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BUDDHISM Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?

BUDDHISM

Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?

by

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Best World Religion

In **Buddhism**, there really exist three Noblest Objects of Veneration : the **Buddha**, the **Dhamma**, the **Samgha**. By just paying homage to them once, one gets great merit and will be born in celestial realm after death.

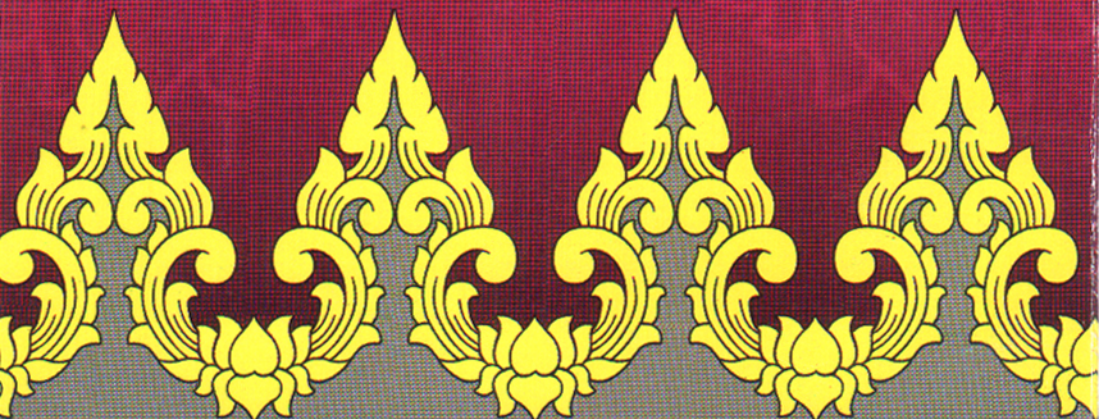
The Buddha really possessed **Omniscient Wisdom**.

He knew all **ultimate realities**, the ultimate components of Mind and Body, and all **Psychophysical Processes** occurring in Living Beings.

His Teachings, called '**Dhamma**', consist of ultimate realities, ultimate truths and natural laws. The **Noble Eightfold Path**, consisting of Threefold Noble Training of Morality, Concentration, Wisdom, which give rise to the **Noblest Nine Supramundance Dhammas** and the **Noblest Persons**, exist only in **Buddhism**.

To become '**Arahant**' is the highest and Noblest Attainment in life!

Buddhism leads to Personal Peace and World Peace!



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(1) Buddhism Won Best Religion in the World Award!
Why?

BUDDHISM WON BEST RELIGION IN THE WORLD AWARD! WHY?

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Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambhuddassa

PREFACE

- **The “Best Religion in the World” Award!**

The Geneva-based International Co-alision for the Advancement of Religions and Spirituality (ICARUS) has chosen to bestow the **“Best Religion in the World”** award to Buddhism.¹

Many intellectuals from all over the world expressed their admiration in the greatness of Buddhism and its founder, the Buddha.

In reality, the appearance of the Buddha and his teachings known as Buddhism in the world is for the welfare, prosperity and happiness of all living beings.

- **“Triple Gem”: Three Noblest Objects of Veneration**

In Buddhism there are three noblest objects of veneration, called **“Triple Gem”**, representing the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha.

The Blessed Buddha is really the noblest, wisest, most compassionate and greatest religious Teacher of men, devas and Brahmās. He is incomparable in morality, concentration and wisdom, and his numerous supernormal knowledges are most powerful. Moreover, his **Omniscient Wisdom** precisely knows in detail everything that should be known.

The Exalted Buddha attained these excellent Supernormal Knowledges and the highest Omniscient Wisdom by accumulating the greatest amount of good merits of fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections, Five Great Sacrifices and Threefold Noble Practice throughout his uncountable existences during a very long period of four asaṅkheyyas (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles, and finally by developing **seven mundane Supernormal**

1 <http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/onecity/2009/07/freedom-from-religion-buddhism-wins-best-religion-in-the-world-award-hm#60EJRGOMj6fIHV1Q.99>

Knowledges, ten Insight-knowledges and four Supramundane noblest Path-Wisdoms, which totally eliminate all defilements and all suffering, making his mind totally pure and most sacred.

So the Buddha was the **Noblest Greatest Teacher** and the **Supreme Head of Three Worlds** of humans, devas and Brahmās. Just by paying homage to him once, one gains great merit and shall be born in a celestial realm after death. The nine outstanding attributes of the Buddha are described in Chapter [10], pages 293-302.

The Buddha's excellent Teachings, known as the Dhamma, are based on Ultimate Realities, Ultimate Natural Truths and Natural Laws. He taught the Noble Eightfold Path, which he himself had realized and walked on and reached Nibbāna. Millions of humans, devas and Brahmās could also develop four Path-consciousnesses, four Fruition-Consciousnesses and realized Nibbāna to become enlightened as **Arahants**, who are the Perfect Noblest persons, just below Buddhas and Paccekābuddhas in nobility.

The four Path-Consciousnesses, the four Fruition-consciousnesses and Nibbāna are truly the Noblest Nine Supramundane Dhammas as they can totally eliminate all ten defilements, which are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world. All persons can practise the Noble Eightfold Path as described in this book on pages 155-220, and will be enlightened as Arahants in this very life if they can successfully develop the Nine Supramundane Dhammas. The six outstanding attributes of the Dhamma are described in Chapter [11], pages 304-309.

The Saṅgha Community is composed of Noble Bhikkhus, comprising four Path-persons and four **Fruition-persons, called Stream-winners, Once returners, Non-returners and Arahants**.

Worldling-bhikkhus, who maintain pure morality and are practising the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the Threefold Noble Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, to become noble persons, are also included in the Saṅgha Community, which is headed by the Buddha. So the Saṅgha Community is also the noblest object of veneration. The noble Saṅghas are like the most fertile field for planting the seeds of merits to get the greatest

benefits. The nine Supreme Attributes of the Saṅgha are described in Chapter [12], pages 310-313.

• **The Great Discovery of Ultimate Realities^{2,3}**

On the auspicious full-moon day of May, 588 B.C., when the Bodhisatta Siddhattha was going to be Fully Self-Enlightened as a Sammāsambuddha, he defeated **Deva Māra** and Māra's great army before sunset. Devas and Brahmās from ten thousand world-systems assembled at the **Mahābodhi Tree** and paid homage to the Bodhisatta (one striving to become a Buddha).

Without paying attention to them, the Bodhisatta undertook Ānāpāna-meditation and developed the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, which is the foundation for developing supernormal powers. As he had practised developing the eight jhāna-attainments very skilfully, his mind was totally pure, soft and tender, being amenable to his wishes. So as soon as he inclined his mind towards the Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences, that knowledge, called '*Pubbenivāsānussati-abhiññā*' arose in him.

Through this supernormal knowledge, he recollected and saw all his past existences, past activities, past events and past experiences up to his past existence of **Sumedha**, four *asaṅkheyyas* and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago, when he attained **Dipaṅkarā Buddha's Prophecy** that he would become a future Buddha.

Moreover, the noble Bodhisatta could also see penetratively **ultimate mentalities** and **ultimate materialities**, the ultimate basic constituents of mind and body, arising and perishing very rapidly and connecting all his uncountable existences as a very long chain without break.

These ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities are collec-

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2. "The Great Chronicle of Buddhas", Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivamsa, Tipiṭakadhara Dhamma-bhaṇḍāgārika, Singapore Edition, p.306-328
 3. "The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma", Third Edition, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp.21-270.

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tively called ‘**ultimate realities**’ that really exist in all living beings and in the whole universe. The Bodhisatta could also develop very powerful insight-knowledge to be able to define precisely each and every ultimate reality by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. This is the most difficult task to do in the world because ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities arise and perish extremely quickly and incessantly.

The Bodhisatta also clearly understood that the ‘**mind**’ is made up of one **consciousness** (*citta*) and several **mental factors** (*cetasikas*), and there are “**one type of consciousness, 52 types of mental factors and 28 types of ultimate materialities that make up mind and body.**”

These ultimate realities were not known by anyone, and the most important and most powerful **mind** is not known by any scientist, psychologist and philosopher, because there are no science-instruments that can detect the mind, let alone to detect the ultimate realities. The ultimate realities and the mind can be discerned and known with insight-wisdom in insight-meditation called “**vipassanā**”.

As ultimate realities are so subtle and so delicate that they cannot arise individually. Consciousness and 7 to 36 mental factors arise together as ‘**mental groups**’ or ‘**minds**’, and 8, 9, 10 or more ultimate materialities arise together as ‘**material groups**’ (*rūpa-kalāpas*), which are comparable in size with electrons, protons and neutrons.

Each material group is of the size of $1/10^5$ of atom in the human realm and much finer in celestial realms according to Buddhist scripture.

According to the “Dictionary of Science,”⁴

Effective size of atom = 10^{-10}m

Effective size of electron = 10^{-15}m

So the size of electron = 10^{-5} or $1/10^5$ of atom

So the size of electron = size of material group

4. “Dictionary of Science” by E.B. Uvarov and D.R.Chapman, p.33

Although material groups and mental groups (mind) are indivisible, each of their contents, that is, each consciousness, each mental factor and each ultimate materiality, can be discerned and defined by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate causes for their arising with insight-wisdom in vipassanā meditation nowadays in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, U.S.A., etc.

The Bodhisatta also knew that ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities are involved in psychophysical processes. **Thus he could understand all the psychophysical phenomena arising and perishing continuously throughout the whole life-span. He also understood the whole features of all existences.** Ultimate materialities, mentalities and psychophysical processes are described in Chapters [14] [15] [16].

As all existences are composed of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, and all mentalities and materialities are arising and perishing very rapidly, **they all have the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self.**

As all ultimate realities arise from natural causes (the Bodhisatta also knew the causes) and perish and disappear soon after they arise incessantly, they are really **‘impermanent’ (anicca).**

What is not permanent is ‘unsatisfactory’ and to be tortured incessantly by the perishing of mentalities and materialities, that we cherish as our minds and bodies, really amounts to **‘suffering’ (dukkha).**

Moreover, as mentalities-materialities arise and perish extremely rapidly and incessantly, leaving no substantial permanent thing, no ‘person’, no ‘self’, no ‘soul’, no ‘ego’, no ‘jīva’, no ‘atta’, no ‘I’, no ‘you’ really exist. This phenomenon is called **‘not-self’ (anatta).**

These three characteristic marks serve as the object of vipassanā meditation to be reflected repeatedly in various ways to be convinced that no ‘person’ and no ‘I’ really exists. Then the meditator can get rid of many wrong views, including **the universal basic wrong view of ‘personality-belief’**, which thinks ‘person’ and ‘I’

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exist and which makes every worldling very selfish.

The British Prime Minister, **William Gladstone**, made the statement: “*Selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race.*”

• **The important Discovery of the Law of Kamma**

At the middle watch of that auspicious night, May 588 B.C., the Bodhisatta inclined his mind towards the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye, and immediately **Divine Eye Supernormal Knowledge** (*Dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*) arose in him. Through this supernormal knowledge, he could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems. He could also penetratively see the ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities in these living beings, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly.

Together with Divine Eye, the following two Supernormal Knowledges also arose in him.

- (1) *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa* – the Supernormal Knowledge of seeing beings in the 31 planes of existence and knowing their respective ‘**Kammas**’, which give rise to their respective existences.
- (2) *Anāgatamisa-ñāṇa* – the Supernormal Knowledge of knowing the future existences of oneself and of others and also future events and future worlds.

In defining 52 mental factors, the Bodhisatta noticed that 13 mental factors are neutral, 14 are immoral and evil, and 25 are beautiful and good.

The 14 immoral mental factors are the only real evil forces in the whole universe, and they arise in our minds as our bad qualities. Ten of them are called **defilements** (described on page 158), which defile, debase, inflict and burn the mind. They are the root-causes of all evil actions and all sufferings in the whole world. Their three leaders are *greed, anger and ignorance*.

Greed, craving or lust = *lobha, taṇhā or rāga*

Anger, hatred or ill-will = *dosa, paṭigha or vyāpāda*

Ignorance or delusion = *moha or avjñā*

They are immoral evil roots. They give rise to immoral minds

to perform immoral evil actions.

The 25 beautiful mental factors are our beautiful good qualities. They are the good forces in the world. Three beautiful or moral roots, which oppose immoral roots, are:

Greedlessness, non-attachment or generosity = *alobha*,

Hatelessness, good-will, tolerance or loving-kindness = *adosa*

Wisdom or knowledge = *paññā* or *paññindriya*.

The 13 neutral mental factors can be used for good purposes or bad purposes. The first seven neutral mental factors associate with all minds. They help consciousnesses to be aware of each sense-object, and also perform important functions. For examples:

Contact (*phassa*) – It makes the contact between consciousness and a sense-object and produces feeling;

Feeling (*vedanā*) – It enjoys the taste of the sense-object;

Perception (*saññā*) – It perceives the detailed features of each sense-object;

Concentration or One-pointedness (*ekkaggatā*) – It unites consciousness and mental factors harmoniously to focus the mind on a sense-object and develop mental concentration.

Psychic life (*jīvitindriya*) – It sustains its concomitant-mental factors and consciousness to last throughout their life-span.

Attention, Reflection (*Manasikāra*) – It takes notice of the sense-object which appears at sense-doors, It makes reflection in deciding whether the sense-object is good or bad.

Volition (*cetanā*) – It decides to perform an action and prompts its associated consciousness and mental factors to do their respective functions to accomplish the action.

As an action is accomplished due to the decision and prompting of volition, the Buddha identifies ‘**volition**’ with ‘**action**’ (*kamma*) and said: “*Volition is action (kamma), thus I say, O monks, for as*

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soon as volition arises, one does the action, be it by body, by speech or by mind.”

According to Abhidhamma Commentary, ‘**mind**’ arises and perishes one after another continuously in a person extremely rapidly at the rate of more than one trillion minds per second.

Thus in killing a chicken or an animal, billions of anger-rooted immoral minds arise and perish, leaving their kamma-properties in the mental stream.

Similarly in stealing other’s property, billions of greed-rooted immoral minds arise and perish, leaving their kamma-properties in the mental stream.

On the other hand, in performing a meritorious deed such as giving alms or observing moral precepts or undertaking meditation, billions of moral minds arise and perish every second, depositing billions of moral kammas in the mental stream.

The volitions, which associate with immoral minds or moral minds, perform the action, and they are called “**conascent kammas**.” The kamma-properties, that are deposited in the mental stream and being conveyed from mind to mind continuously, are called “**asynchronous kammas**”, because the time they are formed and the time they bear results are different. Both types of kammas are simply called “**kammas**”.

Now asynchronous kammas are like the seeds, which are left behind after eating the fruits. As a seed can produce a new tree, which will bear similar fruits, so too each immoral asynchronous kamma can produce a new existence in a woeful abode together with woeful suffering, and a moral asynchronous kamma can produce a new existence in the human realm or a celestial realm together with pleasant enjoyment.

Mother nature is very remarkable to condition the cycle of “tree – fruit – seed – tree – fruit – seed –” and also the cycle of “living being – volitional action – kammas – living being – volitional action – kammas – living being” to go on round after round continuously and endlessly.

In science we have **Newton’s Law**, which states that “to ev-

ery action, there is an equal and opposite reaction”.

In the law of kamma, we can also state that “*to every action, an equal and opposite reaction may come a billion times*”, because billions of kmmas are produced in each action.

In Buddhist literature, there are **many true stories like Dhamma Diṇṇā**, an Arahant with supernormal knowledges, in Gotama Buddha’s Dispensation. She could recollect that in one of her past uncountable existences, she was a brahmin’s wife, and she killed a little goat by cutting its throat to cook good food for a guest. When she died, she had to suffer in hell for many years and she was killed by having her throat cut many million times. When she escaped from hell, she was born as animals as many times as there were many hairs in the body of the little goat that she killed, and in all these animal existences, she was killed by having her throat cut while she was still young. **Thus the effects of a bad kamma is very terrible!**

The effects of good kmmas are very encouraging. We have a saying: “*If we give alms as much as a banyan seed, we shall reap the fruits greater than a banyan tree.*”

This means that “*If you donate one dollar to a temple, you will get a million dollars in your every future existence.*”

During Anomadassī Buddha’s Dispensation one asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago, **a poor man**, who looked after two blind parents, took Threefold Refuge in Triple Gem respectfully throughout his life. At that time, the human life-span was one hundred thousand years. So he had acquired many billions of good kmmas.

When he died, he was born as a **Sakka**, King of devas in Tāvātimsā celestial realm. As his powerful good kmmas kept on bearing results life after life, he was born as the Sakka for eighty existences, as the Universal Monarch for seventy-five existences, as ordinary Kings for uncountable existences, and he was born only in celestial realms and human realm again and again, but never was he born in woeful abodes.

In his last existence, he was born as a **rich man’s son** in

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Sāvatti City during **Gotama Buddha's Dispensation**. At the age of seven years, he was playing with friends, and they ran into a monastery. An Arahant guided them to take Threefold Refuge in Triple Gem. Soon after taking Threefold Refuge, **the rich man's son became an Arahant**, the highest and best attainment in life. He was well known as "**Sarapa-gamaniya Thera**" in the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha. (*Apādan*, 1, 82)

The Law of Kamma is described comprehensively in Chapter (18) in this book. **The Buddha explained rationally how different kmmas give rise to various existences in 31 planes of existence**. So it is the mind with its kamma-property which creates all living beings in the whole universe. **It is very good news to learn that we can control our fates and fortunes by controlling our minds wisely in accordance to the Law of Kamma**.

- **The Important Discovery of the Doctrine of Dependent Origination**

As the **Bodhisatta Siddhattha** could discern and understand comprehensively his uncountable past existences in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, the psychophysical processes and the Law of Kamma, **he could readily deduce the important Doctrine of Dependent Origination, which explains beautifully and logically the rounds of rebirths and suffering of all living beings in terms of eleven causal relations and twelve factors, comprising ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities**. The Doctrine of Dependent Origination is comprehensively described in Chapter (19), pages 407-415.

- **Undertaking Great Insight Meditation (*Vipassanā*)**

The Bodhisatta Siddhattha also discerned the causes that give rise to mentalities and materialities to dismiss the wrong causes. He found four causes – kamma, consciousness, heat and nutriment – that produce materialities. The productive kamma, that gives rise to a new existence, produces important kamma-born materialities at every sub-moment. The resultant consciousnesses as well as other consciousnesses also produce, consciousness-born materialities at the arising moment of each consciousness. These

consciousness-born materialities help us to move our hands, legs, mouths, etc. Otherwise, we cannot move our hands, our legs, our mouths, etc.

The five kamma-born translucent materialities function as five material bases for eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, etc., to depend on and also as five sense-doors (eye-door, ear-door, etc.) where five sense-objects (visible object, sound, smell, taste, touch) appear. The kamma-born resultant-consciousnesses function as life-contium to keep us alive and also as our very **powerful mind-doors**, where all six types of sense-objects, including subtle materialities, mentalities, past sense-objects, future sense-objects, Nibbāna, concepts like meditation-signs, can appear.

Twelve bases (*āyatanas*), including six internal bases which function as six sense-doors and six external bases which represent six sense-objects, are the sources of cognitive series of consciousnesses. When a visible object appears in the eye-door, eye-door cognitive series of consciousnesses arise to be aware of the visible object. These cognitive series of consciousnesses are described in detail in Chapter (16).

When the Bodhisatta could deduce and understand, comprehensively the Doctrine of Dependent Origination in the third watch of that auspicious night when he would be enlightened as a Buddha, he could get rid of all the doubts whether every person had been born in the past or not and would be reborn again in the future or not. So he could also dismiss all wrong views such as ‘the view of no Cause (*ahetka-diṭṭhi*), the View of the wrong Cause (*Visama-hetuka-diṭṭhi*), the View of Inefficacy of Action’ (*Akiriya-diṭṭhi*), ‘the View of Nihilism’ (*Natthika-diṭṭhi*), ‘the View of Eternity of the Soul or Ego’ (*Sassata-diṭṭhi*), ‘the View of Annihilation of the Soul or Ego’ (*Uccheda-diṭṭhi*).

Furthermore, he had clearly observed the continuous chain of cause and effect relations occurring in accordance with the Law of Dependent Origination. So he also realized that all the effects of the causal relations illustrate **the Noble Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha-sacca*)**, because they all are ultimate mentalities-materialites, arising

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and perishing very rapidly and incessantly with the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self, and that all the causes of the causal relations illustrate **the Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering** (*Samudaya-sacca*), although he selected ‘*taṇhā*’ as the main cause of suffering.

As the Bodhisatta had achieved the **Purification of View** (*Dṭṭhi-Visuddhi*) by developing the Knowledge of Characterizing Mentality-materiality (*Nāma-rūpa-Pariccheda-ñāṇa*) and the **Purification by Overcoming Doubts** (*Kaṅkhā-vitaraṇa-visuddhi*) by developing the Knowledge of Discerning the Causes of Mentality-materiality as well as penetratively discerning the Causal Relations of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), he undertook the **Great Insight Meditation** (*Mahāvajjira Vipassanā*) in the third watch of that auspicious night.

He developed the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna and the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye, with which he could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems. He could also penetratively see the ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly, in all these beings.

When he contemplated the true nature of those living beings, living in each world system and belonging to three periods of time (past, present, future), he came to know very well that no matter how numerous *devas*, humans, *brahmās* were in a single world-system, they could be reduced to twelve factors of Dependent Origination as ultimate realities.

Vipassanā Meditation involves repeated reflection with insight wisdom on the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self of ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities in three periods of time (past, present, future) in 31 planes of existence in several ways to develop ten insight-knowledges and four Path-Wisdoms, to get fully enlightened to the Four Noble Truths, to realize Nibbāna, to gain emancipation from the rounds of birth and suffering, and to enjoy the eternal unique peace and supreme happiness of Nibbāna for

ever.

- **The Bodhisatta became Fully Self-Enlightened Buddha**

As the Bodhisatta possessed very pure morality, very strong mental concentration, very powerful insight-knowledge and supernormal power of divine eye, he could successfully develop ten insight-knowledges, four powerful Path-Wisdoms and four Fruition-Wisdoms very quickly just before dawn of that auspicious night.

As soon as the fourth Fruition-consciousness, called Arahatta-phala, arose, his mind became so totally pure that his incomparably great merits, that he had accumulated by fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections and Five Great Sacrifices throughout his uncountable past existences during a very long period of four asaṅkheyyas (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles, bore their great fruits and so he became endowed with Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbañña-ñāṇa*) and many supernormal wisdoms and qualities.

Simultaneously with the attainment of Omniscient Wisdom, he became a Fully Self-Enlightened Sammāsambuddha and the Supreme Head of Three Worlds of *devas*, humans and *brahmās*.

Note: The procedure for undertaking vipassanā-meditation, the development of ten insight-knowledges and the Fourfold Path-wisdom are described in quite detail on pages 204-220. The explanation of Four Noble Truths is described in Chapter [9] on pages 282-291.

- **Three Ways of Acquiring Knowledge**

The Buddha mentioned how knowledge and wisdom can be acquired in three ways.

1. *Sutamaya-paññā* – knowledge acquired by learning from teachers and literature.
2. *Cintāmayapaññā* – knowledge acquired by logical and rational thinking, pondering and doing research and experiments.
3. *Bhāvanāmayapaññā* – knowledge acquired by direct observation with wisdom in meditation.

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Of these three methods, the meditation-method is the most powerful, most definite and most accurate.

In Samādhi Sutta, Buddha persuaded his disciples (*bhikkhus* = monks) to develop the right mental concentration, preferably four *rūpāvacara jhāna* concentrations, by tranquillity-meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*) to see and know ultimate realities and ultimate truths as they really are with “*yathābhūta-ñāṇa*”, that is, **the wisdom that sees and knows things as they really are**. That means that this wisdom can be attained only by meditation.

• **Four Noble Truths and Threefold Noble Training**

Vipassanā Meditation is known and practised only in Buddhism. The Buddha discovered the universal **Four Noble Truths** together with **the Noble Eightfold Path**, consisting of **Threefold Noble Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom**, which are described comprehensively on pages 204-220.

The Noble Training of higher morality consists of “*Catupari-suddhi-Sīla*”, which is cultivating four kinds of morality to be morally pure in all aspects. Pure morality is the Foundation of Meditation. (Pages 160-163)

The Noble Training of concentration consists of Tranquillity Meditation (*Samatha-Bhāvanā*) which comprises Mindfulness of Breathing, Four Guardian Meditations, Mindfulness Occupied with the Body, Meditation on Ten Kasiṇas and Four Aruppas to develop eight *jhāna* attainments. The Four *rūpāvacara-jhāna* concentration is the best concentration to be used for undertaking Vipassanā-meditation. (Pages 164-185)

The Noble Training of Wisdom is totally concerned with Vipassanā-meditation. Twenty two wisdoms, namely, the Knowledge of Defining Mentalities-Materialities, the Knowledge of Discerning the Causes of Mentalities-Materialities, Ten Insight Knowledges, Change-of-Lineage Knowledge, Four Path-Wisdoms, Four Fruition-Wisdoms, and Review-Wisdom, have to be developed in Vipassana Meditation to be fully enlightened to the Four Noble Truths as Arahants and to gain complete emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering. (Pages 187-220)

Moreover, to be Fully Self-Enlightened as a **Sammāsambuddha**, endowed with Omniscient Wisdom, the support of the incomparably great merits, accumulated by fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections, Five Great Sacrifices and Threefold Noble Practice throughout uncountable existences during a very long period of four **asaṅkheyyas** and one hundred thousand world-cycles is definitely essential.

Thus when the **Bodhisatta Siddhattha** attained the Fourth Path-Wisdom and its Fruition-Wisdom, his incomparably great good merit bore results, and immediately he became Perfectly Self-Enlightened as a **Sammāsambuddha**, endowed with Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*) and many special Supernormal Knowledges.

So the Buddha was truly the Greatest in Morality and Compassion, in Nobility and Holiness, in Supernormal Knowledges and Power, in Omniscient Wisdom and many special Attributes. He also became the Greatest Religious Teacher and Greatest Benefactor of devas, humans and **Brahmās** by enlightening many millions of them to gain emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering and to enjoy the Supreme Bliss of **Nibbāna** for ever. So he was truly the Supreme Head of three worlds of humans, devas and **Brahmās**.

- **The Buddha's Excellent Teachings called Dhamma and 'Buddhism'**

The most Exalted Buddha launched the first most active missionary in the world. Out of great compassion and loving-kindness for all living beings, he worked day and night, sleeping for only one hour and twenty minutes a day, and travelling from village to village, from town to town, from country to country, even to other worlds and celestial worlds, for 45 years, preaching his excellent Dhamma discourses to humans, *devas* and *brahmās*.

With his powerful Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye, he could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems. He could also see dying persons and where they were reborn after death according to their **kammas**.

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As the minds of **worldlings**, who were not noble persons (*ariyās*), were overwhelmed by defilements, such as *greed, anger and ignorance*, they live with immoral minds while they are earning for a living and enjoying social pleasure and sensual pleasure. They also committed evil actions such as killing animals, stealing other's properties, lying and cheating others, sexual misconduct, gossiping, etc., accumulating many billions of immoral bad karmas. So when they died, most of them were born in woeful abodes.

In woeful abodes, there was very little chance to perform meritorious deeds to acquire good karmas. Thus woeful beings had to suffer in woeful abodes for uncountable existences as their accumulated bad karmas kept on bearing results. Only when good karmas that they had acquired in their previous human existences had the chance to bear results, would they be reborn as human beings.

If they live immorally again in the human realm or celestial realms, enjoying sensual pleasure and committing evil actions without performing meritorious deeds, they will be reborn again in woeful abodes after death. So the Buddha said: *“The four woeful abodes are the permanent homes of most living beings.”*

To prevent worldlings from being born in woeful abodes and to be born in the human realm and celestial realms again and again, the Buddha taught them to take Threefold Refuge in the noblest “Triple Gem”, comprising the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and to observe the five moral precepts of Pañca-sīla.

Then they can live very happily and nobly with the best moral character, abstaining from committing ten courses of evil actions, accomplishing ten courses of moral actions, living blamelessly and faultlessly, causing no harm to any living being. The procedure and the great benefits of taking Threefold Refuge and observing Pañca-sīla are described on pages 124-133.

We can enjoy personal peace, community-peace and world peace by observing Pañca-sīla and keeping pure morality. Then to enjoy greater happiness and greater benefits, the Buddha taught

Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds, consisting of three Dāna-group meritorious deeds, three Sīla-group meritorious deeds and four Bhāvanā-group meritorious deeds. They are described comprehensively on pages 139-147. If all the people willingly and delightfully perform these meritorious deeds, the human realm will be more pleasant and more peaceful than celestial realms.

The main teaching of the Buddha for the best and highest attainment in life is the noblest teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the Noble Threefold Training of the highest morality, the highest concentration and the highest wisdom. The full teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path is also comprehensively described on pages 155-210.

During the Buddha's days, many *bhikkhus* (monks) and *bhikkhunīs* (female *bhikkhus*) learned meditations from the Buddha and practised the Noble Eightfold Path steadfastly during the rain-retreat for three months and became enlightened to the Four Noble Truths as Arahants, the highest and best attainment in life.

Even nowadays many persons from all over the world came to meditate as taught by the Buddha in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres in Myanmar, Srīlanka, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, U.S.A. If they can undertake the Noble Threefold Training correctly and enthusiastically for three months or more, they can become **enlightened as Stream-Winners**. Then they can live most happily enjoying the eternal peace and supreme happiness of Nibbāna with the understanding that they will never be reborn in woeful abodes. They can be reborn in the human realm, celestial realms and brahma realms for up to seven existences. They will become Arahants in due course and enjoy Nibbana bliss for ever!

• **The First Great Occasion of Dhamma Teaching⁵**

Not long after his attainment of Buddhahood, the Exalted Buddha

5. "The Great Chronicles of Buddhas", Vol. I, by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhamma-bhaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Ed., p.466

34 ❖ *Buddhism Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?*

delivered his first sermon of *Dhamma-cakka* (Turning the Wheel of Dhamma), **teaching Four Noble Truths to five Ascetics, known as *Pañca-vaggi***, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, Migadāya Forest, near Bārānasī City. The Buddha made his voice heard all over ten thousand world-systems. Many *devas* and *Brahmās* came to listen the Sermon. At the end of the sermon, **one hundred and eighty million Brahmās and Venerable Koṇḍañña became enlightened as Noble Persons.**

• **The Great Occasion of the Longest Dhamma Teaching at Tāvātimsā**

In his seventh year or *vassa* (rain-retreat) of Buddhahood, the Exalted Buddha preached his longest discourse about **Abhidhamma**, his longest excellent Teaching, at Tāvātimsā celestial realm. Sitting cross-legged on the throne of the Sakka, King of Devas, he preached Abhidhammā day and night continuously without stopping for three months.

The Buddha could speak very clearly and very quickly. His rate of speech is 128 times faster than that of an average person. Thus the Abhidhamma that he preached continuously for three months is endless and incomparable.

When the time came for going on alms-round, the Omniscient Buddha created another identical Buddha and let the created Buddha preach on Abhidhamma with a voice and manner like his own. He took his alms-bowl and robe and came down to the delightful Anotatta lake in the Himalayas forest. He took a bath in the lake and proceeded to Uttara Kuru (North Island) for receiving alms-food. He partook of the food on the peaceful bank of Anotatta lake, and went to the forest of Sandal trees to spend the day.

Venerable Sāriputta, his right-hand chief disciple, came to attend on him. The Buddha gave the Venerable the gist and the guidelines of Abhidhamma that he taught at Tāvātimsā on that day. Venerable Sāriputta, who was foremost in wisdom among the Buddha's disciples, could reflect on the gist and guidelines of Abhidhamma in a thousand ways and could understand fully what the Buddha taught at Tāvātimsā realm.

In the afternoon the Buddha returned to Tāvātimsā realm to resume preaching Abhidhamma there to devas and Brahmās from ten thousand world-systems. Venerable Sāriputta also went back to his monastery and taught Abhidhamma to his 500 bhikkhu-disciples in a form neither too brief nor too elaborate. In this way Abhidhamma was taught simultaneously every day in Tāvātimsā realm and in the human realm for three months. When the teaching of Abhidhamma in the two realms came to a close also simultaneously at the end of the *vassa* (rain-retreat), eighty thousand crores of devas and Brahmās were enlightened to the Four Noble Truths as noble persons. **Santi-suta Deva**, the Buddha's mother in the human world, was also enlightened as a Stream-winner. Venerable Sāriputta's 500 bhikkhu-disciples also became Arahants.

As Abhidhamma describes rationally and scientifically in detail about the mind and all ultimate realities and explain all psycho-physical phenomena beautifully, it is really the extension of material sciences, psychology and philosophy. And as the Buddha taught Abhidhamma in principles, practicals and practices, it has been verified to be true by many millions of Arahants and noble persons and can be verified nowadays in Vipassanā meditation in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres. The author explained briefly and comprehensively in Chapters (6) (7) (8) why **Abhidhamma is really Supreme Science, Supreme Psychology and Supreme Philosophy**.

Since Buddhism made use of ultimate realities, ultimate truths and ultimate laws as taught in Abhidhamma to achieve the best attainment in life, which is the emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering and the enjoyment of eternal peace and supreme happiness of Nibbāna for ever, starting from this very existence, there is no wonder that Buddhism is religious, ethical, scientific, psychological and philosophical.

7. “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*”, Vol. II, by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivamsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhamma-bhaṇḍagārika*, Singapore Edition, p.1071-1076.

• **The Last Remarkable Dhamma Teaching of the Buddha⁷**

On the night when the Buddha was to realize Parinibbāna (ultimate peace), he was lying on a couch between two sal trees, flowering out of season in the sal Grove of Malla Princes outside Kusinagara town, a wandering ascetic, named **Subhadda**, who came of a well known rich family, and who was the last person to be enlightened by the Buddha, came to the Buddha at the middle watch of the night.

After paying homage to the Buddha, Subhadda asked the questions: “Venerable Sir, Pūrāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañcaya and Migantha (Buddha’s contemporaries) admitted themselves to be all knowing Buddhas, and they are held in high esteem by many people. Are they really the all knowing Buddhas? Are the doctrines they preach really lead to liberation from the rounds of births and suffering?”

The Buddha answered: “Subhadda, do not ask that, leave aside those questions. I shall expound to you the good doctrine leading to liberation and Nibbāna. Listen and pay careful attention. I shall speak in full.

“Subhadda, in whatever religious teaching, the Noble Eightfold Path is not found, therein there is not found the first stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Stream-Winner’, the second stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Once-returner’, the third stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Non-returner’, and the fourth stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Arahant’.

“Subhadda, in whatever religious teaching, the Noble Eightfold Path is found, therein there is found the first stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Stream-winner’, the second stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Once-returner’, the third stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Non-returner’, and the fourth stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Arahant’.

“Subhadda, in this religious teaching of mine, there is the Noble Eightfold Path. Thus in my Teaching alone, are found the first stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Stream-winner’, the second stage noble bhikkhu called ‘Once-returner’, the third stage noble person called ‘Non-returner’, and the fourth stage noble person called ‘Arahant’.

“All other religious teachings are void of the Noble Eightfold

Path. So they are void of the twelve categories of bhikkhus who comprehend the Four Noble Truths, namely: the four noble Path-bhikkhus who attained the Path (Magga), the four noble Fruition bhikkhus who attained the Fruition (Phala), and the four Trainees who are cultivating Insight to attain the four stages of Path-Wisdom.

“Subhadda, in my Teaching alone are these twelve categories of bhikkhus found. If these twelve bhikkhus practise and pass on the Teaching rightly, the world will not be void of Arahants.”

On hearing the clear Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, Subhadda understood the most outstanding feature of Buddhism very well that only in Buddhism the Noble Eightfold Path really exists, and that Morality, Concentration and Wisdom can be practically developed together to the highest level to be enlightened to the Four Noble Truths with the Fourfold Path-Wisdom, which truly totally eliminates all defilements that are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the whole world. Meditators become Arahants, gain emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering, and can enjoy the highest bliss and eternal peace of Nibbāna for ever.

So Subhadda gladly remarked: “Venerable Sir, Excellent is the Dhamma! As if that which has been hidden is revealed; or as if a lamp is lighted in a dark place so that those with good eyes can see visible objects, even so has the Exalted Buddha shown the Dhamma to me clearly.

“Venerable Sir, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. May I be initiated into the Saṅgha Order in the presence of the Buddha.”

The Buddha let Venerable Ananda shave Subhadda’s head and face and administer Triple Gem to him to initiate him as a novice (*sāmaṇera*). Then the Buddha admitted him to the Saṅgha Order as a bhikkhu and taught him the appropriate method of meditation.

Bhikkhu Subhadda sought seclusion in the sala grove and went into walking meditation alone. With intent mindfulness and striving arduously, he became fully enlightened as Arahant. He was the last person to become an Arahant in the presence of the Buddha.

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Therefore Buddhism is truly a Great World Religion with the most outstanding feature of teaching the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths to humans, devas and Brahmās to enlighten them as Noble Persons in their present life so that they can immediately enjoy real peace, real happiness, real salvation, real emanicipation from the rounds of births and suffering. The Noble Persons will become Arahants in due course to enjoy the eternal peace and the supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

• **Nothing to Surpass Buddhism**

Dr.Rhys Davids, the son of a well known English Clergyman, was one of the first scholars to translate Pāli Buddhist Literature into English with the objective of proving the superiority of Christianity over Buddhism. He failed in this task, but he achieved a greater victory. He became a Buddhist and made the following remark:

“Buddhist or not Buddhist, I have examined every one of the great religious systems of the world, and in none of them have I found anything to surpass, in beauty and comprehensiveness, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha. I am content to shape my life according to that Path.” (see Page 53)

Buddhism really practises non-violence, friendliness, loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, equanimity, regarding all human beings as brothers and sisters, without differentiation in race, caste, class and faith, always ready to give a helping hand to all. Buddhism always promotes personal peace, community peace, world peace, compassion, loving-kindness, harmonious living, non-vilence, and encourages preservation of natural environment. That is the reason why there are no persecution and no war in the name of Buddhism, and why Buddhism was voted by spiritual and religious people of the Geneva based International Co-alision for the advancement of Religions and Spirituality (ICARUS) for **“the Best Religion in the World” Award.**

(Dr. Mehm Tin Mon has been teaching *“The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”* in 60 lecture-hours in several countries. **The Essence**

of Buddha Abhidhamma is the most interesting and most beneficial knowledge to learn. A brief description of ultimate realities is also mentioned in Chapters [13] to [19] in this book).

Because physical sciences know only matter and energy and does not know about the mind and psychophysical phenomena, which are described in detail in Buddhism, **the great scientist, Albert Einstein**, said:

“Science is blind without religion, and religion is lame without science.”

Buddhism is neither lame nor blind, however, for Albert Einstein also added the statement:

“If there is any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism.”

Albert Einstein also predicted that Buddhism will become a **Cosmic Religion** in the future by the statement:⁸

“The religion of the future will be a Cosmic Religion. It should transcend a personal God and avoid dogmas and theology. Covering both the natural and the spiritual, it should be based on a religious sense arising from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual, as a meaningful unity. Buddhism answers this description.”

So we should know the true natures and qualities of Buddhism and the Buddha as well as the facts which make Buddhism the Best Religion in the world so that we can make use of them for our greatest benefits.

It is my great privilege to present these true natures and true qualities of Buddhism and the Buddha as well as some expressions of intellectuals and religious leaders in this book with best wishes.

May all readers gain great benefits and be happy and well for ever!

Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

8. “Buddhism in the Eyes of Intellectuals” by K.Sri Dhammananda, Buddhist Missionary Society, P.21

[1]

“BEST RELIGION IN THE WORLD” AWARD

• **Buddhism Wins the Best Religion in the World Award**

The Geneva based International Coalition for the Advancement of Religions and Spirituality (ICARUS) declared on 15.7.2009 that Buddhism Won “Best Religion in the World” Award.⁹

ICARUS director, Hans Groehlichen, said that the award was voted on by an international round-table of more than 200 religious leaders from every part of the spiritual spectrum.

“It was interesting to note that once we supplied the criteria, many religious leaders voted for Buddhism rather than their own religions. Buddhists actually make up a tiny minority of our membership, so it was fascinating but quite exciting that they won,” said Groehlichen.

The ‘**Criteria**’ included factors such as promoting personal and community peace, increasing compassion and a sense of connection, and encouraging preservation of natural environment.

Groehlichen continued, *“The biggest factor for us is that ICARUS was founded by spiritual and religious people to bring the concepts of non-violence to prominence in society. One of the key questions in our voting process was which religion actually practices non-violence.”*

Jonna Hult, Director of Research for ICARUS, said: *“It wasn’t a surprise to me that Buddhism won Best Religion in the World Award, because we could find literally not one single instance of a war fought in the name of Buddhism, in contrast to every other religion that seems to keep a gun in the closet just in case God makes a mistake. We were hard pressed to even find a Buddhist that had ever been in an army. These people practice what they*

⁹ <http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/onecity/2009/07/freedom-from-religion-buddhism-wins-best-religion-in-the-world-award-hm#60EJRGOMj6fIHV1Q>.⁹⁹

preach to an extent we simply could not document with any other spiritual tradition.”⁹

Father Ted O’Shaughnessy, Catholic priest from Belfast, N.Ireland, said: *“As much as I love the Catholic Church, it has always bothered me to no end that we preach love in our scripture, yet then claim to know God’s will when it comes to killing other humans. For that reason, I did have to cast my vote for the Buddhists.”⁹*

Muslim Cleric Tal Bin Wassad from Pakistan agreed and said: *“While I am a devout Muslim, I can see how much anger and bloodshed is channelled into religious expression rather than dealt with on a personal level. The Buddhists have that figured out. In fact, some of my best friends are Buddhists.”⁹*

Rabbi Shmuel Wasserstein from Jerusalem, said: *“Of course, I love Judaism, and I think it is the greatest religion in the world. But to be honest, I’ve been practising Vipassanā meditation every day before minyan (daily Jewish prayer) since 1993. So I get it.”⁹*

[2]
THE BUDDHA
IN THE EYES OF INTELLECTUALS¹⁰

• **Most Honoured Person**

Gotama Buddha is honoured today by every cultured and intellectual man irrespective of whatever religion he may profess. Not only those who belong to some religions but also the so-called free thinkers respect this **world-honoured Supreme Enlightened One**.

From the historical point of view there never lived any other Teacher **who has ever given so much religious freedom as well as due credit to humanity**. The Buddha was the Teacher in history who indiscriminately opened the gate of religion to each and every man in society.

Dr. K.Sri Dhammananda

Aggamahā Saddhamma Jotikadhaja

• **The Buddha's Greatness**

I cannot myself feel that either in the matter of wisdom or in the matter of virtue, Christ stands quite as high as some other people known to history – I think I should put Buddha above him in those respects.

** Bertrand Russell: "Why I am not a Christian"**

• **Embodiment of Virtues**

Buddha was the embodiment of all the virtues he preached. During his successful and eventful ministry of 45 years, he translated all his words into action; and in no place did he give vent to any human frailty, or any base passion. The Buddha's moral code is the most perfect which the world has ever known.

** Prof. Max Muller, German Scholar**

¹⁰ "Buddhism in the Eyes of Intellectuals," by K.Sri Dhammananda, pp.11-18.

- **Blossom of the Human Tree**

This is the blossom on our human tree,
Which opens in many a myriad years;
But opened, fills the world with wisdom's scent
And love's dropped honey.

** Sir Edwin Arnold, "Light of Asia"*

- **Buddha is nearer to us**

You see clearly a man, simple, devout, lonely, battling for light, a vivid human personality, not a myth. Beneath a mass of miraculous fable I feel that there also was a man. He too, gave a message to mankind universal in its character. Many of our best modern ideas are in closest harmony with it.

All the miseries and discontents of life are due, he taught, to selfishness. Selfishness takes three forms – one, the desire to satisfy the senses; second, the craving for immortality; and the third, the desire for prosperity and worldliness. Before a man can become serene, he must cease to live for his senses or himself.

Then he merges into a great being. Buddha in a different language called men to self-forgetfulness five hundred years before Christ. In some ways, he was near to us and our needs. Buddha was more lucid upon our individual importance in service than Christ, and less ambiguous upon the question of personal immortality.

H.G.Wells, World Historian

- **Homage to Buddha**

Lord Buddha could be very easily singled out as the one person known to man who received homage from the greatest number of mankind.

**Prof. Saunders, Literary Secretary Y.M.C.A.
India, Myanmar, Ceylon**

- **Most Noble of Mankind**

If you desire to see the most noble of mankind, look at the king in beggar's clothing; it is he whose sanctity is great among men.

Abdul Atahiya, a Muslim Poet

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• **Buddha's Message**

The Buddha has been something greater than all doctrine and dogma, and his eternal message has thrilled humanity through the ages. Perhaps at no time in past history was his message of peace more needed for a suffering and distracted humanity than it is today.

** Nehru, Indian Prime Minister**

• **We are impressed by His Spirit of Reason**

When we read Buddha's discourses, we are impressed by his spirit of reason. His ethical path has for the first step right views, a rational outlook. He endeavours to brush aside all cobwebs that interfere with mankind's vision of itself and its destiny.

**Dr.S. Radhakrishnan, "Gautama the Buddha"*

• **Cool Head and Loving Heart**

The most striking thing about the Buddha is almost a unique combination of a cool scientific head and profound sympathy of a warm and loving heart. The world today turns more and more towards the Buddha, for he alone represents the conscience of humanity.

** Moni Bagghee, "Our Buddha"**

• **Buddha is like a Physician**

The Buddha is like a physician. Just as a doctor must know the diagnosis of the different kinds of illness, their causes, the antidotes and remedies, and must be able to apply them, so also the Buddha has taught the Four Holy Truths which indicate the range of suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way which leads to its cessation.

Dr. Edward Conze, "Buddhism"

• **Buddha is for Whole Mankind**

The Buddha is not a property of Buddhists only. He is the property of whole mankind. His teaching is common to everybody. Every religion, which came into existence after the Buddha, has borrowed many good ideas from the Buddha.

A Muslim Scholar

• **Greatest Man ever Born**

Here is a teaching we can follow with confidence. Where in the

world of religions, cults and creeds, can we find a master of such brilliance? **In a pagent of stars he was a giant of the greatest magnitude. Little wonder that scientists, philosophers, and men of literature have proclaimed Him ‘the Greatest Man ever born.’**

The radiance of this great teacher goes through a world of suffering and darkness, like a beacon light to guide and illuminate mankind.

A European Writer

• A Radiant Sun

In this world of storm and strife, hatred and violence, the message of the Buddha shines like a radiant sun. Perhaps at no time was that message more needed than in the world of the atomic and hydrogen bombs. Two thousand five hundred years have only added to the vitality and truth of that message.

Let us remember that immortal message and try to fashion our thoughts and actions in the light of that teaching. We may face with equanimity even the terrors of the atomic bomb age and help a little in promoting right thinking and right action.

Nehru, Indian Prime Minister

• Philosophic Genius

The Buddha was a pioneer as a lover of men, and a philosophic genius rolled into a single vigorous and radiant personality. He had things to say that no man or woman, after 2500 years of bustling and hustling and chattering round the fountain of knowledge, can afford to ignore. Greater perhaps than his wisdom was the example he set.

Moni Bagheer, “Our Buddha”

• Ethical Man of Genius

In this sphere **He gave expression to truths of everlasting value and advanced the ethics not of India alone but of whole humanity. Buddha was one of the greatest ethical men of genius ever bestowed upon the world.**

Albert Schweitzer, a leading Western Philosopher

46 ❖ *Buddhism Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?*

• **Salvation Without God**

For the first time in the history of the world, Buddha proclaimed a salvation, which each man could gain for himself and by himself in this world during this life, without the least help from a personal God or gods.

He strongly inculcated the doctrine of self-reliance, of purity, of courtesy, of enlightenment, of peace and of universal love. He strongly urged the necessity of knowledge, for without wisdom, psychic insight could not be got in this life.

** Prof. Eliot, "Buddhism and Hinduism"*

• **Peace and Happiness**

The Buddha taught his doctrine for the good, peace and happiness of all mankind. His aim was to establish righteousness in the world. The Buddha speaks of peace as the goal of his doctrine. The ultimate peace is the peace of Nibbāna, the complete liberation of mind to be reached by following the Noble Eightfold Path. The spirit of peace pervades His teachings at all levels.

**Ven.Dr.Henepola Gunaratana,*

*"In Pursuit of Peace and Happiness"**

• **Who is the Buddha?**

Many people in the world do not understand who the Buddha is. Some used to say that He was a God. **Even Hindus honoured Him as an incarnation of the God Vishnu. Rationalists respect Him as a Great Freethinker, and socialists regard Him as a Social Reformer.**

Although He was born a human being, He is not an ordinary human being. He was an extraordinary human being. **He was an embodiment of great virtues prior to His enlightenment and a flower of humanity.** Such was the achievement of His spiritual development that He was also regarded as **'Acchariya Manussa – Wonderful human being.'**

Ven.Pandit P.Sri Pamaratana Thero

- **The First most active Missionary in the World**

The Buddha was the first most active missionary in the world. He wandered from place to place for 45 years, preaching his doctrine to the masses and the intelligentsia. Till his last moment, he served humanity both by example and by precept. His distinguished disciples followed suit. **Penniless, they even travelled to distant lands to propagate the Dhamma, expecting nothing in return.**

** Ven. Narada Mahā Thera, "The Buddha and His Teachings"**

- **The Buddha's Greatness**

Born a man, living as a mortal, by his own exertion **he attained that supreme state of perfection called Buddhahood, and without keeping his enlightenment to himself, he proclaimed to the world the latent possibility and the invincible power of the human mind.**

Instead of placing an unseen almighty god over man, and giving man a subservient position in relation to such a conception of divine power, **he demonstrated how man could attain the highest knowledge and supreme enlightenment by his own efforts. He thus raised the worth of man.**

He taught that men can gain his deliverance from the ills of life and realize the eternal bliss of Nibbāna without depending on an external god or meditating priests. He taught the egocentric, power seeking world the noble ideal of selfless service.

He protested against the evils of caste system that hampered the progress of mankind and advocated equal opportunities for all. He declared that the gates of deliverance were open to all, in every condition of life, high or low, saint or sinner, who would care to turn a new leaf and aspire to perfection.

He raised the status of down-trodden women, and not only brought them to a realization of their importance to society but **also founded the first religious order for women. For the first time in the history of the world he attempted to abolish slavery.**

His will, wisdom, compassion, service, renunciation, perfect purity, exemplary personal life, the blameless methods that were employed to propagate the Dhamma and his final success – all these factors have compelled about one-fifth of the population of the world to hail the Buddha as the Greatest Religious Teacher that ever lived on earth.

Ven.Narada Mahā Thera, “The Buddha and His Teachings”

• **The Light of Asia**

Ever since the fifth century B.C., the Buddha has been the Light of Asia, a spiritual teacher whose teaching has shed its radiance over an area that once extended from the Kabul valley in the west to Japan in the east, from Sri Lanka in the south to Siberia in the north.

The Buddha’s sublime personality has given birth to a whole civilization guided by holy ethical and humanitarian ideals, to a vibrant spiritual tradition that has enabled the lives of millions with a vision of man’s highest personality. His graceful figure is the centerpiece of magnificent achievements in all the arts – in literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture.

His gentle, inscrutable smile has blossomed into vast libraries of scriptures and treatises attempting to fathom his profound wisdom.

Today as Buddhism becomes better known all over the globe, it is attracting an ever-expanding circle of followers and has already started to make an impact on Western culture.

A Buddha is thus not merely an Enlightened One, but is above all an Enlightener, a World Teacher. His function is to rediscover, in an age of spiritual darkness, the lost Path to Nirvana, to perfect spiritual freedom, and teach this Path to the world at large. Thereby others can follow in his step and arrive at the same experience of emancipation that he himself achieved.

Bhikkhu Bodhi, “The Buddha and His Message”

[3]
BUDDHISM
IN THE EYES OF INTELLECTUALS¹¹

• **Dhamma is the Law**

All the teachings of the Buddha can be summed up in one word: **“Dhamma”**. This law of righteousness exists not only in a man’s heart but it exists in the universe also. All the universe is an embodiment of revelation of Dhamma. The law of Nature which modern science have discovered are revelations of Dhamma. **If man will live by Dhamma, he will escape misery and attain Nibbāna.**

Ven.A.Mahinda

• **Ultimate Facts of Life**

Here it is necessary to draw attention to another unique feature of the religion of the Buddha, that it is the only religion of any religious teacher, which is the outcome of a consistent philosophy, which claims to tell us about the ultimate facts of existence and reality. The religion of the Buddha is a way of life resulting from the acceptance of a view of life, which is said to be factual. His philosophy is not without an account of the nature of knowledge.

Dr.K.N.Jayatileke, “Buddhism and Peace”

• **No Assumption in Buddhism**

It is a glory of Buddhism that it makes intellectual enlightenment an essential condition of salvation. **In Buddhism morality and intellectual enlightenment are inseparable from one another. While morality forms the basis of the higher life, knowledge and wisdom completes it.**

Without a perfect understanding of the law of causality and transformation, no one can even be said to be truly moral if he does not possess the necessary insight and knowledge. In this respect Buddhism differs from all other religions.

¹¹ *“Buddhism in the Eyes of Intellectuals”, by K.Sri. Dhammananda, pp.19-53.*

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All monotheistic religions start with certain assumptions, and when these assumptions are contradicted by the growth of knowledge, it increases sorrow. But Buddhism starts with no assumptions. It stands on the firm rock of facts, and can therefore never shun the dry light of knowledge.

Prof. Lakshmi Narasu, "The Essence of Buddhism"

• **Knowledge is the Key to higher Path**

Without sensuous pleasure would life be endurable?

Without belief in immortality can man be moral?

Without worship of a God can man advance towards righteousness? Yes, replies the Buddha, these ends can be attained by knowledge; knowledge alone is the key to the higher path, the one worth pursuing in life; knowledge is that which brings calmness and peace to life, which renders man indifferent to the storms of the phenomenal world.

Prof. Karl Pearson

• **Religious Revolution**

Twenty-five centuries ago India witnessed an intellectual and religious revolution which culminated in the overthrow of monotheism, priestly selfishness, and the establishment of a synthetic religion, a system of light and thought which was appropriately called Dhamma – Philosophical Religion.

Anagarika Dhammapala, "The World's Debt to Buddha"

• **Buddhism does not lead to a Fool's Paradise**

Buddhism is realistic, for it takes a realistic view of life and of the world. It does not falsely lull you into living in a fool's paradise, nor does it frighten and agonize you with all kinds of imaginary fears and sins. It tells you exactly and objectively what you are and what the world around you is, and shows you the way to protect freedom, peace, tranquillity and happiness.

Ven. Dr. Walpola Rahula, "What the Buddha Taught"

• **Buddhism will remain unaffected**

The doctrines of Buddha Dhamma stand today, as unaffected by the march of time and the expansion of knowledge as when they were first enunciated. No matter to what lengths increased scien-

tific knowledge can extend man's mental horizon, within the framework of the Dhamma there is room for the acceptance and assimilation of further discovery. It does not rely for its appeal upon limited concepts of primitive minds nor for its power upon the negation of thought.

Francis Story, "Buddhism as World Religion"

- **To Awake the Human Heart**

Surely the mysterious East, that fertile mother of religions, has given us in Buddhism a true revelation, since it makes known to us the moral beauty and purity that lies in the deep of human nature needing no other divinity than that which abides in the human heart to awake them into living glory.

Charles T. Gorham

- **A Plan for Living**

Buddhism is a plan for living in such a way as to derive the highest benefit from life. It is a religion of wisdom where knowledge and intelligence predominate. **The Buddha did not preach to win converts but to enlighten listeners.**

A Western Writer

- **Come and See**

Buddhism is always a question of knowing and seeing, and not that of believing. The teaching of the Buddha is qualified as *Ehi Passiko*, inviting you to come and see, but not to come and believe.

Ven. Dr. W. Rahula, "What the Buddha Taught"

- **Religion of Man**

Buddhism will last as long as the sun and the moon last and the human race exists upon the earth, for it is the religion of man, of humanity as a whole.

Bandaranaike, Former Prime Minister of Sri Lanka

- **Life by Principle**

Buddhism taught a life not by rule but by principle, a life of beauty; and as a consequence, it was a religion of tolerance. **It was the most charitable system under the sun.**

Rev. Joseph Wain

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- **Modern Problems**

To read a little Buddhism is to realize that the Buddhists knew, two thousand five hundred years ago, far more about our modern problems of psychology than they have yet been given credit for. They studied these problems long ago and found their answers too.

Dr.Graham Howe

- **Mind Training**

We hear much nowadays of thought-power, but **Buddhism is the most complete and effective system of mind-training yet placed before the world.**

Dudley Wright

- **No Forced Conversion**

It was never, however, the Buddhist way to proselytise – in the sense of forcing ideas and beliefs upon an unwilling audience, much less to exert pressure of any kind, or any kind of flattery, deceit or cajolery, to win adherence to one's own point of view. Buddhist missionaries have never competed for converts in the market-place.

Dr.G.P.Malalasekara

- **Buddhism is not a melancholy Religion**

Some people think that Buddhism is a dark and melancholy religion. It is not so; it will make its followers bright and cheerful. When we read the birth stories of Bodhisatva, the future Buddha, we learn how he cultivated the Perfection of patience and forbearance. It will help us to be cheerful even in the midst of great troubles and to take delight in other's welfare.

Ven.Gnanatiloka, A German Buddhist Scholar

- **The Smallest Element of Persecution**

Of the great religions of history I prefer Buddhism, especially in its earliest forms, because it has had the smallest element of persecution.

Bertrand Russell, English Great Philosopher

- **A genuine Pride**

A religion or a way of life is judged not merely by the truths it proclaims but also by the change that it brings about in the life of its

followers. So far as this test is concerned, Buddhism has a record of achievements in which we can take a genuine pride.

D.Valisinha, General Secretary, Mahā Bodhi Society

- **Rational Analysis**

Buddhism is the only great religion of the world that is consciously and frankly based on a systematic rational analysis of the problems of life and the way of its solution.

Moni Bagghee, “Our Buddha”

- **The Five Precepts**

These five precepts, indicate five arterial directions in which the Buddhist self-control is to be exercised. Thus, the first rule calls upon him to control the passion of anger, the second, the desire for material possession, the third, the lust of the flesh, the fourth, cowardice and malevolence (the causes of untruthfulness), the fifth, the craving for unwholesome excitement.

Edmond Holms, “The Creed of Buddha”

- **Man who Achieved a Great Victory**

One of the first scholars to begin the work of translating the Pāli literature into English, was the son of a well-known clergyman. His object in undertaking the work was to prove the superiority of Christianity over Buddhism. He failed in this task, but he achieved a greater victory than he expected. He became a Buddhist!

We must never forget the happy chance which prompted him to undertake this work and thereby make the precious Dhamma available to thousands in the West. The name of this great scholar was **Dr. Rhys Davids**. **Ven.A.Mahinda, “Blue Print of Happiness”**

- **Nothing to Surpass Buddhism**

Buddhist or not Buddhist, I have examined every one of the great religious systems of the world, and in none of them have I found anything to surpass, in beauty and comprehensiveness, the Noble Eightfold Path and the Four Noble Truths of the Buddha. I am content to shape my life according to that path.

Prof.Dr.Rhys Davids, Great English Scholar*

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- **Dominant Creed**

A system which knows no **God** in the Western sense, which denies a **soul** to man, which counts the belief in **immortality** a blunder, which refuses any efficacy to prayer and sacrifice, which bides men to look to nothing but their own efforts for **salvation**, which in its original purity knew nothing of vows of obedience and never sought the aid of the secular arm, yet spread over a considerable motley of the old world with marvellous rapidity and is still, which whatever base admixture of forcing superstitions, the dominant creed of a large fraction of mankind.

T.H. Huxley

- **Belief in Soul is the Cause of all Troubles**

Buddhism stands unique in the history of human thought in denying the existence of such a **Soul, Self, or Atman**. According to the teaching of the Buddha, the idea of **self** is an imaginary, false belief which has no corresponding reality, and it produces harmful thoughts of ‘me’ and ‘mine’, selfish desire, craving, attachment, hatred, illwill, conceit, pride, egoism, and other defilements, impurities and problems. It is the source of all the troubles in the world from personal conflicts to wars between nations. **In short, to this false view can be traced all the evils in the world.**

Ven. Dr.W.Rahula, “What the Buddha Taught”

- **Democracy**

Buddhism was a democratic movement, which upheld democracy in religion, democracy in society, and democracy in politics.

Dr.Ambedkar

- **Parliamentary System borrowed from Buddhism**

It may come as a surprise to many to learn that in the assemblies of Buddhists in India 2500 years and more ago are to be found the rudiments of our own parliamentary practice of the present day.

Marquess of Zetland, a former Viceroy of India

- **World Culture**

Buddhism has done more for the advance of world civilization

and true culture than any other influence in the chronicles of mankind.

H.G.Wells, World Historian

- **Wisdom is the Sword and Ignorance is the Enemy**

Not a single page of Buddhist history has ever been lurid with the light of inquisitorial fires, or darkened with the smoke of heretic or heathen cities ablaze, or red with blood of the guiltless victims of religious hatred.

Buddhism wields only one sword, the sword of Wisdom, and recognizes only one enemy – Ignorance. This is the testimony of history, and is not to be gain-said.

**Prof.Bapat, “2500 Years of Buddhism”*

- **No Persecution**

There is no record known to me in the whole of the long history of Buddhism throughout the many centuries where its followers have been for such lengthened periods supreme, of any persecution by the Buddhists of the followers of any other faith.

Prof.Dr.Rhys Davids

- **A Spiritual Science**

Buddhism is a system of thought, **a religion, a spiritual science and a way of life, which is reasonable, practical and all embracing.** For 2500 years it has satisfied the spiritual needs of nearly one-third of mankind. It appeals to the west, insists on self-reliance coupled with tolerance for the other's points of view, **embraces science, religion, philosophy, psychology, ethics and art, and points to man alone as the creator of his present life and sole designer of his destiny.**

Christmas Humphreys

- **Eternal Debt to the Buddha**

It is my deliberate opinion that the essential part of the teachings of the Buddha now forms an integral part of Hinduism. It is impossible for Hindu India today to retrace her steps and go behind the great reformation, that Gautama Buddha effected in Hinduism.

By his immense sacrifice, by his great renunciation, and by the

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immaculate purity of his life he left an indelible impress upon Hinduism, and Hinduism owes an eternal debt of gratitude to that great teacher.

Mahatma Gandhi, “Mahā Bodhi”

• **The Buddha’s Teaching: Its Aim and Methodology**

We live at a time when Buddhism is exerting a strong appeal upon an increasing number of people, both East and West. I believe the remarkable success of Buddhism, as well as its contemporary appeal, can be understood principally in terms of two factors: one, the aim of teaching, and two, its methodology.

As to the aim, the Buddha formulated his teaching in a way that directly addresses the critical problem at the heart of human existence – the problem of suffering – and does so without reliance upon the myths and mysteries so typical of religion. **He further promises that those who follow his teaching to its end will realize here and now the highest happiness and peace.**

This pragmatic thrust of the Dharma is clearly illustrated by **the main formula into which the Buddha compressed his program of deliverance, namely, the Four Noble Truths:**

(1) the noble truth that involves of suffering (2) the noble truth that suffering arises from craving (3) the noble truth of the cessation of suffering (4) the noble truth that there is a way to the end of suffering.

The Buddha not only makes suffering and release from suffering the focus of his teaching, but also he deals with the problem of suffering in a way that reveals extraordinary psychological insight. **He traces suffering to its roots within our minds, first to our craving and clinging, and then a step further back to ignorance, a primordial unawareness of the true nature of things. Since suffering arises from our own minds, the cure must be achieved within our minds, by dispelling our defilements and delusions with insight into reality.**

The Buddha offers a clear, precise, practical path made up of eight factors. This of course is the **Noble Eightfold Path**. When all eight factors of the Path are brought to maturity, **the disciple penet-**

rates with insight the true nature of existence and reaps the fruits of the path: perfect wisdom and unshakable liberation of mind.

The methodological characteristics of the Buddha's teaching follow closely its aim. One of its most attractive features, closely related to its psychological orientation, **its emphasis on self-reliance**. For the Buddha, **the key to liberation is mental purity and correct understanding**, and thus he rejects the idea that we can gain salvation by leaning on anyone else.

The Dharma or Teaching is experiential, something to be practised and seen, not a verbal creed to be merely believed. As one takes up the practice of the path, one experiences a growing sense of joy and peace, which expands and deepens as one advances along the clearly marked steps.

What is most impressive about the original teaching is its crystal clarity. The Dharma is open and lucid, simple but deep. It combines ethical purity with logical rigor, lofty vision with fidelity to the facts of lived experience.

Because the Buddha deals with the most universal of all human problems, the problem of suffering, **he made his teaching a universal message**, addressed to all human beings solely by reason of their humanity. **He opened the doors of liberation to people of all social classes.**

Bhikkhu Bodhi, "The Buddha and His Message"

[4]

THE OUTSTANDING QUALIFICATIONS OF THE BUDDHA

• The Criteria of a Great Religion

To determine whether a Religion is good or bad, right or wrong, rational or irrational, noble or ignoble, worthy of worship or not, we have to examine carefully the qualifications of the founder of the religion and the qualities of the religion in every aspect.

In the case of Buddhism, **Gotama Buddha** is the founder of Buddhism as his teachings are designated as ‘**Buddhism**’. The qualifications of the Buddha and the qualities of Buddhism can be examined in every aspect as his biography, his great noble struggle to become a Buddha, his unique qualifications as a Buddha, his unrivalled noble activities, his marvellous achievements, his wonderful teachings in the form of “**Three Piṭaka Canons**” (three Repositories of Buddhist Scriptures) have been well recorded, well studied and well preserved in pristine purity up till now.

[1] The Greatest Struggle to Become a Buddha¹²

To become a Buddha is the most difficult task in the world. Four *asaṅkheyyas* (great aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago, our **Gotama Buddha** was born as a young Brahmin named **Sumedha** in the Royal City of **Amaravatī**. His parents passed away while he was young. He inherited enormous wealth from his parents. At the age of sixteen years, he donated all his wealth to the people of Amaravatī. He left for the Himalayas and became an ascetic.

He lived under a tree on fruits, and without lying down, just in three postures of sitting, standing and walking, he made strenuous

12 “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*,” Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tiṭṭakadhara Dhammaḥaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Edition, pp. 25-48.

effort in meditation. Within seven days he attained eight jhānas and five supernormal knowledges. As he had already performed many meritorious deeds, observing moral precepts and undertaking meditation, in his many uncountable past existences during a very long period of sixteen asaṅkheyyas with the aim of becoming a Buddha, he could develop eight jhāna-attainments and five supernormal knowledges quickly and easily in the Sumedha existence.

One day while he was travelling through space with his supernormal power over **Rammāvati city**, he saw the citizens mending the road for the visit of **Buddha Dīpaṅkarā**. He asked for a part of the road to be repaired by himself. Before he finished his work, Buddha Dīpaṅkarā came along the road followed by four hundred thousand Arahants. On seeing the Buddha's most gracious, glorious and extraordinary person, endowed with bright aura around him and six rays emanating from his body, Sumedha aspired to become a Buddha.

He pondered: "If I so desire, this very day I can become an Arahant. But what does it profit me to become an obscure disciple of the Buddha? I will exert my utmost for the attainment of Buddhahood to rescue millions of beings out of the rounds of births and deaths and suffering."

He spread out his mat and fibre robe on the still muddy road and prostrated himself on them to let the Buddha and all the Arahants walk on his back, thus sacrificing his life. At that moment a young Brahmin maiden about his age, named **Sumittā**, was seized with a sudden great love for him.

She came to him and gave him five lotus blooms, saying: "Venerable Hermit, please offer these lotus blooms to the Buddha. I shall offer the remaining three lotus blooms to the Buddha. Venerable Hermit, throughout the period you are struggling to become a Buddha, may I be your partner who shares your life."

Sumedha and Sumittā offered lotus blooms to the Buddha, Sumedha praying for attainment of Buddhahood and Sumittā wishing to become Sumedha's life partner in his struggle to become a Buddha.

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• **Receiving the Prophecy of Buddha Dīpaṅkarā**

Buddha Dīpaṅkarā made the prophecy thus: “O Sumedha, this girl Sumittā will be your partner who will share her life with you, assisting you with equal fervour and deed for your attainment of Buddhahood. She will be lovely in appearance and pleasing to you with her every thought, word and deed. And Sumedha, you will become **Buddha Gotama** after four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand world-cycles have passed by from the present one.”

On hearing the Buddha’s prophecy, all humans and deities, who had gathered there, acclaimed with joy: “The Buddha said that Sumedha is truly the seed of a future Buddha.”

There was none among the people who did not aspire to Buddhahood on seeing the Buddha’s marvellous splendour. But none of them were qualified to become a ‘**Bodhisatta**’ or ‘**Future Buddha**’.

But **Sumedha** was fully qualified, because he had already performed meritorious deeds with the aim of becoming a Buddha for sixteen asaṅkheyyas, and also (1) he had fulfilled all conditions necessary for attaining Arahatsip, (2) he was an ascetic with the right view, (3) he was prepared to sacrifice his life for the well being of a Buddha, (4) he had attained jhānas and supernormal knowledges, (5) he possessed intense wholesome aspiration for Buddhahood.

Sumedha was highly delighted on hearing the Buddha’s prophecy. He contemplated the Buddha-making factors, which former Bodhisattas had always practised. He discovered that he had to fulfil (1) Ten Perfections, (2) Five Great Sacrifices, and (3) Three-fold Noble Practices.

(1) Ten Perfections are:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (1) Perfection of Alms-giving, | (2) Perfection of Morality, |
| (3) Perfection of Renunciation, | (4) Perfection of Wisdom, |
| (5) Perfection of Effort, | (6) Perfection of Forbearance, |
| (7) Perfection of Truthfulness, | (8) Perfection of Resolution, |
| (9) Perfection of Loving-kindness, | (10) Perfection of Equanimity. |

(2) Five Great Sacrifices are:

- (1) The Sacrifice of valuable treasure and kingdom,
- (2) The Sacrifice of sons and daughters,
- (3) The Sacrifice of beloved wife,
- (4) The Sacrifice of body-parts and organs,
- (5) The Sacrifice of one's own life

with the sole noble aim of becoming a Buddha.

(3) Threefold Noble Practices are:

- (1) The noble practice aiming at the welfare of all beings,
- (2) The noble practice aiming at the welfare of his relatives,
- (3) The noble practice aiming at the becoming of Sammāsambuddha.

The Bodhisatta fulfilled the Ten Noble Perfections, Five Great sacrifices and Threefold Noble Practices very earnestly and diligently throughout many uncountable existences during a very long period of four *asaṅkheyyas* and one hundred thousand world-cycles, accumulating incomparably great noble virtues, which would help him to attain **Omniscient Wisdom** (*Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), the highest wisdom which knows everything that should be known and which will make him a Fully Self-Enlightened Buddha. That is when he could develop **the Fourfold Path-Wisdom, which can eliminate all defilements (*kilesās*) that are the root-causes of all evil actions and all sufferings in the whole universe.**

As a matter of fact, the Bodhisatta gave his life as a sacrifice for the welfare of the world selflessly and peerlessly. So he was endowed with everything needed in his final existence as **Prince Siddhattha**, who was incomparable and supreme even before he became Fully Self-Enlightened as Sammāsambuddha.

[2] The Incomparable and Supreme Life of Prince Siddhattha
• **The Birth of Prince Siddhattha**¹³

On the full-moon day of May, 623 B.C., **Prince Siddhattha**, the

13 “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*,” Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Edition, pp. 222-261.

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Bodhisatta, was born in **Lumbinī Park** in present Nepal, near India border. His parents were **King Suddhodana** and **Queen Mahā Māyā Devī**. They ruled the Sākyan clan from **Kappilavattu City**.

The Prince was born while his mother was standing, holding a branch of a fully blooming Sala tree. Soon after birth, the Prince stood on the ground, looked at ten directions, seeing no one equal to him, walked seven steps northward, and made a bold exclamation:

“I am the noblest among humans, devas and Brahmās.

I am the greatest in power among humans, devas, Brahmās.

I am most worthy of admiration among humans, devas, Brahmās.

This is my last birth. There is no more rebirth for me!”

To herald the birth of the Bodhisatta, ten thousand world-systems quaked; Devas and Brahmās acclaimed in joy and showered flowers from the sky; all musical instruments produced melodies automatically; all flower-plants bloomed and all trees bore fruits.

When the Queen and the noble baby were conveyed back to the Royal City of Kappilavattu, King Suddhodana’s teacher, **Kāḷadevila the Hermit**, came to see the baby. When the King let his son pay homage to his teacher, the baby Prince instantly flew up, resting his feet on the Hermit’s matted hair.

As Kāḷadevila possessed supernormal powers, he immediately could see that the Prince would become a Buddha. So he stood up and paid homage to the Prince with clasped hands. Witnessing the marvellous scene, the King also paid homage to his son.

• **The Ceremony for Naming the Prince**

On the fifth day after the Prince’s birth, the King held the naming ceremony for his son. Among 108 learned Brahmins, eight were selected to foretell the Prince’s fortune. When they examined the **Prince’s body, they found 32 major marks and 80 minor marks of an extraordinary person.**

So seven brahmins predicted: “The Prince will become a Universal Monarch if he leads a household life, but he will become a

Buddha if he renounces the world.”

The youngest Brahmin, named **Koṇḍañña**, however, conclusively foretold that the Prince would certainly become a Buddha. **They also told the King that the cause of renunciation would be seeing four omens: an old man, a sick man, a dead man and a recluse.** They also named the Prince “**Siddhattha**”, meaning that he would succeed in accomplishing the task for the benefit of the whole world.

• **Development of the First Rūpāvacara Jhāna**

When the Prince was just about two months old, the raining season came and King Suddhodana performed a grand ploughing ceremony. The baby Prince was placed under the cool shade of a rose-apple tree near the field. When the ploughing ceremony started, his nursing attendants and security-guards, thinking he was asleep, went to see the ceremony.

The Prince quickly rose and sat cross-legged, undertaking ‘**mindfulness of breathing**’ (*Ānāpānassati-meditation*). Very soon, **he developed the first rūpāvacara jhāna and remained absorbed in jhāna-attainment.**

When nursing attendants returned only after the noon-time, they surprisingly saw the Prince sitting in absorption and the shade of the rose-apple tree did not move although the shades of other trees moved to the east. They quickly reported to the King. On seeing the two strange miracles, the King paid obeisance to his son lovingly for the second time.

• **Prince Siddhattha’s Wonderful Display of Archery**

As King Suddhodana wanted his son to become a Universal Monarch and not a Buddha, he gave orders to keep four great omens out of sight of the Prince, and brought up his son in great royal luxury.

When Prince Siddhattha was sixteen years old, he ordered for the construction of three palaces, named Ramma (Winter) Palace, Suramma (Summer) Palace, and Subha (Raining Season) Palace, specially designed to suit the weather-conditions of three seasons.

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Then the King thought of crowning his son King. So he ordered messages to be sent to his 80,000 Sākya relatives to send their daughters, who had come of age, to the Palace. But the relatives refused to comply, saying that the Prince was handsome but had no education to support a family.

When the King related the matter to his son, the Prince amazingly said: “My dear father, I need not learn anything. I know all the arts and skills that a Prince should know. What skill do you want me to display?”

The King told his son to display the art of archery. On the seventh day at the great gathering of 80,000 Sākya relatives, Prince Siddhattha demonstrated twelve minor types of archery, four major archery skills and the marvellous archery skill of piercing through seven kinds of massive bodies. This wonderful demonstration, which was a feat of skill, having no equal, amazed and delighted all spectators.

Prince Siddhattha had also demonstrated similar extraordinary wonderful skill in archery in his past existence as **Prince Asadisa**. In fact, **“The Great Chronicle of Buddhas”** states that the **Buddha could remember all the knowledges and skills that he had learnt in his uncountable past existences up to the existence of Sumedha**. (Live Readings’ of several persons about their knowledges and skills of past existences by Edgar Cayce, the miracle American, was described on Chapter [20].

• **Prince Siddhattha’s Accession to the Throne**

All the Sākya relatives were so fully delighted with the incomparable powers and all round accomplishments of Prince Siddhattha that they willingly sent to the Palace their royal daughters of matchless beauty, numbering forty thousand.

Among the forty thousand Princes, the crown, the crest and the foremost was **Princess Yasodharā**, who was **Sumittā** when Prince Siddhattha was **Sumedha**.

The 80,000 royal relatives headed by King Suddhodana assembled at a magnificent convention and celebrated the Coronation of Prince Siddhattha, Yasodharā Devī being chosen as his queen.

[3] The Great Renunciation of Prince Siddhattha¹⁴

Prince Siddhattha, surrounded by young maidens, was like the **Sakka**, King of Devas. He was entertained day and night with pleasant music and dances, performed by female troops. **He lived amidst magnificent luxury and royalty for thirteen years like a Universal Monarch.**

Then the desire to visit the Royal Garden arose in him. He rode the royal chariot to the Royal Garden in grand procession. Devas conferred together to show the Prince four Great Omens. A Deva assumed the appearance of an **old man** on the road. The Prince learned from the charioteer that the man was old, getting close to death, and that everyone, including the Prince, will become old as the years pass by.

The Prince became sad, cheerless, and asked the charioteer to drive him back to the Palace. Four months later, the Prince again went to the Royal Garden in grand procession. On the way Devas created a **sickman**, who was in great pain. The Prince again became sad and cheerless to learn that everyone, including him, was subject to sickness. He again returned to the Palace without proceeding to the Royal Garden. On reflecting deeply, he came to know that birth was the prime cause of ageing and sickness.

When King Suddhodana learned about the matter, he ordered to increase the number of dancing girls and guards. Deceived and distracted by sensual pleasure, Prince Siddhattha spent another four months, enjoying the pleasures and luxuries of the Palace life.

Four months later, the Prince again rode the royal chariot to the Royal Garden. On the way Devas created a **dead man** together with his relatives weeping beside the corpse. The Prince learned from the charioteer that the corpse was a dead man and everyone, including the Prince, was subject to death. The Prince became sad,

14 “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*,” Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Edition, pp. 262-279.

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cheerless, and returned to the Palace. On deep reflection, he realized that birth was the prime cause of ageing, sickness and death.

He let four months pass by as before, enjoying sensual pleasure and great luxuries. Then he went to the Royal Garden again in grand procession. On the way Devas created a **recluse** with clean shaven head and beard, wearing a bark-dyed robe. The recluse told the Prince that he had gone forth from household-life, and practising alms-giving, observing moral precepts, undertaking meditation, thus leading a pure and righteous life.

The Prince admired the recluse and decided to become a recluse himself. He proceeded to the Royal Garden, enjoyed its delight, and sat on a stone-slab, thinking about his renunciation.

At sunset, messengers sent by his father arrived and informed him that **Queen Yasodharā** had given birth to a son. The Prince remarked: “The Asura Rāhu, who will seize me captive has been born; a great bondage has come into existence.”

When **King Siddhodana** heard this remark from the messengers, he **named his grand-son “Rāhula”**.

When the Prince arrived at the Palace, he went up and reclined on a royal couch. Instantly musicians started playing musical instruments and dancers started singing and dancing. But being disgusted with sensual pleasure, which kindled the fires of lust, hatred and delusion, the Prince fell asleep in a moment.

On waking up in the middle of the night, the Prince saw dancing girls asleep, some with saliver flowing out of their mouths, some grinding their teeth, some snoring loud, some with no clothes on; they looked like loathsome dead bodies in a cemetery. The Prince decided to renounce the world immediately.

The Prince woke up **Minister Channa** and told him; “I wish to renounce the world now. Go quickly and saddle a thoroughbred horse which possesses great speed.” Then he went to Queen Yasodharā’s chamber and saw the Queen being asleep with her hand holding their son’s head.

The Prince thought: “If I move the Queen’s hand and nestle my

son, I shall surely awaken the Queen. That will endanger my plan for renunciation. So be it for now. Only after I have attained Buddhahood, will I come back and see my son.”

The Prince descended from the Royal Palace and jumped on to the royal steed **Kaṇḍaka**, followed by Minister Channa behind him. Kaṇḍaka joyfully ran out of the Palace and passed through the city-gate as devas kept the gate open.

Just outside the gate, **Vasavatti Māra** appeared and said: “O Prince Siddhattha, please do not go forth. The Celestial Wheel Treasure will appear in seven days and you will become a Universal Monarch.”

The Prince said: “O Powerful Māra, I know that the Wheel Treasure will arrive, but I do not have the least desire to become a Universal Monarch. Please let me go.”

Deva Māra gave way, and the royal steed Kaṇḍaka ran at high speed, passing through three kindgoms of Sākiya, Koliya and Malla in one night, eventually arriving on the bank of River Anomā. When the Prince gave the signal, Kaṇḍaka jumped across the wide river and reached the other bank.

The Prince told Minister Channa to take Kaṇḍaka and his ornaments to the royal Palace and to tell his father that he became a recluse that day. He cut his hair with his sword and threw up his hair-knot after making a solemn resolution: “If I will become a Buddha, let the hair-knot stay in the sky.” It marvellously stayed in the sky.

The **Sakka**, King of Devas, took the hair-knot and enshrined it in **Cūlāmaṇi Cetiya**, which he built in Tāvātimsā celestial realm. Again the Prince thought: “These precious garments of mine are not suitable to a recluse.”

Immediately **Ghatikāra Brahmā**, who was the Bodhisatta’s friend in the life-time of Buddha Kassapa, appeared and gave him eight requisites of a recluse. On wearing the robes, the Bodhisatta became a **Pennyless Recluse**. He had renounced his Royal Palace, his Great Kingdom, his family and relatives, all his treasure and

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even the highest status of a Universal Monarch!

What **Abdul Atahiya**, a Muslim Poet, said was correct: “If you desire to see the most noble of mankind, look at the King in beggar’s clothing; it is he whose sanctity is great among men.”

[4] The Great Struggle to Attain Enlightenment¹⁵

After becoming a recluse, the Bodhisatta observed eight moral precepts called **Ājīvaṭṭhamaka Sīla**. He travelled on foot to **Rājagraha City** in seven days. When he went round for alms-food with great elegance inside the city, the citizens were filled with joy and astonishment on seeing his magnificent, graceful appearance. Royal servants reported to **King Bimbisāra**, and the King sent his ministers to make careful enquiries.

The Bodhisatta collected just enough food for his sustenance. He went out of the city, sat on a mountain, and tried to eat the mixed food in his alms-bowl. Having enjoyed the kingly bliss as great as the bliss of a Universal Monarch, he felt miserable and almost vomitted to eat the coarse mixed food.

Then he admonished himself thus: “You, Siddhattha, in spite of the fact that you have been enjoying supreme in a palace where delicious food and drinks are available at your pleasure, on seeing a recluse in robes of rags, contemplated: “When shall I eat the meal attained by going on alms-round from house to house after becoming a recluse like him? Now your dream has come true; why do you wish to change your mind?”

Then without the slightest revulsion, he took the meal that was so rough.

On hearing the report of his ministers, **King Bimbisāra** came to see the Bodhisatta. The King was very much impressed with him, gladly conversed with him, and offered him as much royal pleasure and wealth as he wanted.

15 “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*,” Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayādaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Edition, pp. 279-292.

The Bodhisatta told the King that he belonged to the Sakyan lineage, and having renounced the world as an ascetic, he had no desire at all for material pleasure. He would go into the forest to undertake the practice of ‘*dukkara-cariyā*’ (austere practice) to attain Buddhahood.

The King replied that he had heard about Prince Siddhattha, who after seeing four great omens, renounced the world to become a recluse. He requested the Bodhisatta to visit his country first when he attained Buddhahood.

The Bodhisatta, alone and penniless, set out on a journey to attain Buddhahood. He came to the place of a great religious teacher. **Ālāra** by name, **Kālāma** by clan. He learnt from this teacher **seven jhāna attainments** up to *Ākiñcaññāyatana-jhāna* in two or three days.

He proceeded to another sect leader, **Udaka** by name, the son of **Rāma**. Udaka told the Bodhisatta the course of practice leading to the eighth jhāna called *Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-jhāna*, which his father Rāma had attained but he had passed away. The bodhisatta practised it strenuously and attained it in two or three days.

The Bodhisatta reflected that the eight jhāna attainments would help him to live very joyfully and to be reborn in *Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana Brahma realm* after death, but they could not lead him to Nibbāna.

So the Bodhisatta departed, went about Magadha country and came to the market town of Senā. Nearby was **Uruvela Forest** which was pleasant and delightful and **Nerañjarā River** with clear water was flowing continuously through the forest.

He decided to stay in Uruvela forest, getting alms-food from Senā town and practising loving-kindness. Later he stopped going for alms-food, living on fruits only. The group of five ascetics, known as **Pañca-vaggī**, with **Brahmin Koṇḍañña** as the leader, also came to Uruvela forest and waited upon the Bodhisatta.

Then the Bodhisatta started practising **Appānaka Jhāna** by restraint of out-breathing and in-breathing. With unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his nose and his

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mouth so that the air could not go out and come in. Then the accumulated air escaped through the ears forcefully like the air coming out from the bellows of a blacksmith.

Then the Bodhisatta restrained exhalation and inhalation through his nose, his mouth and his ears. Thereby, having no chance to escape, the air rushed up to his head, battering and piercing the head like a strong man churning his head with a sharp drill.

