than for merit; reverence of the *Samgha* is contaminated with false pride and propaganda. Corruption is rampant even at the very top.
- 5. Devotees and supporters of the Sāsana do not send their children to the monasteries, so monastic education is fading out gradually. There are no more lay students in most monasteries; without them how can there be sāmaņeras (novices)? Without sāmaņeras how can there be bhikkhus well versed in the texts? If such a situation prevails there would soon be no qualified abbots to preside over the monasteries. Most bhikkhus would be ex-family men who renounced worldly life only at a ripe age and therefore not versed in doctrines and disciplinary rules.
- 6. The supporters of the Sāsana mostly send their children to modern schools where the sole purpose of education is vocational training. But such education is for the benefit of this life only. Such education does not provide knowledge of

Magga, Phala and Nibbāna. The products of such schools do not comprehend the effects of kamma. Hence it is unlikely for them to believe in the higher abodes or the lower woeful abodes. Such people with wrong views will surely not care to offer alms-food, let alone the four requisites, to the Samgha.

- 7. In future the younger generation will no more be fortunate enough to inherit wealth from their parents. Nowadays parents have to struggle hard even to afford education for their children. Novel commodities in the form of diverse consumer goods are abound in the markets. When children grow up and earn their living, it will be difficult for them to make both ends meet. Or they may have to resort to illegal means of acquiring wealth. In such hard times, how could people support the Sāsana?
- 8. Bhikkhus do not at all attempt to modify the old monastic system to keep pace with the time. They are responsible for giving basic education as well as ethical teachings. Conditions are now favourable, yet some monastic schools do not devise their plans on modern lines. They cannot attract the interest of today's parents. Persons with modern education look down upon the system of monastic schools. So, will they have the goodwill to support the *Sāsana*? On reflection we will find that the decline of the *Sāsana* is approaching.
- 9. In future the majority will not be virtuous persons endowed with morality. The age of righteous persons is the time when *mettā*, *karuņā* and muditā flourish. Today lovingkindness is a rarity. Without loving-kindness there could be no compassion for the poor and no sympathetic joy for the

wealthy. Today the world is full of envy, jealously, hatred, pride and greed. Both strata, the high and the low, are cultivating vain pride in different manners, conceit by the elite, and hurt pride or contempt by the down-trodden.

- 10. Everyday we find novel commodities and sources of pleasure everywhere; and so greed gains momentum, just like adding fuel to fire. Greed when it cannot be satisfied leads to intense hatred; and further on to atrocities, murders and wars. If righteous people are rare these days, what will be the future like?
- 11. With righteous people getting rarer and rarer in future there will be few good parents and teachers. In the midst of the immoral society, future generations will find it difficult to be righteous themselves without the moral guidance of parents and teachers. It is not easy then to go to Deva Loka, to enjoy sensual pleasures there. Nor is it easy to be reborn in the human world where *kusala* (unwholesome deeds) are burgeoning.
- 12. I would like to relate my experience at the Yangon railway station in 1957. I went to Yangon to attend the consecration of a Sīmā. On my return a *bhikkhu* friend from Yangon saw me off at the station. While we were waiting for the train, we saw people rushing, pushing violently fighting for seats on the train as it was shunted into the station. I was made to understand that it was a daily scene.
- **13.** I began to reason like this: "This train journey will last two days at the most. Lest they should not get good seats, some push and elbow violently for a good seat. Some pay extra money to have a reserved seat; on the train they scout around for trust worthy companions, some feel unhappy if

their seats are not to their liking; some are overcome by anxiety if their neighbours look dishonest."

- 14. "If people can take such toil for a journey of just two days, why can't they exert enough effort for the long, long journey, passing through many existences to arrive at Nibbāna? Why can't they endeavour to get good places, to find the right companions to accompany them on this long journey? If, by ill chance they be reborn in the four apāyas, they will suffer life long and akusala will be on the increase life after life; they will never get good seats in the long journey through samsāra. "Even when they become human beings they will be poor, needy and destitute. To avoid such catastrophes they should try really hard to be reborn in happy abodes. If they can try to get seats for a two-day railway journey, why can't they do so for a life-long journey. They are so short-sighted, and lack in intelligence." I began to feel pity for their stupidity; and I told my companion bhikkhu of my thoughts.
- 15. Readers of this books should consider these facts seriously and try to comprehend the unique Dhamma as much as they could manage. If you have already accumulated some *Pāramīs* (Perfections) in many past existences, you should continue your efforts in the line of minimising evil deeds and consolidating your *Pāramīs* such as *dāna* and *sīla*. Only then will you be a virtuous *deva* in the *deva* world; or a virtuous human in the human world. Like Bodhisattas who practised *Pāramīs* even in the dark ages void of *Sāsana*, you should also try to fulfil your *Pāramīs* as much as possible so as to gain habits and maturity in the performance of wholesome deeds.