He tolerated the pain. His energy was as vigorous as ever. Again he continued to develop Appānaka jhāna by restraining exhalation and inhalation. Thereupon, the air of great intensity injured his abdomen as if curving it up like a skilful butcher cutting up the abdomen with a sharp knife. Again he was not disappointed and did not give up.

As he kept on restraining exhalation and inhalation, his whole body suffered from violent burning like severe burnt when a weak man was grilled on a big heap of great fire. At that time too, the Bodhisatta's energy was as strong as before. His mindfulness was very distinct and steadfast.

The Bodhisatta's **“Strenuous Exertion”** (*Padhāna-vīriya*) was made up of fourfold determination:

(1) *Let only the skin be left!*

(2) *Let only the sinews be left!*

(3) *Let only the bones be left!*

(4) *Let the flesh and the blood be dried up!*

I shall never give up unless and until I succeed!

The practices of strenuous exertion are called **“Dukkara-cariyā”** as they are very difficult for ordinary people to practise. The Bodhisatta practised “Dukkara-cariyā” for six years! Yet he was never disappointed and he never gave up. He thought: “If I am not successful today, I shall succeed tomorrow.” So he kept on practising day after day with strenuous effort, steadfast mindfulness and keen awareness.

Finally he was afflicted so painfully with great heat all over his body, he fainted and fell down. Even some devas informed King Suddhodana that his son was dead. The King did not believe it,

however, for he firmly believed that his son would not die without attaining Buddhahood.

When the Bodhisatta recovered from his faint, he decided to continue his practice without taking any food. In that case, devas said that they would inject celestial food through his body-pores to keep him alive. Then the Bodhisatta said that he would take food just enough to sustain his body.

Therefore, the Bodhisatta took food just little by little. For a day's meal, he took just a handful of bean soup or pea soup or grain soup. Finally he was reduced to a **living skeleton!** When sweat trickled profusely, he fell with his face downwards and fainted.

It was usual for most Bodhisattas to practise the “*Noble Eightfold Path*” just for about seven days to attain Buddhahood. Gotama Bodhisatta had to do “*Dukkara-cariyā*” for six years as the result of a **Verbal Misdeed** committed by him when he was **Brahmin Jotipāla**, who was very proud of his birth during the life-time of **Kassapa Buddha**.

When his friend **Ghaṭikāra** told him that **Kassapa Buddha** became Fully Self-Enlightened as a Buddha by just practising meditation for six days, **Brahmin Jotipāla** said very harshly: “How can this shaven-headed person realize the knowledge of the Path and Omniscience in six days? Omniscience is very difficult to achieve. I will practise for six years if I can become a Buddha.”

This verbal misdeed against the most exalted Buddha was very serious and heinous. It prevented Gotama Bodhisatta not to discover **vipassanā-meditation** even though he had the knowledge of developing eight jhāna attainments.

When the six-year period of the austere practice called Appānaka-jhāna is completed, the Bodhisatta could easily discern the right Path to attain enlightenment and Buddhahood.

[5] The Discovery of the Right Path to Enlightenment and Buddhahood¹⁶

When the Bodhisatta regained consciousness, he reflected deeply: “I have practised this austere austerities with the greatest effort

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and steadfast mindfulness, enduring the greatest pain for six years. Yet I have not attained enlightenment and Buddhahood. There may be another mode of practice to attain enlightenment and Buddhahood.”

Then he remembered that he had developed the first rūpāvacara jhāna attainment when he was just about two months old. At that time his mind was very pure, clear, calm and peaceful. Therefore, the development of jhānas must certainly be the true Path for the realization of enlightenment and Buddhahood.

He also realized that he must take some solid food to resuscitate and strengthen his emaciated and withered body. So he took his alms-bowl and went round the market town of Senā for alms-food. He sustained his withered body with whatever food he received. Within three days, he regained strength and the major characteristics of a great man.

• **Pañca-Vaggī Departed from the Bodhisatta**

The group of five recluses (*Pañcavaggi*) thought that he had abandoned the practice of meditation and reverted to material accumulation. So they abandoned the Bodhisatta and went to **Isipatana**, the Deer Park near Vārānaśī.

It is a natural course of event (*dhammatā*) that when a Bodhisatta is to attain Buddhahood, either his attendants abandon him or he himself leave them to be alone by himself. The state of solitude is conducive to extraordinary progress and high mental concentration.

Thus living in complete solitude for fifteen days, the Bodhisatta developed four rūpāvacara jhānas in Ānāpānassati meditation, the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna being the basis for Insight Meditation (*Vipassanā*).

He also redeveloped the eight jhāna attainments which he learned from Ascetics Ālāra and Udaka by meditating on **Kasiṇas**, and

16 “The Great Chronicles of Buddhas,” Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayādaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika*, Singapore Edition, pp. 298-328.

practised to develop them very skilfully. These eight jhānas are the basis for the development of mundane **Supernormal Powers**.

On the fourteenth waxing day of the month of Vesākha (May 588 B.C.) the Bodhisattā dreamed five great dreams, and he interpreted them that he would attain Buddhahood the next day, which was the full-moon day.

• **Lady Sujāta Offered Ghana-Milk-Rice**

In the morning of the full moon day, the Bodhisatta departed from his place early. When he reached a big banyan tree, he sat at its base, waiting for the time to go for alms-round. Thereby the whole banyan tree shone brilliantly with his body rays.

The rich lady of Senā, named **Lady Sujātā**, prepared very special Ghana-milk-rice for offering to the Guardian Deity of the Bayan tree. She poured Ghana-milk-rice into a gold cup worth one lakh. She covered it with another gold cup. Carrying the gold cup on her head, she went to the Banyan tree with great pomp and grander.

She was overjoyed on seeing the Bodhisatta and, mistaking him to be the Guardian deity of the Banyan tree, she offered him the Ghana-milk-rice together with the gold cup. Saying words of prayer: “My heart’s desire is fulfilled. May your heart’s desire be also fulfilled!” she paid obeisance and departed.

The Bodhisatta went to Nerañjarā river, took a bath, and sat under the cool shade of a tree. He prepared exactly forty-nine morsels of Ghana-milk-rice, and ate them all.

Then the Bodhisatta rested for the day in the Sal grove on the bank of Nerañjarā river. He practised meditation and developed the eight jhānas very skilfully.

• **A Jewel Throne Appeared under the Bodhi Tree**

In the evening the Bodhisatta took a bath in Nerañjarā river, and walked towards the **Bodhi Tree**. On the way a Brahmin grass-cutter named **Sotthiya**, offered him eight handfuls of grass. He scattered the grass on the ground at the foot of the Bodhi Tree. Immediately a large magnificent jewel throne appeared.

With the Mahābodhi Tree as the back-drop, facing east and with

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a steadfast mind, the bodhisatta sat on the jewel throne, assuming the invincible cross-legged posture. He declared: “Unless and until I attain Buddhahood, I will not change my cross-legged posture!”

• **The Great Battle with Māra Army**

Māra was a powerful evil deva of Paranimitta Vasavattī realm. He led an insurgency there with a large retinue of evil devas. He did not want the Bodhisatta to become a Buddha and ferry humans, devas and Brahmās to Nibbāna. When he saw the Bodhisatta at the Bodhi Tree about to become a Buddha, he quickly assembled a great fighting force of evil devas and commanded them to fight the Bodhisatta.

The Bodhisatta reflected on the so numerous meritorious deeds that he had performed in fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections. His accumulated virtue was so much greater than the Māra’s virtue that Māra’s great army could not enter the vicinity of the Mahābodhi Tree.

Māra launched nine kinds of missiles such as violent cyclone, torrential rain, the rain of stones, the rain of spears, etc. These weapons caused no harm to the Bodhisatta.

Again Māra let meteors fall down on the Bodhisatta, and launched his mechanical weapon to smash the Bodhisatta’s head into bits. The weapon came down roaring like thunder and fell down at the feet of the Bodhisatta as a foot-scraper, thereby humbling the pride of Māra.

Not knowing how to proceed further, Māra approached the Bodhisatta and shouted: “Prince Siddhattha, get away from the jewel throne. The throne belongs to me.”

The Bodhisatta asked: “Who is the witness to prove that the jewel throne belongs to you?”

At that moment all the Māra troops shouted: “We are the witness. We are the witness.”

The Bodhisatta replied: “O Māra, because of my wish for this jewel throne, there was no charity which I have not given, no morality which I have not observed, no austerity which I have not

practised throughout many world-systems. Even in just one existence as **King Vessantara**, when I performed great charities seven times, culminating with **the offering of my son, my daughter and my Queen Maddi Devi**, this great earth trembled seven times. This great earth, having no volition, is just and fair to you and to me. Now it will be my witness!”

So saying, the Buddha pointed his hand towards the great earth. Immediately the great earth revolved swiftly, causing the whole stretch of the sky to resound loudly like the rumbling of thunder. The whole ten thousand world-systems trembled with frightening and fierce sounds. Māra himself and his great army were frightened and they fled in confusion at full speed.

In this manner, with the victory over Māra and his great army before sunset on the full-moon day of Vesākha, the Bodhisatta became the conqueror of the whole world of sentient beings.

Devas and Brahmās from ten thousand world systems assembled at the Mahābodhi Tree and paid homage to the Bodhisatta as the celebration of his victory over Deva Māra and his great army.

[6] Development of Supernormal Knowledges and the Great Discovery of Ultimate Realities

Without paying attention to them, the Bodhisatta undertook *Ānāpānassati meditation* and developed the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, which is the foundation for developing supernormal powers. As his mind was totally pure, soft and tender, being amenable to his wishes, as soon as he inclined his mind towards supernormal knowledge of former existences, *pubbenivāsānussati-abhiññā* arose in him.

Through this supernormal knowledge, he recollected and saw all his past existences, past activities, past events and experiences up to the existence of **Sumedha**, four *asaṅkheyyas* and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago.

Moreover, the noble Bodhisatta, who recollected his successive past existences through supernormal knowledge of former existences, also acquired supernormal knowledges of penetrative in-

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sight as follows.

“There were only the phenomena of **ultimate mentalities** (nāma = consciousness and mental factors that make up the mind) and **ultimate materialities** (rūpa = ultimate basic constituents of the body) throughout the countless existences. On all three occasions of birth, living and death, there were only these two phenomena of mentalities and materialities (nāma-rūpa), arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly.

“Indeed, in all abodes and at all times, the phenomena of mentalities and materialities are in a continuous state of flux, like the flame of an oil-lamp or like the current of a river, and through a succession of causes and effects, it is only the continuum of mentalities and materialities which fulfils various functions such as seeing a visible object, hearing a sound, etc. In reality, there is no sentient individual at all to be called ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘she’, ‘man’, etc. Indeed, there is not a single deva, māra or Brahmā who can create such a sentient being”

Note: Ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, which are collectively called ‘**ultimate realities**’, are the ultimate, indivisible, basic components of mind and body. What really exist in living beings and in the whole universe are only these ultimate realities. As these ultimate realities arise and perish very rapidly and incessantly, more than a billion times per second, leaving nothing permanent, ‘man’, ‘woman’, ‘person’, ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘atta’, ‘jīva’ do not really exist, and consequently the ‘Creator’ of living beings do not exist.

The Bodhisatta could also define each ultimate mentality and each ultimate materiality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising. These are described in Visuddhi Magga¹⁷ and they have to be discerned vividly in insight meditation (vipassanā). Many meditators in Interna-

17 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Vol.II,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 42-48, 88-101, 114-119,
121, 137-139, Mya Mon Yadanar Literature, Tel: 951-385261.

tional Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres in Myanmar, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Malaysia, U.S.A., etc., can discern them vividly nowadays.

The knowledge of defining ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate causes for their arising, is called “Nāma-rūpa Pariccheda-ñāṇa”. This knowledge is the landmark of attaining the “Purity of View”, which can dispel the wrong views of “Personality-belief” and “Self-illusion”, taking wrongly that ‘man’, ‘woman’, ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘self’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘jīva’, ‘atta’ really exist.

At the minddle watch of that auspicious full-moon night the Bodhisatta directed his mind continuum or mental stream towards acquiring the **Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Power of Sight or Divine Eye** in brief, and immediately *Dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā* (**Divine-Eye Supernormal Knowledge**) arose in him.

Through this supernormal knowledge, the Bodhisatta could see all living beings and inanimate things in one hundred thousand crores of world systems. He could also penetratively see the ultimate realities in these living beings, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly. Moreover, he could also see the deaths and births of sentient beings.

Based on the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Power of Sight or Divine Eye, the following two Supernormal Powers also arose in the Bodhisatta.

- (1) *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa* – Power of seeing beings in the 31 planes of existence and knowing their respective ‘**Kammas**’ which give rise to their present existences;
- (2) *Anāgatarisā-ñāṇa* – Power of knowing future existences of oneself and of others and also future events and future worlds.

The Bodhisatta showed the way how to purify and develop the mind to the highest level, because those ‘supernormal powers’ and ‘kammās’ are the powers and functions of two mental factors which associate with pure, concentrated minds.

‘**Knowledge or Wisdom**’ is the beautiful mental factor called ‘*paññā*’ in Pāḷi. As we have the saying: “*Knowledge is power*”, ‘*supernormal knowledge*’ is the power of ‘*paññā*’ associated with pure, concentrated mind.

‘**Kamma**’ refers to the neutral mental factor called ‘*cetanā*’ in Pāḷi, and translated as ‘**volition**’ or ‘**intention**’.

“O monks, it is ‘**volition**’ that I call ‘**kamma**’. Prompted by volition, one performs an ‘**action**’ through body, speech or mind”, said the Buddha.

[7] The Discovery of Ultimate Mentalities and Ultimate Materialities¹⁸

It is very important that the Bodhisatta discovered the **ultimate mentalities** that make up the mind and the **ultimate materialities** that make up the body and knew them precisely by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes. Otherwise, he would not know about the detailed features of the **mind, which is the most powerful and most important force in the whole universe.**

The author describes the essential features of **ultimate realities** in Chapters (13) to (20) of this book in order to give the essential knowledge to understand the Buddha’s Teachings, which are based on ultimate realities. Ultimate realities are involved in all psycho-physical processes occurring in the whole universe. The Buddha taught about ultimate realities in detail in his **Higher Teachings** known as **Abhidhamma Piṭaka**, comprising seven Treatises.

The Buddha analyses ‘**mind**’ into ‘**consciousness**’ (*citta*) and 52 ‘**mental factors**’ (*cetasikas*), and ‘**body**’ into 28 ‘**ultimate materialities**’ (*rūpa*), none of these are known in science, psychology and philosophy.

Among 52 mental factors, 13 are neutral, 14 are immoral, 25 are beautiful. Neutral mental factors can support and associate with

18 “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third Edition, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 30-194.

both immoral mental factors and beautiful mental factors. They are described briefly below.

(a) Thirteen Neutral Mental Factors

1. **‘Contact’** (*phassa*) makes the contact between consciousness and sense-object, producing **‘feeling’** (*vedanā*).
2. **‘Pleasant feeling’** constitutes sensual pleasure, and **‘painful feeling’** constitutes mental displeasure. We are happy to enjoy pleasant feeling; we are sad and unhappy to experience painful feeling. Feeling is *‘Vedanā’*.
3. **‘Perception’** (*saññā*) perceives the detailed features of sense-objects and what it perceived are maintained in the mental stream as memory.
4. **‘Volition’** (*cetanā*) prompts its concomitants (i.e. consciousness and mental factors associated with it) to perform their respective functions and to accomplish each **action**. So volition is identified with **action** (*kamma*) and is also called **‘kamma’** by the Buddha. The Kamma Law is described in detail in Chapter [18].
5. **‘Concentration’** (*ekaggatā*) unites its concomitants and focuses them on a sense-object, producing tranquillity, peace and mental concentration (*samādhi*) which makes the mind very powerful.
6. **Psychic life** (*jīvitindriya*) sustains its concomitants and keeps us alive.
7. **Attention or reflection** (*manasikāra*) directs its concomitants towards the sense-object that appears at the sense-door. **Wise reflection** gives rise to moral minds; **unwise reflection** gives rise to immoral minds.
8. **Initial application of the mind to a sense-object** (*Vitakka*). It applies the mind to the sense-object and initiates a **thought**.
9. **Sustained application of the mind to sense-object** (*Vicāra*). It examines the object again and again. It is ‘discursive thinking’.
10. **Decision** (*Adimokkha*) – It decides whether the sense-object is good or bad.
11. **Effort or Energy** (*Viriya*) – It supports and upholds its concomitants not to slacken and give up.

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12. **Joy or Interest in the sense-object (*Pīti*).**

13. **Wish or Will (*Chanda*)** – It is the wish to go, to learn, etc.

Strong wish is called ‘will’. **Effort** (*vīriya*) and **Wish or Will** (*chanda*) support us to be successful in whatever we do; **they are the keys to success**. We have a saying: “*If there is a will, there is a way!*”

Initial application of the mind to a sense-object (*vitakka*), **sustained application** (*vicāra*), **joy** (*pīti*), **pleasant feeling** (*sukha*) and **concentration** (*ekaggatā*) are five *jhāna*-factors which can be developed by tranquillity-meditation to attain *jhāna* (mental absorption).

So neutral mental factors are very important and very useful in our lives.

(b) Fourteen Immoral Mental Factors

The 14 immoral mental factors are the real evil forces in the world. They are really the causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world.

1. **Ignorance or Delusion (*Moha* or *Avijjā*)**

It is the leader of immoral mental factors. It blinds the mind not to know the real nature of sense-objects, ultimate materialities and mentalities, three characteristics of existence, past existences, future existences, kamma and its result, the Law of Dependent Origination, four Noble Truths, why are we born, why are we alive, shall we be reborn again after death, where shall we be reborn, etc.

2. **Greed, Craving, Attachment (*Lobha*, *Taṇhā*, *Rāga*)**

It craves for various sense-objects, sensual pleasure, money, wealth, power, fame, etc., and gets attached to them.

Because *ignorance* (*moha*) deludes the mind to have the wrong vision that sense-objects, including human beings, are permanent (*nicca*), pleasant (*sukha*), self or person (*atta*) and beautiful (*subha*), greed (*lobha*) constantly craves for them, enjoys them as sensual pleasure, and gets attached to sense-objects, money, wealth, beloved ones, movies, entertainments, etc. Many people think that enjoying sensual pleasure is the real happiness.

They don't notice that sensual pleasure is transient and fleeting; soon after it arises, it disappears. It is temporary gratification of greed (*lobha*). As greed will never give up its intrinsic nature of craving, the more it gets, the more it craves for. "*Even the whole wealth on earth cannot satisfy the desires of greed*", said the Buddha.

People also don't know that they are enjoying sensual pleasure with immoral minds, called greed-rooted consciousness which arises and perishes by many billions every second, leaving behind billions of immoral bad karmas in their mental streams. These bad karmas will start bearing bad results in this life such as forgetting to do good meritorious deeds, loss in business, loss of good job, etc. Because of the lack of good karmas and the accumulation of many billions of bad karmas, those people will be definitely reborn in woeful abodes after death.

Moreover many people are addicted to gambling, hunting, fishing, smoking, intoxicating drinks and drugs because of *greed (lobha)*. Inflated greed gives rise to strong attachment called **clinging** or **grasping** (*upādāna*), which is very difficult to be cured. So we should regard sensual pleasure and attachment to be bad habits as Māra's snare to send us to woeful abodes.

Because of strong attachment with greed to great wealth, power and beloved ones, many heart-broken lovers and many billionaires committed suicide when they lost their beloved ones or great wealth.

*"From craving springs grief,
From craving springs fear,
For him who is wholly free from craving,
there is no grief, much less fear."* (Dhammapada 216)

In the Second Noble Truth the Buddha pointed out that *craving (taṇhā)* or *greed (lobha)* is the cause of new rebirth and all suffering.

3. **Anger, hatred, ill-will** (*Dosa, Paṭigha, Vyāpāda*)

Anger or hatred is the most destructive element. As soon as one comes across unpleasant things or unpleasant dealings or loss of

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wealth, money, job, etc., anger arises in the mind, accompanied with *ignorance (moha)* and painful mental feeling. So one cannot think properly, and is ready to use abusive language or to engage in a quarrel.

Inflated anger makes one angry, violent, cruel, ready to commit crimes. Depressed anger causes sadness, sorrow, grief, worry, lamentation, depression, despair, stress and strain, and even suicide to arise.

Note: Ignorance (*moha*), greed (*lobha*) and anger (*dosa*) are the leaders of immoral mental factors. They are called ‘immoral roots’ as they give rise to immoral minds.

All ‘**ten courses of evil actions**’, (described on page 123), are performed by *ignorance, greed and anger*. As minds can arise and perish very rapidly at the rate of more than a thousand billion minds per second, many billion anger-rooted consciousnesses or immoral minds arise and perish in killing a chicken or a fish, leaving behind many billion immoral karmas in the mental stream. Similarly in stealing other’s property many billion greed-rooted consciousnesses or immoral minds arise and perish, leaving behind many billion immoral karmas in the mental stream.

These karmas are like the seeds of fruits. Just as each seed can give rise to a new tree, so too each strong karma can produce a new existence. An immoral karma can produce a woeful existence in a woeful abode and a moral karma can produce a blissful existence in a blissful realm.

In science **Newton’s Law** states that to every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

In **Kamma Law**, we may have to state that to every action, there are a billion equal and opposite reactions, because billions of karmas arise during the action. That means that if we kill a chicken, we may be killed in return a million existences. If we donate one dollar to the temple, we can get a million dollars in each of many future existences.

To know the Kamma Law and to live in accord with natural

laws is very important. The author describes about Kamma Law in Chapter [18] quite comprehensively. Because of the ignorance of the Kamma Law, some people are killing innocent people world-wide.

4. **Pride or Conceit** (*Māna*)

It is not wise to be conceited, having too high an opinion of oneself. Remember the saying: “*Pride will have a fall.*”

5. **Wrong View** (*Diṭṭhi*)

Because of *ignorance* of natural ultimate realities, natural truths and natural laws, there are many wrong views. The basic wrong view is “**Personality-belief**” (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), thinking that ‘person’, ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘self’, really exist, or “**ego-illusion**” (*atta-diṭṭhi*), thinking that, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘jīva’, ‘atta’ really exist. This basic wrong view makes one very selfish. “**Selfishishness is the greatest curse of the human race**”, said William Gladstone, the British Prime Minister. Based on selfishness, thousands of wrong view arise.

6. **Moral Shamelessness** (*Ahirika*)

It does not feel ashamed to do immoral actions.

7. **Moral fearlessness** (*Anottappa*)

It is not afraid to do immoral actions as it is ignorant of the Law of Kamma.

8. **Restlessness** (*Uddhacca*)

It makes the mind restless and not serious.

9. **Jealousy or envy** (*Issā*)

It makes one jealous of other’s success or good fortune.

10. **Stinginess or Concealing one’s property** (*Macchhariya*)

It makes one reluctant to give money to charity. It does not appreciate to share one’s property, one’s knowledge with others.

11. **Remorse or Repentance** (*kukkucca*)

It has the characteristic of grieving over the evil that has been done or over the good that has not been done.

12. **Sloth, idleness** (*Thina*)

It is the shrinking state of consciousness. It arises due to lack of

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effort.

13. **Torpor, inactive** (*Middha*)

It is the morbid state of mental factors.

14. **Sceptical doubt** (*Vicikicchā*)

It is the doubt about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, past existences, future existences, Dependent Origination, the Four Noble Truths, because one does not understand about them clearly.

The immoral mental factors, numbered 1 to 8, 12, 14 are called ‘**defilements**’ (*kilesās*), because they defile, debase and burn the mind. They are our worst enemies.

The above 14 immoral mental factors are our bad qualities and internal enemies. They make us low, mean, wicked, bad-natured and unhappy. They give rise to immoral minds to perform immoral, evil actions. They are the causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world.

Many **psychology departments** in universities do research how to get rid of them. No body knows how to get rid of them. But the Buddha knew and taught the people so that many million people could eliminate them totally and became the noblest and happiest persons. The method how to get rid of these evil mental factors by the Noble Threefold Training is described on pages 155-220 in this book.

(c) **Twenty-five Beautiful Mental Factors**

The 25 beautiful mental factors are our good qualities and the good forces in the world. By developing them systematically, we can suppress evil forces not to arise. They are described on pages 338-343. Among 25 beautiful mental factors,

Greedlessness, non-attachment, generosity = *alobha*,

Hatelessness, loving-kindness, good-will = *adosa*,

Wisdom or knowledge = *paññā* or *amoha*

are moral roots. They give rise to moral minds to perform meritorious deeds. They can be developed by performing alms-giving (*dāna*), observing moral precepts (*sīla*) and practising meditation

(*bhāvanā*). Then we can suppress immoral roots (*greed, anger, ignorance*) not to arise. We also get great merit; so we can live happily and beneficially.

Faith and confidence (*saddhā*) in Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha), **mindfulness** (*sati*), **concentration** (*samādhi*), **effort** (*vīriya*) and **wisdom** (*pāññā*) are our **five powers** and **five faculties**, which can combat **defilements** bravely.

Again **right view** (*wisdom*), **right thought** (*vitakka*), **right speech** (*sammā-vācā*), **right action** (*sammā-kammanta*), **right livelihood** (*sammā-ājīva*), **right effort** (*sammā-vāyāma*), **right mindfulness** (*sammā-sati*) and **right concentration** (*sammā-samādhi*) constitute the **Noble Eightfold Path** as well as the **Noble Threefold Training** of morality, concentration and wisdom.

By undertaking this Noble Path or Noble Training as taught by the Buddha (described on pages 155-220, we can develop the highest wisdom called the **Fourfold Path-Wisdom**, which totally eliminates all defilements as well as all immoral mental factors. Then we shall become **Arahants** among the noblest and happiest persons except the Buddha and Pacceka-bhuddhas.

(d) **Twenty-eight Ultimate Materialities**

Not only did the Bodhissatta analyse ‘**mind**’ into ultimate mentalities but also analyse ‘**body**’ into ultimate materialities. As ultimate mentalities arise as ‘**mental groups**’, called ‘**minds**’, consisting of consciousness and mental factors, ultimate materialities also arise as ‘**material groups**’, comprising ‘**four primary elements**’ and ‘**derived materialities**’. All ultimate materialities are formless and shapeless just like energy.

• **Four Primary elements or primary materialities** (*Bhūta-rūpa*)

1. **The Element of Extension** or **the Element of Solidity** (*Pathavī*)

It has the characteristic of hardness and softness. Its function is to receive its co-arising materialities.

2. **The Element of Cohesiveness** or **the Element of Fluidity** (*Āpo*)

It has the characteristic of cohesiveness and fluidity. Its function is to cohere co-arising materialities.

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3. **The Element of Heat** (*Tejo*)

It has the characteristic of hotness and coldness. Its function is to make co-arising materialities matured, soft and tender.

4. **The Element of Motion** (*Vāyo*)

It has the characteristic of supporting and pushing. Because of supporting, we can stand erect. Because of pushing, motion, vibration, oscillation, rotation occur.

- The above four primary elements always arise together in different proportions to form material groups, producing the following four derived materialities simultaneously.

5. **Visible object** or **colour** (*Vaṇṇa* or *rūpārammaṇa*),

6. **Smell** or **odour** (*gandha* or *gandhārammaṇa*),

7. **Taste** (*rasa* or *rasārammaṇa*)

8. **Nutrient** or **nutritive essence** (*ojā*)

The above eight elements or materialities always arise together as an indivisible material group. All inanimate things including trees, earth, water, air are made up of these material groups.

• **Five Translucent Materialities** (*Pasāda-rūpas*)

1. **Eye-translucent materiality** (*cakkhu-pasāda*)

2. **Ear-translucent materiality** (*sota-pasāda*)

3. **Nose-translucent materiality** (*ghāna-pasāda*)

4. **Tongue-translucent materiality** (*jivhā-pasāda*)

5. **Body-translucent materiality** (*kāya-pasāda*)

These five translucent materialities serve as **five sense-doors**, namely, the eye-door, the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door, the body-door, where five sense-objects appear. They also serve as the five material bases, namely, the eye-base, the ear-base, the nose-base, the tongue-base, the body-base for the eye-consciousness, the ear-consciousness, the nose-consciousness, the tongue-consciousness, the body-consciousness to depend on respectively for their arising.

• **Five Sense-objects** (*Gocara-rūpas*)

1. ***Rūpārammaṇa*** – visible object (*vaṇṇa*)

2. **Saddārammaṇa** – sound (*sadda*)
3. **Gandhārammaṇa** – smell (*gandha*)
4. **Rasārammaṇa** – taste (*rasa*)
5. **Phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa** – tangible object (*pathavī, tejo, vāyo*)

The names in brackets are the ultimate materialities that represent the sense-objects.

Abhidhammā also describes the **sixth sense-object**:

6. **Dhammārammaṇa** – mind-object, consisting of five translucent materialities, 16 subtle materialities, 89 types of consciousness, 52 mental factors, Nibbāna and concepts such as meditation-signs. These subtle objects cannot appear in the five sense-doors; they can appear only in the **mind-door**, which is ‘**life-continuum**’ – the resultant consciousness of the kamma which produces the present existence.

(e) The Causes of Materialities and Mentalities

Abhidhammā describes four causes which produce materialities.

1. **Kamma-born Materialities** (*Kammaja-rūpas*)

The kamma that produces the present existence also produces kamma-born materialities continuously at every sub-moment.

The **nine kammaja-rūpas**, namely, the **five translucent materialities**, **two sex materialities** that differentiate males from females, **life-materiality** which sustains its co-arising materialities as well as our life and the **heart-base**, depending on which 75 consciousnesses arise, are the most important materialities in our life.

2. **Consciousness-born Materialities** (*Cittaja-rūpas*)

Cittaja-rūpas begin to form from the arising moment of the first life-continuum which follows rebirth-consciousness. They continue to be formed at every arising moment of subsequent consciousnesses throughout the whole life. **Two consciousness-born materialities** help us to move our hands, legs, other body-parts to move around, and our mouths to speak.

3. **Heat-born Materialities** (*Utuja-rūpas*)

Utuja-rūpas start to form from the existing moment of rebirth

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consciousness. The heat-element, present in every material group, produces heat-born materialities at every sub-moment during its existing state. Trees can grow and continue to exist due to the continuous production of heat-born materialities.

4. **Nutriments-born Materialities** (*Āhāraja-rūpas*)

After the nutriments (*ojā* or *āhāra*) present in digested eaten food diffuse throughout the body with blood, they come in contact with the nutriments in body-material groups; the combination then produces nutriment-born materialities at every sub-moment till the time of death.

The materialities produced by the four causes keep us alive till death.

(f) **The Causes that Produce Mentalities**

Mentalities (consciousness and mental factors) do not exist anywhere. Just as the flame arises and disappears at the striking point of the match-stick with the match-box, so too eye-consciousness and its associated mental factors arise and perish at the striking point of the visible object with the eye-door; ear-consciousness and its associated mental factors arise and perish at the striking point of the sound with the ear-door, and so on. So the **six sense-doors**, called **six internal bases** or *saḷāyatana*, and the **six sense-objects**, called **six external bases**, are the causes for the cognitive series of consciousnesses and their associated mental factors to arise and to be aware of the six sense-objects.

The **reproductive kammās**, which give rise to our existences, produce their resultant consciousnesses (*viññāṇas*) and associated mental factors at every consciousness-moment, that is, mind after mind continuously, together with kamma-born materialities at every sub-moment to keep us alive for the whole life. (one consciousness-moment = three sub-moments, denoting the arising, existing and perishing moments of consciousness.)

[8] The Great Discovery of the Doctrine of Dependent Origination¹⁹

On that auspicious full-moon day of Vesākha when the Bodhisatta would become a fully Self-Enlightened Buddha, he defeated **Māra Army** before sunset, **developed the Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences and discovered ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities** at the first watch of the night, **developed the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye, Yathākammūpagañña, Anāgatañsa-ñña and discovered the important Law of Kamma** at the middle watch of the night, **discovered the important doctrine of Dependent Origination, undertook Great Insight Meditation (*Mahāvajira Vipassanā*) and became Fully Self-Enlightened Buddha** at the third watch of the night.

The Doctrine of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*) describes the rounds of births and deaths of all living beings in terms of eleven causal relations and twelve factors. The doctrine is explained briefly on pages 89-94 and comprehensively in Chapter [19]. It will be briefly described here again.

• Twelve Factors of Dependent Origination

1. *Avijjā* = *moha* = ignorance of Kamma Law, etc.
2. *Sankhārā* = *cetanā* = kamma formations.
3. *Viññāṇa* = resultant consciousness of kamma.
4. *Nāma-rūpa* = mentality-materiality.
5. *Salāyatana* = six internal bases = six sense-doors.
6. *Phassa* = contact between sense-object and consciousness.
7. *Vedanā* = feeling produced by contact.
8. *Taṇhā* = greed or craving and attachment.
9. *Upādāna* = clinging or grasping by *taṇhā* or *diṭṭhi* (wrong view)
10. *Bhava* = *kamma-bhava* = kamma-formations, and
Upapatti-bhava = rebirth-process = *viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa*.

19 “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 221-239.

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11. *Jāti* = birth = arising of *upapatti-bhava*.

12. *Jarā-maraṇa soka parideva dukkha domanassa upāyāsa* = ageing-death, worry, lamentation, pain, grief, despair.

• **Eleven Causal Relations of Dependent Origination**

1. *Avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā*

Ignorance conditions kamma-formations to arise.

In the past existence, because of ignorance of kamma and its result that immoral kammas will produce woeful rebirths for many existences, people commit evil actions like killing animals and stealing others' properties. Thus billions of evil immoral kammas arise. Ignorance also make some people think that celestial existences are very pleasant, so they perform meritorious deeds, producing billions of moral kammas, to be born in celestial realms after death.

2. *Saṅkhāra-paccayā viññānaṃ*

Kamma-formations condition resultant consciousnesses to arise.

When people die, their immoral kammas will cause them to be reborn in woeful abodes or their moral kammas will cause them to be reborn in celestial realms, producing resultant consciousnesses which function as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum for the whole life and finally as death-consciousness in the present existence.

3. *Viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṃ*

Consciousnesses condition mentality-materiality to arise.

Here 'consciousness' has to be taken as 'resultant consciousness' as well as *kamma-consciousness*'. In the present existence, when resultant consciousnesses arise one after another, their associated mental factors arise as 'mentality'. Although they arise together, resultant consciousnesses are taken as the cause and mental factors as the effect.

'Kamma-consciousness' refer back to 'saṅkhāra' as 'kamma-formations', because only kammas can produce kamma-born materialities. In 'mentality-materiality', 'mentality' means 'mental factors' associated with 'resultant consciousnesses' and 'materiality' means 'kamma-born materialities' produced by 'saṅkhāra'.

4. *Nāma-rūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanam*

Mentality-materiality conditions six internal bases to arise.

Here ‘mentality’ refers to resultant consciousnesses and their associated mental factors, which contain ‘life continuum’ that functions as ‘mind-door’; ‘materiality’ refers to kamma-born materialities which contain five translucent materialities that serve as ‘five sense-doors’. So ‘six internal bases’, meaning ‘six sense-doors’, arise.

5. *Saḷāyatana-paccayā phasso*

The six internal bases condition contact (phassa) to arise.

When six sense-doors come in contact with six external sense-objects respectively, resultant consciousnesses associated with their respective mental factors including *phassa* (contact) and *vedanā* (feeling) arise; *phassa* makes the contact between resultant consciousness and sense-object.

6. *Phassa-paccayā vedanā*

The contact conditions feeling to arise.

Although they arise together, ‘contact’ is taken as the cause and ‘feeling’ as the effect.

7. *Vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*

Feeling conditions craving or attachment to arise.

8. *Taṇhā-paccaya upādānam*

Craving or attachment conditions grasping to arise.

9. *Upādāna-paccayā bhavo.*

Grasping conditions becoming (bhava) to arise.

Here ‘bhava’ consists of ‘kamma-bhava’ which is ‘kamma-formations’, the same as *saṅkhāra*, and ‘upapatti-bhava’ which is ‘re-birth-process’ comprising ‘*viññāṇa*’ and ‘*nāmā-rūpa*’, the same as the effects of *saṅkhāra* (causal relations 2 and 3).

10. *Bhava-paccayā jāti.*

‘Kamma-bhava’ or ‘kamma-formations condition ‘upapatti-bhava’ or resultant-consciousnesses, their associated mental factors and kamma-born materialities to arise.

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The arising, existing and perishing of resultant consciousnesses, their associated mental factors and kamma-born materialities, which represent the future existence, is called ‘birth’, ‘ageing’ and ‘death’.

11. *Jāti paccayā jarā-maranam soka parideva dukkha domanassa upayasā sambhavadanti.*

Birth conditions ageing-death, worry, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair to arise. Thus arises the whole mass of suffering.

When ageing-death, worry, lamentation, pain, grief and despair arise, immoral minds associated with *avijjā* also arise. So *avijjā* will condition another round of eleven causal relations to arise again. This process will go on indefinitely until the person concerned becomes an Arahant.

• **Dependent Origination in Terms of Three Rounds** (*Vaṭṭa*)

Although the Buddha taught Dependent Origination in terms of one cause and one effect, in real life many causes operate together to give rise to many effects.

The twelve factors of Dependent Origination can be classified as ‘three rounds’ (*Vaṭṭa*).

‘*Vaṭṭa*’ in Pāli means ‘going round and round like the rotation of a wheel’.

1. **The Round of Defilements** (*Kilesā-vaṭṭa*) = *avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna*

2. **The Round of Kammas** (*Kamma-vaṭṭa*) = *saṅkhāra, kamma-bhava*

3. **Round of Resultants** (*Vipāka-vaṭṭa*) = (*Upapatti-bhava*), *viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷāyatana, phassa, vedanā, jāti, jarā-maraṇa, soka, parideva, dukkha, domanassa, upāyāsa.*

The round of defilements, namely, *avijjā* (*moha*), *taṇhā* (*lobha*), *upādāna* (*taṇhā, diṭṭhi*), arise together in greed-rooted consciousnesses. So they operate together.

Avijjā (*moha* = ignorance of natural truths) give the delusion that animals really exist, and their roasted or fried meat is very tasty. So *taṇhā* craves for fried meat and attached to it. When attachment or craving becomes stronger as grasping (*upādāna*), people kill animals, fry their meat and eat it joyfully.

During the killing of animals, *billions of immoral minds together with volitions (cetanās)* arise and perish, leaving *billions of immoral kammās* in the mental stream. Billions of immoral minds together with volitions are taken as ‘*saṅkhāra*’ (kamma-formations), and billions of immoral kammās are taken as ‘*kamma-bhava*’ (kamma-formations). So the round of defilements give rise to the round of kammās.

Again *avijjā* give the delusion that celestial beings and their great sensual pleasure really exist. So *taṇha* craves for them and *upādāna* strongly grasps them. Thus people perform meritorious deeds with the intention of becoming celestial beings to enjoy celestial pleasure after death. In performing meritorious deeds, billions of moral minds together with volitions arise and perish, leaving billions of moral kammās in the mental stream.

Again billions of moral minds together with volitions represent ‘*saṅkhāra*’ and billions of moral kammās represent ‘*kamma-bhava*’. So the round of defilements give rise to the round of kammās again.

Again just as earth, water, air help apple seeds or other seeds to grow up as apple trees or other trees and bear fruits, so also the round of defilements help the round of kammās to produce the round of resultants, namely, *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedanā*, which represent a new existence either in a woeful abode or in a celestial realm, and in that existence, birth, ageing-death, worry, lamentation, pain, grief, despair will also arise. When they arise, the round of defilements arise again.

Therefore, the round of defilements conditions the round of kammās to arise; the round of kammās then conditions the round of resultants to arise; and the round of resultants condition the round of defilements to arise. Thus the three rounds of Dependent Origination will keep on rotating round after round indefinitely. Only when all defilements are totally eliminated, will the rotation of three rounds of Dependent Origination stop for ever.

• **The Rotation of Dependent Origination in Terms of Five Causes and Five Effects**

In the explanation described above, we can see that the round of

defilements and the round of karmas arise together, and they operate together to produce the round of resultants. So we can combine the first two rounds as ‘*avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna, saṅkhāra, kamma-bhava*’ as the cause for the production of the round of resultants, which can be taken as ‘*viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷāyatana, phassa, vedanā*’. *Vedanā* will then give rise to the round of defilements, namely, ‘*taṇhā, avijjā, upādāna*’ which in turn will give rise to the round of karmas.

Therefore, we can also state the rotation of the wheel of Dependent Origination as five causes and five effects:

In the past, because of five causes: ‘*avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna, saṅkhāra, kamma-bhava*,’ there arise five effects: ‘*viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷāyatana, phassa, vedanā*’ in the present; the present five effects then give rise to the Five Present causes: ‘*avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna, saṅkhāra, kamma-bhava*’, which will produce five effects: ‘*viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷāyatana, phassa, vedanā*’ in the future, and so on.

[9] The Bodhisatta Undertook Great Insight Meditation and Attained Buddhahood²⁰

At the first watch of that auspicious night, the Bodhisatta had attained ‘**the Knowledge of Precisely Defining Mentality and Materiality**’ (*Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*) which is the **Landmark of ‘the Purity of View’**.

In the middle watch of that auspicious night, the Bodhisatta developed the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye with which he could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world systems, and he could also see the deaths and births of sentient beings. Science shall still have to know about these things.

He could also develop *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa* – **the power of seeing beings in 31 planes of existence and knowing their respective karmas** (volitional actions) which gave rise to their present existences. He could also develop *Anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa* – **the power of knowing future existences of oneself and of others**

20“*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*,” Vol. I, pp. 325-328 by
Mingun Sayādaw Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivamsa.

and also of future events and future worlds. So he came to know the important Law of Kamma very well.

At the third watch of that night he clearly discerned the four causes which give rise to materiality and also the causes which produce mentality. Also he comprehensively discerned the Causal Relations of Dependent Origination, which truly explained why all living beings were born life after life starting from time immemorial. So he also attained **‘the Knowledge of correctly discerning the Causes of Mentality and Materiality’** (*Paccaya-pariggahāṇāṇa*). This knowledge is the Landmark of **‘the Purity by Transcending Doubt’** (*Kaṅkhā-vitarana Visusuddhi*).

As the Bodhisatta had temporarily eliminated two defilements, namely, the Wrong View (*Diṭṭhi*) and Septical Doubt, he became a Junior Stream Winner (*Cūḷa-Sotāpanna*).

Then the Bodhisatta undertook the **Great Insight Meditation** (*Mahāvajira Vipassanā*). He developed the Fourth Rūpāvacara Jhāna and the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye with which he could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world systems. He could also penetratively see the ultimate mentalities and the ultimate materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly, in all living beings.

When he contemplated the true nature of those living beings, living in each world-system and belonging to three periods of time (past, present, future), he came to know very well that no matter how numerous devas, humans, brahmās were in a single world-system, they could be reduced to twelve factors of Dependent Origination as ultimate realities.

He could discern the same phenomena in all other world-systems. Summing up the number of objects of vipassanā meditation, as there are a hundred thousand crores of world-systems, there are also a hundred thousand crores of each of the twelve factors of Dependent Origination. So the total number of these objects for twelve factors became one million and two hundred thousand crores (1,200,000 crores).

He then contemplated each of these factors by reflecting their

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common characteristics of ‘impermanence, suffering and not-self’.

As all the twelve factors are ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, they arise and perish very rapidly and incessantly. So they have the characteristic of ‘**impermanence**’ (*anicca*).

What is not permanent is ‘*unsatisfactory*’ and to be tortured incessantly by the dissolution of mentalities and materialities, which constitute our most cherished minds and bodies, really amount to ‘**suffering**’ (*dukkha*).

Moreover, as mentalities and materialities have no form, no shape, and they arise and perish extremely rapidly, leaving no permanent entity to be called ‘self’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, *jīva*, ‘atta’, ‘person’, ‘I’, ‘you’, etc., they also have the characteristic of ‘**not-self**’ (*anatta*).

As each factor of Dependent Origination promotes **three insight knowledges** (*vipassanā-ñāṇas*), namely, the insight-knowledge of impermanence, the insight-knowledge of suffering, and the insight-knowledge of not-self, there are altogether **3,600,000 crores of Mahāvajira Insight Wisdom**.

As the Bodhisatta could observe three characteristics clearly in all mentalities and materialities in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems and his insight-knowledge was extremely strong, he could develop **ten insight-knowledges** very quickly.

1. ***Sammasana-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of defining mentalities and materialities as impermanence, suffering and not-self.
2. ***Udayabhaya-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of discerning distinctly mentalities-materialities at their arising moments and perishing moments together with their three characteristics.
3. ***Bhaṅga-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of discerning only the very rapid incessant dissolution and perishing of mentality-materiality.
4. ***Bhaya-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of discerning the fearful nature of the very rapidly perishing mentality-materiality which appears as terror.
5. ***Ādinava-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of realizing the faults and unsatisfactoriness of all mentalities and materialities.

6. ***Nibbidā-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of feeling bored and disgusted with mentalities-materialities as they have faults.
7. ***Muñcitukamyatā-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of the strong desire for the deliverance from the bondage of all mentalities and materialities.
8. ***Patisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of exertion for deliverance by reinvestigating all mentalities-materialities in terms of their three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self.
9. ***Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*** – the knowledge of equanimity or mental balance without love and hatred towards all mentalities and materialities as they are arising and perishing naturally.
10. ***Anuloma-ñāṇa*** – conformity-knowledge which conforms to the functions of truth both in the nine preceding insight-knowledges and in the 37 factors of enlightenment which follow.

After developing the above ten insight-knowledges, the following four knowledges follow automatically.

11. ***Gotrabhu-ñāṇa*** – change of lineage knowledge which cuts the worldling lineage to form the holy (*ariya*) lineage. *Gotrabhu*-consciousness is a meditating mind which observes Nibbāna first and points the way to Nibbāna to Path-consciousness and its Fruition-consciousness.
12. ***Magga-ñāṇa*** – **Path-wisdom** which is the wisdom that associates with Path-consciousness.

After *Gotrabhu*-consciousness, Path-consciousness arises once taking Nibbāna as its object and performing four functions simultaneously:

- (1) comprehension of the Noble Truth of Suffering,
 - (2) eradication of craving which is the Cause of Suffering,
 - (3) realization of Nibbāna which is the Extinction of Suffering,
 - (4) full development of eight factors of the Path.
13. ***Phala-ñāṇa*** – **Fruition-wisdom** which is the wisdom that associates with Fruit-consciousness which follows Path-consciousness immediately. It enjoys Nibbāna bliss.
 14. ***Paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*** – **Reviewing-Wisdom**

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It is the wisdom which (1) reviews the Path, (2) reviews the Fruit, (3) reviews Nibbāna, (4) reviews defilements eliminated, (5) reviews defilements remaining.

If we combine the above 14 knowledges with the two basic knowledges called *Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa* and *Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa* there become **sixteen knowledges or Wisdoms in Vipassanā Meditation**.

The noble Bodhisatta developed the four Path-consciousnesses, one after another quickly, and the **fourfold Path-Wisdom** totally eliminated all defilements from his mind. Soon after the last Path-consciousness, called **Arahatta-magga**, its fruit-consciousness called **Arahattaphala** arose. At that moment his mind-continuum was so pure and so clear that, his extremely great merit that he had accumulated by fulfilling Ten Great Perfections and Five Great Sacrifices in his uncountable past existences, bore their unique great fruits and he became endowed with **Omniscient Wisdom** (*Sabbāñ-ñuta-ñāṇa*), **the Fourteenfold Wisdom of a Buddha**, **the Eighteen Special Qualities** (*Avenika Dhamma*) and the **Fourfold Valorous Wisdom** (*Vesārajja-ñāṇa*).

Simultaneously with the attainment of Omniscient Wisdom, he became a Fully Self-Enlightened Sammāsambuddha, the Supreme Head of Three Worlds of devas, humans and Brahmās, and came the dawn.

[10] The Nine Marvellous Attributes of the Buddha²¹

Although the Buddha is endowed with infinite noblest attributes, only nine special attributes were taught by him.

1. The Attribute of Ārahant

Since his most powerful Fourfold Path-Wisdom completely eliminated all defilements, the **Buddha's mind is perfectly pure and peaceful**, without the slightest trace of evil elements. So evil immoral minds never arise in him. Besides, as he is also endowed

21 "The Great Chronicles of Buddhas," Vol. II, pp.1104-1143,
by Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṃsa, *Tiṭṭhakadhara*
Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika, Singapore Edition,

with the highest morality, the highest concentration and the highest wisdom, he is said to be **the noblest person, who is most worthy of veneration by humans, devas and Brahmās**. So he is known as **‘Arahant’**.

2. The Attribute of **Sammāsambuddho**

Being Perfectly Self-Enlightened by himself without any help from any teacher or Almighty Person and truly possessing Omniscient Wisdom, which actually knows all natural truths called ‘Dhamma’, and also having the greatest ability to expound the Dhamma to men and gods for their greatest welfare of emancipation from all sufferings and attainment of eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna, the Buddha is known as **‘Sammāsambuddha’**.

3. The Attribute of **Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno**

Being endowed with **Eight Supernormal Knowledges (Vijjā)** and **Perfect Moral Practice (Caraṇa)**, the Buddha is known as **‘Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno.’**

Eight Supernormal Knowledges are:

- (1) ***Pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal Knowledge of knowing his countless former existences and others’ countless former existences as well as former worlds.
- (2) ***Dibbacakkhu-Abhiññā*** – Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye which can see all living beings including humans, devas and Brahmās in a hundred thousand crores of world-systems as well as ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities that make up their minds and bodies.
- (3) ***Āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*** – Arahatta Path-wisdom which completely eliminates all defilements including moral intoxicants called ‘āsavas’.
- (4) ***Dibbasota-Abhiññā*** – Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Ear which can hear subtle and coarse sounds, far and near, as well as the voices from celestial worlds.
- (5) ***Iddhividha-Abhiññā*** – Multivarious kinds of psychic powers of creating various forms, flying through the air, walking on water, diving into the earth, passing through walls and mountains, making near what is far, making much what is little, etc.

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- (6) ***Cetopariya-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal Knowledge of reading other people's minds.
- (7) ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa*** – Insight Knowledge which can discern the true natures of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities such as their characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising.
- (8) ***Manomayiddhi-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal Power of assuming various forms through mastery of the mind.

4. The Attribute of Sugato

Because the Buddha '**Goes well**', that is going to Nibbāna through four Path-Wisdoms, and '**Speaks well**', that is speaking only what is true and beneficial, he is known as '**Sugato**'.

5. The Attribute of Lokavidū

The Buddha is also known as '**Lokavidū**', because he correctly knows and understands the natures of three worlds:

- (1) the world of all living beings (*Satta-loka*),
- (2) the world of conditioned things (*Saṅkhāra-loka*) comprising mentalities and materialities which give rise to all living beings,
- (3) the world of locations of living beings (*Okāsa-loka*), comprising three spheres (sense-sphere, fine-material sphere, immaterial sphere) and 31 planes of existence.

6. The Attribute of Anuttaro-purisa-dammasarathi

'**Anuttaro**' means that the Buddha is incomparable in morality (*sīla*), in concentration (*samādhi*), in wisdom (*paññā*), in emancipation from the round of suffering (*vimutti*), and in the knowledge leading to liberation from all sufferings (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*). So he reigns supreme in this attribute among all living beings.

'**Purisa-damma-sarathi**' means that the Buddha tames those who deserve to be tamed including animals, humans, devas and Brahmās.

So the Buddha is known as '**Anuttaro-purisa-dammasarathi**' because he is incomparable and unrivalled in taming those who deserve to be tamed.

7. The Attribute of **Satthā-deva-manussānaṃ**

‘*Satthā-deva-manussānaṃ*’ means that the Buddha is the incomparable **Greatest Teacher of men, devas and Brahmās**. His teachings enlighten many million humans, devas and Brahmās to become Noble Persons and then attain Arahantship, becoming Perfect Noble Persons called Arahants, that is the highest and best attainment in life.

8. The Attribute of Buddhho means that the Buddha is truly Fully Self-Enlightened to the Four Noble Truths to become a Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha and he can enlighten men and gods (*devas* and *brahmās*) to become noble persons, who can enjoy the Eternal Peace and Unique Bliss of the Deathless Nibbāna for ever.

9. The Attribute of Bhagavā means that the Buddha is “**the Most Powerful and Exalted One**”, because he possesses many exalted powers and glories as the result of his enormous meritorious deeds and many billions of powerful good kammās, which he has accumulated in his countless past existences by fulfilling Ten Perfections, Five Great Sacrifices and Three Noble Practices.

The exalted powers and glories, although so numerous, can be classified as six kinds:

(1) **Issariya** – “the Buddha’s will power of supremacy to bend things to his will” has eight mundane features:

- the Buddha can transform himself to an atomic size;
- He can also transform himself to be infinitely large and tall;
- He can levitate at will and travel in space;
- He can travel bodily to celestial realms and Brahma realms in an instant as fast as his mind;
- He can transform himself to various forms instantly. He can assume a deva-form among the devas, a Brahma form among the Brahmās;
- He can dominate the wills of others to accomplish all his routines; all beings have to fulfil his wishes;
- He uses the mastery of psychic powers to tame very powerful and arrogant individuals;

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- His power of *Yatthākāmāvasāyittā* has complete control over jhāna absorptions and supernormal powers. He can finish a task in a moment.

(2) **Dhamma** – This glorious quality of the Buddha is his unique attainment of **the Nine Supramundane Dhammas consisting of Four Noble Paths** (*Ariya-maggas*), **Four Noble Fruitions** (*Ariya-phalas*) and **Nibbāna**, which together destroy all his defilements so completely that no faintest trace remains in his mind, making him the noblest and most worthy of veneration by humans, devas and Brahmās. The Nine Supramundane Dhammas are the noblest, because they can totally eliminate all defilements.

(3) **Yasa** – The glorious reputation of the Buddha is pure, unadulterated and unexaggerated; his fame spreads in all directions in the three worlds of humans, devas and Brahmās.

(4) **Sīri** – Splendour of Physical Perfection

As the accumulated result of his past great unique meritorious deeds and moral karmas, the Buddha possesses a very splendid body which is endowed with 32 major characteristic marks and 80 minor characteristic marks of a Great Man.

(5) **Kāma** – Power of Accomplishing all the Buddha's Wishes

The Buddha can accomplish instantly whatever he wishes and sets out to accomplish by this power. On attaining Perfect Self-Enlightenment, he also attained Buddhahood together with Omniscient Wisdom, and then he accomplished his great noble task of enlightening many million humans and many millions of devas and Brahmās, leading them to liberation from the rounds of rebirths and sufferings, and ferrying them to the safe shore of Nibbāna.

(6) **Payatta** – The unrivalled noble Effort that leads to the Top

The Buddha's strenuous effort and steadfast diligence are unrivalled since his Bodhisatta's days. When he became Perfectly Self-Enlightened as a Sammāsambuddha at the age of 35 years, he knew that he had only a short span of 45 years of his life remaining to fulfil his noblest task of enlightening all the many million humans and gods to be liberated as noble persons by himself, thus liberating

them from the rounds of rebirths and sufferings and ferrying them to the safe shore of Nibbāna.

So he increased his supreme effort to the highest level, and sleeping for only one hour and twenty minutes a night, he worked full time for the welfare and happiness of humans and gods and achieved the greatest success.

[11] The Buddha is truly the Supreme Head of Three Worlds

The Buddha is truly the Greatest in nobility, holiness, wisdom, supernormal power, special attributes and noble qualities. He is indeed the **most Compassionate and Greatest Teacher** of men and gods, guiding and enlightening millions of them to attain emancipation from the rounds of suffering to enjoy the greatest bliss and eternal peace of Nibbāna.

He is the **Greatest Benefactor of men and gods** and he receives reverence from many millions of them. So he is truly the **Supreme Head of Three Worlds** of humans, devas and Brahmās. Thus he raised the status of men to the highest level, higher than Devas and Brahmās.

[12] The Buddha is the Greatest Discoverer of all Times

He discovered the **ultimate realities** which really and basically exist in the whole universe at all times. The ultimate realities are the ultimate basic components of mind and body that are known as ultimate mentalities (*nāma*) and ultimate materialities (*rūpa*).

Ultimate mentalities consist of *consciousness (citta)* and 52 types of *mental factors (cetasikas)*; each *mind* is a combination of consciousness and several mental factors. The body is made up of 28 types of ultimate materialities.

These ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities are not known in science, psychology and philosophy, because they are so subtle that they cannot be detected by any science instrument and they cannot be known by rational and logical thinking. But they can be discerned and known clearly with insight wisdom associated with the right mental concentration in Vipassanā Meditation. The right concentration is the concentration associated with four *rūpāvacara*

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jhānas. So the mind is much more powerful than science instruments!

Ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities give rise to all living beings, all inanimate things, all 31 planes of existences, and all universes. They are involved in all psychophysical reactions, and all psychophysical phenomena can be explained on the basis of ultimate realities.

Based on the ultimate realities, the Buddha also discovered all important natural truths, natural laws such as **the Law of Kamma, the Law of Dependent Origination and the Four Universal Noble Truths**.

‘Kamma’ literally means **‘volition = *cetanā*’**, and **‘Volitional action’**. It is a property of the mind. Kamma gives rise to all living beings, differentiate them and accommodate them in different planes of existence. This means that **it is really the mind which creates all living beings and 31 planes of existence through its property called kamma**. (described in detail in Chapter (18))

‘The Law of Dependent Origination’ explains very beautifully and rationally **“the rounds of rebirth and death”**, called **‘*Samsāra*’** in Pāli, of all living beings with eleven cause-effect relations described in Chapter (19).

It means that everyone of us has been born and died, born and died, again and again continuously from time immemorial till the infinite future until one attains ‘Arahantship’.

This Law of Dependent Origination has to be discerned clearly and understood comprehensively in insight meditation in order to attain enlightenment to become Noble Persons (Ariyās). The Law has been verified by many million noble persons including millions of Arahants and can be satisfactorily verified nowadays in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres. (This Law, together with **concrete Evidences of Past Existences and Future Existences**, are described in Chapters (19) (20).

‘The Four Noble Truths’, the greatest universal truths as it encompasses all ultimate realities, comprising all ultimate mentali-

ties (*citta* and *cetasikas*), all ultimate materialities (*rūpa*) and *Nibbāna*. It is most important to discern and understand comprehensively the Four Noble Truths with the four Path-wisdoms in order to be enlightened as Arahants.

The Four Noble Truths also include the **Noble Eightfold Path** which leads to *Nibbāna*. (The Four Noble Truths are described and explained in Chapter (9).)

[13] The First Most Active Missionary in the World

The most Exalted Buddha was the first most active missionary in the world. Out of great compassion for all living beings, he travelled day after day, from village to village, from town to town, from country to country, even to other worlds and celestial worlds, for 45 years, preaching his excellent Dhamma discourses to the masses to liberate them from the rounds of suffering.

With his powerful Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Eye, he could see all living beings living in one hundred thousand crores of world systems. He could also see living beings who were about to die and where and how they were reborn after death.

The minds of worldlings, who are not noble persons are usually overwhelmed by defilements such as greed, anger, ignorance; so they live with immoral minds while they are earning for a living and enjoying sensual pleasure. When they perform evil actions such as lying, stealing, gossiping, or killing animals, billions of immoral minds arise and perish quickly, depositing billions of immoral karmas in their mental streams.

As each bad karma produces a woeful existence in a woeful abode, each person has to suffer miserably life after life in woeful abodes for many existences. It is very difficult for them to regain human existence again with the support of good moral karmas they have done in previous existences.

So the Buddha teaches them to perform meritorious deeds such as alms-giving (*dāna*), observing moral precepts (*sīla*) and undertaking meditation (*bhāvanā*) so that they can collect many billions of good karmas. Consequently after their death, they will be reborn in

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human realm and celestial realms for many existences.

To those who possess mature faculties with accumulated virtues, he teaches them to practise the Noble Eightfold Path strenuously so that they will get enlightened as noble persons. Even if they attain the First Path-Wisdom and its Fruition-wisdom, they will become Noble Persons called **Stream-Winners**. Then they can live very happily, enjoying Nibbāna bliss as much as they like life after life with the guarantee that they will never be reborn in woeful abodes. They will become Arahants, Perfect Noble Persons, in due course without further meditation.

There were several **Great occasions of Dhamma Teaching** also. **When the Buddha delivered his First Sermon of Dhammacakka, teaching the Four Noble Truths** to five Ascetics, known as *Pañcavaggi*, in the Deer Park, at Isipatana, Bārānasī, **he made his voice to be heard all over ten thousand world-systems**. Many devas and Brahmās came to listen the Sermon. At the end of the Sermon, **eighteen crores of Brahmās and Venerable Koṇḍañña** became enlightened as stream-winners. **This is the First Great Occasion of Dhamma Teaching.**

The Second Great Occasion of Dhamma Teaching took place when the Buddha delivered the discourse of **Maṅgala Sutta** at the assembly of devas and humans who were debating the question on **‘What constitute Blessing’**. In this discourse the Buddha described 38 types of Blessings and how to attain them in daily life. At the end of the discourse, innumerable number of devas, humans and Brahmās came to realize the Four Noble Truths and became Noble Persons.

The Third Great Occasion of Dhamma Teaching took place thirteen years after the Buddha’s attainment of Buddhahood **when he exhorted his son, young Bikkhu Rāhula, by delivering the discourse of Cūla Rāhulovāda** in the Andhavana Grove of Sāvattī. At that occasion also, **innumerable devas, humans and Brahmās** came to listen the sermon, realized the Four Noble Truths and became Noble Persons.

There are four types of Noble Persons – Stream-Winners, Once

Returners, Non-returners, and Arahants, Arahantship being the noblest and best attainment.

Even a Stream-Winner is very noble, because his mind is totally free from all **wrong views** including **‘personality belief’** thinking ‘I’ exists, all sceptical doubts and all coarse aspects of other remaining defilements that can give rise to woeful rebirth. He will keep pure morality and will never commit evil actions. So he is guaranteed never to be reborn in woeful abodes. Only when one is completely certain that one shall never be reborn in woeful abodes, can one live very happily. Even if one possesses great wealth great power, and enjoys sensual pleasure as much as one likes, one shall not be really happy, because sensual pleasure is fleeting, transcient, low, ignoble, and it is enjoyed with craving and lust. Craving is greed (*lobha*) which is the hottest fire and the cause of all suffering including woeful suffering.

If a person knows that he will be reborn in a woeful abode after death and will have to suffer miserably for a long time in the woeful existence for having enjoyed sensual pleasure crazily and excessively for a few years in the human existence, then he will no longer be happy and will abstain from such enjoyment.

A stream-winner can enjoy both blameless sensual pleasure and the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna as much as he likes in this very life. He can be reborn in the human realm and celestial realms for up to seven existences, and if he wishes, he can still be reborn in Brahma realms, enjoying Brahma happiness and Nibbāna happiness. He will attain higher Path-Wisdoms and Fruition-Wisdoms in due course and become an Arahant without the need to undertake further meditation. After passing away from Arahant existence, he will realize and attain **Anupādisesa Nibbāna** eternally.

The objective of the Buddha’s teaching is not to win converts, but to enlighten listeners to understand the Four Noble Truths and gain liberation from the round of suffering and to enjoy the unique bliss and eternal peace of Nibbāna for ever. This is the real form of **‘Salvation’**.

Because of his unrivalled noble effort and infinite compassion to

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salvage and ferry all living beings to the safe peaceful shore of Nibbāna, the Exalted Buddha is adored, respected, revered and relied on by the whole world!

[14] The Freedom of Thought in Buddhism

The Freedom of thought allowed by the Buddha is unheard of elsewhere in the history of religions. This freedom is necessary because man's emancipation from suffering and attainment of eternal peace and happiness depends on his own realization of the Universal Noble Truths, and not on the benevolent grace of a God or any external Almighty Power.

In **Kālāma Sutta**, the **Kālāmas**, the inhabitants of a small town called Kesaputta in Kosala Kingdom, asked the Buddha: "Sir, many recluses and brahmins visited Kesaputta. They explained and illumined only their own doctrines, and despised and condemned other's doctrines. But for us, sir, we always have doubt and perplexity as to who among them spoke the truth, and who spoke falsehood."

Then the Buddha gave them this advice, unique in the history of religions:

"O Kālāmas, (1) do not accept anything on mere hearsay (i.e. not to believe anything just because one has heard people say it). (2) Do not accept anything by mere tradition because it has been handed down for many generations. (3) Do not accept anything just because it is spoken and rumoured by many. (4) Do not accept anything just because it is found written in your religious books. (5) Do not believe anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. (7) Do not accept anything merely because it agrees with your preconceived thoughts and ideas. (8) Do not accept anything thinking that the ascetic or brahmin or teacher is respectable and therefore his teaching must be true.

(9) "But after observation and analysis, you know for yourselves that these things are moral, blameless, praised by the wise, and, when undertaken and performed, conduce to well-being and happiness to one and all, then accept them and live and act accordingly."

These wise sayings of the Buddha, uttered over 2600 years ago,

still retain their original force and freshness even in this enlightened twenty-first century.

[15] Boundless Compassion and Perfect Tolerance in the Buddha

So compassionate and tolerant was the Buddha that he did not exercise his power to give commandments to his lay-disciples. Instead of using the imperative – thou shalt or thou shall not, he says – “it behoves you to do this, it is right for you not to do that.”

The moral precepts which the Buddha prescribed for Buddhists to observe are not commandments but a moral code which they observe on their own accord.

Since the Buddha’s mind is totally pure and free from defilements, he had no greed, no anger, no ignorance, no wrong belief, no conceit, no jealousy, no avarice, no worry, no remorse, no perplexity, no sloth and no torpor.

Since his Bodhisatta days he developed boundless compassion to ferry the people from the shore of suffering to the safe shore of Nibbāna, thus he decided to struggle steadfastly for uncountable existences to attain Buddhahood and teach them the Universal Noble Truths so that they will be enlightened as noble persons (Ariyās).

When he became a Buddha, as he came to know that he could have to enlighten many millions of humans, devas and Brahmās in a short period of 45 years of his Buddhahood, he worked day and night sleeping only for one hour and twenty-minutes a day, to accomplish that noblest task, out of compassion for all living beings.

The Buddha also taught his followers to practise the four sublime states of living as he himself practised them always. The four sublime states are four illimitable mental factors:

(1) **Mettā** = loving-kindness and tolerance; it is the sincere wish for the happiness and welfare of all living beings. The Buddha urges to develop loving-kindness to the extent that one can love one’s enemy as one loves oneself so that one shall have no enemies.

To practise mettā, one extends one’s loving-kindness to all living beings, sincerely wishing them: “May all living beings be free from danger, free from bodily pain and mental suffering, and may they

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be happy and well always.”

(2) **Karuṇā** = compassion; it makes the hearts of good persons quiver when others are afflicted with sorrow. The wish to remove the sufferings of others is its chief characteristic.

To practise karuṇā, one embraces all sorrow-stricken beings with compassion, sincerely wishing them: “May all miserable beings be free from miseries.”

(3) **Muditā** = appreciative joy; its chief characteristic is to rejoice in other’s prosperity.

To practise muditā, one embraces all prosperous beings with appreciative joy, wishing them sincerely: “May their gain and prosperity remain with them for a long time.”

(4) **Upekkhā** = equanimity, mental balance; it views living beings impartially, i.e. neither with attachment nor with aversion. It is the balanced state of the mind.

To practise upekkhā, one embraces the good and the bad, the loved and the unloved, the sorrow-stricken or the happy prosperous, with equanimity and reflects thus: “All beings have only their karmas as their possession and they are as they are conditioned by their karmas.”

Anyone, who is pervading the whole world with loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy or equanimity, is said to be living in the ‘**sublime abode**’ or ‘**brahma abode**’. So it is called the **sublime modes of living**.

This spirit of loving-kindness and tolerance has been one of the most cherished ideals of Buddhist culture and civilization. **That is why there is not a single example of persecution or the shedding of a drop of blood in the history of Buddhism.**

To the unique credit of Buddhism it must be said that throughout its peaceful march of 2600 years, no drop of blood has been shed in the name of the Buddha, no mighty monarch has wielded his powerful sword to propagate Buddhism, and no conversion has been made by force.

Aldous Huxley wrote: “Alone of all the great world religions

Buddhism made its way without persecution, censorship or inquisition. In all these respects its record is enormously superior to that of Christianity.”

Lord Bertrand Russel remarks: “*Of all the great religions of history, I prefer Buddhism, especially in its earliest forms, because it has had the smallest element of persecution.*”

Not only the freedom of thought, but also the tolerance allowed by the Buddha is astonishing to the scholars of the history of religions. Once in Nalanda a prominent richman named **Upāli**, a well-known disciple of **Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (Jaina Mahāvīra)**, was sent by Mahāvīra himself to defeat the Buddha in argument on the Law of Kamma. Quite contrary to expectations, at the end of the discussion, Upāli was convinced that the views of the Buddha were right and those of his master were wrong. So he begged the Buddha to accept him as one of his lay disciples.

But the Buddha asked him to reconsider it, and not to be in a hurry, for “*considering carefully is good for a well-known man like you.*”

Upāli was overwhelmed with joy at the unexpected utterance of the Buddha, and said: “*Lord, if I had become a follower of another teacher, his followers would have taken me round the streets in procession, proclaiming that such and such a millionaire had renounced his former religion and had embraced theirs. But, Lord, you advise me to investigate further. The more pleased am I with this salutary advice of yours.*”

And he appreciatively repeated: “*For the second time I seek refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha.*”

The Buddha, quite in keeping with his boundless compassion and perfect tolerance, advised him to support his former religious teacher as he used to, although he now became a Buddhist.

In the third century B.C., the great Buddhist **Emperor Asoka** of India, following this noble example of tolerance and compassion, honoured and supported all other religions in his vast empire. In his Rock Edict XII, the Emperor declared:

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“One should not honour only one’s own religion and condemn others’ religions, but one should honour others’ religions for this or that reason. So doing, one helps one’s own religion to grow and renders service to the religions of others too. In acting otherwise one digs the grave of one’s own religion and also does harm to other religions. Whosoever honours his own religion and condemns other religions, does so indeed through devotion to his own religion, thinking “I will glorify my own religion.” But on the contrary, in so doing he injures his own religion more gravely. So concord is good: Let all listen, and be willing to listen to the doctrines professed by others.”

**[16] The Buddha Taught Universal Love to Establish
Brotherhood among all Living Beings**

It was the Buddha who, for the first time in the known history of mankind, attempted to abolish slavery and the caste system which was firmly rooted in India at that time. The Buddha declared:

“By birth is not one an outcast,

By birth is not one a brahmin,

By deeds is one an outcast,

By deeds is one a brahmin.” (Sutta Nipāta, Vasala Sutta, p.21)

The Buddha taught higher morality and the Four Sublime States of Living and introduced the glorious Idea of Brotherhood among all the people, regarding one another as brothers and sisters, without differentiating them by colour, race, nationality, faith, caste and social status.

In **Anamatagga Sutta** the Buddha revealed that all living beings have lived for so many uncountable existences that there is no one at present who has been not related to us as father, mother, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, etc. So we all should live together lovingly and harmoniously as brothers, sisters, relatives, etc.

A good Buddhist must practise universal love towards every living being and identify himself with all, making no distinction whatsoever. It is this universal love, one of the most salient characteristics of Buddhism, that attempts to break all the barriers of caste,

colour and creed which separate one another. If the followers of different faiths cannot meet on a common platform like brothers and sisters just because they belong to different religions, then surely the religious teachers have failed in their noble missions.

[17] **The Buddha Established the Noblest Saṅgha Community**

With his great foresight the Buddha established the noblest Saṅgha Community soon after his attainment of Buddhahood. He knew in advance that he could live only for 45 years as a Buddha and the Saṅgha Community will last for a long time and will be able to maintain his “Noble Teachings”, known as the “**Buddha-Dispensation**”, flourishingly for 5000 years. Now the Saṅgha Community has already lasted for 2600 years.

The Saṅgha Community is made up of Noble Bhikkhus, comprising four Magga-persons and four Phala-Persons. Magga-persons lasted only for one consciousness-moment and then become Phala-persons, known as Stream-Winners, Once returners, Non-returners and Arahants. All noble persons have developed high morality, high concentration and high wisdom to be enlightened to Four Noble Truths and to have realized Nibbāna with Path-Wisdom and Fruition-Wisdom. So they have the same view, the same moral practice and they all are very noble.

Worldling bhikkhus (monks), who are respectfully practising the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the Noble Threefold Training of morality, concentration and wisdom to become Noble Persons are also included in the Saṅgha Community.

The nine Supreme Attributes of the Saṅgha are described in Chapter (12). The noblest **Omniscient Buddha**, his noblest precious Teachings known as the **Dhamma** and his noblest disciple Bhikkhus known as the Saṅgha are adorably called “**Triple Gem**”. This noblest Triple Gem represents the Three Noblest Objects of Veneration in Buddhism.

If we can respectfully pay homage to the Buddha or the Dhamma or the Saṅgha just for a moment, the merit we attain can prevent us from woeful rebirth and produce many blissful rebirths in celestial realms.

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When the Buddha's foster mother, **Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī** donated a specially prepared robe to the Buddha, the Buddha told her to donate to the Saṅgha, saying: *"If you donate to the Saṅgha, it means donating to me also."* The Buddha said so with the intention of persuading the people to respect the Saṅgha.

In **Velāma Sutta**, the Buddha said that he was a very rich Brahmin, named **Velāma**, in one of his past existences. He invited all the people of the Great Southern Island (modern India) to come to his great offering of food to them for seven years, seven months and seven days.

As it was the time outside the Buddha's Dispensation, there was no one among the donees who had taken Threefold Refuge in Triple Gem. So the merit that he gained from that great offering was less than the merit of offering one meal to a Stream-Winner. The merit of offering food to a hundred Stream-Winners is less than the merit of offering food to a Once-returner, and so on. That means that the nobler the donee, the greater the merit.

So we get the greatest merit by offering alms to a Buddha, and yet we get greater merit by offering to the Saṅgha with the Buddha as the head of the Saṅgha. So whenever we offer alms to monks, we should offer with the intention that we are offering to the Saṅgha with the Buddha as its head.

According to Buddhism, caste, colour or social status does not preclude one from becoming a Buddhist and from entering the noble Order of Saṅgha where all are treated as equal. Princes, warriors, rich men, poor men, slaves, scavengers, all joined the Order and attained Arahantship. So the doorway of Buddhism to Nibbāna is wide open to all without any distinction.

The Buddha provided equal opportunities for all and raised the status of people to the level of the happiest noble persons.

[18] The Buddha Raised the Status of Women to the Highest Level

It was also the Buddha who raised the status of women to the highest level to let them become Bhikkhunīs and Arahants. Before

the appearance of the Buddha, women in India were not held in high esteem. The birth of a daughter to a family was considered an unwelcome and cumbersome addition.

The Buddha called women as “*mātugāma*”, meaning “**mother-folk.**” They are indeed “**the best friends of husbands**” and “**the mothers of the human race.**” Remember the saying: “*The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.*”

The Buddha included mothers among the five **Greatest Benefactors** of humanity, namely, the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, Mothers and Fathers. The gratitude that we owe to our mothers is greater than the greatest mountain called mount Meru and it is greater than the gratitude we owe to our fathers, said the Buddha.

Although at first the Buddha refused to admit women into the Saṅgha Order on reasonable grounds, yet later he yielded to the entreaties of Venerable Ānanda and his foster-mother, Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, and founded the **Order of Bhikkhunīs** (*female bhikkhus*) with rules and regulations.

Just as **Arahants Sariputta and Mahā Moggallāna were made the two chief disciples in the Order of Bhikkhus, even so Arahants Khemā and Uppalavaṇṇa were made the two female chief disciples in the Order of Bhikkhunīs. Many other female disciples, too, were named by the Buddha himself as most distinguished and pious followers.**

Before the founding of the Order of Bhikkhunīs, women did not enjoy sufficient freedom and were deprived of an opportunity to exhibit their innate spiritual capabilities and their mental gifts. The establishment of the Order of Bhikkhunīs was certainly a blessing to women. In this Order queens, princesses, daughters of noble families, widows, bereaved mothers, helpless women, courtesans, all despite their caste or rank met on a common footing, enjoyed perfect consolation and peace as well as the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

The Buddha succeeded in enlightening his father King Suddhodana, his foster-mother, Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, his former wife Queen Yasodarā, his son Prince Rāhula, his brother Prince Nanda,

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his sister Princess Janapada Kālyānī to become Arahants. He also enlightened his mother Queen Mahā Māyā Devī, who passed away and became **Santusita Deva** in Tusitā realm, and thousands of his relatives to become Noble Persons (*Ariyās*). These achievements illustrate that the Buddha has done the best service to his family and relatives.

[19] The Buddha is Truly the Greatest Religious Teacher

The most Exalted and Wisest Buddha taught Universal Noble Truths to humans, devas and Brahmās for self-enlightenment, for developing the highest wisdom and the total purity of the mind, for developing great compassion and universal love, for eternal peace and happiness in the whole world.

His teachings also effectively promotes the concept of non-violence, personal peace, community peace, increasing compassion and a sense of connection and encouraging preservation of natural environment.

The Buddha declared that the gates of deliverance from all suffering and the enjoyment of eternal peace and unique happiness in this very life were open to all, in every condition of life, high or low, saint or sinner, who would care to turn a new leaf and aspire to perfection.

His will, wisdom, compassion, universal love, renunciation, perfect purity, exemplary personal life, the blameless methods of propagating his excellent teachings – all these factors have compelled about one-fifth of the world population to embrace Buddhism, and many millions of humans, devas and Brahmās have gained enlightenment to become Noble Persons and Arahants and to emancipate from the rounds of suffering and to enjoy the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever!

The Buddha's sublime personality, boundless compassion and universal love and tolerance for all living beings have given birth to a highly cultured civilization in which everyone looks upon others as brothers, sisters or relatives, the young respect the elders, the elders lovingly admonish the young, parents bring up sons and daughters, teachers teach students, employers look after

workers, all live harmoniously, performing their respective duties as prescribed by the Buddha.

The Buddha's teachings are conducive to world peace and happiness. If everyone would live morally and developing sincerely loving-kindness, compassion and appreciative joy to all as taught by the Buddha, then we shall attain lasting world peace and true happiness right away!

[20] Can the Buddha Guide Us and Salvage Us Now Since He has Passed Away?

When the Buddha was about to pass away, he said to Ānanda and the large gathering of bhikkhus thus: “Ānanda, some of you may think that ‘now we have no teacher when the Buddha has passed away’. Don’t think so. The Doctrine and Discipline which I have taught you and prescribed for you will be your Teacher when I am gone.

“Ānanda, while I am living, I have taught you Suttanta Piṭaka, encompassing thirty-seven Constituents of Enlightenment, comprising Four Foundations of Mindfulness, Four Supreme Efforts, Four Foundation of Accomplishment, Five Faculties, Five Powers, Seven Constituents of Enlightenment, Eight Constituents of the Noble Path, all leading to Nibbāna. They will remain as your Teacher.

“Ānanda, I have also taught you the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, specifying in minute detail such as the Five Aggregates, the Twelve Sense-bases, the Eighteen Elements, the Four Noble Truths, etc. All these Dhammas lead to Nibbāna. So they will remain as your Teacher.

“The Doctrines that I have taught you over forty-five years, constituting the Dhamma and Doctrine, numbering 84000 units, will be with you. These eighty-four thousand units of the Dhamma factors will guide you and supervise you as 84000 Teachers on My behalf.”

With his great foresight the most Exalted Bhuddha has also established the **‘Saṃgha Community’**, comprising of four types of Noble Persons who have attained four types of Path-wisdom and four types of Noble Persons who have attained four types of Frui-

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tion-wisdoms and four types of Trainees who are cultivating Insight to attain the four stages of Path-Wisdom.

“If these twelve types of bhikkhus will keep on practising and passing on the Buddha’s Teachings rightly, the world will not be void of Arahants,” said the Buddha.

Moreover, the Buddha also said that there are four types of Noble Persons who have attained four types of Path-Wisdom and four types of ‘**cetiya**’ (shrine or pagoda) which we can worship as the living Buddha. The four types of “**cetiya**” are as follows.

- (1) **Dhamma Cetiya** – Tipiṭaka Scriptures (Three Buddhist Canons) or Stupas or Pagodas with Tipiṭaka Scriptures enshrined in them.
- (2) **Dhātu Cetiya** – Buddha’s relics or Pagodas in which the relics of a Buddha are enshrined.
- (3) **Paribhoga Cetiya** – Utensils or robes used by a Buddha or Pagodas in which a Buddha’s utensils are enshrined as well as a Bodhi Tree.
- (4) **Uddhissa Cetiya** – Buddha statues, Buddha Paintings, Buddha Images, Shrine, Temple, Pagoda or anything which represents a Buddha. We can even visualize a Buddha.

When we are paying homage to anyone of the above four types of cetiya, if we can recall or recite the Buddha’s attributes, regarding the Cetiya as the real Buddha, then we shall get the same merit as we are paying homage to the real Buddha according to the teaching of the Buddha.

So we shall get great merit by doing meritorious deeds as taught by the Buddha such as offering food, water, flowers to a Buddha statue or offering food and requisites to *bhikkhus* (monks) with the intention that we are giving alms to the Saṅgha Community headed by the Buddha.

[5]

THE OUTSTANDING QUALITIES OF BUDDHISM

• What is Buddhism?

All the sublime teachings of the Omniscient Buddha, which he taught during his long and successful missionary of 45 years, are collectively called **“Dhamma”** in Pāḷi, meaning **“Ultimate Realities and Natural Truths”**, and generally known world-wide as **“Buddhism”**. It is also called **“the Buddha’s Dispensation”**.

The Buddha truly possesses **“Omniscient Wisdom”** (*Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*) which correctly knows all **Ultimate Realities** (*paramatthas*) comprising ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities that really exist in living beings and in the whole universe. The Buddha also knows penetratively all **Natural Truths and Natural Laws** which govern all natural psychophysical processes involving ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities.

Making use of this profound knowledge of all ultimate realities, all natural truths and natural laws, the Blessed Buddha expounded his excellent **“Teachings”** called **“Buddhism”** for the greatest benefits, welfare and happiness of all living beings, including humans, devas and Brahmās.

His ultimate aim of teaching Buddhism is to enlighten living beings to the Four Noble Truths so that they will become Noble Persons and Arahants, who can emancipate from the rounds of births and deaths and suffering and can enjoy the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever. So it is said that all the Teachings of the Buddha have only one essence, that is the **“Essence of Liberation”** (*Vimutti-rasa*) from the rounds of births and deaths and suffering and **“the realization of Nibbāna”**, which is eternal peace and unique happiness.

[1] Buddhism is Established on the Firm Foundation of Ultimate Realities, natural Truths and Natural Laws

It is the glory of Buddhism that it is established on the firm foundation of ultimate realities, natural truths and natural laws.

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Ultimate realities (*paramatthas*) consist of Nibbāna as well as ultimate mentalities (*nāma*) and ultimate materialities (*rūpa*), which are the ultimate basic components of mind and body. They are not further divisible into simpler things.

Ultimate mentalities comprise consciousness (*citta*) and 52 types of **mental factors** (*cetasikas*) both of which are aware of sense-objects, and are collectively known as ‘**mentalities**’. Mentalities are so subtle and tender that they cannot arise separately. One consciousness combines with seven to 36 mental factors and arise together as ‘**mind**’, which has to depend on a material base (*vatthu*) and clings to a sense-object for its stability.

Ultimate materialities number 28 types. Again they are so subtle and tender that they cannot arise individually. Eight to thirteen materialities combine together as ‘**material groups**’ (*rūpa-kalāpas*). These material groups are comparable in size to electrons, protons and neutrons.

So the ultimate realities that really exist in all living beings and in the whole universe are one type of ‘**consciousness**’, 52 types of ‘**mental factors**’ and 28 types of ‘**ultimate materialities**’. They take part in psychophysical processes and they combine together in several million ways in accordance with natural laws to form all various kinds of living beings and inanimate things in the universe.

As ultimate realities have no form, no shape like energy and are invisible even under the most powerful electronic microscope and can neither be detected by the latest science instruments, they are totally unknown to scientists, psychologists and philosophers. So these educated people cannot understand and cannot explain the psychophysical phenomena, which are taking place every second in each individual and in the whole universe.

All these realities come to be known to the people only when a Buddha appears in the world. The Buddha knows all the ultimate realities and all psychophysical phenomena in detail comprehensively. He makes use of this profound knowledge in his sublime teachings both in principles and in practice.

There are no assumptions, no inventions, no theories and no hy-

potheses in Buddhism. The Buddha taught out of his own experience and correct understanding of all ultimate realities, natural truths and natural laws. So Buddhism is all natural truths which have been verified to be true by many million Arahants and Noble Persons.

[2] The Sublime Teachings of the Omniscient Buddha Brings Immediate Great Benefits

In his higher Teachings called ‘**Abhidhamma**’, the Exalted Buddha teaches in detail about all ultimate realities, psychophysical phenomena, natural laws and natural truths.

The essential basic descriptions of all ultimate materialities, all ultimate mentalities, psychophysical phenomena involving these ultimate realities in living beings, the all embracing Paṭṭhāna Conditions, the important Law of Kamma, the important Doctrine of Dependent Origination, and the Four Noble Truths are presented in Chapters (9) (13) to (19) for easy understanding and ready reference. Readers are advised to study these chapters thoroughly in order to understand the deep sublime teachings of the Buddha.