## THE PLEASURES OF BRAHMAS

Brahmas are very peaceful beings; they enjoy the tranquility of  $jh\bar{a}na$ -kusala they had performed previously to gain the Brahma Realm. They are reborn as Brahmas only after attaining  $jh\bar{a}na$ ; and for this they had to meditate in solitude in quiet places away from the crowded cities, villages, houses, monasteries, remote from the throngs of society and the worldly sensual pleasures. Brahmas have no spouses, no children. They have no sexual organs so they do not enjoy the pleasures of  $k\bar{a}ma$ -guṇa. They had clearly seen the faults of sensual pleasures even during their meditation period as human beings, So they live a very pure life, free from all thoughts of sensual pleasures.

In their divine palaces and gardens, all *Brahmas* live in serenity, in saintliness. Some enjoy their *jhāna* bliss while others develop *mettā-bhāvanā* radiating waves of loving-kindness. Like in the human world there are different grades of *Brahmas*. There are *Brahma* kings, *Brahma purohitas* (advisers or counsellors) and lower grade *Brahmas* who form the retinue in attendance to the king.

# **A** Lower class *Brahmas* cannot see the *Brahma* king without his consent.

## 1. Asaññasatta Brahmas

Asaññasatta Brahmas are those divine beings without any consciousness or mind. As human beings they find faults of *citta* (mind) and sañña (memory). They think that all forms of greed arise because of *citta*. They also think that life would be so peaceful had there been no *citta*. While concentrating on the fault of consciousness, "*Citta* is loathsome.

Citta is loathsome", they develop a kammațțhāna called saññavirāga-bhāvanā (disgust for saññā).

When they die they are reborn as *Brahmas* in the Asaññasatta Brahma Realm and live like golden statues, standing, sitting, or reclining, without consciousness. Their life-span is 500 *kappas* long.

## 2. Arūpa Brahmas

Arūpa Brahmas have no rūpa; they have consciousness only. In the human world they worked for attainment of *jhānas*; after that they concentrate on the faults of rūpa; they think that the rūpa is the seat of suffering. Then they develop rūpavirāga-bhāvanā (disgust for rūpa). When they die they become Arūpa Brahmas, beings without material form, in the open space called Arūpa Brahma Realm. They live as continuous steams of consciousness high in the heavens for many kappas.

# Non-Buddhists will find it hard to believe in these two types of *Brahmas*.

## From Brahma to Hog

Of the Brahmas born in the Brahma Realm, the Ariya Brahmas (who have achieved Magga and Phala) will not go downwards to the lower realms. They soar higher, become Arahants and realise Nibbāna. But for Brahmas who are not yet Ariyas, they will have to descend to either deva or human abode at the exhaustion of their *jhāna* power. But they will not fall directly into the woeful planes. Due to the past kusala they become devas or humans of Dvihetuka or Tihetuka category in the next

life. From these planes they, according to their own actions, may fall into the four  $ap\bar{a}ya$  existences and become animals, *petas* or sinners in hell.

In the cycle of *samsāra*, ordinary worldlings, *puthujjana* persons, although they reach the highest abode of Brahmas, are liable to fall into bad, lower planes, such as the animal kingdom. There is a saying "Once a radiant *Brahma*; next a filthy hog". Being a *puthujjana* is a very dreadful state. From Bhavagga, the highest Brahma Realm, you might one day fall to the woeful planes. A rocket, missile or a projectile will soar skywards as long as there is propulsive energy; once the energy is spent, it must fall down again. So also sentient beings, at the exhaustion of their *jhāna* power, must return to the lower abodes.

## Note Bhavagga is the highest of all planes of existence. It is also known as Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana-bhūmi.

## WHAT IS NIBBĂNA?

It needs an entire treatise to explain Nibbāna in full. In this book I shall give only a few hints, since there is no room here for exposition of this important subject. Considering that it would be wiser to leave out this subject entirely than to treat it in a superficial matter. I had not touch upon it in the earlier editions. But beginning with the 1320 M.E. edition (20th edition), for the readers to get at least some knowledge about Nibbāna, the section on "Recollection of Peaceful Nibbāna" (*Upasama Nussati*) from the book "Thingyo Bhathatika" has been included.