Among the 52 mental factors (described on pages 332-347), **13 neutral mental factors** are our excellent qualities if we can make good use of them; **14 immoral mental factors** are our bad qualities and internal enemies, and they represent the real evil forces in the universe; they also include **ten defilements** (*kilesās*) which defile, debase and burn the mind most of the time to make life unpleasant, unhappy and miserable, and they are the root causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world; and finally **25 beautiful mental factors** constitute the beautiful good forces in the world as well as our powerful excellent qualities.

By developing our excellent qualities and beautiful good forces, we can become upright, virtuous, noble, and we can suppress and finally eliminate all evil forces and all suffering in our minds. Then we can enjoy permanently the eternal peace and unique happiness of Nibbāna for ever. The Buddha discovered **the Eightfold Noble Path** and taught to humans and gods to achieve this final goal of Buddhism successfully.

[3] The Noble Teaching of Alms-giving, Moral Precepts and Meditation

Among ten defilements, **greed** (*lobha*), **anger** (*dosa*), and **ignorance** (*moha*) are the leaders. They are known as “immoral roots”, because they give rise to immoral minds and influence the people to perform immoral evil actions.

Greed makes people greedy to steal others’ properties, cheat others of their moneys, commit adultery, etc. In doing an immoral action, greed-rooted immoral consciousnesses arise and perish by many billions according to the Law of Consciousness, leaving behind in the mental stream many billion immoral kamma-properties according to the Law of Kamma.

Anger makes one angry and cruel and compel people to commit killing animals and men, abusing others, quarreling, fighting with others, etc. In so doing anger-rooted immoral consciousnesses arise and perish by many billions, depositing many billion immoral kammass.

These immoral kammass start bearing their bad results from this present existence and will produce woeful rebirth after death. They can keep on producing many woeful existences.

Ignorance (*moha*) also prompts people to perform evil actions by making them ignorant of the Law of Kamma and not to know what is good and what is bad.

There are also **three moral roots** among beautiful mental factors. They are direct opposites of immoral roots.

Alobha – greedlessness, non-attachment, generosity

Adosa – hatelessness, tolerance, loving-kindness, good-will

Amoha (*Pañña*) – wisdom, knowledge

These moral roots will give rise to moral minds and persuade people to perform meritorious deeds.

Alobha (greedlessness) can be developed by **alms-giving** (*dāna*) and it can suppress **lobha** (greed) not to arise in the mind. Greed prevents us from giving alms by its strong attachment to wealth. When we can donate just a spoonful of rice to a monk, billions of

moral minds arise and perish, depositing many billion moral karmas in our mental streams. These good karmas will start bearing good results from this very existence and condition blissful existences to arise after death.

Adosa (tolerance, loving-kindness) can be developed by observing five moral precepts called **Pañca-sīla** and by radiating loving kindness to all living beings. When developed, it can suppress **dosa** (anger) not to arise in the mind. Again we can get billions of good karmas by observing Pañca-sīla and radiating loving-kindness.

Amoha (wisdom, knowledge) can be developed by undertaking meditation (*bhāvanā*) or by learning the Dhamma. It is the wisdom that penetratively understands the true natures of ultimate realities, natural laws and natural truths that govern psychophysical processes. When we can develop wisdom to the highest level of the Fourfold Path-wisdom by undertaking the Noble Threefold Training of morality, mental concentration and wisdom, then the Fourfold Path-wisdom can totally eliminate all defilements and we can emancipate from the rounds of births and deaths and suffering and enjoy the eternal peace and the unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

[4] **Buddhism Teaches Immoral Actions and Moral Actions Precisely**

• **Ten Courses of Immoral Actions**

The Buddha discovered ten kinds of immoral actions which should be avoided by all means. The reason is that if we commit any one of these ten immoral actions, immoral minds and immoral karmas arise by many billions, and these immoral karmas will condition one to be reborn in woeful abodes life after life.

Three immoral bodily actions:

- 1 *Pānātipāta* – killing any living being,
- 2 *Adinnādāna* – stealing other's property,
- 3 *Kāmesu-micchācārā* – misuse of the senses such as sexual misconduct and using intoxicating drinks and drugs,

Four immoral verbal actions:

- 4 *Musāvādā* – lying,
- 5 *Pisunavācā* – slandering, back-biting,

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6 *Pharusavācā* – rude or harsh speech,

7 *Samphappalāpā* – vain talk, gossiping.

Three immoral mental actions:

8 *Abhijjā* – covetousness, plotting to take other's property illegally,

9 *Vyāpāda* – ill-will, plotting to destroy other's life and property,

10 *Micchādiṭṭhi* – wrong view, taking that kamma and its result do not exist.

• Ten Courses of Moral Actions

There are ten courses of moral actions, also known as “**ten courses of good conduct**” (*sucaritas*) whereas ten courses of immoral actions are known as “**ten courses of evil conduct**” (*ducaritas*).

The avoidance of ten courses of immoral actions such as the avoidance of killing, the avoidance of stealing, the avoidance of sexual misconduct, the avoidance of lying are known as ten courses of moral actions.

When we abstain from an evil action such as killing an animal or stealing other's property, tolerance or loving-kindness and greedlessness arise in us; so moral minds and moral kammas also arise by many billions. These moral kammas will condition us to be reborn in celestial realms for many existences.

[5] The Basic Training in Buddhism to Attain Great Benefits

In one of his missionary tour in Kosala Country, the Buddha came to **Veḷudvāra Village**. The village-elders asked the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, we have saved some money from our agricultural work. We want to live with our family happily using this money, and we want to be reborn in celestial realms after death. How should we live, Sir?”

The Buddha said: “You revere the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha respectfully. And you abstain from committing three evil bodily actions and four evil speeches. Then you can live happily with your family, enjoying your wealth. You will be surely reborn in a celestial realm after death.”

What the Buddha advises them to do amounts to ‘**keeping Threefold Refuge respectfully and observing Pañca-sīla diligently.**’

When the Buddha came to **Sālā village**, the Brahmins of that village asked him: “Venerable Buddha, when some people die, they are born in celestial realms. When some other people die, they are born in woeful abodes. What make the difference between them?”

Again the Buddha gave the answer: “O Brahmins, when those people, who live justfully die, they are born in celestial realms. And when those other people, who live unjustfully die, they are born in woeful abodes.”

The Brahmins asked again: “Venerable Buddha, what do you mean when you say that some people live justfully and some other people live unjustfully?”

The Buddha said: “Well, Brahmins, those people, who abstain from ten evil courses of immoral actions are living justfully, and those other people, who do not abstain from ten courses of evil actions, are living unjustfully and immorally.”

So when the Buddha advises the people to observe Pañca-sīla diligently, he really means that they should abstain from all ten evil actions.

- **The Procedure for Observing Pañca-Sīla together with
Threefold Refuge**

The Basic training for Buddhists is to observe respectfully Pañca-Sīla together with Threefold Refuge. One can ask for Pañca-Sīla together with Threefold Refuge from the Buddha, a member of Saṅgha or a virtuous teacher. It should be undertaken respectfully in five steps to gain great merit.

Step 1: Asking for Permission to pay Homage

Okāsa Okāsa Okāsa. Oh Venerable Sir, may I pay obeisance to thee! So as to be free from all my offences, accumulated from evil deeds done bodily, verbally and mentally, I pay homage to the Triple Gem: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, once, twice, thrice, with my joined palms on my forehead very respectfully and humbly.

Owing to my deeds of merit, may I realize Nibbāna soon.

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Step 2: Asking for Pañca-Sīla together with Threefold Refuge

Ahaṃ bhante tisaraṇena saha pañca-sīlaṃ dhammaṃ yācāmi anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante. (This Pāḷi recitation may be omitted. Just say in English.)

Dutayampi ahaṃbhante me bhante.

Tatayampi ahaṃ bhante me bhante.

Meaning: Venerable Sir, I wish to observe the five moral precepts together with the Noble Threefold Refuge.

Venerable Sir, please honour me by guiding me to undertake the precepts and the Threefold Refuge.

Bhikkhu: *Yamaṃ vadāmi taṃ vadetha.*

Repeat the words that I say.

Devotee: Yes, Venerable Sir.

Step 3: Paying Homage to the Buddha

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa

(Recite three times)

Meaning: Homage to the Exalted One, the One worthy of special veneration, and the Perfectly Self-Enlightened One.

Step 4: Taking the Noble Threefold Refuge

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Samghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dutayampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dutayampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Dutayampi Samghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Tattayampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Tattayampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

Tattayampi Samghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

This Pāḷi recitation should not be omitted.

Meaning: I take refuge in the Buddha.

I take refuge in the Dhamma.

I take refuge in the Samgha.

For the second time I take refuge in the Buddha.

... ..

For the third time I take refuge in the Buddha.

... ..

Bhikkhu: *Tisaraṇa-gamanam paripunnam.*

The act of taking Threefold Refuge is completed.

Devotee: *Āmabhante.*

Yes, Venerable Sir.

Step 5: Undertaking to Observe the Five Precepts

1 *Pāṇātipātā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from killing any living being.

2 *Adinnādānā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from stealing other's properties.

3 *Kāmesu-micchācārā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from sexual misconduct.

4 *Musāvādā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from telling lies, slandering, speaking harshly, and talking vainly.

5 *Surāmeraya-majjapamā-daṭṭhānā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from intoxicating drinks and drugs.

(Again Pāli recitation can be omitted.)

Bhikkhu: *Tisaraṇeṇa saha pañca-sīlam dhammam sādhuṇam katvā appamādena sampādettha.*

Do observe the five precepts together with the Three Noble Refuges with diligence and steadfast mindfulness.

Lay-devotee: *Āmabhante.*

Yes, Venerable Sir.

• **The Great Benefits of Taking Threefold Refuge**

In order to enshrine the noblest Triple Gem in our hearts, we take Threefold Refuge with the understanding of their noblest virtues and with great respect and great devotion.

When the noblest virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sāṃgha are established in our hearts, our whole body and mind become very noble; so we are nobler than ordinary people without Threefold Refuge.

Because of the noblest virtues of Triple Gem, ghosts, ogres, ogresses and even wild beasts will not attack us, and we shall surely escape from woeful rebirth and will be born in celestial realms after death.

Thus by taking Threefold Noble Refuge, we are well protected from all dangers including woeful rebirth, which is the worst danger.

Besides, we gain great merit in taking Threefold Refuge and the good karmas will bear many wonderful results in the present existence as well as in future existences.

No matter where we are born in the future, either in the human realm or in the celestial realm, we shall enjoy (1) longevity, (2) great bodily beauty, (3) great happiness, (4) great retinue, (5) great power, (6) great respect and great affection from others, (7) great fame, (8) great wisdom, (9) great wealth, and (10) great sensual pleasure.

A good evidence about the attainment of these great merits is the true story of Venerable Tisaraṇagāmaṇiya Thera.

One asaṅkheyya (incalculable aeon) and one hundred thousand world cycles ago, **Anomadassī Buddha** appeared in the world. A **poor man**, who looked after his two blind parents, could neither offer alms nor afford to listen to the sermon of the Buddha. However, he met the Chief Disciple of the Buddha, named **Nisabha Thera**, and took Threefold Refuge with his guidance.

At that time the life-span of human beings was one hundred thousand years. As the poor man kept Threefold Refuge well established in his heart with great respect throughout his life, he

accumulated many billions of powerful moral kammās.

When he died, he was born as the **Sakka**, King of Devas, in Tāvātimsā celestial realm. During a very long period of one asankheyya and one hundred thousand world-cycles, he was re-born uncountable times in celestial realms and human realm, but never was he born in woeful abodes.

Again whenever he was born, he was more outstanding than others. He was born as the Sakka for eighty existences, as the Universal Monarch for seventy-five existences, as Kings and feudal lords for uncountable existences.

At the time of Gotama Buddha in the present world he was reborn as a rich man's son in Sāvātthi city. At the age of seven years, he was the leader of his play mates. While they were playing, they went into a monastery. An Arahant guided them to take Threefold Refuge. As soon as the rich man's son had taken Threefold Refuge, he became an Arahant. He was well known as **Tisaraṇagāmanīya Thera** in Gotama Buddha's Dispensation.

(*Apa. 1, 82; Apa.tha.2, 39*)

• **The Wonderful Benefits of Observing Pañca-Sīla**

1. Since the bodily and verbal actions of a person who diligently observes Pañca-sīla are blameless and praise-worthy, **he possesses the best moral character.**
2. Since he avoids doing harm to any living being, **he brings peace and happiness to all living beings including himself.**
3. Since he can prevent gross and aggressive defilements such as greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*) and ignorance (*moha*) from arising in the mind, **he enjoys peace and happiness instantly.**
4. Loving-kindness (*mettā*), tolerance (*khantī*) and compassion (*karuṇā*) bloom in a person of good morality. So his face is calm, serene and adorable. People love and respect him. **So he can join any assembly of people with grace and boldness.**
5. **Pañca-sīla represents the most beautiful and attractive dress as well as the best perfume.**

The fragrance of flowers travels not against the wind, nor the

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fragrance of sandal wood and perfumes, but the fragrance of the virtuous person travels against the wind pervading every direction.

(Dhammapada 54)

6. A virtuous person, because of mindfulness and diligence **will succeed in business and amassing riches.**
7. His good fame will spread far and wide.
8. In ***Akaṅkheyya Sutta*** the Buddha advises a person to keep pure morality if he wishes to win adoration and respect of his companions, great wealth, great fame and high position.
9. Morality is the Foundation for building the higher structure of concentration. The Buddha advises that to **develop the four Rūpāvacara Jhānas, one should keep pure morality, and to develop the Fourfold Path-wisdom and the Fourfold Fruition-Wisdom, one should maintain very pure morality diligently.**
10. The impurities of the mind-continuum cannot be washed with the water from Ganges River or other rivers; they can be washed only with the cool clear water of morality.
11. The burning heat in body and mind by defilements cannot be cooled down and extinguished by moon-light, star-light or pure water; it can be cooled down and extinguished only by the cooling element of morality.
12. There is no stairway like morality to go up to celestial realms; and there is no door-way like morality to enter Nibbāna.
13. A person with morality will be free from delusion and perplexity at the time of death, remembering the meritorious deeds that he has done.
14. He will be reborn in a blissful realm (human-realm or celestial realm) after death.
15. *“Ijjati bhikkhave sīlavato cetopanidhi visuddhattā”*
“All the wishes of a person with pure morality will be fulfilled, because his mind is pure and noble”, said the Buddha.

[6] Pure Morality Leads to the Best Moral Character and World Peace

- **Pure Morality is the Crown among all our Virtues**

The young and the old should embrace Pañca-sīla, because it is good till old age. It is the beginning of all meritorious deeds and itself is the noblest meritorious deed. It is the most beautiful and most precious dress, and its unique fragrance surpasses all perfumes in fragrance.

Morality makes the mind and the person pure and noble, and as a pure, noble person, he maintains **the best moral character**. A person without morality is wicked and ignoble. So morality differentiates upright persons from wicked persons.

- **Moral character is the most important quality** of a person according to the concept of western scholars also. They make the following statement:

“When wealth is lost, nothing is lost;

When health is lost, something is lost;

When character is lost, everything is lost.”

“A person, endowed with morality, wisdom and justice will not do evil action under any circumstances, will not commit injustice for the sake of fulfilling his wishes”

“A person, endowed with morality, retinue and wealth will be honoured and respected by all wherever he is.”

“Pure morality leads to happiness till old age. Well established faith and confidence in Triple Gem leads to happiness. Attainment of knowledge leads to happiness. Abstinence from all evil actions leads to happiness.” (Dhammapada Verses 84, 303, 333)

‘Pañca-Sīla’ is a very noble, beneficial and happy way of living for lay-persons. The objective of observing five noble precepts or *Pañca-Sīla* is to abstain from “Ten Courses of Immoral Actions” also called “Ten Courses of Evil Conduct” and accomplish “Ten courses of Moral Actions,” also called “Ten Courses of Good Conduct.” In observing *Pañca-Sīla*, we abstain from causing any harm to any living being, thus allowing all living-beings including animals to live happily without worry and without danger caused by us. So it is very noble.

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If we perform any evil action which is included in “Ten Courses of Immoral Actions”, we acquire billions of immoral karmas which will bring about similar reactions a billion times, including woeful suffering by being born in woeful abodes for many existences. If one understands the natural law of karma, one will no longer perform evil actions.

In the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha, **Dhamma Dinnā** was foremost among the female disciples of the Buddha in preaching the Dhamma. She was also an Arahant with supernormal knowledges. With her supernormal knowledge of former existences, she could see that she was the wife of a Brahmin in one of her past existences.

One day a closed friend of the Brahmin came to their house and her husband requested her to cook good food. As she could not get meat from the market, she killed a little goat, bred at her house, by cutting its throat, and cooked its meat.

Her husband and his friend admired her for the tasty good food she served. But when she died, the immoral karma of killing the little goat sent her to hell, where she was burnt and killed uncountable existences.

When she escaped from hell, she was reborn as animals as many times as there were hairs in the body of the little goat that she killed, and in each of these existences she was killed by having her throat cut while she was still young.

She killed just one little goat. She was killed uncountable times in the same way as she had killed the little goat. She had also to suffer terribly in hell for thousands of years. How dreadful are the results of an evil action?

This happened according to **the Law of Karma**. We cannot go against natural laws; we should live wisely making use of natural truths and natural laws. Even the Exalted Buddha, who was most powerful, could not stop his previous evil karmas from bearing bad results in his last existence.

The concept that animals were created by an Almighty God for

human consumption is not correct and very cruel. There are many million species of animals and many are not only suitable for human consumption but also dangerous to men.

The Buddha could see all human beings in the world, and where they were born after death with his powerful Divine Eye. He could see that many were reborn as animals because of their bad karmas.

The millionaire **Brahmin Todeya**, who had wrong view and did not donate money in charity, was born as a dog at his house after death. The Buddha advised Todeya's son, named **Subha**, to feed the dog to its full, and when it became sleepy, to tap the back of the dog, saying: "Daddy, where did you bury the four pots full of gold?" When Subha did as told by the Buddha, the dog was delighted because its former son called it "Daddy", and so it ran to the place and scratched the earth where the gold pots were buried.

When Subha asked his servants to dig at that place, he got the four gold pots. He was convinced that the dog was really his former father and he became a devotee of the Buddha.

So many animals can be our former relatives. We should develop loving-kindness and compassion to all animals.

The Buddha said: "All tremble at the rod. All fear death and life is dear to all. Comparing others with oneself, one should neither strike nor cause to strike." (Dhammapada 129, 130)

In observing Pañca-sīla, we abstain from killing or torturing any living being including tiny animals, because such killing gives rise to billions of immoral karmas which will bring about woeful re-birth and woeful suffering a billionfold.

The Buddha admonished his son Rāhulā never to cause harm to any living being by mental thought, verbal speech or bodily action. This is the ideal way how we should observe Pañca-sīla. As we cause no harm to any living being, we allow all living beings, men and animals, to live safely, peacefully and happily without danger, enemies, dread, worry and anxiety. So Pañca-sīla is called "**Great offering of safety and happiness**" (*Mahā-dāna*).

To cause no harm to any living being and to let all living

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beings live peacefully, happily, without any worry, anxiety and dread is “the Noblest Democratic Principle of Buddhism.” With this understanding, Pañca-sīla is embraced and practised diligently by all Buddhists, who adore justice, truthfulness, equality, peace and happiness.

This noble democratic principle promotes non-violence, non-transgression, tolerance, loving-kindness, compassion and sympathy for all. So there are no persecution and no war in the name of Buddhism.

As a person of pure morality abstains from all evil actions, he leads a very noble, beautiful, blameless life. So he is free from four types of danger:

- (1) He is free from the danger of being blamed by himself;
- (2) He is free from the danger of being blamed or dispraised by others;
- (3) He is free from the danger of being punished by the law;
- (4) He is free from the danger of being reborn in a woeful abode after death.

So he can live most happily among house-holders.

Pañca-sīla is called ‘**Nicca-Sīla**’, meaning ‘**the morality that should be observed always**’, and it is also known as ‘**Garudhamma Sīla**’, meaning ‘**the morality that should be observed respectfully and heedfully**.’

If everyone in the whole world observes Pañca-sīla diligently, we can attain lasting ‘World Peace’ right away. So Pañca-sīla is regarded as ‘the Guardian of the World’.

[7] Teaching Higher Morality for Greater Benefits

• Observing Sabbath Precepts (*Uposatha-Sīla*)

Pious Buddhists usually observe eight or nine moral precepts on Sabbath days to acquire greater merit. These special precepts are called **Sabbath-precepts** (*Uposatha-Sīla*). ‘*Uposatha*’ means ‘**living with good conduct**’.

In observing Sabbath-precepts, one observes eight or nine moral precepts and has to abstain from all sexual activity and from taking

food after midday till dawn the next day. One must also abstain from enjoying music, songs, dances, and from using perfumes, cosmetics, high or luxurious seats and beds. The purpose of these abstinences is to control one's lust, pride, craving for sensuous objects.

Those who undertake meditation in a meditation centre are also required to observe Sabbath-precepts to purify their minds from lust and other coarse defilements so that they advance quickly in their meditation. Another reason for abstaining from sensual enjoyment is that sense-objects are a disturbance to meditation.

The procedure for undertaking to observe Sabbath-precepts is the same as that for observing Pañca-sīla in steps (1) (3) (4); only steps (2) (5) are different.

Step (2): Asking for Sabbath-precepts together with the Noble Threefold Refuge

*Ahaṃ bhante tisaraṇena saha aṭṭhaṅga-sammanā-gataṃ
(navāṅga-sammanā-gataṃ) uposatha-sīlaṃ dhammaṃ
yācāmi anuggahaṃ katvā sīlaṃ detha me bhante.*

Dutiyampi ahaṃ bhante me bhante.

Taiyampi ahaṃ bhante me bhante.

Meaning: Venerable Sir, I wish to observe aṭṭhaṅga-sīla (navāṅga-sīla) consisting of eight (nine) precepts together with the Noble Threefold Refuge.

Venerable Sir, please honour me by guiding me to undertake the precepts and the Threefold Refuge.

For the second time, Venerable Sir,

For the third time, Venerable Sir,

Bhikkhu: *Yamahaṃ Vadāmi taṃ vadetha.*

Repeat the words that I say.

Devotee: *Āma bhante.*

Yes, Venerable Sir.

Step (5): Undertaking to observe the Precepts

1 *Pāṇātipātā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padaṃ samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from killing

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any living being.

2 *Adinnādānā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from stealing other's properties.

3 *Abrahma cariyā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from the ignoble practice of sexual intercourse.

4 *Musāvādā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from telling lies, slandering, speaking harshly, and talking vainly.

5 *Surāmeraya-majjapamā-daṭṭhānā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from consuming intoxicating drinks and drugs.

6 *Vikāla-bhojanā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from taking food after midday till dawn the next day.

7 *Nacca gīta vādita visūka dassana mālāgandha vilepana dhāraṇa maṇḍana vibhūsanatṭhānā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, which are obstacles to Noble Practice, and also abstaining from wearing flowers, using perfumes and beautifying with cosmetics.

8 *Uccāsayana mahāsayanā veramaṇi-sikkhā-padam samādiyāmi.*

I undertake to observe well the precept of abstaining from staying on any high or luxurious seat or bed.

9 (For observing Navaṅga-sīla) *Yathābalaṃ mettā-sahagatena cetasā sabbavantāṃ lokāṃ pharittvā viharāmi.*

I shall permeate all living beings with loving-kindness to the best of my ability.

Bhikkhu: *Tisaranēṇa saha aṭṭhaṅga (navaṅga) sammanāgataṃ uposathasīlaṃ dhammaṃ sādhukaṃ katvā appamādena sampādettha.*

Do observe the eight (nine) precepts together with the Three

Noble Refuges with diligence and steadfast mindfulness.

Lay-devotee: *Āmabhante*.

Yes, Venerable Sir.

• **The Great Benefits of Observing Sabbath-Precepts**

Since Sabbath-precepts (*Uposatha-sīla*) contains all *Pañca-sīla* precepts and some other more precepts, endeavouring to purify the mind further than that achieved by observing *Pañca-sīla*, the benefits of observing Sabbath-precepts will be much greater than the benefits of observing *Pañca-sīla*.

In observing Sabbath-precepts, just trying to restrain oneself not to break the precepts will not bring the benefits as much as one deserves to receive. Only when one can try to keep one's mind pure, will the benefits be great and extensive.

As a lady should wash herself and her hair before she tries to beautify herself with various cosmetics, perfumes and ornaments to look beautiful and smell sweet, so should a person, who wants to observe Sabbath precepts, should purify his mind to be free from greed, anger, pride, wrong view, jealousy, and other defilements in order to receive **the greatest benefits from observing Sabbath-precepts**.

1. One who observes Sabbath-precepts will receive great wealth and great power.
2. Even a future Universal Monarch can become a Universal Monarch only if he observes Sabbath-precepts.
3. One will receive progressive benefits of enjoying great wealth and great luxuries of celestial beings and human beings throughout the rounds of rebirths and deaths (*saṃsāra*) until one finally attains Nibbāna.
4. In the present existence, one will be innocent, righteous and good, and thus one will receive great admiration, great respect and loving-kindness from many persons as well as from celestial beings.
5. There are many stories of female deities like **Uttarā, Sonadinnā** and **Uposathā**, who received great celestial luxuries for having

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observed Uposatha-sīla in previous existences as human beings.

During the reign of **King Brahmadattha** in ancient **Bārānasī**, the Bodhisatta was a poor man named **Gaṅgamālā**. He worked for a wealthy man called **Suciparivāra**. The wealthy man and his wife observed Uposatha-sīla six days a month. Every servant in their house also did the same.

On one Sabbath-day the Bodhisatta, a new employee, went to work early in the morning without knowing that it was a Sabbath-day. When he came back at sunset, he found out that all others were observing Uposatha-sīla.

So he asked for permission from the wealthy man to allow him to observe Uposatha-sīla for the rest of the day. At night he suffered from severe stomach pain due to flatulence since he had not taken any food for the whole day.

Although the wealthy man told him to take food, he refused to take. At dawn the pain became so severe that he fainted. That morning the **King** happened to go round the town in great magnificence. On seeing the great splendour of the royal luxury, he longed to be a king, and passed away. Immediately he was conceived in the womb of the Queen as the result of keeping Uposatha-sīla for half a day.

When he was born, he was named **Prince Udayakumāra**. When he came of age, he became a famous King of *Bārānasī*.

In the ancient city of **Sāketa**, there was a female lay-devotee named **Upasathā**. She was endowed with faith and conviction (*saddhā*) and pure morality (*sīla*). She supported the Saṅgha with four main requisites. She usually observed eight Sabbath-precepts on Sabbath days. She frequently listened to the discourses of the Buddha as well as of the disciples of the Buddha. She practised Tranquillity-meditation (*Samatha-bhāvanā*) and insight meditation (*Vipassanā-bhāvanā*) successfully and she became a **Stream-Winner**.

Now she had heard from some discourses that **Nandavana Garden** in Tāvātimsā celestial realm was very pleasant and enjoyable. So she wished to be born as a deity in that Garden. When she

passed away, she was reborn as a celestial maiden, named **Upasathā**, in Nandavana Garden in Tāvatisā realm.

[8] Teaching Completely All Meritorious Deeds for Happy and Beneficial Living

• Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds Which Produce Peace, Happiness and Great Benefits

To do good actions completely, we should perform ten meritorious actions, known as “Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds.” These ten meritorious deeds produce so much great benefits that they should be performed at all times.

(a) Three Dāna-group Meritorious Deeds

1. *Dāna* – alms-giving, generosity,
2. *Pattidāna* – sharing one’s merit to others,
3. *Pattānumodana* – rejoicing others’ merit by saying “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu.*”

(b) Three Sīla-group Meritorious Deeds

4. *Sīla* – morality, observing 5, 8, 9 or 10 moral precepts,
5. *Appacāyana* – reverence to elders and holy persons,
6. *Veyāvacca* – volunteer service in wholesome deeds.

(c) Four Bhāvanā-group Meritorious Deeds

7. *Bhāvanā* – tranquillity-meditation and Insight Meditation,
8. *Dhammassavana* – listening to Dhamma sermons,
9. *Dhamma-desanā* – expounding the Dhamma,
10. *Diṭṭhiujukamma* – straightening one’s right view.

It is the same as *Sammādiṭṭhi* – the right view.

Diṭṭhiujukamma should be included in all three groups.

• Brief Explanation of Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds

(a) Dāna – Alms-giving

It is the easiest meritorious deeds to donate one’s money in charity. Fulfilling ten noble Perfections begins with alms-giving. The nobler the receiver of donation, the greater the merit received by the doner. So Buddhists donate to the Saṃgha Community headed

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by the Buddha, to hospitals, to monasteries, to schools, to the needy, etc.

As moral actions bear similar results a billionfold, if we donate as much as a banyan seed, we get the benefit greater than a banyan tree, or in other words, if we donate one dollar in charity, we shall get a million dollars in every future existence.

To make sure that we shall get everything we need in our future journey in the rounds of births and deaths called ‘**Samsāra**’, we should try to donate various things as much as possible.

Don’t say that “I cannot donate, because I have no money.” You can donate your food for breakfast and also for lunch to the Buddha at home in your shrine. You can eat after donating for ten minutes. Your upbringing of your children, your support to your parents and relatives also mean alm-giving. Donating even a flower to the Buddha Statue will bring great benefits including celestial existence and celestial happiness. Try to donate first little by little to the temple, to the monastery, to the hospital, to the orphan-school, etc., always with the intention or wish: “May this donation helps me to realize Nibbāna soon.” Then you can donate more and more as you become more prosperous.

(b) Pattidāna – Sharing merit to others

After performing any meritorious deed, we share our merit to all living beings, saying: *“I share my merit to all living beings. May all living beings obtain the share of my merit and be well and happy”*.

While we are sharing merits, moral minds and moral karmas arise by many billions, and our good merit is multiplied many times. Those who could rejoice our merit by saying “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*”, will also attain great merit. Our relatives, who died and became woeful ghosts, will be following us expecting our shared merits, and if they can say “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*” meaning “I appreciate the good merit”, they will get great merit which can help them to become celestial beings.

(c) Pattānumodana – Rejoicing other’s merits by saying ‘Sādhu’

By saying “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*” in appreciation of other’s meritorious deeds, moral minds and moral karmas arise by many bil-

lions. Besides, we also receive a good share of the merits shared by others.

In Sāvattthi city, the rich lady named **Visākhā** donated the great **Pubbārāma Monastery**, worth 270 million gold coins, to the Buddha and shared merit to all living beings. A lady, who was present there, rejoiced the great donation and gladly said: “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*”, also meaning: “Well done! Well done! Well done!” When she died, she was born in a very grand magnificent mansion in Tāvātimsā celestial realm.

In Buddhism we can do many meritorious deeds without the need to spend any money, and we get very great benefits.

(d) Sīla – Morality, observing 5, 8, 9, 10 moral precepts

Morality is the beginning and foundation of all meritorious deeds. It represents the best way of living nobly, happily and beneficially. By observing five moral precepts, we abstain from all the ten courses of immoral actions and accomplish all the ten courses of moral actions. So we gain very great merits, which will protect us from woeful rebirth and condition us to be reborn in celestial realms after death life after life for many existences.

If we can observe higher moral precepts, that is, eight, nine or ten moral precepts, we shall get much more merit. We can live nobly and happily with the best morality, radiating loving-kindness to all living beings, wishing them sincerely to be free from danger, mental pain and bodily pain, and to be happy and well always. So it leads to individual peace as well as to ‘**World Peace.**’

(e) Appacāyana – Reverence to elders and holy persons

Subduing our pride, we should pay respect to elders, parents, teachers, monks, nuns and holy persons. We get great merit by doing so. It is a great blessing to respect those worthy of respect. We should bend down our head in respect when we pass in front of them.

A person, who is in the habit of constantly honouring and respecting the elders, can increase his four blessings: longevity, beauty, happiness and good health.
(Dhammapada 109)

(f) Veyāvacca – Volunteer service in wholesome deeds

Giving volunteer service in wholesome deeds is more meritorious than alms-giving. Volunteer service in the affairs of Triple Gem, parents and teachers amount to great volunteer meritorious deed as well as **character-morality** (*cārīṭṭa-sīla*).

Performing the respective duties of parents, sons and daughters, teachers, students, etc., as prescribed by the Buddha, also amount to volunteer meritorious deed and character-morality. If we perform the volunteer service with noble enthusiastic volition or intention, we shall gain great merit and great benefits.

During the time of Kassapa Buddha, in a monastery on the bank of Ganges River, a monk was sweeping the ground, putting the rubbish together. He called a novice, who was playing near-by three times to come and throw away the rubbish into the river. The novice pretended not to hear and kept on playing. The monk beat the novice's head with the long-handled broom.

The novice wept, scooped the rubbish into a basket, and went to the bank of the Ganges river. When he saw the tides and the waves coming up with great force, filling the whole bank of the river, he prayed and made a wish: "As the Ganges river is filled with great mass of water, let my mind be filled with great wisdom in my future existence. May I be able to ask very profound questions, which cannot be answered by learned persons."

The monk also came to the bank of the river and heard the prayer and the wish of the novice. So he also prayed and made a wish: "As the great Ganges river is overflowed with great mass of water, may my mind be overflowed with great mass of wisdom in my future existences as the result of my great merit of observing bhikkhu-morality and performing volunteer meritorious deeds. And may I be able to answer all the profound questions asked by the future learned person of this present novice."

When they passed away, they were reborn as celestial beings in Tāvātimsā realm. During the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha, the former novice was reborn as **King Miliṇḍa** with great wisdom,

and the former monk was reborn as **Venerable Nāgasena**, who later became an Arahant with very great wisdom.

When King Miliṇḍa asked profound questions to learned persons in his country, they could not answer and left the country in shame. When Venerable Nāgasena came to King Miliṇḍa's country, he could answer satisfactorily all the questions asked by King Miliṇḍa. Their questions and answers were published as a well known book, entitled '**Miliṇḍa Paññhā**'.

So after performing a volunteer meritorious deed or any other meritorious deed, if we pray and make a wish, even profound wishes can be fulfilled by the power of the great merit of the meritorious deed.

(g) Bhāvanā – Meditation

There are two types of Buddhist Meditation, namely:

- (1) *Samatha Bhāvanā* = Tranquillity Meditation,
 - (2) *Vipassanā Bhāvanā* = Insight Meditation,
- (1) '**Samatha**' means 'Tranquillity, calm, serene, peaceful'.

Tranquillity meditation develops mental concentration by subduing and temporarily eliminating *hindrances (nīvaraṇas)*, which are arisen defilements in the mind that defile, debase, inflict and agitate the mind to be restless and wandering.

The Buddha taught 40 Subjects of Tranquillity Meditation, comprising ten Kasiṇa Meditations, ten Meditations on Foulness (*Asubha*), ten Recollections (*Anussatis*), four Sublime Living Meditations (*Brahma-Vihāras*), Meditation on Perception of loathsomeness of Food, Meditation on Defining the four Primary Elements and four Meditations on Immaterial Sphere (*Āruppas*). All the 40 meditations can give rise to the Right Concentration (*Sammāsamādhi*) and they are very beneficial.

Among the 40 meditation-subjects, **Mindfulness of Breathing** (*Ānāpānassati*) is the foremost. It can develop the Four Rūpāvacara Jhānas (mental absorptions). If one practises well to gain mastery in developing the jhāna, one can remain in jhāna-attainment for one hour, two hours, ... up to seven days at a time, living in great bliss,

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much superior to sensual pleasure.

When the mind is concentrated to jhāna-concentration, the mind becomes pure and very powerful, radiating very brilliant and penetrative light, which enables meditators to see near and far-away objects as well as the internal organs of oneself and of others with closed eyes. It helps meditators to discern ultimate realities, comprising ultimate materialities, consciousnesses and mental factors, and define each of them with respect to its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause.

After developing four rūpāvacara jhānas in Mindfulness of Breathing, the meditators can undertake the remaining meditation-subjects easily and successfully. They can undertake all the ten kasiṇa meditations, developing four rūpāvacara jhānas as well as four arūpāvacara jhānas. They may proceed further, if they wish, developing the eight jhānas skilfully in fourteen ways on nine kasiṇas with the exception of space-kasiṇa as taught by the Buddha, then they can attain the seven supernormal knowledges (*Abhiññā*).

As jhāna-minds are much more powerful than sense-sphere moral minds, which arise in performing dāna-group meritorious deeds and sīla-group meritorious deeds, the jhāna moral kammās are also much more powerful than sense-sphere moral kammās, which give rise to human existences and celestial deva existences after death, whereas rūpāvacara moral kammās will produce rūpa-brahmā existences and arūpāvacara moral kammās will produce arūpa brahmā existences with very long life-spans as described in Chapter (18).

(2) **Vipassanā Meditation** is concerned with developing ten Insight Knowledges (*Vipassanā-ñāṇas*) and fourfold Path-Wisdom (*Magga-ñāṇa*) which is the most powerful wisdom as it can totally eliminate all defilements (*kilesās*), which are the root causes of all evil actions and all suffering in every living being except Arahants and also in the whole world.

Vipassana meditation is also concerned with reflecting mainly on **three characteristic marks of existence** in many special ways to develop ten insight knowledges.

As all mentalities and materialities, which make up our minds and

bodies, are arising and perishing extremely rapidly and incessantly, they possess the following three characteristics of existence.

- (i) *Anicca-lakkhaṇa* – the characteristic of impermanence as all mentalities-materialities perish soon after they arise due to causes,
- (ii) *Dukkha-lakkhaṇa* – the characteristic of suffering, because to be tortured continuously and incessantly by the rapid dissolution and perishing of our cherished mind and body really amount to suffering,
- (iii) *Anatta-lakkhaṇa* – the characteristic of not-self, because when all mentalities-materialities that constitute mind and body perish, nothing remains to be called soul, self, ego, atta or person.

These three characteristics of existence represent the object of viṣṣaṇā meditation. By reflecting on them in several ways, meditators can develop ten insight knowledges. Then, *gottrabhu*, the consciousness that cuts the worldling-lineage of the meditator to form the holy-lineage, points the way to Nibbana. Then Sotāpatti-path-consciousness and its Fruition-consciousness arise taking Nibbāna as their objects. The meditator becomes a **Stream-Winner**, who can enjoy the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna right away. As a noble person, a Stream-winner will never be reborn in the woeful abodes. He will become an Arahant (Perfect Person) in due course without further meditation.

*Better than absolute sovereignty over the whole earth,
better than going to celestial realms and Brahma realms,
better than even to be a Sakka, the King of devas, is to be a
Stream-Winner.* (Dhammapada 178)

(h) Dhamma-savana – Listening to Dhamma Sermons

Listening to the Dhamma discourses and reading good Dhamma books increase our knowledge and understanding of Buddhism. Even if we understand one word like ‘**Right View**’ and put it into practice, we gain great benefit.

Even if we hear the Dhamma that we have heard before, but now it is explained from different points of view, we can understand

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more clearly than before.

We can drive away sceptical doubt about the Dhamma and develop greater faith and confidence in the Dhamma.

We can dismiss wrong views and develop **the right view**, which is the best guiding star to live rightly and most beneficially.

As the Dhamma can drive away defilements, we can listen to the sermon with clear moral minds, acquiring billions of good karmas.

While the Buddha was preaching a sermon to a great audience by the side of Gaggarā lake in Sampā country, **a little frog** from the lake came on land and listened to the sermon. Of course, it didn't understand a word. But it was listening respectfully to the pleasant Dhamma-voice of the Buddha. So it was developing moral minds and moral karmas by many billions every second.

At that moment a cowherd came by and put down his stick on the head of the little frog. The frog died and immediately became a celestial *deva* in Tāvātimsā realm. The *deva* remembered his former frog-existence listening to the sermon. So he came down to near Gaggarā Lake with its celestial mansion, and paid homage to the Buddha.

As the Buddha knew everything, he made the *deva* and the celestial mansion visible to the audience. He asked the *deva*: “Who are you?” three times. The *deva* also answered three times: “I was a little frog in Gaggarā Lake. While I was listening respectfully to the Buddha's sermon, a cowherd put down his stick on my head. So I died and became a celestial *deva* in Tāvātimsā realm.”

The whole audience were amazed and delighted to know that they could be born as celestial beings in great jewel mansions by listening to the Dhamma. So they listened to the Buddha's sermon more attentively. The Buddha continued preaching and at the end of the sermon, 84000 people and the frog *deva* were enlightened as Stream-Winners. This attainment is the greatest benefit and the best attainment in life.

(j) **Dhamma-desanā – Expounding the Dhamma**

The Teachings of the Buddha, called the Dhamma, is truly one of

the Three Noblest and most Precious Jewels in the world. So it is included in the noblest **‘Triple Gem’** and **‘Three most Precious Jewels’**, meaning the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha.

The ‘Nine Supramundane Dhammas’, comprising **‘four Path-Wisdoms, four Fruition-Wisdoms and Nibbāna’** are really the noblest Dhammas, because they can eradicate all defilements and give rise to eternal peace and unique happiness as well as the attainment of **Arahatship**, which is the highest and noblest attainment in life.

The noble teachings of the Dhamma to the people offer them the comprehensive understanding of the Dhamma, which is the most important and most beneficial knowledge in life, and if they can put this valuable knowledge into practice, they can develop the best moral character, the highest mental culture, avoiding all evil actions that cause harm to any living being and performing ten bases of meritorious deeds, thus acquiring great merit and billions of good kammās. These good kammās will prevent them from being born in woeful abodes and will condition them to be reborn in blissful realms life after life, and finally will support them to become enlightened as **Stream-Winners**, who will become Arahants in due course. This will be their most satisfactory and best attainment in life.

So the Buddha states that **“the appearance of the Dhamma in the world is for the welfare and happiness of all living beings”** and that **“the gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts.”**

Thus the Dhamma can really give rise to **“individual peace and happiness”** as well as **“World Peace and Worldly Happiness”** right away in this very life.

So we should exert great effort to learn the Dhamma, practise the Dhamma and expound the Dhamma to the world for the greatest benefits, welfare and happiness of all living beings including ourselves!

(j) *Ditṭhijjukamma* – The Right View Knowing Kamma and its Result

Ditṭhijjukamma or the Right View, knowing the Law of Kamma

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and kamma and its result, is the most important factor among the ten bases of meritorious deeds. The reason is that if one is ignorant of the Law of Kamma, one cannot differentiate between good and evil, and one lacks moral shame and moral dread; then one is ready to perform all evil actions.

The Wrong View (*micchādiṭṭhi*) causes unarisen evil actions to arise, multiply the evil deeds that have already arisen, and will condition woeful rebirths to arise life after life after death. The wrong view has no equal in causing unarisen evil deeds to arise, in multiplying evil deeds that have already arisen, and in conditioning woeful rebirths to arise in woeful abodes.

The right View (*sammādiṭṭhi*) causes unarisen good deeds to arise, multiply the good deeds that have already arisen, and will condition blissful existences to arise life after life after death. The right view has no equal in causing meritorious deeds to arise, in multiplying meritorious deeds that have arisen, and in conditioning blissful rebirths to arise in blissful realms.

Thus only if one understands kamma and its result, known as the Law of Kamma, and makes the right view as the guiding star in life, shall one be able to lead a happy and beneficial life.

Diṭṭhijjukamma or the Right View should be included in all three groups of meritorious deeds, because one will perform *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā* only if one has the right view about kamma and its effect.

The **Dāna-group** represents *alobha* (greedlessness) and opposes *lobha* (greed) and *macchariya* (stinginess). It is compared to the legs.

The **Sīla-group** represents *adosa* (angerlessness) and opposes *dosa* (anger) and *issā* (jealousy). It is compared to the body.

The **Bhāvanā-group** represents *amoha* (wisdom) and opposes *moha* (ignorance). It is compared to the head.

To have a complete set of legs, body and head, one must perform all the three groups of meritorious deeds.

[9] Teaching the Right Way of Living Happily and Beneficially

All people want to live happily. Yet they do not know how to live happily. Many commit suicide, because they cannot tolerate the

suffering they encounter in life.

Some books appeared, claiming that they could show the way of living happily and they became best sellers within a few weeks. But the authors did not know the causes of suffering and how to eliminate the causes of suffering. So their books cannot lead to real happiness.

World leaders are consulting together to find a way of establishing lasting world peace and living happily in harmony, yet they cannot even find a way how to stop local fightings and killing innocent people which are occurring world-wide.

*If all the people in the world abide by the simple logical, rational, practical, pragmatic and universal teachings of the Buddha, **they can live happily and beneficially, enjoying world peace and harmony right away.***

The Teachings of the Omniscient Buddha is very simple, and yet very deep and profound. The essential teachings of all the Buddhas can be summarized as:

“Avoid evil, do good, and purify the mind.”

Everyone can accept it and everyone will argue that every religion teaches this; what is the significance?

Correct. If one looks only from the worldly or mundane point of view, there seems to be no difference between the teachings of the Buddha and the teachings of other religions. But if one can also look from the Dhamma point of view, there are great differences.

To see from the Dhamma-point of view, we should know the natures and functions of ultimate realities, and the ultimate natural laws and natural truths that govern the psychophysical processes involving ultimate realities. These are clearly described in Chapter (13) to (19).

Our way of living should be in accord with natural laws and natural truths. We should not live against them.

If we are ignorant of the Law of Kamma, and we lack the right view, our definition of good and evil will be wrong.

Socrates, who was declared by a Greek God to be the wisest

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man in the world, said: *“To know what is good and what is bad is very important in life; if one knows the difference clearly, one will not turn one’s back towards ‘good’ and do ‘evil’.”*

Socrates also admitted: *“All I know is that I know nothing.”*

This statement is admirable and also correct, because no one can know ultimate realities, ultimate natural laws and natural truths. They are known only when a Buddha appeared in the world and taught to the people about them.

The worldly view takes that ‘man, woman, I, you’ really exist. The concept that ‘I exist’ makes one very selfish, producing harmful thoughts of ‘I’, ‘my’, ‘mine’, ‘selfish desire’.

The British Prime Minister ‘William Gladstone’ said:

“Selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race.”

So the contemporaries of Socrates, who were called ‘**Sophists**’ and who were Tuition Teachers, taught their students: “What is beneficial to oneself is good. What is not beneficial to oneself is bad.”

Thus worldlings are happy to kill chickens, fish, etc., cook their flesh and eat them, thinking that it is not sinful in doing so, because they believe that God creates animals for human consumption.

The natural Law of Kamma states that in killing animals, immoral minds and immoral karmas arise by many billions in the killer, and these immoral karmas will condition the killer to be reborn in hell and also as animals to be killed in a similar way for uncountable existences. (Please refer to the true story of Dhamma Dinna on page 132.)

Therefore, the Buddha defines ‘Good and Evil’ as follows.

“An action is good if it causes no harm to any living being and brings good effects to oneself and to others.”

“An action is evil if it causes harm to any living being and brings bad effects to oneself and to others.”

So **ten courses of immoral actions** (described on page 123) are designated as evil actions, because by committing any one of them, one can be reborn in hell after death, and abstaining from

these ten immoral actions amounts to performing **ten courses of moral actions**, because by abstaining from evil actions, one develops billions of moral minds and moral karmas, which will condition one to be reborn in celestial realms for many existences.

Therefore, when the Buddha advises us ‘to avoid evil’, we should abstain from all the Ten Courses of Immoral Actions; and when he advises us ‘to do good’, we should perform all the Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds.

Again when the Buddha advises us ‘to purify the mind’, we should purify our mind to be totally free from ten defilements (*kilesās*), which are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the whole world.

When our minds are totally pure, free from all defilements, we become Arahants (Perfect noble persons), who can enjoy the eternal peace and the highest bliss of Nibbāna for ever. The Buddha teaches the **Noble Eightfold Path**, consisting of the noble Threefold Training of morality, concentration and wisdom for the total purification of the mind and for the realization of Nibbāna and becoming Noble Persons including Arahants.

For the sake of living happily throughout the whole life as a worldling, the Buddha advises just to observe Pañca-sīla together with Threefold Refuge diligently as described on pages 125.

As described on pages 128-130, the wonderful benefits of observing Pañca-sīla with Threefold Refuge diligently and respectfully are very great. As one with pure morality has lived a blameless life causing no harm to any living being, one can feel certain that one shall not be reborn in a woeful abode after death, and that one shall surely be born in a celestial realm where one wishes to be reborn and one can live very happily.

Also as one abstains from ten courses of immoral actions, which are committed by anger-rooted immoral minds and greed-rooted immoral minds, gross anger and gross greed will not arise in one. This also contributes to happy living.

• **Living a faultless and blameless life leads to the highest happiness.**

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In **Anānaya-Sutta**, the Buddha described four types of happiness which can be enjoyed by house-holders as follows.

1. **Atthi-sukha** – Happiness from having enough wealth.

If one possesses enough wealth for living the whole life, one will be very happy.

2. **Bhoga-sukha** – Happiness from spending wealth freely.

If one can spend one's wealth freely for all essential purposes, one will be very happy.

3. **Ānānaya-sukha** – Happiness from being free from debt.

To be free from any debt also makes one very happy, because if we are in debt to a person, we shall be born as an animal or slave in that person's house after death.

4. **Anavajja-sukha** – Happiness from living a faultless life.

Among the four types of happiness, *Anavajja-sukha* is supreme, much higher than the other three types of happiness.

Those who lead a faultless and blameless life by observing Pañca-sīla with Threefold Refuge are free from all kinds of worry and they feel certain to be born in celestial realms for many existences. So they live most happily. Their happiness is much greater than the first three kinds of happiness.

If they can also perform ten bases of meritorious deeds, they will acquire much greater merits and they can live much more happily for uncountable existences.

Especially if they can recollect Four Guardian Meditations regularly, they can acquire very great merits, getting billions of good karmas every second, and **they can live more peacefully and more happily in perfect harmony with others.**

The Four Guardian Meditations can protect us from internal and external dangers and they are desirable at all times and at all places. The internal dangers are the **'five hindrances'** (*nīvaraṇas*), which are defilements which have arisen in our minds and start inflicting and agitating the mind. They are our closest enemies which prevent us from performing meritorious deeds and obstruct the arising of moral minds, jhāna and magga.

The external dangers come from wicked persons, dangerous animals, ghosts, ogres, etc. To ward off these dangers, we should undertake the guardian meditations.

• **Practising Four Guardian Meditations**

- (1) *Mettā-bhāvanā* – Radiating loving-kindness,
- (2) *Buddhānussati* – Reflecting on the attributes of the Buddha,
- (3) *Asubha-bhāvanā* – Reflecting on the repulsiveness of a corpse, and
- (4) *Maraṇānussati* – Reflection on the nature of death.

(1) We should radiate loving-kindness sincerely thus:

“May all living beings be free from danger;
May all be free from mental suffering;
May they be free from bodily pain;
May they be happy and well always.”

Or we can radiate loving-kindness thus: “May all living beings be happy and well always” repeatedly.

By radiating loving-kindness, we develop kindness to all humans, devas and animals. Kindly persons will help us; kindly deities will protect us; and kindly animals will be friendly to us. We are loved by men and deities alike. We can live harmoniously with all living beings.

(2) We should reflect with great respect on the attributes of the Buddha wherever we go and wherever we are. We can choose any attribute of the Buddha and reflect it repeatedly thus: “*Arahāṃ, Aralam*”, with the understanding: “The Buddha is the noblest and most worthy of veneration”.

By doing so, we are permeating our bodies and minds with the Buddha’s noblest attributes. Thus our bodies will be as sacred as the special fragrance chamber of the Buddha. So no enemies, no wild animals and no ghosts will attack us. We can live safely with the feeling that we are with the Buddha. Moreover, *Buddhānussati* will strengthen our faith and confidence in the Buddha and his Teachings as well as our mindfulness and wisdom.

(3) Furthermore, we should also practise ‘*asubha-bhāvanā*’

by reflecting on the repulsiveness of a corpse. This will subdue

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our lust and sever our attachment to our bodies as well as to other people's bodies. When we are well established in the perception of loathsomeness, even divine objects cannot tempt our minds to greed.

(4) Finally but not last, we should practise 'marañānussati'

by reflecting on the nature of death. We should reflect in this way repeatedly: "My being alive is uncertain, my death is certain." The perception of death will subdue our pride, greed and anger. It will help us to give up improper search for wealth and to live without attachment to existence with a growing sense of urgency (*samvega*) to undertake Threefold Noble Training.

Those, who are enjoying great **sensual pleasure**, will not experience true happiness, because sensual pleasure is transient and fleeting; it perishes soon after it has arisen. Thus sensual pleasure is designated as '*viparināma-dukkha*' by the Buddha, meaning '*suffering associated with changes in conditions*.'

Besides, sensual pleasure is low, ignoble, enjoyed by worldlings but not by noble persons, and it is enjoyed with greed-rooted consciousnesses, which are immoral minds and will condition woe-ful rebirth to arise after death.

Moreover, greed (*lobha*) has the characteristic of craving for and attachment to sensual pleasure and sensuous objects. It will never give away this characteristic of craving and attachment. The more it gets, the more it craves for. So the more one enjoys sensual pleasure, the more inflated greed becomes, craving for many things. As the desires of greed can never be gratified, ungratified desires cause suffering.

Again "**greed (*rāga*) is the hottest fire,**" said the Buddha. Craving gives rise to grief, fear and suffering. Many heart-broken lovers and many heart-burning billionaires, who lost billions of dollars overnight due to the falling prices of stocks and shares during economic depression, could not bear the burning pain for losing their beloved things. So they committed suicide.

As house-holders, we should practise at least the first two Guardian Meditations to live nobly and happily with moral minds and to enjoy great benefits for uncountable existences.

Therefore, “the right way of living happily and most beneficially” by “Avoiding evil, doing good, and purifying the mind”, which is taught by the Buddha, is correct.

[10] The Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the Highest Attainment in life

“The only Path that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering of the right Path, and to the realization of Nibbāna is the Noble Eightfold Path.”

(Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)

One of the noblest and most important discovery of the Buddha is the discovery of the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of eight mental factors as eight Path-factors, which can be classified as the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.

The Buddha teaches in detail how to undertake the Threefold Noble Training successfully, developing morality, concentration and wisdom to the highest level. The highest wisdom, called the Fourfold Path-Wisdom, totally eliminates all defilements (*kilesās*), which are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world.

By the total eradication of all defilements, the mind becomes totally pure and noblest, making the person an ‘*Arahant*’, a Perfect Noble Person, who is among the noblest and happiest persons apart from silent Buddhas and Buddhas.

The eight factors of the Noble Eightfold Path are classified as the Noble Threefold Training as follows.

1. Right Understanding

(Sammā-diṭṭhi)

2. Right Thought

(Sammā-saṅkappa)

3. Right Speech

(Sammā-vācā)

4. Right Action

(Sammā-kammanta)

5. Right Livelihood

(Sammā-ājīva)

III Training of Wisdom

(Paññā-sikkhā)

I Training of Morality

(Sīla-sikkhā)

6. Right Effort

(*Sammā-vāyāma*)

7. Right Mindfulness

(*Sammā-sati*)

8. Right Concentration

(*Sammā-samādhi*)

**II Training of Concentration
(*Samādhi-sikkhā*)**

• Explanation of the Eight Path-Factors

1. What is the Right Understanding (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*)?

- (1) Understanding the Noble Truth of Suffering,
- (2) Understanding the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering,
- (3) Understanding the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering,
- (4) Understanding the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the Extinction of Suffering,

This is called the Right Understanding. (*Dīgha-nikāya 24*)

2. What is the Right Thought (*Sammā-saṅkappa*)?

- (1) The thought free from lust (*nekkhamma-saṅkappa*),
- (2) The thought free from ill-will (*avyāpāda-saṅkappa*),
- (3) The thought free from cruelty (*avihiṃsā-saṅkappa*),

This is called the Right Thought. (*D-22*)

3. What is the Right Speech (*Sammā-vācā*)?

- (1) To abstain from lying,
- (2) To abstain from slandering or backbiting,
- (3) To abstain from harsh or abusive speech,
- (4) To abstain from vain talk or gossiping,

This is called the Right Speech.

4. What is the Right Action (*Sammā-kammanta*)?

- (1) To abstain from killing any sentient being,
- (2) To abstain from stealing others' properties,
- (3) To abstain from sexual misconduct and misuse of the senses,

This is called the Right Action.

5. What is the Right Livelihood? (*Sammā-ājīva*)?

- (1) To avoid a wrong way of living which involves wrong speech and wrong action,

- (2) To get one's livelihood by a right way of living which involves the right speech and the right action,

This is called the Right Livelihood.

6. What is the Right Effort (*Sammā-vāyāma*)?

- (1) To prevent the arising of evil things which have not yet arisen,
- (2) To overcome and dispel the evil things which have already arisen in the mind,
- (3) To develop wholesome things that have not yet arisen,
- (4) To maintain the wholesome things that have already arisen in the mind, and bring them to growth, to maturity, to the full perfection of development,

This is called the Right Effort.

7. What is the Right Mindfulness (*Sammā-sati*)?

- (1) To dwell in contemplation of the materiality-aggregate,
- (2) To dwell in contemplation of the feeling-aggregate,
- (3) To dwell in contemplation of the consciousness-aggregate,
- (4) To dwell in contemplation of the mind objects ardently, clearly comprehending them and mindful, after putting away worldly greed and grief,

This is called the Right Mindfulness.

8. What is the Right Concentration (*Sammā-samādhi*)?

Mental concentration is the concentrated state of the mind that remains fixed on a single object for one hour, two hours, etc.

The Right Concentration, according to *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, is the concentration associated with the four *rūpāvacara jhānas*.

The Right Concentration, according to Visuddhi Magga, can be extended from the neighbourhood concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) to the concentration associated with any of the four *rūpāvacara jhānas* and the four *arūpāvacara jhānas*.

• The Purpose of the Noble Threefold Training

The Omniscient Buddha knew very well that **Ten Defilements** (*kilesās*), which defile, debase, inflict and burn the mind, are the root-causes of all suffering in the world as well as the root-causes

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of the rounds of rebirths (*samsāra*) as well as the rounds of suffering involved thereby.

• **Ten Defilements (*Kilesās*) that Defile and Burn the Mind**

1. *Moha or Avijjā – ignorance, delusion*

It blinds the mind not to know the Four Noble Truths, Past existences, Future existences, the front end and the rear end of Present existence, Ultimate Realities and Five Aggregates of Clinging, Causal Relations of Dependent Origination, Law of Kamma, Law of Consciousness, etc.

2. *Lobha or Taṇhā – greed, craving, attachment.*

3. *Dosa or Paṭigha – anger, hatred, ill-will, aversion.*

4. *Māna – Pride or conceit,*

5. *Diṭṭhi – Wrong view,*

6. *Vicikicchā – Sceptical doubt,*

7. *Uddhacca – Restlessness of the mind,*

8. *Thina – Sloth or laziness,*

9. *Ahrika – Moral shamelessness,*

10. *Anottappa – Lack of moral dread.*

These defilements have been thriving and flourishing in the minds of worldlings from time immemorial. They have grown like a big tree. They exist in the mind in three layers:

1. *Anusaya-kilesās* – latent defilements that lie dormant in the mind, ready to arise and spring up to the surface of the mind when sense-objects appear.

2. *Pariyuṭṭhāna-kilesās* – moderate defilements that have arisen in the mind and started to agitate the mind as **hindrances** (*nivaraṇas*), which prevent moral minds, jhānas and maggas from arising.

3. *Vītikkaṃma-kilesās* – gross defilements which are ready to commit evil actions.

Now if we want to cut down a big tree and destroy it totally, we must cut the branches first, then cut the trunk, and dig out the roots and burn them all.

Similarly if we want to cut and destroy the kilesā-tree in our

minds, first we must **undertake the Training of Morality** to develop **pure morality** which will suppress and prevent **gross defilements** (*vītikkaṃma-kilesās*) from arising in the mind. This is like cutting down the branches of the Kilesā-tree.

Then we must **undertake the Training of Concentration** to develop the **right concentration** which will suppress and dispel the **hindrances and arisen defilements** (*pariyuṭṭhāna-kilesās*) from arising in the mind. So we shall attain the **Purity of the Mind** (*citta-visuddhi*). This is similar to cutting down the trunk of the Kilesā-tree.

Then we must **undertake the Training of Wisdom** which includes **Vipassanā Meditation**. When we can develop **ten insight knowledges** (*vipassanā-ñāṇas*) and **four Path-Wisdoms** (*Magga-ñāṇas*), the four Path-Wisdoms will totally eliminate all defilements including latent defilements. This is similar to digging out the roots of the kilesā-tree and burn them all.

Then we shall gain full enlightenment to the Four Noble Truths (described on pages 155-222) and emancipation from the rounds of rebirths as well as from the rounds of suffering, and we can live most happily as Arahants, enjoying the eternal Peace and unique-happiness of Nibbāna for ever.

Many millions of humans, *devas* and *Brahmās* have walked on this Noble Path to Nibbāna and have gained full Enlightenment as Arahants. The Noble Path is open to all whoever wished to achieve the highest and best attainment in life.

• **Brief Description of the Noble Threefold Training**

To undertake the Noble Threefold Training and fight against the internal worst enemies called ‘**defilements**’ is the hardest and noblest battle in life that we should launch without fail and without delay with enthusiasm, boldness, faith and confidence in the Buddha and the Dhamma.

The Buddha said: “*Those who practise the Noble Threefold Training are the ones who revere me most.*”

*“A soldier may conquer the enemies a million times in battle.
But a hero conquers his defilements just once. That hero who*

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conquers his defilements is indeed the greatest of conquerors.”
(Dhammapada 103)

*“Free from pain and torture is the Noble Path,
Free from groaning and suffering is this Path,
It is the Perfect Path.”* (Majjhima Nikāya 139)
*“Truly like this Path there is no other path to the purity of
insight. If you follow this Path, you will put an end to all
suffering.”* (Dhammapada 274+275)

Actually it is a very blissful Path to walk on from the beginning to the end.

To achieve success, we must develop the higher morality (*Adhisīla*), the higher concentration (*Adhisamādhī*) and the higher wisdom (*Adhipaññā*).

[11] Undertaking the Noble Training of Higher Morality

A bhikkhu must cultivate four kinds of morality to be morally pure in all aspects.

(a) Cultivating *Pātimokkha-saṃvara Sīla*

This is the moral discipline consisting of 227 rules which the Buddha prescribes for bhikkhus to observe. The bhikkhus should observe them well with faith and confidence in the Buddha, for it is accomplished by **faith** (*saddhā*). So bhikkhus should cultivate through faith the training precepts without exception and completely perfect them without regard for one's life.

For thus it has been said that as a pheasant guards her eggs, or as a yak her tail, or as a mother her only son, or as a one-eyed man his remaining eye, so in the same way one should protect one's morality very prudently and scrupulously (careful to do nothing morally wrong) at all times.

Lay-persons should observe diligently the eight or nine Sabbath-precepts (page 134), which serve as *Pātimokkha-saṃvara Sīla* for them.

(b) Cultivating *Indriya-saṃvara Sīla*

This morality is concerned with the restraint of the six sense-faculties, namely, the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body

and the mind, to prevent the arising of defilements at these faculties.

“On seeing a visible object with the eye, he apprehends neither the signs nor the particulars through which, if he left the eye-faculty unguarded, evil and unprofitable states of covetousness and grief might invade him; he enters upon the way of its restraint; he guards the eye-faculty; he undertakes the restraint of the eye-faculty. The remaining five faculties should be guarded in a similar way.” (M.i.180)

When the restraint of the sense-faculties is not properly taken, *Pātimokkha-saṁvara sīla* does not endure, does not last long, like a crop not fenced in properly. If the sense-faculties are not well guarded, they will be raided by defilements as a village with open gates is raided by thieves. And lust leaks into his mind as rain does into a badly roofed house.

When the restraint of sense-faculties is properly taken, *Pātimokkha-saṁvara sīla* does endure and last long, like a crop well fenced in. And it is not raided by the robber-defilements, as a village with well guarded gates is not raided by thieves. And lust does not leak into his mind, as rain does not leak into a well-roofed house.

As *Pātimokkha* restraint is to be fulfilled with faith, so should *Indriya-saṁvara sīla* be undertaken with mindfulness (*sati*); for this *sīla* is accomplished with mindfulness. When the sense-faculties are well guarded by mindfulness, they cannot be invaded by covetousness, ill-will, and other defilements.

(c) Cultivating *Ājīva-pārisuddhi Sīla*

Ājīva-pārisuddhi sīla concerns with the purity of livelihood, **It should be undertaken by means of energy (*vīriya*).** The abandoning of wrong livelihood is effected in one who has rightly applied energy. With energy one abandons improper wrong search and pursues the right kind of search by going on alms-round. etc., avoiding what is of impure origin as though it were a poisonous snake, and acquires requisites of pure origin.

He must not transgress the six training precepts prescribed by the Buddha with respect to livelihood.

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(i) With livelihood as cause and reason, one with evil wishes, lays claim to a higher property of noble persons, by saying that he attains *jhāna*, *magga* and *phala* although he does not possess them.

(ii) With livelihood as cause and reason, he acts as go-between or match-maker.

(iii) With livelihood as cause and reason, he falsely states: “A bhikkhu who lives in your monastery is an Arahant.”

(iv) With livelihood as cause and reason, he eats superior food that he has ordered for his own use though he is not sick.

(v) With livelihood as cause and reason, a bhikkhunī, who is not sick, eats superior food that she has ordered for her own use.

(vi) With livelihood as cause and reason, one who is not sick eats curry and cooked rice that he has ordered for his own use.

Moreover, a bhikkhu must avoid the improper search by scheming, talking, hinting, belittling, pursuing gain with gain with evil wishes to receive greater gain.

Scheming is rejecting requisites with the evil intention of getting more and better requisites.

Talking is talking round, persuading, suggesting, flattery and bean-soupery with evil wishes to get requisites. Bean-soupery resembles bean-soup in which a few beans do not get cooked and the rest get cooked, so too talking with a little truth and much false is called bean-soupery.

Hinting is giving a sign or making an indirect talk or round about talk with the evil intention of getting requisites.

Belittling means abusing, reproaching, ridiculing and back-biting with the evil intention of receiving requisites.

Pursuing gain with gain is seeking for, seeking out, going in search of material goods by means of material goods, such as carrying to there goods that have been received from here, or carrying to here goods that have been got from there with the evil intention of receiving gain, honour and renown.

(d) Cultivating Paccaya-sannissita Sīla

This morality (*sīla*) is to be undertaken with wisdom, because

one with wisdom is able to see the advantages and the dangers in requisites. So one should accomplish this morality by using requisites obtained lawfully, after reviewing them with wisdom.

Herein, reviewing is of two kinds: at the time of receiving requisites and at the time of using them. For use is blameless in one who at the time of receiving robes, alms-food, etc., reviews them either as elements or as rapulsive, and in one who reviews them thus at the time of using them.

Besides, there are four kinds of use of requisites: use as theft, use as debt, use as an inheritance, use as a master. Herein, use by one, who is unvirtuous, is called ‘use as theft.’ Use without reviewing by one who is virtuous is ‘use as debt’. Use of the requisites by the seven kinds of sekkha persons is called ‘use as an inheritance’ for they are the Buddha’s sons. Use by Arahants is called ‘use as a master’; because they escaped the slavery of craving.

The way to review requisites as elements is this: “This robe, food, etc., consists merely of the four elements. It is formed when conditions are favourable and dissolves soon after it has been formed. The same thing is true with the person who uses it.”

One reviews requisites in this way: “This robe, food, etc., which is not itself disgusting, becomes utterly disgusting on reaching this filthy body.”

One must contemplate the purpose of using the necessities of life such as robe, food, dwelling place and medicine in order to prevent the arising of defilements in using them.

1. “Reflecting wisely, he uses the robe only for protection from contact with gadflies, flies, wind, burning heat and creeping things, and only for the purpose of concealing the private parts.”

2. “Reflecting wisely, he uses alms-food neither for amusement nor for intoxication nor for smartening nor for embellishment, but only for the endurance and continuance of this body, for the ending of discomfort and for assisting the life of purity.”

3. “Reflecting wisely, he uses the resting place only for the purpose of protection from cold, from heat, from contact with gadflies, flies, wind, burning heat and creeping things, and only for the

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purpose of warding off the perils of climate and enjoying retreat.”

4. “Reflecting wisely, he uses the requisites of medicine as cure for the sick, only for protection from arisen hurtful feelings and for complete immunity from affliction. (M. i. 10)

Lay-devotes should also observe the above four sīlās for these moralities develop not only moral culture but also mental culture – both of which pave the way to the arising of mental concentration. Of course, eight or nine moral precepts serve as *Pātimokkha-saṃvara Sīla* for Lay-persons.

[12] Undertaking the Noble Training of Concentration

The purpose of undertaking the noble Training of Concentration is to develop the Right concentration (*Samāsamādhī*) and the Purity of the Mind (*Citta-Visuddhi*).

The Buddha taught 40 subjects of Tranquillity-Meditation for this purpose. Among the 40 subjects of Samatha-meditation, **Mindfulness of Breathing (*Ānāpānassati*)** is the foremost and it is constantly used by the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and the disciples of the Buddha known as the Buddha’s sons. If it is practised properly, it is both peaceful and sublime. It demands strong mindfulness and wisdom. (*Visuddhi. i. 276*)

Ānāpānassati has been practised and recommended by the Blessed Buddha thus: “And bhikkhus, this concentration through mindfulness of breathing, when developed and practised much, is both peaceful and sublime. Nothing need be added to it. It is an unadulterated blissful abiding, and it banishes at once and stills evil unprofitable thoughts as soon as they arise. (S. iii, 270-280)

Ānāpānassati is one of the most effective meditation-subject for developing concentration quickly. It is suitable to many meditators and used in many meditation-centres as the special meditation-subject for developing concentration. If properly practised, it can develop the mind up to the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, which is the best concentration for undertaking insight-meditation (*vipassanā*).

(a) Undertaking the Practice of Mindfulness of Breathing

• The Four Basic Steps of Mindfulness of Breathing

There are four basic steps in practising *Ānāpānassati* systemati-

cally. The meditator should sit comfortably either cross-legged or in any preferable posture on a mat or a seat. He should keep his body and head erect while relaxing all muscles. He should close his eyes well so that no light gets into the eye. He should always breathe normally, taking notice of the in-breath and the out-breath.

He should always keep his mind and awareness at the two nostrils and the upper lip just below the two nostrils. He should take note of the touching of the in-breath and the out-breath at the tip of the nostrils or at the upper lip. If the touching of the breath at the nostrils are not distinct, he should focus his attention only on one nostril. The touching of the breath around the nostril will become more and more distinct gradually.

Then he focuses his attention at the most distinct point of the touching of the breath either at one nostril or the upper lip, and try to be aware of the in-going breath and the out-going breath by the gentle touch of the breath at the touching point, without following the breaths either inward or outward.

• **First Step: Awareness of the In-breath and the Out-breath**

The first important step in mindfulness of breathing is to be constantly aware of the in-breath and the out-breath by their gentle brushing either at the nostril or at the upper lip just below the nostril.

Only if the meditator practises Ānāpānassati by establishing his mindfulness on the breath at the point of distinct contact with the in-breath and the out-breath, will the Ānāpānassati concentration and meditation be accomplished in him. (Visuddhi. i, 271)

An important requirement is to focus the mind on the breath at the point of contact only, and not to follow the breath as it goes into the nostril or it goes out of the nostril. If he follows the breath, his mind will not be at the state of one pointedness and consequently his progress in developing the concentration will be delayed.

For the same reason he should not take note of any bodily sensation such as pain, itch or numbness that arises during meditation. Since the mind can be aware of only one thing at a time, the meditator will not be aware of anything else if he can focus his

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mind well on the meditation subject. If the pain becomes unbearable, he can change his posture gently to relieve the pain while still focusing his attention on the in-breath and the out-breath, which is his meditation-subject.

He must keep his mind constantly focused on the in-breath and the out-breath without allowing the mind to wander out to other sense-object. In case it has wandered out, he must bring it back to the meditation-subject as soon as he notices it. In case the meditating mind does not remain fixed calmly on the subject of the in-breath and the out-breath and is very restless, the **Counting Method** should be used as directed in Great Commentaries.

• **The Counting Method to Control the Mind**

If the mind is restless or wandering, the meditator should count his breath as follows to control his mind.

1. In-breath, out-breath – one,
2. In-breath, out-breath – two,
3. In-breath, out-breath – three,
4. In-breath, out-breath – four,
5. In-breath, out-breath – five.

He may count not less than five and not more than ten. He may count one to five or one to eight again and again. He should make a determination to keep his mind calmly fixed on the in-breath and the out-breath while counting one to five or one to eight, without letting his mind wander away towards various external objects. He should not also allow any thought to arise and to come in.

As he reflects on the breath by counting, his meditative mind will gradually remain fixed calmly on the object of the in-breath and the out-breath by the power of the counting method.

When the mind remains calmly fixed on the meditation-subject for one hour continuously, he can stop counting and continue to be aware of the in-breath and the out-breath without counting. If he can focus his mind continuously on the in-breath and the out-breath for one hour without counting at every sitting for meditation, he can proceed to the second step.

• **Second Step: Awareness of the Length of Breath**

While we are aware of the in-breath and the out-breath by their gentle brushing at the touching point of the breaths with the nostril or the upper lip, we also take note of the length of the in-breath and the out-breath. If we are breathing quickly, we take the length to be short; if we are breathing slowly, we take the length to be long.

The length of the in-breath should be equal to the length of the out-breath. This will greatly help the development of mental concentration. The meditator should always breathe normally. He should not intentionally make the breath either long or short.

The length of the breath should also be taken note in the third step. Generally the length of breath changes from time to time during meditation. Whatever the length of breath may be, the in-breath and the out-breath should be equal in length.

• **Third Step: Awareness of the Whole Breath**

When the meditator is calmly and firmly conscious of the length of breath for one hour at every sitting in meditation, he should proceed to the third step. In the third step he should be aware of the beginning, the middle, and the end of the whole breath.

He should not try to note thus: “This is the beginning, this is the middle, this is the end.” Neither should he label the breath as “beginning, middle, end.” If he tries to do so, he may jeopardize the concentration. If he cannot meditate without labelling, then he should just label as “in-breath, out-breath.”

All he need to do is to be mindfully aware of the whole in-breath and the whole out-breath from the beginning to the end by the touch of the breath at the tip of the nostril or at the upper lip.

He should not follow the breath as it goes into the body or out of the body. He should not take the breath that touches the nostril as the beginning, the breath that reaches the chest as the middle, and which arrives at the navel as the end when he breathes in.

Similarly, when he breathes out, he should not regard the navel, the chest, and the nostril as the points to mark the beginning, the middle and the end of the breath. He must focus his mind only on

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the breath that is touching the tip of the nostril or the upper lip, thus keeping the mind at one point, that is the point of contact.

• **Fourth Step: The Disappearance of the Breath**

As the meditator watches the in-going breath and the out-going breath to be aware of the beginning, the middle, and the end of the whole in-breath and the whole out-breath for many sittings, his breathing becomes more and more gentle and subtle. The gross in-breaths and the gross out-breaths gradually cease, and his consciousness arises with the subtle in-breath and the subtle out-breath as its object. And when that has ceased, it goes on arising with the successively subtler breaths as its object. How?

Suppose a man strikes a bronze-bell with an iron-bar. Immediately a loud sound arises, and his consciousness will arise with the loud sound as its object. After that, his consciousness will arise with the subtle sound as its object. And when that has ceased, his consciousness will go on arising with the successively subtler sound as its object. This is how it should be understood.

For while other meditation-subjects become clearer at each higher stage, *Ānāpānassati* does not. In fact, as he goes on developing it, it becomes more and more subtle for him at higher stages, and it even becomes to the point at which it is no longer manifest or distinct.

If the breaths do not become subtle even when he can concentrate his mind on the whole breath clearly, being aware of the beginning, the middle and the end of the breath for one hour or more at every sitting, he should make a mental wish: “May my gross breath be calm,” and strive on to be mindfully aware of the beginning, the middle and the end of the whole breath.

Gradually the breath will become smooth, subtle and calm by itself. He should not purposely make the breath calm and subtle; he will slowly gasp for air and become tired. He will jeopardize his concentration.

If the breath becomes subtle by itself and the mind is calm on it, most meditators, by the power of meditation, are no longer aware of the head, the nose and the body; there exist only the breath and the mind which is conscious of the breath. At that moment, “I”,

“you”, “he” cannot be found.

Then he will need more powerful mindfulness to concentrate his mind on that subtle breath very attentively. At that stage very powerful mindfulness that fixes the mind on the meditation subject and very powerful wisdom that clearly apprehends the subtle breath are very essential.

While he is striving so, sometimes the in-breaths and the out-breaths are no longer distinct. He can no longer find the breath which seems to disappear. In that case, he should fix his mind at the place where he has apprehended the breath, bearing in mind that he is still breathing.

As he gives his attention in this way, the breaths will reappear after no long time. Then he keeps on fixing his attention on the whole in-breath and the whole out-breath by their gentle brushing at the touching point.

• **The Appearance of Meditation-Signs**

The natural in-breath and out-breath are taken as the ‘**Preparatory sign**’ (*Parikamma-nimitta*). The grey dirty image like cigarette-smoke that appears at a high degree of mental concentration is also regarded as the preparatory sign.

A white image like cotton or silk-cotton that appears at a higher degree of concentration is called the ‘**Aquired sign**’ (*Uggaha-nimitta*). This is a general description. The image of other colours or shapes may also appear.

As the concentration rises, the image may become very clear and bright like the evening star. This image is taken as the ‘**Counter sign**’ (*Paṭibhāga-nimitta*). Again this is a general description.

In **Visuddhi Magga** it is described that the meditation sign is not the same for all people. It appears to some producing a soft touch like cotton-wool, silk-cotton or a breeze. To some the sign appears like a star, a ball of ruby or a ball of pearl; to some it has a harsh touch like a cotton-seed, or a pin made of wood; to some it is like a long string, or a wreath of flowers, or a crest of smoke; to others it is like a spread out cobweb, a film of cloud, a lotus flower, a

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chariot-wheel, the disc of the moon or the disc of the sun.

The meditation-sign appears differently in different people due to the difference in perception, for it is born of perception, originated by perception, sprung from perception. Therefore, it should be understood that when it appears differently, it is because of the difference in perception.

For a person, who had done *Ānāpānassati* in a previous life, the meditation-sign starts to appear while he is focusing on the whole breath or while he is meditating on very subtle breath. But the initial sign is not stable and firm yet. So the meditator should ignore it and keep on focusing on the in-breath and the out-breath.

For most people, the meditation-sign appears while the meditator is focusing on the mild subtle breath which reappears after it has gone to be no longer distinct. Again the meditation-sign is not stable yet. The meditator should not pay attention to it. He should strive on to be mindful of the breath. When the breath and the sign becomes identical and indivisible, he is aware of the sign while he is trying to be aware of the breath and vice versa. This is the right form.

However, for some meditators the sign does not appear at the place where the breath touches the nostril or the upper lip. It appears a little further apart or about one foot from the tip of the nose. It may also appear on the forehead or in other places.

In this case the meditator should not pay attention to the sign. He should focus his attention on the breath at the point of contact. When his concentration attains full strength, the sign will appear at the point of contact and become indivisible from the breath.

• **The Arising of Fourfold Jhānas**

When the meditation sign and the breath are identical and indivisible, the meditator should fix his mind on the sign; and so from now on his development proceeds by way of fixing. He should put away extraneous aspects, and anchor his mind upon the in-breath and the out-breath.

From the time the counter-sign appears, the hindrances (*nīvaraṇas*)

are suppressed, the defilements subside, his mindfulness is established and his mind is concentrated in **access concentration** (*upacāra-samādhī*).

He should not give attention to the meditation-sign for its colour. He should guard it as carefully as a king's chief queen guards the embryo of a universal monarch. He should make the sign grow and improve with repeated attention. When his mind remains fixed on the meditation-sign for one hour, two hours, or more, he is said to attain the **first rūpāvacara jhāna**.

To make it sure, after coming out of the jhāna, he should look with closed eyes at his heart to see his life-continuum (*bhavaṅga-citta*), which appears like a star. The life-continuum functions as the mind-door. The meditation-sign and the first rūpāvacara jhāna appears in his mind-door. If he can discern the **five jhāna-factors** distinctly which associate with the first rūpāvacara-jhāna, then it is sure that he attains the **first rūpāvacara jhāna**.

• **Five Jhāna-factors**

The five jhāna-factors are neutral mental factors which give rise to the first jhāna when they are fully developed.

1. *Vitakka* – Initial application of the mind to the meditation-object; it is also called thought-conception;
2. *Vicāra* – Sustained application of the mind on the meditation-object by examining it again and again;
3. *Pīti* – Joy or rapture or interest in the meditation-object;
4. *Sukha* – Pleasant feeling;
5. *Ekaggatā* – One-pointedness of the mind; Ekaggatā unites consciousness and mental factors harmoniously and focuses them on the meditation-sign; it prevents its concomitants from dispersing and fixes them on one object. It functions as **mental concentration** (*samādhī*).

• **Mastery of the Jhāna in Five Ways**

When a beginner has reached the first jhāna, he should enter upon it often without reviewing it much. For the first jhāna-factors occur crudely and weakly in one who reviews it much. Conse-

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quently they do not become conditions for developing higher jhānas. While he is endeavouring for the unfamiliar higher jhāna, he falls from the first jhāna and fails to reach the second jhāna.

Here the Blessed One gave the simile of a stupid mountain cow with no knowledge of pasture-fields and no skill in walking on craggy mountains. It might occur to her thus: “How if I were to go to a place I have never gone to, eat grass I have never yet eaten, drink water I have never yet drunk”.

And if she were to lift the hind leg without planting her fore leg firmly, she would fall down and would not get to the place where she had intended to go, neither would she easily get back to her original place.

Therefore, the meditator should acquire mastery in five ways first of all with respect to the first jhāna.

1. *Āvajjana vasiṭā* – mastery in advertizing; it is the ability to discern the five jhāna-factors skilfully.

2. *Samāpajjana vasiṭā* – mastery in attaining; it is the ability to enter the jhāna quickly.

3. *Adiṭṭhāna vasiṭā* – mastery in resolving; it is the ability to remain in jhāna for as long a time as he has resolved to stay.

4. *Vuṭṭhāna vasiṭā* – mastery in emerging; it is the ability to emerge from the jhāna at the time he has determined to emerge.

5. *Paccavekkhana vasiṭā* – mastery in reviewing; it is the ability to review the jhāna-factors quickly by reducing the number of bhavaṅga cittas between cognitive series.

• **The Second Rūpāvacara Jhāna**

When the meditator has acquired mastery in five ways with respect to the first jhāna, he can consider the faults in this now familiar jhāna after emerging from it. As he views the jhāna-factors, with mindfulness and full awareness, he finds *vitakka* and *vicāra* to be gross and weak while *pīti*, *sukha* and *ekaggatā* appear to be fine and calm.

So he reflects that the first jhāna is close to the enemies (*nīvaraṇas*) due to *vitakka* and *vicāra*, and it is less calm and less blissful than

the second *rūpāvacara jhāna* which has only *pīti*, *sukha* and *ekaggatā* as its *jhāna*-factors.

Thus he cuts off his attachment to the first *jhāna*, brings to mind the counter-sign of *Ānāpānassati* and focuses on it without allowing *vitakka* and *vicāra* to arise in the mind. He does so with the purpose of abandoning the gross *jhāna* factors and developing the peaceful *jhāna*-factors, knowing that “now the second *rūpāvacara jhāna* will arise.” He develops the three stages of meditation in the normal order of preparatory meditation, neighbourhood meditation and absorption meditation. The culmination of this meditation is the attainment of the second *rūpāvacara jhāna*.

When the mind remains fixed on the counter-sign for one hour, two hours or more, he attains the second *jhāna*. When he examines the *jhāna*-factors, he finds *vitakka* and *vicāra* to be absent, and only *pīti*, *sukha* and *ekaggatā* to be present. He practises to acquire mastery in five ways with respect to the second *jhāna*.

• The Third Rūpāvacara Jhāna

Then on emerging from the now familiar second *jhāna*, he considers the flaws in it thus: “This *jhāna* is threatened by the nearness of *vitakka* and *vicāra*. Besides rapture (*pīti*) is a form of mental excitement, so it appears to be gross and weak whereas bliss (*sukha*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) appear to be calm and blissful. Because of rapture, the second *jhāna* is gross and weak, and less calm and less blissful than the third *rūpāvacara jhāna*.

Thus he cuts off his attachment to the second *jhāna*, and reflects on the counter-sign of *Ānāpānassati*, suppressing *pīti* not to arise in the mind. He does so with the purpose of abandoning the gross *jhāna*-factor and developing the peaceful factors, knowing that “now the third *rūpāvacara jhāna* will be arising.” He develops the three stages of meditation.

The culmination of this meditation is the attainment of the third *jhāna*. When his mind remains focused on the counter sign for one hour, two hours, or more, he attains the third *jhāna*. On examining the *jhāna*-factors, he finds only *sukha* and *ekaggatā* to be present.

He then practises to acquire mastery in five ways with respect to the third rūpāvacara jhāna. With the stilling or surmounting of *vitakka*, *vicāra* and *pīti*, he dwells in bliss with equanimity and is mindful. He is worthy of praise since he has equanimity toward the third jhāna, which has reached the perfection of bliss. **The bliss associated with the third rūpāvacara jhāna is the highest mundane bliss.**

Equanimity of jhāna is a name for equanimity producing impartiality towards even the highest bliss described thus: “He dwells in equanimity”. (*Vbh.* 245)

• The Fourth Rūpāvacara Jhāna

When he has acquired mastery in five ways with respect to the third rūpāvacara jhāna, he emerges from the jhāna and considers the flaws in it thus: “This jhāna is threatened by the nearness of rapture (*pīti*), and the mental concern about bliss (*sukha*) makes it gross and weak whereas equanimity as feeling (*upekkhā*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) appear calm and peaceful. Because of *sukha*, the third jhāna is gross and weak and less calm and tranquil than the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna.”

Thus he cuts off his attachment to the third jhāna and reflects on the counter sign of *Ānāpānassati*, suppressing *sukha* not to arise in the mind. He does so with the purpose of abandoning the gross jhāna-factor and developing the peaceful jhāna-factors, knowing that “now the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna will arise.” He develops the three stages of meditation. The culmination of this meditation is the attainment of the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna.

When his mind remains focused on the counter-sign for one hour, two hours or more, he attains the fourth jhāna. On examining the jhāna-factors, he finds only *upekkhā* and *ekaggatā* to be present. With the abandoning of bodily pleasure and bodily pain and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, he enters upon and dwells in the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna.

He then practises to acquire mastery in five ways with respect to this jhāna. With the stilling of gross jhāna-factors, the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna is so subtle that the breathing of a person dwell-

ing in the fourth jhāna attainment is no longer noticeable.

The fourth rūpāvacara jhāna has neither pain nor pleasure and possesses the purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. The mindfulness, as well as other associated mental factors, is cleared, purified and clarified by equanimity. This purity of mindfulness and the associated strong concentration make the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna the best basis for undertaking vipassanā-meditation.

(b) Undertaking Four Guardian Meditations

After attaining the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna in *Ānāpānassati*, one can undertake any other meditation-subject easily and successfully on the basis of the fourth jhāna concentration.

It is wise to undertake the **Guardian Meditations** to develop the highest possible concentration in each meditation subject, because the Guardian Meditations protect one from internal and external enemies and they are desirable at all places at all times to guard oneself.

(1) Undertaking Loving-Kindness Meditation (Mettā Bhāvanā)

To make oneself an example and to develop sympathy and consideration for others, one first pervades oneself with loving-kindness for some time as follows:

- (1) May I be free from danger,
- (2) May I be free from mental suffering,
- (3) May I be free from bodily pain,
- (4) May I be well and happy.

One cannot attain jhāna in radiating loving-kindness to oneself. Next the meditator should develop loving-kindness towards his teacher or preceptor or a person whom he adores and respects and who has the same sex like him.

He first develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna by reflecting on the counter-sign of *Ānāpānassati*-meditation until very bright and brilliant light is radiated. He emerges from the fourth jhāna and focuses his mind on the person whom he loves and respects. The person will vividly appear in the brilliant light.

Then focusing his attention on that person, he develops loving-

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kindness in four ways as: “May this righteous man be (1) free from danger, (2) free from mental suffering, (3) free from bodily pain, and (4) well and happy.”

Then choosing one way, he should visualize the happiest form of the respectable person and radiates loving-kindness repeatedly: “May this righteous person be free from mental suffering.” His development of loving-kindness will progress smoothly and quickly as it has the powerful support of the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna concentration.

When his mind is calm, tranquil and well concentrated on the respectable person for one hour or more, he should examine the jhāna factors. If all the five jhāna-factors appear clearly in his wisdom, then he can assume that he has attained the first rūpāvacara jhāna. He should practise to gain mastery in five ways with respect to this first jhāna, and then develop the second and third rūpāvacara jhānas as described in *Ānāpānassati* meditation.

He cannot go higher to the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, because loving-kindness cannot associate with equanimity (*upekkhā*) in the mind. As there are four ways for developing loving-kindness, one should attain the third jhāna in each way.

When the meditator attains success, he should develop loving-kindness in the same way towards another respectable and adorable person. He should develop loving-kindness successfully towards at least ten such persons.

Then he should develop loving-kindness in the same way towards very dear persons including parents, brothers, relatives and friends, one after another. The persons should be of the same sex as himself, and the third rūpāvacara jhāna should be attained in each of the four ways of developing loving-kindness.

Next the meditator should develop loving-kindness in the same way towards at least ten neutral persons and to all his enemies or persons he hates, one after another.

When he can develop loving-kindness equally towards the four types of persons:

1. *Atta* – oneself,
2. *Piya* – dear persons including adorable and respectable persons,
3. *Majjhatta* – neutral persons whom one neither loves nor hates,
4. *Veri* – enemies or persons one hates,

and when he can eliminate the demarcations differentiating them, then he is said to have broken the barriers between persons or attained '***Īmāsambheda***'.

According to *Visuddhi Magga*, the attainment of ***Īmāsambheda*** is successful only in one whose mind has reached jhāna in developing loving-kindness towards the four types of persons. Again the development of 528 modes of loving-kindness can be fully successful only in one whose mind has reached jhāna attainment and who has attained ***Īmāsambheda***'.

The meditator can now develop 528 modes of loving-kindness and dwell in the sublime state of jhāna attainment, pervading any quarter with loving-kindness. It is really like Rūpa-Brahmās living in the sublime state (*Brahma-vihāra*).

(2) Recollection of the Buddha's Attribute (*Buddhānussati*)

The meditator develops the *fourth rūpāvacara jhāna* by reflecting on the counter-sign of *Ānāpānassati* meditation until very bright and brilliant light is radiated. With the help of this light, he recalls and visualizes a Buddha statue which he adores and respects. When he sees the Buddha statue vividly in the light, he pays homage to it, assuming it to be the real Buddha.

Then he reflects on all the nine attributes of the Buddha one after another, and chooses the one attribute which he likes best. He reflects on this attribute repeatedly, e.g. '*Arahāṃ Arahāṃ.*' As his concentration arises, the Buddha's image will disappear while his mind remains focused on the special attribute.

With the strong support of the fourth jhāna concentration, he will soon attain the access jhāna in *Buddhānussati*. When his mind remains focused on the attribute for one hour or more without any distraction, he should view the jhāna factors. If he can see the jhāna factors to be calm and well developed, he will realize that he has

reached access jhāna.

A meditator, who attained access jhāna in Buddhānussati, attains fullness of faith and respect in the Buddha, good mindfulness, wisdom, much joy and happiness. He feels as if he were living in the Buddha's presence and so can avoid immoral actions. His body, permeated and inhabited by Buddha's attributes, becomes as worthy of veneration as a chamber of relics. So he is protected from all dangers.

(3) Recollection of Foulness (*Asubha Bhāvanā*)

“Recollection of Foulness” is much praised by the Buddha, because it is the most effective meditation subject for subduing lust (*rāga*). Indeed the *rāga* ogre is most afraid of foulness for it is conquered by the perception of foulness (*asubha-saññā*).

The meditator first develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna that he has attained in *Ānāpānassati meditation*. When the wisdom associated with the fourth jhāna-concentration radiates very bright, glittering light in all directions, the meditator recalls the most repulsive corpse, having the same sex as he does, that he has seen formerly.

When he can see the corpse vividly under the bright, brilliant light, he focuses his meditative mind calmly on the corpse in its most repulsive position, trying to discern the sign of foulness in the corpse as directed in Visuddhi Magga. (Vs. 1. 178)

He reflects on the sign of foulness repeatedly: “repulsive, repulsive”. When the meditative mind remains calmly fixed on the sign of foulness for one hour or more, the sign of the corpse changes from the ‘**acquired sign**’ to the ‘**counter-sign**’. The sign of the corpse which the meditator sees clearly as if he is looking at the corpse with open eyes is the acquired sign. This sign appears as a hideous, ugly, dreadful sign.

When the counter-sign arises, the meditative reflection (*bhāvanā-manasikāra*) is well developed and exalted, and the sign of the corpse becomes calm and steady. So the counter-sign appears like a prosperous man with plump limbs lying down after eating to his full.

Observing the counter-sign, the meditator reflects as ‘repulsive, repulsive’ many times until his meditating mind remains established calmly on the sign for one hour, two hours or more. Then he reviews the jhāna factors to find them clearly evident. The meditator now attains the first rūpāvacara jhāna. He should practise well to gain mastery in five ways with respect to this jhāna.

The meditator also attains the “**perception of foulness**” which can well suppress his greed. So he is free from lust, passions, and frivolity, and resembles an Arahant.

(4) Recollection of Death (*Maraṇānussati*)

According to the instructions of *Visuddhi Magga* (Vs. 2. 222) and *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta* (Ma. i. 23), a meditator, who has successfully developed the first jhāna by reflecting on the foulness of a corpse, can easily change his meditation to mindfulness of death.

The meditator first recalls the acquired sign or the counter-sign of a corpse and reflects on its foulness to develop the first rūpāvacara jhāna. He then emerges from this first jhāna and reflects on the nature of his death thus: “This body of mine has the nature to disintegrate; I will surely die; I cannot escape from death.”

He should constantly focus his attention on the nature of his death, establishing mindfulness on death and developing a sense of urgency together with the knowledge of death. Soon he will observe with his mind-eye the disgusting corpse of his dead body in place of the external corpse. Then he discerns with his wisdom the nature of the cutting-off of life-faculty (*jīvitindriya*) in his dead body.

And focusing his meditative mind on the object of the cutting-off of life-faculty, he reflects repeatedly in one of the following ways that he likes best:

1. *Maraṇaṃ me dhuvaṃ, jīvitaṃ me adhuvaṃ.*

My death is certain, my being alive is uncertain.

2. *Maraṇaṃ me bhavissati.*

My death will certainly occur.

3. *Maraṇaṃ maraṇaṃ.* Death, death.

He should ardently strive to concentrate his meditative mind on

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the object of the cutting-off of life-faculty in his dead body for one hour, two hours or more. If he is successful, he will find that the jhāna factors become distinct.

As the object of meditation is the nature of death and frightening, awaking the sense of urgency, only access jhāna arises.

The benefits of maraṇānussati are many: the meditator acquires the perception of disgust and disenchantment with all kinds of existences; he cuts off attachment to life and properties; he avoids evil doing and much storing; he develops the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*), and consequently the perception of suffering (*dukkha-saññā*) and the perception of not-self (*anatta-saññā*) also appear in him. Finally he develops the sense of urgency (*saṁvega*) to undertake meditation promptly.

(c) Mindfulness Occupied with the Body (*Kāyagatāsati*)

‘*Kāyagatāsati*’ is a meditation subject which was never before practised except when the Buddha appeared, and is outside the province of any of the founders of sects. It has been praised by the Buddha in various ways in different Suttas thus:

“Bhikkhus, when one thing is developed and repeatedly practised, it leads to a supreme sense of urgency, to supreme benefit, to supreme liberation from bondage, to supreme mindfulness and comprehension, to the attainment of insight and vision, to a happy-life here and now, to the realization of wisdom, emancipation and fruition. What is that one thing? It is mindfulness occupied with the body. (A. i, 43)

The meditator develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna by reflecting on the counter-sign of Ānāpānassati until very bright, brilliant and penetrative light is radiated. With the help of this light he can see near objects and far-away objects. He can also see penetratively with closed eyes into his body as well as into other people’s bodies to see all the thirty-two parts of the body as described below.

“In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, bowels, intestines, stomach, excrement, brain, bile,

phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, lubricant (in bone joints) and urine.” (M. iii, 90)

The meditator can also observe the repulsive nature of each body-part. So not only the body-parts of a dead body or corpse are disgusting but also the body-parts of a living person are disgusting. Thus a corpse is called “*Aviññānaka-asubha*” (foulness without consciousness) whereas a living body is called “*Viññānaka-asubha*” (foulness with consciousness).

By reflecting on the repulsive nature of each body-part, the skeleton of oneself for example, the meditator can develop the first rūpāvacara jhāna as in *Asubha-bhāvanā*. So he also attains “the perception of foulness” on the living body.

The Benefits of Kāyagātāsati are wonderful and many. The meditator, who is devoted to the mindfulness occupied with the body, is a “conqueror of boredom and delight; the boredom in meditation and the delight in sense-pleasure cannot conquer him. He lives subduing boredom as it arises.

He is also a conqueror of fear and dread, and fear and dread do not conquer him. He lives putting down fear and dread as they come up. He can bear major and minor pain, heat and cold, hunger and thirst, insect-bites and scorpion-sting, blames and abuses. He can endure arisen bodily painful-feelings that are menacing to life.

He can develop four rūpāvacara jhānas and then four arūpāvacara jhānas based on the colour aspect of head-hairs, bones, blood, urine, etc. He can also develop supernormal powers.

As he attains the perception of loathsomeness on the living body, he can well suppress his sense-desires to live happily and to progress quickly in insight meditation.²²

(d) Development of Eight Jhāna Attainments based on

Ten Kasiṇas and Four Ārūppas

A meditator, who has attained the four rūpāvacara jhānas in

22. “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga, Vol. I, pp. 196-211, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Literature. Tel. 951-385261*

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Ānāpānassati meditation, can easily and quickly undertake Kasiṇa meditations to develop the fourfold rūpāvacara jhānas.

To prepare an earth-kasiṇa (*pathavī-kasiṇa*), he draws a circle about 15 inches in diameter with a stick on a clean patch of ground. He sits about four feet from the earth-circle where he can see the earth-circle clearly with moderately open eyes. He develops the fourth rūpāvacara-jhāna by reflecting on the counter-sign of Ānāpānassati meditation.

He emerges from the fourth jhāna, focuses his attention on the earth-circle with open eyes, and reflects repeatedly: “earth, earth” or “*pathavī, pathavī*”. The meditator, with the support of the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, has excellent memory. He can develop the acquired sign, the identical image of the earth-circle seen with closed eyes, in about an hour.

He then goes to the meditation-hall and reflects on the acquired sign as “earth, earth” or “*pathavi, pathavi*” repeatedly until a clear, smooth and bright **counter-sign** arises. When the counter-sign becomes stable, he enlarges it gradually by his will-power in this way: “May the counter-sign grow larger by one inch, another inch, and so on” till it extends indefinitely in all directions. He then focuses his mind on the extended counter-sign and reflects repeatedly: “earth, earth” or “*pathavī, pathavī*” until his mind remains absorbed on the counter-sign for one hour, two hours, or more. He now attains the first rūpāvacara jhāna.

He practises to gain mastery in five ways with respect to the first jhāna. He can then develop the fourfold rūpāvacara jhānas in the same way as described in Ānāpānassati meditation.

The meditator can undertake the remaining nine kasiṇa-meditations in the same way as described in the earth-kasiṇa meditation.

To develop **Āpo-kasiṇa** (*Water-kasiṇa*) the meditator, after emerging from the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna of Ānāpānassati, looks at the water in a well or the water in a round bowl about 15 inches in diameter, reflecting ‘*āpo, āpo*’ repeatedly. When he attains the acquired sign of āpo-kasiṇa, he goes to the meditation hall, calmly develop the counter-sign and the four rūpāvacara jhānas as before.

To develop **Tejo-kasiṇa** (*Fire kasiṇa*) the meditator looks at the middle part of a wood-fire in the kitchen through a hole at the base of an aluminium vessel. He can see a circle of fire and reflects on it as ‘*tejo, tejo*’ repeatedly until he attains the acquired sign. He goes to the meditation-hall, calmly develops the counter-sign and the four rūpāvacara jhānas as before.

Next, for developing the ‘**Vāyo-kasiṇa**’ (*Air-kasiṇa*) the meditator sits or stands in the open air, focusing his attention on the breeze that touches his cheek, reflecting ‘*vāyo, vāyo*’ repeatedly. After attaining the acquired sign in the wind (*vāyo*) he can develop it to the counter-sign and go on developing the four rūpāvacara jhānas as before.

To develop ‘**Nīla-kasiṇa**’ (blue, brown or black kasiṇa), the meditator develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna of Ānāpānasati, comes out of it, and looks at the head-hair of a meditator with closed eyes in the meditation-hall. He can see the hair with his concentrated mind eye with the help of bright, penetrative light radiated from the concentrated mind. He focuses his attention on the brown or black colour of the hair, reflecting ‘*nīla, nīla*’ repeatedly until the acquired sign arises. He develops the acquired sign to the counter-sign and continues developing the four rūpāvacara jhānas.

To develop the acquired sign in ‘**Pīta-kasiṇa**’ (*Yellow-kasiṇa*), the meditator, after emerging from the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna of Ānāpānasati, focuses his attention on the yellow colour of the fat or urine of a person sitting in front of him in the meditation-hall. After attaining the acquired sign, he develops it to the counter-sign and continues developing the four rūpāvacara jhānas.

To develop the acquired sign of ‘**Lohita-kasiṇa**’ (*Red-kasiṇa*), he should focus his attention on the red colour of the blood of a person sitting in front of him in the meditation-hall.

To develop the acquired sign of ‘**Odāta-kasiṇa**’ (*White-kasiṇa*), he reflects on the white colour of the skull of that person.

Note: To develop the acquired sign in Nīla-kasiṇa, Pīta-kasiṇa, Lohita-kasiṇa or Odāta-kasiṇa, the meditator, after emerging from the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna of Ānāpānasati, can reflect on the

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blue colour, the yellow colour, the red colour or the white colour of a cloth tied to a round vessel about 15 inches in diameter. After attaining the acquired sign, he can develop it to the counter-sign and continue developing the four rūpāvacara jhānas as before.

To develop the acquired sign of ‘**Ākāsa-kasiṇa**’ (Space-kasiṇa), the meditator focuses his attention on the limited space, which is seen on looking out to the sky through a hole in the wall.

For developing the acquired sign of ‘**Āloka-kasiṇa**’ (Light-kasiṇa), he looks at the arising sun or setting sun at the height of a palm tree, concentrating his attention on the light radiated from the sun.

After attaining the acquired sign of each kasiṇa, he can go to the meditation-hall and develop the counter-sign and the four rūpāvacara jhānas as before.

• **Developing Arūpa Jhānas by Meditation on Āruppas**

Rūpāvacara fourth jhāna in fourfold jhāna method obtained in Kasiṇa-meditation is used as the base for going up to arūpāvacara jhānas. First fivefold mastery of the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna must be developed. Also the contemplation on the faults of materiality (*rūpa*) to suppress the attachment to materiality must be undertaken thus:

“This material body is subject to hotness and coldness, hunger and thirst, and to all kinds of diseases. Because of the body, one quarrels with others. To clothe it, to feed it and to accommodate it, one has to work the whole life.”

“The meditator should also contemplate how subtle and calm the arūpāvacara jhāna is to strengthen his desire to attain it.

Then he develops the four rūpāvacara jhānas on any one of the nine kasiṇas, excluding ākāsa-kasiṇa. He emerges from the fourth rūpāvacara-jhānas and, without paying attention to the extended counter-sign of kasiṇa, he concentrates on the space where the counter-sign is and meditate repeatedly: “Space is infinite! Space is infinite!” This is preparatory meditation – the prerequisite for the arising of higher meditation.

The counter-sign will be in front of him so long as he still has a

subtle desire (*nikanti*) for it. When this subtle desire disappears, the counter-sign also disappears, unfolding infinite space. Concentrating on this infinite space, he meditates on: “Space is infinite! Space is infinite!”

When his subtle desire (*nikanti*) disappears, he is said to reach neighbourhood meditation (*upacāra-bhāvanā*). If he goes on meditating earnestly and strenuously, he may soon reach the absorption-meditation (*appanā-bhāvanā*) and attain the first Arūpāvacara jhāna called ‘**Ākāśānañcāyatana kusala jhāna**’ or ‘Ākāśānañcāyatana moral consciousness’.

He then develops mastery in five ways with respect to the first arūpa jhāna. Then to develop the second arūpāvacara jhāna, he contemplates on the unsatisfactoriness of the first arūpa jhāna for being close to rūpāvacara jhānas and for being coarse compared to the second arūpāvacara jhāna.

Then concentrating his attention on ākāśānañcāyatana kusala citta (moral consciousness) which focuses on infinite space, he meditates: “Consciousness is infinite, consciousness is infinite.” This is the new preparatory meditation. When his subtle clinging (*nikanti*) to the first arūpāvacara jhāna disappears, he comes to the neighbourhood meditation. When he attains the second arūpāvacara jhāna called “**Viññānañcāyatana Kusala Citta**”, he reaches absorption-meditation.

Similarly by practising the preparatory meditation on the non-existence of ākāśānañcāyatana kusala citta, mentally repeating: “There is nothing whatsoever!”, the third *arūpāvacara jhāna* called “**Ākiñcaññāyatana Kusala Citta**,” is attained.

Furthermore, by practising the preparatory meditation on “ākiñcaññāyatana kusala citta”, mentally repeating: “This consciousness is calm! It is excellent!” the fourth arūpāvacara jhāna, called “**Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana Kusala Citta**,” is finally attained.

(e) Going higher to Supernormal Knowledges (*Abhiññā*)

After developing eight jhāna-attainments, comprising four rūpāvacara jhānas and four arūpāvacara jhānas in all the ten kasiṇas, the meditator can develop five mundane supernormal knowledges

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by practising these jhānas very skilfully in fourteen ways based on eight kasiṇas with the exception of space-kasiṇa and light-kasiṇa, as described in Visuddhi Magga.

Although the meditator can undertake insight meditation more powerfully with supernormal knowledges, it takes a long time to develop them successfully and, after attaining them, he has to practise constantly to maintain them. So insight meditation (*vipassanā*) is usually undertaken without developing supernormal knowledges.

Note: In International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres, after the meditator successfully develops the four rūpāvacara jhānas in Ānāpānassati meditation, he is taught to undertake the four Guardian Meditations and Kāyagatāsati Meditation as described above, because he can learn to develop them easily and they will support him to undertake vipassanā meditation more effectively and successfully.

Moreover, he is also taught to develop the eight jhāna attainments in all the ten kasiṇas as described above so that he can develop the jhānas very skilfully and can maintain the right concentration for a long time in undertaking vipassanā meditation. Thus he can advance quickly in vipassanā meditation.

Many meditators can successfully develop the above jhānas and can also practise vipassanā meditation successfully as described briefly below in accord with the teachings of the Buddha as mentioned in Visuddhi Magga.^{23,24,25,26}

23 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Vol. II, pp. 209-350,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon.

24 “Visuddhimagga Aṭṭhakathā”, translated into Myanmar Language
by Ven. Nandamālā, Vol. III, pp. 229-604.

25 “Visuddhi Magga” in Myanmar Language, translated by Ven.
Mahāsī Sayadaw, Vol. IV, pp. 220-499.

26 “The Only Path to go to Nibbāna” in Myanmar Language, by
Pa-auk Tawya Sayadaw, pp. 265-819.

[13] Undertaking the Noble Training of Wisdom

• Systematic Purification of the Mind

According to *Rathavinita Sutta* (M.1.190-205) and *Visuddhi Magga* (Vs. 2. 73), the mind is systematically purified in seven stages:

1. *Sīla-Visuddhi* – Purification of Morality,
2. *Citta-Visuddhi* – Purification of the Mind by developing the right concentration,
3. *Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi* – Purification of View,
4. *Kaṅkhāvitarāṇa-Visuddhi* – Purification by overcoming Doubts,
5. *Maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-Visuddhi* – Purification by knowledge and Vision of the Path and Not-path,
6. *Paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-Visuddhi* – Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way,
7. *Ñāṇadassana-Visuddhi* – Purification by Knowledge and Vision.

According to above instruction, after developing **the purity of morality** (*sīla-visuddhi*) by diligently observing the fourfold morality for overall purification (*Catupārisuddhi-sīla*), and the purity of the mind (*citta-visuddhi*) after developing eight jhāna-attainments by tranquillity-meditations, the meditator should now proceed to the third-step of purification, i.e., the **Purification of View** (*Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi*). The last five steps of purification are concerned with the Noble Training of Wisdom.

[14] Undertaking the Purification of View (*Diṭṭhi Visuddhi*)

To develop the purity of view, the meditator must get rid of the basic wrong view of **personality-belief** (*Sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) and **Ego-illusion** (*Attadiṭṭhi*), thinking that ‘I’, ‘person’, ‘self’, ‘atta’, ‘soul’, or ‘ego’ exists. This basic wrong view makes one very selfish, thinking of only one’s welfare and not others’ welfare, and it prompted the British Prime Minister **William Gladstone** to make the statement: **“Selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race.”** Based on this basic wrong view, many wrong views arise in the world.

To get rid of this basic wrong view, one must analyse body and mind into their ultimate components called ultimate materialities and

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ultimate mentalities, and define each materiality and each mentality precisely by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and the proximate causes for their arising.

So a meditator must perform the task of defining mentality-materiality (*nāma-rūpa*) when he enters the field of vipassanā. To begin with what is easier, the defining of materiality is first conducted in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres.

(a) Defining Ultimate Materialities (*Rūpā-kammaṭṭhāna*)

The meditator develops the fourth rūpavacara jhāna that he has attained either by Ānāpānassati meditation or white kasiṇa meditation until very bright and brilliant light is emitted. He emerges from the jhāna and undertakes **“Defining of Primary Elements” (*Catudhātu-vavatthāna*) meditation**, which is described quite in detail in “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Volume I, pp. 212-228, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon.

Among the four primary elements, **the element of extension (*Pathavi*)** has the characteristics of hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness and lightness; **the element of cohesion (*Āpo*)** has the characteristics of fluidity and cohesiveness; **the element of heat (*Tejo*)** has the characteristics of hotness and coldness; and **the element of motion (*Vāyo*)** has the characteristics of supporting and pushing. So there are 12 characteristics which represent the four primary elements.

Then the meditator should start defining the primary elements thus: “starting from a place in his body where hardness is distinct, he tries to observe the nature of hardness in every part of his whole body from head to toe. He repeats this procedure to define the remaining eleven characteristics one after another.”

Or the meditator should give priority to discern the characteristic which is easier to observe than the others. So he should discern **the pushing characteristic first.** While he breathes in and out normally, he should observe the pushing nature at the middle of his head or at his chest or at his belly wherever it is most distinct.

When he can observe the nature of pushing clearly, he should fix

his meditating mind calmly on the pushing characteristic. When he can observe the nature of pushing clearly, he gradually extends the area of observation so that he is aware of the pushing nature in every part of the body.

Then he should observe **the nature of hardness, roughness, heaviness, supporting, softness, smoothness, lightness, hotness, coldness, cohesiveness and fluidity** one after another in the same manner. Then he should practise to observe the twelve characteristics one after another in the same order.

In practising thus, whichever characteristic he is observing, he should observe it vividly throughout his whole body from head to toe. In striving to do so, he accomplishes one round whenever he completes discerning the twelve characteristics. He should strive to accomplish two or three rounds per minute.

Then he should rearrange the order of the characteristics to be in conformity with the order given in the discourse, that is in the order: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness (for *pathavī*), cohesiveness and fluidity (for *āpo*), hotness and coldness (for *tejo*), supporting and pushing (for *vāyo*).

In this order he should discern each characteristic throughout his body from head to toe. He should strive on to observe the characteristics more and more quickly until he can discern them about three rounds per minute.

Then he should take an overall view of the twelve characteristics by looking from behind the shoulders, giving equal attention to the upper part of the body and to the lower part of the body. When he can discern the twelve characteristics quickly and almost simultaneously with his wisdom, he should take note of hardness-roughness-heaviness-softness-smoothness-lightness as *pathavī*, cohesive-ness-fluidity as *āpo*, hotness-coldness as *tejo*, and supporting-pushing as *vāyo*.

He focuses his mind on the twelve characteristics, which represent the four primary elements, until very bright and penetrative light, which enables him to see external objects as well as his internal organs with closed eyes, is radiated. Then he attains the

neighbourhood concentration, the highest concentration attainable in Catudhātu-vavatthāṇa meditation. As he keeps on focusing his mind on the twelve characteristics, first a grey colour, then a white colour, and then a clear mass like glass or ice generally appear. This clear mass represents translucent materialities in the body. When he continues to discern the twelve characteristics in the clear mass, the mass breaks into very tiny material groups which make up the body.

The material groups arise and perish very rapidly. He continues to discern the twelve characteristics in the material groups with his wisdom as he has discerned them in his body. When he can observe the twelve characteristics, he knows that the four primary elements are present in each material group.

After that, he tries to discern the derived materialities in each material group by discerning their respective characteristics with wisdom. He should analyse the material groups in accordance with five sense-doors, namely, the eye-door, the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door and the body-door. Thus he comes to know all the 24 derived materialities as well. He also defines each ultimate materiality by its characteristic, function, manifestation and the proximate cause for its arising.

(h) Defining Ultimate Mentalities (*Nāma-kammaṭṭhāna*)

Ultimate mentalities are **consciousness** (*citta*) and **mental factors** (*cetasikas*), which together make up the mind. According to *Abhidhammā Commentary*²⁷, more than a thousand billion minds arise and perish one after another incessantly per second, and consciousness and mental factors have no form and no shape just like energy. As scientists cannot even detect the mind, how can we observe the components of the mind?

Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha describes that **life-continuum**, that is the series of kamma-resultant consciousness that keeps us alive,

functions as the **mind door**, in which ultimate mentalities, ultimate materialities, past sense-objects, future sense-objects and Nibbāna can appear, giving rise to mind-door cognitive series of consciousnesses, which can observe all sense-objects that appear in the mind-door.

So ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities can be observed by the minds that arise in the mind-door cognitive series. In other words, we can see ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities with our moral minds which are associated with the right concentration (*sammāsamādhī*).

In order to discern mentalities, a meditator must first observe (1) the physical base (*vatthu*) on which consciousness and mental factors depend on for their arising, and (2) the sense-object taken by consciousness and mental factors.²⁸

According to *Abhidhamma Commentary*²⁹ the visible-object appears at the eye-door and at the mind-door simultaneously; the sound appears at the ear-door and at the mind-door simultaneously; and so on. So the meditator first develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna or the right concentration that he has attained until very bright and penetrative light is radiated.

He observes the eye-door (*cakkhu-pasāda* = eye-translucent materiality) and the mind-door (life-continuum) together, and then observes a visible object striking the two doors simultaneously. Then he discerns the cognitive series of consciousnesses that arises as follows.

-Bhu- “Ti-Na-Da-Pa-Ca-Sp-St-Vo-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Td-Td-”Bh-

Bh = *bhavaṅga*-stream = life-continuum;

Ti = *atīta-bhavaṅga* = passed life-continuum which passed by from the time the sense-object strikes the sense-door to the time the object appears at the door;

Na = *bhavaṅgalana* = vibrating life-continuum which occurs when the sense-object appears at the sense-door;

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- Da = *bhavaṅgupaccheda* = arrested life-continuum = the life-continuum is cut off after this consciousness and the cognitive series of consciousness starts to arise;
- Pa = *Pañcadvārāvajjana* = five-door directing consciousness; it apprehends or takes notice of the sense-object;
- Ca = *Cakkhu-viññāṇa* = eye-consciousness; it sees the sense-object;
- Sp = *Sampaṭicchana* = receiving consciousness; it receives the sense-object transmitted by the eye-consciousness;
- St = *Santīrana citta* = investigating consciousness; it investigates the sense-object;
- Vo = *Voṭṭhapana* = determining consciousness; it determines whether the sense-object is good or bad;
- Ja = *Javana citta* = impulsive consciousness; it knows the sense-object and enjoys the taste of the sense-object;
- Td = *Tadālabana* = registering consciousness; it follows javana-cittas and continues enjoying the sense-object;
- Bh = *Bhavaṅga-stream* = life-continuum flows on.

Similar cognitive series arise at the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door and the body-door when the corresponding sense-objects appear at the respective doors. We just need to change the eye-consciousness to the ear-consciousness, the nose-consciousness, the tongue-consciousness, or the body-consciousness in the respective cognitive series.

The five-door cognitive series of consciousnesses know the sense-objects only roughly. To know the detailed features of the sense-objects, several consequent mind-door cognitive series of consciousnesses arise, taking the past sense-object of each of the above five-door cognitive series soon after that cognitive series terminates.

Indeed the mind functions as a super-computer storing up billions of sense-data in the mental stream and identifying each sense-object presently observed by matching it with the stored-up data. So we remember the sense-objects that we have seen before.

• **Independent mind-door cognitive series of consciousnesses** also arises when a **mind-object** (very subtle object that cannot appear in the five sense-doors) appears in the mind-door as follows.

Bh- “Na-Da-Ma-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Td-Td-”Bh-

The symbols have the same significance as described earlier. ‘Ma’ stands for *Manodvārāvajjana* which functions as the mind-door directing or apprehending consciousness as well as determining consciousness as *Voṭṭhapana*. ‘Td’ will be absent for sense-objects of fairly great intensity; it arises only when the sense-object is of very great intensity.

Although the minds arise and perish extremely rapidly, after a cognitive series of consciousnesses arises and perishes, it can be reobserved in the mind-door as a past sense-object. Then it can be discerned and examined in detail in slow motion and each consciousness can be known precisely by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause.

After discerning each consciousness in the cognitive series, the meditator then investigates the mental factors that associate with each consciousness. He investigates whether the characteristic, function, manifestation and the proximate cause for arising of *phassa*, which makes contact between consciousness and the sense-object, is present or not in the consciousness he is investigating. In this way he knows all the mental factors that associate with each consciousness.

The characteristic, the function, the manifestation and the proximate cause for the arising of each and every ultimate materiality and ultimate mentality (consciousness and mental factors) are described in *Visuddhi Magga*³⁰. So the meditator can refer to these descriptions for identifying each consciousness and each mental factor by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations

30. “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga.” Vol. II, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon

and proximate causes.

• **The Characteristic of Not-self (*Anatta*) Becomes Distinct**

It is very important to analyse each mental group (mind) and each material group (*rūpa-kalāpa*) into their ultimate components in order to know ultimate realities (*paramatthas*) and the characteristic of ‘not-self’ or ‘no-soul’ (*anatta*). The mental groups or minds and material groups are not divisible into their components. However, we can achieve analytical understanding of each ultimate component in each group by penetrative investigation with wisdom associated with the right concentration about the characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. In this way we can know precisely all the components of each mind and each material group.

The not-self or no-soul (anatta) characteristic is known only in Buddhism; it is not known outside Buddhism. The not-self or no-soul (anatta) characteristic is not distinct and not known, because it is covered up by compactness as groups. If the compactness can be penetrated and analysed with wisdom associated with the right concentration, the not-self or no-soul characteristic becomes clear and evident as it really is.^{31,32}

When the meditator has defined all consciousnesses, all mental factors and all ultimate materialities internally in himself, he also defines them externally in others to understand that everyone is made up of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities that can be classified as five aggregates of grasping or clinging.

• **Discerning Five Aggregates of Grasping (*Upādānakkhandhas*)**

The five aggregates of grasping, that represent the Noble Truth of Suffering and that have to be investigated in *vipassanā* meditation, are as follows.

1. *Rūpupādānakkhandha* = Materiality-aggregate of grasping comprising 28 kinds of ultimate materialities;
2. *Vedanupādānakkhandha* = Feeling-aggregate of grasping com-

31. Abhi. A. 2. 47

32. Vs. 2. 276

prising feeling mental factors associated with 81 mundane consciousnesses.

3. *Saññupādānakkhandha* = Perception-aggregate of grasping comprising perception mental factors associated with 81 mundane consciousnesses;
4. *Saṅkhārupādānakkhandha* = Aggregate of mental formations of grasping comprising 50 mundane mental factors other than feeling and perception.
5. *Viññānupādānakkhandha* = Consciousness-aggregate of grasping comprising 81 mundane consciousnesses.

When the meditator vividly observes and understands that there are only five aggregates of grasping in all living beings and in the universe and that they are arising due to causes and perishing very rapidly and incessantly, leaving nothing that can be called a ‘person’, ‘self’, ‘soul’ or ‘ego’, he can **dismiss the wrong view of ‘personality-belief’** (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) and ‘ego-illusion’ (*atta-diṭṭhi*) and attain ‘the Purity of View’ (*Diṭṭhi-visuddhi*).

• **The Knowledge of Defining Mentality-Materiality Arises**

The knowledge of defining each consciousness, each mental factor and each ultimate materiality by means of their characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes is known as ‘the Knowledge of defining mentality-materiality’ (*Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). This knowledge is the landmark of ‘the Purity of View’ (*Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi*).

[15] **Undertaking the Purification by Overcoming Doubts**

The meditator, who has defined materiality and mentality both internally in himself and externally in others, must further discern the **causes that give rise to mentality and materiality**. Otherwise, doubt and wrong views may arise in him. He may think that an Almighty God creates them or there are no causes which produce them. Since doubt (*vicikicchā*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) are defilements (*kilesās*), they must be got rid off.

Visuddhi Magga describes four causes – *kamma*, *citta*, *utu* (heat), *ojā* (nutriment) – which can produce materiality.

The meditator develops the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna until it radi-

ates brilliant and penetrative wisdom light. He comes out of the jhāna and focuses his attention on his consciousness (*citta*) which arises in the heart depending on a heart-base. When he bends his finger, he can see thousands of consciousness-born material-groups (*cittaja-rūpa*), arising and dissolving and also causing his fore-finger to bend. He can also understand that all his bodily movements are caused by arising and perishing of consciousness-born material groups.

Next he focuses his attention on a material group and discerns a series of heat-born material groups produced by the heat (*tejo*) in the material group.

He can also discern another stream of nutriment-born material groups produced by the nutriment (*ojā*) in the material group in combination with the external nutriment.

When he can discern the kamma that gives rise to the present existence, he can also observe kamma-born material groups being incessantly produced by that kamma at every sub-moment.

(a) Discerning the Causes which give rise to Materialities and Mentalities

Next, he investigates the four causes, namely, kamma, consciousness, heat, nutriment, which produce materialities.

Next he investigates with the right thought and the right understanding the causes which give rise to mentalities. Again with the help of the glittering, penetrative wisdom-light he discerns clearly that the eye-door cognitive series of consciousness arises due to the contact between the eye-door and a visible object; the ear-door cognitive series of consciousness arises due to the contact between the ear-door and an audible sound, and so on. Attention (*manasikāra*) to the sense object that appears at the sense-door must also be present for each cognitive series to arise.

In the case of impulsive consciousness (*javana citta*s), wise reflection gives rise to moral consciousnesses (*kusala citta*s), and unwise reflection gives rise to immoral consciousnesses (*akusala citta*s).

(b) Discarding Sixteen Kinds of Doubt

Now there still exist five kinds of doubt about the past: "Was I in

the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past?"

Also there exist five kinds of doubt about the future: "Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?"

Again there exist six kinds of doubt about the present: "Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? From what existence comes this existence? What existence will follow the present existence?"

These 16 kinds of doubt can be discarded only when the meditator can penetratively discern the causal relations of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*).

(c) Discerning the Causal Relations of Dependent Origination

The Buddha has reminded Ānanda that beings have to undergo the round of rebirths life after life, because they do not understand properly and penetratively the causal relations of Dependent Origination or Dependent Arising.

Also in Visuddhi Magga³³ and Abhidhamma Commentary³⁴ it is clearly stated thus:

"There is no one, even in a dream, who has emancipated from the round of misery without the ability to break through the Paṭiccasamuppāda causal relations of the saṃsāra machine with his wisdom sword which has been sharpened on the sacred whetstone of concentration."

Thus the causal relations of Paṭiccasamuppāda must be discerned and verified by insight wisdom to clarify all doubts and straighten all wrong views. According to the instruction given in the Visuddhi Magga Commentary:

(1) The past five causes – viz., ignorance (*avijjā*), kamma-formations (*saṅkhāra*), craving (*taṇhā*), grasping (*upādāna*), and kamma (*kamma-bhava*) – must be investigated and discerned clearly, and the arising of the present five effects–viz., resultant consciousness (*viññāṇa*), mentality-materiality (*nāma-rūpa*), six sense-bases (*saḷā-*

33. Vs. 2. 221

34. Abhi. A. 2. 129

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yatana), contact (*phassa*) and feeling (*vedanā*) – due to the past causes must be observed vividly with wisdom by insight meditation.

(2) The present five causes – *viz.*, ignorance, craving, grasping, kamma-formations and kamma – must be discerned next, and the arising of the future five effects – *viz.*, resultant consciousness, mentality-materiality, six sense-bases, contact and feeling – due to the present five causes must be observed clearly with wisdom by insight meditation.

Herein the causes of Dependent Origination constitute the truth of the cause of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*) and the effects of Dependent Origination constitute the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*).

Therefore, the meditator must observe with wisdom:

- (1) the arising of the present truth of suffering due to the past truth of the cause of suffering;
- (2) the arising of the future truth of suffering due to the present truth of the cause of suffering.

In order to correlate the past causes with the present effects and the present causes with the future effects, we should know the mental and physical phenomena in the past, the present and the future.

How can one know the past mental and material phenomena which have already dissolved and the future phenomena which do not come into existence yet?

Well, the ability of the concentrated mind is marvellous. We have learnt about **pubbenivāsānussati-abhiññā** which can remember thousands of one's past lives and **anāgataṃsaññā** which can know one's future existences.

In the case of insight-meditation (*vipassanā*) we need not go to the *Abhiññā*-stage and we have no *Abhiññā* – the power of which we could make use of. But, if we have the right concentration and the knowledge to characterize the mental and material phenomena both internally (in one's self) and externally (in others), then we can trace the stream of arising and dissolving of mentality and materiality backward to past lives. This method is mentioned in *Samyutta Nikāya* (II.71 Myanmar), in *Khajjaniya Sutta*, and it is being practised satisfactorily in Pa-auk Forest Meditation Centres.

In Pa-auk forest Meditation Centres the yogi performs some meritorious deeds at the shrine by offering candles and flowres. He characterises the mental and material phenomena which arise during this performance. He then goes to the meditation hall and meditates together with other yogis (meditators). He develops concentration, discerns his mentality-materiality, and traces the series of mentality-materiality backward to the previous performance of the meritorious deed and again analyses the mental and material phenomena arising at the time. If he observes the same results as he has noted before, he is assured that he can characterize the near past mentality-materiality.

After that he can go on tracing the series of mentality-materiality backward to observe the stream of mentality-materiality until he can discern the mentality-materiality at the time of conception in his mother's womb.

So now he knows the present five effects pertaining to the present existence: rebirth consciousness and its associated mental factors, kamma-born materiality including the sense-bases, the contact of the sense base with the sense object, and the resultant feeling.

Then he goes on tracing the series of mentality-materiality backward in the immediate past existence, the important events and the actions done in that existence. He can actually observe his past existence, the important events and the actions done in that existence. Then he focuses his mind on the mentality-materiality which arose at the time of near-death when the near-death sign appeared. From this sign he discerns the *kamma-formations* and the *kamma* which produces the present existence. He can also discern the three supporting forces, that is, *ignorance*, *craving* and *grasping*, from their accompanying consciousness which arose at the time when the near-death sign appeared.

Next he tries to discern whether the past five causes gave rise to the present five effects. He can see the arising of the five effects due to the five causes if they represent the true cause – effect relation. He also feels convinced that the past existence was his real existence.

Then he traces the series of mentality-materiality backward in his

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first past existence until he discerns the rebirth consciousness, its associated mental factors, the kamma-born materiality, the sense base, the contact of the sense-base with the sense-object and the resultant feeling.

He then proceeds tracing the series of mentality-materiality in his second past existence in order to find the five causes in that existence that give rise to the five effects in the first past existence. If he is successful, he can proceed to find the cause-effect relation of the third past existence and the second past existence.

He must also discern the cause-effect relation of the present existence with the future existence. So he offers food to the Buddha again, making a wish what he wants to be in the next existence. If he wishes to become a celestial being, then thinking the celestial existence to really exist is *ignorance* (*avijjā*), the desire to become a celestial being is *craving* (*taṇhā*), and clinging to that desire is *grasping* (*upādāna*). His wholesome consciousness and volition for offering food to the Buddha are *kamma-formations* (*saṅkhāra*) and the kamma-seed deposited in his mental stream is *kamma-bhava*. So now he has developed the five causes for conditioning a new existence to arise.

Then he develops the concentration till it radiates very bright light and intently tries to observe the new existence which will arise due to the five present causes. Usually the new existence which he has wished for appears vividly. He discerns the *rebirth consciousness* (*viññāṇa*), its associated *mental factors* (*nāma*), the *kamma-born materiality* (*rūpa*), the six internal bases (*saḷāyatana*), the contact (*phassa*) of the sense-base and the sense-object, and the resultant feeling (*vedanā*) at the moment of rebirth of the new existence.

He then tries to discern whether the present five causes give rise to the future five effects. If they are the true cause-effect relation, he can observe the arising of the five future effects due to the present five causes. He continues to discern the cause-effect relation of the first future existence and the second future existence in a similar way, and so on until he can observe no more future existence.

So now he has successfully discerned the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* causal relations of his past three existences, the present existence and the future existences in terms of five causes and five effects.

"Five causes were there in the past;

Five fruits we find in the present life;

Five causes do we now produce;

Five fruits we reap in future life." (Vs.2.214, Ps.50)

He further discerns the *Paṭiccasamuppāda* causal relations from one existence to another in terms of one cause and one effect as:

1. dependent on *ignorance (avijjā)* arise *kamma-formations (saṅkhāra)*;
2. dependent on *kamma-formations* arises the resultant consciousness (*viññāṇa*);
3. dependent on the resultant consciousness arise associated *mental factors (nāma)* and *kamma-born materiality (rūpa)*;
4. dependent on *mentality-materiality* arise six internal bases (*saḷāyatana*);
5. dependent on six internal bases arises contact (*phassa*) with sense object;
6. dependent on contact arises feeling (*vedanā*);
7. dependent on feeling arises craving (*taṇhā*);
8. dependent on craving arises grasping (*upādāna*);
9. dependent on grasping arises *kamma-formations (kamma-bhava)* and rebirth process (*upapatti-bhava*);
10. dependent on *kamma-formations* (in the present existence) arises rebirth (*jāti*) (in the future existence);
11. dependent on birth arise *decay-and-death (jarā -maraṇa)*, worry (*soka*), *lamentation (parideva)*, *pain (dukkha)*, *grief (domanassa)* and *despair (upayāsa)*. (S.1.243).

After discerning clearly all the causal relations from the third past existence to the last future existence, he can observe the whole series of the arising and perishing of mentality-materiality extending from the most past existence to the last future existence. So he can get rid of all the 16 doubts described earlier.

When the immediate causes as well as the major causes for the arising of mental groups and material groups have been thoroughly investigated, the yogi knows definitely that the five groups of existence

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that constitute each living being are being produced by the respective appropriate causes. So he is able to eliminate the "View of Un-causedness" (*Ahetuka-diṭṭhi*) which believes in the arising of living beings without any cause, and also the 'View of the Wrong Cause of Existence' (*Visama-hetuka-diṭṭhi*) which believes in the creation of living beings by a Creator.

Furthermore, since the yogi has observed the continuous chain of cause and effect relations occurring in accordance with the Law of Dependent Origination, he can discard the 'View of the Inefficacy of Action' (*Akiriya-diṭṭhi*), the 'View of Nihilism' (*Natthika-diṭṭhi*), the 'View of Eternity of the Soul or Ego' (*Sassata-diṭṭhi*) and the 'View of Annihilation of the Soul or Ego' (*Uccheda-diṭṭhi*).

Numerous speculative opinions and theories, which at all times have influenced and still are influencing mankind, and which are not in accord with the causal relations, can all be eliminated.

Now the mind of the yogi is free from all false views. Thus the stage of the 'Purity of View' (*Diṭṭhi Visuddhi*) is further reinforced. Besides since the yogi has now overcome all the 16 doubts (*kaṅkhā*) mentioned above as well as the sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) with respect to the causal relations, he is said to overcome or transcend all doubts. So he has also attained the '**Purity by Transcending Doubt**' (*Kaṅkhā-vitarana Visuddhi*).

• **The Knowledge of Discerning the Causes of Mentality and Materiality Arises**

The Landmark of this stage of purity is *Yathābhūta-ñāṇa* (the knowledge which can discern the ultimate realities correctly) or **Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa** (the knowledge of discerning the causes of mentality and materiality). The meditator also attains this knowledge.

• **Becoming a Junior Stream-winner** (*Cūla-Sotāpanna*)

'A stream-winner' is a noble person who has eliminated two defilements (*diṭṭhi* and *vicikicchā*) completely. He will never be reborn in the woeful abodes and is destined to enter Nibbāna in due course.

Now the meditator, who has attained **Nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa** and **Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa**, has temporarily eliminated *diṭṭhi* and *vicikicchā* as described above. So he resembles a stream-winner but he is not a stream-winner yet. He is called a *cūla-sotāpanna*

meaning a ‘junior stream-winner’. He will not be reborn in the woeful abode in his subsequent life.

• **The Importance of Developing the Two Basic Knowledges for Vipassanā Meditation**

These two knowledges, i.e., *Ñāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa* and *Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*, are very important. They are the basic knowledges for insight-meditation and they constitute the foundation for the arising of ten insight-knowledges in later stages. They are not included in *Vipassanā-ñāṇas* because they do not contemplate the three characteristic marks (*tilakkhaṇa*) of existence.

You will understand how very difficult to develop these two basic knowledges correctly if you understand the above description. Some teachers even say that in bending your hand, the hand which is bending is materiality and the knowledge which knows the bending of the hand is mentality. If you know this, you can differentiate between materiality and mentality, and so you possess the knowledge called ‘*Nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*’. This is not correct. This knowledge is really the knowledge of defining each ultimate materiality and each ultimate mentality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and nearest causes. To know like this, you have to analyze body and mind into 28 types of ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities consisting of all consciousnesses and all mental factors which arise and perish very rapidly in you. Besides, you should be able to discern all these ultimate realities by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations, and nearest causes for their arising. You should know all these, because they constitute the objects of vipassanā meditation. So you can see the great difference.

Also some teachers say that if you know that the hand bends because of the intention to bend the hand, you possess the knowledge called ‘*Paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*’. Again this is not correct. This knowledge really means the knowledge which knows all the causes which give rise to all materialities and all mentalities, including all the causal relations of Dependent Origination, the discourse known as **Paṭiccasamuppāda** which beautifully explains why every living being is born life after life in the long ‘*Samsāra*’ which is ‘*the round of rebirths*’. Only when you know all these causes vividly, can you get rid of all doubts concerning the past, the present and the future as well

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as all wrong views about continuous existences and kamma and its effect.

All sceptical doubts about the teachings of the Buddha are known as ‘*Vicikicchā*’ and all wrong views are included in ‘*diṭṭhi*’. *Vicikicchā* and *diṭṭhi* are two defilements which must be eliminated first in vipassanā meditation.

The two knowledges which we have just discussed eliminate these two defilements temporarily to develop the **Purity of View** (*Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi*) and the **Purity of the Mind from Doubt** (*Kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*). Unless we attain these two Purities, we cannot undertake vipassanā meditation according to *Visuddhi Magga* and *Rathavinīta Sutta*. Consequently we cannot go into vipassanā meditation directly from the beginning of meditation as claimed by some meditation teachers. Remember that only the meditation as taught by the Buddha leads to real Vipassanā and real realization of Nibbāna.

[16] Undertaking the Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Path and Not-Path (*Maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-Visuddhi*)

The criteria of this Purity of Vision is *Sammasana-ñāṇa* and the first part of *Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*.

Sammasana-ñāṇa is the knowledge which can investigate the three characteristic marks of ultimate mentalities and materialities in the five aggregates of grasping.

Udayabbaya-ñāṇa is the knowledge which can clearly discern the three characteristic marks of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities together with their arising and perishing phenomena.

• **Vipassanā Meditation the Buddha’s Way**

Strictly speaking vipassanā meditation, which is reflecting on the three characteristic marks of mentality and materiality in the thirty-one planes of existence, begins at this stage.

To go up to the fifth stage of purification of the mind, one must perform vipassanā meditation. How should one perform vipassanā?

Some teachers say that just meditating on one materiality or one mentality will lead to the realization of Nibbāna. This is impossible; don’t believe it.

Abhidhamma Commentary (1, 271) and *Visuddhi Magga Commentary* (2, 300) comment that:

- (1) meditating on materialities alone will not lead to the Path-wisdom;
- (2) meditating on mentalities alone will not lead to the Path-wisdom;
- (3) meditating on only five internal aggregates will not lead to the Path-wisdom;
- (4) meditating on only five external aggregates will not lead to the Path-wisdom.

How should one meditate to attain Path-wisdom?

According to the instructions in *Visuddhi Magga* (Mahāṣī 4, 282-283), *Paṭisambhidā Paḷi* (51-52), *Samyutta Paḷi* (2,258), *Mūlapaṇṇāsa Commentary* (1, 281), one must meditate on all internal materialities and mentalities, all external materialities and mentalities, all mundane ultimate materialities and mentalities which represent the causal relations of Dependent Origination, pertaining to the past, the present and the future, by reflecting repeatedly as ‘*anicca, anicca*’ (impermanence, impermanence), ‘*dukkha, dukkha*’ (suffering, suffering), and ‘*anatta, anatta*’ (not-self, not-self).

(a) Discerning all Materialities and all Mentalities again for Undertaking Vipassanā Meditation

One must discern all ultimate materialities and all ultimate mentalities vividly internally in oneself and externally in others. One must define each ultimate materiality and each ultimate mentality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and nearest causes for their arising.

(b) Vipassanā Meditation on Materialities

The meditator discerns 18 real materialities (*niphanṇa-rūpas*) in the six-sense doors and in the 42 body-parts (*koṭṭhāsas*) and contemplates the nature of their impermanence, suffering and not-self collectively in each sense-door as well as in each body-part.

He discerns the nature of arising and perishing of materialities with his wisdom and contemplates the nature of impermanence as ‘*anicca, anicca*’, repeatedly both internally and externally.

He discerns the nature of being tortured incessantly by the dissolution of materialities and contemplates the nature of suffering as ‘*dukkha, dukkha*’, repeatedly both internally and externally.

He discerns clearly with his wisdom the absence of a permanent,

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imperishable substance that can be called a ‘self’ or ‘soul’ and contemplates repeatedly the nature of not-self as ‘*anatta, anatta*’, repeatedly.

(c) Vipassanā Meditation on Mentalities

When he can discern the three characteristic marks of materialities quite rapidly and well, he discerns the three characteristic marks of mentalities in the six kinds of cognitive series of consciousnesses in the six sense-doors.

Observing the rapid arising and perishing of each cognitive consciousness and its concomitant mental factors at every consciousness-moment with his wisdom, he contemplates repeatedly ‘*anicca, anicca*’. He reflects in this way on all the consciousnesses and their mental factors in the six kinds of cognitive series both internally and externally.

Similarly he discerns the nature of being tortured incessantly by the rapid dissolution of consciousnesses and associated mental factors and contemplates repeatedly ‘*dukkha, dukkha*’.

Again he discerns with his wisdom the absence of a permanent, imperishable substance that can be called a ‘self’ or ‘soul’ and contemplates repeatedly ‘*anatta, anatta*’.

(d) Vipassanā Meditation on Materialities and Mentalities

Collectively

Then he reflects on the three characteristic marks on materialities and mentalities together pertaining to the six kinds of cognitive series in the six sense-doors.

In the eye-door there are cakkhu-dassaka-kalāpa, kāya-dassaka-kapāla and bhāva-dassaka-kalāpa consisting of 30 ultimate materialities and also cittaja-aṭṭhaka-kalāpa, utuja-aṭṭhaka-kalāpa and āhāraja-aṭṭhaka-kalāpa consisting of 24 ultimate materialities, making up 54 ultimate materialities in all.

Also in the eye-door cognitive series of consciousness, the first consciousness ‘*pañcadvārāvajjana*’ consists of consciousness and ten mental factors – viz., contact, feeling, perception, volition, one-pointedness, life-faculty, attention, initial application, sustained application and determination, making up 11 ultimate mentalities.

The meditator focuses his attention on each consciousness, its con-

comitants, the 54 materialities associated with the physical base and the sense object, and contemplates repeatedly ‘*anicca, anicca*’ on the nature of arising and perishing, ‘*dukkha, dukkha*’ on the nature of being tortured incessantly, and ‘*anatta, anatta*’ on the nature of not-self and no soul.

(e) Addhāpaccupanna Vipassanā Meditation

(1) He contemplates the impermanent characteristic of materiality in the past, in the present and in the future from birth to death at least once. He repeats contemplating the painful characteristic and the not-self characteristic. He continues reflecting on three characteristics internally and externally.

(2) He contemplates each of the three characteristics of mentality from birth to death in the same way. He should cover all the six types of cognitive series of consciousness.

(3) Then he should reflect on mentality and materiality in the same way both internally and externally.

(f) Vipassanā Meditation in Three Periods

In all the past existences, the present existence, and the future existences in which he has discerned the causal relations of Dependent Origination, from birth to death, he contemplates in turn the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self on materiality alone, on mentality alone, and on mentality-materiality together.

(g) Vipassanā Meditation on Gross and Subtle, Inferior and Superior Materiality and Mentality

If he can skilfully contemplate the three characteristics in turn, both internally and externally, on materiality alone, on mentality alone, on mentality-materiality together, pertaining to the past, to the present and to the future, those materialities and mentalities will also include gross and subtle, inferior and superior, far and near materialities and mentalities.

(h) Vipassanā Meditation on Present Five Aggregates

He discerns the real materialities in the six sense-doors and in the 42 body parts of the present existence and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn. He also focuses his attention on the arising and perishing of external real materialities and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn. This is the contemplation of the three char-

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acteristic marks on the present materiality-aggregate.

Then he discerns the feeling (mental factor) in each consciousness of the six-door cognitive series and, focusing on its arising and perishing, he contemplates its characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn. He contemplates both internally and externally. This is the vipassanā meditation on the present feeling aggregate.

He then contemplates on the three characteristics in turn on the perception aggregate, on the aggregate of mental formations, and on the consciousness aggregate in turn in the same way.

(i) Vipassanā Meditation on Past-Present-Future five Aggregates

He discerns the real materialities in the six sense doors and in the 42 body parts of the past existences, the present existence and the future existences successively and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn, both internally and externally.

He also discerns the feeling aggregate, the perception aggregate, the aggregate of mental formations and the consciousness aggregate in turn in the past existences, in the present existence, in the future existences successively, and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn, both internally and externally.

(j) Vipassanā Meditation in 40 Ways

In order to strengthen the comprehension of impermanence, suffering, and not-self, the meditator contemplates the five aggregates in turn as impermanence, as pain, as a disease, a boil, a dart, a calamity, as affliction, as alien, as disintegrating, as a plague, a disaster, a terror, a menace, as fickle, perishable, unenduring, as no protection, no shelter, no refuge, as empty, vain, void, not-self, as danger, as subject to change, as having no core, as the root of calamity, as murderous, as subject to cankers, as Māra's bait, as subject to birth, subject to ageing, subject to illness, subject to death, subject to sorrow, subject to lamentation, subject to despair, subject to defilement.

(Visuddhi A. 2, 247-248)

(k) Vipassanā Meditation on the Causes and Effects of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)

Next he discerns the causes and the effects of Dependent Origination.

nation in the series of existence in the past, in the present and in the future, and focusing on their incessant arising and perishing, he repeatedly reflects on their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn. For example:

Because *avijjā* arises, *saṅkhāra* arises.

Avijjā arises and perishes; so it is *anicca* (*dukkha*, *anatta*).

Saṅkhāra arises and perishes; so it is *anicca* (*dukkha*, *anatta*).

(1) Vipassanā Meditation on Material Septad and Immaterial Septad (*Visuddhi Magga*, 2, 253-264)

Next he examines materialities in seven different conditions and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn and in detail.

Similarly he examines mentalities in seven different conditions and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn and in detail.

③ Sammasana-ñāṇa Reaches the Highest Level

As the meditator undertakes vipassanā meditation in many ways contemplating the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities very skillfully as described above, the arising and perishing natures of ultimate realities appear very clearly and distinctly in his wisdom.

So his *knowledge of defining ultimate mentality and materiality* (**sammasana-ñāṇa**) as impermanence, suffering and not-self reaches the highest level.

④ Developing Udayabbaya-ñāṇa

Udayabbaya-ñāṇa is the knowledge which can clearly discern ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities at their genetic instant and perishing instant together with their characteristic marks of impermanence, suffering and not-self.

In developing *Sammasana-ñāṇa* the meditator has already contemplated the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in various ways in ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities as well as in the causes and effects of Dependent Origination. Now he must undertake ‘Momentary Present Vipassanā Meditation’.

(a) Momentary-Present Vipassanā Meditation

‘Momentary-Present’ means the arising moment, the existing moment, the perishing moment of each consciousness respectively.

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Penetratively discerning ultimate materialities-mentalities at their sub-moments of arising, existing and perishing, the meditator contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn.

When he can do momentary-present vipassanā meditation in the present existence skilfully, he repeats the meditation in the past existences and the future existences contemplating on three characteristics in turn (1) in materialities alone, (2) in mentalities alone, (3) in materialities-mentalities together in each of the above existences. Then he gives priority to the characteristic that he can contemplate best, and reflects on it repeatedly.

When the arising and perishing of materialities-mentalities appear very rapidly in his wisdom, he performs the broad method of vipassanā meditation in connection with Udayabbaya-ñāṇa.

(b) The Broad Method of Vipassanā Meditation in

Connection with Udayabbaya-ñāṇa

Then the meditator discerns the cause-effect relations of Dependent Origination in his past existences, present existence and future existences, and performs the vipassanā meditation by contemplating the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self in turn on –

- (1) The arising mentalities-materialities (*samudaya-dhammānupassī*)
- (2) The perishing mentalities-materialities (*Vaya-dhammānupassī*)
- (3) The arising and perishing mentalities-materialities
(*samudaya-vayadhammānupassī*)^{35,36,37}

When he can do vipassanā-meditation very skilfully, he can clearly discern the mentalities-materialities together with causes – effects at the arising moment, at the existing moment and at the perishing moment.

• The Appearance of Vipassanā Impurities (*Upakkilesās*)

Now the four Noble Truths, the principles of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* and three characteristic marks become distinct in his wisdom. *Taruṇavipassanā* and *Taruṇavipassanā-ñāṇa* arise in him. The landmark of this stage is the appearance of ‘ten impurities of vipassanā (*upakkilesās*):

- (1) *Obhāsa* – very bright body rays,
- (2) *Ñāṇa* – very pure insight wisdom,
- (3) *Pīti* – very intense joy,
- (4) *Passaddhi* - tranquillity of consciousness and mental factors,
- (5) *Sūkhā* – mental happiness,
- (6) *Adhimokkha* - intense faith and confidence,
- (7) *Paggaha* – intense effort,
- (8) *Upaṭṭhāna* – unshakeable mindfulness,
- (9) *Upekkhā* – equanimity,
- (10) *Nikanti* – mild attachment (craving).

The first nine impurities are not really defilements. By paying attention to them, “*Etam mama, eso ha masami, eso me attā*” = “These things are mine, these things are I, these things are my ‘self’—such thoughts together with craving (*taṇhā*), pride (*māna*), and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) arise in the mind. These three defilements are the real defilements of vipassanā.

Those meditators without the knowledge of the teachings of the Buddha will wrongly think that the body rays, intense joy, tranquillity, happiness, etc., are produced by the Path-consciousness and Fruition-consciousness and wrongly believe that they attain Nibbāna. They are on the wrong Path.

Those who understand that appreciation of and attachment to body-rays, intense joy, etc., are not the right Path to the attainment of Nibbāna and that only performing vipassanā meditation without any craving and attachment to those body-rays is the right Path to Nibbāna. The knowledge which clearly understands the right Path and the wrong Path correctly in this way is called “*the Purification by knowledge and vision of the Path and the not-Path*” (*Maggā-magga-ñāṇadassana Visuddhi*).

[17] Undertaking the Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way

The meditator again undertakes vipassanā meditation contemplating the three characteristics in turn in (1) only materialities, (2) only mentalities, (3) materialities and mentalities together, (4) five aggregates (5) twelve bases, (6) eighteen elements, covering all mentalities-materialities which arise in the six sense-doors.

(a) Undertaking Fourfold Anupassanā Meditation

Next he performs the fourfold Anupassanā meditation. He again defines the three characteristics in turn in all materialities-mentalities mentioned above, giving priority to materialities and proceeding to mentalities. This is called *Kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*.

Next he defines the three characteristics in turn in all mentalities-materialities as above giving priority to feeling. This is called *Vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*. For example:

Sense base arises and perishes – *anicca (dukkha, anatta)*

Sense object arises and perishes – *anicca (dukkha, anatta)*

Feeling arises and perishes – *anicca (dukkha, anatta)*

He repeats the *Anupassanā* meditation as above, giving priority to consciousness. It is called *Cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*.

Again he repeats the *Anupassanā* meditation as above, giving priority to contact, volition, perception, etc. It is called *Dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*.

(b) Vipassanā Meditation on Four Postures and Reflection with Wisdom (*Iriyāpatha-sampajañña*)

‘*Iriyāpatha*’ means four postures of standing, sitting, going and lying. ‘*Sampajañña*’ means the wisdom of reflection.

The meditator discerns all mentalities-materialities or five aggregates while he is in any posture – standing, sitting, going, lying, bending, stretching, etc. In any bodily movement he must be aware of the intention, the movement, the benefit of the movement with wisdom. He must also discern all mentalities-materialities in the six sense doors and contemplate on their three characteristics.

He performs vipassanā meditation on mentalities-materialities in each posture by dividing them:

- (1) as two groups of mentalities and materialities,
- (2) as five aggregates,
- (3) as twelve bases,
- (4) as 18 elements,
- (5) as 12 factors of Paṭiccasamuppāda.

He also occasionally reflects on the disgusting nature (*asubha*) of mentalities-materialities. He strives strenuously until the “Knowledge of comprehending mentality-materiality at the genetic instant as well as at the perishing instant together with the three characteristic marks of impermanence, suffering and not-self”

(*Udayabbaya-nāṇa*) is fully developed.

(c) Meditation focused on the Dissolution of

Mentalities-Materialities (*Baṅgānupassanā*)

As he repeatedly and strenuously contemplates the three characteristic marks of mentalities and materialities in the four postures, his preceeding meditation knowledge connects with his subsequent meditation knowledge. So his insight knowledge (*vipassanā-nāṇa*) becomes very strong, very keen, sharp and pure. He pays no attention to the arising of mentalities-materialities, but focuses his attention on their dissolution. This is the meditation called '*Baṅgānupassanā*'.

“*Khaya vaya bheda nirodheyeva satisantiṭṭhati*”. (Vs. 2. 294)

“*With the powerful support of the preceeding insight knowledge, the mindfulness associated with the subsequent insight knowledge becomes well established on the fading away, dissolution and cessation of formations.*”

(1) *Aniccaṃ khayaṭṭhena* – observing the nature of fading away, breaking up, dissolving and disappearing of formations with direct knowledge, he reflects '*anicca, anicca*' repeatedly.

(2) *Dukkhaṃ bhayaṭṭhena* – observing the frightful nature of fading away, breaking up, dissolving and disappearing of formations with direct knowledge, he reflects '*dukkha, dukkha*' repeatedly.

(3) *Anatta asāraṇaṭṭhena* – observing the coreless, selfless and soulless nature of formations with direct knowledge, he reflects '*anatta, anatta*' repeatedly.

(4) He also reflects on the repulsive nature of formations intermittently.

When the meditator developed *Nāmarūpa-pariccheda-nāṇa* and the Purification of View, he has broken the compactness of mentality-materiality by penetrating into the ultimate realities in mental groups and material groups. Now material groups (*rūpa-kalāpas*) and mental groups (minds) are no longer distinct.

Since his insight knowledge is very keen and very sharp, the ultimate realities (*paramattha dhammas*) of formations (mentalities-materialities) become very quickly distinct in his knowledge. As they appear and dissolve so quickly that he could no longer observe their arising and existing; he observes only their dissolution.

This 'knowledge of contemplation of dissolution' is called *Baṅga-nāṇa*.

(d) Undertaking Ñāta-Ñāṇa Vipassanā

‘Ñāta’ means the mentalities-materialities which exist internally and externally in three periods and which have to be observed by insight wisdom (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*).

‘Ñāṇa’ means the knowledge which is undertaking vipassanā meditation on mentalities-materialities known as ‘Ñāta’. This knowledge associates with the mind-door javana consciousnesses.

According to Visuddhi Magga (Vs. 2.278) the meditator has to do vipassanā meditation on both *Ñāta* and *Ñāṇa*. For example:

- (1) Discern materiality, materiality perishes - *anicca*;
The meditating knowledge also perishes - *anicca*;
- (2) Discern mentality, mentality perishes - *anicca*;
The meditating knowledge also perishes - *anicca*.

Also contemplate as *dukkha*, *anatta*. He should contemplate the characteristics in turn (1) internally for some time, (2) externally for some time, (3) on materialities for some time, (4) on mentalities for some time, (5) on causes for some time, (6) on effects for some time, (7) on past formations for some time, (8) on present formations for some time, (9) on future formations for some time. He can give priority to the dhamma which he can meditate better.

According to *Mahāṭikā* (Vs. Ti. 2. 441) it is desirable to do vipassanā meditation in several ways to make *bhaṅgañāṇa* perfect.

(e) Vipassanā Meditation on the Dissolution of Paṭīccasamuppāda

He discerns clearly only the dissolution of the materialities-mentalities, the causes and effects of Paṭīccasamuppāda pertaining to the past, the present and the future according to the First Method, and contemplates the three characteristics in turn internally as well as externally.

Avijja dissolves – *anicca*; the meditating knowledge dissolves – *anicca*.
Saṅkhāra dissolves – *anicca*; the meditating knowledge dissolves – *anicca*.

He should keep on meditating till the Path-wisdom arises.

⑤ The Knowledge of Discerning the rapid and incessant dissolution of Mentality-Materiality (*Bhaṅgañāṇa*) arises.

⑥ The Arising of Bhayañāṇa

As he keeps on discerning continuously the dissolution of materialities, mentalities, formations, causes, effects in the past, in the present and in the future, internally and externally, he realizes very vividly

the painful nature of being tortured incessantly and repeatedly by the continuous dissolution of formations. The painful nature becomes so distinct that all living abodes, all the 31 planes of existence, including Brahma realms which are regarded to be very peaceful, appear as great pain, great danger and great terror.

When he sees how past formations have dissolved, the present ones are dissolving, and those to be generated in the future will dissolve in the same way, the **‘Knowledge of Appearance as Terror’** (*Bhayañāṇa*) arises in him.

⑦ The Arising of *Ādīnava-ñāṇa*

Also the materialities-mentalities, causes and effects, all formations in three periods, all internal formations and external ones, appear in his wisdom distinctly as impermanence, suffering, not-self, as changing and perishing phenomena. So all kinds of existence and all living abodes no longer appear as safe asylum, safe shelter and safe refuge.

As he repeats, develops and cultivates the knowledge of appearance as terror, he finds no place to go. The three kinds of becoming appear like charcoal pits full of glowing coal, the four primary elements like hideous venomous snakes, the five aggregates like murderers with raised weapons, the six internal bases like an empty village, the six external bases like village-raiding robbers, the seven stations of consciousness and the nine abodes of beings as though burning, blazing and glowing with eleven fires. All formations appear as a huge mass of danger and faults, devoid of satisfaction or substance, like a tumour, a disease, a dart, a calamity, an affliction. (Vs. 2. 282-284).

Thus by the power of repeated contemplation of the nature of dissolution of formations (*baṅgānupassanā*), all formations appear as great dreadful danger, and **‘the Knowledge of Realization of Fault and Unsatisfactoriness in Formations’** arises in the meditator.

⑧ The Arising of *Nibbidā-ñāṇa*

When he sees all formations as great dreadful danger full of faults and unsatisfactoriness, he becomes dispassionate, dissatisfied, disenchanted, disgusted and bored with all formations belonging to any kind of becoming, destiny, station or abode. So **‘the Knowledge of Feeling bored and disgusted with all formations’** (*Nibbidā-ñāṇa*) also arises in him. (Vs. 2. 287-288)

⑨ **The Arising of Muñcitukamyatā-ñāṇa**

When he feels bored and disgusted with all formations which are dissolving incessantly, he is dissatisfied with, takes no delight in, is no longer attached to any single formations in any kind of becoming, generation, destiny, station or abode. He desires to be delivered from the whole field of formations and to escape from it.

Just as a fish in a net, a frog in a snake's jaws, a jungle fowl shut in a cage, a deer fallen into the clutches of a strong snare, a man encircled by enemies want to be delivered and to escape from their respective danger, so too the meditator wants to be delivered from the whole field of formations and to escape from it. So **'the Knowledge of Desire for Deliverance'** (*Muñcitukamyatā-ñāṇa*) also arises in him (Vs. 2. 288-289).

⑩ **The Arising of Paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa**

The meditator, who desires to be delivered from all formations in the thirty-one planes of existence, pertaining to three periods, again discerns those same formations and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self for achieving deliverance from them.

He sees all formations as impermanence, because they (1) cannot go beyond dissolution, (2) exist temporarily, (3) are limited by arising and perishing, (4) unenduring, (5) subject to change, (6) subject to death, etc.

He sees them as suffering because they are (1) torturing incessantly, (2) hard to bear, (3) the basis of pain, (4) a disease, (5) a tumour, (6) a dart, (7) a calamity, (8) an affliction (9) a torture, (10) a terror, (11) no shelter, (12) no refuge, (13) a danger, (14) subject to birth, (15) subject to ageing, (16) subject to illness, (17) subject to sorrow, (18) subject to lamentation, (19) subject to despair, and so on.

He sees all formations as not-self, because they are (1) alien, (2) soulless, (3) vain, (4) void, (5) ownerless, (6) not subject to control and so on.

He also sees them as repulsive, because they are (1) objectionable, (2) stinking, (3) disgusting, (4) unaffected by disguise, (5) hideous, (6) loathsome, and so on.

As he strives on in this way, **'the Knowledge of Exertion for Deliverance'** (*Paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*) arises in him.

⑪ The Arising of the Knowledge of Equanimity

He discerns repeatedly all formations, causes and effects, in the thirty-one planes of existence in three periods and contemplates their characteristics of impermanence, suffering, not-self and foulness in turn, sometimes internally, sometimes externally, the nature of dissolution of formations becomes very rapid and very distinct. He continues defining the three characteristics in turn in the nature of dissolution.

His meditating mind gradually abandons both terror and delight on formations and becomes equally indifferent and neutral. It becomes calmly established on the dissolution of formations.

When the meditating mind is calmly established on the dissolution of formations, the meditator will not hear any external sound. The functions of the five-door cognitive series stop, and only the mind-door cognitive series keep arising. Then the vipassanā meditation becomes specially strong. The meditator can keep on discerning the formations which he can discern better, giving priority to the characteristic which he can reflect better.

At this stage *faith* (*saddhā*) and *wisdom* (*paññā*), *effort* (*vīriya*) and *concentration* (*samādhi*) must be specially balanced by *mindfulness* (*sati*). All the five *faculties* (*indriyas*) must be balanced to progress to enlightenment.

The meditator, who clearly sees the faults of formations and is undertaking vipassanā by discerning the dissolution of formations with keen intention to emancipation from all formations, finds nothing which can be cherished as ‘mine, I, myself’ (Vs. 2. 294).

Abandoning the two extremes of ‘terror’ (*bhaya*) and *delight* (*nandī*) towards formations, he becomes indifferent and neutral towards them. He neither takes them as ‘I’ nor ‘mine’ nor ‘myself’; he is like a man who has divorced his unfaithful wife. The knowledge that takes him to this stage of equanimity is ‘**the Knowledge of Equanimity towards Formations**’ (*Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*).

⑫ From Conformity-Knowledge to Path-wisdom

As he repeats, develops and cultivates that equanimity towards formations, his faith becomes more resolute, his energy better exerted, his mindfulness better established, his mind better concentrated, while his equanimity grows more refined.

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Then when his meditating wisdom emerges from the dissolution of formations called ‘*pavatta*’ and sees the unformed and undissolved nature of Nibbāna called ‘*apavatta*’, the following Path Absorption cognitive series (*Magga Appanā Vithis*) arises.

(*Mandapaññā*)

- Na- Da - Ma - Pa - U- Nu- Go- Magga - Phala - Phala - Bh -

(*Tikkhapaññā*)

- Na- Da - Ma - U- Nu- Go-Magga - Phala - Phala - Phala - Bh -

When the object of formations as impermanence or suffering or not-self appears at the mind-door, life-continuum vibrates twice as *bhavaṅga-calana* (Na), *bhavaṅgu-paccheda* (Da) and is cut off. After that *manodvārāvajjana*(Ma) directs the mental stream towards the object, apprehends the object and decides whether it is good or bad.

Then one of the 4 sense-sphere moral consciousnesses associated with knowledge (*ñāṇa-sampayutta mahākusala citta*) arises four times, functioning as preparation (Pa), proximity (U), conformity (Nu) and change-of-lineage (Go),

‘Preparation’(*parikamma*) prepares for the arising of the Path-consciousness.

‘Proximity’ (*upacāra*) functions as access to the Path.

‘Conformity’ (*anuloma*) conforms to the functions of truth both in the nine preceding insight knowledges and in the 37 requisite factors of enlightenment (*Bodhipakkhiya*) which follow.

The knowledge associated with preparation, proximity and conformity is the highest insight knowledge known as the ‘**knowledge of conformity**’(*anuloma-ñāṇa*).

Gotrabhu does not take formations as its object; it takes Nibbāna as its object and points out Nibbāna so that the Path-consciousness can arise after it, also taking Nibbāna as its object. It is like the sailor’s crow pointing out the land so that the ship can sail on towards the land.

Gotrabhu is called change-of-lineage because it changes the lineage of the meditator from a worldling to a noble person. Up to *gotrabhu* consciousness, the meditator is still a worldling (one who is bound by all ten fetters). But as soon as the path-consciousness arises, he becomes a noble person. The knowledge associated with *gotrabhu* is called ‘*Gotrabhu-ñāṇa*.’

The knowledge associated with the Path-consciousness is called ‘*Path-wisdom*’ (*Magga-ñāṇa*).

The knowledge associated with Fruition-consciousnesses is called ‘*Fruition-wisdom*’ (*Phala-ñāṇa*).

The **path-consciousness** always arises just once performing four functions – viz., (1) comprehension of the truth of suffering, (2) eradication of craving which is the cause of suffering, (3) realization of Nibbāna, (4) full development of the eight constituents of the Path.

Fruit-consciousnesses arises soon after the Path-consciousness without any lapse in time (*akāliko*) two or three times, taking Nibbāna as its object. As soon as Fruition-consciousness arises, the meditator becomes a **stream-winner** (*sotapanna*) (Vs. 2.315). He can enjoy the unique bliss of Nibbāna as much as he likes and is fully guaranteed never to be reborn in woeful abodes.

After the Path-absorption cognitive series and a few bhavaṅga cittas (life-continuum) have passed by, five **Reviewing cognitive series** (*Paccavekkhaṇa-vīhis*) normally arise. By these cognitive series the javana cittas (1) review the Path, (2) review the Fruit, (3) review Nibbāna, (4) review the defilements (*diṭṭhi* and *vicikicchā*) which have been annihilated, and (5) the defilements still remaining to be annihilated. The knowledge associated with these javana cittas is called ‘**Reviewing wisdom**’ (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*).

[18] Undertaking the Purification by Knowledge and Vision

Starting from the training of morality to the time when conformity knowledge arises, the first six stages of purification of the mind, i.e. from *Sīla-visuddhi* to *Paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*, are completed. On attaining the first Path-consciousness, the seventh stage of purification called *Ñāṇadassana-visuddhi* is reached.

When the stream-winner continues performing vipassanā meditation and attains the three higher Path-wisdoms and Fruition-wisdoms, all the seven stages of Purification (*Visuddhi*) are completed and the mind becomes totally pure. The meditator then becomes an **Arahant**, a perfect person.

(a) Sotāpatti-magga and Stream-winner

The First path-wisdom (*Sotāpatti Magga-ñāṇa*) totally eliminates two defilements (*diṭṭhi*, *vicikicchā*) and three fetters (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*,

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vicikicchā, sīlabbataparāmāsa). It also eliminates the coarse aspects of other defilements so that a stream-winner will not commit any evil action. He will never be reborn in woeful abodes.

A stream-winner can be reborn in the sense-sphere up to seven existences. He can be further reborn in brahma realms, but he is destined to become an Arahant in due course.

As a Stream-winner will never be reborn in woeful abodes, enjoying Nibbāna bliss as much as he likes, and he is destined to become an Arahant in due course, it is better to be a stream-winner rather than to be a Universal Monarch or a Brahmā.

(b) Sakadāgāmi-magga and Once-returner

When the stream-winner undertakes vipassanā meditation and attains *Sakadāgāmi-magga and Phala*, he becomes a Once-returner as he will be reborn in the sense-sphere only once. The second Path-wisdom does not eradicate any defilement, but it reduces the strength of the remaining defilements. He can be further reborn in Brahma realms and will be an Arahant in due course.

(c) Anāgāmi-magga and Non-returner

When the once-returner undertakes vipassanā meditation and attains Anāgāmi-magga and phala, he becomes a **Non-returner** as he will not be reborn in the sense-sphere. The third Path-wisdom further eradicates the defilement ‘anger’ (*dosa*) and two fetters (*kāmarāga, paṭigha*). As anger is totally eliminated, he will never be angry, upset, sad or depressed. He does not enjoy sensual pleasure any more. He will be reborn in a Brahma realm after death. He will become an Arahant in due course.

(d) Arahatta-Magga and Arahant

If a non-returner undertakes vipassanā meditation and attains Arahatta-magga and phala, he will become an **Arahant** in this very life. The Arahatta path-wisdom totally eliminates all remaining defilements and fetters in him. His mind is totally free from all defilements which are the causes of suffering. So he will never experience mental pain any more. As he is bearing his last body, he will lay down this heavy burden at death. He is rightly liberated with the highest wisdom and worthy of the highest offerings of the world with its deities (Vs. 2.318). He fully enjoys the unique bliss and eternal peace of Nibbāna. He will pass over to Nibbāna after death.

[19] The Teachings of the Buddha are very Deep, very Profound and most Beneficial

The Omniscient Buddha was really the Greatest Teacher of men and gods. By his outstanding effort and wisdom, he discovered the most profound **Noble Eightfold Path**, consisting of the Noble Three-fold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, which can collectively and completely eradicate all defilements from the mind by developing the highest Fourfold Path-wisdom, thereby delivering the beings from the endless rounds of rebirths and suffering and establishing them at the highest level of attainment in life, called **Arahatship**. The Buddha taught selflessly with infinite compassion his very profound and very deep teachings for purifying and developing the mind to humans, devas and Brahmās for the highest attainment in life and enjoyment of eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever. He taught day and night, with an open mind and open hand, keeping nothing in secret, just for the greatest benefits and well-being of all living beings.

The Buddha was the forerunner of scientists in teaching both in principles and practices what he has clearly discerned, experienced and understood by himself. He taught ultimate realities, natural truths and natural laws, which will remain true for ever. There are no assumptions, no theories and no hypothesis in his teachings. He used no instruments in undertaking practices to verify his teachings, because there are no instruments which can detect the mind and ultimate realities. He used the most powerful instrument, that is the mind itself, for clearly discerning the mind and ultimate realities with direct wisdom.

The Buddha also attained unheard-of great success in enlightening many millions of humans, devas and Brahmās to become Noble Persons (*Ariyās*), including millions of Arahants. With his great foresight he has established the Saṅgha Community, comprising Noble Bhikkhus and Worldling Bhikkhus, who constantly learn, practise, and teach the Dhamma to the people both in principles and in practices.

There are many Meditation Centres world-wide, teaching Tranquility Meditation and Vipassanā Meditation. **Recently there appeared in the world Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres, where meditation is taught strictly in accordance with**

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the Teachings of the Buddha. In these Centres, many meditators can develop four rūpāvacara jhānas in the Meditation of Mindfulness of Breathing, can discern ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities clearly and define them correctly by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and nearest causes for their arising; they can also discern the causal relations of Dependent Origination, and undertake Vipassanā Meditation in detail as taught by the Buddha; so they can become enlightened as Noble Persons nowadays.

About sixty Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Centres have now come into existence world wide with the main centre being situated in Maw-La-Myine City in Lower Myanmar.

The Chief Teacher, Pa-auk Tawya Sayadaw himself was teaching in the Centre in Pyin-Oo-Lwin Township in Upper Myanmar. There are Branch Centres in Sarilanka, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Taiwan, and U.S.A. near San Francisco City. All meditators are welcome to meditate in these Centres.

[20] **Is Buddhism a Religion or Not?**

Buddhism is recognized as a **Great Religion** world-wide. It is included among the **Four Great World Religions**, namely, Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam.

Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Dictionary defines religion as: (1) recognition of and belief in superhuman power or powers in which obedience, reverence and worship are due; (2) any system of faith in and worship of a Supreme Being or a god or gods.

Oxford Dictionary defines religion as (1) belief in the existence of a supernatural ruling power, the creator, and controller of the universe, who has given to man a spiritual nature which continues to exist after the death of the body; (2) one of the various systems of faith and worship based on such belief: the great religions of the world, e.g., Buddhism, Christianity, Islam.

According to the above definitions, **Buddhism** is truly a great

world religion as it is a system of faith in and worship of three most precious and noblest objects of veneration, called **‘Triple Gem’** (*Tiratana*), **consisting of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha.**

• **Why is the Triple Gem most Precious and Noblest?**

The nine supreme glorious attributes of the Buddha, described in Chapter (10), clearly show that **the Buddha is most exalted, noblest and wisest among all humans, devas and Brahmās**, because he is incomparable in morality (*sila*), in mental concentration (*samādhi*), in wisdom (*paññā*), and his mind is perfectly pure without a trace of defilements (*greed, anger, ignorance*) which are the root-causes of all suffering and all evil actions.