"Recollection of Peaceful Nibbāna" means recollecting repeatedly the 'peaceful bliss (santi-sukha)' of Nibbāna. People talk differently about Nibbāna. Some say that Nibbāna is a special kind of mind and matter. Others say that in mind and matter there is an eternal quality like the perpetual core; when mind and matter come to cessation, that eternal quality or perpetual core remains and continues to exist; Nibbāna is just existing as that eternal core. Still others say, "How can Nibbāna be said to be blissful if you do not get to enjoy since there are no mind and matter in Nibbāna." Just as something about an object can be thoroughly understood only by those who have actually experienced it, so the nature of Nibbāna can be thoroughly understood only by those Noble Persons who have actually attained it. The deep nature of Nibbāna cannot be understood by mere speculation of a worldling. Nevertheless, I will present Nibbana to the best of my knowledge, in the light of Texts and of logical reasoning.

Nibbāna is is one of the Supreme Ultimates — it is independent of the other three *paramattha sacca*, namely ultimate realities of consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*) and matter ( $r\bar{u}pa$ ). Since it has nothing to do with mind and matter which are conditioned states ( $n\bar{a}ma-r\bar{u}pa-sankh\bar{a}r\bar{a}$ ), it cannot be a special kind of mind or matter. Nibbāna is listed as "Bhiddhā Dhammā", external Dhamma in the texts — Matrix (Matika) Text of the first book of Abhidhamma; so it is not eternal core within the body. Nor something that can feel *vedanā*. It is not an object ( $\bar{a}rammana$ ) like sight or sound because it cannot be felt. There is no enjoyment-feeling (*vedayita sukha*) bliss in Nibbāna — there is only 'peaceful bliss' (*santisukha*).

Let us elaborate: Enjoyment-feeling (*vedayita sukha*), after being enjoyed, vanishes and so effort has to be made to get it afresh time after time. But it is not worth going through that toil of renewing it just to get it anew. People, being not satisfied with what happiness they get out of that toil, try to enjoy more resorting to unlawful means like people taking a debt. It is a pity that as a result they have to pay back the debt of happiness with suffering in the four woeful states. The nature of 'peaceful bliss' which is not contaminated with such enjoyment is peacefulness due to the cessation of mind and matter, the conditioned states.

To further elucidate: A rich man, endowed with worldly pleasures soundly asleep, will surely scold his servants when they make worldly pleasures ready and wake him up. While he was asleep there was no apparent enjoyment, but he prefers the peaceful sleep to happiness gained through enjoyment. People say words of praise for the happiness of peaceful sleep without enjoyment, "Ah, how nice it is to be asleep." So you can imagine how sublime the happiness of 'peaceful bliss' is, which is just peacefulness without mind and matter.

Let us further consider the Once-returners and Arahants (Anāgāmīs and Arahants). They consider the aggregates of mind and matter as a very heavy burden. Therefore, they often enter into the Attainment of Cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*) in order to be free from the aggregates of mind and matter as much as possible. During that Attainment there is absolutely no enjoyment or feeling; there is only the cessation of mind and matter with no new arising of them. The very cessation of some of mind and matter they take to be an immense happiness; that is why they enter into this Attainment. Moreover, if we consider the state of Mindless beings and the Immaterial Beings, the

peacefulness of 'peaceful bliss' becomes evident. Mindless Beings have no feeling or enjoyment because they have no mental activity; for 500 world cycles they remain peacefully away from matter. The number of mental states that arise in the mental continuum of these Immaterial beings is very small indeed. If he is an Arahant, only 12 types of consciousness-one mind-door adverting (manodvārāvajjana), the eight types of sense-sphere functional consciousness (kāmavacara kiriya), one type of resultant consciousness of 'neither-perceptionnor-non-perception (nevasaññānāsaññāyatana)', one type of functional consciousness of 'neither-perception-nor-non-perception (nevasaññānāsaññāyatana)' and one type of Fruition of Arahantship consciousness - have chance to arise in his mental continuum. Since they arise only one at a time, when a type of consciousness does not arise again all mind and matter cease. Then the element of Nibbana that is called 'peaceful bliss' will become positively evident.

That Nibbāna which is 'peaceful bliss' is not one as a common property; it is a property unique to each individual. That is why, when their aggregates still remain, the Noble persons enter into Fruition Attainment each taking his own Nibbāna as object. It is said that dwelling with their mind inclined towards Nibbāna constitutes immense happiness. At the time of their *Parinibbāna* (final passing away), all *Theras* (Elders) and *Therīs* (Sisters) relinquished their aggregates of mind and matter uttering words of joy; this puts us to shame, us worldlings who are forever attached to mind and matter!