Thus he will never develop immoral minds, will never perform evil actions, and will always live nobly, enjoying the supreme bliss of Nibbānā, or teaching his excellent Dhamma to humans, devas and Brahmās for their great welfare, or radiating compassion and loving-kindness to all living beings to be free from suffering and to be happy and well always.

Moreover, the great noble virtue, great merit and many-billions of very noble karmas that he has accumulated in his uncountable past existences by steadfastly fulfilling ten noble perfections, five great sacrifices and three noble practices during a very long period of four *asaṅkheyyas* (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles are so incomparably great that as soon as he could develop the highest Arahatta-Path-Wisdom and its Fruition-Wisdom, **he became Perfectly Self-enlightened *Sammāsambuddha*, called Buddha in brief, endowed with Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbpañña-nāṇa*), and many incomparable Supernormal Knowledges, Supernormal Powers and Special Attributes. So he became incomparable in nobility, power, wisdom and worthy of veneration and worship by humans, devas and Brahmās.**

The Six Supreme attributes of the Dhamma, described in Chapter (11), and the nine supreme attributes of the Saṅgha, described in Chapter (12) also show that the Excellent Teachings of the Buddha called the Dhamma and the Saṅgha

Order, headed by the Buddha himself, are also the noblest, and they are also most precious, because they are very rare as they appear only when the Buddha appears and they can give rise to incomparably great merit.

• **The Buddha's Omniscient Wisdom Knows Everything**

The Buddha's Omniscient Wisdom really knows everything in detail that should be known. **The most important thing we should know in life is about our minds.** The mind controls our thoughts, our speeches and our actions, and thus it controls the whole world.

The Buddha said: "*The mind leads the world. It attracts everything to follow it. Everything always has to follow the wish of one thing which is the mind.*" (Samyutta Nikāya, Citta Sutta)

The mind is so subtle and so fine that it cannot be detected by any scientific instruments. So the mind is unknown to scientists, psychologists and philosophers.

The Buddha's supernormal knowledge of Divine Power of Sight or Divine Eye was so powerful that the Buddha could see one hundred thousand crores of world-systems together with all living beings living on them. He could also see penetratively the ultimate basic components of minds and bodies, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly.

The Buddha could also discern that the mind is made up of *consciousness (citta)* and *mental factors (cetasikas)*, which are called '*ultimate mentalities*' or just '*mentalities*' (*nāmas*), and the body is made up of *material groups (rūpa kalāpas)*, which comprise 8, 9, 10 or more '*ultimate materialities*' or just '*materialities*' (*rūpas*).

The Buddha discovered that altogether there are one type of consciousness, 52 types of mental factors and 28 types of ultimate materialities. These ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities are collectively called '*ultimate realities*' (*paramatthas*), which are the ultimate indivisible basic things that really exist in the universe. They are involved in psychophysical processes and psychophysical phenomena.

The Buddha could also define each type of consciousness,

each type of mental factor and each type of ultimate materiality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising. This is the most difficult task to do, because they are more subtle and more delicate than the mind and they are arising and perishing extremely rapidly. It is stated in Abhidhamma Commentary that the minds can arise and perish one after another at the rate of more than one trillion minds per snap of the fingers or per wink, and the life-span of materiality is 17 times the life-span of the mind.

Although the Buddha could see all living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems in terms of mentalities and materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly, he could not see any supernatural ruling power, the creator and controller of the universe, and any permanent thing that can be called ‘self’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘jīva’, ‘atta’, etc.

As all mentalities and materialities are arising and perishing extremely rapidly, the Buddha said that they have the common characteristics of *impermanence (anicca)*, *suffering (dukkha)* and *not-self (anatta)*.

As all living beings are composed of mentalities and materialities, which can be classified as five aggregates of clinging (p.194), namely, the material aggregate, the feeling aggregate, the perception-aggregate, the aggregate of mental formations, and the consciousness-aggregate, we can also note that all existences and the five aggregates of clinging also have the characteristics of ‘*impermanence, suffering and not-self*’.

Thus the Buddha stated: “*In brief, the five aggregates of clinging are the Noble Truth of Suffering.*”

‘**The Ultimate Realities**’, ‘**Ultimate Materialities**’ and ‘**Ultimate Mentalities**’ are described in Chapters (13) (14) (15) on pages 315-331 in this book for easy reference.

Out of 52 types of mental factors, 13 are neutral, 14 are immoral and unwholesome, and 25 are beautiful and wholesome. The 14 immoral mental factors are our bad qualities and internal enemies, and they represent the only and real evil forces in the whole

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world. Ten of them are called **‘defilements’** (*kilesās*), which defile, debase and burn the mind; they are the causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world. **Their three leaders, namely, greed (*lobha* or *taṇhā*), anger (*dosa*) and ignorance (*moha* or *avijjā*), are immoral roots; they give rise to immoral minds to perform evil actions and they influence the mind to perform evil actions.**

In performing an evil action like killing a chicken or stealing other’s property, immoral minds arise and perish by many billions, depositing many billion **immoral kammas** in the mental stream. These immoral kammas can start bearing evil effects from the present existence and can condition the persons, who perform the evil actions, to be born in woeful abodes for many existences.

Among the beautiful mental factors, there are also three moral roots, which are direct opposites of immoral roots.

Alobha = greedlessness, non-craving, non-attachment.

Adosa = angerlessness, tolerance, loving-kindness.

Amoha (*paññā*) = wisdom or knowledge.

Moral roots give rise to moral minds to perform moral actions. They can be developed by alms-giving, observing moral precepts and meditation respectively. When developed, they can oppose immoral roots not to arise in the mind.

Thus when we perform a moral action or a meritorious deed like giving alms to a temple, moral minds arise and perish by many billions, depositing many billion moral kammas in our mental streams. These moral kammas can start bearing good effects from the present existence and can condition us to be reborn in blissful realms, that is, human realm and celestial realms, for many existences. The Law of Kammas is described in Chapter (18).

Thus it is very beneficial to do meritorious deeds, and it should be very dreadful to do evil actions, because the evil consequences are very terrible. Worldlings, whose minds are blinded by *ignorance* (*moha*) and other defilements, do not know the teachings of the Buddha, kamma and its results, and what is

good and what is bad; so they perform many immoral actions, enjoy sensual pleasure as much as possible, and neglect to do meritorious deeds.

Worldlings don't know that sensual pleasure is transient and fleeting. Soon after it arises, it disappears, leaving behind craving and hankering for more pleasure. It is temporary gratification of the desire of *greed (lobha)*. As greed never gives up its intrinsic nature of craving, the more it gets, the more it craves for. So the desires of greed can never be satisfied, and ungratified desires means suffering. **The Buddha designated sensual pleasure as 'suffering due to change of conditions' (*viparināma-dukkha*).**

• **Most Worldlings are born in Woeful Abodes after Death**

Also worldlings do not know that they are enjoying sensual pleasure with immoral minds, that is, greed-rooted consciousnesses, which will arise by many billions every second, depositing billions of bad karmas in their mental streams. As they neglect to do meritorious deeds, they acquire no good karmas. So they will be reborn in woeful abodes after death again and again.

When the Buddha saw many living beings in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems with his divine eye, he also saw the living beings who were dying and where they were reborn after death. Most of them were born in four woeful abodes.

Placing a little amount of earth on his thumb-nail, the Buddha said: *"O bhikkhus, when living beings die, if the number of those, who are reborn in human realm and celestial realms, amounts to the number of grains of sand in the little earth on my thumb-nail, the number of beings who are reborn in four woeful abodes is more than the number of grains of sand in the whole earth."*

(Nakhasikha Sutta)

In woeful abodes there is very little chance to perform meritorious deeds. So when woeful beings die, they are reborn again and again in woeful abodes. It is very very difficult for them to be reborn in the human realm again. Only when some good karmas that they have acquired previously have the chance to bear results, will they be reborn in the human realm.

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Again when they become human beings, due to their ignorance of the Dhamma and the Law of Kamma, they perform evil actions, enjoy sensual pleasure and neglect to do meritorious deeds again. So when they die, they are reborn in woeful abodes again.

Therefore, the Buddha said: “*The four woeful abodes are the permanent home of most worldlings.*”

• **The Teaching to overcome Woeful Rebirth and to be born in Celestial Realms**

So as the first step, the Buddha advised the people to take Threefold Refuge in Triple Gem and to observe the five moral precepts of Pañca-sīla diligently, that is to abstain from committing any one of ten immoral actions and to accomplish ten courses of moral actions simultaneously. (pp. 123-124)

Many people, who were destined to be born in woeful abodes, because they had done no meritorious deeds, were reborn in celestial realms if they had the chance to pay homage to the Buddha, or to listen to the Dhamma Sermon or to offer a cup of drinking water or a flower to the Buddha-statue or to the Saṃgha just before death.

A poor man, who looked after two blind parents, took Threefold Refuge from a Chief Disciple of Anomadassī Buddha. He kept Threefold Refuge well established in his heart throughout his life. When he died, he was born as the **the Sakka, King of Devas,** in Tāvātimsā realm.

During a very long period of one asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world cycles, he was born uncountable existences in celestial realms and human realm, but never was he born in woeful abodes.

And wherever he was born, he was more outstanding than others. He was born as the Sakka for eighty existences, as Universal Monarch for seventy-five existences, as Kings and feudal lords for uncountable existences.

At the time of Gotama Buddha, he was born as a rich man's son in Sāvattī city. At the age of seven years, he was playing together with his friends, and they went into a monastery. An Arahant

guided them to take Threefold Refuge. Soon after taking refuge, the rich man's son became an Arahant. He was well known as '**Tisarāṇa-gāmaṇiya Thera**' in Gotama Buddha's Dispensation.

(Apa. 1, 82; Apa. Tha. 2, 39)

Another note-worthy story is the story of a fisherman, named 'Damiḷa'. He earned his living by fishing for fifty years. As he grew old, he fell sick and was bedridden. A monk, who was going on alms-round, came to his house. His wife paid homage to the monk and apologized that they had no food to offer, because her husband was sick and bedridden.

The monk asked for permission to see her husband. When he was allowed to go inside, he went in and asked Damiḷa: "Devotee, how is your illness?"

Damiḷa replied: "My illness is getting worse. I don't think I can overcome it, Venerable Sir."

"Would you like to take Threefold Refuge and Panca-sīla?" asked the monk.

"Yes, Venerable Sir," answered Damiḷa.

So the monk administered Therefold Refuge to Damiḷa. After taking Threefold Refuge, Damiḷa could not open his mouth any more; he had passed away. He was immediately reborn as a celestial being in upper Catumahārājika realm, and he realized that because he had taken Threefold Refuge, he was born in the celestial realm.

Therefore, he came down to the human realm, immediately appeared in front of the monk and gladly said: "Venerable Sir, I am Damiḷa. Because you administered Threefold Refuge to me, I was born in Catumahārājika realm. If I could also take Pañca-sīla, I would be born at a higher celestial realm. I thanked you very heartily Sir."

(Añ. Tha. 2, 107)

The above examples demonstrated that the **Omniscient Buddha**, his excellent Teachings called the '**Dhamma**', and his **Saṅgha Order**, consisting of noble Bhikkhus and Arahants, are really the noblest objects of veneration. By just paying homage to them or by

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just donating alms-food, drinking water or four requisites to them, people attained great merit, escaped from woeful rebirth and were born in celestial realms.

When people could take Threefold Refuge respectfully and establish the noblest virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha in their hearts well, they would be well protected from all dangers, including **the worst danger called ‘woeful rebirth’**, and they would be born in celestial realms and human realm for uncountable existences, even as Sakka and Universal Monarch.

Together with keeping Threefold Refuge, we also should observe the five moral precepts of *Pañca-sīla* diligently and mindfully. The objective of observing *Pañca-sīla* is to abstain from “ten courses of immoral actions” called “ten courses of evil conduct”, and to accomplish simultaneously “ten courses of moral actions” called “ten courses of good conduct.” That means that we abstain from causing any harm to any living being including humans and animals, allowing them to live safely and happily without any danger, worry and fear. Thus it amounts to a very noble, admirable, faultless and blameless way of living. So we shall be free from the danger of being punished by the law and being reborn in woeful abodes. **Thus we can live most happily as house-holders.**

The Buddha said that **‘morality’ is the beginning, foundation and crown of all meritorious deeds**. By observing Pañca Sīla, we become noble, virtuous, honest, gentle, peaceful with the best moral character. A virtuous person will become rich owing to his non-negligence and diligence. Indeed a person of pure morality will get whatever he wants, because his mind is pure and noble. He also enjoys respect and adoration of his co-workers and friends. (described in detail on pages 128-133).

• **The Teaching of Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds**

In order to attain greater merits, the Buddha teaches Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds, covering a wide range of good actions. Essentially they include three categories, namely:

(1) The category of **alms-giving** (*dāna*), consisting of donation in charity, sharing one’s merits, and appreciating others’ meritori-

ous deeds;

(2) The category of **morality** (*sīla*), consisting of 5, 8, 9, 10 precepts for lay-persons and higher morality for bhikkhus, reverence to elders and holy persons, and volunteer service in wholesome deeds; and

(3) The category of **meditation** (*bhāvanā*), consisting of learning and teaching the Dhamma, undertaking tranquillity-meditation to develop mental concentration and vipassanā meditation to develop wisdom.

In daily life, in order to live wisely with moral minds and to attain great benefits, we should practise tranquillity meditations, especially the Four Guardian Meditations, which are desirable at all times and at all places to guard ourselves from internal enemies (defilements) and external enemies (wicked persons, dangerous animals, ghosts, etc.)

They are (1) radiating loving-kindness, (2) reflecting on the attributes of the Buddha, (3) reflecting on the repulsiveness of a corpse, and (4) reflection on the nature of death. They are described briefly on pages 175-179.

We should make a habit of radiating loving-kindness and reflecting repeatedly any one attribute of the Buddha wherever we are to get billions of good karmas every second and to make the best preparation for death. If it becomes a habit, we shall be reflecting the attribute of the Buddha automatically at the time of near death, for example: “*Araham, Araham*”. Then we shall feel that we are living with the Buddha and our mind and body are permeated with the powerful noblest attribute of the Buddha. Then we should not be afraid of anything and the ghosts cannot approach us. We shall die peacefully and shall be born in celestial realms.

As the **Right View of Knowing the Law of Karma** is the most important factor among the Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds, we should make the right view our guiding star to lead us to live wisely. We can study the Law of Karma in Chapter (18).

• **The Mind is the Real Creator of all Living Beings.**

In Chapter (18) on pages 393-399, how various types of kammas give rise to all living beings in thirty-one planes of existence are described in detail.

When living beings perform immoral actions, immoral minds and immoral kammas (*akusala kammas*) arise by many billions. These kammas will condition them to be reborn in four woeful abodes for many existences.

When they perform various meritorious deeds like alms-giving, observing moral precepts and undertaking meditations without attaining jhānas, sense-sphere moral minds (*kāmāvacara kusala cittas*) and sense-sphere moral kammas (*kāmāvacara kusala kammas*) arise by many billions. These kammas will condition them to be reborn in human-realm and six celestial realms for many existences.

When they undertake tranquillity meditations like mindfulness of breathing (*Ānāpānassati*, pp. 164-170) and develop four fine-material sphere moral consciousnesses (*rūpāvacara kusala cittas*), fine-material sphere moral kammas (*rūpāvacara kusala kammas*) arise by many billions. These kammas will condition them to be reborn in sixteen fine-material-sphere realms (*rūpa-Brahma realms*) for several existences.

When they undertake ten-kasina meditations and can develop four rūpāvacara kusala jhānas as well as four immaterial sphere kusala jhānas (*arūpāvacara kusala cittas*), then they can acquire many billion immaterial moral kammas (*arūpāvacara kusala kammas*). These kammas will condition them to be reborn in four immaterial-sphere realms (*arūpāvacara Brahmā realms*) for several existences.

So all living beings in thirty-one planes of existence are created by the powerful mind through its kamma-property. All human beings are born different from one another in appearance, in wisdom, in fate and fortune, because their kammas are different. **If they control their minds wisely, they can also control their fates and fortunes. This is very good news. If we understand the teachings of the Buddha, we can control our minds.**

Those who are born in deva-realms, they can enjoy celestial

sensual pleasure which is much superior to human sensual pleasure. Many celestial beings enjoy celestial sensual pleasure too much that they forget to do meritorious deeds. So when their good kammās are used up by enjoying sensual pleasure, they die and they are born in woeful abodes.

Brahmās do not enjoy sensual pleasure; they enjoy jhāna bliss which is much superior to deva sensual pleasure. They also enjoy very long life-spans.

At one time Gotama Buddha, accompanied by Venerable Ānanda went to Rājagṛaha City on alms-round. Near the gate of the city, the Buddha saw a **young female pig**, looking for food by digging the ground with its snout. The Buddha smiled and Ānanda asked him why did he smile.

The Buddha said: “Ānanda, did you see that young female pig digging the ground with its snout? She was a Mahā Brahmā with bright body rays two existences ago. She died from Mahā Brahmā realm and was reborn in a rich family in Rājagṛaha city. She was very beautiful and everyone admired her beauty. She became conceited and was busy with beautifying herself with cosmetics and beautiful clothes, neglecting to do meritorious deeds. So when she died, she became a female pig.”

So even if you become a Sakka or a Brahmā, you cannot escape woeful rebirth yet if you are a worldling.

The Buddha also noticed that all living beings in thirty one planes of existence are composed of mentalities and materialities which are arising and perishing very rapidly. So they have the characteristics of *impermanence, suffering and not-self*. Therefore, all existences are unsatisfactory and they have the intrinsic nature of suffering. **Moreover since the minds of worldlings are influensed and overwhelmed by defilements most of the time, worldlings are being burnt most of the time by eleven fires, namely, the fires of greed (lobha), anger (dosa), ignorance (moha), birth (jāti), ageing (jarā), death (maraṇa), worry (soka), lamentation (parideva), pain (dukkha), grief (domanassa), and despair (upāyāsa).**

Thus, the Buddha teaches the Four Noble Truths, which contains the Noble Eightfold Path, which can enlighten humans, devas and Brahmās to the Four Noble Truths and to become Noble Persons (Ariyas). Then they can enjoy the eternal peace and the supreme bliss of Nibbāna as much as they like, and the doors of four woeful abodes are closed for ever for them. So they will live happily and will all become Arahants in due course and attain emancipation from the rounds of births and deaths and the rounds of all suffering. This is the greatest Salvation, which can be attained by all sooner or later if they devote themselves to practice the Noble Eightfold Path with faith and confidence and steadfast effort.

• **The Highest Teaching of the Buddha**

All the teachings of the Buddha have only one essence, that is the essence of emancipation from the rounds of rebirths and suffering (*Vimutti-rasa*). The culmination of his teachings is the teaching of the Noble Eightfold Path, which leads to enlightenment to the Four Noble Truths, the realization of Nibbāna, and the emancipation from the rounds of births and deaths and suffering.

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of eight factors, which can be classified as the Noble Threefold Training of Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*). It was fully discovered by the Bodhisatta at the auspicious full-moon night of Vesākha (May 588 B.C.) when he became Perfectly Self-Enlightened as *Sammāsambuddha*.

The Noble Eightfold Path is comprehensively described in Chapter (9) and on pages 155-220 in this book. It is the summary of the teachings of the Buddha on the Noble Eightfold Path and the Noble Threefold training that was compiled by **Bhaddantacariya Buddhaghosa** in '*Visuddhi Magga*' (*The Path of Purification*) and by **Bhaddanta Āciṇṇa** in his great treatise, 'entitled '**The Only Path to Nibbāna**'. Venerable Āciṇṇa is the Chief Monk of Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres and he is teaching in detail successfully the full course of the Noble Threefold Training as taught by the Buddha.

Nowadays many meditators in Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsāna Centres can develop jhāna concentration, can discern and define ultimate realities, can penetratively verify the causal relations of Dependent Origination, can undertake vipassanā meditation as taught by the Buddha and can develop ten insight knowledges correctly.

When a meditator can develop ten insight knowledges, the Path-cognitive series of consciousness (*Magga-Vīthi*) arises automatically as described on pages 218-220, giving rise to Sotāpatti Path-Consciousness and Sotāpatti Fruition-consciousness. By reundertaking vipassanā-meditation, the meditator can develop three higher Path consciousnesses and their three Fruition-consciousnesses.

The four Path-wisdoms totally eliminate all defilements from the mind of the meditator. Thus his mind becomes completely pure and most noble. He is said to be fully enlightened to the four Noble Truths as an Arahant, to attain emancipation from the rounds of rebirths and suffering, to realize Nibbāna and to be able to enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

The Buddha said: “There is no fire like lust (Lobha); lust is the hottest fire. There is no offence like anger (dosa), anger is the most heinous offence. There is no suffering like the five aggregates of mentality-materiality; the five aggregates of mentality-materiality are the greatest suffering. There is no bliss like Nibbāna; Nibbāna is the greatest bliss.”

(Dhammapada 202)

“The only Path that leads to the purity of the mind, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering of the right Path and to the realization of Nibbāna is this Noble Eightfold Path.

(Mahāsatiṭṭhāna Sutta)

“Free from pain and torture is this Path; free from groaning and suffering is the Path; it is the Perfect Path.”

(Majjhima Nikāya 139)

“Among all paths, the Noble Eightfold Path is the noblest; among all truths, the Four Noble Truths are the noblest; among all principles, Nibbāna free from lust is the noblest; among

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all beings, the Omniscient Buddha is the Noblest.”

(Dhammapada 273)

“Only this Noble Eightfold Path is the right Path for the purification of the vision of wisdom; there is no other path apart from this Path. So you all go along this Path; you will arrive the safe shore of Nibbāna. (Dhammapada 274)

Although the most Exalted and Omniscient Buddha was really the Supreme Head of Three Worlds of men, devas and Brahmās, the Excellent Teacher of men and gods, and the Greatest Benefactor of all living beings, he was most humble, most compassionate, causing no harm to any one and respecting all religions. And being most considerate for the welfare of all living beings, he told them openly and sincerely to work for their own welfare and emancipation from suffering without looking for some external Gods for help but to revere themselves and to rely on themselves.

“The Tathāgatas (Buddhas) are mere Teachers.

They can just show you the Right Way to your

Liberation from all bonds and Realization of Nibbāna.

You yourself should make the exertion to attain emancipation from all suffering.”

“By oneself indeed is evil done;

By oneself is one defiled.

By oneself is evil left undone;

By oneself is indeed is one purified.

Purity and impurity depend on oneself;

No one purifies another.” (Dhammapada 165)

“Far better than to live a hundred years without morality (sīla) and concentration (samādhi) is to live a single day with pure morality and undertaking samatha-vipassanā meditation.”

(Dhammapada 110)

“Far better than sovereignty over the whole earth as a Universal Monarch or to be a celestial King as the Sakka or to be born in celestial realm or Brahma realm is to be a Stream-

winner.”

(*Dhammapada* 178)

• **Only in Buddhism is there the Noble Eightfold Path**

At the time of the Buddha, many monks or bhikkhus learned meditation from the Buddha and went into the forest in groups to undertake the Noble Threefold Training during the rain retreat which lasts for three months. At the end of the retreat, usually all those bhikkhus became enlightened as Noble Persons (Ariyās), mostly as Arahants (Perfect Noble Persons).

Those who attain Sotāpatti Path-consciousness are called ‘**Sotāpatti Path-Persons**’. When Sotāpatti Path-consciousness perishes and Sotāpatti Fruition-Consciousness arises, they become **Sotāpatti Fruition Persons or Stream-Winners**.

When Stream-Winners reundertake Vipassanā meditation and attain Sakadāgāmi Path-consciousness, they are called ‘**Sakadāgāmi Path-Persons**’. When Sakadāgāmi Path-Consciousness perishes and Sakadāgāmi Fruition-consciousness arises, they become **Sakadāgāmi Fruition-Persons or Once-returners**.

When Once-returners reundertake vipassanā meditation and attain Anāgāmi Path-consciousness, they are called ‘**Anāgāmi Path-Persons**’. When Anāgāmi Path-consciousness perishes and Anāgāmi Fruition-consciousness arises, they become **Anāgāmi Fruition Persons or Non-returners**.

When non-returners reundertake vipassanā meditation and attain Arahatta Path-consciousness, they are called ‘**Arahatta Path-Persons**’. When Arahatta Path-Consciousness perishes and Arahatta Fruition-consciousness arises, they become **Arahatta Fruition-Persons or Arahants**.

The four Path-persons last for only one consciousness-moment while the Path-consciousness exists. So they cannot be known by others. The four Fruition-Persons can live throughout their life-spans. Arahants can live only for seven days if they live as lay-persons, because they are very noble. Only if they become bhikkhus, can they live throughout their life-spans.

On the night when the Buddha was to realize *Parinibbāna* (Ultimate Peace), he was lying on a couch between two sala trees,

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flowering out of season, **in the sala grove of Malla Princes outside Kusinagara town. A wandering ascetic, named Subhadda,** who came of a well known rich family, and who was the last person to be enlightened by the Buddha, came to the Buddha at the middle watch of the night.

After paying homage to the Buddha, Subhadda asked the questions: “Venerable Sir, are **Pūrana Kassapa, Makkhali Gosala, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañcaya and Nigantha,** son of **Nātāputta** (Buddha’s contemporaries), who admitted themselves to be all knowing Buddhas, and who are held in high esteem by many people, are they all knowing Buddhas? Or are none of them Buddhas? Or are some of them Buddhas while others are not? For if they are really Buddhas, the doctrines they preach must lead to liberation from the rounds of rebirths. Are all their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are none of their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are some of their doctrines conducive to liberations while others are not?”

In order to teach Subhadda the Noble Eightfold Path, the Buddha answered: “Subhadda, do not ask that. Leave aside the question whether all of those six religious teachers know all the truths, whether none of them know the truths, whether some of them know all the truths while others do not.

“Subhadda, I shall expound to you the good doctrine leading to liberation and Nibbāna. Listen and pay careful attention. I shall speak in full.

“Subhadda, in whatever religious teaching, the Noble Eightfold Path is not found, therein there is not found the first stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Stream-winner’**, the second stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Once-returner’**, the third stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Non-returner’** and the fourth stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Arahant’**’.

“Subhadda, in whatever religious teaching, the Noble Eightfold Path is found, therein there is found the first stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Stream-winner’**, the second stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Once-returner’**, the third stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Non-returner’** and the fourth stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Arahant’**’.

“Subhaddha, in this religious teaching of mine, there is the Noble Eightfold Path. Thus in my Teaching alone are found the first stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Stream-winner’**, the second stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Once-returner’**, the third stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Non-returner’** and the fourth stage noble bhikkhu called **‘Arahant’**.”

“All other religious Teachings are void of the Noble Eightfold Path. So they are void of the twelve categories of bhikkhus who comprehend the Four Noble Truths, namely the **four noble Path-bhikkhus** who attained the Path (*Magga*), the **four noble Fruition-bhikkhus** who attained the Fruition (*Phala*), and the **four Trainees** who are cultivating Insight to attain the four stages of Path-wisdom.

“Subhadda, in my Teaching alone are these **twelve categories of bhikkhus** found. If these twelve bhikkhus practise and pass on the Teaching rightly, the world will not be void of Arahants.”

On hearing the clear Teaching of the Omniscient Buddha, Subhadda understood the most outstanding feature of Buddhism very well that only in Buddhism the Noble Eightfold Path really exists, and that Morality, Concentration and Wisdom can be practically developed together to the highest level to be enlightened to the Four Noble Truths with the Fourfold Path-wisdom, which truly, totally eliminates all defilements, which are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the whole world, and leads to emancipation from the rounds of births and deaths and all suffering. Then meditators become Arahants, who gain emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering, and can enjoy the highest bliss and eternal peace of Nibbāna for ever.

Any person, who clearly understands the outstanding features of Buddhism like Subhadda, will be convinced why Buddhism is worthy of veneration and also is worthy of the “Best Religion in the World” Award!

So Subhadda gladly remarked: “Venerable Sir, Excellent is the Dhamma! Excellent is the Dhamma. As if that which has been hidden is revealed, or as if a lost traveller is told the right path, or

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as if a lamp is lighted in a dark place so that those with eyes can see visible objects, even so has the Exalted Buddha shown the Dhamma to me in various ways.

“Venerable Sir, I, Subhadda, take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Saṅgha. Venerable Sir, may I be initiated into the Saṅgha Order in the presence of the Buddha.”

The Buddha let Venerable Ānanda shave Subhadda’s head and face, robe him with bhikkhu robes, administer Triple Gem to him, thus initiating him as a *Sāmaṇera* (Novice).

Then the Buddha caused Sāmaṇera Subhadda to be admitted to the Saṅgha Order as a full fledged *bhikkhu* and taught him the appropriate method of meditation.

Bhikkhu Subhadda sought seclusion in the sala grove, went into meditation in the walking meditation alone. With intent mindfulness and striving arduously, he became fully enlightened as Arahant during that very night. He was the last person to become an Arahant in the presence of the Buddha.

Therefore Buddhism is truly a Great World Religion that can offer Real Peace and Real Happiness, Real Salvation from woeful suffering, Real Emancipation from the rounds of births and deaths and all sufferings and the Best Attainment in life as Noble Persons (Ariyas), who can enjoy the highest happiness and eternal peace of Nibbāna right away in this very life, who will never be born in woeful abodes, and who will become Arahants in due course, which is the highest and best attainment in life!

Moreover, Buddhism is truly the Greatest Religion of personal peace, community peace, world peace, tolerance, compassion, non-violence, non-aggression, causing no harm to any living being, radiating loving-kindness to all living beings to be happy and well always, letting all living beings live safely and harmoniously.

Buddhism really practises non-violence, friendliness, compassion and loving-kindness, regarding all human beings as brothers and sisters, without differentiation of race, caste and faith, always ready to give a helping hand to all. That is the reason why there are

no persecution and no wars in the name of Buddhism and why Buddhism was voted by Spiritual and Religious people of the Geneva-based International Co-alision for the Advancement of Religions and Spirituality (ICARUS) for “the Best Religion in the World” Award!

[21] Is Buddhism Scientific, Psychological and Philosophical?

Intellectuals including scientists, psychologists and philosophers agreed that Buddhism is scientific, psychological and philosophical.

Sir Edwin Arnold said: “I have often said and I shall say again and again that between Buddhism and modern science there exists a close intellectual bond.”

Albert Einstein, the great scientist, said: “If there is any religion that would **cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism.**”

Chirstmas Humphreys, President of English Pāli Text Society, said: “**Buddhism is a system of thought, a religion, a spiritual science and a way of life**, which is reasonable, practical and all embracing. It appeals to the West, insists on self-reliance coupled with tolerance for the other points of view, embraces **science, religion, philosophy, psychology, ethics and art.**”

Egerton C.Baptist wrote: “Buddhism can meet the Atomic challenge, because **the supramundane knowledge of Buddhism begins where science leaves off.** And this is clear enough to anyone who has made a study of Buddhism. For through Buddhist Meditation the atomic constituents making up matter have been seen and felt.”

Dr.K.N.Jayatileke wrote: “**Buddhism is the only religion** of any religious teacher, **which is the outcome of a consistent philosophy, which claims to tell us about the ultimate facts of existence and reality.**”

A European wrote “Here is a teaching we can follow with confidence, where in the world of religions, cults and creeds, can we find a master of such brilliance? In a pageant of stars he was a giant of the greatest magnitude. Little wonder that **scientists, philosophers, and men of literature have proclaimed the Buddha**

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‘the Greatest Man ever born.’ The radiance of this great teacher goes through the world of suffering and darkness, like a beacon light to guide and illuminate mankind.”

Moni Bagghee wrote: “The most striking thing about the Buddha is almost a unique combination of a **cool scientific head** and profound sympathy of a warm and a loving heart. The world today turns more and more towards the Buddha, for he alone represents the conscience of humanity.

“The Buddha was a pioneer as a lover of men and a **philosophic genius** rolled into a single vigorous and radiant personality. Greater perhaps than his wisdom was the example he set.”

Dr. Graham Howe said: “To read a little Buddhism is to realize that the Buddhists knew, 2500 years ago, far more about our **modern problems of psychology** than they have yet been given credit for. They studied these problems long ago and found their answers too.”

• Dr. Mehm Tin Mon's Great Discovery

From my long experience of studying, writing and teaching “**Buddha Abhidhamma**”, the Buddha’s higher teachings, and the **Noble Eightfold Path**, the Practical Aspects of The Noble Three-fold Training, described comprehensively in “**The Essence of Visuddhi Magga**” **Volumes I+II**, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, I clearly come to know that Buddha Dhamma itself is ‘**Mental Science**’ or ‘**Spiritual Science**’ as it deals with mentalities and religion and not of material things, or it is ‘**Ultimate Science**’ as it deals with ultimate realities, or ‘**Supreme Science**’ as it deals with all ultimate realities, comprising all ultimate mentalities, ultimate materialities and Nibbāna, and explains all psychophysical phenomena, which are not known in material sciences. Its practical aspects are described fully in Visuddhi Magga.

Moreover, Abhidhamma should also be designated as ‘**Supreme Psychology**’ and ‘**Supreme Philosophy**’, because Abhidhamma describes in detail about the structure, characteristics, properties, functions, purification, development and application of the most powerful and most important thing in the universe called ‘**the Mind**’, and also about the ultimate realities, natural truths, natural laws, eternal peace and real happiness and highest and best attainment in life, which are not known to psychologists and philosophers.

Buddhism is Spiritual Science or Mental Science or Supreme Science, Supreme Psychology and Supreme Philosophy. Buddhism is also the highest Ethics, which teaches the Best Moral Character, and the Art of Living wisely and most happily to escape woeful rebirth and to enjoy blissful rebirth life after life.

Buddhism teaches the Four Universal Noble Truths including the most pleasant Noble Eightfold-Path, which leads to the Highest Mental Development and the Best Attainment in life to become Noble Persons and enjoy the External Peace and the Supreme Happiness of Nibbanā for ever.

[6]
**BUDDHA DHAMMA IS REALLY SUPREME
SCIENCE**

• **Material Sciences and Spiritual Science should work together**

Nowadays material sciences have developed to a very high level achieving great material progress. They have produced many wonderful things for comfortable living, convenient travelling, space communication and various material enjoyments. But they cannot study the mind yet; so they cannot produce spiritual progress and spiritual development.

Every living being on earth is composed of mind and body . As only the mind, not the body, can know, feel, think, reason, decide and act, the mind is the leader, and the body is the follower. In fact, the mind controls everyone's thoughts, speeches and actions, so it controls the whole world. It is the mind that produces all material sciences, languages and literature, etc.

Psychologists also acknowledge that the mind has infinite power and that it can accomplish anything. Its ability of creation is unlimited. Our happiness and unhappiness, etc., depend on our minds. If we really believe that we shall be successful in life, then we shall be successful; if we don't believe so, we shall not be successful.

So it is most important to study about all the features of the mind, its functions and abilities, its power and achievements, and how we can make use of its power and abilities for our greatest benefits. The knowledge that we can get from such study can be designated as **“mental science”** or **“spiritual science”**. Only spiritual science can produce spiritual progress, spiritual development and spiritual benefits.

So material sciences and spiritual science should be developed together to give us both material progress and spiritual progress as well as the highest physical achievement and the highest mental attainment.

• The Development of Spiritual Supreme Science

But how can spiritual science be developed, since nobody can study the mind as there are no science instruments that can detect the mind. As the mind is more subtle and finer than matter and energy known in science, there will never be material instrument that can detect the mind.

But the mind can be detected, analysed and studied in detail by the most powerful mental instrument, that is the **‘mind’** itself. The ordinary mind is not powerful, because it is defiled and debased by immoral mental factors called **defilements**. Defilements defile and blind the mind, making the mind dull, restless and wandering to various sense-objects

When the mind is purified and concentrated not to be restless and wandering by undertaking the Noble Threefold Training of morality, concentration and wisdom, the mind becomes very powerful.

In fact, the Buddha has demonstrated and taught the people how to purify and develop the mind to the highest level in order to attain the highest morality, the highest concentration and the highest fourfold path-wisdom, which can totally eliminate all defilements, which are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world.

Then the mind becomes purest, noblest and most powerful. The person who achieves this state becomes an Arahant, a perfect noble person, who can enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever. To attain Arahantship (i.e. to become an Arahant) is the highest and best attainment in life!

Nowadays we can undertake the Noble Threefold Training in Buddhist Meditation Centers, especially International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centers, where the Noble Threefold Training is taught precisely as taught by the Buddha. If we can practise successfully even to attain the first Path-wisdom, we shall become the first-stage noble person, called **‘Stream-winner’**. Then we can live most happily as lay-persons, enjoying the unique bliss of Nibbāna as much as we like, and we are guaranteed never to be

reborn in woeful abodes.

So if we develop pure morality and undertake the tranquillity-meditation called **“Mindfulness of Breathing”**, we can attain the fourth rūpa-jhāna concentration. Then the mind becomes pure, free from defilements, very powerful and blissful. The pure, concentrated mind radiates very bright penetrative light. With the help of this light, we can see with closed eyes near and far away sense-objects vividly. We can also see penetratively all the internal organs of our bodies and other people’s bodies.

After that, by undertaking the tranquillity meditation called **“Defining the Four Primary Elements”**, **we can break down the body into material groups**, that is, the body disappears and material groups appear in our vision, arising and perishing very rapidly. These material groups are comparable in size with protons and electrons as described on page 20 in this book. Material groups are composed of 8,9,10 or more ultimate materialities and they are indivisible. ultimate materialities and the ultimate basic components of the body.

Again with the support of the fourth rūpa-jhāna concentration and the brilliant bright light, radiated from the pure mind, we can penetratively discern each ultimate materiality in each material group, and define it precisely by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising. In this way we can discern and know precisely the 28 “ultimate materialities” which make up 21 types of material groups that make up all living bodies.

Next, we can proceed to discern and define ultimate mentalities. First we discern the eye-door and the mind-door, which is life-continuum, arising and perishing very quickly in our hearts. Then we discern a visible object striking the two doors and appear at the doors at the same time. The life-continuum is cut off, and a cognitive series of consciousnesses or minds arises to know the sense-object.

Since consciousnesses or minds arise and perish extremely rapidly, we cannot see the cognitive series while it is arising and per-

ishing. But when it terminates, the whole cognitive series appears in the mind-door as a past sense-object. Then we can discern each ultimate mentality in each mind and define it precisely by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising.

In this way we can also discern and define the ultimate mentalities in the cognitive series of consciousness that arise in the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door, the body-door and the mind-door. Then we know precisely one type of consciousness and 52 types of mental factors, which are collectively called “**ultimate mentalities**” that make up 121 types of minds.

It is very amazing that the Buddha discovered the ultimate mentalities, ultimate materialities and Nibbāna, which are collectively called “the ultimate realities” that really exist in the universe 2600 years ago.

In the year 588 B.C, as a Bodhisatta, he developed very powerful Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences, and he could see all his past existences, past activities, past events and past experiences up to his past existence of Sumedha, four incalculable aeons (asaṅkheyyas) and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago. He also saw his past existences in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing very quickly and continuously, connecting all his past existences as a long chain in a continuous stake of flux, like the flame of an oil-lamp or the current of a river.

Moreover, he could discern and define each mentality and each materiality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising. So he discovered 28 types of ultimate materialities, one type of consciousness and 52 types of mental factors, which constitute the bodies and minds of all living beings in the world. This is one of the most difficult thing to do.

As these ultimate realities arise and perish extremely rapidly and incessantly, more than a billion times per second, leaving nothing permanent, he also realized that ‘man’, ‘woman’, ‘person’, ‘I’,

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‘you’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘atta’, ‘jiva’ do not exist in the ultimate sense, and consequently no ‘Creator of living beings’ really exist. The Bodhisatta could also discern the natural causes that produce ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities.

Then the Bodhisatta developed very powerful supernormal knowledge of Divine Power of Sight or Divine Eye, which could see all living beings and inanimate things in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems. He could also penetratively see ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing in all living beings. Moreover, he could also see dying persons and where they were reborn in accordance to their karmas. So he also attained the Super Normal Knowledge of seeing beings in the 31 planes of existence and knowing their respective karmas which gave rise to their present existences.

Based on these knowledges, the Bodhisatta could reason and inferred rationally “the Law of Karma” and “the Doctrine of Dependent Origination,” which are comprehensively described in chapters [18] and [19]. The Doctrine of Dependent Origination describes the rounds of births and deaths of all living beings in terms of eleven causal relations and twelve factors, comprising ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities. **According to this Doctrine, everyone of us has been born uncountable existences in the past and will be born uncountable existences in the future. This is also a great discovery.**

The Bodhisatta could also reason that as all existences are composed of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, which are arising due to causes and perishing extremely rapidly, they all have the common characteristics of *impermanence* (*anicca*), *suffering* (*dukkha*) and *not-self* (*anatta*).

Then he undertook the Great Insight Meditation (*Mahāvajira Vipassanā*), discerning the arising and perishing ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities in all living beings in a hundred thousand crores of world-systems and reflecting on their three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and not-self

in various ways. He could easily develop ten insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñānas*) and four Path-wisdoms (*Magga-ñānas*), which completely eliminated all his defilements, which are the root causes of all suffering. Immediately he became Fully Self-Enlightened *Sammāsambuddha*, endowed with Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbaññuta-ñāna*), Fourteen Wisdoms of a Buddha, Eighteen Special Qualities and Four Valorous Wisdoms.

Omniscient Wisdom is the highest wisdom which knows everything that should be known. With this Omniscient Wisdom the Buddha reflected in detail about all ultimate realities, all ultimate truths and ultimate laws, all psychophysical processes involving ultimate realities in living beings and all embracing *Paṭṭhāna* Conditions which explain logically and rationally the causes of all Psychophysical Phenomena.

The Buddha expounded all these knowledges in his higher teachings called *Athidhamma* in *Tavatimsā* celestial realm to *Devas* and *Brahmās* from ten thousand worlds. He expounded these higher teachings continuously without break for three months. He also gave the gist of his *Abhidhamma* teachings in *Tāvatsmsā* realm to his right hand Chief Disciple, **Venerable *Sariputta***, who was the foremost in wisdom among his disciples, so that Venerable *Sāriputta* could teach *Abhidhamma* in the human realm simultaneously.

Venerable *Sāriputta* could reflect and ponder on the gist of *Abhidhamma* in a thousand ways and understand the whole Buddha's *Abhidhamma* Teachings in the celestial realm. But when he taught *Abhidhamma* to his five hundred disciple-monks, he taught only as much as it is suitable to human beings. His teachings were compiled as seven great Treatises and designated as “***Abhidhamma Repository***” (*Abhidhamma Piṭaka*).

At the end of *Abhidhamma* Teachings, eighty thousand crores of *Devas* and *Brahmās* got enlightened to the Four Noble Truths and became Noble Persons (*Ariyās*). The five hundred disciple-monks of Venerable *Sāriputta* were also enlightened as *Arahants* (Perfect Noble Persons), the highest and noblest at-

tainment for ordinary people. So the teaching and learning of Abhidhamma is very beneficial.

As the Buddha was the forerunner of scientists in teaching both in principles and practicals, the practical aspects of all his teachings, including the Threefold Noble Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom, which represents the Noble Eightfold Path and leads to the end of suffering and realization of Nibbāna, are recorded in three great volumes of “**Visuddhi Magga**”, meaning “**the Path of Purification.**”

Millions of human beings, who could practice the Noble Threefold Training successfully, have been enlightened as Noble Persons, which is the best and noblest attainment in life for ordinary persons.

So the study of the mind in all aspects, that is, analysing the mind into consciousness and mental factors, defining all ultimate mentalities by their respective characteristics, functions and proximate causes, discerning the causes which give rise to mentalities, studying in detail about their participation in all psychophysical processes, applying the higher knowledge of the Law of Kamma and the Doctrine of Dependent Origination in daily living with the best moral character and to live wisely, happily and most beneficially, practising the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom to purify the mind completely and to develop the highest wisdom, called “**Fourfold Path-Wisdom,**” which can totally eliminate all defilements, which are the root causes of all evil actions and all suffering, thus giving rise to the highest and noblest attainment in life of becoming Noble Persons, has been accomplished completely since 2600 years ago.

Therefore, the Buddha’s excellent Teachings, called “**Buddha Dhamma**” and designated as “Buddhism” are totally qualified to be called “**Spiritual Science**” or “**Supreme Science.**”

Moreover, Buddha Dhamma also describes the properties, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of all ultimate realities, including ultimate mentalities, ultimate materialities and Nibbāna,

and also the study of all psychophysical phenomena in which both ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities (unknown to material sciences) are involved. **So Buddha Dhamma is also qualified to be called “Supreme Science” as the extension of Material Sciences.**

- **Description of Ultimate Realities and Psychophysical**

- Processes**

For the sake of information to readers who are unfamiliar with Abhidhamma, **the essential features of ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities together with the causes which give rise to them, the combination of 28 ultimate materialities into 21 types of material groups, and the combination of consciousness with 52 types of mental factors into 121 types of mental groups or minds are described briefly on pages 78-88 and more comprehensively in Chapters (14) (15).**

The psychophysical processes occurring in a life-time of all living beings are described in Chapter (16). The all embracing **Paṭṭhana Conditions**, explaining rationally all the causes of psychophysical processes are described in Chapter (17).

The important Law of Kamma, its operation in all existences in a life-time, how kammās give rise to all living beings in 31 planes of existences, how different kammās differentiate all living beings to be different from one another, and how we can determine our fates and fortunes are described in Chapter (18).

The important Doctrine of Dependent Origination, which explains in several ways how all living beings have to undergo the rounds of births and deaths continuously and endlessly, is described in Chapter (19). Concrete evidences about past existences and future existence together with some interesting explanations of outstanding evidences are described in Chapter (20).

The Four Universal Noble Truths, which embrace all ultimate realities including Nibbāna, and which can enlighten worldlings to become Noble Persons if they can

penetratively and comprehensively understand the Four Noble Truths are described in Chapter(9).

The Practical Aspects for discerning and defining ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities, for verifying the Law of Kamma, the Law of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths, as well as the practices for developing morality and the best moral character, for living wisely, happily and most beneficially, for developing jhāna-concentration and supernormal knowledges, and for undertaking the Threefold Noble Training to develop the purification of the mind and the highest Fourfold Path-wisdom to achieve the highest attainment in this very life as Noble Persons are described on pages 187-220.

The pages and chapters mentioned in this book refer to the pages and chapters in the book entitled “BUDDHISM Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?” written by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon.

For more complete and more comprehensive, understanding, please study the following books written by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon:

1. *“The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma,” Third Edition,*
2. *“The Essence of Visuddhi Magga,” Volume I,*
3. *“The Essence of Visuddhi Magga,” Volume II.*

• Supreme Science produces the Highest Spiritual Progress and the Highest Spiritual Development

The Buddha revealed to the world the ultimate realities that really basically exist in the universe, and how they are involved in all psychophysical processes, occurring incessantly in all living beings, how they condition all living beings to come into existence life after life, and how they determine the fates and fortunes of all living beings.

Among these ultimate realities, he discovered that the 14 immoral mental factors, including ten defilements, are the only evil forces in the world, that defile and debase the mind, making living

beings wild and wicked to perform all evil actions, including endless fightings and waging wars. Because of these evil forces, the people are not safe, not happy, and there is no personal peace and no world-peace.

The Buddha also knew that the 25 beautiful mental factors and 13 neutral mental factors are the good forces and they can be developed by performing meritorious deeds, comprising alms-giving, observing moral precepts and undertaking meditation. Then the good forces become powerful and they can oppose and subdue the evil forces not to arise in the mind, letting the people live morally and happily, enjoying personal peace and community peace.

The Buddha also knew that those, who live immorally performing evil actions, will be reborn in woeful abodes for uncountable existences, suffering tremendously, and those who live morally performing meritorious deeds, will be reborn in blissful realms for uncountable existences, enjoying great happiness.

- **Finally the Buddha Discovered the Universal Four Noble Truths**

Finally the Buddha discovered the Universal Four Noble Truths, including the Noble Eightfold Path, which can bring about the total cessation of all suffering and the realization of Nibbāna.

The Noble Eightfold Path consists of the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom. By undertaking this Noble Threefold Training, the Buddha could develop morality, concentration and wisdom together to the highest level to attain the Four Path-wisdoms and four Fruition Wisdoms and realize Nibbāna.

The Four Path-wisdoms, the Four Fruition-Wisdoms and Nibbāna are really the nine noblest Supramundane Dhammas, for they can totally eliminate all the evil forces, that is the 14 immoral mental factors.

Nibbāna has the characteristic of eternal peace and supreme

bliss (*santi-sukha*). It can be observed by four supramundane moral consciousnesses and four supramundane fruition-consciousnesses and its eternal peace and unique bliss can be enjoyed right away in this very life.

Many persons could also undertake the Noble Threefold Training successfully and attained the Nine supramundane Dhammas. They became *Arahants*, Perfect Noble Persons, and could enjoy the eternal peace and unique happiness of Nibbāna for ever. **Arahants are the noblest and happiest persons in the world.**

In the case of the Buddha, as soon as he could develop the fourth Path-wisdom and its Fruition-wisdom, his incomparably great merit that he had accumulated by fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections, Five Great Sacrifices and Threefold Noble Practices during a very long period of four incalculable aeons and one hundred thousand world cycles, bore results, and he became Fully Self-Enlightened Sammā-sambuddha, endowed with Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*) and many supernormal wisdoms.

Very soon after his enlightenment, the most Exalted Buddha, out of great compassion for all living beings, waged the first most active missionary in the world, travelling day after day, from village to village, from town to town, from country to country, even to other worlds and celestial worlds, teaching his excellent Dhamma discourses to human beings and celestial beings to liberate them from the rounds of births and suffering, including endless woeful suffering.

Many millions of humans, devas and Brahmās were enlightened as Noble Persons, receiving the best and noblest attainments in life. The Buddha also established the **noblest Saṅgha Order** to let them keep on teaching the noble Dhamma so that many people could gain enlightenment as Noble Persons. Even nowadays the Saṅgha Order maintain the noble Dhamma in pristine purity and keep on teaching the Dhamma both in principles and in practices so that people can still be enlightened as Noble Persons.

The appearance of the Buddha and the Dhamma in the world is for the welfare and happiness of all living beings!

Thus the Buddha's Teachings, known as Buddha Dhamma, really represent Supreme Science, which is truly the extension of Material Sciences. Material Sciences should be supplemented with Supreme Science. Only if they work together, will all the people be able to enjoy both the highest material development and the highest spiritual development simultaneously.

[7]

BUDDHA ABHIDHAMMA IS REALLY SUPEREME PSYCHOLOGY

1 What is Psychology?

The Columbia Viking Desk Encyclopedia defines “psychology as the science of the mind. Psychologists do not agree upon any one definition of mind, some considering it almost synonymous with soul and therefore a thing apart from the body; others tying mind closely with brain, making each a function of the other.”

The encyclopedia continues: “Generally modern psychology is defined as the science that studies all interactions between living organisms and environment, thus avoiding the mechanistic approach of strict behaviorism as well as the extreme idealism of philosophy. Although psychology is close to the biological, physical and social sciences, it remains a specific science since no complete explanation of individual behavior can be given solely in terms of any other one science. Its important concepts (i.e. of emotions, instincts, consciousness, and intelligence) are therefore described in terms of their relationship to the behavior of the individual as a whole.”

Oxford Dictionary gives the meaning of psychology as “science, study of the mind and its processes.”

2. ‘Psychology’ should mean the Science of the Mind

As the science of the mind, it should describe the nature, properties, functions and working of the mind in detail as the Omniscient Buddha described about the mind in minute detail in Abhidhamma.

However, psychologists cannot see and cannot study the mind, because the mind is invisible and cannot be detected by any instrument. So modern psychologists have to study all interactions between living organisms and environment as the science of the mind.

Yet, psychologists come to know that the mind is most powerful and its creative power is unlimited. It is the mind that instructs and directs men how to build saloon cars of various designs, bullet-trains, ocean-liners, supersonic aeroplanes, space-

ships, televisions, computers, ipads, iphones, etc. Psychologists also mention that our success and failure in life depend on our minds. If we really believe that we shall become rich, then we shall be rich; if we believe that we shall be poor the whole life, then we shall be poor the whole life.

But psychologists do not know what the mind really is. Some even believe that it is the brain that functions as the mind. This is incorrect. The brain is materiality, and materiality does not know sense-objects, does not feel sensation, cannot think, cannot reason, etc. Only the mind, which is mentality, knows sense-objects, feels sensations, can think, can reason, etc.

Professor Sir John Eccles, the most prominent Neurologist in the United Kingdom, performed a special research on the structure of the brain and then remarked: “The study on the structure of the brain reveals that the brain is a kind of computer run by a ghost. The ghost here means something that cannot be detected by instruments which are used to detect material things.”

That ghost must be the mind, and **the mind itself is a very powerful supernormal computer**, because it can store many billions of data such as all the knowledges, all the skills and all the merits of meritorious deeds that the Bodhisatta Siddhattha had learnt and acquired in his uncountable existences throughout the very long period of four asankheyyas (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles, and they were all remembered by **Prince Siddhattha**. The brain must perform its functions according to the commands of the mind.

3. How can we know and study the Mind?

The Omniscient Buddha was the leader and forerunner of scientists in discovering all ultimate realities and in teaching his excellent Dhamma both in principles and in practicals. In order to analyse the body and discern ultimate materialities, he taught the meditation - subject called **“Defining Four Primary Elements”** to develop the neighbourhood concentration and to break down the body into material groups and to discern and define each ultimate materiality present in the material groups by means of its characteristic, func-

tion, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising. These are described on pages 323-331, 323-325.

Then the Buddha taught how to discern the four causes which give rise to materialities and how to classify the 28 ultimate materialities into 21 types of material groups (*rūpa-kalāpas*) as described on pages 325-331 in Chapter (14).

The causes which produce mentalities are the kamma which has the chance to give rise to the present existence, and the **twelve bases** (*āyatana*s) consisting of six sense doors and six sense-objects, which are described on pages 87-88.

Soon after the **death-consciousness** (*cuti citta*) of the past existence perishes, **the rebirth-consciousness** (*patisandhi-citta*) of the present existence arises without any separation in time as described in diagram 16.1 on page 354.

The kamma, that gives rise to the present existence, produces its resultant consciousness one after another continuously from birth to death. The first resultant consciousness functions as rebirth-consciousness, subsequent resultant consciousnesses function as **life-continuum** (*bhavaṅga-cittas*) to keep the new person alive, and the last resultant consciousness functions as death-consciousness.

The life-continuum serves as **the mind-door**, where all six sense-objects, including consciousnesses, mental factors, past sense-objects and future sense-objects can appear. The five translucent materialities, produced by the kamma, at the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, and the body function as the eye-door, the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door and the body-door respectively.

The meditator, who wants to discern mentalities, develops the right concentration, preferably the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna concentration, until very brilliant and penetrative light is radiated. He observes the eye-door and the mind-door together, and then observes a visible object striking the two doors simultaneously. **The eye-door cognitive series of consciousnesses**, as described and explained on pages 355-357, arises and disappears very quickly.

Bha-”Tī-Na-Da-Pa-Ca-Sam-San-Vo-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Dā-Dā-”Bha

However, the cognitive series reappears in the mind-door immediately as a past sense-object, and the meditator can discern and define each consciousness in the cognitive series by means of its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising. Then he discerns and defines each mental factor that associates with each consciousness by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising.

Similar cognitive series of consciousnesses arise in the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door and the body-door.

When one of the six sense-objects, which may be past, present or future sense-object, appears at the mind-door, **the primary mind-door cognitive series of consciousnesses arises** as described and explained on pages 359-361. The meditator can discern and define each consciousness and its associated mental-factors as before.

Bha- “Na-Da-Ma-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Dā-Dā”-Bha-

In a five-door cognitive series, the sense-object is known only roughly whether it is good or bad. The detailed features of the sense-object are not known yet. Thus after a five-door cognitive series, several secondary mind-door cognitive series immediately follow, retaking the sense-object which has perished and reappeared in the mind-door as a past sense-object. Only after these several secondary mind-door cognitive series, discerning the detailed features of the sense-object one after another, does one know the object vividly together with its name.

The *jhāna* cognitive series of consciousnesses (*jhāna-vīthi*) is described and explained on pages 361-365. The supremundane series of consciousness (*magga-vīthi*) are described and explained on pages 217-220.

4. The Properties, Functions and Reactions of Consciousnesses and Mental Factors

The Buddha analyses the mind into ‘consciousness’ and 52 mental factors. The classification of mental factors into 13 neutral mental factors, 14 immoral mental factors and 25 beautiful mental factors, and the description of their properties and functions are

described on pages 332-343 in Chapter (15).

The classification of consciousnesses into 12 immoral consciousnesses, 18 rootless-consciousnesses, 24 sense-sphere beautiful consciousnesses, 15 fine-material sphere consciousnesses, 12 immaterial-consciousnesses and eight supramundane consciousnesses and the description of their properties and functions are described on pages 344-348.

5. The Description of Psychophysical Processes

Psychophysical processes involve ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities. The classification of ultimate materialities and the description of their properties are described on pages 320-331.

The psychophysical phenomena at the time of conception are described on pages 353-355. The psychophysical phenomena in a living being is described on pages 355-361.

6. The Purification and Development of the Mind

The impurities of the mind are 14 immoral mental factors. Among them, ten defilements (kilesās, page 158) defile, debase and burn the mind. They are the causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the whole world. The mind can be totally purified and developed to the highest level in seven stages by undertaking the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.

According to *Rathavinita Sutta*³⁸ and *Visuddhi Magga*³⁹, the mind is systematically purified and developed in seven stages in the following order.

- (1) *Sīla-visuddhi* – the purification of morality by observing the fourfold morality for overall purity,
- (2) *Citta-visuddhi* – the purification of the mind by undertaking mindfulness of breathing to develop four rūpāvacara jhānas (four-jhāna method),
- (3) *Diṭṭhi-visuddhi* – the purification of view by analysing body and mind into ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities and

38. M. 1-281

39. Vs. 2-73, 2-222(315)

defining each of them by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising.

- (4) *Kaṅkhāvitarāṇa-visuddhi* – the purification by overcoming all doubts by penetratively discerning the causal relations of Dependent Origination,
- (5) *Maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi* – purification by knowledge and vision of what is the Path and not-Path after developing the first two insight-knowledges by vipassanā-meditation,
- (6) *Paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi* – purification by knowledge and vision of the way by developing the remaining eight insight-knowledges in vipassanā-meditation,
- (7) *Ñāṇadassana-visuddhi* – purification by knowledge and vision by developing the four Path-Wisdoms.

All the above seven stages of purification are described on pages 155-220.

Thus the mind can be developed systematically from sense-sphere moral consciousness to fine-material moral consciousnesses and immaterial moral consciousnesses, and then to the four Path-Consciousnesses associated with the four Path-wisdom which totally eliminated all defilements in the mind. Then the meditator becomes an Arahant, the highest attainment in life and can enjoy the highest bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

7. The Mind is the real Creator of all Living Beings

The important **Law of Kamma**, described in Chapter [18], is also very amazing. ‘**Kammas**’ mean all volitional actions performed by all living beings in the whole universe, including men, animals, ghosts, deities, etc.

Since the body, the hands and the mouth cannot move by themselves, and they are moved by the mind through mind-born materialities, all their actions are actually performed by the minds.

In nature we find that each mango-tree bears many fruits, and each ripe mango-fruit leaves behind a mango-seed, which can give rise to a new mango-tree again. Similarly, each moral or immoral action is performed by many million moral or immoral-minds, and

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when these minds perish soon after they arise, they leave behind many million moral or immoral karmas in the mental stream. Each potent moral karma has the potential to produce a blissful existence in the human realm or a celestial realm, and each potent immoral karma has the potential to produce a woeful existence in a woeful abode.

If a person can develop rūpāvacara kusala jhāna, he will acquire billions of rūpāvacara kusala karmas. And each potent rūpāvacara kusala karma can produce a brahma-existence in a fine-material Brahma-realm.

Also if a person can develop arūpāvacara kusala jhāna, he will acquire billions of arūpāvacara kusala karmas. Each potent arūpāvacara kusala karma can give rise to a brahma-existence in an immaterial brahma-realm after death.

How various types of karmas bear results to give rise to all living beings in the 31 planes of existence are described on pages 393-394. The chart of 31 planes of existence is displayed on page 398 and also attached to the back of this book. The Buddha could see all living beings and know their karmas, which gave rise to their respective present existences, with his supernormal knowledges.

The way how karmas always arise and the manner how they always bear results are determined by **“the Law of Karma”**. With the help of this Law, we can rationally explain the differences in fate and fortune of the people as described on pages 399-404.

8. The Law of Karma

The Law of Karma is not controlled by any Almighty God. It is a natural law which freely works in its own field. Those who understand and believe in the workings of karma and in the teachings of the Buddha are said to have **the right view**. The right view is very important and essential to lead a wise and beneficial life.

It is a very good news to know that we can wisely control our fates and fortunes by making use of the Law of Karma to control our minds to abstain from evil actions and to perform moral actions. Millions of people with the right view have gone to Nibbāna

to enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

9. The Doctrine of Dependent Origination

Another important natural law to understand is **the Doctrine of Dependent Origination**. This doctrine describes the rounds of rebirths of all living beings in terms of eleven causal relations of twelve factors as well as in terms of five causes and five effects and also in terms of three rounds of defilements, kammās and kamma-resultants as presented on pages 197-202, 407-414.

Gotama Buddha said that he had steadfastly fulfilled Ten Noble Perfections and Five Great Sacrifices throughout his uncountable past existences during a very long period of four asaṅkheyyas (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles since his existence of **Sumedha** when he received **Buddha Dīpaṅkarā's prophecy** that he would become a future Buddha. Nobody could become a Buddha without fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections and Five Great Sacrifices for such a long period.

The **Buddha** reminded **Venerable Ānanda** that worldlings had to undergo the round of rebirths life after life, because they did not understand properly the causal relations of Dependent Origination (Vs.2.252-253).

In undertaking insight meditation, the meditators must discern and verify the causal relations of Dependent Origination to clarify all doubts about past existences and future existences and to straighten all wrong views about the causes of existences. Also in Visuddhi Magga and Abhidhamma Commentary, it is clearly stated thus:

“There is no one, even in a dream, who has emancipated from the rounds of misery without the ability to break through the causal relations of Dependent Origination with his wisdom-sword, which has been sharpened on the sacred whatstone of concentration.”

The Doctrine of Dependent Origination has been discerned and verified by many million Noble Persons. Even nowadays the meditators in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres in Myanmar can discern their past existences, present existence and future existences and correlate one existence with another ex-

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istence by means of the causal relations of Dependent Origination. Then they can proceed undertaking vipassanā-meditation to develop ten insight knowledges to become enlightened as Noble Persons.

Concrete evidences about past existences and future existences are described in Chapter [20] on pages 416-442. So we should have no doubt about our past existences and our coming future existences. We should live wisely, nobly and happily according to the advices of the Buddha to be reborn again and again in blissful realms and to be finally enlightened to the Four Noble Truths to become Noble Persons and to enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever.

Buddha Dhamma can purify and develop the mind to the highest level to attain the highest Fourfold Path-wisdom and Arahantship which is the highest attainment in life!

[8]

BUDDHA ABHIDHAMMA IS RALLY SUPREME PHILOSOPHY

1. What is Philosophy?

Thorndike Barnhart Comprehensive Dictionary defines philosophy as (1) study of the truth and principles underlying all knowledge; study of the most general causes and principles of the universe, (2) system for guiding life, (3) reasonable attitude; calmness and love of wisdom.

Oxford Disctionary defines philosophy as the search for knowledge and truth, especially the nature and meaning of existence.

With his most powerful supernormal power of divine eye, the Buddha could see all living beings residing in a hundred thousand crores of world-systems known as “the Field of Authority of the Buddha.”

When he contemplated the true nature of those beings living in each world-system, he came to know very well that no matter how numerous devas, humans and brahmās were in a single world-system, they were composed of mentalities-materialities, and they could be reduced to twelve factors of Dependent Origination.

The Buddha also stated that there were uncountable numbers of world-systems and universes, and no world-systems and no universes are permanent; they were destroyed regularly by fire, by water or by air, and new world-systems and new universes were formed again naturally by the combination of dust particles, comets, etc.

2. What Really Exist in the Universe?

Throughout history philosophers wanted to know the true nature of existence and the fundamental elements that make up the universe and all living beings.

Early philosophers believed that there were only four fundamental elements: the earth, water, fire and air in the universe. They also believed that life came from these four elements and returned

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to these four elements after death. This assumption was later found to be unsatisfactory.

Scientists tried to analyse everything to find the fundamental elements that made up the universe. They found only matter and energy and 92 natural elements in chemistry. In the twentieth century, they postulated that **matter is made up of atoms, and atoms are made up of electrons, protons and neutrons**. But they could not detect the mind, and they did not know what the mind really is.

About 2600 years ago, that is in 588 B.C., the Buddha appeared in the world. He possessed many most powerful supernormal knowledges and Omniscient Wisdom which can know precisely everything that should be known. With his supernormal knowledge of divine eye, he could penetratively see all living beings residing in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities.

These ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, which are collectively called '**ultimate realities**', **consist of consciousness, 52 mental factors, and 28 types of ultimate materialities**. They are the most basic fundamental elements that really exist in living beings and in the whole universe. They are involved in all psychophysical processes, and all psychophysical phenomena can be explained in terms of ultimate realities.

In his seventh year (vassa) of Buddhahood, the Buddha expounded Abhidhamma doctrine to devas and brahmās in Tāvattimsā realm day and night continuously for three months. He also gave guidance to his right-hand Chief Disciple, Venerable Sariputta, who was foremost in wisdom among his disciples, so that the latter could teach Abhidhamma to human-beings in the human realm simultaneously. At the end of Abhidhamma teachings, known as the higher teaching of the Buddha, uncountable devas and brahmās became enlightened as Noble Persons. The five hundred bhikkhu-disciples of Venerable Sariputta, to whom Sariputta taught Abhidhamma, also became enlightened as Arahants when the Buddha gave them a short sermon based on Abhidhamma. So Abhidhamma teach-

ings are very important and very beneficial.

All the teachings of Abhidhamma by Venerable Sāriputta became **Abhidhamma Piṭika**, containing seven great treatises. Vipassanā meditation is entirely concerned with repeated reflection of the three characteristics of ultimate realities. So the knowledge of Abhidhamma is very essential to gain enlightenment as Noble Persons.

The seven treatises of Abhidhamma can be regarded as ‘Supreme Philosophy’, the Seventh treatise, called ‘Paṭṭhāna Treatise, being the master-piece of Buddhist Philosophy. The 24 modes of Paṭṭhāna Conditions and their operation in cognitive series of consciousness and psychophysical processes are described briefly in Chapter [17] on pages 366-375.

3. What is the True Nature of Existence?

There are many important life-problems which cannot be answered by learned men and philosophers. **Leo Tolstoy**, 1829-1910, the well known Russian writer and religious philosopher, who won the Noble Prize with his great novel “War and Peace”, considered by many as the greatest novel ever written, pondered over some life-problems: *“How did I come into existence as a man? Why am I alive? What is the most important thing to do in life? Why shall I grow old and die finally? Shall I be reborn again after death? Where and how shall I be reborn again? These questions are certainly very important. As I cannot answer these questions logically and rationally, I feel that the place I am standing on collapses.”*

The Buddha really knew everything that should be known with his Omniscient Wisdom, the greatest wisdom known as **‘Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa’** in Paḷi. On the auspicious night of Vesākha, 588 B.C., while the Bodhisatta was sitting on the jewel-throne at the foot of Mahābodhi Tree, his mind was totally pure, soft and tender, being amenable to his wishes and enabling him to accomplish all kinds of feats, because he had tamed and trained his mind by developing very skilfully the eight jhāna-attainments on ten kasiṇas.

In the first watch of that night, the Bodhisatta developed the fourth rūpāvacara-jhāna, which is the foundation for developing

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supernormal powers, came out of the jhāna, and inclined his mind towards **supernormal knowledge of former existences**. Immediately, the supernormal knowledge, known as ‘*Pubbenivāsānussatī-abhiññā*’, arose in him, and he could vividly see all his past existences together with all his past activities, past events and past experiences up to his past existence of **Sumedha**, four *asaṅkheyyas* (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago.

He recollected also, in backward order, many existences prior to Sumeda-existence, and recollected in the forward order all his past existences up to the existence of **Setaketu Deva**, just before his present existence. So he came to know that every living being has uncountable past existences and uncountable future existences.

He also developed powerful insight-knowledge, seeing all existences in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly, and they were in a continuous state of flux like the flame of an oil lamp or the current of a river, connecting all his existences.

The Bodhisatta had very great wisdom to be able to discern each mentality and each materiality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising.

He also understood that as mentalities and materialities arise from natural causes and perish very rapidly and incessantly, there is no sentient being to be called ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘man’, ‘woman’, etc., and consequently there is no ‘Almighty God’ or ‘Brahmā’ who creates living beings.

Thus the Bodhisatta could get rid of the wrong concepts of ‘self’, ‘soul’, ‘ego’, ‘jīva’, ‘atta’ and “**personality-belief**”, thinking that ‘I’ or ‘person’ really exists. These concepts make one selfish and one’s selfish actions will condition one to be born in a woeful abode after death.

Therefore, what really exist in all living beings and in the whole universe are ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities which are collectively called “**ultimate realities**.”

*At the middle watch of that auspicious night, the Bodhisatta directed his mind-continuum towards attaining the **Supernormal***

Knowledge of Divine Power of Sight, and immediately **Divine Eye** (*Dibbacakkhu*) arose in him. Through this supernormal knowledge of Divine Eye, he could see all living beings and inanimate things in one hundred thousand crores of world-systems. He could also see all living beings in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly. So he knew that they have three common characteristics of impermanance, suffering and not-self. Moreover, he could also see those living beings, who were dying, and where they were born after death in accordance with their kmmas.

Based on the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Power of Sight or Divine Eye, the Bodhisatta also attained the following two supernormal knowledges:

(1) *Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa* – Power of seeing beings in the thirty-one planes of existence and knowing their respective kmmas, which have given rise to their respective present existences.

(2) *Anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa* – Power of knowing future existences of oneself and of others, and also the future events and future worlds.

Thus the Bodhisatta could get rid of ‘**ignorance** or **delusion**’ (*moha* or *avijjā*) that blinds the mind not to see and not to know past existences and future existences of sentient beings as well as **the true nature of the Law of Kamma that gives rise to new existences**.

In the third watch of that auspicious night, the Bodhisatta inclined his mind-continuum to know the true nature of the process of birth and death of all living beings when **the Doctrine of Dependent Origination** (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*) became clearly evident to him.

The Doctrine of Dependent Origination beautifully and rationally explains the rounds of births and deaths (*saṃsāra*) of all living beings with eleven causal relations of twelve factors as explained in Chapter [19] on pages 407-415.

The Buddha reminded Venerable Ānanda that living beings have to undergo the round of rebirths life after life, because they do not understand properly and penetratively the causal relations of De-

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pendent Origination. Also in Visuddhi Magga and Abhidhammā Commentary, it is clearly stated thus:

“There is no one even in a dream, who has emancipated from the rounds of misery without the ability to break through the Paṭiccasamuppāda causal relations of the Saṃsāra machine with his wisdom sword which has been sharpened on the sacred what stone of concentration.”

Millions of Arahants have verified the Truth of the Doctrine of Dependent Origination. Even nowadays the meditators in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres can discern at least their three past existences, present existence and future existences and can relate the five causes of each past existence with the five effects of its subsequent existence successfully.

Thus they can get rid of all doubts about their past existences and their future existences. They can also eliminate all wrong views such as “the view of uncausedness (*ahetuka-diṭṭhi*) which believes in the arising of living beings without any cause, “the view of the wrong cause of existence (*visama-hetuka-diṭṭhi*) which believes in the creation of living beings by a Creator, “the view of the inefficacy of action (*akiriya-diṭṭhi*), “the view of nihilism” (*natthika-diṭṭhi*), “the view of eternity of the soul” (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) and “the view of annihilation of the soul” (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*).

4. Why were We Born as Human Beings?

Most people do not care to know why they were born and what will happen after death. Leo Tolstoy was right when he said that to know why we are born and what will happen to us after death is very important.

According to Monotheistic Religions, human beings are created by an Almighty God and are allowed to live just one existence to prepare for two eternities: the eternity of heaven or the eternity of hell. A man will have as his future either the endless bliss in heaven or the endless suffering in hell. So it is very important for them to believe in God and abide by God’s Commandments.

According to natural science, a human is produced from a zygote formed by the combination of an ovum from the mother and a

sperm from the father. The zygote grows into a baby in the mother's womb, and the baby, after being born, grows into a man by consuming food.

Nowadays scientists help barren couples from all over the world **to get test-tube babies**. These couples should not get babies according to the wish of the Almighty God. But scientists can help them to get children.

Scientists take an ovum from the ovary of the wife and put it in a test-tube. They also put the semen of the husband into the test-tube and watch from a microscope. Many sperms from the semen swarm around the ovum, trying to penetrate into it. After a sperm had penetrated into the ovum, the skin of the ovum hardens, preventing other sperms from penetrating into it.

The fertilized ovum, known as zygote, is placed inside the womb of the mother. The zygote attaches itself to the wall of the mother's womb when pregnancy takes place. The baby is born in due time just as in normal pregnancy. The baby is known as a **'test-tube baby.'**

Scientists think that the baby is produced from the zygote. But, sometimes, they found that the zygote did not produce a baby. They do not know what is the reason.

The research conducted by **Louis Pasteur**, 1822-1895, the French scientist who established the process of **'Pasteurization'**, revealed that living beings can only be produced from living beings. So scientists accepted the principle: **"All life from life"** (*Omne viuum ex vivo*). So scientists cannot explain how a material cell called 'zygote' can give rise to 'a test-tube baby'.

In the case of the Buddha, he could see clearly the rebirth-process with his most powerful Divine-eye and he could understand everything that should be understood with his Omniscient Wisdom.

The Buddha knew that the zygote functions as a material support for pregnancy to take place, and that the baby, who is conceived in the zygote in the mother's womb, died from the past existence and a potent kāmāvacara kusala kamma of that past exis-

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tence produced its first result in the form of three kamma-born material groups, namely, body-decad, sex-decad and heart-decad, which amount to a very tiny drop called **‘kalala-fluid’**, together with a sense-sphere resultant consciousness and its associated mental factors.

The three kamma-born material groups serve as material aggregate, the resultant consciousness serves as consciousness-aggregate, and the associated mental factors function as three mental aggregates. The combination of these five aggregates represents a living baby, who is conceived in the mother’s womb. The resultant consciousness takes the near-death sign of the baby’s past existence as its object, and depends on the heart-decad as its material base.

The reproductive kamma, i.e. the potent *kāmāvacara kusala* kamma, keeps on producing its resultant consciousnesses and their associated mental factors at every consciousness-moment and kamma-born materialities at every submoment. (The life-span of consciousness is one consciousness-moment which is equal to three submoments, i.e. the arising submoment, the existing submoment and the perishing submoment of a consciousness.) The first resultant consciousness is called **‘rebirth-consciousness’**, the subsequent resultant consciousnesses are called **‘life-continuum’**, and the last resultant consciousness is called **‘death-consciousness’**.

(See Chart No.9, the bottom figure, attached at the back of this book.)

Of the material groups produced by four causes, **kamma born material groups** start to form at the moment of conception, and they keep on forming at every submoment until the last-formed kamma-born materiality groups perish simultaneously with death-consciousness.

Consciousness-born material groups begin to form at the arising moment of the first life-continuum consciousness, and they keep on arising at every arising moment of subsequent consciousnesses.

Heat-born material groups start to form from the existing moment of rebirth-consciousness. The reason is that the heat-ele-

ments present in the first kamma-born material groups come to their existing state at that moment. From that time onwards, the heat-element, present in every material group, keeps on producing heat-born material groups at every submoment until the person dies and the corpse turns to dust.

Every material group also contains nutritive element ‘ojā’. But nutriment-born material groups start to form when internal ojā meets external ojā (from digested eaten food) at the time of diffusion of nutritive essence and the combination of internal ojā and external ojā comes to the existing state. From that moment, nutriment-born material groups are also formed at every submoment.

As new material groups are formed continuously, old material groups perish and disappear when their life-span of 17 consciousness-moments is over. Altogether 20 types of material groups, consisting of 8 types of kamma-born material groups with the exception of male-sex-decad or female sex-decad, 6 types of consciousness-born material groups, 4 types of heat-born material groups and 2 types of nutriment-born material groups (described on pages 328-330), arise in a person. Thus the material phenomena go on uninterruptedly in the sense-sphere till death like the flame of a lamp or the stream of a river.

The psychophysical phenomena at the time of conception and the psychophysical phenomena in a life-time are described on pages 353-361. So long as the resultant consciousnesses are arising, their associated mental factors and four types of material groups will keep on arising and perishing, so that the person will remain alive.

5. What is the Most Important Thing to Do in Life?

Who can give the correct advice how to live wisely, happily and beneficially and what is the most important thing to do in life? Can a philosopher give the best advice by reasoning and thinking deeply without the knowledge of the true facts of life? How can one know the true facts of existence?

The Buddha pointed out that there are three ways of acquiring knowledge. They are:

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- 1 *Sutamaya-ñāṇa* – knowledge acquired by learning from teachers and scriptures.
- 2 *Cintāmaya-ñāṇa* – knowledge acquired by logical and rational thinking based on known facts;
- 3 *Bhāvanāmaya-ñāṇa* – knowledge acquired by direct observation with insight wisdom in vipassana meditation.

Of these three methods, the third method is most powerful and most certain. The Buddha advised his disciples to develop the right mental concentration (*samāsamādhi*) by undertaking tranquility-meditation in order to see and know penetratively all ultimate realities and natural truths correctly with *yathābhūta-ñāṇa*, that is, “the wisdom that can see and know things as they really are.”

For example, if a person can undertake tranquillity-meditation on “mindfulness of the in-breath and the out-breath”, called ‘*Ānāpānassati*’, as taught by the Buddha and described on pages 164-174, he can develop **four rūpāvacara jhānas**, which are collectively designated as “**the right concentration**” (*sammā-samādhi*) by the Buddha.

Then the mind becomes pure, serene, very blissful and very powerful. It will radiate very brilliant and penetrative light. With the help of this light, the meditator can penetratively see all his internal organs and other people’s organs vividly.

By undertaking another tranquillity-meditation called “**Meditation occupied with the Body**” (*Kāyagatāsati*) as described on page 180-181, the meditator can discern all the 32 parts of the body in himself and in others, and can reflect repeatedly on the disgusting nature of each body-part to develop the first rūpāvacara jhāna. Then he will attain “**the perception of foulness**” (*asubha-saññā*), which can effectively subdue his **greed** (*lobha*), which is the main cause of all suffering. So he becomes serene like an Arahant. As he attains the perception of loathsomeness on the living body, he can well suppress his sense-desires to live happily with sensual pleasure and to progress quickly in insight meditation.

Again by undertaking another tranquillity meditation called “**Defining the Four Primary Elements**” (*catudhātu-vavatthāna*),

which is briefly described on pages 188-190, he can discern the **material groups** (*rūpa-kalāpas*), which make up the body and which are arising and perishing very rapidly. The meditator can also discern penetratively 8, 9, 10 or more **ultimate materialities** present in each material group. He can also define each ultimate materiality precisely by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. He can also discern and define each ultimate materiality in other people's bodies.

The material groups are comparable in size to electrons and protons as explained in the Preface of this book. So ultimate materialities, which amount to 28 types, are much smaller and finer than electrons and protons. Material sciences do not know these ultimate materialities, which are involved in psychophysical processes.

What is more amazing is that with the help of the brilliant penetrative light radiated from the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna moral consciousness, the meditator can discern the cognitive series of consciousnesses or minds that arise in the six sense-doors to be aware of the six types of sense-objects that appear at the doors as described on pages 190-194.

Material sciences know the eye-door, the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door, the body-door superficially, but do not know the **mind-door**, which is functioned by life-continuum, i.e. *bhavaṅga-cittas*, which are called '*unconscious-minds*' by scientists and psychologists. The mind-door is very powerful. All six types of sense-objects, including **mind-object**, consisting of ultimate materialities, ultimate mentalities, past sense-objects, future sense-objects, Nibbāna and concepts (meditation-signs) can appear in the mind-door and can be known by mind-door cognitive series of consciousnesses.

Ultimate mentalities consist of consciousness (*citta*) and 52 types of mental factors (*cetasikas*), which are unknown to scientists and psychologists. As the minds can arise and perish one after another extremely rapidly at the rate of about one thousand billion minds per wink or per snap of the fingers, it is most difficult to discern and define each consciousness and each mental factor by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate

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causes. Yet the Buddha could discern and define them precisely and teach his disciples practically how to discern them. Nowadays meditators in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres can also discern and define ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities successfully.

Thus the Omniscient Buddha knew in detail all the true-facts of existence from conception till death. He could also see with his most powerful divine eye that most people were born in four woeful abodes after death because of their bad kammās, and they were reborn in woeful abodes life after life as there was very little opportunity to do meritorious deeds in woeful abodes. So **the four woeful abodes are the permanent homes of most woeful beings** with very little chance for them to be reborn in the human realm again.

So to prevent human beings and celestial beings from being born in woeful abodes, all the Buddhas gave the following best **simple advice for the best living and the most important thing to do in life:**

“Avoid evil, do good, and purify the mind;

This is the advice of all the Buddhas.”

Without the knowledge of ultimate realities, the Law of Kamma, and the Doctrine of Dependent Origination, no body can interpret the above advice correctly.

What is evil and what is good? What are the defilements that defile and debase the mind? Why and how should we purify the mind?

Socrates (469-399 B.C.), the Greek philosopher who is regarded as one of the wisest men of all times, consulted the famous Oracle at Delphi. ***The Oracle proclaimed: “Know thyself; Socrates is the wisest man in the world.”***

Socrates remarked: “To know what is evil and what is good is most important in life. If people correctly know what is evil and what is good, no body will turn his back towards ‘good’ and do ‘evil’.” Socrates wisely admitted: ***“All I know is that I know nothing.”***

Socrates' contemporaries, the **Sophists**, who were tuition teachers, taught their students: "What is beneficial to you is good; what is not beneficial to you is bad."

This is a selfish definition without consideration for the welfare of other beings and without the knowledge of kamma and its results.

According to the Buddha, an action is good if it is faultless and blameless, that is, it does not cause any harm to oneself and to others and it brings good results to oneself and to others. An action is evil if it causes harm to oneself or to others and it brings bad results to oneself or to others or to both.

The Buddha knew that there are ten kinds of evil actions or evil conduct, called "*akusala-kamma*patha", meaning "accomplishment of evil kammas that will lead to woeful rebirth".

Avoiding these ten evil actions amounts to ten moral good actions, called "*kusala-kamma*patha", meaning "accomplishment of moral kammas that will lead to blissful rebirth."

Ten evil actions and ten moral actions are described on pages 123-124.

Abstaining from ten evil actions and accomplishing ten moral actions simultaneously can be achieved by simply observing five precepts of Pañca-sīla with the understanding that in the fourth precept one must abstain from four false speeches: lying, slandering, speaking harshly and talking vainly and that by abstaining from three evil bodily actions and four evil speeches, one also automatically abstains from three evil mental actions.

The Buddha also advised to take Threefold Refuge together with Pañca-sīla, because by developing great reverence to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha – three holiest objects of veneration – one gets great merit and one shall willingly abstain from all ten evil actions.

Both Threefold Refuge and Pañca-sīla will prevent woeful rebirth and will give rise to very great benefits including the happiest and most beneficial way of living for lay persons. Keeping pure morality promotes the best moral character and

world peace as described on pages 130-134.

The fifth precept of Pañca-sīla advises to abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs, because when one becomes intoxicated, one loses good moral character, the power of thinking wisely, and so one is ready to commit all evil actions.

As the second step the Buddha advised lay-persons to perform “ten bases of meritorious deeds” for greater happiness and more beneficial living. These ten meritorious deeds are described comprehensively on pages 139-147, and they can be divided into Dāna-group, Sīla-groups and Bhāvanā-group.

The Dāna-group, consisting of alms-giving, sharing one’s good merits and appreciating other’s good merits, is the easiest to do. Yet alms-giving is the best form of happy, social dealing; it helps the poor; it makes both the donor and the donee happy, it can turn enemies to friends and it will make one prosperous in the present existence as well as in many future existences. It subdues *greed (lobha)*, personality-belief and selfishness (*diṭṭhi*), *conceit (māna)* and stinginess to Share One’s property or Knowledge with others (*macchariya*).

The **Sīla-group**, consisting of morality (*sīla*), reverence to elders and holy persons (*appacāyana*) and volunteer service in meritorious deeds (*veyāvacca*), is the foundation of higher meritorious deeds. It constitutes blameless, faultless and wise living, the best moral character, and it subdues *anger and grief (dosa)*, jealousy (*issā*) and remorse (*kukkucca*).

The **Bhāvanā-group**, consisting of meditation (*bhāvanā*), listening or studying the Dhamma (*dhamma-savana*), teaching the Dhamma (*dhamma-desanā*) and the right-view believing in kamma and its results, brings about the happiest living and the greatest benefits. It subdues *ignorance (moha)*, sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*), restlessness (*uddhacca*), moral shamelessness (*ahirika*) and moral fearlessness (*anottappa*).

Ten defilements (kilesās), described on page 158, are immoral mental factors that defile, debase, inflict and burn the mind. They are the root-causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the

world. They become grosser and more violent by fishing, hunting, gambling, consuming intoxicating drinks and drugs, and enjoying sensual pleasure, which will never bring real happiness and which will multiply immoral karmas to send such persons to woeful abodes.

As the third step the Buddha taught the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the training of higher morality, the training of higher concentration and the training of higher wisdom in order to develop ten insight knowledges which are very powerful to subdue ten defilements very effectively and to give the way for the arising of four Path-Wisdoms, one after another, which can totally eliminate all defilements and simultaneously enlighten the meditators to the four Noble Truths and to become Arahants, the best, happiest and highest attainment in life!

The whole practice of the Noble Threefold Training is briefly and comprehensively described on pages 155-220.

6. The All-embracing Paṭṭhāna Treatise is the Most Marvellous Supreme Philosophy

As Abhidhamma deals entirely with ultimate realities, ultimate truths, supernormal knowledges and supramundane wisdoms, the whole Abhidhamma Piṭaka can be regarded as supreme philosophy.

Abhidhamma Piṭaka consists of seven great treatises. When the Buddha contemplated on the first six treatises on the fourth week after his self-enlightenment as a Sammāsambuddha, his Omniscient Wisdom comparatively was vast, and the doctrinal methods were comparatively limited. So no body-rays were radiated yet.

But when he contemplated on the seventh Treatise of all embracing Paṭṭhāna with unlimited number of doctrinal methods, his Omniscient Wisdom found the opportunity to display its extensive brilliance. As the Buddha applied his mind to the most subtle and profound points in all embracing Paṭṭhāna with unlimited number of doctrinal methods, there arose from his mind very brilliant wisdom-rays of six colours, spreading out to countless world-systems in all directions!

In the all embracing Paṭṭhāna Treatise, the Buddha explained the arising of cognitive series of consciousnesses from the contact between six sense-doors and six sense-objects with twenty-four Paṭṭhāna conditions or causes. In the Paṭṭhānaniddeśa Pāli, the Buddha described (1) the conditioning state, (2) the conditionally arisen-state, and (3) the conditioning force or property of each Paṭṭhāna condition. This Pāli describes briefly and precisely the operation of twenty-four Paṭṭhāna Conditions in natural processes of psycho-physical phenomena. The operation of twenty-four Paṭṭhāna Conditions are described briefly and comprehensively on pages 364-375 in Chapter [17].

• **Buddhism is Truly a Natural Great World Religion**

The Blessed Buddha was really the noblest, wisest, most compassionate and greatest religious Teacher of men, devas and brahmās. His numerous Supernormal Knowledges are most powerful and his Omniscient Wisdom precisely knows in detail everything that should be known. He attained these supernormal powers and the highest wisdom by accumulating good great merits of fulfilling Ten Noble Perfections, Five Great Sacrifices and Threefold Noble Practice throughout his uncountable existences during a very long period of four asaṅkheyyas (great aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles and finally by developing seven mundane Supernormal Knowledges and Four Supramundane noblest Path-wisdoms, which totally eliminate all defilements and all suffering.

As he had discovered all ultimate realities consisting of ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities that make up body and mind, all natural truths and all natural laws, which govern all psycho-physical processes, he revealed them to the world in his marvellous higher Teachings called ‘Abhidhamma’ and make use of them in his overall Teaching called “Buddhism”.

In Abhidhamma⁴⁰ the Buddha described how fourteen immoral mental factors – the evil forces in the world – overwhelm and

⁴⁰*“The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 209-216.*

influence worldlings (persons with all ten defilements) to live immorally, to do evil actions and to be reborn in woeful abodes life after life, as Four Great Intoxicants, Four Great Floods, Four Bonds, Four Ties, Four Grasping of sensual pleasure and wrong views, six Hindrances which obstruct good thoughts and good deeds, seven latent defilements in the mind, Ten Fetters which bind worldlings to the rounds of existence and suffering and Ten Defilements which defile, debase, burn the mind and influence worldlings to do evil actions.

To live wisely, happily and beneficially with moral minds, to escape from woeful rebirth and to be born in blissful realms life after life, the Buddha advised to keep Threefold Refuge respectfully, to observe Pañca-sīla mindfully and to do Ten Bases of Meritorious Deeds joyfully.

To escape from woeful rebirth for ever, to enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna for ever, and to live most happily as a Noble Person which is the best achievement in life, one should willingly undertake the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom and walk on the most pleasant Noble Eightfold Path enthusiastically till one reaches the destination of Nibbāna.

Buddhism is teaching the noblest Threefold Training to all fortunate persons from all over the world to develop the highest morality, the highest mental concentration, the highest mundane Supernormal Knowledges, the highest Supramundane Fourfold Path-wisdom and Fourfold Fruition-Wisdom, and to realize Nibbāna and to enjoy its eternal peace and supreme happiness as Noble Persons for ever.

The Four Path-Wisdoms, the Four Fruition-Wisdoms and Nibbāna, which are collectively known as “Nine Supramundane Dhammas”, are truly the noblest Dhammas as they can totally eliminate all the evil forces, called ten defilements and immoral mental factors. The attainment of “Nine Supramundane Dhammas and Arahantship” in this very existence is the highest and noblest attainment in life.

[9]
**THE FOUR UNIVERSAL NOBLE TRUTHS
AND NIBBĀNA**

• **The Four Noble Truths are the Nucleus of the Buddha's Teachings**

The Four Noble Truths are the heart and nucleus of all the Buddha's teachings. They encompass all mundane mentalities and materialities in the universe together with the supramundane eight consciousnesses and Nibbāna. Those who understand penetratively and comprehensively the Four Noble Truths become Noble Persons (*Ariyās*).

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering

In his first sermon, known as 'Dhamma-cakka Sutta' (Turning the Wheel of Dhamma), the Buddha said:

"Birth, ageing, sickness and death are suffering. Sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are suffering. Association with unloved persons or unpleasant conditions is suffering; separation from beloved persons or pleasant conditions is suffering, and not to get what one desires is suffering. In brief, the five aggregates of clinging are suffering."

Later in Pātheyya Sutta, the Buddha described three types of suffering.

- (i) ***Dukkha-dukkha*** – the obvious type of suffering comprising all bodily pain and mental pain. The first twelve types of suffering mentioned in Dhamma-cakka Sutta are obvious suffering.
- (ii) ***Viparināma-dukkha*** – the suffering due to change in condition.

Pleasant conditions do not exist forever. Sooner or later, they will change into unpleasant conditions, giving rise to suffering. Some obvious examples are:

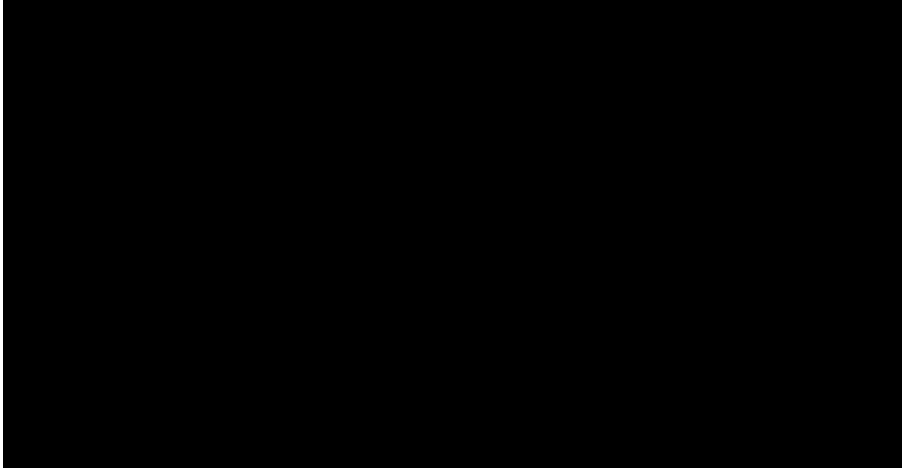
All youthfulness will end in ageing.

All social gatherings will end in parting.

All lovely unions will end in parting company.

All pleasant living will end in dying.

Table 9.1 The Four Noble Truths



Sensual pleasure is transient and fleeting, and it belongs to *viparināma dukkha*. In a well-known play written by the world-famous **William Shakespeare**, **Romeo** and **Juliet** fell in love with each other. When they were together, they were so happy that they thought: “*Love is a many splendid thing.*” But when they were separated by their parents, they were so sad that they finally committed suicide.

Many heart-broken lovers also committed suicide. Many billionaires also committed suicide during economic depression, because they lost many million dollars overnight when the prices of stocks and shares went down drastically. The greater the attachment to the wealth or beloved one, the greater the suffering when one lost them.

(iii) ***Saṅkhāra-dukkha*** – *the suffering due to conditioning*

This is the most important type of suffering that must be observed by insight wisdom in vipassanā meditation. All human beings, Devas and Rūpa-Brahmās are made up of five aggregates of clinging, which are composed of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities.

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As the mentalities and materialities together with the five aggregates are arising due to causes and perishing extremely rapidly and incessantly, they have to be reconditioned to arise by causes very rapidly and incessantly.

So the Buddha said, “*Sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā, sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā,*” meaning: “*All conditioned things are impermanent; all conditioned things are suffering.*”

As all living beings and all existences are made up of five aggregates of clinging, they are conditioned things; so they are impermanent and really suffering.

2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering

“*This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering. It is craving (taṇhā) which gives rise to fresh rebirth together with pleasure and attachment. It finds great delight in this and that objects in the new existence,*” said the Buddha.

Here the Buddha singled out *craving (taṇhā)* as the main cause which produces a new existence. Craving is greed (*lobha*) which has the characteristic of craving for and attaching to sense-objects and existence. Strong attachment is called ‘*clinging*’ or ‘*grasping*’ (*upādāna*). Greed always arises together with *ignorance (avijjā)* and other defilements in greed-rooted immoral consciousness. Ignorance blinds the minds of worldings and makes sense-objects and existence appear to be *permanent (nicca)*, *pleasant (sukha)*, self or *person (atta)* and *beautiful (subha)*; so *greed (taṇhā)* craves for them, and *grasping (upādāna)* strongly attaches to them.

We have seen in the **Doctrine of Dependent Origination** that *avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna* represent **the round of defilements** and they give rise to **the round of kammās**, comprising *kamma-formations (saṅkhāra)* and *kammās (kamma-bhava)*. The round of kammās, with the support of the round of defilements, then produces **the round of resultants**, comprising *resultant consciousness (viññāṇa)*, *its associated mental factors* and *kamma-born materialities (nāma-rūpa)*, *six internal bases (saḷāyatana)*, *contact (phassa)*, and *feeling (vedanā)*, **which represent a new existence.**

As the round of resultants will give rise to the round of defilements, the above three rounds will keep on rotating, producing new existences one after another endlessly.

Thus *craving* (*taṇhā*) can be singled out as the origin of suffering.

- **Craving takes Delight in the new Existence**

Craving builds a new existence again and again, and whatever existence it has built, whether the existence of an animal or the existence of a human being, it always takes delight in the new existence and the sense-objects in that existence.

In Buddhist literature, once there lived **King Assaka**, who ruled Paṭali City in Kāsī country. His chief queen, **Upārī Devī**, was very beautiful and much loved and adored by the king. However, she fell ill and died while still young. The king had her corpse immersed in oil in a glass-coffin, and he gazed at the corpse constantly.

A hermit with supernormal power came to the royal garden of the king and asked the gardener to inform the king that he could tell where his dead queen was reborn. The king went to the garden with his entourage.

The hermit told the king that his dead queen was reborn as a cow-dung beetle in that garden. The king would not believe it, saying that his intelligent queen must have been reborn as a celestial being.

The hermit, by his supernormal power, asked the beetle to come out from under the big stone-slab, where the king and his former chief queen had sat together on several occasions. The female beetle came out following a male beetle.

The hermit made the king understand what the female beetle said. She said that she was the chief queen of King Assaka in her past existence, but she had died from that existence and became a beetle; so she and the king were in different existences and they did not belong to each other anymore. She added that she was very happy to be with her new husband, and that, as she loved her husband so much that, if possible, she would

like to feed the blood from King Assaka's throat to her beetle-husband.

The king was convinced that the female beetle was indeed the new existence of his dead chief queen. He was so angry that he gave the order to burn the queen's corpse immediately. On his return to the palace, he chose a new chief queen and lived happily.

Thus craving gives rise to fresh rebirth, and bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight.

3. The Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering

“This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering. It is the complete fading away and extinction of craving, forsaking and abandoning craving, liberation and detachment from craving. It is Nibbāna - the eternal peace and supreme bliss.

According to the Third Noble Truth, there is really the extinction of suffering when the main cause of suffering, *craving* (*taṇhā*), is completely eliminated. How can craving be totally eliminated?

Craving is greed (lobha) which works in unison with other defilements. The following first eight defilements associate with eight greed-rooted consciousnesses.

1. Ignorance or Delusion — Moha or Avijjā

It blinds the mind not to know: (1) the four Noble Truths, (2) past existences and future existences, (3) the front end and the rear end of present existence, (4) the causal relations of Dependent Origination and the Law of Kamma.

2. Moral Shamelessness to do evil actions — *Ahirika*

3. Moral Fearlessness to do evil actions — *Anottappa*

4. Restlessness of the mind — *Uddhacca*

5. Greed, Craving, Attachment — *Lobha, Taṇhā, Rāga*

Greed has the characteristics of craving for sense-objects and attaching to them. By craving for many things like money, wealth and sensual pleasure, greed has the greatest influence on the mind as well as on the person. *Strong attachment* to money, wealth,

beloved ones, etc., is called *clinging or grasping* (*upādāna*). The greater the attachment, the greater the worry to guard them, and the greater the pain when one lost them. That is the reason why heart-broken lovers and some billionaires committed suicide.

6. Wrong View — *Diṭṭhi*

The most basic and universal wrong view is ‘personality-belief’ or ‘**self-illusion**’. The belief that ‘**self**’ is identical with any one of the five aggregates of grasping or with ‘**person**’ is called ‘**personality-belief**’. The belief that ‘**self**’ is identical with ‘**soul**’, ‘**ego**’ or ‘**atta**’ is called ‘**self-illusion**’. This wrong view develops ‘**selfishness**’, and “**Selfishness is the greatest curse of the human race**”, correctly said by **Willian Gladstone**, the British former Prime Minister.

7. Pride or Conceit — *Māna*

‘Pride’ also looks at oneself as ‘I’ and becomes very conceited.

8. Sloth or Idleness — *Thina*

It makes the mind inactive. It arises due to lack of effort.

9. Greed or **Craving also causes ‘Anger’ or ‘Hatred’ to arise**. The Buddha said:

From craving springs grief;

From craving springs fear;

For him who is wholly free from craving,

There is no grief, much less fear. (Dhammapada 216)

When grief or fear arises, anger also arises causing mental pain, so greed gives rise to anger.

10. **Sceptical Doubt** (*Vicikicchā*) about the Buddha, the Dhamma the Saṅgha, past existences, future existences, the law of kamma, the Doctrine of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths, because ‘**Ignorance**’ (*Moha*) blinds the mind not to know them.

‘**Ignorance**’ (*Moha* or *Avijjā*) blinds the mind not to know the true nature of sense-objects, comprising all living beings and inanimate things. Living beings are composed of ultimate mentalities and

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ultimate materialities. As mentalities and materialities are arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly, leaving nothing permanent, they have the characteristics of *impermanence* (*anicca*), *suffering* (*dukkhā*), *not-self* or *no-self* (*anatta*), and disgusting (*asubha*). So all sense-objects also have the same characteristics.

But *ignorance* blinds the minds of worldlings and turn their worldly outlook upside down. So worldlings and all defilements see sense-objects to be *permanent* (*nicca*), *pleasant* (*subha*), *self* or *person* (*atta*) and *beautiful* (*subha*). They are also ignorant of the Law of Kamma, the Doctrine of Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths. So they perform evil actions and enjoy sensual pleasure as much as possible. When they die, most of them are born in woeful abodes for many existences. So **the Buddha said: “The Four woeful Abodes are the permanent homes of most living beings.”**

All defilements can be uprooted and totally eliminated by undertaking the Noble Eightfold Path, consisting of the Noble Threefold Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom.

Observing the higher morality mindfully can suppress and subdue defilements not to arise in the mind. Next, meditators develop *jhāna*-concentrations by undertaking tranquillity-meditations strenuously as taught by the Buddha. Then meditators can keep their minds pure, free from defilements for longer periods. The concentrated mind is very powerful and blissful.

The wisdom in the pure mind radiates very bright and penetrative light, with the help of which meditators can discern ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities, arising and perishing rapidly in themselves as well as in others. They can define mentalities and materialities precisely by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising. They can also discern the four causes – *kamma*, *consciousness*, *heat* and *nutriment* – that give rise to materialities.

Then by tracing their mind-continuum or mental streams back-

ward and forward, they can discern their past existences and future existences and verify the causal relations of Dependent Origination. After that, they can undertake vipassanā-meditation as instructed by the Buddha. **When they penetratively discern the true characteristics of mentalities and materialities, ignorance cannot blind the mind any more, and greed has nothing to crave for and attach to. So both ignorance and greed do not arise in the mind anymore, and other defilements also do not arise in the mind.**

When they can develop ten insight knowledges, the Path-consciousness and the Fruition-consciousness arise without delay. Although the Path-consciousness arises only once, the wisdom associated with it, called **Path-wisdom**, **simultaneously accomplishes four functions, namely:**

1. comprehension of the Noble Truth of Suffering,
2. eradication of defilements which are the causes of suffering,
3. realization of Nibbana, and
4. full development of the eight factors of the Noble Path.

By reundertaking vipassana meditation, the meditators can develop three higher Path-wisdoms, and **the four Path-wisdoms totally eliminate all defilements including craving (*taṇhā*), and the meditators become Arahants, the noblest and happiest persons just below Buddhas and Pacceka-buddhas!**

• **Nibbāna, the Ultimate Goal of Buddhism, really Exist!**

According to the Third Noble Truth, when the origin of suffering ‘craving’ is totally eliminated, all suffering is also totally eliminated. Therefore, the mental stream is totally free from all taints, defilements and suffering, and it will be serene, peaceful and blissful.

These serenity (*sīti*), peace (*santi*) and bliss (*sukha*) describe the nature of Nibbāna. Nibbāna has the characteristic of ‘eternal peace and supreme bliss’ (*Santisukha*).

In Samyutta (Nikāya (38.1), the Buddha said:

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“The extinction of greed (lobha), the extinction of hatred (dosa), the extinction of ignorance (moha), this is called Nibbāna.”

In **Āditta Sutta, Samyutta Nikāya**, the Buddha said:

“O monks, the whole world is in flames. The six sense-doors, namely, the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body, the mind, and the six sense-objects, namely, the visible object, the sound, the smell, the taste, the touch and the thought are in flames. The six consciousnesses that arise due to the contact between the sense-doors and the sense-objects, namely, the eye-consciousness, the ear-consciousness, the nose-consciousness, the tongue-consciousness, the body-consciousness, the mind-consciousness and their associated mental factors are in flames.

“By what fire are they in flames? By the fire of lust (lobha), hatred (dosa), and ignorance (moha); by the fire of birth (jāti), ageing (jarā) and death (maraṇa), sorrow (soka), lamentation (parideva), pain (dukkha), grief (domanassa) and despair (upāyāsa) are they kindled. When all these eleven fires are totally extinguished and eliminated by four Path-wisdoms, Nibbāna is realized.

However, “the end goal” that one aims for should be differentiated from ‘the means’ that is employed, Here the extinction of the flames is ‘the means’, and Nibbāna is ‘the end goal’. One must not thereby infer that Nibbāna is nothing but the extinction of greed, anger and ignorance.

Nibbāna always exists naturally, but we cannot see it, because our minds are blinded by ignorance, greed and anger. It is like the moon on the full-moon night. Though the moon surely exists in the sky, we cannot see it when it is blocked by thick clouds. When the clouds are blown away by strong winds, the moon becomes visible immediately. Similarly, when defilements are eliminated, we can realize Nibbāna vividly.

Nibbāna can be realized clearly by four Path-consciousnesses and four fruition-consciousnesses, and the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna can be enjoyed

as much as one likes by a noble person (*ariyā*) by developing Fruition-attainment. It is very remarkable that the ultimate Goal ‘Nibbāna’ and its supreme bliss can be realized and enjoyed in this very life!.

If one can develop the first Path-wisdom and its Fruition-wisdom, one becomes a Noble Person called ‘Stream-winner’ , who can enjoy the eternal peace and supreme bliss of Nibbāna up to seven existences in blissful realms, and one shall become an Arahant automatically.

“Far better than sovereignty over the whole earth or sovereignty over two celestial realms, that is, far better than to be a Universal Monarch or the Celestial King Sakka, is to be a Stream-winner.”

4. The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the Extinction of Suffering

“This, O monks, is the Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Extinction of Suffering. It is simply the Noble Eightfold Path consisting of the right understanding, the right thought, the right speech, the right action, the right livelihood, the right effort, the right mindfulness, and the right concentration.”

The classification of the eight Path-factors of the Noble Eightfold Path as the Noble Threefold Training, and the practical procedure for undertaking the Noble Threefold Training is comprehensively described on pages 187-220 in the book entitled “Buddhism Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?”, written by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon.

The beauty of the Path is that meditators first develop the pure higher morality, and on the foundation of this pure morality, they undertake Tranquillity Meditations to develop *jhāna* concentrations to attain the purity of the minds when the wisdom in the mind radiates very bright penetrative light.

With the help of this bright. penetrative light, they define ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities in themselves and in others, discern the causes of materialities and mentalities as well as the

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causal relations of Dependent Origination, and then undertake Vipassanā Meditation as taught by the Buddha to develop ten insight knowledges.

If they are successful, the first Path-wisdom and its Fruition-wisdom will arise, taking Nibbāna as their object, and they will become Stream-winners. If they wish, they can reundertake Vipassanā Meditation to develop three higher Path-wisdoms and their three Fruition Wisdoms. If successful, they will become Arahants, the best, highest and happiest attainment in life.

The Four Path-Wisdoms, the Four Fruition-Wisdoms and Nibbāna are the nine Noblest Supramundane Dhammas, which are so powerful that they can totally uproot and eliminate all defilements from the minds to become Arahants!

“Free from pain and torture is the Noble Eightfold Path; free from groaning and suffering is this Noble Path; it is the Noblest Perfect Path.”
(Majjhima Nikāya 139)

“The only Path that leads to the purity of the mind, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering of the right path, and to the realization of Nibbāna is the Noble Eightfold Path.

(Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta)

- **Material Sciences, Modern Psychology and Modern Philosophy should be Supplemented with Spiritual Supreme Science**

Material Sciences can produce material progress, but not spiritual progress. They do not know what really is the mind, which is the most important and most powerful thing in the world. The mind controls every body's thoughts, speeches and actions; so it controls the whole world.

It is the mind that creates not only many wonderful material things but also all living beings in the whole universe and determines their fates and fortunes through its kamma-properties.

Material sciences cannot explain why human beings are born,

why they are alive, what is the most important thing to do in life, why all human beings are different from one another, and what will happen after death.

Material sciences do not know what is morally good and what is morally bad, how to develop the best moral character, which is most important in social life, what is real happiness and illusive happiness, and how to live wisely happily and most beneficially.

Being ignorant of the real facts of life and existence is very serious. The ignorance of the most fundamental things called “ultimate realities”, comprising “ultimate mentalities” that make up the mind and “ultimate materialities” that make up the living body, is the greatest hindrance to understand all psychophysical processes and attain “the right view” for living wisely, happily and beneficially.

Material sciences are producing many wonderful luxurious goods, beautiful houses, new saloon cars, television sets, radios, cassettes, computers, ipads, iphones, etc. If these things are used for enjoying sensual pleasure, they can give only material happiness temporarily, because sensual pleasure is enjoyed with immoral minds associated with *greed (lobha)* and *ignorance (moha)* which are immoral mental factors and the hottest fires. Immoral minds leave behind billions of immoral karmas in the mental streams of the persons who enjoy sensual pleasure. These immoral karmas will condition them to be reborn in woeful abodes life after life.

As material sciences also produce many modern deadly weapons and nuclear bombs, there are deadly fightings and battles in several places in the world. If people do not develop good morality, loving kindness and compassion, material sciences cannot prevent the Third World War from arising, which will destroy the whole world.

So to teach the people how to develop good morality and good character, how to live wisely, peacefully, harmoniously, beneficially, enjoying real happiness and lasting world-peace, and how to develop the highest knowledge and wisdom for achieving the high-

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est, noblest attainment in life as Noble Persons (*Ariyās*), Material Sciences, Modern Psychology and Modern Philosophy should be supplemented with Spiritual Supreme Science, which is also the Extension of Material Sciences, Modern Psychology and Modern Philosophy. Buddha Dhamma is fully well qualified as Spiritual Supreme Science!

[10]

THE NINE SUPREME ATTRIBUTES OF THE BUDDHA⁴¹

*As the noblest Omniscient **Buddha**, his noblest and most precious teachings called the **Dhamma**, and his noblest disciples and bhikkhus called the Saṅgha very rarely appeared in the world and they are most precious and most worthy of veneration for getting the greatest benefits, they are adorably called “**Triple Gem**” (Tiratana).*

• The Nine Supreme Attributes of the Buddha

Although the Buddha is endowed with infinite noblest attributes, only nine special attributes were taught by the Buddha in his various discourses for the sake of ready remembrance and easy contemplation by devotees among humans, devas and Brahmās.

(For the same reasons only six supreme attributes of the Dhamma and nine supreme attributes of the Saṅgha will be described.)

1 The Attribute of Arahaṇ

*Being perfectly pure and totally free from defilements (greed, anger, ignorance) which defile, debase and burn the mind and which are the root causes of all evil actions and all suffering in the world, and possessing the highest morality, the highest mental concentration and the highest wisdom, the Buddha is the noblest and most worthy of veneration and worship by men and gods. He will never perform evil action in any place. So he is known as ‘**Arahaṇ**’.*

2 The Attribute of Sammāsambuddho

*Being Perfectly Self-Enlightened and truly possessing Omniscient Wisdom which actually knew all natural truths called ‘Dhamma’ and also having the greatest ability to expound the Dhamma to men and gods for their greatest welfare, the Buddha is known as ‘**Samma-sambuddha**’.*

41 “The Great Chronicles of Buddhas”, Vol.II, by the most

Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicitta Sārābhivaṃsa, Tipitakadhara Dhammabaṇḍagārika, Singapore Edition, pp. 1104-1143.

3 The Attribute of *Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno*

Being endowed with eight supernormal knowledges and perfect practice of morality in fifteen ways, the Buddha is known as '***Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno***'.

(a) Eight Supernormal Knowledges (*Vijjā*)

(1) ***Pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal knowledge of knowing his countless former existences as well as others' countless former existences together with former worlds.

(2) ***Dibbacakkhu-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal knowledge of divine eye which can see things at far away places, things concealed, and things too subtle to see with human eyes. The Buddha's divine eye could see all living beings in a hundred thousand crores of world-systems as well as ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities that make up their minds and bodies.

(3) ***Āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal knowledge of extinction of moral intoxicants and all defilements, making the mind of the Buddha perfectly pure. This knowledge is the same as Arahatta Path-Wisdom.

(4) ***Dibbasota-ñāṇa*** – Supernormal knowledge of divine ear which enables the Buddha to hear subtle and coarse sounds, far and near, as well as the voices from celestial worlds.

(5) ***Iddhividha-abhiññā*** – Multivarious kinds of psychic power of creating various things and various forms, flying through the air, walking on water, diving into the earth, passing through walls and mountains, making near what is far, making far what is near, making much what is little, making little what is much, etc.

(6) ***Cetopariya-ñāṇa*** – The Knowledge of reading others' minds.

(7) ***Vipassanā-ñāṇa*** – Insight Knowledge which can discern the true natures of ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities and their common characteristic marks of impermanence, suffering and not-self.

(8) ***Manomayiddhi-ñāṇa*** – Psychic Power of the mind to assume various forms through mastery of the mind accomplished by *jhāna* practice.

(b) Perfect Practice of Morality in Fifteen Ways (Cariya)

(1) **Sīla-saṁvara** – Morality of Restraint, observing 227 bhikkhu precepts of restraint called Pātimokkha Saṁvara Sīla.

(2) **Indriya-saṁvara** – Keeping watch over six sense-doors with constant mindfulness so as to prevent any defilement from arising at any door.

(3) **Bhojanamattaññutā** – Knowledge of proper extent in receiving alms-food and in enjoying it.

(4) **Jāgriyānuyoga** – Wakefulness, sleeping only for one hour and twenty minutes in the third watch of the night and spending the remaining time in meditation, teaching, preaching and bhikkhu-practice.

(5) **Saddhā** – Faith and Confidence in Triple Gem.

(6) **Sati** – Mindfulness of Meritorious deeds.

(7) **Hiri** – Moral shame or sense of shame to do evil.

(8) **Ottappa** – Moral dread or sense of fear to do evil.

(9) **Vīriya** – Great Effort and Diligence.

(10) **Bāhusacca** – Wide Knowledge in the Dhamma.

(11) **Wisdom** – Wisdom including supernormal knowledges.

(12-15) **Four Rūpāvacara Jhānas.**

4 The Attribute of Sugato

Because the Buddha ‘**goes well**’, that is going to Nibbāna through four Path-Wisdoms, and ‘**speaks well**’, that is speaking only what is true and beneficial, he is known as ‘**Sugato**’.

5 The Attribute of Lokavidū

The Buddha is also known as ‘**Lokavidū**’, because he correctly knew and understood the nature of three worlds:

(1) the world of living beings (Satta-loka),

(2) the world of conditioned things comprising mentalities and materialities (Saṅkhāra-loka),

(3) the world of locations of living beings (Okāsa-loka).

The world of locations consist of three spheres or 31 planes of existence as described below.

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(1) **Sense-Sphere** consisting of four woeful abodes, one human realm, and six deva realms, making up eleven sense-sphere realms where sensual pleasure is enjoyed.

(2) **Fine-material Sphere** consisting of 16 Rūpa-brahmā realms, where Rūpa-brahmās live with rūpa-jhāna bliss.

(3) **Immaterial Sphere** consisting of 4 Arūpa-brahmā realms, where Arūpa-brahmās without bodies live with arūpa-jhāna bliss.

Therefore, there are $11+16+4=31$ planes of existences.

The Buddha could see and know correctly with his supernormal power of divine eye that those human beings, who lived immorally performing evil actions, were reborn in woeful abodes when they died, and those human beings, who lived morally performing meritorious actions, were reborn in the human realm and celestial deva realms when they died.

As the Buddha taught Tranquillity Meditation how to develop four rūpāvacara jhānas and four arūpāvacara jhānas, many people could develop these jhānas. Those who attained rūpāvacara jhānas were reborn in rūpa-brahmā realms when they died, and those who attained arūpāvacara jhānas were reborn in arūpa-brahmā realms when they died.

This brief explanation explains how the Buddha rationally and correctly understood with his Omniscient Wisdom about the formation of three Spheres, thirty-one Planes of Existence and the various beings living in these various realms. They can be verified by any able person who can develop the eight jhānas and the supernormal power of divine eye by meditation according to the Buddha's instructions.

6 The Attribute of Anuttaro-purisa-dammasarathi

'**Anuttaro**' means that the Buddha is incomparable in morality (Sīla), in mental concentration (Samādhi), in wisdom (Paññā), in emancipation from the round of suffering (Vimutti), and in the knowledge leading to liberation from all suffering (Vimutti-nāṇa-dassana). So he reigns supreme in this attribute among all living beings.

‘Purisa-damma-sarathi’ means that the Buddha tames those who deserve to be tamed including animals, humans, devas and Brahmās.

The Buddha not only tames individuals from their savage states to virtuous states but also uplifted those virtuous persons who had moral purity to attain jhānas, and those who attained jhānas to realize the fourfold Path-wisdom to become Arahants (Perfect Persons).

So the Buddha is known as **“Anuttaro-purisa-dammasarathi”**, because he is incomparable and unrivalled in taming those who deserve to be tamed.

7 The Attribute of **Satthā-deva-manussānam**

The Buddha is known as **“Satthā-deva-manussānam”**, because he is the incomparable **Supreme Teacher of gods and men**.

He teaches human beings and celestial beings to live morally and harmoniously with others without causing any harm to any living being, without performing any evil action, and practising the three-fold noble training of developing morality (Sīla), concentration (Samādhi) and wisdom (Paññā) to become noble persons (Ariyās) in this very life.

Noble Persons can live most happily enjoying human happiness, celestial happiness and Nibbāna happiness in many blissful existences. They will never be born in woeful abodes again.

** Far better than to be a Universal Monarch or a celestial King or an Emperor who rules the whole world is to be a Noble Person.*
(Dhammapada 178)

8 The Attribute of **Buddho**

The Exalted One is known as **‘Buddho’** or **‘Buddha’**, because he himself is Fully Self-Enlightened to the Four Noble Truths with his Fourfold Path-wisdom to become a Perfectly Self-Enlightened Buddha and he can enlighten men and gods to become noble persons, who can enjoy the Eternal Peace and Unique Bliss of the Deathless Nibbāna for ever.

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9 The Attribute of Bhagavā

The Buddha is also known as ‘**Bhagavā**’, meaning ‘**The Most Exalted One**’, because he possessed many exalted powers and glories as the results or fruits of his enormous meritorious deeds and many billions of good kammās which he had accumulated in his countless existences by fulfilling Ten Perfections during a very long period of four incalculable aeons (*asaṅkheyyas*) and one hundred thousand world-cycles.

Although these exalted powers and glories are so numerous, they can be classified as six kinds, namely: (1) *Issariya*, (2) *Dhamma*, (3) *Yasa*, (4) *Sirī*, (5) *Kamma* and (6) *Payatta*.

(1) *Issariya* – The Will-power of Supremacy

‘**Issariya**’ is the innate will-power of the Buddha to bend things to his will. For example, he has unsurpassed will-power in displaying the **Twin Miracle**, to let water flow out from some parts of his body and to let fire flow out from other parts of his body simultaneously.

Also the Buddha has unsurpassed will-power to enter the Absorption of Arahatta-fruition to enjoy *Nibbāna* bliss at very short moments when he takes a pause in his sermon, while the audience are saying: “*Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu*” (Good! Good! Good!). As a matter of fact, there is no short odd moments when the Buddha does not dwell in the absorption of Arahatta-fruition, enjoying the unique bliss of *Nibbāna*.

• Eight Mundane Features of the Buddha’s Will-Power

(a) **Animā** – The Buddha can transform himself to an atomic size. This was the power he used when **Brahmā Baka** competed with him. The Buddha could see *Brahmā Baka* when the latter made himself invisible. But when the Buddha made himself invisible, *Brahmā Baka* could not see the Buddha.

(b) **Mahimā** – The Buddha can also transform himself infinitely big and tall. This was the power he used to impress the **Lord of Asurā realm**, who thought that he might have to look down at the Buddha because of his enormous size. But when they met each

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other, the lord of Asurā had to look up to the Buddha, because the Buddha made himself very large and very tall.

(c) **Laghimā** – The Buddha can levitate at will and travel in the air with this power, which causes lightness of his body comparable to the lightness of his mind.

(d) **Patti** – The Buddha can travel bodily to any far away place as fast as his mind can travel. He can travel to Deva-realms and Brahmā realms bodily in an instant.

(e) **Pākamma** – The Buddha can transform himself to various forms instantly. He can assume a deva-form among the devas, and a Brahmā-form among the Brahmās. In preaching to the inhabitants of other world-systems, he assumes the form, the voice, etc., of the respective king of each world-system.

(f) **Isitā** – It is the power of dominating the will of others. All the Buddha's routine is accomplished through this power; all beings have to fulfil the wishes of the Buddha.

(g) **Vasitā** – This power is the mastery of psychic powers. The Buddha used this power to tame very powerful and arrogant individuals such as **Uruvela Dragon**, overpowering their powers in every aspect, such as emitting fire, fumes, flames, etc.

(h) **Yatthākāmāvasāyitā** – By this power the Buddha has complete control over jhāna-absorptions and supernormal powers. He can finish a task that he is performing in a moment. In displaying the Twin Miracle, he let fire come out from the upper part of his body while water flows out of the lower part of his body. And then suddenly while the people are watching in awe, he let fire come out of the lower part of his body, and water flow out of the upper part of his body.

The Buddha stands unrivalled in the above eight features of will-power.

(2) **Dhamma – Knowledge of Nine Supramundane Dhammas**

This glorious quality of the Buddha is his unique attainment of the Nine Supramundane Dhammas, consisting of Four Paths (ariya-maggas), Four Fruitions (ariya-phalas) and Nibbāna, which together

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destroy all his defilements so completely that no faintest trace remains in his mind, making him to be the Noblest and most worthy of veneration by humans, devas and Brahmās.

Because of the attainment of this glorious quality of Dhamma, the Buddha becomes endowed with all his unique attributes and glories.

(3) **Yasa – The glorious reputation of the Buddha**

The glorious reputation of the Buddha is no empty boast but true to its every detail and well deserved. In that sense, the Buddha's reputation is pure, unadulterated and unexaggerated, and his fame spreads in all directions, in the human-world, in the Deva-world and in the Brahmā-world.

(4) **Sīri – Splendour of Physical Perfection**

As the cumulative result of his past great unique meritorious deeds and moral kammās, the Buddha possesses a very splendid body which is endowed with 32 major characteristic marks and 80 minor characteristic marks of a Great Man together with a very beautiful miraculous white hair, called 'uṇṇalum' in Pāli, at the middle of his forehead.

His body is like solid gold, very well proportioned, comely, sublime, glorious and very graceful. Brilliant body-rays of six hues always emanate from the person of the Buddha. His matchless superb appearance is free from any taint of defilements, and is further brightened by his **Infinite Compassion** (mahā-karuṇā), great **Loving-Kindness** and **Omniscient Wisdom**.

(5) **Kāma – Power of Accomplishing all his Wishes**

The Buddha can accomplish instantly whatever he wishes and sets out to accomplish by his power of accomplishment. Since his past existence of **Sumedha**, when he received the Prophecy of **Buddha Dīpaṅkarā** that he would become a future Buddha, he had set his mind on leading humanity to liberation by boldly proclaiming thus:

“When I become enlightened, may I be able to lead humanity to enlightenment also (Buddho bodheyyam).

“When I attain liberation from the rounds of rebirths, may I

be able to lead humanity to liberation also (*Mutto modheyyaṃ*).

“When I cross over to the safe shore of Nibbāna, may I be able to ferry across humanity to the safe shore of Nibbāna also (*Tiṇṇo tāreyyaṃ*).

That earnest desire, that steadfast purpose and determination, had never waned in the Buddha. It was that purposefulness which led him to attain Perfect Self-enlightenment, gained liberation from the rounds of rebirths, and crossed over to the safe shore of Nibbāna.

On attaining Perfect Self-enlightenment, he also attained Buddhahood together with Omniscient Wisdom, and then he accomplished his great noble task of enlightening many million humans and many million devas and Brahmās, leading them to liberation from the rounds of rebirths, and ferrying them to the safe shore of Nibbāna.

That steadfast wish (*adhigama-chanda*), steadfast purpose and steadfast effort that are responsible for the glorious accomplishment of the Buddha’s noble mission both for himself and for others are designated as ‘**Kāma**’.

(6) Payatta – The unrivalled noble Effort that Leads to the Top

The Buddha’s strenuous effort and steadfast diligence are unrivalled since his Bodhisatta’s days. When he became Perfectly Self-enlightened as a *Sammāsambuddha* he knew that he had only a short span of 45 years of his life remaining to fulfil his enormous noblest task of enlightening all those many million humans and gods to be enlightened to the Four Noble Truths by himself, liberating them from the rounds of rebirths and suffering and ferrying them to the safe shore of Nibbāna.

Since his Bodhisatta days, his supreme effort was unrivalled by any other living beings. Because of his unique effort, he reached the top as a *Sammāsambuddha*.

As a Buddha, he increased his supreme effort to the highest level. He looked at the whole world every day with his divine eye to see any human or god who should be liberated from the rounds of rebirth and suffering. When he saw someone to be liberated, however far that person may be, he used his supernormal power to go to that person and preached a suitable sermon to liberate that person.

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When the Buddha was eighty years old and about to attain Parinibbāna (pass away), he suffered from serious diarrhoea, yet he walked on and on together with Ānanda and 500 bhikkhus to reach **Kusinara** to liberate a wandering ascetic, named **Subhadda**, who was the last person, whom the Buddha should convert to an Arahant. His supreme effort and unique diligence are very remarkable.

His last words on his death-bed are also very note-worthy:

“Now, bhikkhus, I say this as my last exhortation: Decay and dissolution are inherent in all compounded things. Hence, strive diligently with mindfulness to complete the task of liberating yourselves.”

Because of his unrivalled noble effort and infinite compassion for the living world, the Exalted Buddha is adored, respected, revered and relied on by the whole world!

• **Contemplation of the Buddha’s Attributes**

The nine attributes of the Buddha are arranged as a Pāli verse as follows.

“Itipi so Bhagavā Arahāṃ Sammāsambuddho Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno Sugato Lokavidū Anuttaro-purisa-dammasarathi Satthā-deva-manussānaṃ Buddho Bhagavā.”

Repeated reflection on the Buddha’s attributes is called **‘Buddhānussati’**, which is a **Guardian Meditation** that guards and protects us from internal dangers and external dangers. Internal dangers are **‘hindrances’** (*nīvaraṇas*) which are arisen defilements in the mind. They are our closest enemies which prevent the arising of meritorious deeds and moral minds. External dangers come from wicked persons and dangerous animals.

To undertake *Buddhānussati* meditation, we should mentally recite each attribute of the Buddha, reflecting its meaning thus:

*“Arahāṃ – the Buddha has destroyed all defilements and become noblest and most worthy of veneration,
Sammāsambuddho – He is Perfectly Self-enlightened and endowed with Omniscient Wisdom,*

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Vijjācaraṇasampanno – He is endowed with supreme wisdom and virtuous conduct,

Sugato – He goes well to Nibbāna and speaks well only what is true and beneficial,

Lokavidū – He knows three worlds in detail, namely, the world of beings, the world of location of beings, and the world of formations (mentalities-materialities),

Satthādevamanussānaṃ – He is the greatest teacher of men and gods guiding them to liberation from all suffering and to the realization of Nibbāna.

Buddho – He is Perfectly Self-enlightened and he can also enlighten others to become noble persons who can enjoy the unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever without being born in woeful abodes,

Bhagavā – He is the most Exalted and Blessed One. He is blessed with infinite special qualities which make him most powerful, most graceful, most respectful and most successful.

After we have reflected the nine attributes of the Buddha a few times, we should choose one attribute that we like best, and recollect it repeatedly as, for example, ‘Arahāṃ, Arahāṃ, Arahāṃ, ...’.

When we are recollecting the Buddha’s attributes, our minds are not obsessed or distressed by greed, hatred and delusion; and they are upright and moral. Hindrances are suppressed not to arise in our minds, and jhāna-factors including joy (*pīti*) and bliss (*sukha*) that associate with moral minds become stronger and stronger, raising our mental concentration.

When the neighbourhood concentration (close to jhāna-concentration) is reached, we can live very peacefully and happily in meditation. It is also very beneficial as billions of moral minds and billions of moral kammās arise during meditation, and the moral kammās will produce many blissful existences in the future.

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THE SIX SUPREME ATTRIBUTES OF THE DHAMMA⁴⁴

The teachings of the Buddha are called ‘**Dhamma**’ and also designated as ‘**Buddhism**’. The teachings contain both principles and practices. By undertaking the practices consisting of the Three-fold Noble Training of morality (*Sīla*), concentration (*Samādhi*) and wisdom (*Paññā*), one can develop four Path-consciousnesses (*Maggas*) and **four Fruition-consciousnesses** (*Phalas*), which are known as **Supramandane consciousnesses** as they are aware of Nibbāna.

The fourfold Path-wisdom which associates with the four Path-consciousnesses totally eliminates all defilements from the mind making the person totally pure and highly noble. The person is called an Arahant, a Perfect Person, who can enjoy the unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever, and he is said to attain emancipation from the rounds of births and suffering.

The four Path-consciousnesses, the four Fruition-consciousnesses and Nibbāna are collectively known as the Nine Suprāmandane Dhammas, which are the noblest Dhammas, and they exist only in Buddhism. For this reason, Buddhism can be said to be the Best Religion.

The six Supreme Attributes of the Dhamma are as follows.

1 The Attribute of Svākkhāta

*The Dhamma is well expounded by the Buddha. It is excellent at the beginning, at the middle and at the end. The Dhamma is complete in letter and meaning. It is perfectly complete without the need to add and subtract anything; and it fully describes the noble practice called the **Noble Eightfold Path**, consisting of the **Noble Threefold Training of Morality** (*Sīla*), **Concentration** (*Samādhi*)*

44 “The Teachings of the Buddha”, Higher Level, Vol.I, Published by Department for the Promotion and Propagation of the Sāsana, pp. 143-168.

and **Wisdom** (*Paññā*), that leads to the highest Fourfold Path-wisdom, which totally eliminates all defilements (*Kilesās*) and realizes *Nibbāna*, the ultimate Goal of Buddhism.

*The three virtues of the Dhamma may be noted thus. The **Dhamma has three aspects, namely, learning, practice and realization.***

When one listens or learns the Dhamma, his mind will be calm and peaceful, because the Dhamma can temporarily expel defilements such as greed, craving, hatred, etc., which have arisen in the mind and defiled and burnt the mind. This describes how the Dhamma is excellent in the beginning.

The Dhamma is not only to be learnt but also to be practiced. Even if we can observe five moral precepts diligently, which is the basic practice of Buddhism to abstain from ten evil actions such as killing any living being, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, etc., we lead a faultless, blameless and pure life, and enjoy the greatest happiness as house-holders. When we die, we shall not be born in woeful abodes; we shall be reborn in celestial realms and human realm for many blissful existences.

Furthermore, if we can undertake tranquillity meditation such as mindfulness of breathing, as taught by the Buddha, and attain *rūpāvacara jhānas*, we can enjoy the greatest mundane bliss, that is *jhāna-bliss*, and shall be born as *Rūpa-brahmās* when we die. This is how the Dhamma is excellent in the middle.

The more we practise the Dhamma, the more we realize the Truth. After attaining the *jhānas*, if we can keep on meditating insight meditation called *vipassanā*, and when we can develop ten insight wisdoms, then automatically shall we realize *Magga*, *Phala* and *Nibbāna* and become Noble Persons (*Ariyās*). Then we shall be among the happiest people in the world, enjoying the highest unique bliss of *Nibbāna* as much as we like, and knowing clearly that we shall never be reborn in the four woeful abodes. This describes how the Dhamma is excellent at the end.

2 The Attribute of *Sandiṭṭhiko*

The Dhamma expounded by the Buddha can be seen and realized

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clearly by oneself. The Dhamma comprising the Four Paths (Maggas), the Four Fruitions (Phalas) and Nibbāna can be seen and realized vividly by oneself, if one practises the Dhamma. It is not that kind of Dhamma which has to be accepted by hearsay. So the Dhamma has the quality of Sandiṭṭhiko.

All the ultimate realities, natural laws and natural truths, discovered and expounded by the Buddha, can be seen and understood vividly by anyone by undertaking vipassanā meditation, and they have been verified to be true by millions of Noble Persons.

3 The Attribute of Akāliko

The Nine Supramundane Dhammas are ‘Akāliko’, because they produce their fruit or results immediately. This attribute shows the arising of the Four Fruition-consciousnesses immediately after the arising and perishing of the Four Path-consciousnesses without any separation in time. Also the unique bliss of Nibbāna can be realized and enjoyed immediately by the Four Path-consciousnesses and the Four Fruition-consciousnesses while they are arising without the need to wait till next existence.

The Path-consciousnesses are the causes and the Fruition-consciousnesses are the results. The Path-consciousnesses eliminate defilements and the Fruition consciousnesses cool down the heat of burning defilements, bringing about perfect tranquillity. **And the person who can develop Path-consciousnesses in vipassanā-meditation can realize Nibbāna and enjoy the unique peace and bliss of Nibbāna immediately.**

So also anyone, in giving alms and observing moral precepts, will have peace and happiness immediately. And those, who are meditating, will enjoy peace and happiness while joy (*pīti*), bliss (*sukha*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are being developed in Tranquillity-meditation, and will attain greater peace and happiness while undertaking Vipassanā-meditation, because defilements are being reduced and eliminated temporarily during vipassanā-meditation. That is why many meditators, irrespective of their religions and beliefs, find great pleasure in Buddhist Meditation.

4 The Attribute of Ehipassiko

The Dhamma is ‘Ehipassiko’, because it is clearly visible like the majestic moon in a clear sky. The highest and noblest Dhammas called the Nine Supramundane Dhammas, comprising the Four Path-consciousnesses, the Four Fruition-consciousnesses and Nibbāna, exist distinctly in pristine purity like the full moon in the cloudless sky. Anyone, who realizes them clearly, should invite others to come and practise the Dhamma so that they can see and know the Dhamma clearly by themselves.

The Buddha’s doctrines are so distinct, so pure and so perfect that they are worthy of inviting others to study and practise them. The Buddha did not command nor urge people to come and believe his Teachings blindly. He only invited and persuaded them to come, see and practise his Teachings and decide the results for their own benefits.

When one encounters a wonderful scene, one is not satisfied with having seen it alone; one usually invites one’s beloved ones and close friends to see it also. Similarly, when a person attains Path-consciousness and enjoys the unique bliss of Nibbāna, he feels so happy and so delighted that he invites and urges his beloved ones to come and practise the Dhamma so that they can also enjoy the unique peace and bliss of Nibbāna.

5 The Attribute of Opaneyyiko

The Dhamma is ‘Opaneyyiko’ because it is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind. The Dhamma, comprising the Nine Supramundane Dhammas and Buddha’s Teachings (Pariyatti), are so precious and so excellent that one should practise the Dhamma even in the situation when one’s clothes are on fire or one’s hair is in flame.

When one attains the Path-consciousness, the Fruition-consciousness and Nibbāna, one should perpetually bear them in mind, enjoying the unique peace and happiness of Nibbāna as much as one likes with Fruition-consciousnesses.

As the Supramundane Dhammas can actually extinguish all the flames of woeful abodes and all Samsāra suffering due to repeated

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birth and death, and enable one to enjoy the unique peace and bliss of Nibbāna for ever, they are really most precious and most pleasant, worthy of being perpetually borne in mind.

6 The Attribute of Paccattaṃ Veditabbo Viññūhi

The Dhamma is ‘Paccattaṃ Veditabbo Vinnūhi’ because the Dhamma comprising Four Path-consciousnesses (Maggas), Four Fruition-consciousnesses (Phalas) and Nibbāna can be experienced in one’s own mind at will individually through Fruition-consciousnesses by Noble Persons (Ariyās), who have been enlightened to the Four Noble Truths (Ariya-saccas).

*A noble person can reflect how he has reached the stages of Magga and Phala by his retrospective knowledge (Paccavekkhaṇā-ñāṇa). **He can also enjoy the bliss of Nibbāna by dwelling in Fruition-attainment as long as he likes.***

The Path, Fruition and Nibbāna can be experienced only by those who have realized them, and not by others. It is impossible for a pupil to enjoy the bliss of Nibbāna by the Fruition-attainment of his teacher; neither can the teacher share his Fruition-attainment with his beloved ones nor can his beloved ones realize the Nibbāna that he has realized.

Therefore, the Dhamma is not that kind of doctrine which claims that a person will be salvaged by a Creator. **The Dhamma let all clearly be known that one must be salvaged by oneself and that one must not rely on others for one’s liberation from all bondage and all suffering.**

Alms-giving (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*) and meditation (*bhāvanā*) may be taken to be included in the attribute of ‘Paccattaṃ Veditabbo Viññūhi’. **According to the Law of Kamma one shall enjoy the fruits of one’s meritorious deeds, and one shall have to suffer miserably on account of one’s evil deeds.**

The bliss of Nibbāna can be enjoyed only by noble persons, each one with his own Fruition-attainment that he has realized. Stream-winners (*sotāpannas*) will enjoy Nibbāna bliss with Sotāpatti Fruition-attainment, Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmīs*) will enjoy Nibbāna

bliss with Sakadāgāmi Fruition-attainment; Non-returners (*Anāgāmīs*) will enjoy Nibbāna bliss with Anāgāmi Fruition attainment, and Arahants (*Arahats*) will enjoy Nibbāna bliss with Arahatta Fruition-attainment.

This is the way how the Dhamma is experienced by each individual according to his own realization.

• **Contemplation of the Dhamma's Attributes**

The six attributes of the Dhamma are arranged as a Pāli verse as follows:

“Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo, Sandiṭṭhiko, Akāliko, Ehipassiko, Opaneyyiko, Paccattam vedhitabbo vinnūhi.”

The essential meaning of this Pāli verse is:

“Well expounded is the Dhamma by the Exalted Buddha, to be self-realized, with immediate fruit, inviting investigation, leading on to Nibbāna, to be comprehended by the wise, each for himself.”

** Majjhima Nikāya **

The contemplation of the Dhamma's attributes is done as one contemplates the Buddha's attributes. Through repeated contemplation of the Dhamma, the meditator is filled with the intrinsic value of the Dhamma so much so that he feels a deep sense of awe and gratitude towards the Buddha. For, never was the Dhamma propounded by any teacher, other than the Buddha.

Thus his devotion to the Buddha increases tremendously. He gains stable mindfulness, profound wisdom, and much merit. He becomes tolerant to pain and indifferent to fearful things. He feels that he is in the company of the Dhamma. His body is pervaded with the virtues of the Dhamma like a shrine worthy of obeisance. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the Dhamma, he is incapable of committing evil, through shame and dread to do it. Contemplation of the attributes of the Buddha or the Dhamma is a sure basis for gaining enlightenment. If he does not gain enlightenment in this existence, he will be reborn in fortunate existences. These are the benefits of **Buddhānussati and Dhammānussati** (repeated contemplation of the Dhamma's attributes).

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**THE NINE SUPREME ATTRIBUTES OF THE
SAṂGHA⁴⁵**

The community of eight classes of noble bhikkhus is called the Noble Saṁgha (Ariya Saṁgha). The eight types of noble persons comprise four Path-persons and four Fruition-persons. The four Path-persons exist only for one consciousness-moment each while the Path-consciousnesses are existing. When the four Path-consciousnesses perish and four Fruition-consciousnesses arise, four Fruition-persons appear. The four Fruition persons are called Stream-winners, Once-returners, Non-returners and Arahants.

The worldling-bhikkhus (Sammuti Saṁgha) have the same view and the same moral practice as the noble bhikkhus. So the worldling bhikkhus are also included in the Saṁgha.

The nine attributes of the Saṁgha are arranged as a Pāḷi verse as follows.

- 1 *Suppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṁgho,*
- 2 *Ujuppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṁgho,*
- 3 *Ñāyappaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṁgho,*
- 4 *Sāmicippaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṁgho,*
Yadidaṁ cattāri purisayugāni attha-purisa-puggalā,
esā bhagavato sāvaka-saṁgho,
- 5 *Āhuneyyo,* 6 *Pāhunayyo,*
- 7 *Dhakkhineyyo,* 8 *Añjali karaṇīyo,*
- 9 *Anuttaraṁ puññakkhettaṁ lokassa.*

The meanings of the Nine Attributes are as follows.

1 The Attribute of Suppaṭipanno

The disciples of the Exalted Buddha observe 227 disciplinary rules well and practise well the threefold training of morality,

45 “The Teachings of the Buddha”, Higher Level, Vol. I,
Published by Department for the Promotion and Propagation
of the Sāsana, pp. 168-182.

concentration and wisdom.

The noble disciples of the Buddha endeavour to eradicate defilements such as ignorance, lust and anger. So they are called ‘**Suppaṭipanno**’ – the well practised noble persons.

2 The Attribute of Ujuppaṭipanno

The disciples of the Exalted Buddha undertake the practice of the threefold training of morality, concentration and wisdom honestly and unswervingly. Hence they are ‘**ujuppaṭipanno**’.

The noble disciples of the Buddha avoid the two extremes, namely, self-indulgence and self-mortification. They take the straight way called the Middle Way and become enlightened as noble persons. They don’t conceal their faults and pretend to be innocent; neither do they pretend to possess the virtues which they do not really possess. They dedicate their lives to realize the Truth and practise very honestly and righteously.

3 The Attribute of Ñāyappaṭipanno

The disciples of the Exalted Buddha undertake the threefold training of morality, concentration and wisdom with the sole intention of realizing Nibbāna.

The noble disciples of the Buddha abandon all worldly happiness and strive solely for the realization of Nibbāna. They long for nothing but the bliss of Nibbāna. They make every endeavour to achieve their goal. So they are ‘**Ñāyappaṭipanno**’.

4 The Attribute of Sāmicippaṭipanno

The disciples of the Buddha undertake the noble practice of the threefold training diligently so that they will be worthy of veneration, reverence and devotion by humans, devas and Brahmās. The more virtuous the receivers of four requisites from lay devotees, the greater the benefits the devotees will gain. Thus the noble disciples of the Buddha always try to uphold their morality and practice so that their devotees will gain much benefit.

The Buddha advised his disciples to cultivate loving-kindness and practise insight meditation so that they will gain emancipation from defilements and become nobler. Then their devotees will

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gain greater benefits.

Thus the noble disciples who possess morality, concentration and wisdom are worthy of reverence, devotion and receiving the offerings of their devotees; they are endowed with the attribute of ‘**Sāmicippaṭipanno**’.

The noble disciples, Ariya Saṅgha, consisting of eight classes of noble bhikkhus, are also endowed with the following attributes.

5 The Attribute of Āhuneyyo

The noble disciples, of the Exalted Buddha are worthy of receiving offering brought even from afar. So they are endowed with the attribute of ‘**Āhuneyyo**’.

The scent of flowers spreads only around them. The reputation of noble Saṅgha spreads throughout the whole world and up to celestial realms. **So not only human beings but also devas and Brahmās come and worship noble saṅgha. For example, the Sakka and his wife, assuming the form of an old poor couple, came from Tāvātimsā realm and offered alms-food to Venerable Mahākassapa.**

6 The Attribute of Pāhuneyyo

The noble disciples of the Exalted Buddha are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for guests. So they are endowed with the attribute of ‘**Pāhuneyyo**’.

We shall gain little benefit for treating worldly guests with good food. But we shall gain great benefit for offering such good food set aside for guests to the noble saṅgha. The more virtuous the Saṅgha, the more merit we shall gain.

Moreover, we can come across laymen guests any day, but we can meet the noble Saṅgha very rarely, only when the Buddha appears in the world. So we should give priority to offer special offerings to the noble Saṅgha rather than to ordinary guests.

7 The Attribute of Dakkhineyyo

The noble disciples of the Exalted Buddha are worthy of receiving offerings donated with the intention of getting great benefits in future existences or with the intention of dedicating to persons who have passed away.

As the noble disciples belonging to the noble Saṅgha are very noble, they can fulfil the wishes of such donors to enjoy happiness and prosperity in many future existences or to let the persons who have passed away get great benefit also. So the noble disciples are endowed with the attribute of ‘Dakkhineyyo’.

8 The Attribute of Añjalikaraṇīyo

The noble disciples of the Exalted Buddha are so noble that they are worthy of obeisance by the three worlds of human beings, devas and Brahmās. So they are endowed with the attribute of ‘Añjalikaraṇīyo’.

We respect the Saṅghas because they possess the virtues which should be respected. Of the many virtues of the Saṅgha, even one single virtue of morality excels all the virtues of worldlings. So the Saṅgha should be respected by the whole world.

It is very difficult for the Saṅgha to fulfil even the single virtue of morality. They also strive to develop other virtues such as concentration and wisdom not only for their benefits but also for the welfare of the whole world.

9 The Attribute of Anuttaraṃ Puññakkhettaṃ Lokassa

The noble disciples of the Exalted Buddha are the incomparably most fertile field for all humans, devas and brahmās to sow the seeds of merit. Therefore, the noble Saṅgha is ‘Anuttaraṃ Puññakkhettaṃ Lokassa’.

Performing meritorious deeds is like sowing seeds. If we sow our seeds in a fertile field, we shall reap a good harvest. Similarly, if we give alms to virtuous and noble bhikkhus, we shall gain great merit. The noble Saṅgha is like the incomparable fertile field which can be used by the whole world. What we need is to choose good seeds.

The resultant merit will be superb if we donate to noble Saṅgha out of conviction, keen volition and wisdom. Thus the noble Saṅgha is the unique fertile field for all to sow the seeds of merit.

• Contemplation of the Saṅgha’s Attributes

The contemplation of the Saṅgha’s attributes is done as one con-

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templates the Buddha's attributes. The contemplation of the Samgha's attributes is called 'Samghānussati'.

Buddhānussati, Dhammānussati and Samghānussati are excellent meditations which can be done very easily at all times and at all places to guard oneself from all dangers, to get one's good wishes fulfilled, and to live happily, peacefully and most beneficially. They produce similar great benefits.

We can repeatedly reflect 'Araham, Araham', or 'Svākkhāto, Svākkhāto' or 'Suppaṭipanno, Suppaṭipanno' while we are resting on a chair, lying on bed, walking or travelling, getting billions of good karmas every second. These good karmas will produce millions of blissful future existences.

The time of near-death is most important! Those who do not observe moral precepts, who live unjustfully (that is doing evil actions) and do not care to do meditation, usually see frightening near-death signs. They may even see woeful ghosts, approaching them and calling them to come along with them. When these people die, they will be reborn in woeful abodes.

Those people, who live morally and justfully, avoiding evil actions, contemplating the Buddha's attribute at the time of near-death, will see pleasant near-death signs such as celestial people and celestial mansions. They will die very peacefully and will be reborn in blissful realms.

So the wise people should study the attributes of the most precious Triple Gem and live happily and peacefully by undertaking meditations on Buddhānussati, Dhammānussati and Samghānussati to intensify their faith and devotion in the Triple Gem, to be endowed with billions of good karmas, to die peacefully and to be reborn pleasantly in blissful realms!

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THE GREATEST DISCOVERIES OF THE BUDDHA

• The Discovery of Ultimate Realities that Really Exist in the Whole Universe^{46,47}

In that auspicious night of the full-moon day of Vesākha (May 588 B.C.) when our Bodhisatta developed the **Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences** (*Pubbenivāsānussati-abhiññā*), his mind is totally pure, well concentrated, and very powerful. So he also developed penetrative insight to see ultimate realities thus:

“There were only the phenomena of ultimate mentalities (consciousness and mental factors which constitute the mind) and ultimate materialities (ultimate constituents of the body) throughout the countless existences. On all three occasions of birth, living and death, there were only these two phenomena of mentalities and materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and incessantly.

“Indeed in all abodes and at all times, the phenomena of mentalities and materialities are in a continuous state of flux, like the flame of an oil lamp or like the current of a river, and through a succession of causes and effects, it is only the continuum of mentalities and materialities which fulfils various functions such as seeing a visible object, hearing a sound, etc.”

The **mentalities** and **materialities**, vividly seen by the Bodhisatta above, constitute the **ultimate realities** that really exist in the whole universe.

After developing the Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences at the first watch of that auspicious night, the Bodhisatta developed the **Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Power of**

46 “The Great Chronicles of Buddhas”, Vol. I, by the Most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw, Singapore Edition, p. 320-328.

47 “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 20-25

sight, also called **Divine Eye** and **Cittupupāta-ñāṇa**, at the second watch of that night.

Through this supernormal power, the Bodhisatta could see all sentient beings in the thirty-one planes of existence and also those beings on the verge of death and then at the time of taking conception in new existences after their deaths.

Again based on his Divine Eye, the Bodhisatta could develop the following two supernormal powers.

(1) **Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa** – Power of seeing beings in thirty-one planes of existence and knowing their respective **Kammas** (volitional actions) which give rise to their present respective existences, and

(2) **Anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa** – Power of knowing future existences of oneself and of others, and also future events and future worlds. So the Bodhisatta came to know the important **Law of Kamma** very well.

At the third watch of that auspicious night the Bodhisatta contemplated why living beings were being born life after life, and he discovered the next important Law of Dependent Origination, consisting of twelve factors and eleven causal relations which can rationally explain the rounds of births and deaths of all living beings beautifully.

At the third watch of that auspicious night the Bodhisatta undertook insight meditation called *vipassanā* bhāvanā. Vipassanā investigated all psychophysical phenomena occurring in the whole universe in terms of ultimate realities. As he understood all psychophysical phenomena taking place in the whole universe very well, he could develop Ten Insight Knowledges and the Fourfold Path-wisdom easily and quickly and became Fully Self-Enlightened as *Sammāsambudha*, seeing and knowing the four Universal Noble Truths clearly, and attaining Omniscient Wisdom (*Sobbaññuta-ñāṇa*) at the same time.

After his enlightenment the Buddha fasted for seven weeks, and spent his time in deep contemplation as well as experiencing the bliss of emancipation (*Vimutti Sukha*), under the Bodhi-Tree and in

its neighbourhood.

On the fourth week, the Buddha stayed cross-legged in a golden chamber created by devas, and reflected on the supreme doctrine of **Abhidhammā** (excellent higher Teachings of the Buddha consisting of seven treatises).

When the Buddha applied his mind to the most subtle and profound points in the all embracing **Paṭṭhāna** treatise (the seventh treatise) with an unlimited number of methods, his Omniscient-Wisdom became so profound and so brilliant that **six bright coloured rays** were emitted from his mind and body.

- **Teaching Abhidhamma in Tāvātimsā Realm and Human Realm Simultaneously⁴⁸**

In his seventh vassa (Buddhist lent) the Buddha preached Abhidhamma, day and night continuously for three months to devas and Brahmas from ten thousand world-systems. The Buddha's rate of speech is 128 times faster than that of an average person. Thus, with such unimaginable fast rate of speech, the Abhidhamma that the Buddha preached during that vassa of three months is endless and incomparable.

Every day when the time came for going on alms-round the Buddha, with his supernormal power, created another identical Buddha after his own image, and let the created Buddha act exactly after his own manner, preaching with a voice like his own to the extent prescribed by him.

The Buddha himself came down to the human world, took a bath at Anotatta lake in the Himalayas, and proceeded to Uttara Kuru (North Island) for receiving alms-food. Then he returned to the delightful Anotatta lake and partook of his food on the peaceful bank of the lake. After his meal, he proceeded to the forest of Sandal trees to spend the day.

48 "The Great Chronicles of Buddhas", Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicitta Sārābhivaṃsa, Singapore Edition, pp. 615-616.

320 ❖ *Buddhism Won Best Religion in the World Award! Why?*

Venerable Sariputta, the right-hand chief disciple of the Buddha, went to the Sandal forest to attend to the Buddha. Whereupon, the Buddha told him the gist and the guidelines of Abhidhamma that the Buddha taught in Tāvātimsā that day.

The Buddha knew that Sāriputta, who was foremost in wisdom among his disciples, could reflect on that gist and outlines in a thousand ways to understand the Abhidhamma that the Buddha taught in Tāvātimsā that day.

The Buddha returned to Tāvātimsā in the afternoon to continue teaching Abhidhamma there. Venerable Sāriputta, by reflecting on the gist and outlines given to him by the Buddha every day, he could understand the Abhidhamma taught each day by the Buddha in Tāvātimsā. But he taught it in a form neither too brief nor too elaborate to his five hundred newly ordained bhikkhus.

These five-hundred bhikkhus were common bats, dwelling in a cave at the time of Buddha Kassapa. They listened respectfully to the pleasant, harmonious tone of Abhidhamma recitation by two bhikkhus every day. As they could develop moral minds and moral karmas in listening to Abhidhamma recitation, they were born in a celestial realm when they died.

They enjoyed the lives of *devas* from the time of **Buddha Kassapa** up to the time of **Buddha Gotama**, not being born even once in woeful abodes. At the time of Buddha Gotama, they were born in the human world. They witnessed **the marvellous Twin Miracle of the Buddha** just before the Buddha went up to Tāvātimsā realm. The Twin Miracle aroused their faith and devotion, and they received ordination as monks under the personal supervision of Venerable Sāriputta. They could understand the teaching of Abhidhamma very well. When the Buddha came down from Tāvātimsā and delivered a short sermon to them, they all became Arahants.

The teachings of Abhidhamma in Tāvātimsā by the Buddha and in the human realm by Venerable Sāriputta came to a close simultaneously at the end of the vassa, on the full-moon day of October.

Eighty thousand crores of *devas* and Brahmās were enlightened to the Four Noble Truths and became Noble Persons (*Ariyās*).

Santusita Deva, the Buddha's mother in the human world, also became a Stream-winner. So the Buddha's preaching of Abhidhamma in Tāvātimsā realm was very immensely successful and beneficial.

With the guidance of the Buddha, Venerable Sāriputta could teach Abhidhamma in the human world, and his teaching was approved by the Buddha. So the Abhidhamma taught by Venerable Sāriputta in the human world was classified as 'Abhidhamma Piṭaka'.

The whole discourse of Abhidhamma reveals the wonderful great discovery of all the ultimate realities that really exist in all living beings and in the whole universe. All psychophysical phenomena can be explained rationally on the basis of ultimate realities just as chemical reactions and nuclear reactions can be explained satisfactorily on the basics of subatomic theory.

• **A Brief Description of Ultimate Realities⁴⁹**

There are four kinds of ultimate realities that really exist in nature. They are *consciousness, mental factors, materiality and Nibbāna*.

- 1 **Consciousness** (*citta*) is that which is aware of a sense-object and knows the object.
- 2 **Mental factors** (*cetasikas*) are those which depend on *consciousness* for their arising, assist *consciousness* in the total act of cognition of each sense object, and influence *consciousness* in several ways.
- 3 **Materiality** (*rūpa*) is that which changes state, form, colour, etc. on account of adverse conditions such as hotness and coldness. *Materiality* includes matter and energy known in science, and matter and energy are interconvertable according to science.
- 4 **Nibbāna** is eternal peace and supreme bliss.

It is the ultimate goal (*summum bonum*) of Buddhism. *Nibbāna* is realized through the knowledge associated with four Path-consciousnesses and four Fruition consciousnesses in this very life.

49 "The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma", Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Literature, pp. 9-321.
Email: drmtinmon@gmail.com

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It can be realized by undertaking the noble **Threefold Training** of Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*) that represents the noble **Eightfold Path**.

Explanation: *Consciousness and mental factors* cannot arise separately.

They always arise together and perish together. There is only one type of consciousness, but 52 types of mental factors. Consciousness and mental factors are collectively called **“mentality”** (*nāma*).

There are 28 types of ultimate materialities which are collectively called **“materiality”** (*rūpa*).

What really exist basically in living beings and in the whole universe are **“mentality-materiality”** (*nāma-rūpa*), that is, consciousness, 52 kinds of mental factors, and 28 types of ultimate materialities.

What we call **“mind”** is a combination of consciousness and several mental factors. There are 121 possible combinations of consciousness and mental factors. These combinations represent and explain the various mental states.

Nibbāna is supramundane (*Lokuttara*), meaning that it is beyond three worlds called sense-sphere (*kāma-loka*), fine-material sphere (*rūpa-loka*) and immaterial sphere (*arūpa-loka*). Or we can say that Nibbāna is beyond the worlds of mentality-materiality and suffering.

3 The Analysis of Mind and Body^{50,51,52}

Scientists have analysed the body into atoms and atoms into sub-atomic particles called electrons, protons and neutrons. But they have not analysed the mind yet.

50 “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 13-16.

51 “*Kamma, The Real Creator*”, by Dr Mehm Tin Mon,
Mya Mon Yadanar Literature pp. 102-111.

52 “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Vol. II,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Literature,
pp. 42-103, 209-256.

Scientists and psychologists do not even know what the mind really is, because there are no scientific instruments that can detect the mind up till now. They fondle the theory that the “**brain**” functions as the mind. This is not correct.

The brain is materiality, and materiality cannot be aware of sense-objects, cannot feel, cannot think, cannot reason, etc., and do not possess the many wonderful, amazing properties of the mind such as supernormal knowledges and supernormal powers.

Professor Sir John Eccles, the most prominent Neurologist in the United Kingdom, performed a special research on the brain and made the following remark:

*“The study on the structure of the brain reveals that **the brain is a kind of computer** run by a ghost. The ghost here means something that cannot be detected by instruments which are used to detect material things.”*

That ghost should be taken as the mind. There are many evidences which show that the mind itself functions as an enormous **Super Computer**, controlling the brain and other bodily functions.

For example, the mind can store up many billion data such as the knowledges, the skills and the experiences of the Bodhisatta that he had learnt and acquired in many existences during the long period of four *asaṅkheyyas* (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world cycles while he was fulfilling Ten Perfections. All these knowledges, skills and experiences could be remembered and recollected by the Buddha.

In the case of the Buddha, with the support of his Supernormal Knowledge of Former Existences, Divine Eye and Omniscient Wisdom, his insight knowledge was so powerful, that he could penetratively see the ultimate components of his body and mind called ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities.

He could also define precisely each and every materiality and mentality by their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes for their arising. These characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes are described in

Visuddhi Magga⁵³, the Treatise which compiled all the teachings of the Buddha in connection with “**the Only Path to Nibbāna**” called “**The Noble Eightfold Path.**”

Knowing precisely all **ultimate mentalities** (called ‘*Nāma*’) and all **ultimate materialities** (called ‘*Rūpa*’) in all aspects and explaining rationally all psychophysical phenomena that are occurring in all living beings and in the whole universe in terms of those **ultimate realities** (called ‘*Paramatthas*’) are truly the greatest discoveries of the Buddha that give the greatest benefits to all humanity, *devas* and *Brahmās*.

These discoveries as well as the subsequent discoveries of the natural truths and the natural laws, such as the ‘**Law of Kamma**’, the ‘**Law of Dependent Origination**’ and ‘**the Four Great Universal Noble Truths**’ that enlighten many millions of humans, *devas* and *Brahmās* to become ‘**Noble Persons**’ (*Ariyās*), who can enjoy ‘**the holiest eternal peace and unique happiness of Nibbāna**’, truly certify the fact that the Buddha really possessed ‘**Omniscient Wisdom called Sabbaññutta-ñāṇa**’ that really knows everything that should be known to attain **the highest status of ‘Buddha-hood’**.

53 “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Vol. II,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication,
pp. 42-48, 88-104, 114-119, 121, 137-139.

[14]

THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF ULTIMATE MATERIALITIES

• The Practical Analysis of the Body^{54,55}

The Buddha was the leader and precursor of scientists in discovering “the Ultimate Science or Supreme Science”, that is what **Abhidhamma really is**, and in teaching his **Dhammas**, which are truly **natural Truths and natural Laws**, both in principles and practicals.

There are no assumptions and no hypotheses in Buddhism. The Buddha taught out of his experiences what he had really seen, understood and realized with his wisdom.

To those who do not attain supernormal powers to analyse the body and define materialities, the Buddha taught the meditation-subject called ‘*Catudhālu-vavatthāna*’, which is ‘**Defining the Four Primary Elements**’.

He defines *pathavi* (the element of solidity) by discerning its characteristics of hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness, heaviness and lightness, *āpo* (the element of liquidity) by discerning its characteristics of cohesiveness and fluidity, *tejo* (the element of heat) by discerning its characteristics of hotness and coldness, and *vāyo* (the element of motion) by discerning its characteristics of pushing and supporting.

The meditator practises to discern all the 12 characteristics of the 4 primary elements one by one in order repeatedly until he can discern all the 12 characteristics almost simultaneously. He then concentrates his mind on the 12 characteristics until very bright and penetrative light radiates from his mind. This indicates that he now attains the **neighbourhood concentration** (*upacāra-samādhi*).

54 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Vol. I, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication, pp. 213-223.

55 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Vol. II, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication”, pp. 210-240.

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As he keeps on focusing his mind on the four elements, first a grey colour, then a white colour, and then a clear mass like a block of ice or glass generally appear. This clear mass represents translucent materialities (*pasāda-rūpas*) in the whole body.

When he continues to discern the four primary elements in the clear mass, the mass breaks down into very tiny particles of **material groups** (*rūpa-kalāpas*), which are of the size comparable to the size of electrons, protons, and neutrons as explained on page 20.

He continues to discern and define the four primary elements in the material groups with his wisdom as he has discerned them in his body. Then he discerns and defines all derived materialities present in the material groups.

We should take note that scientists observed electrons, protons, neutrons as cathode rays, anode rays and neutral rays. These sub-atomic particles don't have any form or shape. Electrons, protons and neutrons can be regarded as material groups.

We can divide the body into material groups, but we cannot further divide material groups. Yet we can discern the ultimate materialities present in each material group by discerning their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes. It is similar to an analytical instrument which can detect the various metals present in an ore or alloy without breaking the ore or the alloy.

Nowadays meditators in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Centres can successfully undertake the above meditation, breaking down the body into material groups and discerning the ultimate materialities present in different types of material groups. They can also define precisely each type of ultimate materiality by its characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause for its arising.

They can also develop four rūpāvacara jhānas by the meditation called “**mindfulness of breathing**” (*Ānāpānassati*) and all the eight jhānas comprising four rūpāvacara jhānas and four arūpāvacara jhānas by meditation on ten kasiṇas as taught by the Buddha.

The mind associated with these jhānas are very powerful, radiating very brilliant and penetrative light. With the help of this light

the meditators can discern ultimate materialities and ultimate mentalities very vividly and can define them precisely with their insight wisdom. This concentrated pure mind associated with jhāna and insight wisdom is the right instrument to study the ultimate realities in detail.

• **Classification of Materialities**^{56,57}

There are four primary materialities and 24 derived materialities which are derived from primary materialities. Altogether there are 28 ultimate materialities, which are described below

(a) Four Types of Primary Materialities (*Bhūta-rūpas*)

1 *Pathavī* – the element of solidity or the element of extension

- It has the characteristic of hardness and softness.
- Its function is to act as a receiver or foundation.
- It is manifested as receiving co-arising elements.
- Its proximate cause for arising is the other 3 primary elements.

2 *Āpo* – the element of fluidity or the element of cohesion

- It has the characteristic of cohesiveness and fluidity.
- Its function is to cohere particles together.
- It is manifested as holding the particles together.
- Its proximate cause for arising is the other 3 primary elements.

3 *Tejo* – the element of heat or heat-energy

- It has the characteristic of hotness and coldness.
- Its function is to mature its concomitants.
- It is manifested as making co-arising elements tender and soft.
- Its proximate cause for arising is the other 3 primary elements.

4 *Vāyo* – the element of motion or the air-element

- Its function is to cause motion.
- It is manifested as conveying, that is, acting as the cause for successive arising at adjacent location.
- Its proximate cause for arising is the other 3 primary elements.

⁵⁶ “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 174-192.

⁵⁷ “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Vol. II,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 42-56

(b) Twenty-four Derived Materialities (*Upādā-rūpas*)

(1) Five Translucent Materialities

1 Eye-translucent materiality *cakkhu-pasāda*

It is the translucent, sensitive part of the eye, where sense-object can appear. It functions as the **eye-door** and the **eye-base**, dependent on which eye-consciousness arises.

2 Ear-translucent materiality *sota-pasāda*

It is the translucent, sensitive part of the ear, where sound can appear. It functions as the **ear-door** and the **ear-base**, dependent on which ear-consciousness arises.

3 Nose-translucent materiality *ghāna-pasāda*

It is the translucent, sensitive part of the nose, where odour can appear. It functions as the **nose-door** and the **nose-base**, dependent on which nose-consciousness arises.

4 Tongue-translucent materiality *jivhā-pasāda*

It is the translucent, sensitive part of the tongue, where taste can appear. It functions as the **tongue-door** and the **tongue-base**, dependent on which tongue-consciousness arises.

5 Body-translucent materiality *kāya-pasāda*

It is the translucent, sensitive part of the body, where the touch becomes distinct. It functions as the **body-door** and the **body-base**, dependent on which body-consciousness arises.

(2) Seven Materialities of Five Sense-Objects (*Gocara-rūpas*)

6 Visible form or colour *rūpārammaṇa (vaṇṇa)*

7 Sound *saddārammaṇa (sadda)*

8 Odour *gandhārammaṇa (gandha)*

9 Taste *rasārammaṇa (rasa)*

10 Touch *phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa (pathavī, tejo, vāyo)*

Note: The words in brackets mention the ultimate realities in Pāli.

(3) Two Sex-Materialities (*Bhāva-rūpas*)

11 Female-sex-materiality (*Itthi-bhāva*)

It imparts feminine-features. It spreads all over the female-body.

12 Male-sex-materiality (*Purisa-bhāva* or *Pumbhāva*)

It imparts masculine-features. It spreads all over the male-body.

(4) Four Individual Materialities

13 Heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*)

It exists in the blood of the heart. It functions as the heart-base depending on which 75 consciousnesses arise.

14 Life-materiality (*jīvita-rūpa*)

It is the vital force present in all kamma-born material groups. It sustains its associated materialities to last throughout their life-span.

15 Nutriment (*ojā* or *āhāra-rūpa*)

It is present in material groups in edible food as well as in internal (inside the body) material groups. It sustains the body.

16 Space-element or Limiting space (*pariccheda-rūpa*)

It is the space around each material group. It delimits each material group.

(5) Two Intimation-Materialities (*Viññatti-rūpas*)

17 Special bodily movement (*Kāya-viññatti*)

It let others know one's intention.

18 Special verbal movement (*Vacī-viññatti*)

It let others know one's intention by speaking.

(6) Three Mutable Materialities (*Lahutādi-rūpas*)

19 Material lightness (*Rūpassa-lahutā*)

It has the characteristic of lightness and quickness. Its function is to dispel the heaviness of the body by bodily gesture.

20 Material malleability (*Rūpassa-mudutā*)

It has the characteristic of malleability without coarseness. Its function is to dispel roughness and hardness of materiality.

21 Material adaptability (*Rūpassa-kammaññatā*)

It has the characteristic of adaptability, that is, favourable to good bodily action. Its function is to dispel unadaptability and unskillfulness in bodily action.

(7) Four Characteristic Materialities (*Lakkhaṇa-rūpas*)

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22 **Materiality at arising moment of material group** at early stages (*Upacaya-rūpa*)

23 **Materiality at arising moment at later stages** (*Santati-rūpa*)

24 **Materiality at existing or ageing moment** (*Jaratā-rūpa*)

25 **Materiality at perishing moment** (*aniccatā-rūpa*)

Note: Both *upacaya-rūpa* and *santati-rūpa* denote the materiality at its arising state. They are collectively called ‘*jāti-rūpa*’ (*jāti* means ‘birth’).

In counting 28 materialities, the five sense-objects (*gocara-rūpas*) should be counted as 4 materialities, excluding the **touch**, because *pathavī*, *tejo*, *vāyo* are included in the four primary elements.

• **The Causes Which Produce Materialities**

It is amazing and admirable that the Buddha also knew the causes that produce materialities and mentalities. The causes that produce materialities are kamma, consciousness (*citta*), heat (*utu or tejo*) and nutriment (*ojā*).

Materialities are not produced singly or separately. They are produced as material groups. Eight materialities comprising four primary elements and visible form (*vaṇṇa*), odour (*gandha*), taste (*rasa*) and nutriment (*ojā*) always arise and perish together; they are inseparable. So they are called “**Indivisible materialities**” (*avinibbhoga-rūpa*).

These 8 indivisible materialities are produced by all the 4 causes. When a material group is formed, the limiting space (*pariccheda-rūpa*) is also formed simultaneously. So the 9 materialities, comprising 8 indivisible materialities and limiting space, are said to be produced by 4 causes (9 *catuja-rūpas*; ‘*catuja*’ means ‘produced by 4 causes’).

Again 9 materialities, comprising 5 translucent materialities (*pasāda-rūpas*), two sex-materialities (*bhāva-rūpas*), the heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) and life materiality (*jīvita-rūpa*), are produced by kamma alone. They are collectively called **9 kammaja-ekaja-rūpas**; ‘*kammaja*’ means ‘produced by kamma’, ‘*ekaja*’ means ‘produced by one cause’. We can take note that these kamma-born materiali-

ties are very important in life.

Two intimation-materialities (*viññatti-rūpas*), namely, special bodily movement and special verbal movement, are produced by consciousness alone.

These two mind-born materialities help us to move our hands, our legs, our mouths, etc., so that we can move about, speak, and eat. Science thinks that the brain gives the signal and muscles move the hands and the mouth. Materiality cannot move by itself. It needs the help of consciousness-born materiality to move.

Sound (*sadda*) is produced by two causes – viz., consciousness and heat (*utu*). Vocal sounds are produced by consciousness. External sounds produced by the wind, storms, thunder and the sounds that come from radios, cassettes, musical instruments are produced by heat.

Three mutable materialities (*lahutādi-rūpas*) are produced by three causes – viz., consciousness, heat and nutriment (*ojā*). They are the causes for the pleasant bouyant feeling we experience when our minds are clear or when the weather is pleasant or after we have a light pleasant meal.

To summarize the materialities produced by each cause:

18 Kammaja-rūpas = 9 *kammaja-ekaja-rūpas* + 9 *catuja-rūpas*
= 18 kamma-born materialities

15 Consciousness-born materialities = 9 *catuja-rūpas* + 2 *viññatti-rūpas* + sound + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

13 Heat-born materialities = 9 *catuja-rūpas* + sound + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

12 Nutriment-born materialities = 9 *catuja-rūpas* + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

• **Formation of Material Groups** (*Rūpa-kalāpas*)

Out of 28 types of materialities, limiting space and four characteristic materialities are not included in material groups. All material groups contain 8 indivisible materialities as the basic unit. All kamma-born materialities also contain material life (*jīvita-rūpa*) in addition.