Sadevakassa lokassa, ete vo sukhasammatā. Yassa c'ete nirujjhanti, taṁ tesaṁ dukkhasammataṁ.

The world of ignorant ordinary beings together with *Brahmas*, Sakka and other *devas* (celestial beings) consider the desirable sense-objects such as visible object, audible object, etc., as pleasurable. In Nibbāna that is much revered by the Noble Ones, they cease. That Nibbāna where they cease without trace, these ignorant beings consider to be suffering since there is no enjoyment in Nibbāna.

Sukham diṭṭhamariyebhi, sakkāyassa nirodhanam, Paccanīkamidam hoti, sabbalokena passatam.

With the eye of wisdom the Noble Ones have clearly seen Nibbāna, the element of happiness, where the five aggregates that really exist in the ultimate sense, cease to be. The Noble Ones who have personally seen Nibbāna are actually in opposition to the world of worldlings who are afflicted with ignorance  $(avijj\bar{a})$  and craving  $(tanh\bar{a})$ ; they are like people running back to back in opposite directions!

## CONCLUSION

## The Reader's Duty

I have done my part in writing this "Abhidhamma In Daily Life" dealing with Dhamma aspects which the general reader should know in their everyday relationship. Having gained useful knowledge from this treatise, it is the duty of the general reader to put the knowledge so gained into practical use by developing mindfulness, self-restraint and earnest endeavour.

## **Knowledge and Practice**

Knowledge is not practice. Mere knowledge is useless. Books can offer knowledge but cannot practise for the reader. There are many who are literate, who have gathered much useful knowledge on the practice of Dhamma, but very few use such knowledge to their advantage. In the midst of majority of such people in the world, chances are slim to foster good, righteous mind.

For example, many deeds of *dāna* are performed nowadays not with a view to accumulate *Pāramīs* but to keep in line with social trends of showing off, vaunting their success and wealth for all to see; people can no longer follow the path of *Pāramīs* laid down by noble, virtuous ones. The social climbers, indeed, know their *dāna* will bear no good fruit or very little fruit, but

## CONCLUSION

because of their strong craving for popular acclamation, social acceptance and recognition, they sink to the level of doing deeds that the ignorant people do even though they know they should not.

## The Wily Tiger

Here is a story from Hitopadesa to illustrate my point. A wily tiger was too old to catch his prey. One day he kept calling loudly, "Oh travellers! Come and take this gold bangle." A traveller heard this call, so he approached the tiger and asked, "Where is the gold bangle?"

The old wily tiger showed the gold bangle in his paws. The traveller said he dared not come near him who used to be a man-eater. Then the wily old tiger preached him a sermon as follows. "In my younger days I killed human beings because I was not fortunate enough to listen to the Dhamma. As I grow older I lost my wife and children. I really felt samvega (sense of spiritual urgency). At that time I happened to meet with a noble person who taught me to live a virtuous life making deeds of  $d\bar{a}na$ . Since then I have been living a strictly righteous life. You have nothing to be afraid of. I am harmless. See, I don't even have claws and fangs. I have resolved to give this gold bangle to someone as charity, and you are the lucky one. Go bathe in the lake and come accept my gift."

Believing these persuasive words, the traveller did what he was told. When he stepped into the lake he sank into the swamp. Saying that he would help him, the tiger came and devoured the traveller.

This story from Hitopadesa gives us a moral lesson that mere knowledge is useless without morality. Educated and

intelligent persons without morality endowed with cunning, charm and cleverness at deceiving can be more dangerous than the ignorant, because they possess the knowledge to scheme wicked deeds. I would like to advise the readers not to be contented with mere knowledge, but to practise what they have digested so that they may become really virtuous persons. Here I conclude wishing you all again a more virtuous life.

Versified epilogue rendered in simple prose:

To bring this treatise to a close, here are some pertinent remarks in brief: In this modern age, although there are *bhikkhus* as well as laity with resolution to strive for attainment of Nibbāna, unless the mind is intrinsically pure, they will still be far away from the Sublime State they long for.

Therefore, beginning with myself, all my companions, close associates and generations to come, who wish to reach the blissful peace of Nibbāna realised by our Noble Predecessors, should study this treatise, "Abhidhamma In Daily Life" carefully, precisely, meticulously, and strive with full diligence accordingly so as to attain the supreme height, to become the great conqueror, the glorious victor.