[1] Nine Kamma-born Material Groups (*Kammaja-kalāpas*)

1 ***Jīvita-navaka-kalāpa* = Vital nonad** (*navaka* = nonad = 9)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa*

2 ***Cakkhu dasaka* = Eye-decad** (*dasaka* = decad = 10)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *cakkhu-pasāda*

3 ***Sota-dasaka* = Ear-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *sota-pasāda*

4 ***Ghāna-dasaka* = Nose-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *ghāna-pasāda*

5 ***Jivhā-dasaka* = Tongue-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *jivhā-pasāda*

6 ***Kāya-dasaka* = Body-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *kāya-pasāda*

7 ***Itthibhāva-dasaka* = Female-sex-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *itthibhāva-rūpa*

8 ***Pumbhāva-dasaka* = Male-sex-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *pumbhāva-rūpa*

9 ***Hadaya-desaka-kalāpa* = Heart-decad**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *jīvita-rūpa* + *hadaya-vatthu*

[2] Six Consciousness-born Material Groups (*cittaja-kalāpas*)

1 ***Mind-born Pure-octad* (*cittaja-suddhaṭṭhaka*, *aṭṭhaka* = 8)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* produced by consciousness.

2 ***Bodily intimation-nonad* (*Kāya-viññatti-navaka*)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *kāya-viññatti*

3 ***Vocal intimation-decad* (*Vacī-viññatti-sadda-dasaka*)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *sadda* + *vacīviññatti*

4 ***Undecad of mutability* (*Lahutādi-ekādasaka* = 11)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *lahutā* + *muditā* + *kammaññatā*

5 ***Dodacad of mutability* (*Kāya-viññatti-lahutādi-dvādasaka*)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *kāya-viññatti-lahutādi rūpas*

6 ***Tridecad of mutability* (*Vacīviññatti + sadda-lahutādi-terasa*
ka = 13)**

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *Vacīviññatti* + *sadda* + *lahutādi-rūpas*

[3] Four Heat-born Material Groups (*Utuja-kalāpas*)

1 Heat-born pure octad (*Utuja-suddhaṭṭhaka*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* produced by heat

2 Sound-nonad (*Sadda-navaka kalāpa*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *sadda*

3 Undecad of mutability (*lahutādi-ekādassaka*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

4 Dodecad of sound-mutability (*Sadda-lahutādi-dvādassaka*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + *sadda* + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

[4] Two Nutriment-born Material Groups (*Āhāraja-kalāpas*)

1 Nutriment-born pure Octad (*Āhāraja-suddhaṭṭhaka*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* produced by nutriment

2 Undecad of mutability (*Lahutādi-ekādassaka*)

= 8 *avinibbhoga-rūpas* + 3 *lahutādi-rūpas*

Note: The formation of various material groups by the four causes have to be discerned and can be discerned in insight meditation. They have been done successfully in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres.

• **Internal and External Material Groups**

All the 21 types of material groups occur internally in living beings. Female-sex-decad does not arise in males, and male-sex-decad does not occur in females. For those who are born blind or deaf, eye-decad or ear-decad is absent.

In the external world outside living bodies, only two heat-born material groups are found. All inanimate things, such as trees, stones, earth, water, air, corpses, etc., are made up of heat-born pure octads. The sounds produced by thunder, musical instruments, the beating of drums, the rubbing of branches in the wind, cassette or radio sounds, etc., are heat-born sound nonads.

[15]

THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF ULTIMATE MENTALITIES

• **Classification of Mentalities**^{58,59}

There are one type of consciousness and 52 types of mental factors, which are collectively called '**mentalities**' (*nāma*).

Among 52 mental factors, 13 are neutral, 14 are immoral or unwholesome, and 25 are beautiful or wholesome. They are our important qualities.

As the mind is the most powerful force in the world, and mental factors can influence the mind, mental factors also have great influence on all living beings and the whole world.

• **Classification of Mental Factors** (*Cetasikas*)

(a) **Thirteen Neutral Mental Factors** (*Āññasamāna Cetasikas*)

They are divided into two sub-groups.

- (1) **Seven Essential Mental Factors** which associate with all consciousnesses.

1 **Contact** – *Phassa*

It makes the contact between consciousness and sense-object. The contact produces *feeling* (*vedanā*).

2 **Feeling** – *Vedanā*

It manifests itself as pleasant feeling (*sukha*), painful feeling (*dukkha*) and neutral feeling (*upekkhā*), depending on whether the sense-object is pleasant, unpleasant and neutral, respectively. It enjoys the taste of the sense-object.

3 **Perception** – *Saññā*

It takes note of the detailed features of each sense-object and

58 "The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma," Third Edition,

by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 62-93.

59 "The Essence of Visuddhi Magga," Vol. II,

by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Literature,
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stores the data in the mental stream or mind-continuum like a computer storing the data in its memory.

4 Volition or Intention – *Cetanā*

It prompts its concomitants (citta and cetasikas associated with it) to perform their respective functions in order to accomplish an action. Since each action, called ‘**kamma**’ in Pāḷi, is accomplished by the effort of ‘**volition**’, volition is designated as ‘**kamma**’.

5 Concentration or One-pointedness of the mind – *Ekaggatā*

It unites consciousness and mental-factors harmoniously on a sense-object to make the mind focused on the object. When the mind becomes concentrated by meditation, it becomes very powerful.

6 Psychic life – *Jrvitindriya*

It sustains its concomitants to last throughout their life-span so that they can perform their respective functions. Without psychic life, we shall die.

7 Attention or Reflection – *Manasikāra*

It pays attention to each sense-object that appears at the sense-door and directs cognitive consciousnesses towards the object in order to be aware of the object. Wise reflection on the object gives rise to moral minds; unwise reflection gives rise to immoral minds.

(2) Six Particular Mental Factors which associate with particular consciousnesses

8 Initial application of the mind to a sense-object – *Vitakka*

It applies the mind to the sense-object and initiates a thought about the object. It is called ‘*applied thought*’.

9 Sustained application of the mind to the sense-object – *Vicāra*

It examines the object again and again. It is called ‘*discursive thinking*’.

10 Decision – *Adimokkha*

It decides whether the sense-object is good or bad.

11 Effort or Energy – *Vīriya*

It supports and upholds its concomitants not to slacken and give up. It makes one energetic and courageous and work hard with

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perseverance to succeed in every task. *It is a key to success.*

12 Joy or be fond of – *Pīti*

It can be developed in five stages by meditation.

- (i) The thrill of joy which causes the flesh to creep.
- (ii) Momentary joy like a flash of lightning.
- (iii) The flood of joy which causes the feeling of rising and falling like riding a boat on tides.
- (iv) Uplifting joy which can lift a person to float or fly in the air.
- (v) Suffusing joy which pervades the whole body like a full-blown balloon. We can experience it in the jhāna state.

13 Wish or Will – *Chanda*

It is like the wish to go, to see, to learn, etc., strong *wish* is called ‘*will*’. As the saying goes: “If there is a will, there is a way”, strong wish or will brings success in whatever we do. *So it is also a key to success.*

Note: The above 13 neutral mental factors are our excellent qualities if we can make good use of them. *Perception (saññā)* functions as memory; *volition (cetanā)* functions as *kamma*; mental *concentration (ekaggatā)* makes the mind powerful; *psychic life (jīvitindriya)* keeps us alive; wise *reflection (manasikāra)* helps us to live happily with moral minds; *joy (pīti)* and pleasant *feeling (sukha)* constitute sensual pleasure which every worldling craves for; *effort (vīriya)* and *will (chanda)* help us to be successful in whatever we do.

Initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicāra*), joy (*pīti*), feeling (*vedanā*), concentration (*ekaggatā*) are **five jhāna-factors** which can be developed by Tranquillity Meditation to attain jhānas.

Vitakka, *vīriya* (effort), *ekaggatā* function as three factors of the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to Nibbāna.

(b) **Fourteen Immoral Mental Factors** (*Akusala Cetasikas*)

They are classified as four sub-groups.

(1) **Moha Group of Four Immoral Mental factors**

1 **Ignorance or Delusion – *Moha* or *Avijjā***

It blinds the mind not to know (1) the true nature of sense-objects

and ultimate realities, (2) past existences and future existences, (3) kamma and its result, (4) Dependent Origination, and (5) Four Noble Truths. It is the leader of immoral mental factors.

2 Moral shamelessness – *Ahirika*

It does not feel ashamed to do immoral actions.

3 Moral fearlessness – *Anottappa*

It is not afraid to do evil actions as it is ignorant of good and bad, kamma and its result, and four Noble Truths.

4 Restlessness – *Uddhacca*; it makes the mind restless.

(2) Lobha Group of Three Mental factors

5 Greed, Craving, Attachment – *Lobha* or *Taṇhā* or *Rāga*

Greed has desire or craving for sensuous objects and gets attached to them. It is most active and it overwhelms the minds of worldlings most of the time. It influences people to work hard to get money, wealth, power, fame, etc., so that they can enjoy sensual pleasure as much as possible. It never gives up its intrinsic nature of craving however much one may possess. The more one gets, the more one craves for.

“Even the whole wealth on earth cannot gratify the desires of *greed*”, said the Buddha. As *greed* has thousands of desires which can never be gratified, one will never be happy if one is under the influence of *greed*.

6 Wrong view – *Diṭṭhi*

The most basic and universal wrong view is ‘**personality-belief**’ or ‘**self-illusion**’. The belief that ‘self’ is identical with ‘soul’ or ‘atta’ is called the wrong view of ‘**self-illusion**’ (*atta-diṭṭhi*).

The belief that self is identical with any one of the five aggregates of grasping or with person is called ‘**personality-belief**’ (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*).

This basic wrong view of ‘*personality-belief*’ or ‘*self-illusion*’ makes one very selfish, egoistic, concerned only with one’s welfare, having no regard and no sympathy for others. Based on this basic wrong view, many wrong views spring up in the world. This basic wrong view, in combination with bad kammās will produce

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woeful rebirth after death.

7 **Pride or Conceit – *Māna***

Māna also looks at oneself as ‘I’ and becomes conceited, thinking: ‘I am the best’, ‘I know everything’, ‘I am most pretty’.

(3) **Dosa Group of Four Mental Factors**

8 **Anger, Hatred, Ill-will – *Dosa, Paṭigha, Vyāpāda***

Anger is rough, cruel and most destructive. Before it destroys others, it may destroy oneself first. As soon as one comes across unpleasant things and unpleasant dealings, anger arises and burns the mind with painful feeling, making one sad, disappointed or angry.

Inflated anger makes one angry, violent, cruel, ready to commit crimes. Depressed anger causes sadness, sorrow, grief, lamentation, depression, despair, stress and strain, illness and even suicide. Medical reports say that ninety percents of patients who come to clinics have diseases connected with the mind.

9 **Jealousy or Envy – *Issā***

Issā is objective and it looks at others. One feels jealous of others’ success. One envies another man’s good fortune. Jealousy and envy makes one unhappy without being agitated by any one.

10 **Averice or Stinginess – *Macchhariya***

It has the characteristic of concealing one’s property and as such it is subjective. It does not appreciate to share one’s place, one’s property, one’s gain, one’s knowledge, one’s recognition with others. It does not wish others to become rich as oneself.

It takes the form of stinginess when one is reluctant to donate to charity or to help the needy and the poor.

11 **Remorse or Worry – *Kukkucca***

It has the characteristic of grieving over the evil that has been done or over the good that has not been done. As it is useless to cry over spilt milk, so too it is of no use to repent or feel sorry about wrong doings. Instead of worrying about something, one should do something good, such as radiating loving-kindness.

Jealousy, stinginess, remorse, worry and ill-will make one un-

happy without any reason. Getting rid of them as soon as they arise by changing one's thought will make one immediately happy.

(4) The last three Immoral Mental Factors

12 Sloth or Idleness – *Thina*

It is the shrinking state of consciousness like a cock's feather before fire. It is the sickness of consciousness. When one is idle due to lack of effort, one is under the influence of *thina*.

13 Torpor or Dullness – *Middha*

It is the morbid state of mental factors. It is the sickness of mental factors. When one feels inactive, one is being influenced by *middha*. *Thina* and *middha* always associate with consciousness together.

14 Sceptical doubt – *Vicikicchā*

It is the sceptical doubt about the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Noble Threefold Training, one's past existences, one's future existences, the Law of Kamma and its result, the Law of Dependent Origination, and the Four Noble Truths, because one does not understand them clearly.

Being occupied with sceptical doubt, one does not revere the Triple Gem, one does not learn the Dhamma, one does not undertake the Noble Training, one does not even perform meritorious deeds. So one suffers a great loss in this life. Without performing meritorious deeds, one shall be reborn in woeful abodes again and again.

• The Real Evil Forces in the World

The fourteen immoral mental factors are the real evil forces in the world. Wicked men and wild beasts, evil ghosts and cruel ogres are dangerous, ferocious and frightening, because their minds are overwhelmed by these 14 immoral mental factors.

These immoral mental factors are our bad qualities and internal enemies. Ten of them, comprising *greed (lobha)*, *anger (dosa)*, *ignorance (moha)*, *pride (māna)*, *wrong view (diṭṭhi)*, *torpor (thina)*, *sceptical doubt (vicikicchā)*, *restlessness (uddhacce)*, *moral shamelessness (ahirika)* and *moral fearlessness (anottappa)*, are called '**de-filements**' (*kilesās*), because they defile, debase and burn the

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mind all the time when they arise in the mind.

Defilements lie latent in the mind since conception in rebirth-consciousness; they **arise** to the surface of the mind, agitate and start burning the mind when we come in contact with various sense-objects; they influence the mind to do evil actions when they **become gross** and violent.

Their three leaders, namely, *greed, anger and ignorance, are immoral roots, from which immoral, evil minds arise and perform evil actions. They are the main causes of all evil, unjust actions and all sufferings in the world.*

Attachment to sense-objects (kāmarāga), attachment to jhāna bliss and Brahma existences (bhavarāga), ill-will (paṭigha), pride (māna), false view (diṭṭhi), adherence to false view that one becomes pure by bovine or canine morality or by rites and ceremonies (sīlabbata-parāmāsa), sceptical doubt (vicikicchā), jealousy (issā), avarice (macchhariya) and ignorance (moha) are ten Fetters (saṃyojana) that bind beings to the Wheel of Existence to be reborn endlessly in the Three Worlds of Sense-sphere, Fine-material Sphere and Immaterial Sphere.

(c) Twenty-five Beautiful Mental Factors (*Sobhana Cetasikas*)

These 25 beautiful mental factors are our good, positive qualities, If we can develop them systematically, we can overcome and destroy all immoral mental factors, which are our bad, negative qualities. **Then we shall be the noblest and happiest people in the world, enjoying the eternal peace and unique bliss of Nibbāna for ever.**

They are divided into four sub-groups.

(1) Nineteen Beautiful Mental Factors (*Sobhana Cetasikas*)

They collectively associate with all beautiful consciousnesses.

1 Faith and Confidence – *Saddhā*

It is having faith and confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha called ‘**Triple Gem**’ with the knowledge that they are the noblest objects of veneration, and by worshipping them and taking refuge in the Triple Gem, we shall be safe, peaceful and

prosperous, being reborn in blissful realms repeatedly.

“Saddhā is our most precious and noblest possession”, said the Buddha.

2 Mindfulness – Sati

It is mindful of things that are taking place and not to let things go unnoticed. We must be always mindful of meritorious deeds, such as alms-giving, observing moral precepts and undertaking Buddhist meditations.

Mindfulness is the Way to the Deathless (Nibbāna), Heedlessness is the way to death. The mindful do not die; the heedless are as if already dead. (Dhammapada V. 21)

3 Moral Shame – Hirī; feeling ashamed to do evil.

4 Moral Dread – Ottappa; fear to do evil.

Knowing the Law of Kamma and the very terrible consequences of evil actions to oneself, one feels ashamed and scared to do evil. Moral shame and moral dread are the nearest causes for maintaining pure morality.

5 Greedlessness, Non-attachment, Generosity – Alobha

Greedlessness (alobha) is the opposite of *greed (lobha)*, and it can oppose and overcome *greed*. It does not crave for money, wealth, power, sensual-pleasure. It makes one greedless, selfless, not attached to one's wealth; so one can donate and help others very generously. Also one can be contented with whatever one has. We can develop generosity by practising alms-giving.

“Contentment is the greatest wealth”, said the Buddha.

A well contented man is much happier than a discontented rich man.

6 Hatelessness, Good-will, Tolerance, Loving-kindness – Adosa

Angerlessness (adosa) opposes *anger (dosa)* and can overcome *anger*. Hatelessness and good-will towards all living beings, to tolerate insults, unpleasant dealings, unpleasant weather, unpleasant conditions, and to cause no harm to any living being is the characteristic of ‘*angerlessness*’ (*adosa*), and it is the most beautiful quality to possess.

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Wishing all living beings to be free from danger, mental pain, bodily pain and to be well and happy always is called *loving-kindness (mettā)*; *tolerance and forbearance* are called ‘*khantī*’. ‘*Khanti*’ and ‘*metta*’ are excellent qualities to possess according to the teachings of the Buddha.

Anger, hatred, ill-will and bad-attitude make one ugly and dissociable whereas hatelessness, good-will, tolerance and loving-kindness make one beautiful and sociable both in this life and in future existences.

The Buddha advised to practise the meditation of radiating loving-kindness (*Metta-bhāvanā*) at all times and at all places to protect oneself from all dangers, to gain great merit, and to live happily and very beneficially.

7 Equanimity and Mental balance – *Tatramajjhataṭṭā*

Its chief characteristic is ‘*impartial view*’ or ‘*keeping at the middle of all things*’. ‘*To view impartially*’ means ‘*to view with neither attachment nor aversion*’. It balances consciousness and mental factors to function together at equal pace. When mentalities are working together harmoniously at equal pace, it has nothing to do, it can relax and be at peace at equanimity. It is a very noble quality.

Tatramajjhataṭṭā maintains equanimity whatever worldly condition one may encounter. The **eight worldly-conditions** (*loka-dhammas*) are “*gain and loss, fame and dishonour, praise and blame, happiness and suffering.*”

‘*Tatramajjhataṭṭā*’ is also called ‘*upekkhā*’, which is neither hedonic indifference nor neutral feeling. We can practise it as a meditation for living at a sublime state by contemplating repeatedly with equanimity: “*All beings are as they are conditioned by their own karmas.*”

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 8 Tranquillity of mental factors | – <i>Kāya-passaddhi</i> |
| 9 Tranquillity of consciousness | – <i>Citta-passaddhi</i> |
| 10 Lightness of mental factors | – <i>Kāya-lahuta</i> |
| 11 Lightness of consciousness | – <i>Citta-lahutā</i> |
| 12 Elasticity of mental factors | – <i>Kāya-mudutā</i> |

- 13 Elasticity of consciousness – **Citta-lahutā**
- 14 Adaptability of mental factors – **Kāya-kammaññatā**
- 15 Adaptability of consciousness – **Citta-kammaññatā**
- 16 Proficiency of mental factors – **Kāya-pāguññatā**
- 17 Proficiency of consciousness – **Citta-pāguññatā**
- 18 Uprightness of mental factors – **Kāyujjukatā**
- 19 Uprightness of consciousness – **Cittujjukatā**

The above six pairs or 12 mental factors make the mind tranquil and peaceful, light and tender, adaptable to new conditions and to work proficiently and uprightly.

(2) Three Abstinent Mental Factors (*Virati Cetasikas*)

20 The Right Speech – **Sammāvācā**

It is the speech which abstains from four evil speeches:

- (i) Lying or false speech – *Musāvādā*,
- (ii) Slandering or back-biting – *Pisuṇavācā*,
- (iii) Harsh or abusive speech – *Pharusavācā*,
- (iv) Frivolous or vain talk – *Samphappalāpā*.

21 The Right Action – **Sammā-kammanta**

It is the action which abstains from three evil bodily actions:

- (i) Killing any living being – *Pānātipātā*,
- (ii) Stealing other's property – *Adinnādānā*,
- (iii) Sexual misconduct – *Kāmesumicchācārā*.

It also includes misuse of the senses such as taking intoxicating drinks and drugs.

22 The Right livelihood – **Sammā-ājiva**

It is the livelihood which abstains from four evil speeches and three evil bodily actions. It abstains from a livelihood that causes harm to other beings, such as trading in arms, weapons, poison, intoxicating drinks and drugs, live-animals and human-beings. It also abstains from slaughtering, fishing, hunting, soldiering, deceit, treachery, soothsaying, trickery, etc.

Observing eight precepts by abstaining from four evil speeches, three evil bodily actions and the wrong-livelihood is called observ-

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ing *Ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*.

(3) Two illimitable Mental Factors (*Appamaññā Cetasikas*)

23 Compassion – *Karuṇā*

It makes the hearts of good people quiver when others are afflicted with suffering. The wish to remove the suffering of others is its chief characteristic. It discards cruelty and wickedness.

24 Sympathetic joy – *Muditā*

It is not mere sympathy but appreciative joy. Its chief characteristic is to rejoice at other's prosperity.

25 The Faculty of Wisdom – *Paññindriya*

Wisdom has the control over the understanding of things as they really are, that is, understanding in terms of ultimate realities with the characteristics of *impermanence (anicca)*, *suffering (dukkha)* and *not-self (anatta)*.

Because wisdom can overcome *ignorance (moha)*, it is called 'amoha' (*non-delusion or wisdom*). Because it can remove the veil of *darkness of ignorance* blinding man's mind and dispel the *darkness of ignorance (avijjā)*, it is called 'higher knowledge' (*vijjā*).

Paññindriya is usually called '**wisdom mental factor**' (*paññā-cetasika*). When it is purified and cultivated by *concentration (samādhi)* it assumes the powerful role of '**supernormal knowledge**' (*abhiññā*).

When it is developed to the highest level by insight meditation (*vipassanā*), it becomes the powerful '**Fourfold Path-wisdom**' (*Magga-ñāṇas*), which can totally eliminate all *defilements (kilesās)* from the mind and establish the highest status called '**Arahatship**' (*Perfect Person*). **The culmination of wisdom is the 'Omniscient Wisdom' (*sabbaññuta-ñāna*) of the Buddha.**

• The Beautiful Good Forces in the World

(1) The 25 beautiful mental factors constitute the beautiful good forces in the world. By developing them, we can become upright, virtuous and noble, and we can destroy all the evil forces and all suffering in our minds.

The 25 beautiful mental factors are our excellent qualities. They do not usually arise in worldlings, because they don't have the

chance to arise in the mind as the minds of worldlings are overwhelmed by evil forces called ‘*immoral mental factors*’.

Only the Buddha knew the natures and powers of the good forces and the bad forces and how to develop the good forces in order to suppress and finally eliminate the bad forces totally to become the noblest and happiest people in the world. The Buddha and Arahants are indeed the noblest and happiest people in the world.

(2) Greedlessness (*alobha*), hatelessness (*adosa*) and wisdom (*paññā*, *amoha*) are three moral roots, the roots of moral minds and the causes of all good actions and happiness in the world. They can be developed by performing alms-giving (*dāna*), observing moral precepts (*sīla*) and undertaking meditation (*bhāvanā*), respectively.

In performing these three kinds of meritorious deeds, moral minds arise by many billions every second, and when they perish, they leave their seeds of merit called **good kammās** by many billions in the mind-continuum. **Each good kamma has the potential to produce a blissful existence in a blissful realm.** So billions of good kammās mean that we can enjoy many uncountable-existences in blissful realms life after life.

(3) Faith (*saddhā*), right effort (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), knowledge (*suta*), wisdom (*paññā*), moral shame (*hiri*) and moral dread (*ottappa*) constitute the seven qualities of an upright person.

(4) Faith, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) and wisdom are the five powers and the five faculties, which can combat our worst enemies called ‘defilements’ (*kilesās*).

(5) Right view (wisdom), right thought (*vitakka*), right speech (*sammāvācā*), right action (*sammā-kammanta*), right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*), right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*) and right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*) constitute the Noble Eightfold Path as well as the Noble Threefold Training. By developing them fully, we can attain the Fourfold Path-wisdom, which eliminates all defilements, and we shall become Arahants.

• **Classification of Consciousnesses (*Cittas*) or Minds**

Consciousness (citta) and *mental factors (cetasikas)* combine systematically in several ways to form **121 combinations**, which represent various states of the ‘**mind**’. These combinations are simply called ‘**consciousnesses**’ although they represent ‘**minds**’.

Consciousnesses are classified into four kinds according to birth (*jāti*). They are shown in four vertical columns of Chart (1), that is, “The Complete Chart on *Cittas*”, attached at the back of this book.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|-----------------------|
| (1) Immoral Consciousnesses | | <i>Akusala Cittas</i> |
| (2) Moral Consciousnesses | | <i>Kusala Cittas</i> |
| (3) Resultant Consciousnesses | | <i>Vipāka Cittas</i> |
| (4) Functional Consciousnesses | | <i>Kiriya Cittas</i> |

Only moral consciousnesses and immoral consciousnesses have kamma properties. Resultant consciousnesses are the results of kammās, and functional consciousnesses, except two *avajjana cittas*, arise only in Arahants.

The main horizontal rows of Chart (1) describe the following *cittas*.

(a) Twelve Immoral Consciousnesses 12 *Akusala Cittas*

The first main row describes 12 immoral minds, comprising:

- (1) 8 Greed-rooted consciousnesses – *Lobha-mūla cittas*,
- (2) 2 Anger-rooted consciousnesses – *Dosa-mūla cittas*,
- (3) 2 Ignorance-rooted consciousnesses – *Moha-mūla cittas*.

While we are craving for or enjoying sensual pleasure or committing stealing, cheating, lying or sexual misconduct, greed-rooted consciousnesses arise by billions every second.

When we are angry, sad, disappointed, worrying or committing killing or torturing any living being, anger-rooted consciousnesses arise by billions every second.

When our minds are wavering, having sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*) or beoming restless (*uddhacca*), billions of ignorance-rooted consciousnesses will arise.

(b) Eighteen Rootless Consciousnesses 18 *Ahetuka Cittas*

(1) **The 7 immoral resultant consciousnesses** are the results of immoral karmas. They consist of eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, receiving consciousness, and investigating-consciousness. Their functions are to be aware of the five unpleasant sense-objects, that appear in the five sense doors, that is, the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the body.

The investigating-consciousness (Tī = santīrana-citta) also functions as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death-consciousness of all woeful beings.

(2) **The eight moral rootless resultant consciousnesses** are the results of sensphere-moral karmas. They also consist of eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, receiving consciousness, and two investigating consciousnesses. Their functions are to be aware of the five pleasant delightful sense-objects, that appear in the five sense-doors.

The investigating-consciousness, which is associated with neutral feeling, also functions as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death-consciousness of retarded human beings and retarded earth-bound deities.

(3) **Three rootless functional consciousnesses** are:

Pan-D = *Pañca-dvārāvajjana citta* = *Five-door directing consciousness*

It takes notice of the sense-object that appears in one of the five sense-doors and directs the subsequent cognitive consciousnesses towards the object.

Mano-D = *Manodvārāvajjana* = *Mind-door directing consciousness*

It takes notice of the sense-object that appears at the mind-door and decides whether the object is good or bad.

Hasi = *Hasituppāda* = *Smiling consciousness of Buddha and Arahats*

(c) 24 Sense-sphere Beautiful Consciousnesses

= 24 *Kāmāvacara Sobhana Cittas*

The third main row consists of 24 beautiful consciousnesses, which are equally divided into three sub-groups.

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- (1) 8 Sensphere Moral Consciousnesses = 8 *Mahā-kusala cittas*,
- (2) 8 Sensphere Resultant Consciousnesses = 8 *Mahā-vipāka cittas*,
- (3) 8 Sensphere Functional Consciousnesses = 8 *Mahā-kiriya cittas*.

(1) When worldlings and noble persons, who are not Arahants yet, perform meritorious deeds, such as alms-giving, observing moral precepts or undertaking meditation, **sensphere moral consciousnesses** arise by many billions and deposit many billions of sense-sphere moral karmas in the mental stream or mind-continuum. These karmas start bearing good results starting from this life and continue bearing good results in subsequent existences, bringing comfort and prosperity to their possessors. After death, they will produce blissful existences in human realm or *deva* realms.

(2) **Sensesphere resultant consciousnesses** function as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death-consciousness for the whole life of human beings and devas.

(3) **Sensesphere functional consciousnesses** arise in Arahants when they perform meritorious deeds. As Arahants have no *ignorance (moha)* and no *craving (lobha)* for any benefit from their good deeds, only functional consciousnesses, instead of moral consciousnesses, will arise in them.

(d) **15 Fine-material Sphere Jhāna Consciousnesses**
= 15 *Rūpāvacara Cittas*

The fourth main row consists of 15 fine-material sphere jhāna consciousnesses which are equally sub-divided into three sub-groups.

- (1) 5 Fine-material sphere moral consciousnesses = *Rūpāvacara Kusala cittas*,
- (2) 5 Fine-material sphere resultant consciousnesses = *Rūpāvacara Vipāka cittas*,
- (3) 5 Fine-material sphere functional consciousnesses = *Rūpāvacara Kiriya cittas*.

(1) **Fine-material sphere moral consciousnesses** arise in worldlings and noble persons, who are not Arahants yet, when they undertake **Tranquillity Meditation** and the five jhana-factors present in their sense-sphere moral consciousnesses become fully devel-

oped to the jhāna state. Five *rūpāvacara kusala cittas* differ from one another in their jhāna-factors.

When meditators practise well after attaining *jhānas*, they can remain in **jhāna-attainment** for one hour, two hours, up to seven days at a time, enjoying the jhāna-bliss, which is much superior to sensual-pleasures. Jhāna-attainment also develops billions of *rūpāvacara kusala kammās*, which produce *Brahma existences after death*.

(2) **Fine-material sphere resultant consciousnesses** are the results of *rūpāvacara kusala kammās*. They function as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death-consciousness of *Rūpa-brahmās*.

(3) **Fine-material sphere functional consciousnesses** arise in Arahants who attain *rūpa-jhānas*.

(c) **Twelve Immaterial Sphere Jhāna Consciousnesses**
= (12 *Arūpāvacara Jhānas*)

The fifth main row consists of 12 immaterial sphere jhāna consciousnesses which are equally divided into three sub-groups.

(1) 4 Immaterial sphere moral consciousnesses = *Arūpāvacara*

Kusala cittas,

(2) 4 Immaterial sphere resultant consciousnesses = *Arūpāvacara*

Vipāka cittas,

(3) 4 Immaterial sphere functional consciousnesses = *Arūpāvacara*

Kiriya cittas.

(1) **Immaterial sphere moral consciousnesses** arise in worldlings and noble persons, who are not Arahants yet, when they undertake **Arūpāvacara Meditation**, based on the fifth jhāna of **Kasina Meditation**. *Arūpāvacara jhānas* are more blissful, more peaceful and more powerful than *rūpāvacara jhānas*. *Arūpāvacara jhānas* differ from one another in their meditation subjects.

(2) **Immaterial sphere resultant consciousnesses** are the results of *arūpāvacara kusala kammās*. They function as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum and death-consciousness of *Arūpa-brahmās*.

(3) **Immaterial sphere functional consciousnesses** arise in Arahants who attain *arūpa-jhānas*.

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(f) **Eight Supramundane Consciousnesses = 8 Lokuttara Cittas**

The **sixth main row** consists of 8 supramundane consciousnesses, which are attained by undertaking **insight-meditation** (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) in the **Vipassanā-yānika Way**, using neighbourhood concentration. They comprise **four Supramundane Moral Consciousnesses** (*Magga-cittas*) and four **Supramundane Resultant Consciousnesses** (*Phala-cittas*).

(g) **Forty Supramundane Consciousnesses = 40 Lokuttara Cittas**

The **seventh main row** consists of 40 supramundane consciousnesses, which are attained by undertaking **insight-meditation** in the **Samatha-yānika Way**, which is based on jhāna concentration. They comprise **20 Supramundane Moral Consciousnesses** (*Magga-cittas*) and 20 Supramundane Fruition-Consciousnesses (*Phala-cittas*).

As each of eight Supremundane Consciousnesses in brief associates with each of five rūpāracara jhānas in turn, we get $8 \times 5 = 40$ Supremundane jhāna consciousnesses in the broad method or in the Samatha-yānika method.

Note: The association of mental factors with each of 121 consciousnesses to make them different from one another are described in “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 81-93, and Charts [2, 3].

• **The art of living Wisely, Happily and Most Beneficially**

The knowledge of the natures of consciousnesses that can arise in us tells us how to live wisely. Resultant consciousnesses that function as our rebirth-consciousnesses, life-continuum to keep us alive, eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, etc., to be aware of sense-objects, are very important in our life. But as they arise spontaneously without any of our effort, we have no control over them. However, as they arise as the results of our karmas, we should do meritorious deeds to acquire billions of good karmas to support them and to live a long life.

On the other hand, we have control over immoral minds (*akusala cittas*) and moral minds (*kusala cittas*) as they depend on our intention (*cetanā*) and reflection (*manasikāra*). The intentions that associate with good roots (*greedlessness, angerlessness, wisdom*) and wise

reflection give rise to moral minds and moral actions, producing billions of good karmas which support our welfare and prosperity.

However, the minds of worldings (persons with a lot of defilements) are overwhelmed and influenced by defilements (*greed, anger, ignorance*) most of the time. *Ignorance (moha)* blinds the mind not to know the true nature of sense-objects. It gives the illusion that man, woman, person, I, you, he, she really exist.

So every worldling thinks: “I really exist; my body and mind is ‘I’; my happiness is most important in my life; enjoying sensual pleasure is good; so I must work hard to get much money; then I can buy a car, a house, marry my sweetheart and live happily with sensual pleasure.”

Then with the intention associated with greed and ignorance to get money and sensual pleasure, he works hard throughout his whole life to get money, to accumulate wealth and to enjoy sensual pleasure as much as possible.

But he is not aware that sensual pleasure is fleeting and transient. It perishes soon after it arises, leaving behind hunger, thirst and hankering for more pleasure. Also he does not know that he is enjoying sensual pleasure with greed-rooted consciousnesses, accumulating bad karmas and forgetting to do meritorious deeds.

Moreover, the nature of greed is to crave for and get attached to much money, much wealth, and new pleasure all the time; the more it gets, the more it craves for. As it always keeps on craving for new pleasure, its desires can never be gratified, and ungratified desires mean suffering; so persons enjoying sensual pleasure can never be really happy. Besides, greed and selfishness give rise to grief, despair, ill-will, fear, pride, conceit, other defilements and even to suicide. Many heart-broken lovers and billionaires committed suicide because of greed, attachment and despair.

On the other hand, if we live with moral minds, performing meritorious deeds such as keeping pure morality, helping others, radiating loving-kindness or reflecting the Buddha’s virtues, our minds will be pure, peaceful, free from defilements, and associated with joy, pleasant mental feeling and wisdom. So we can live peace-

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fully and happily, accumulating good kammas by many billions every second. These good kammas will bear good results starting from this existence, helping us to be well, healthy and prosperous. They will produce blissful existences in the human realm and celestial realms for uncountable existences.

If we can undertake meditation in a meditation-centre such as International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres, we can develop higher mundane moral minds, called *rūpāvacara kusala jhānas* and *arūpāvacara kusala jhānas*. Then we can live more peacefully and more happily, enjoying the **highest mundane bliss, called jhāna bliss**. We shall acquire billions of *rūpāvacara kusala kammas* and *arūpāvacara kusala kammas*, and shall be born as Brahmās after death.

If we can continue our meditation, we can undertake insight meditation to attain the First Supremundane Moral Consciousness (*Sottāpatti-magga citta*) and its Fruition-consciousness. Then we shall become noble persons, called **Stream-winners**, and we can live most happily, enjoying both jhāna-bliss and the **highest unique bliss called Nibbāna bliss**. We shall never be reborn in woeful abodes, and shall attain higher Supramundane Consciousnesses automatically in due course in future existences to become **Arahants**, (Perfect Persons). Then we can enjoy matchless Nibbāna bliss forever.

“Better than absolute sovereignty over the whole earth, better than going to celestial realms and brahma realms, better than even lordship over the worlds is to be a Stream-Winner.”

(Dhammapada 178)

[16]

THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF PSYCHOPHYSICAL PHENOMENA IN LIVING BEINGS

• Psychophysical Phenomena in a Life-Time⁶⁰

In the *Paṭṭhāna Treatise of Buddha Abhidhamma*, the Buddha described 24 conditions or causes to explain how mentalities and materialities are conditioning one another in many wonderful ways to arise and function together as the very sublime and intricate psychophysical phenomena operating in living beings in a life-time. The operations of these amazing 24 *Paṭṭhāna* conditions are briefly and comprehensively described in “the Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma” (pp. 239-266) and also in this book in Chapter (17) on pages 366-375.

Here I shall describe the essential, real psychophysical phenomena taking place in human beings in a life-time. First, we should take note that ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities are like very subtle energy without visible form and shape and they cannot be detected by any scientific instruments.

In a person consciousnesses arise continuously one after another very rapidly without any separation in time at the rate of a thousand billion consciousnesses per eye-wink. **The life-span of a consciousness** is measured by three sub-moments, namely, the submoment of arising (*uppāda*), the submoment of existing (*thiti*) and the submoment of perishing (*bhaṅga*) of the consciousness. **These three submoments are equal to a consciousness-moment, which is the life-span of a consciousness.**

The life-span of materiality is equal to seventeen consciousness-moments or $17 \times 3 = 51$ sub-moments, that is, seventeen times the life-span of consciousness. The arising moment and the perishing moment of materiality are equal to one sub-moment each.

60 “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 107-140, 168-173, 189-193.

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So the existing time of materiality is equal to $51 - 2 = 49$ sub-moments. Thus materiality is also arising and perishing extremely rapidly.

• **The Causes which produce Mentalities and Materialities**

The four causes, namely, kamma, consciousness, heat (*utu*) and nutriment (*ojā*), that produce materialities have been described on pages 328-331 of this book.

The causes which produce mentalities, comprising consciousnesses and mental factors, are **the kammās** and **the twelve bases** (*āyatana*s).

Each kamma, which conditions each existence to arise, continuously produces its resultant consciousness one after another, associated with mental factors, throughout the life-span of the existence. These resultant consciousnesses and associated mental factors function as rebirth-consciousness, life-continuum, death-consciousness of the existence throughout the life-span.

The twelve bases consist of six internal bases and six external bases, which are described below.

• **Six Internal Bases (Six Sense-Doors)**

1 Eye-base as well as Eye-door	<i>Cakkhu-pasāda</i>
2 Ear-base as well as Ear-door	<i>Sota-pasāda</i>
3 Nose-base as well as Nose-door	<i>Ghāna-pasāda</i>
4 Tongue-base as well as Tongue-door	<i>Jivhā-pasāda</i>
5 Body-base as well as Body-door	<i>Kāya-pasāda</i>
6 Mind-base as well as Mind-door	<i>89 or 121 cittas</i>

Note: The first five bases are 5 translucent materialities in the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue and the body. They act as physical bases (*vatthus*) for eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness and body-consciousness respectively to depend on for their arising. They also function as five sense-doors for visible object, sound, smell, taste and tangible object to appear respectively.

Mind-base consists of all consciousnesses including 19 *bhavaṅga-cittas* which serve as the mind-door. Excluding ten *dvipaṇca-vinnāṇas*,

which depend on the first five bases for their arising, the remaining 75 *cittas* in brief or 107 *cittas* in the broad method, with the exception of 4 *arūpāvacara vipāka cittas*, depend on the **heart-base** (*hadaya-vatthu* in the heart) for their arising.

• **Six External Bases (Six Sense-objects)**

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| 1 Visible object (<i>vaṇṇa</i>) | 2 Sound (<i>Sadda</i>) |
| 3 Odour (<i>gandha</i>) | 4 Taste (<i>rasa</i>) |
| 5 Tangible object or touch (<i>pathavī, vāyo, tejo</i>) | |
| 6 Mind object consisting of 52 <i>cetasikas</i> , 16 <i>sukhuma-rūpas</i> (subtle materialities) and <i>Nibbāna</i> . | |

Note: All ultimate realities comprising all consciousnesses, all mental factors, all ultimate materialities and *Nibbāna* are included in the twelve bases (*āyatanas*).

When six sense-objects (six external bases) strike the respective six sense-doors (six internal bases) and appear at the doors, cognitive processes arise to be aware of the sense-objects. For example, when a visible object strikes the eye-base (*cakkhu-pasāda*) and appears at the eye-door, eye-door-cognitive series of consciousnesses arises to be aware of the visible object (described on page 357).

• **Psychophysical Phenomena at the Time of Conception**

The life of a human being starts with conception in an existence. That being must die from his immediate past existence to be reborn in the present existence. This is in accord with the science conception that **“Life comes from life”**.

The description of the detailed features of an existence in Buddhism is very logical and scientific, and the description can be verified by direct observation with wisdom in insight meditation.

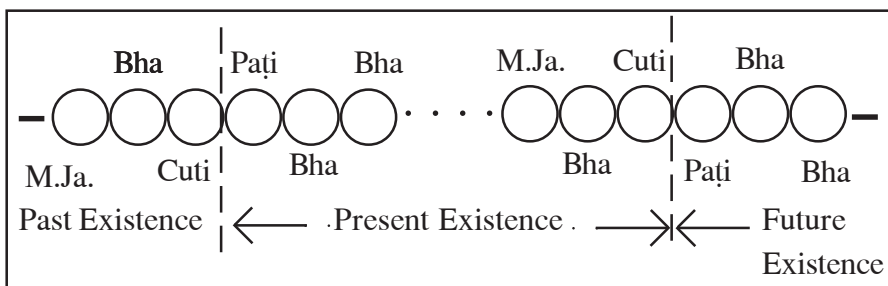
Diagram (16.1) shows the mental stream or life-continuum connecting three existences. In his immediate past existence, when a person is about to die, **the energy of the kamma** which produces that existence is about to be exhausted. Then among the many billions of moral kammas and immoral kammas which are stored in the mental stream or mind-continuum of that person, one kamma

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will have the chance to produce the new existence.

(The many billions of karmas are classified into four kinds each according to (1) their functions, (2) their priority of bearing results, (3) with respect to the time of their bearing results, and (4) with respect to the place of fruition of the kamma. These classifications are described in Chapter [17] on pages 381-394.)

Diagram (16.1) Mind-Continuum Connecting Three Existences



Among the many billion karmas, the ‘**successful kamma**’, which has the chance to produce the next existence, appears at the mind-door of the dying person, or the objects observed at the time of performing that kamma, called ‘**kamma-nimitta**’, appears at the mind-door, or ‘**the sign of destiny**’ in connection with the place where the successful kamma is going to produce the new existence appears at one of the six sense-doors of the dying person.

Taking that near-death sign as its object, the near-death cognitive series of consciousness (*maraṇāsanna-vīthi*) arises in the dying person. After that cognitive series terminates with *maraṇāsanna-javana* (*M.Ja.* in Diagram), a life-continuum (*Bha* = *Bhavaṅga*) and then **death-consciousness** (*cuti* = *cuti citta*) arise and perish. That means the dying person dies.

Soon after the death-consciousness perishes, the **rebirth-consciousness** (*Paṭi* = *Paṭisandhi citta*) of the new existence arises without any separation in time, no matter in whatever realm the new existence takes place.

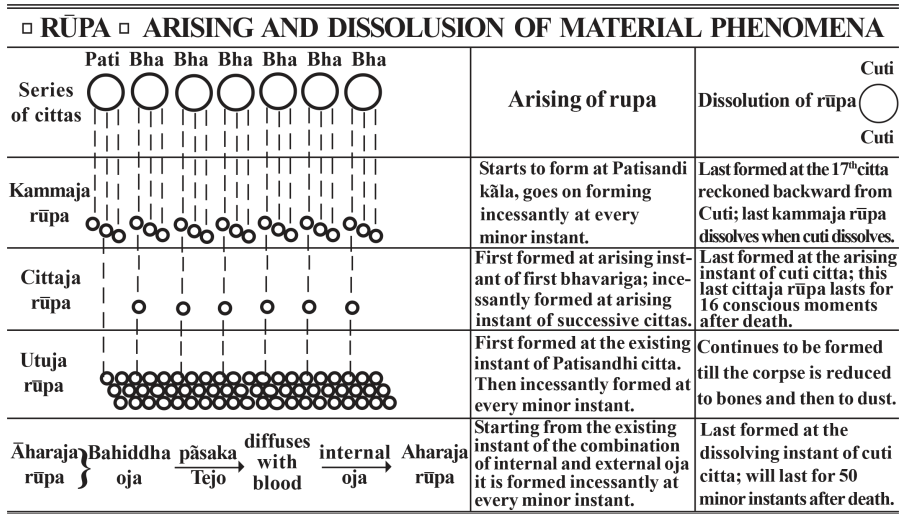
The successful kamma, which produces the new existence, pro-

duces its sense-sphere resultant consciousness one after another continuously for the whole existence. The first resultant consciousness functions as **rebirth-consciousness**; the subsequent resultant consciousnesses function as **life-continuum**, and the last resultant consciousness functions as **death-consciousness**.

• Material Phenomena in One Existence

The successful kamma called ‘**reproductive kamma**’ (*Janaka-kamma*) also produces kamma-born materialities starting from the moment of conception. In womb-born living beings like humans, dogs, cows, three kamma-born material groups, comprising body-decad, sex-decad and heart-decad, are manifested at the moment of conception. After conception, eye-decad, ear-decad and the rest are manifested slowly in due order.

Diagram (16.2) Material Phenomena in One Existence



Of the four causes which produce materiality, **the reproductive kamma** starts producing kamma-born material groups from the arising moment of rebirth-consciousness and continues producing kamma-born material groups at every sub-moment till the arising moment of the seventeenth consciousness reckoned backward from

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death-consciousness. Since materiality has a life-span of 17 consciousness-moments, the last formed kamma-born materiality will perish at the perishing moment of death-consciousness.

It is a natural law that psychic life and material life must arise together and must perish together. All consciousnesses are associated with psychic life (jīvitindriya cetasika) and all kamma-born-material groups contain material life (jīvita-rūpa).

75 consciousnesses, excluding 10 *dvipaṇcaviññāṇas*, 4 *arūpa vipāka cittas*, all rebirth-consciousnesses and Arahants' death-consciousnesses, produce mind-born material groups at their arising submoments.

So mind-born material groups begin to form at the arising moment of the first *bhavaṅga citta* (life-continuum) after rebirth-consciousness and continue to be formed at every arising moment of subsequent consciousnesses for the whole life till the arising moment of death-consciousness. This last formed mind-born material groups will last for 16 consciousness-moments after death. That means that all mind-born materiality perishes soon after death.

Every material group also contains the nutritive essence 'ojā'. After eaten food is digested in the stomach, the nutritive essence containing external *ojā* diffuses throughout the body. So the external *ojā* comes in contact with internal *ojā* present in internal material groups of the body. The time of contact is called the genetic or arising moment. After one submoment, the combination of internal *ojā* and external *ojā* reaches the existing state. Starting from that existing moment, the combination of internal *ojā* and external *ojā* produces nutriment-born material groups every submoment continuously.

So nutriment-born materiality is formed at every sub-moment incessantly till the perishing moment of death-consciousness, because the support required for the formation of āhāraja-rūpa can be furnished by consciousness up to that time. So at the time of death, that last-formed nutriment-born materiality has lasted for one submoment. In another 50 submoments, that last-formed nutriment-born materiality also perishes.

Thus at the time of death, kamma-born materiality perishes simultaneously together with death-consciousness. Mind-born materiality, nutriment-born materiality perish soon after death. But heat-born materiality will go on forming and perishing till the corpse, which consists of only heat-born materiality, is converted into dust.

As new material groups are incessantly produced from four causes, old material groups perish and disappear when their life-span of 17 consciousness-moments is over. Thus the material phenomena go on uninterruptedly in the sense-sphere till the end of life like the flame of a lamp or the stream of a river.

• Psychophysical Phenomena in a Living Being

Soon after the kamma-born rebirth-consciousness arises and perishes, kamma-born life-continuum (*bhavaṅga-cittas*) keep on arising one after another incessantly day and night while we are not aware of anything. All *bhavaṅga cittas* depend on the kamma-born heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) and take the near-death sign of the immediate past life as their object for their arising. As this object is not processed to be known by cognitive series of consciousnesses, we do not know it. As we do not know anything while *bhavaṅga cittas* are arising, psychologists called *bhavaṅga-cittas* as ‘**unconscious minds**’.

In reality there are no consciousnesses which are not aware of a sense-object. Every consciousness takes a sense-object and clings to it, and also has to depend on a physical base (*vatthu*) for its arising.

When we are awake, all six sense-objects (external bases) come in contact with our six sense-doors (internal bases) respectively. However, we can be aware of only one sense-object at a time only when a cognitive series of consciousness arises to know the object.

When a sense-object of very great intensity strikes the eye-door and appears at the door, the following eye-door cognitive series of consciousness arises.

Bha-“Ti-Na-Da-Pa-Ca-Sam-San-Vo-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Dā-Dā”-Bha-

The symbols represent the following consciousnesses.

Bha : *Bhavaṅga* = *Life-continuum*

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Only bhavaṅga-cittas keep arising before any sense-object appears at any sense-door.

Tī : *Atīta-bhavaṅga = past bhavaṅga-citta*

At the arising moment of this consciousness, the sense-object strikes the eye-door and takes one consciousness-moment to become distinct.

Na : *Bhavaṅga-calana = Vibrating life-continuum*

At the arising moment of this *citta*, the sense-object appears at the eye-door. Life-continuum vibrates two times (Na-Da) and is cut-off.

Da : *Bhavaṅgu-paccheda = cut-off or arrested life-continuum*

Bhavaṅga-stream is cut-off after this consciousness.

Pa : *Pañcadvārāvajjana = five-door directing consciousness*

It is always the first consciousness in the five-door cognitive series. It pays attention and takes notice of the sense-object.

Ca : *Cakkhu-viññāṇa = eye-consciousness*

It sees the visible object and transmits it to next consciousness.

Sam : *Sampaticchana = receiving consciousness*

It receives the sense-object and relays it to next consciousness.

San : *Santīrana = investigating consciousness*

it investigates the sense-object whether it is good or bad.

Vo : *Voṭṭhapana (manodvārāvajjana) = determining citta*

It determines whether the sense-object is good or bad.

Ja : *Javana = impulsive consciousness*

It arises seven times enjoying the taste of the sense-object. (We know the sense-object here and we think we enjoy it.)

Dā : *Tadālabhāna = registering consciousness*

It arises two times and continues enjoying the taste of the sense-object. When the second *tadālabhāna* perishes, the visible object and the eye-base, which have arisen together, also perish together, because their life-span of 17 consciousness-moments is now complete.

Bha : *Bhavaṅga = life-continuum*

Since the visible object no longer exists, the cognitive series ends, and life-continuum arises continuously.

Note: When the sense-object is of moderate intensity, it takes two or three consciousness-moments after striking the eye-door to develop itself to become distinct at the door, and two *tadālabhāna cīttas* can no longer arise.

Similar cognitive series of consciousnesses arise in the ear-door, the nose-door, the tongue-door and the body-door.

• **Mind-door Kāma-javana Cognitive Series of Consciousness**

When one of the six sense-objects, which may be past, present or future sense-object, appears at the mind-door, the mind-door sense-sphere impulsive consciousness (*kāma-javana*) cognitive series of consciousnesses arises. Just as the image of a person appears directly in a mirror, so too a sense-object appears directly in the mind door.

If the sense-object is very clear and distinct, the following cognitive series of consciousness arises.

“Na-Da-Ma-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Ja-Dā-Dā” -Bha-

Na : *Bhavaṅga-calana = Vibrating life-continuum*

At the arising moment of this consciousness, the sense-object appears at the mind-door. Life-continuum vibrates two times (Na-Da) and is cut-off.

Da : *Bhavaṅgu-paccheda = cut-off or arrested life-continuum*

Bhavaṅga-stream is cut-off after this consciousness.

Ma : *Manodvārāvajana = mind-door directing consciousness*

It pays attention and takes notice of the sense-object and decides whether the sense-object is good or bad.

Ja : *Javana = impulsive consciousness*

It arises seven times enjoying the taste of the sense-object.

If wise reflection is made in making decision, moral minds arise as *javana-cīttas*. If unwise reflection is made in deciding whether the object is good or bad, immoral minds arise as *javana-cīttas*.

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Dā : *Tadālabana* = registering consciousness

It arises two times and continues enjoying the taste of the sense-object. After the second *tadālabana*, the cognitive series terminates.

Bha : *Bhavaṅga* = life-continuum

As the cognitive series has terminated, bhavaṅga-stream keeps on flowing again.

Note: If the sense-object is of moderate intensity, two *tadālabanas* do not arise, and the cognitive series terminates after the seventh *javana-citta*. After that, life-continuum keeps on flowing as usual.

• **Secondary Mind-door Cognitive Series of Consciousnesses**

As described above, when one of the six sense-objects appears at the mind door, **primary mind-door cognitive series** arises. But there are **secondary mind-door cognitive series** which follow each and everyone of the **five-door cognitive series**.

In a five-door cognitive series, the sense-object is processed only to the extent to be known roughly whether it is good or bad. The form, the shape, the detailed features and the name of the sense-object are not known yet.

Thus after a five-door cognitive series, several secondary mind-door cognitive series follow, retaking the sense-object which has perished and reappears as a past object in the mind-door.

The first secondary mind-door cognitive series retakes the past sense-object. The second mind-door cognitive series follows suit, observing the retaken object and the old object that reappears in the mind-door together.

Then the third secondary mind-door cognitive series follows suit, observing the form and the shape of the object.

Then the fourth secondary mind-door cognitive series follows again, considering the name of the sense-object. If necessary, many secondary mind-door cognitive-series quickly occur in succession, examining the detailed features of the object and also thinking about the name of the object.

Only after these many-secondary mind-door cognitive series, does

one know the object together with its name and other details.

Considering the fact that consciousness can occur one after another incessantly at a tremendous rate of more than a billion times per eye-wink or per snap of the fingers, and a mind-door cognitive series contains only about ten cognitive consciousnesses, more than a billion cognitive series of consciousnesses can occur in a second.

That is also the reason why we think that we can see and hear simultaneously when we watch television. In reality, we cannot hear while we see, and we do not see while we hear.

• Cognitive Series of Consciousnesses in a life-time

While we are eating, or thinking about something or doing something, the five-door cognitive series and the mind-door cognitive series will be arising and perishing as described above. After each cognitive series, the normal stream of life-continuum will be flowing so that there is no break in the mental stream in the whole life.

In the above cognitive series, only sense-sphere moral minds and immoral minds will be arising as impulsive consciousnesses (*kāma-jāvanas*) which bear kamma properties. In Arahants, functional consciousnesses (*kiriya-cittas*) will arise as impulsive consciousnesses which do not bear kamma properties.

When we undertake **tranquillity meditation** and attain **jhānas**, **fine-material moral consciousnesses** and **immaterial moral consciousnesses** will arise as impulsive consciousnesses.

Again after attaining the jhānas, if we continue undertaking **insight meditation** (*vipassanā*) and attain **Path-wisdom** (*Magga-ñāṇa*), **supramundane moral consciousnesses** will arise as impulsive consciousnesses.

• Jhāna Cognitive Series (*Jhāna Vīthi*)

‘**Jhāna**’ is the state of mental absorption when the mind remains focused on the **counter-sign** (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) of concentration for one hour, two hours, one day, two days, up to seven days at a time. At the jhāna state, the five jhāna-factors (p.171) are fully developed and they totally suppress defilements including hindrances not to arise in the mind.

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So the mind is pure, calm, tranquil, peaceful and very powerful. It radiates very brilliant and penetrative light with the help of which the meditator can see penetratively all the internal organs of himself as well as of others, and define ultimate mentalities and ultimate-materialities by means of their respective characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of their arisings. He could also see far-away objects clearly.

To attain *jhāna*, we have to undertake tranquillity-meditation as taught by the Buddha. The Buddha taught 40 tranquillity-meditation subjects, of which **‘mindfulness of breathing’** (*Ānāpānassati*)⁶¹ is the foremost one. This meditation is described on pages 164-174.

In this meditation, the meditator has to focus his mind on the in-breath and the out-breath at the distinct touching point of the breath at his nostril or upper lip. When he can concentrate his mind well on the breath for one hour, two hours, continuously, the **learning sign or acquired sign** (*uggaha-nimitta*, usually as a white mass) appears at the touching point.

The meditator continues focusing his mind on the learning sign, which slowly turns into the **counter-sign** (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*) which appears very clear and bright like the evening star, or a diamond, or pearl, etc. He continues his meditation by focusing his mind on the counter-sign, and when his mind remains focused and absorbed at the counter-sign for one hour, two hours, or more, he is said to attain the **first rūpāvacara kusala citta**, i.e., the first fine material sphere *jhāna*.

The *jhāna* cognitive series is as follows.

(*Manda-paññā*) Na-Da- “Ma-Pa-U-Nu-Go-Jha” -Bha-
(*Tikkha-paññā*) Na-Da- “Ma-U-Nu-Go-Jha” -Bha-

When the counter-sign appears at the meditator’s mind door:

Na : *Bhavaṅga-calana* = vibrating life-continuum,
Da : *Bhavaṅgu-paccheda* = cut-off or arrested life-continuum,

61 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Volume I,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 147-162

- Ma : *Manodvārāvajjana* = mind-door directing consciousness,
Pa : *Parikamma* = preparation for jhāna to arise,
U : *Upacāra* = proximity of jhāna,
Nu : *Anuloma* = adaptation or connection between
parikamma and jhāna,
Go : *Gotrabhu* = it cuts the kāma-lineage to form the exalted
or *mahaggata*-lineage,
Jhā : *Jhāna* = *rūpāvacara citta* (or *arūpāvacara kusala citta*),
Bha : *Bhavaṅga* = life-continuum.

When the counter-sign appears at the mind-door, life-continuum vibrates twice and is cut-off (Na-Da). Then *manodvārāvajjana* (Ma) takes notice of the sign and decides whether it is good or bad.

Then sense-sphere moral consciousness associated with wisdom functions as neighbourhood-concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) javana function four times in persons of slow-wisdom (*manda-paññā*) as *parikama*, *upacāra*, *anuloma* and *gotrabhu*, or three times in persons of quick-wisdom (*tikkha-paññā*) as *upacāra*, *anuloma* and *gotrabhu*.

Immediately after *gotrabhu*, *rūpāvacara kusala first-jhāna citta* arises just once as impulsive consciousness (*appanā-javana*). This fine material-sphere moral consciousness or first jhāna consciousness associates with all the five jhāna-factors.

After practising to redevelop this first *rūpāvacara-jhāna citta* very skilfully, the first two jhāna factors (*vitakka*, *vicāra*) can be eliminated to develop the second *rūpāvacara-jhāna citta*. Then the third jhāna-factor (*pīti* = joy) can be eliminated to develop the third *rūpāvacara-jhāna citta*, and the fourth jhāna-factor (*sukha* = bliss) can further be eliminated to attain the fourth *rūpāvacara jhāna citta*, which is the best foundation for undertaking insight meditation.

After practising to redevelop the fourth *rūpāvacara jhāna* very skilfully, the meditator can develop higher concentration called **im-material sphere moral consciousnesses** (*arūpāvacara jhāna cittas*) by undertaking ‘**Kasiṇa meditation**’.

• **Developing Arūpāvacara Jhānas** (*Immaterial Sphere Jhānas*)⁶²

Then he redevelops the *fourth rūpāvacara jhāna*, comes out of it, and undertakes **kaṣiṇa-meditation** like repeated reflection of an earth-disc called ‘*pathavī kaṣiṇa*’. When he can see the earth-disc with closed eyes, he attains the **learning sign**. Again focusing on the learning sign, he reflects ‘*pathavī, pathavī*’ repeatedly until the learning sign becomes clear and brilliant; he attains the **counter-sign**. (“Developing Arūpāvacara cittas” is described on pages 181-186 in this book.)

He extends the counter-sign with his will-power until it fills all directions. Focusing on that enlarged counter-sign and reflecting *pathavī, pathavī* repeatedly, he can develop the fourfold or fivefold *rūpāvacara jhānas*. The *jhāna* cognitive series is as shown above.

The meditator now reasons about the defects of the physical body and the troubles it develops on account of heat and cold, insect-bites, hunger and thirst, diseases, ageing and death, and the need to work the whole life for food, clothing and shelter.

When he feels detached from the physical body and materiality, he first develops the fourth *rūpāvacara jhāna* by meditating on the expanded counter-sign of earth-kaṣiṇa. He then comes out from the fourth *jhāna* and, though the expanded counter-sign exists in his vision, he neglects it and tries to concentrate his attention on the infinite space (*ākāsa*) beyond it and meditates “*space, space*” (*ākāsa, ākāsa*) repeatedly.

When his mild attachment (*nikanti*) to the counter-sign disappears, the counter-sign suddenly disappears, unfolding infinite space. Concentrating his mindfulness on the infinite space, he goes on meditating “*space, space*” until he reaches the first *arūpa-jhāna*. This *jhāna* is called “*ākāsānañcāyatana kusala citta*” because it focuses on infinite space.

62 “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Volume I,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 108-144, 245-250.

He then continues his meditation by concentrating his mindfulness on *ākāsānañcāyatana kusala citta*, meditating “*viññāṇa, viññāṇa*” (consciousness, consciousness) repeatedly till he reaches the second *arūpa-jhāna*. This *jhāna* is called “*vinnāṇañcāyatana kusala citta*”.

Then, without giving attention to *ākāsānañcāyatana kusala citta*, he focuses his attention on nothingness and meditates “*nothingness, nothingness*” or “*natthi kiñci*” repeatedly till he reaches the third *arūpa-jhāna*. This *jhāna* is called “*akiñcaññāyatana kusala citta*”; ‘*akiñcañña*’ also means ‘*nothingness*’.

By taking the third *arūpa-jhāna* consciousness as the object of meditation, he can further develop the fourth *arūpa-jhāna*. This *jhāna* is called “*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana kusala citta*”. ‘*Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana*’ literally means that ‘perception neither exists nor does not exist’. It refers to the fact that this fourth *arūpa-jhāna* consciousness is so subtle and so refined that one cannot definitely say whether there is a consciousness or not. Consciousness is no longer noticeable at the state of this *jhāna*.

• Developing Supernormal Powers (*Abhiññā*)

A person, who attains four *rūpa-jhānas* and four *arūpa-jhānas* in earth-kasiṇa meditation, can easily develop these eight *jhānas* in the meditation of other nine kasiṇa meditations. Then he can practise in 14 ways as described by the Buddha on these nine *kasiṇas* (except *ākāsa kasiṇa*) and eight *jhānas* to make his mind very skilful and powerful. He can then develop five or seven **supernormal powers** as described on pages 185-186.

[17]

**THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF THE ALL-EMBRACING
PAṬṬHĀNA CONDITIONS⁶³**

- **This discovery marvellously and rationally explains all Psychophysical Phenomena.**

On the fourth week after he was fully enlightened as a Sammāsambuddha, the Buddha reflected on the supreme doctrine of Abhidhamma while staying cross-legged in the Golden House (*Ratanaghara*), created by Devas and Brahmās, at the corner to the north-west of Mahābodhi-Tree.

When he reflected on the lower six Treatises of Abhidhamma Piṭaka, no rays were emitted from his body yet, because his Omniscience was comparatively vast and the doctrinal methods in these Treatises were comparatively limited. But when he contemplated the seventh treatise of all-embracing **Paṭṭhāna** with unlimited numbers of methods, his Omniscience found the opportunity to display its extensive brilliance.

The six rays of blue, gold, white, red, darkish and glittering colours from the Buddha's body shined in the directions of all ten quarters; they could illuminate the entire ten thousand world systems. The Buddha is the Teacher who poured out his teachings from his cheerful, golden heart to those of the three worlds of devas, humans and Brahmās.

The all-embracing Paṭṭhāna, with its various new methods, is even larger and deeper than the great ocean. When the Buddha reflected on the Paṭṭhāna causal relations in many wonderful ways, his Omniscient Wisdom is incomparably deep, subtle and powerful owing to the variety of glorious Perfections, which he fulfilled in his uncountable existences during the very long period of four

63 “*The Great Chronicles of Buddhas*”, Vol. I, by the most Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicitta Sārābhivaṃsa, Singapore Edition, pp. 338-341.

asaṅkheyyas (great aeons) and one hundred thousand world cycles, has its opportunity to display its brilliance.

The **Paṭṭhāna Paccayaniddeso Pāli** describes (1) the conditioning states, (2) the conditionally arisen states, and (3) the conditioning force or property of each Paṭṭhāna condition. The **condition** (*paccaya*) has the characteristic of assisting its conditionally arisen thing (*paccayuppanna*) for its arising or existence. This Pāli describes briefly and precisely the operation of 24 **Paṭṭhāna Conditions** in natural processes of psychophysical phenomena. I describe the operations of the 24 Paṭṭhāna Conditions in my book: “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”.⁶⁴

Also in my book “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”,⁶⁵ Volume II, all the causal relations of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*) are also explained by means of 24 Paṭṭhāna Conditions in a higher level. The readers are invited to study these interesting descriptions.

Here in this book, I shall just explain briefly the nature and operation of each Paṭṭhāna Condition in the natural process of psychophysical phenomena to give some idea about 24 **Paṭṭhāna Conditions**.

(1) Root Condition (*Hetupaccayo*)

The root condition represents three immoral roots, namely, greed (*lobha*), anger (*dosa*) and ignorance (*moha*), and three moral roots, namely, greedlessness (*alobha*), non-hatred or loving-kindness (*adosa*) and wisdom (*amoha*).

As the roots of a tree assist the tree to grow and to be firm and stable, so too the six roots assist consciousnesses, their associated mental factors and consciousness-born materiality to arise and to be firm and stable by root condition.

64 “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third-Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 239-266.

65 “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Volume II,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 142-184.

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(2) Object Condition (*Ārammana-paccayo*)

The object condition represents the six sense-objects, namely, visible object, sound, smell, taste, touch and mind-object. These six sense-objects comprise all materialities, all mentalities as well as Nibbāna and concepts.

Just as a rope-line and a walking stick aid an invalid person to sit up and stand up, so also the six sense-objects aid the very subtle consciousnesses and their associated mental factors to arise and exist by clinging and depending on them.

(3) Predominance Condition (*Adhipati-paccayo*)

The predominance-condition is of two kinds: conascent condition and object condition. The strong wish or will (*chanda*), predominant effort (*vīriya*), predominant consciousness (*citta*) and investigating wisdom (*vīmaṃsa*) can act as conascent predominance, but only one at a time in a group of consciousness and mental factors.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*Predominant wish or will aids the consciousness and the mental factors associated with it and also the consciousness-born materiality to accomplish the task wished by chanda by predominance-condition, and so on.*” *Vīriya, citta and vīmaṃsa act similarly.*

Also it was said by the blessed one: “Grasping attentively any dhamma as a predominant object, these dhammas, viz., consciousnesses and its concomitants arise; the former dhamma aids the latter dhammas to arise and exist by predominance condition.”

(4) Proximity Condition (*Anantara-paccayo*)

A dhamma (ultimate reality) which assists another dhamma to arise and exist without any separation in time is a proximity-condition. When a consciousness and its associated mental factors perish, another consciousness and its associated mental factors arise without any separation in time. This phenomenon arises because the former consciousness and its mental factors aid the latter consciousness and its mental factors to arise and exist by proximity-condition.

Although all consciousnesses and their associated mental factors

perish and disappear soon after they have arisen, they do not perish without momentum and due concern. Each consciousness as well as each mental factor transmits its property to the next arising consciousness and mental factor and aids them to arise without any separation in time by proximity-condition.

(5) Contiguity Condition (*Samanantara-paccayo*)

Contiguity-condition is the same as proximity-condition. There is no interval (*antara*) between two consecutive consciousnesses; thus they are proximate (*anantara*). As consciousnesses have no form and no shape like material groups, they are quite without interval, because the distinction of co-presence is lacking; thus they are contiguous (*samanantara*).

These two conditions emphasise that consciousnesses or minds arise and perish one after another without any separation in time.

(6) Conascence Condition (*Sahajāta-paccayo*)

A dhamma that, while arising, assist another dhamma to arise together, is a nascence-condition, just as a lamp is for its illumination.

In any natural process in which the conditioning dhamma and the conditionally arisen dhamma arise together simultaneously, then the former is said to condition the latter to arise and exist by nascence condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*the four mental aggregates (cittas and cetasikas) mutually condition one another to arise together by nascence-condition. The four primary elements (pathavī, āpo, tejo, vāyo) mutually condition one another to arise together by nascence condition. At the moment of conception, mentality (re-birth-consciousness and its associated mental factors) and materiality (kamma-born materiality) mutually condition each other to arise together by nascence-condition, and so on.*”

(7) Mutuality Condition (*Aññamañña-paccayo*)

The dhammas that mutually aid one another to arise and exist together are mutuality-conditions, as the three sticks of a tripod mutually support one another to remain balanced.

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In the above three first phenomena mentioned in conascence-condition, the conditioning dhamma and the conditionally arisen dhamma also mutually aid each other to arise together by mutuality-condition.

(8) Support Condition (*Nissaya-paccayo*)

A dhamma that assists another dhamma to arise and exist as the foundation and support is a support-condition, as the earth for trees, as canvas for paintings, and so on.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha stated: “*The four mental aggregates as well as the four primary elements mutually support one another to arise and exist by support-condition, and so on*”, and also: “*The eye-base (cakkhu-pasāda) supports the eye-consciousness and its associated mental factors to arise and exist by support-condition, and so on*”.

(9) Powerful Support Condition (*Upanissaya-paccayo*)

A powerful support condition is a powerful cause which assists by means of support condition. For example, the rain is a powerful cause which supports the growth of trees, animals and men. Similarly, parents are a powerful support for their children, and teachers for their students.

In any phenomenon in which the cause is a powerful support for its effect, then the cause aids the effect to arise by means of powerful support condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*Preceding wholesome dhammas (kusala cittas and cetasikas) give powerful support to subsequent wholesome dhammas by powerful support condition.*

“Preceding wholesome dhammas sometimes give powerful support to subsequent unwholesome dhammas (akusala cittas and cetasikas) by powerful support condition.

Preceding unwholesome dhammas give powerful support to subsequent unwholesome dhammas by powerful support condition.

“Preceding unwholesome dhammas sometimes give powerful support to subsequent wholesome dhammas by powerful support condition.

“Also, weather, food, person, and lodging place give powerful support to living beings by powerful support conditions”.

(10) Prenascence Condition (*Purejāta-paccayo*)

Prenascence condition refers to something previously arisen, which serves as the cause for something arising later. For example, the sun and the moon have come into existence since the formation of the solar system. They give light to the people who are living on the earth now. So the sun and the moon aid the people by means of pre-nascence condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*the eye-base conditions the eye-consciousness and its mental factors to arise and exist by pre-nascence-condition. The ear-base conditions the ear-consciousness and its mental factors to arise and exist by pre-nascence-condition, and so on.*”

“*The visible object conditions the eye-consciousness and its mental factors to arise and exist by pre-nascence-condition. The sound conditions the ear-consciousness and its mental factors to arise and exist by pre-nascence condition, and so on.*”

(11) Post-nascence Condition (*Pacchājāta-paccayo*)

This causal relation refers to the phenomenon in which the cause arises later and the thing to be conditioned arises earlier.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*The post-nascent consciousness and its mental factors aid the prenascent materiality (i.e. heart-base, eye-base, ear-base, etc.) to exist and be stable by post-nascence condition.*”

(12) Repetition Condition (*Āsevana-paccayo*)

In learning a discourse of the Buddha by heart through constant repetition, the later recitation becomes gradually easier and easier. Thus earlier learning aids later learning by means of repetition condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*Preceding javana moral consciousnesses and their associated mental factors enhance the strength of subsequent javana moral consciousnesses and their associated mental factors by repetition-condition, and so on.*”

(13) Kamma Condition (*Kamma-paccayo*)

A well preserved seed, when placed in a well watered ground, gives rise to an offshoot. Similarly wholesome kamma or unwholesome kamma, with the support of *ignorance* (*avijjā*) and *craving* (*taṇhā*), gives rise to a new offspring in the form of five aggregates of existence.

In the two accounts stated above, the seed or kamma is the cause or condition; and the offshoot or five aggregates of existence is the result or conditionally arisen thing. The cause is said to condition the result to arise by way of kamma condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*Moral kamma or immoral kamma produced its resultant mental aggregates (resultant consciousnesses and its associated mental factors) and kamma-born materialities by kamma-condition, and so on*”.

(14) Kamma-result Condition (*Vipāka-paccayo*)

Resultant consciousness and its associated mental factors are the kamma-result of a past kamma. As they are caused to arise by the force of the past kamma, they have no worry at all for their arising. They can arise peacefully and leisurely without any effort by the force of kamma.

As a cool breeze will make a person in the cool shade feel cooler, so too resultant consciousness and its associated mental factors mutually aid one another by kamma-result condition to arise more peacefully.

(15) Nutriment Condition (*Āhāraja-paccayo*)

Parents produce their children, support them and look after them so that they will grow up happily. In the same way the four nutriments, namely, edible food (*ojā*), contact between consciousness and sense-object (*phassa*), volition (*cetanā*) or reproductive kamma and consciousness (*viññāṇa*), produce their resultants and keep on supporting them so that they are stable and durable. This type of conditioning process is known as nutriment-condition.

Nutriment supports the body by nutriment-condition. Similarly contact produces feeling and supports it to be durable; reproductive

kamma keeps on producing four resultant mental aggregates and material aggregate continuously and incessantly to keep us alive for the whole life-span; consciousness produces its associated mental factors and consciousness-born materiality to enable us to move our hands, legs, mouths, etc., by nutriment-condition.

(16) Faculty Condition (*Indriya-paccayo*)

With the exception of masculinity-faculty and femininity-faculty, the remaining twenty faculties, which assist in the sense of controlling faculty like ministers controlling their respective faculties, are faculty-conditions.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*the eye-faculty (cakkhu-pasāda) controls eye-consciousness and its associated mental factors by faculty-condition, and so on. Material life-faculty (jīvitarūpa) controls kamma-born materiality by faculty-condition. The immaterial or mental faculties control their respective concomitants (cittas and cetasikas) and the mind-born materiality by faculty-condition*”.

(17) Jhāna Condition (*Jhāna-paccayo*)

Jhāna-condition stands for seven jhāna-factors called ‘*jhānaṅgas*’. These jhāna-factors condition their conascent consciousnesses, associated mental factors and mind-born materialities to focus on a particular object like the counter-sign of concentration closely and fixedly. This type of conditioning is said to occur by way of jhāna-condition.

(18) Path-Condition (*Maggapaccayo*)

Path-condition stands for the twelve constituents of the path called ‘*maggāṅgas*’. The moral path-constituents form a path, conditioning their conascent consciousnesses, associated mental factors and mind-born materialities to bear results in blissful realms. The immoral path-constituents similarly form a path, conditioning their conascent consciousnesses, associated mental factors and consciousness-born materialities to bear results in woeful abodes. This type of conditioning is said to take place by way of path-condition.

(19) Association Condition (*Sampayutta-paccayo*)

Tea-essence, milk, sugar and hot-water are so thoroughly mixed

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in a cup of tea that they cannot be differentiated and they give a combined pleasant taste.

Similarly consciousness and its associated mental factors, which together form four mental aggregates, are so thoroughly mixed that they cannot be differentiated. Besides they arise together, perish together, have a common physical base and a common object, and they mutually aid one another by way of association-condition.

(20) Dissociation Condition (*Vippayutta-paccayo*)

In a crown or a necklace, the gold and the jewels do not mix thoroughly; they can easily be differentiated by sight. Yet the gold makes the jewels more beautiful, and the jewels make the gold more attractive.

Similarly material groups and mental groups do not mix, neither do they arise together nor perish together. Yet material groups aid mental groups, and mental groups aid material groups in many ways. They are said to aid one another by way of dissociation-condition.

(21) Presence Condition (*Atthi-paccayo*)

The earth can support plants and living beings to grow on it, because it is present. Parents can support and look after their children while they are present.

Such a phenomenon, either prenascent or conascent, which through its presence is a condition for other phenomena to arise, is called presence-condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha stated: “*The four immaterial aggregates mutually support one another by presence-condition. The four great primary elements mutually support one another by presence-condition. At the moment of rebirth, mentality and materiality mutually aid each other by presence-condition. Consciousness and its associated mental factors aid consciousness-born materiality to arise by presence-condition. The four great primary elements aid derived materialities to arise by presence-condition.*”

“The eye-base aids the eye-consciousness and its associated mental factors to arise and exist by presence-condition, and so on. The

visible object aids the eye-consciousness and its associated mental factors to arise and exist by presence-condition. The heart-bases aid the mind-elements, the mind-consciousness-elements, and their associated mental factors to arise and exist by presence-condition.”

(22) Absence Condition (*Natthi-paccayo*)

The absence of the sun contributes to the appearance of the moon; the absence of light gives rise to darkness; and the death of a king contributes to the enthronement of his eldest son. These examples illustrate how something can condition another thing to arise by being absent.

In mental phenomena, a consciousness and its associated mental factors, which have just perished, form the necessary condition for the immediate arising of the subsequent consciousness and its associated mental factors by absence condition.

In *Paccayaniddeso Pāḷi* the Buddha said: “*Consciousness and its associated mental factors, which have just ceased in contiguity, are related to the present consciousness and its associated mental factors, which have arisen in a similar manner, by absence-condition.*”

(23) Disappearance Condition (*Vigata-paccayo*)

When something perishes and disappears, it no longer exists, so it is absent. Therefore, disappearance-condition is synonymous with absence-condition.

Disappearance-condition, like absence-condition, applies only to mental phenomena in which a consciousness with its associated mental factors can arise only when the preceeding consciousness and its associated mental factors perish and disappears.

(24) Non-disappearance Condition (*Avigata-paccayo*)

If something does not disappear, it is present. So non-disappearance condition is identical with presence-condition.

Such a phenomenon, whether prenascent or conascent, which through its non-disappearance is a condition for another phenomenon to arise, is called non-disappearance-condition.

The operation of non-disappearance-condition in psychophysical phenomena is identical with the operation of presence-condition.

[18]

THE DISCOVERY OF THE IMPORTANT LAW OF KAMMA

- **The Important Law of Kamma**^{66,67}

When the Bodhisatta attained the Supernormal Knowledge of Divine Power of Sight (*Dibbacakkhu Abhiññā*) and the Supernormal Knowledge of Seeing beings in thirty-one planes of existence and knowing their respective kammās which give rise to their present respective existences (*Yathākammūpaga-ñāṇa*) in the auspicious night of his full enlightenment as a Buddha, he also discovered the important Law of Kamma.

- **What is ‘Kamma’?**

Kamma is ‘*Volitional action*’. An action without volition or intention is not kamma. The reason is that it is *volition (cetanā)* which accomplishes an action. Volition is a mental factor which associates with every consciousness.

- **How does Kamma arise?**

All three types of actions, namely, bodily action, verbal action and mental action, are performed by the mind. Since the body, the hands, the legs and the mouth cannot move by themselves; they are moved by the mind through mind-born materiality.

Suppose a mosquito bites you. You feel painful and you know that a mosquito is biting you. You become angry and anger prompts you to kill the mosquito. Anger itself cannot bring about the killing action. It is the volition (*cetanā*) which, being associated with anger, becomes angry volition, sets the motive to kill the mosquito and prompts its associated consciousness and mental factors to perform their respective functions to accomplish the killing action.

66 “Kamma, The Real Creator”, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon,
Mya Mon Yadanar Publication, pp. 115-202, 254-315.

67 “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, pp. 153-168.

Consequently consciousness and mental factors produce mind-born materiality to move the hand to smash the mosquito to death.

• **Who kills the mosquito?**

Since the hand smashes the mosquito to death, is the hand the killer? The hand would say: “I am just materiality. I cannot move by myself. The consciousness moves me to smash the mosquito. I do not know what was being done.”

Then is consciousness the killer? The consciousness would also argue: “I am just aware of the mosquito-bite. I have no intention to kill the mosquito. Volition prompts me to move the hand; so I move it.” Thus we can see that consciousness is also only an accomplice, not the real killer.

Since the volition sets the motive to kill the mosquito, prompts consciousness and mental factors to do their functions to kill the mosquito and is concerned with accomplishing the killing action, volition is the real killer.

Since the killing action is accomplished because of volition (*cetanā*), the Buddha identifies volition with the action and said:

“Cetanā-haṃ bhikkhave kammaṃ vadāmi.

Cetayittvā kammaṃ karoti kāyena vācāya manasā.”

“O monks, it is volition that I call kamma. Prompted by volition, one performs an action through body, speech or mind.”

One performs an evil action because one is influenced by immoral roots (greed, anger, ignorance) and unwise reflection, thinking that an evil action is faultless and it will not bring back reactions upon oneself. During an evil action, immoral minds arise and perish by many billions, depositing billions of immoral kammās in the mental stream or mind-continuum.

Similarly one performs a moral, good action because one is influenced by moral roots (greedlessness, angerlessness, wisdom) and wise reflection, knowing that a moral good action will bring about great benefits. During a moral action, moral minds arise and perish by many billions, depositing billions of moral kammās in the mental stream.

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As stated in Abhidhamma Commentry, the minds can arise and perish one after another very rapidly at the rate of more than a thousand billion minds per snap of the fingers or per eye-wink. So many billion minds can arise and perish during an immoral action or a moral action.

The volitions which associate with each of these many billion minds perform and accomplish the action. They are called **conascent kammās**. When they perish together with the minds, each of them leaves its kamma-property in the mental stream. So many billion kamma-properties called **asynchronous kammās** will be deposited in the mental stream. These asynchronous kammās are like the seeds of fruits left behind after eating the fruits.

As each seed has the potential to produce a new tree which can bear the same kind of fruits, so also a potent asynchronous kamma has the potential to produce a new existence which is in accord with the reaction done.

So there are two types of kammās:

- (1) **Conascent Kammās** which perform and accomplish the action,
- (2) **Asynchronous kammās** which produce reactions including new existences and fortunes.

Both types are simply called “kammās” in conversation for easy reference.

• **How do Kammās bear Results?**

The way asynchronous kammās bear results resembles the way plant-seeds produce new plants together with flowers and fruits.

Sadisam pākam janeti.

Kamma will produce results similar to it.

Yadisam vappate bijam tādissam harate phalam.

As you sow the seed, so shall you reap the fruit.

Kālyānakārī kalyānam pāpakārī ca pāpākam.

Who does good receives good; who does bad receives bad.

Good deeds will bear good results, and bad deeds will bear bad results.

- **Kamma bears Results a Billionfold**

In science we have a law called “**Newton’s Law of action**”. The Law states: “**To every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.**” Similarly, in the Law of Kamma, we can say that to every action, similar reactions will come many times.

How is that? Because in a moral or immoral action, billions of moral or immoral kammās are produced, and each kamma can produce a new reaction in accord with the action.

For example, during the dispensation of our Gotama Buddha, a Lady Arahant by the name of **Dhamma Dinnā** was foremost among Buddha’s female disciples in preaching the Dhamma. She possessed supernormal powers. When she looked at her past existences with her supernormal knowledge of former existences, she saw that in one existence she was the wife of a brahmin.

One day her husband’s closest friend came to their house. Her husband requested her to cook some special good food. She went to the market, but she could not get any meat, because she was late. So she killed a little kid (young goat) which she bred at home, and cooked its meat. Her husband and friend enjoyed the tasty food and thanked the good house-wife.

Now she believed that animals were created by a Creator for human consumption, and so it would not be sinful to kill a kid. She was wrong; because when she died, she was born in hell and she had to suffer very miserably for many years, or we can say that she was killed a billion times.

When she escaped from hell, she was born as animals as many existences as there were hairs in the body of the kid that she killed. In all these animal existences, she was killed while still young by being cut at her throat. Only when one of her past good kammās had the chance to bear results, she regained the human existence.

Thus she killed a kid just once, and she was killed many times in return in the same way as she killed the kid!

- **Donate a Quarter and Become a Millionaire**

I have the chance to read the biography of **Howard Hugh**, an

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American billionaire, who possessed three billion dollars. He was handsome and good natured. Many ladies were interested in him. But he did not marry and lived as a bachelor. He took pleasure riding his single-seated aeroplane under the blue sky.

One day unfortunately the plane crashed, and he was very seriously wounded. He had to take major surgery operation and long medical treatment including pathadine injection to reduce the pain. Finally he was cured, but addicted to pathadine.

He had to take pathadine injection regularly. After many days he lost appetite for food and could not sleep. He grew very thin and haggard with cracked flesh and skin. So he was no longer handsome. As he was very shy, he didn't want to associate with people. To pass his time away leisurely for a change, he stayed with his group in resort-hotels one after another.

He rented the whole top floor of the hotel and let it be secluded, without allowing other people to come in. As he could not sleep, he spent his time watching television, movies, special programs and listening to songs and music. He could only eat ice-cream which he liked best.

Everyday at twilight time he came down from the hotel by the lift and took a walk for one hour. When he went up to his top floor by the lift, he gave the lift-operator one quarter (25 cents). One day he forgot to bring a quarter. He walked to the cars in the parking lot. When he saw a man sitting in a car, he asked politely: "Friend, I need a quarter. Can you help me?"

"Oh yes, here is one quarter. I am very glad to help you."

"Thank you. Friend, may I know your name and address?"

The man willingly told his name and address. He was amazed why the stranger wanted to know his name and address. Later he was more amazed to receive a cheque of one million dollars from that stranger, whom he came to know to be Howard Hugh, a billionaire. Howard Hugh had written a last will to give a million dollars to the man who had donated a quarter to him before he passed away.

That donor of one quarter might get one million dollars in each of his many future existences, because he had acquired many millions of good kmmas in donating a quarter gladly.

In Myanmar we have a saying: **“Donate as much as a banyan seed; you will get the reward greater than a bayan tree.”** So try to donate generously.

• **The Operations of the Law of Kamma**

The Law of Kamma is a natural law, which is not controlled by any Almighty God. As a mango-seed will produce a mango-tree, and an apple-seed an apple-tree, so also unwholesome immoral kmmas will produce bad results, and wholesome moral kmmas will produce good results.

We have learnt that billions of moral or immoral kmmas are deposited in the mental stream in each moral or immoral action. Now we have performed uncountable actions in the present existence as well as in our uncountable past existences. So the moral kmmas and the immoral kmmas we have produced and acquired are uncountable. These kmmas, which have not produced their results and still remained active, have been transmitted from mind to mind up to the present existence. We have noted that **the Bodhisatta saw his continuous mental stream from Sumedha-existence up to Siddhattha-existence with his supernormal knowledge of former existences.**

Thus we could understand that there will be many billions of kmmas in our present mental streams. So no body can know or predict which kamma will produce what result at what time. Only the Buddha knew how kmmas operate. According to the teachings of the Buddha, kmmas can be classified into four kinds in four ways to predict when, where and how each type bears results.

(a) Four Kinds of Kmmas according to Function

(1) Productive Kamma (*Janaka Kamma*)

Productive kamma is a powerful kamma that can produce a new existence. It produces its resultant consciousness with associated mental factors and kamma-born materiality continuously from con-

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ception till death. They constitute five aggregates and an existence.

If the productive kamma is a sense-sphere moral kamma (*kāmāvacara kusala kamma*), the new existence arises either in the human realm or a *deva* realm. If the kamma is an immoral kamma, the new existence arises in one of the woeful abodes. If the productive kamma is strong, the new being will enjoy long life; if it is weak, the new being will enjoy short life.

(2) Supportive Kamma (*Upatthambhaka Kamma*)

Supportive kamma is not strong enough to produce a new existence. It supports the productive kamma to bear results and also supports the results to last long.

(3) Obstructive Kamma (*Upapīlaka Kamma*)

Obstructive kamma obstructs or prevents the productive kamma not to bear result, and when the productive kamma has the chance to bear results, the obstructive kamma obstructs the productive kamma to bear little results and also obstructs the results not to grow and not to last long.

At the time of rebirth of a new existence, billions of moral kammas and immoral kammas will be transmitted from the death-consciousness of the past existence to the rebirth-consciousness of the new existence. For human beings, moral kammas can function as supportive kammas, and immoral kammas function as obstructive kammas.

Although a person is born poor, if he has a good job and work hard with good intelligence, he can become rich. Especially if he performs good actions or meritorious deeds regularly, his accumulated moral kammas, become more powerful than immoral kammas and bear good results. So he can become very prosperous.

When he becomes rich, he may enjoy a lot of sensual pleasures, thus increasing immoral kammas and forgetting to perform meritorious deeds. When his cumulative immoral kammas become more powerful than moral kammas, they will start bearing bad results one after another. So we have the saying: ***“Misfortune never comes alone.”***

Therefore, we have ups and downs in life due to the alternate results of good karmas and bad karmas. Thus the world-famous English play-writer, **William Shakespeare**, wrote:

“Life is not a bed of roses. Life is full of ups and downs.”

(4) Destructive Kamma (*Upaghātaka Kamma*)

Destructive kamma is a powerful kamma which tortures a person, completely cuts off the effects of his productive kamma and destroys the productive kamma. So the person dies abruptly and is usually reborn in accordance with the destructive kamma.

A destructive kamma may be moral or immoral. For example, a person may, through his productive kamma, be destined to live a long life. But an immoral destructive kamma may arise suddenly and bring about his premature death by such means as heart-attack, paralytic stroke, car-accident, etc.

On the other hand, a person is reborn as a woeful ghost after death due to his immoral productive kamma. His former relatives offer food and robes to monks and share the good merit with him. If he can appreciate the good deed and say “*sādhū, sādhu*” or “*well done, well done*,” the powerful moral kamma that he acquires can act as a destructive kamma, destroying his immoral productive kamma completely and producing its good effects. So the woeful ghost dies suddenly and is reborn as a celestial being.

Thus when one of our relatives dies, we usually perform great meritorious deeds and share the merits to that person to help him in case he is reborn as a woeful ghost.

(b) Four Kinds of Karmas according to Priority of Bearing Results

(1) Weighty Kamma (*Garuka Kamma*)

A weighty kamma is so powerful that no other karmas can stop its function of bearing results. In other words, it has the first priority to produce the next existence.

Bad weighty karmas include five very heinous karmas, namely, killing the father, killing the mother, killing an Arahant, wounding the Buddha, and creating a schism in the Saṅgha Community, the

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last one being the most heinous. A person, who committed such a heinous action, will be born in the worst hell called ‘*Avīci hell*’. A permanent false view (*niyata-micchādiṭṭhi*) is also taken as one of the weighty kammās.

Good weighty kammās include nine jhāna kammās, namely, five rūpāvacara jhānas and four arūpāvacara jhānas. A person, who can develop a jhāna and maintain it till death, will be reborn as a brahmā after death as the result of that jhāna kamma.

Supramundane moral kamma (lokuttara kusala kamma) will be the best weighty kamma for it closes the doors of the four woeful abodes for ever. A noble person (*Ariyā*) will never be reborn in a woeful abode; he will be reborn only in a blissful realm after death if he is not yet an Arahant.

(2) Proximity-Kamma (*Āsanna Kamma*)

Proximity-kamma is a near-death kamma, which is performed at the time of near death or which was performed earlier and is remembered or recollected at the time of near death.

If we do not have any good weighty kamma, that is often the case, we must rely on our proximity kamma to condition our next life. To get a good proximity kamma, sons and daughters or relatives or friends should arrange wholesome deeds such as offering robes to monks or listening to Dhamma-preaching for the near-death person. He should also be reminded of his past good deeds or to reflect on one of the Buddhas’ attributes such as “*Arahāṃ, Arahāṃ.*”

A good example is **Venerable Sona’s father** in Sri Lanka. The father was a hunter. He kept on hunting until he was very old. He became a monk in his son’s monastery, which was on Sona Giri Hill.

Soon the very old monk fell ill and he had a vision that hell-hounds were coming up the hill to bite him. He told his son to drive away the hounds. Being an Arahant, Venerable Sona knew that his father had a near-death-sign of destiny to be cast down to hell after death.

In order to save his father, Ven. Sona told his disciples to gather flowers quickly and spread them on the pagoda which was in the

monastery compound. Then they carried his father on a couch to the pagoda. Venerable Sona persuaded his father to pay homage to the pagoda and to rejoice in the offering of flowers to the pagoda on his behalf.

The old monk paid obeisance to the pagoda. He also took delight in offering flowers to the Buddha. So he developed moral minds by many billions and acquired many billion moral kammass. One of these moral kammass now had the chance to function as productive kamma by proximity effect. At that time the near-death sign changed.

“My son, very beautiful celestial ladies are calling me to go along with them. Shall I go with them?”

“Please go along with them, father.”

His father passed away, became a celestial being and went along with celestial ladies. The son was delighted to know that his effort to prevent his father from being cast down to hell was successful.

(3) Habitual Kamma (*Āciṇṇa Kamma*)

Habitual kamma is a deed, either good or bad, that one performs regularly or habitually, or it may be a good deed which is performed once and is recollected frequently.

For teachers, their regular teachings become their wholesome habitual kammass. For a person who meditates regularly, that meditation practice becomes his moral habitual kamma.

For those who make fishing, hunting or stealing as their regular means of earning a living, those immoral actions become their immoral habitual kammass. Since **Venerable Sona’s father** was a hunter for life, hunting was his habitual kamma. So he saw hell hounds as the near-death sign, indicating that he was going to be born in hell after death.

In the absence of a weighty kamma and a proximity kamma, the habitual kamma will have the chance to condition the arising of the next existence after death.

It is important to live well morally, and it is more important to die well to be reborn in a blissful realm. The best way to prepare for our death is to develop a moral habitual kamma. We can choose any

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meritorious deed we like – alms-giving, keeping pure morality, or meditating. If we perform it regularly, it will become habitual kamma and bear results to generate a good rebirth.

(4) Unspecified Kamma (*Kaṭattā Kamma*)

Unspecified kamma is a kamma, which has been done earlier and forgotten, but is potent enough to take on the role of generating rebirth in the absence of weighty kammās, proximity kammās and habitual kammās.

For example, **the chief Queen Mallikā of King Kosala** in Sāvatti, performed many meritorious deeds together with the king. She also arranged the most outstanding offering of alms-food of the king to the Buddha and the Saṅgha. But unfortunately she also committed one heinous immoral action.

One day when she went into the bath-room, a dog followed her, and she enjoyed sexual pleasure with the dog. When she came out of the bath-room, the dog followed her. This was noticed by the king, and he immediately questioned her. She vehemently lied to the king saying that the king must have had a distorted vision for she came out alone.

As the King loved his chief Queen very dearly, he believed her and excused her. After many days, the Queen forgot this matter totally. When she died, this immoral unspecified kamma had the chance to bear results and conditioned her to be reborn in Avīci Hell, the worst hell.

King Kosala believed that his wise beloved chief Queen would be reborn in a celestial realm. But to make it sure, he went to Jetavana Monastery for seven days to ask the Buddha. As the Buddha knew about the matter well, he used his supernormal power to make the king forget about asking the question about his chief Queen.

On the eighth day the Buddha allowed him to ask the question, because the Buddha knew that the chief Queen escaped from Avīci hell and was reborn in Tusitā celestial realm. The king was very glad to hear that his beloved chief Queen was reborn in Tusitā realm.

As Queen Mallikā had performed many meritorious deeds, one powerful moral kamma acted as a destructive kamma, destroying totally her immoral heinous kamma that sent her to Avīci Hell and conditioning her to be reborn in Tusitā realm. She was very lucky to suffer in the worst hell just for seven human days. So moral wholesome kammas are very reliable.

[C] Four Kinds of Kammas according to the Time of Bearing Results (*Pākakāla Kamma Catukka*)

(1) Immediately Effective Kamma (*Diṭṭhadhammavedaniya Kamma*)

These kammas bear results in the present existence.

(2) Subsequently Effective Kamma (*Upapajjavedaniya Kamma*)

These kammas bear fruits in the next subsequent existence.

(3) Indefinitely Effective Kamma (*Aparāpariyavedaniya Kamma*)

These kammas bear results from the second subsequent existence till the last existence when the person becomes an Arahant.

(4) Defunct Kammas (*Ahosi Kammas*)

These kammas no longer bear fruits.

When we perform moral actions or immoral actions, moral consciousnesses or immoral consciousnesses arise seven times as impulsive consciousnesses (*javana cittas*) in each cognitive series.

Among the seven *javanas*, the first javana is the weakest, because it does not get repetitive effect from previous javanas. The subsequent javanas become stronger and stronger, the seventh javana being the strongest on account of repetitive effect.

The *volition* (*cetanā*), which associates with the first weakest javana, is the weakest and it is called **“Immediately effective kamma.”** This kamma can ripen and yield its results in the present existence. If it does not have the chance to bear results in the first existence, it becomes defunct kamma.

The volition, associated with the seventh strongest javana, is the strongest and it is called **“Subsequently effective kamma”**. This kamma can ripen and bear results to produce the next subsequent existence. If it does not have the chance to bear fruits in the next subsequent existence, it also becomes defunct kamma.

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The volitions, associated with the middle five javanas, are moderately strong; they represent “**Indefinitely effective kammās**”. They can ripen at any time starting from the second future existence till the last existence when the person becomes an Arahant, and they will bear results whenever they get the opportunity.

• **Illustrations of Immediately Effective Kammās Bearing Results**

There are many examples illustrating the operation of immediately effective kammās. A very poor man by the name of **Mahāduk** had the chance to offer one meal to **Kassapa Buddha**. As the Buddha is the noblest person, he got great merit for offering alms-food to the Buddha. He became rich within a few days on account of this good kamma.

During the time of **Gotama Buddha**, a very poor couple, **Puṇṇa** and his wife, gladly offered boiled rice, the food that would sustain the couple for the whole day, to **Venerable Sāriputta**, the right-hand chief disciple of Gotama Buddha. The Venerable had just come out from Extinction Attainment (*Nirodha Samāpatti*) for seven days.

As the Venerable was very noble, to offer food to him when he was just out of extinction attainment and in need of food very urgently, the couple attained very wholesome moral kammās by many billions. On that very day all the earth-lumps that came out of the plough of Puṇṇa in the field turned into real gold. So the couple became very rich.

Prince Devadatta, who was Prince Siddhattha’s brother-in-law, became a monk together with other Sākyan Princes. By undertaking meditation he could develop eight jhāna attainments and some supernormal powers. He became ambitious to become a Buddha himself.

With his supernormal power he could convince **Prince Ajātasattu** to become his disciple. **He persuaded the Prince to kill his father, King Bimbisāra**, to become king while he would kill the Buddha to become a Buddha. The Prince killed his father and became king.

With the help of King Ajātasattu, Ven.Devadatta tried to kill the Buddha several times. He failed. Finally he rolled down a very big

rock from up hill to kill the Buddha, who was taking a walk down hill. The big rock hit another big rock, smashing it into pieces. A small splinter hit the toe of the Buddha, thus wounding the Buddha. In fact nobody could kill a Buddha.

Ven. Devadatta also tried to cause a chism in the Saṅgha Community. Again he failed. So he committed two most heinous evil actions. He repented, felt very sad, and fell ill. He wanted to beg pardon from the Buddha. He requested his disciples to carry him on a couch to the Buddha, who was staying at the Jetavaṇṇa monastery at that time.

There was a big lake near the monastery. When Ven. Devadatta reached there, he felt very thirsty. He asked his disciples to let him down to drink water. As soon as he stepped down from the couch, and stood on earth, the earth cracked open and Avīci hell fire swallowed him and took him to Avīci hell. So immediately effective karmas bear results in the present existences.

• **Illustrations of Subsequently Effective Karmas Bearing Result**

An old woman called **Caṇḍālī**, who earned her living by begging, was walking slowly along the main road of Rājagṛaha city. The **Buddha** saw her when he looked at the world in the morning with his divine eye. The Buddha knew that she had done no meritorious deed, and that she would die soon and would be reborn in a woeful abode.

The Buddha had compassion for her. So he went out on alms-round early to meet her at the outskirts of the city. As the Buddha stopped in front of her, she also stopped, gazing at the Buddha without knowing the Buddha. As she did not develop reverence and respect to the Buddha, she gained no merit yet from meeting the Buddha.

Venerable Mahā Moggallāna, the left-hand chief disciple of the Buddha, looked at her mind and also knew that she would die soon and would be reborn in a woeful abode. He also knew the intention of the Buddha. So he persuaded Caṇḍālī: “Caṇḍālī, the Buddha is standing here to bless you. You will soon die and be reborn in a

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woeful abode. Pay homage to the Buddha to get great merit and be reborn in a celestial realm.”

Only then did Caṇḍālī develop reverence to the Buddha and paid homage to him very respectfully. Just paying homage respectfully to the Buddha for a few seconds developed billions of powerful moral karmas. The Buddha knew that she would be reborn in a celestial realm after death. So he proceeded on his alms-round.

Caṇḍālī also proceeded on her way unsteadily with the help of a walking stick. A cow thought that she would cause harm to its young calf. So the cow butted her, and she fell down and died. Her subsequently effective karma conditioned her to be reborn in a big beautiful gold mansion in Tāvātimsā realm with one thousand attendants. She immediately came down and thanked Venerable Mahā Moggallāna for persuading her to pay obeisance to the Buddha.

As persuaded by his teacher Ven.Devadatta, Prince Ajātasattu killed his father, King Bimbisāra, and became king. When he grew old, his son again killed him to become king. As Ajātasattu acquired billions of heinous immoral karmas, the immediately effective karma conditioned him to be killed in return, and the subsequently effective karma conditioned him to be reborn in hell after death.

Ajātasattu’s teacher, **Devadatta**, inflicted a wound on a toe of the Buddha and also caused a schism in the Saṅgha community. So he acquired many billions of very heinous immoral karmas. His immediately effective karma conditioned him to be swallowed by Avīci hell-fire in the present existence, and his subsequently effective karmas conditioned him to be killed many billion times in his subsequent existences in Avīci hell for a very long time.

• **Illustrations of Indefinitely Effective Karmas Bearing Results**

One *asaṅkheyya* (incalculable aeon) and one hundred thousand world cycles ago, **Anomadassī Buddha** appeared in the world. At that time there was a poor man, who was looking after his two blind parents. He did not have the chance to meet the Buddha, but luckily he met **Venerable Nisabha**, the Right-hand Chief Disciple of the

Buddha, and respectfully took Threefold Refuge from him.

“Taking Threefold Refuge” means the solemn recognition of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha as the holiest objects of worship, because they can ward off all dangers, including woeful rebirth after death, bring great benefits and prosperity, eliminate suffering and deliver happiness.

At that time the life-span of human beings is one hundred thousand years. As that poor man kept Threefold Refuge throughout his life, he acquired many billions of powerful good karmas, and the many billion indefinitely-effective karmas would bear great results for uncountable future existences.

When that poor man died he was born in Tāvātimsā celestial realm. He was born as **King of Devas, called Sakka**, for eighty existences, as Universal Monarch in the human realm for seventy-five existences, as ordinary human king and ordinary deva-king for innumerable existences. He was never born in the four woeful abodes.

In every existence he was honoured wherever he went; he had great intelligence and great retinue; he enjoyed great wealth; he possessed good appearance; he was loved by others; he had steady and good friends; his reputation spread in all directions.

Finally he was reborn as a very rich man’s son in Sāvatti at the dispensation of **Gotama Buddha**. At the age of seven years, he was playing with his friends and they went into a monastery. An Arahant met them, admonished them kindly, and let them take Threefold Refuge. With the guidance of the Arahant, the boys recited: *“Buddham saranam gacchāmi; Dhammam saranam gacchāmi; Saṅgham saranam gacchāmi”*, meaning: “I go to the Buddha for refuge; I go to the Dhamma for refuge; I go to the Saṅgha for refuge”.

The rich man’s son immediately recalled the Threefold Refuge that he had maintained at the time of Anomadassī Buddha, and he attained Arahantship, that is, he became an Arahant at the age of seven years. He was well known as **“Saraṇagamaniya Thera”**

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in the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha. (Apa. 1, 82; Apa.tha, 2, 39)

• **Our Indefinitely Effective Kammās always Follow Us**

If we think, speak or act with wicked minds, because of that, misery follows us, even as the wheel follows the hoofs of the ox which draws the cart.

If we speak, act or plan with pure minds, because of that, peace and happiness follow us, even as one's shadow which never leaves us. (Dhammapada 1 and 2)

• **All Kammās Become Defunct When One becomes an Arahant**

As billions of kammās are formed when we perform a moral or immoral action, all the kammās will not have the chance to bear results during the specified periods. Only some kammās will have the chance to bear results.

Those immediately effective-kammās, which do not have the chance to bear results in the present existence, will become defunct and inactive. Similarly subsequently effective kammās, which fail to bear results in the next subsequent existence, will also become defunct and ineffective.

Indefinitely effective kammās, however, will bear results from the second subsequent existence up to the last existence when a person becomes an Arahant. Since all defilements are totally eliminated in an Arahant, the remaining kammās have no necessary support from ignorance, craving and clinging (*avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna*) to produce a new existence. So an Arahant is not reborn after death or *parinibbāna*. So all kammās become defunct and inactive when Arahants pass away.

For example, during the Dispensation of Gotama Buddha, **Angulimāla** killed more than one thousand people to get one thousand right-hand fore-fingers of human beings. When the Buddha admonished him, he threw away his sword and became a bhikkhu. Then he undertook meditation diligently as taught by the Buddha; he became an Arahant. So when he passed away to Anupādisseṣa Nibbāna, all his kammās became defunct.

(d) Four Kinds of Kammas with respect to the Places of Fruition (*Pākāṭhāna Kamma Catukka*)

(1) Immoral Kammas (*Akusala Kammas*)

When we perform immoral actions with immoral minds, immoral kammas are produced by many billions. Immoral kammas produce their fruition in four woeful abodes in the form of woeful existences and woeful suffering.

(2) Sense-Sphere Moral Kammas (*Kāmāvacara Kusala Kammas*)

When we perform meritorious deeds such as alms-giving and observing moral precepts, sense-sphere moral minds arise by billions and perish, leaving behind billions of sensesphere-moral kammas.

These kammas produce their fruition in sensuous blissful realms, that is, human realm and six *deva* celestial realms in the form of blissful existences and blissful sensual happiness.

(3) Fine-material-sphere Moral Kammas

(*Rūpāvacara kusala Kammas*)

When we can develop rūpāvacara kusala jhāna-attainments, we acquire billions of rūpāvacara kusala kammas. These kammas are much more noble and superior than sense-sphere moral kammas. If we can maintain these jhānas till death, these kammas will have priority to bear results to be reborn as brāhmas in the brahma-realms.

The first rūpāvacara kusala kamma will produce rūpa-brahma-existence in the first rūpāvara brahma-realm, the second rūpāvacara kusala kamma will give rise to brahma-existence in the second rūpāvacara brahma-realm, and so on.

In developing rūpāvacara jhānas, we have to abstain from enjoying sensual pleasure, which is a hindrance or obstruction to the development of jhānas. So fine-material sphere brahmās (*rūpa-brahmās*) do not enjoy sensual pleasure. They enjoy jhāna-bliss, which is the highest worldly bliss, much superior to celestial sensual bliss. They are much more powerful than *devas*, and they also enjoy much longer life-spans than *devas*.

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We can also enjoy jhāna-bliss by developing rūpāvacara jhānas through tranquillity meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) nowadays in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha-sāsana Centres in Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, U.S.A., etc.

(4) Immaterial-sphere Moral Kammas (*Arūpāvacara Kusala Kammas*)

After developing four rūpāvacara jhānas through kasiṇa-meditation we can also develop four immaterial-sphere moral jhānas (*arūpāvacara kusala jhānas*) by undertaking tranquillity meditation on four immaterial meditation-objects. These jhānas can also be developed nowadays in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Centres.

As arūpā-jhānas are superior to rūpa-jhānas, arūpa-jhāna bliss is more peaceful and more blissful than rūpa-jhāna. When we can develop arūpa-jhāna attainments, we acquire billions of immaterial moral kammas. If we can maintain the arūpāvacara jhānas till death, the arūpāvacara kusala kammas will have priority to bear results after death to condition us to be reborn in immaterial-sphere brahma-realms.

Here again the first arūpāvacara kusala kamma will produce arūpa-brahma existence in the first arūpāvacara brahma-realm, the second arūpāvacara kusala kamma will give rise to arūpa-brahma existence in the second a rūpāvacara brahma-realm, and so on.

Now in developing *arūpāvacara kusala jhānas*, we are also undertaking meditation which develops no desire for material body, which associates with a lot of suffering such as hunger, illness, birth, ageing, bodily pain, quarrels, etc.

By the power of this meditation with no desire for material body, when arūpāvacara kusala kammas bear results, they produce immaterial resultant consciousnesses with their associated mental factors, which constitute four resultant mental aggregates. So *arūpa-brahmas* exist only as four mental aggregates or minds without bodies. Yet they can live with great arūpa-jhāna bliss for many world-cycles.

• So the Mind or Kamma is the Real Creator!

The Buddha discovered that ‘**the mind**’ or its property called

‘**kamma**’ is the real creator of all living beings in the thirty-one planes of existence.

We perform immoral evil actions with immoral minds, producing immoral kmmas. Immoral kmmas condition the rebirth of woeful beings in four woeful abodes. Those beings who develop anger-rooted consciousnesses just before death are usually born in hells. Those who develop greed-rooted consciousnesses just before death are usually reborn as woeful ghosts (*petas*) or as demons (*asurās*) if their immoral kmmas are very heinous. Those who develop ignorance-rooted consciousnesses just before death are usually reborn as animals.

When we perform meritorious deeds without the knowledge of kamma and its result, two rooted moral minds arise by billions, producing billions of two-rooted moral kmmas; the two roots are greedlessness and angerlessness (*alobha, adosa*).

If we perform meritorious deeds with the knowledge of kamma and its result, three-rooted sense-sphere moral minds and three-rooted sense-sphere moral kmmas will arise by billions; the third root is wisdom (*amoha*).

If we can develop keen volitions by feeling happy and enthusiastic before and after performing the meritorious deeds, our moral kmmas will be of superior quality. If we develop poor volitions by feeling unhappy and not enthusiastic before and after performing the meritorious deeds, our moral kmmas are of inferior quality.

So there are four kinds of sense-sphere moral kmmas:

- (1) two-rooted inferior sense-sphere moral kmmas,
- (2) two-rooted superior sense-sphere moral kmmas,
- (3) three-rooted inferior sense-sphere moral kmmas,
- (4) three-rooted superior sense-sphere moral kmmas.

Type (1) sense-sphere moral kmmas produce rootless sensuous blissful rebirth with *kusala vipāka upekkhā santīraṇa citta* in the human realm and the lower catumahārājika realm as retarded persons.

Type (2) and (3) sense-sphere moral kmmas give rise to two-rooted sensuous blissful rebirth with *kāmāvacara vipāka nāṇa-*

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vippayutta cittas in the human realm and six celestial deva realms.

Type (4) sense-sphere moral kammās give rise to three rooted sensuous blissful rebirth with *kāmāvacara vipāka ñāṇa-sampayutta cittas* in the human realm and six celestial deva realms.

So human beings are not born equal. Some are born blind, deformed or retarded as rootless persons with very low wisdom.

Some are born normal as two-rooted persons without rebirth-wisdom. Some are also born normal as three-rooted persons with rebirth wisdom. Three-rooted persons are more intelligent than two-rooted persons, and they can develop *jhānas* and can be enlightened as noble persons by undertaking threefold noble training. Rootless persons and two-rooted persons cannot develop *jhānas* and cannot attain enlightenment to become noble persons however much they may try in the present existence.

• **How Fine-material Sphere Kammās give rise to 16 Rūpa-Brahma Realms**

Among *chanda, citta, vīriya*, and *paññā* (wish, consciousness, effort and wisdom) which associate with *rūpāvacara jhānas*, one usually become predominant. Based on the quality of this predominant factor, each of the four *rūpāvacara jhānas* can be differentiated as inferior (*paritta*), moderate (*majjhima*) and superior (*pañita*).

Three types of *first rūpāvacara kusala jhānas* produce three types of *first rūpāvacara kusala kammās*, which give birth to rūpa-brahmās in three first *jhāna rūpa-realms*, called *Brahma-parisajjā realm*, *Brahma Purohitā realm* and *Mahā-brahma realm*, respectively.

Three types of *Second rūpāvacara kusala jhānas* produce three types of *second rūpāvacara kusala kammās*, which give birth to rūpa-brahmās in three second *jhāna rūpa-realms*, called *Parittabhā realm*, *Appamāṇābhā realm* and *Abhassarā realm*, respectively.

Three types of *third rūpāvacara kusala jhānas* produce three types of *third rūpāvacara kusala kammās*, which give birth to rūpa-brahmās in three third *jhāna rūpa-realms*, called *Paritta-subhā realm*, *Appamāṇa-subha realm* and *Subhakiṇhā realm*, respectively.

Fourth rūpāvacara kusala jhānas give rise to *fourth jhāna kusala kammās*, which give birth to rūpa-brahmās in *vehapphala realm*.

After attaining the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, if the meditator practises *saññā-virāga bhāvanā* (meditation which develops no desire for perception and consciousness) to completion, then by the power of this meditation the kamma, which is produced, will give birth to *Asaññasatta brahmā* in *Asaññasatta* realm. **Asaññasatta brahmā has only body with no perception, no consciousness and no mentality.** So he will never be aware of mental pain throughout his long life-span for 500 world-cycles.

Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*s), who attain the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, will be reborn in *Suddhāvāsa* realms (Pure realms) after death. Here again, depending on the predominant faculty, rebirth takes place in five *Suddhāvāsa* realms as follows.

- (1) Predominant faculty of faith (*saddhā*) Avihā realm,
- (2) Predominant faculty of effort (*vīriya*) Ātappā realm,
- (3) Predominant faculty of mindfulness (*sati*) Suddassā realm,
- (4) Predominant faculty of concentration (*samādhi*) Suddassī realm,
- (5) Predominant faculty of wisdom (*paññā*) Akaniṭṭha realm.

The non-returners in *Suddhāvāsa* realms attain *Arahatta-magga* and *Arahattha-phala* in due course. So the five *Suddhāvāsa* realms are inhabited only by three types of noble persons, namely, *Anāgāmi-phala* person (non-returners), *Arahatta-magga* person, and *Arahatta-phala* person (Arahant). Arahants will pass over to *Anupādisesa Nibbāna* after death.

So there are seven fourth jhāna realms altogether.

• The Chart showing 31 Planes of Existence

At the bottom of the chart, the names of 8 major hells and 128 minor hells are described. They exist below the earth-surface. They are not eternal hells. Upon the exhaustion of their evil karmas which sent them to hells, hell-denizens may be reborn in blissful realms as the results of their past good karmas.

On the surface of the earth, there exist four realms, namely, the animal realm, the realm of woeful ghosts, the human realm and the realm of demons (*asurās*).

Above the surface of the earth, there are six celestial *deva* planes

[illegible]

Chart 18.1 The Chart Showing 31 Planes of Existence

or realms; their names are described.

High up in space there exist sixteen fine material planes (rūpa-brahma realms), consisting of 3 first jhāna planes, 3 second jhāna planes, 3 third jhāna planes and 7 fourth jhāna planes.

At the top of the chart are four immaterial realms or *bhūmis*. They are named according to the names of four arūpāvacara jhānas.

Rebirth consciousness (*Paṭisandhi*) of the inhabitants of each plane is described in the left vertical column. The life-span of the inhabitants of each plane or realm is described in the right vertical column.

There should be no doubt about the existence of thirty-one planes of existence, because the Buddha and many Arahants with super-normal knowledges could see them and their inhabitants with their divine eyes.

• **The Extremely Powerful Law of Kamma**

Kamma is a property of the mind which is most powerful in the world. Moral minds give rise to moral kammās, and immoral minds produce immoral kammās. These kammās are transmitted from mind to mind; so they exist in the mental stream. They are also transmitted from one existence to another existence continuously as there is no break and no gap in the mental stream and the material stream at the time of death and rebirth.

*The **Law of Kamma** is not controlled by any Almighty God. It is a natural Law which works in its own field. It does not give preference either to the rich or to the poor, either to the king or to the pauper; it always works as it should as an honest universal judge.*

• **Why are People Different from One Another?**

There was a very rich brahmin, named **Todeya**, living near Jetavana Monastery, where the Buddha was dwelling. As Todeya was ignorant of the Law of Kamma, he told his son, named **Subha**, not to give donation to anyone for alms-giving will not bring any benefit to oneself, and if one donates generously, one shall become poor.

As Todeya did not perform any meritorious deed, he didn't live long, and when he died, he was reborn as a dog at his house. The

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dog remembered its past existence, and it was very fond of Subha. Subha also became fond of the dog, let it eat good food and sleep on a bed.

The Buddha knew about Todeya being reborn as a dog. To give a lesson to Subha, he walked in front of Subha's house on his alms-round. The dog barked at the Buddha. The Buddha stopped and said to the dog: "You Todeya, you didn't respect me when you were a human being; now you bark at me when you are a dog." Then he went on his way.

The dog noticed that the Buddha knew about its past life and became very sad. So it went to a heap of ashes and slept on it. When Subha saw his dog sleeping on ashes, he asked his house-guard why the dog slept on ashes. The guard told Subha that the Buddha called the dog "Todeya".

Subha became angry with the Buddha for saying that his father became a dog after death. So he angrily went to Jetavana Monastery to challenge the Buddha.

The Buddha knew that Subha would come to him. So he calmly said: "Subha, have you got the four gold-pots left by your father?"

Subha was most interested to get those four pots full of gold. He knew that his father buried them somewhere. He had searched for them, but could not find them. So he immediately calmed down and replied: "No, I didn't get them yet."

The Buddha said again: "Well Subha, if you want to get them, go back to your house, feed your dog to its full, and when it becomes sleepy, tap its back with your hand and ask: "Daddy, where did you bury the four gold pots? The dog will show you the place."

As Subha wanted to get the gold-pots very much, he thought: "I shall go home and try it. If I do not get the gold pots, I shall come back and challenge the Buddha violently." So he went home, fed his dog to its full, and when it became drowsy, he tapped its back with his hand and asked: "Daddy, where did you bury the gold-pots?"

The dog became very excited and delighted, because its former

son called it “Daddy”; so it jumped up and ran to the place and scratched the earth where the four gold pots were buried. On digging at that place, Subha got the four gold-pots.

Subha was so happy that he developed reverence to the Buddha and became a devotee of the Buddha. As he was intelligent, he asked the Buddha: “Venerable Sir, why are all people different from one another? Why some people have long lives and some have short lives, why some are sickly and some are healthy, why some are ugly and some are beautiful, why some have few friends and some have many friends, why some are poor and some are rich, why some are born in high caste and some are born in low caste, why some are not intelligent and some are very intelligent?”

The Buddha first gave the essential answer thus:

“Sabbe satta kammaṣakā kammaṃ satte vibhajjati”

“All beings are the owners of their kammās; they own only their kammās as their properties. Their kammās determine their fates and fortunes and divide them into lowness and excellence.”

As the kammās done by the people in their past existences as well as in their present existences are different, their fates and fortunes are different. Subha requested the Buddha to explain in more detail. So the Buddha elaborated his answers as follows.

(1) Short life and long life

Some people have no compassion for other living beings and get into the habit of killing them cruelly. When they die, they are usually reborn in hells. However, with the support of some good kammās they have acquired previously, if they are reborn as human beings, their lives are short.

Some people have compassion for other living beings and avoid killing animals or human beings. When they die, they are usually reborn in celestial realms. However, if they are reborn as human beings, they enjoy long lives.

(2) Poor health and good health

Some people have no compassion for other living beings and take pleasure in torturing living beings (men and animals). When they

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die, they are usually reborn in hells. However, with the support of some good karmas they have acquired previously, if they are reborn as human beings, they are sickly and prone to diseases.

Those people, who have compassion and do not injure other living beings, will be reborn in celestial realms after death. However, if they are reborn as human beings, they enjoy good health.

(3) Being ugly or being beautiful

Some people are short tempered and wrathful. They easily become angry and furious. They speak harshly, insulting others. When they die, they are usually reborn in hells. However, if they are reborn as human beings with the support of their previous good karmas, they are ugly.

Some people are calm and peaceful with little or no anger. They practise loving-kindness and tolerance. They seldom become angry and they do not speak ill of others. When they die, they are reborn in celestial realms. However, if they are reborn as human beings, they are handsome or beautiful.

(4) Having few friends or many friends

Some people are jealous of others who are more successful or richer than them. Because of this jealousy, they will be reborn in hells after death. However, if they are reborn as human beings with the support of their previous good karmas, they will have few friends and little power.

On the other hand, some people have no jealousy and can rejoice at others' success or prosperity. When they die, they will be reborn in celestial realms. However, if they are reborn as human beings, they will be famous with many friends and followers and great power.

(5) Being born poor or rich

Some people are stingy and very much attached to their wealth. They don't want to share their wealth with others. They do not give anything in donation. Because of their stinginess and their attachment to their wealth, they are reborn in four woeful abodes after death. If they are reborn as human beings because of their previous

good kammass, they will be very poor.

On the other hand, those who are generous, willing to help others and devoted to alms-giving, will become richer in this very life, and will be reborn as celestial beings after death, or if they are reborn as human beings, they will be very rich; the greater their donation, the richer they will be.

(6) Being born in low class or high class

Some people are very proud and conceited. They think highly of themselves, have a low opinion of others, and look down on others. They don't know to pay respect to others who are worthy of respect. On account of this false pride, they are reborn in woeful abodes after death. If they are reborn as human beings because of their previous good kammass, they will be reborn in low class or caste.

Some people have no pride. They live humbly, paying respect to all, especially to those who are worthy of respect. When they die, they are born as celestial beings, or if they are reborn in the human realm, they are born in high class or caste.

(7) Being born dull-witted or intelligent

Some people have no desire for knowledge and no desire to learn. They do not associate with honest, upright, wise and learned persons who could give them good example and good advice. They associate with ignorant, silly, stupid persons who could not give them any useful knowledge.

They do not ask learned persons to explain to them what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong, what should be practised and what should be avoided, what is beneficial in the present as well as in the future. With no knowledge of natural laws and natural truths, right conduct and right actions, they perform wrong, evil actions. So when they die, they are reborn in four woeful abodes. But if they are reborn as human beings with the support of their previous good kammass, they are dull-witted.

On the other hand, some people are willing to learn and to study to get good knowledge. So they approach upright, wise and learned persons and learn from them what is good and what is bad, what is

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right and what is wrong, what are the natural laws and natural truths, and what are most beneficial in life. So they become learned and intelligent in the present life. As they know and perform the right, best actions, they will be reborn in celestial realms after death, or if they are reborn as human beings, they will be intelligent life after life.

• **Can We Create Our Fate and Fortune as We Like?**

Of course, yes, if you can make use of your mind wisely, because it is your mind which creates your present fate and fortune through its kamma property. The mind is the most powerful force in the universe that creates towns and cities, languages and cultures, arts and science, space-ships and space-communication, etc.

As the mind controls our thoughts, our speeches and our actions, it actually rules the whole world. And it is the mind that creates all living beings and determines their fates, fortunes and destinies.

If you know the nature and the workings of the mind, and how kammās are formed and how they bear results, you will have **the right view** (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). Then with the guidance of the right view as your guiding star, you will live wisely, avoiding evil actions and doing good actions.

On the other hand, if you are ignorant of the law of kamma, which describes how kammās are formed and how they bear similar results a billionfold, you will have **the wrong view** (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). Then you don't know how to live wisely, doing evil actions, enjoying sensual pleasure and neglecting meritorious deeds.

You do immoral evil actions with immoral minds, producing billions of immoral kammās, which are transmitted from mind to mind and from one existence to another existence until your last existence when you become an Arahant, a Perfect Person. These billions of bad kammās will condition you to be reborn in woeful abodes for billions of existences.

When you perform meritorious deeds such as alms-giving and observing moral precepts, sense-sphere moral minds arise by many billions, producing billions of sense-sphere moral kammās, which will condition you to be reborn again and again in the human realm

and celestial realms, enabling you to enjoy supreme sensual pleasure for many existences.

If you can practise **tranquillity meditation** (*samatha-bhāvanā*) and develop fine-material sphere jhānas (*rūpāvacara kusala jhānas*), you will be reborn as a **Brahmā** after death. Then you are very powerful, and you can enjoy greater worldly bliss called jhāna-bliss for many million years.

If you can also undertake **insight meditation** (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) and develop the first Path-wisdom and its Fruition-wisdom, you will become a noble person called '**Stream-winner**'. Then you are totally guaranteed never to be reborn in woeful abodes, and you can be reborn up to seven existences in the human realm and celestial realms, enjoying excellent sensual pleasure together with the highest bliss called '**Nibbāna bliss**'. After that, you can be reborn as a Brāhmā, attain three higher Path-Wisdoms in due course, become an Arahant and pass over to Nibbāna, enjoying eternal peace and supreme bliss for ever.

*So you can be whatever you like in the thirty-one planes of existence. The Buddha has shown the way, and you will have to exert the right effort to reach your goal. **The first important thing is to develop the right view and make it your guiding star in life.***

*The right understanding of the Law of Kamma, Kamma and its results, will make you a person with **the right view**. If you do not understand the Law of Kamma, kamma and its results, and neglect them or disbelieve them, you will become a person with **the wrong view**.*

***"The right view** causes unarisen wholesome deeds to arise, multiplies the wholesome deeds that have arisen, and will condition blissful existences to arise after death. The right view has no equal in causing meritorious deeds to arise, in multiplying meritorious deeds that have arisen and in conditioning blissful rebirths in blissful realms.*

***"The wrong view** causes unarisen immoral deeds to arise, multiplies the immoral deeds that have arisen and condition woeful existences to arise after death. The wrong view*

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has no equal in causing evil deeds to arise, in multiplying evil deeds that have arisen, and in conditioning woeful rebirths in woeful abodes”, said the Buddha.

The great English poet and dramatist, **William Shakespeare**, 1564-1616, wrote: *“I am the captain of my soul and the master of my fate.”*

We can now say: *“I am the captain of my mind and the creator of my fate.”*

[19]

THE IMPORTANT DOCTRINE OF DEPENDENT ORIGATION

• **The Important Doctrine of Dependent Origination^{68,69}**
(*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)

A brief statement of Dependent Origination and the explanation of the eleven causal relations of the Doctrine are described on pages 89-93.

Table 19.1 Causal Relations between Three Existences

3 Periods	12 Factors	20 Modes
Past	1 <i>Avijjā</i> (Ignorance) 2 <i>Saṅkhāra</i> (<i>Kamma</i> -formations)	<i>Kamma-bhava</i> (<i>Kamma</i> -process) 5 Causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Present	3 <i>Viññāṇa</i> (Consciousness) 4 <i>Nāma-rūpa</i> (Mentality - Materiality) 5 <i>Saḷāyatana</i> (6 Bases) 6 <i>Phassa</i> (Contact) 7 <i>Vedanā</i> (Feeling)	<i>Upapatti-bhava</i> (Rebirth-process) 5 Effects: 3, 4 5, 6, 7
	8 <i>Taṇhā</i> (Craving) 9 <i>Upādāna</i> (Grasping) 10 <i>Kamma-bhava</i> (<i>Kamma</i> – formations)	<i>Kamma-bhava</i> (<i>Kamma</i> -process) 5 Causes: 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Future	(<i>Upapatti-bhava</i>) 11 <i>Jāti</i> (Rebirth) 12 <i>Jarā-maraṇa</i> (Ageing and Death)	<i>Upapatti-bhava</i> (Rebirth-process) 5 Effects: 3, 4 5, 6, 7

68 “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”, Third Edition, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication, pp. 221-239.

69 “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”, Vol. II, by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication, pp. 129-208.

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Table 19.1 shows three Periods or Existences, twelve Factors, and twenty Modes of Dependent Origination. The explanation of the Doctrine of Dependent Origination in detail is described in “The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma”⁶⁸ and “The Essence of Visuddhi Magga”.⁶⁹ Here only a brief essential discussion will be described.

In Table 19.1, we can easily see eleven causal relations between twelve factors as:

- 1 *Avijjā* (*moha*, ignorance) causes *Sankhāra* (kamma-formations including both moral karmas and immoral karmas) to arise;
- 2 *Sankhāra* causes *Viññāṇa* (resultant consciousness) to arise;
- 3 *Viññāṇa* causes *Nāma-rūpa* (mentality-materiarity) to arise (resultant consciousness causes mental factors or mentality to arise, and kamma-consciousness or *saṅkhāra* causes kamma-born materiality to arise);
- 4 *Nāma-rūpa* causes *saḷāyatana* (six internal bases) to arise (six internal bases consist of five kamma-born translucent materialities which also serve as five sense-doors, and resultant consciousnesses including life-continuum which serves as the mind door);
- 5 *Saḷāyatana* causes *Phassa* (contact) to arise (when six sense-doors come in contact with six sense-objects, resultant consciousnesses and associated mental factors including *phassa*, *vedanā* arise; *phassa* makes the contact between consciousness and sense-object);
- 6 *Phassa* causes *Vedanā* (feeling) to arise;
- 7 *Vedanā* causes *Taṇhā* (craving) to arise;
- 8 *Taṇhā* causes *Upādāna* (grasping) to arise;
- 9 *Upādāna* causes *Bhava* (becoming) to arise;
(*bhava* consists of *kamma-bhava* which is kamma-formations and *upapatti-bhava* which is rebirth-process consisting of *viññāṇa* and *nāma-rūpa* which represent future existence);
- 10 *Bhava* causes *Jāti* (rebirth) to arise;
(*Kamma-bhava*, i.e. kamma-formations, give rise to *upapatti-bhava*, i.e. rebirth-process, consisting of rebirth-consciousness and mentality-materiarity which constitute future existence, their arising is

rebirth, their existing is ageing (*jarā*), and their perishing is death (*marāṇa*);

11 *Jāti* causes *Jarā-marāṇa* (ageing-death), *soka* (worry), *parideva* (lamentation), *dukkha* (pain), *domanassa* (grief), *upāyāsa* (despair) to arise. Thus arise the whole mass of suffering.

Here ageing-death is the primary and compulsory resultant of rebirth whereas worry, lamentation, pain, grief, despair are the secondary and optional resultants of rebirth.

Although the Buddha preaches Dependent Origination, starting with “*avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā*” (ignorance causes kamma-formations to arise), *avijjā* is not the first cause. The four *āsavas* (cankers or intoxicants) are the cause of *avijjā*.

The four *āsavas* or cankers are:

- (1) *Kāmāsava* = attachment to sensual pleasure (*kāmatanḥā*),
- (2) *Bhavāsava* = attachment to jhāna and brahmā existence (*bhavatanḥā*),
- (3) *Diṭṭhāsava* = wrong views (*diṭṭhi*),
- (4) *Avijjāsava* = ignorance (*avijjā*).

The first two *āsavas* refer to *tanḥa* (factor 8 in Table 19.1) *diṭṭhāsava* is included in *upādāna* (factor 9 in table 19.1), and *avijjāsava* is the same as *avijjā*. This means that when *tanḥā* and *upādāna* arise, *avijjā* also arises, and the earlier *avijjā* also causes new *avijjā* to arise.

Also when ageing-death, worry, lamentation, pain, grief, despair in factor 12 arise, *avijjā* also arises together with immoral consciousness. So *avijjā* is not the first cause.

When *avijjā* arises, subsequent factors also arise again as cause-effect relations. So the causal relations of Dependent Origination can turn round and round like a wheel with twelve factors serving as the spokes of the wheel as shown in Figure 19.1 on page 413.

This shows that all living beings, excluding Arahants, are born again and again one existence after another endlessly in the thirty-one planes of existence. The round of rebirth is called ‘*Samāsāra*’ in Pāli.

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In Table 19.1, although the causal relations are described for three existences, they can be extended backward and forward endlessly. This shows that we have been born for uncountable existences and shall be reborn again and again until we are enlightened as Arahants.

• **The Round of Rebirth in Terms of Five Causes and Five Effects**

Although the Buddha described the Doctrine of Dependent Origination as one cause and one effect, in real life, many causes give rise to many effects.

When we look at Table 19.1 we see only *avijjā* and *saṅkhāra* to be taken as the past causes. But *avijjā* is *kilesa-vaṭṭa-dhamma*, so also are *taṇhā* and *upādāna*. Now *avijjā*, *taṇhā*, *upādāna* are defilements (*kilesās*) and they all are *vaṭṭa-dhammas*, that is, they are the dhammas or ultimate realities involved in the round of rebirth. Besides they associate together with greed-rooted consciousness. Therefore, *taṇhā* and *upādāna* must be taken together with *avijjā* as the past causes.

Again *saṅkhāra* (kamma-formations) is a *kamma-vaṭṭa-dhamma*, and so also is *kamma-bhava* which is also kamma-formations. So *saṅkhāra* and *kamma-bhava* should also be taken together as the past causes.

So we have five dhammas – viz., *avijjā*, *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, *saṅkhāra*, *kamma-bhava* (factors 1, 2, 8, 9, 10) as the past causes.

Viññāna, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedanā* (factors 3, 4, 5, 6, 7) in the present existence are the present effects of the past causes.

Again in the present existence, *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, *kamma-bhava* are the present causes for future rebirth. As reasoned above, when *taṇhā*, *upādāna* are taken into account, *avijjā* is also implicitly accounted for. Furthermore, *saṅkhāra* must also be grouped together with *kamma-bhava* as both are kamma-formations. So we again get *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, *kamma-bhava*, *avijjā*, *saṅkhāra* (factors 8, 9, 10, 1, 2) as the present causes for the arising of the future existence.

In the future existence, we see *jāti* and *jarā-maraṇa* as the effects of the present causes. *Jāti*, *jarā*, *marāṇa* actually denote the arising, existing and perishing of *upapatti-bhava* which consists of *viññāṇa* and *nāma-rūpa*. When *viññāṇa* and *nāma-rūpa* arise, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedanā* also arise. So we again have *viññāṇa*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedanā* as the future five effects of the present five causes.

The five past causes (1, 2, 8, 9, 10), the five present effects (3, 4, 5, 6, 7), the five present causes (1, 2, 8, 9, 10) and the five future effects (3, 4, 5, 6, 7) are described as **20 Modes** in the third column of Table 19.1.

Thus it is stated in Visuddhi Magga that:

“Five causes were there in the past;
Five fruits we find in present life;
Five causes do we now produce;
Five fruits we reap in future life.”

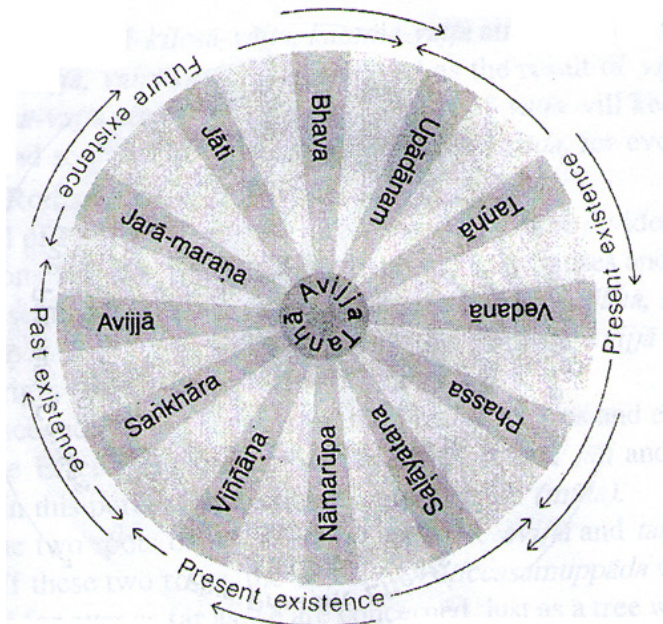


Fig 19.1 The Wheel of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* in terms of one cause and one effect



Fig 19.2 The Wheel of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* in terms of five causes and five effects

• **The Round of Rebirth in Terms of Three Rounds (*Vaṭṭa*)**

‘*Vaṭṭa*’ means going round and round like the rotation of a wheel. The wheel of Dependent Origination may be divided into three segments called ‘three rounds’ or ‘three *vaṭṭas*’.

- 1 Round of defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*) = *avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna*
- 2 Round of karmas (*kamma-vaṭṭa*) = *saṅkhārā, kamma-bhava*
- 3 Round of resultants (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*) = *viññāṇa, nāma-rūpa, saḷāyatana, phassa, vedanā, jāti, jarā-maraṇa, soka, parideva, dukkha, domanassa, upāyāsa*.

The round of defilements is really the driving force which makes people to perform moral actions as well as immoral actions. For example, *avijjā* (ignorance) gives us the vision that fried chicken really exists and it is very tasty, although in the ultimate sense, fried chicken does not exist and only ultimate materialities exist. As we could not see ultimate realities and we are seeing fried chicken, we develop the *wrong view* (*diṭṭhi*) that fried chicken really exists and

craving (*taṇhā*) for eating fried chicken also arises. When *craving* and *wrong view* grows stronger to *grasping* (*upādāna*), we have a very strong desire to eat fried chicken; so we kill a chicken, fry it and eat it. So billions of *immoral minds* (*saṅkhāra*) and billions of *immoral karmas* (*kamma-bhava*) arise during the time of exerting the effort to kill the chicken and killing it.

Again *ignorance* (*avijjā*) gives us the vision that a rich man enjoying great luxury really exists, although in the ultimate sense the rich man and luxury do not really exist as they are in reality only ultimate mentalities and materialities, both of which have no form and no appearance. However, because of the wrong vision, the *wrong view* (*diṭṭhi*) taking them to really exist and *craving* (*taṇhā*) for becoming a rich person arises in us. When they grow in strength to *grasping* (*upādāna*), we exert the effort to give donation to charity, because the Buddha said that alms-giving will make us rich in future



Fig. 19.3 The Wheel of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* in terms of Three Rounds (*Vaṭṭas*)

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existences. So billions of *moral minds* (*saṅkhāra*) and billions of *moral karmas* (*kamma-bhava*) arise during the time of exerting the effort to give donation and donating our money to charity.

So the round of defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*) will always give rise to the round of karmas (*kamma-vaṭṭa* consisting of *saṅkhāra* and *kamma-bhava*), and the round of karmas, with the support of ignorance, craving and grasping, will always produce the round of resultants, just as seeds, with the support of earth, water, air and sun-light, produce new trees and fruits.

And the round of resultants (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*) will give rise to the round of defilements again. So the rounds of *vaṭṭa* will keep on rotating for ever, and so does the Wheel of Dependent Origination.

So the Doctrine of Dependent Origination beautifully explains the round of birth and death of all beings in the thirty-one planes of existence!

• **The Two Roots of Dependent Origination**

In Table 19.1 the Wheel of Dependent Origination is divided into two portions. The first portion starts from the Past Causes and ends at the Present Effects, comprising *avijjā*, *saṅkhāra*, *nāma-rūpa*, *saḷāyatana*, *phassa*, *vedenā*. In this portion, *avijjā* is the root or origin (*mūla*).

The second portion starts from the Present Causes and ends at the Future Effects, comprising *taṇhā*, *upādāna*, *bhava*, *jāti*, *jarā-maraṇa*. In this portion *taṇhā* is the root or origin.

So the two roots of Dependent Origination are *avijjā* and *taṇhā*. If we can completely cut off these two main roots, the wheel of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* will be destroyed for ever as far as we are concerned, just as a tree will die if its roots are cut off.

The Buddha showed that we can cut off the two main roots of *Paṭiccasamuppāda* by undertaking **Threefold Noble Training of Morality, Concentration and Wisdom**, which represents the **Eight-fold Noble Path**. When we can clearly see with wisdom all the true nature of mentality and materiality, their causal relations as described in Dependent Origination, and open up the eight major

departments which are covered up and blinded by *avijjā*, then *taṇhā*, the main cause of suffering, has no place to attach to and nothing to crave for. So both *avijjā* and *taṇhā* will be totally cut off and we shall be liberated from the round of suffering and rebirth for ever!

• **Eight major Departments Blinded by *Avijjā***

‘*Avijjā*’ is ignorance and delusion. Essentially it is the mental factor ‘*moha*’ present in twelve immoral minds. As ignorance, it blinds man’s mental eyes preventing him from seeing the true nature of all living beings and inanimate things. As delusion, it tricks men by making human beings appear as permanent (*nicca*), pleasant (*sukha*), substantial (*atta*) and beautiful (*subha*) whereas in reality every person is impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), void of substance or soul (*anatta*) and loathsome (*asubha*).

There are eight important objects or departments, which are covered up or blinded by *avijjā* so that their true nature is not known. They are:

- (1) The noble truth of suffering ... *dukkha sacca*,
- (2) The noble truth of the cause of suffering ... *samudaya sacca*,
- (3) The noble truth of the extinction of suffering... *nirodha sacca*,
- (4) The noble truth of the Path leading to the extinction of suffering
... *maggā sacca*,
- (5) Past existences and past aggregates of mentality-materiality,
- (6) Future existences and future aggregates of mentality-materiality,
- (7) The front end and the rear end of the present existence and the present aggregates of mentality-materiality,
- (8) Paṭiccasamuppāda causal relations which include the Law of Kamma and its effects.

In Digha Nikāya (Sutta 15) the Buddha said: “*Profound, Anandā, is this Dependent Origination, and profound does it appear. It is through not understanding, not penetrating this law, that this world resembles a tangled ball of thread, a bird’s nest, a thicket of reed, and that man does not escape from the lower states of existence, from the course of woe and perdition, suffering from the round of rebirth.*”

[20]

THE GREAT DISCOVERY OF PAST EXISTENCES AND FUTURE EXISTENCES

• Concrete Evidences about Past Existences and Future Existences

Most people cannot remember their past existences, because their minds are blinded by *avijjā* (ignorance). Many believe that all living beings are created by an Almighty God, and so they do not have past existences. However, there are several persons worldwide who could remember their past existences very well.

• Persons Who Remember their Past Existences Well

(1) **Dr. Ian Stevenson, a professor from the University of Virginia, U.S.A.**, made a world-wide research on persons who could tell about their past existences. I have a copy of his book entitled “Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation”, Universtiy Press of Virginia, in which he commented: “In my discussion at the end, I argue that *some* of the cases do much more than suggest reincarnation; they seem to me to furnish considerable evidences for it.”

(2) **Dr. Thar Hla, Professor of the Institute of Medicine (1)** I myself met two colleagues who could remember their past existences very well. One colleague is **Dr. Thar Hla**, a specialist in skin diseases and a retired professor of the Institute of Medicine (1) Yangon. His past existence was a spinster by the name of **Daw Shwe Mai**, who donated her house and her farm-land to a Buddhist monastery and made a wish to become an intelligent man in her next life. Her wish came true. She had a burning scar on her chest because her blouse was burnt while cooking. When Dr. Thar Hla was born, he also had a similar scar on his chest. Dr. Thar Hla remembered his past existence very well and he is still living.

(3) **U Aye Naing, Assistant Director and Adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs**

My other colleague is **U Aye Naing**, a retired assistant director

and an adviser to the Ministry of Religious Affairs. He could remember his past existence as a Karen National Chief, **U Nay Gyaw**, and his past family in detail. At the age of three years, U Aye Naing persuaded his parents to take him to his previous house in another village and showed the way how to go there. When he met his previous son and daughters, he called them by their names, told them that he was previously their father, and that he buried a pot with some gold ornaments under the mango tree at the back yard. When they dug at that place, they found the pot with gold ornaments as told by the child. So they believed that the child was their reincarnated father. U Aye Naing visited his previous family frequently.

(4) Shanti Devi of New Delhi, India

A good case of reincarnation is **Shanti Devi** who was born in New Delhi, India, in 1926. When she was three years old, she told her parents that she had a husband by the name of **Kadar Nath Chaubey**, a textile trader in Mutra. She said that she was his wife **Lugdi** in her past existence and that Lugdi died ten days after giving birth to a son.

As Shanti Devi talked often about her past existence; her father wrote a letter, addressed to “Kadar Nath Chaubey, textile trader, Mutra”. About a week later, a letter came from Kadar Nath Chaubey, saying that his wife was indeed Lugdi and she did die ten days after giving birth to a son. He also requested to let him see Shanti Devi.

A few days later while Shanti was playing in front of the house, she immediately ran into the bed-room. When asked by her mother, she said that her former husband was at the gate. It was indeed Kadar Nath Chaubey. As all what Shanti had said came to be true, her father informed the Research Department that his daughter could remember her past life very well. The Research Department arranged a trip to take Shanti Devi to Mutra.

At the Mutra station Shanti greeted a relative of Kadar Nath Chaubey among the crowd. She was put in a pony cart and asked to give directions to her former house. Shanti gave correct directions. She also remembered her previous house although it was

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painted differently.

Before they entered the house, the Research people asked Shanti about the rooms and the furnitures in each room. Again what she said was found to be correct.

A big crowd gathered in front of the house to see Shanti. **Shanti could call the names of about fifty persons and talked to them friendly.**

While the Research people and Shanti were sitting in the parlour, Shanti said that she (Lugdi) had buried one hundred silver coins in one corner of the room. The Research people delightfully dug the ground, but no money was found. Then Kadar Nath Chaubey appologized them, saying that he had already taken the money earlier. (The International Aryan League, Delhi, reported in 1936)

• **Infant Prodigis Exist all over the World**

1 Christian Heineken, the Wonder Child from England⁷⁰

Christian Heineken could speak within a few hours of his birth. He could repeat passages from the Bible at the age of one year. He could answer any question on geography at the age of two. He could speak French and Latin at the age of three. He became a student of philosophy at the age of four. (How could he speak English, French, Latin and know about geography in detail without learning them? He must have learnt them in his past life.)

2 Macaulay in England could write a world history at the age of six yeras. He must have studied world history in his past existence and still remembered it.

3 Ma Hla Gyi, the wonder girl in Myanmar, in 1954 could read Pāli and understand the meaning at the age of six years without going to school yet. It is very hard to read and understand Pāli. Only learned monks could do it. Ma Hla Gyi remembered her past life as a learned Elder-mouk.

⁷⁰ Narada Mahā Thera: “*The Buddha and His Teachings*”,

Published by Singapore Buddhist Meditation Centre, pp. 233-249.

4 Piṭaka Maung Tun Kyaing, the Wonder boy in Myanmar, could recite much Piṭaka Pāḷi at the age of six. He was invited to many towns and villages to recite Piṭaka Pāḷi as a ceremony of Dhamma recitation. He could also remember his past existence as a learned monk.

• **Remembering Past Existences through Hypnosis**

Those who could not remember their past existences can be hypnotized and asked to tell about their past existences. This technique has been much studied and practised in Europe and the United States of America.

1 Mrs. N. Baker, a housewife in England, did not know French and had never gone to France. Yet when she was hypnotized, she spoke in French fluently about many events that had occurred in Paris many years ago.

2 Reverend Martin, the clergyman in Coptic Church, Pennsylvania, and 22 educated church members wanted to do their own research with regard to past existences. They learned the art of hypnosis and hypnotized their church devotees who never believed in past existences.

But when they were asked under hypnosis to tell about their past existences, they all told about their past existences. All what they said were recorded and played back to them. They were very amazed to hear about their past existences. When their statements under hypnosis were investigated, they were found to be true. Their research findings were published as a book entitled: *“Researches in Reincarnation and Beyond.”*

3 Bridy Murphy became Mrs. Virginia Tighe

A research committee in U.S.A. hypnotized **Mrs. Virginia Tighe** six times in 1952-1953. In all the six times she spoke about her past life as **Bridy Murphy** in Belfast, Ireland, about 150 years ago. She told the place where she lived, the name of the street, the name of the big store where she used to do her shopping, and the name of her husband who served as a Professor of Law in Queen’s College around the year 1847.

The research committee went to Belfast to make an investigation. They could not find the name of the street, the place where Bridy Murphy lived, the big store where she used to do her shopping. Everything had changed in the course of 150 years.

But when they studied the old city diaries and the old records, they found the name of the street, and the name of the big store mentioned by Mrs. Virginia Tighe. They also saw the record that the Queen of England came to Ireland in 1847 and opened Queen's College, where Bridy Murphy's husband worked as a Law-professor.

The story of Bridy Murphy was published in newspapers and journals and it became well known in the United States of America. But people would regard it as a great miracle that Mrs. Virginia Tighe, who has never been to Ireland, could tell correctly the story of Bridy Murphy, who lived with her husband in Belfast 150 years ago. As nobody could explain it, that story was now forgotten in the course of more than 60 years.

• **Edgar Cayce, the American Miracle Man**

The ability and achievements of **Edgar Cayce** in the United States of America were very mysterious and very marvellous. He was born in Kentucky in 1877. His farming parents were not educated. He went to a country school up to the ninth grade.

Then he worked as a clerk in a bookshop. Later he became an insurance-salesman. At 21, he became afflicted with laryngitis and lost his voice. All medication proved ineffective for a year.

Then while he was working as a photographer's apprentice, a travelling entertainer and **hypnotist, Mr. Hart**, came to town. He agreed to hypnotize Edgar Cayce. Miraculously Cayce could talk in normal voice under hypnosis. Later, a local man, **Mr. Layne**, who had some talent as a hypnotist, hypnotized Cayce and suggested to him to describe the nature of his ailment.

Edgar Cayce responded in normal voice: "In the normal state, the body is unable to speak because of a partial paralysis of the inferior muscles of the vocal cords produced by nervous strain. It may be

removed by increasing the circulation of blood to the affected parts by suggestion while in the unconscious condition.”

Mr. Layne promptly suggested to Cayce that his circulation would increase to the affected parts until the ailment was cured. Gradually Cayce’s upper chest and then his throat began to turn pink, then rose (pinkish red), and then violet red. After 20 minutes the sleeping man cleared his throat and said: “It’s all right now. The condition is removed. Make the suggestion that the circulation return to normal and let the body awaken.”

Mr. Layne gave the suggestion as directed. Edgar Cayce woke up and began to speak normally. It occurred to Layne that if, in the hypnotic state, Cayce could see and diagnose the condition of his own body, he might also be able to see and diagnose that of others. He suggested to Cayce about this.

They tried the experiment on Layne himself, who had been suffering from a stomach ailment. Cayce, under hypnosis, described the inner condition of Layne’s body and suggested certain modes of treatment. It worked. Then Cayce diagnosed many patients, gave correct readings and treatments, and cured many chronic patients who could not be cured by normal medical treatments.

Readings could be taken at night or in broad daylight. A few minutes after lying down, he would put himself to the hypnotic state. Then Layne or Cayce’s wife would give Cayce appropriate suggestion. The usual formula was this:

“You will now have before you (patient’s name) who is located at (street, address, town, state). You will go over his body carefully, examine the body thoroughly, and tell me the conditions you find at the present time, giving the causes of existing conditions, and also suggestions for the relief of his body. You will answer questions as I ask you.”

Edgar Cayce, under hypnosis, had parapsychological ability. He could examine patients who were far away and he could see penetratively into their bodies to diagnose the nature of diseases and ailments correctly. So invalid patients need not be brought to

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him. He could make correct diagnosis and cure the patients not only from the United States but also from other countries.

Edgar Cayce had been giving medical diagnosis by clairvoyance since 1901 and about thirty thousand patients were cured of their chronic diseases. **He could also see their past karmas, and he said that some diseases were connected with their past bad karmas.** To cure past karma-related diseases, the bad effects of the bad karmas had to be stopped by performing meritorious deeds, and the present diseases had to be cured by proper medicines. The medicines which Cayce prescribed were mainly herbal medicines. **The records of patients were kept in Edgar Cayce Foundation, which was set up in Virginia Beach.**

• **Life-Readings which are more Exact than Astrological Charts**

It was not until 1923, in Dayton, Ohio, that **the first reference to reincarnation** appeared during one of Edgar Cayce's diagnosis. While he was in the hypnotic state, a friend requested him for an astrological reading. Cayce casually answered from his hypnotic state that **more important than the urges from the planetary influences were the drives, talents and abilities which came to a person from his previous existences on earth.**

Then followed **"Life-Readings"** in which Cayce described some details of previous reincarnations on earth, apparently picking out only those past reincarnations which were most influential to the present existence. He frequently gave names, dates and places, as well as characteristic urges of talents, weakness, abilities, and sometimes physical and psychological problems arising as a result, he explained, of memory carried over at a deep unconscious level from these previous existences.

Life-Readings of Edgar Cayce himself revealed that he had been a high priest in Egypt, many centuries ago, who possessed great occult powers; but self-will and sensuality proved his undoing. In a later reincarnation in Persia, he had been a physician. Once he was wounded fatally in a desert warfare and left to die on

the desert sand. Alone, without food, water, shelter and the ability to move, he spent three days and nights in such physical agony that **he made a supreme effort to release his mind from his body**. He was finally successful in this attempt.

- **A Maiden Telegraph Operator**

A young woman Telegraph Operator in New York City became curious about the strange telegrams that she was asked on several occasions to send to Virginia Beach. She made enquiries about Edgar Cayce's identity; her curiosity heightened, and she decided to request for her life-reading by sending a telegram, stating her present address.

Very soon she received her life-reading. She was told in the reading that she was wasting her time as a telegraph operator, and that she should study commercial art, because she had been a **competent commercial artist** for several past existences, and that she could be one again.

The notion of entering commercial art or any other kind of art had never entered her head, but on the strength of a daring sense that she might as well try anything once, she put herself through art school. To her surprise she found that she had genuine talent and she soon became a highly successful artist.

- **The Best-Seller Book about Edgar Cayce and Reincarnation**

The detailed story of the wonderful achievements of Edgar Cayce was written by **Gina Cerminara** as a book entitled "**Many Mansions: The Edgar Cayce Story of Reincarnation**", a Signet Book. This book became a Best Seller for several years in the United States of America and is still available in prominent book-shops in U.S.A.

This best-seller book showed that people were very interested in the wonderful abilities of Edgar Cayce and reincarnation. But as they could not explain about these strange phenomena, they just regarded these phenomena as miracles that could not be explained, and all finally forgot all about them.

Nevertheless the **Bridy Murphy story** and the **Edgar Cayce story** are very good evidences for the verification of the teachings of the Buddha that all living beings are born again and again in accord with the Law of Kamma and the Law of Dependent Origination, that all the knowledges, experiences, talents, kammās, etc., acquired in each existence, pass over to the subsequent existence, and that there is no separation in time and no break in the stream of mentality-materiality between death and rebirth. (explained on pages 353-355). So all the knowledges, etc., that we have learnt in our uncountable past existences are present in the mental-material streams of our present existences. We cannot remember them, because our minds are blinded by *ignorance (avijjās)* and other defilements (*kilesās*).

• **The Buddha Taught both in Principles and in Practice**

In the case of the Buddha, his mind is totally pure, well concentrated and endowed with the highest wisdom such as the highest supernormal knowledges (*Abhiññās*) and Omniscient Wisdom (*Sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). So he could remember all the knowledges and experiences that he had acquired and encountered during the very long period of four *asaṅkheyyas* (incalculable seons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles, because all these data existed in his present mental-material stream and he could read them clearly.

The Buddha could also read the similar data accumulated in the mental-material stream of every body. So as soon as he saw a person, he knew the person's name, intellectual level, disposition (natural character) and what meritorious deeds the person had done in the past existences as well as in the present existence.

*For example, while the Buddha was giving a discourse to an audience of bhikkhus in Veluvana-Monastery outside Rājagṛaha City, he saw, from a distance, the two ascetic friends, named **Kolita** and **Upatissa**, and their 250 followers coming to him; so he drew the attention of the bhikkhus and said: "Bhikkhus, yonder come Kokita and Upatissa together with their 250 followers. These two leading ascetics are destined to become the pair of my Chief Dis-*

ciples on my left and right.”

So, as soon as he saw them, he knew who they were and that they had successfully fulfilled Ten Perfections (Pāramī) for one asaṅkheyya and one-hundred thousand world-cycles to become his right-hand and left-hand chief disciples, named **Venerable Mahā Moggalāna** and **Venerable Sāriputta** respectively.

He immediately ordained all of them as bhikkhus according to their request, and expounded an appropriate discourse, in harmony with the intellectual level and disposition of the 250 followers. Thus only the 250 followers became enlightened as Arahants at the end of the discourse, but not the two chief disciples as they needed higher wisdom called *agga-savaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*.

Venerable Mahā Moggalāna had to practise the Noble Eightfold Path earnestly in a forest for seven days to be enlightened as Arahant with *agga-savaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*. **Venerable Sāriputta** had to practise the Noble Eightfold Path for 15 days while staying with the Buddha in the Sukarakhata cave on Mount Gijjhakuta to be enlightened as Arahant with the highest stage of *agga-savaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*.

As the Buddha taught his teachings called “the Dhamma” (natural truths) both in principles and in practice, many of his disciples could develop four *rūpāvacara jhānas* and four *arūpāvacara jhānas* by undertaking meditation on each of ten *kaṣiṇas*. Then by practising further earnestly in fourteen ways as instructed by the Buddha and mentioned in *Visuddhimagga*^{71,72}, developing the eight *jhānas* in several ways on eight *kaṣiṇas* with the exception of light-*kaṣiṇa* and space *kaṣiṇa*, they could also develop five or seven supernatural knowledges (*lokiya abhiññās*) as described on pages 185-186.

These supernatural powers are attainable through the utmost per-

71 “*The Essence of Visuddhi Magga*”, Vol. I, pp. 250-251,
by Dr. Mehm Tin Mon, Mya Mon Yadanar Publication,
Email: drmtinmon@gmail.com

72 “*The Essence of Buddha Abhidhamma*”, Third Edition, p. 132,
Mya Mon Yadanar Publication.

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fection in mental concentration, and they are related to the higher knowledge associated with the fourth *rūpāvacara jhāna*.

Those who attain the supernormal knowledge of recollecting past existences (*Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññā*) can see vividly many of their past existences, and those who attain Divine Eye or Clairvoyance and also the supernormal power of knowing future existences and future worlds (*Anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa*) can also see their future existences. The ability or power of seeing past existences and future existences are different between different persons.

(1) **Non-Buddhists** without the knowledge of defining ultimate mentalities and ultimate materialities can see their past existences up to forty world-cycles.

(2) **Normal disciples** (*pakati-sāvakas*) of the Buddha could see their past existences up to one thousand world-cycles.

(3) **Great disciples** (*mahāsāvakas*) could see their past existences up to one-hundred thousand world-cycles, which was the period of their fulfilling Ten Perfections.

(4) The **two Chief disciples** of the Buddha could see their past existences up to one asaṅkheyya and one hundred thousand world-cycles which was the period of their fulfilling Ten Perfections.

(5) **The Fully Self-Enlightened Buddhas** could see their past existences during the period of unlimited world-cycles. They could also see unlimited past existences and unlimited future existences of other persons, like Buddha Dīpaṅkara giving the prophecy that the Bodhisatta Sumedha would become Gotama Buddha after four asaṅkheyyas and one hundred thousand world cycles.

• **Psychic Powers arise when the Minds become Pure and Concentrated**

The minds of worldlings are usually defiled, debased and deluded by arisen defilements (*kilesās*), called ‘hindrances’ (*nīvaraṇas*), because they hinder and prevent the arising of moral minds, jhānas, path-wisdom and fruition-wisdom.

The Buddha taught ‘**tranquillity meditation**’ (*samatha bhavanā*) to subdue and suppress defilements not to arise in the mind. If we

practise the most popular tranquillity meditation, that is ‘**mindfulness of breathing**’ as taught by the Buddha, we can develop the neighbourhood concentration and then the jhāna concentration in a short time. Then the mind is free from arisen defilements; so it is pure, calm, peaceful and blissful. We can enjoy much greater bliss than enjoying sensual-pleasure. We can think clearly and our memory will be very much improved.

Then the wisdom associated with good concentration like jhāna concentration, radiates very brilliant and penetrative light. With the help of this penetrative light, we can penetratively see with wisdom (with closed eyes) our internal organs as well as far away objects. This means that we start getting some psychic powers.

Many meditators in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres can develop jhāna concentration nowadays. A **Lady physics professor** and one of her assistant teachers from Maw-La-Myine Universtiy came to meditate at the Main Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centre in Maw-La-Myine Township. When the lady professor could develop four rūpāvacara jhānas, she could penetratively see all the internal organs of her body as well as of others’ bodies and also all the objects in front of her as well as far away objects with closed eyes.

She wanted to investigate whether she could correctly see far away objects. So she developed the fourth rūpāvacara jhāna, came out of the jhāna and looked at her mother’s house in Mudon Town, which is nine miles away from the meditation centre. She could see vividly her mother chatting with her brother in the parlour. She noted the colours of their dresses, the chairs they sat, and telephoned her mother whether what she saw were correct. Her mother replied that they were correct.

Then her assistant teacher observed ten moral precepts, carried her gold-coloured watch, wrapped with a napkin, along with her and lost it. She could not find the watch at any place; so she was very sad. The lady-professor said that she would look for the watch in her meditation.

When they meditated together in the meditation-hall, the lady-

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professor developed the fourth jhāna, came out of it, and looked for the watch at every place they had gone to. **It is similar to an out-of-body-experiment.** By sitting in the meditation-hall with closed eyes, she could see clearly all the places they had gone to one after another. Finally she saw the watch amidst some stones between the Pagoda and the meditation-hall.

She continued to meditate her normal meditation and at the end of the meditation-period, they went to the place where she had seen the watch. Yes, they found the watch there just as she had seen with her psychic power!

An Abhidhama student of mine, also a lady, meditated at the Main Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centre together with me in 1988. When she attained the neighbourhood concentration (that is just below the first jhāna concentration), she looked at her parents' house in Yangon, which is 200 miles away, with closed eyes. She could see every room of the house and all her family members in the house except her father. When she telephoned her mother, she was told that her father was away to another town to attend to a funeral while all the rest were at home.

Later she could develop all the eight jhāna-attainments, could also discern very well the causal relations of Dependent Origination, correlating successfully her past existences, present existence and future existences, and then completed the vipassanā meditation course. She is now serving as an **assistant teacher of meditation** in the Main Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centre as a nun in Maw-La-Myine.

Another lady meditator, who is now a retired **High School head-mistress**, could complete the whole course of samatha-vipassanā meditation quite easily. She then learnt how to develop the **super-normal power of recollecting her past existences** successfully from **Pa-auk Forest Chief Meditation Teacher**. She could see her thrity past existences very well, and in all these existences, whether she was a woman, man or celestial being, she was always a spinster or a bachelor, never married in any existence including her present existence.

She could also see her thirty past existences in terms of ultimate mentalities and ultimated materialities, arising and perishing very rapidly and connected as a continuous stream of mentality-materiality in accordance with the Law of Dependent Origination, just as the Budhisatta Sidhattha saw his uncountable past existences with his supernormal power of recollecting his past existences on the auspicious night of his Fully Self-Enlightenment as a Buddha. So she was certain about the reality of her past existences. She is now also staying in the Main Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centre.

Another Abhidhamma Student of mine in Pyin-Oo-Lwin Town, who was a man and university graduate, earns his living by opening a photographic shop. He went to meditate in a Meditation Centre and when he could develop the neighbourhood concentration, his mind became pure and concentrated, and he remembered the art of painting and the art of sculpture automatically.

When he came back home, he started painting as well as sculpting. As his paintings and statues that he made are of good quality, many people came to buy them. Other professional painters and sculptors also came to see how he paints and sculpts, and they were amazed to see that he is painting and sculpting in the same way as they have learnt from their teachers. This shows that he can remember the art of painting and the art of sculpture that he learnt in his previous existence.

- **Explanation of the Psychic Power of Edgar Cayce**

So now we can understand and explain the wonderful achievements of **Edgar Cayce**, the miracle American. The life-reading on Edgar Cayce by Edgar Cayce himself revealed that he was a **high priest** in Egypt many centuries ago, who possessed great occult or supernormal powers; but self-will and sensuality proved his undoing. In a later existence in Persia, he was a **physician**. Once he was wounded fatally in desert-warfare and left to die on the hot sands. Alone without food, water and shelter, he spent three days and nights in such physical agony, **making a supreme effort to release his consciousness from his body**. Finally he succeeded in his attempt.

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Actually the mind or consciousness cannot go outside the body. When the mind becomes concentrated and pure, it has the psychic power of seeing penetratively into the body of any person and also far-away objects. That **Persian Physician** mentioned above must have attained the neighbourhood concentration and the psychic ability to see far-away objects like his home and family members. So he thought that he could release his consciousness from his body.

In his reincarnation as **Edgar Cayce**, he could use this psychic power and physician-knowledge to examine patients who were far away, to see penetratively into their bodies to diagnose the nature of their diseases and to prescribe correct herbal medicines to cure the diseases. In giving **life-readings** of several people, Edgar Cayce could use the Supernormal Knowledges, which would include the supernormal knowledge of seeing various past existences and which he learnt in his existence as the **Egyptian high priest**.

The mind of a person under hypnosis is not aware of anything except one thing which is the suggestion of the hypnotist. So it is free from arisen defilements, called 'hindrances' (*nīvaraṇas*). So it is pure and concentrated like in the state of the neighbourhood concentration. Thus it has psychic power like the mind associated with the neighbourhood concentration.

• **Evidences of Future Existences**

Every existence is the future existence of its past existence. So the concrete evidences of past existences are also the concrete evidences of future existences.

As the Buddha could see all his uncountable past existences up to the existence of **Sumedha**, the Bodhisatta, four asaṅkheyyas and one hundred thousand world-cycles ago, these uncountable past existences and his last existence as the Buddha were the future existences of Sumedha.

I have described on pages 399-401 about the rich Brahmin **Todeya**, who told his son Subha not to donate money in charity, and when he died, he became a dog at this house and the Buddha

showed good evidence to Subha that the dog was his former father.

Again on pages 389-390 I described about an old beggar-woman, named **Caṇḍālī**, who had the chance to pay homage to the Buddha on the road in Rājagṛaha City just before she was butted to death by a cow. She was immediately reborn as a celestial being in Tāvātimsā realm and came down to thank Venerable Mahā Moggalāna for persuading her to pay homage to the Buddha.

Another interesting story is about a **little frog**, who lived in Gaggārā lake in Campā country. While the Buddha preached a sermon to a large audience by the lake, the frog came up to listen the Buddha's voice. At that moment a cowherd came to the place where the little frog stayed still behind the audience and accidentally pressed his goad on the frog. The frog died and instantly was reborn by spontaneous rebirth as a deity in a great gold mansion in Tāvātimsā realm.

On reflection the deity came to know that his good deed of listening to the Buddha's sermon with respect as a frog had given rise to his celestial existence. So he came down to earth together with his mansion to pay obeisance to the Buddha. The Buddha used his magnificent power to make the deity and his celestial mansion visible to the audience, and asked the deity who he was, although he already knew about the deity.

The deity answered: "I was a little frog from this lake. While I listened to your voice with respect, I was killed and reborn as a deity in Tāvātimsā realm."

The Buddha asked the question three times, and the deity gave the same answer three times. The audience was very much impressed to know the immediate great benefits of listening to the Dhamma even by a frog. So they paid more attention to the Buddha's sermon.

The Buddha continued preaching the sermon in detail. Eighty-four thousand people gained enlightenment and emancipation from suffering. The frog-deity also became a Stream-Winner.

(Vimāna Story 201)

In my book "**Kamma, the Real Creator**", I described many

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more modern evidences about future existences. The true story of **Estelle Roberts** was also included. Estelle Roberts in England could see earth-bound deities and communicate with them throughout her life since childhood. She helped the people to communicate with their dead relatives who became earth-bound deities many times from 1925 to 1970.

• **Estelle Roberts and the Spirit Red Cloud**

When Estelle Roberts went out, she could see earth-bound deities or spirits going about on the streets. It was like meeting many people on a busy street.

Estelle Roberts was married at the age of eighteen. She bore three children and then her husband was bed-ridden with chronic illness. So she had to attend to her sick husband as well as to her children, and she had to work to support the family.

When her husband died, he came to her as a spirit for three nights successively. With a very sad face the spirit called her to come along with him.

“How can I go along with you?” she asked.

“You die and come along with me,” said the spirit.

“I cannot die. I have to bring up the children.”

The spirit didn’t say anything more and departed sadly.

On the day before the burial, the spirit came again and apologised her: “I do not understand. I do not need you any more. You need not attend to me any more. I can live on by myself. It is very surprising.”

“As you are alive after death, all other dead persons are also alive after their death in the human existence. I have to tell to the people about this so that the whole world knows about it”, said Estelle Roberts.

At that time Estelle Roberts was thirty years old. She married Arther Roberts the next year. As she didn’t have to work any more, she had more time to think about the spirits who came to her. She also attended regularly **spiritual meetings in which living relatives communicated with the spirits of their dead beloved ones through a medium who had extrasensory perception.**

Then the medium told Estelle Roberts, “You are also a medium. You have many things to do. When the spirit world chooses you and gives you responsibility, don’t refuse to accept it.”

Estelle Roberts wanted to use her ability of extrasensory perception for the benefits of the people. **On one night she sat alone in darkness to have contact with the spirit world. Then she heard a voice speaking in magnificent exact English.**

“I come to serve the world. I shall work with you.”

“Who are you?” asked Estelle Roberts.

“You know me as Red Cloud. I shall be your spirit guide.”

At that moment there appeared a man’s head surrounded by light with olive complexion, dark eye and thin dark beard.

Red Cloud was learned and powerful. He served as Estelle’s guiding spirit and guardian for more than fifty years. In cooperation with Estelle Roberts he demonstrated the existence of the spirit world to the people in a practical and wonderful manner. He also cured many patients of their chronic diseases.

• **The Secret Message between two Lovers**

One day a **maiden** was present in a spiritual meeting of Estelle Roberts. She wanted to contact with her lover who died recently in an accident. Her lover spirit arrived immediately and gave a message to Estelle again and again. Estelle was hesitant to speak that message. So she asked the maiden: “Did your lover use to speak harsh speech?”

“No, what did he say?”

“He was speaking repeatedly: ‘Not bloody likely’.”

“Is that so! Ha! Ha! That was a well-known message from a Bernard Shaw’s play. When my lover and I were together, we agreed to use that message to inform the living one if one of us dies.”

The spirits, who are born by spontaneous rebirth, remember their past existences and their sweethearts. They still love their sweethearts and follow them wherever they go. Estelle Roberts noticed that their temperament, behaviour and the manner they spoke did

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not change.

• **Still Remembering from the Spirit World**

Estelle's youngest son, **Terrence Roberts**, did not believe in extrasensory perception and he did not want to hear about the spirit world. Estelle wanted him to know about the future existences of people. But she didn't want to say in a forceful manner.

When Terrence was twenty years old, he became a young officer in the Royal Air Force. On one weekend he came home with a girl friend to see his mother. While they were talking at the sitting room, Estelle Roberts casually said to her son, calling him Terry: "Terry, a friend of yours is standing by your side."

"Really? What is his name?"

Terrence took it as a joke and responded playfully.

"His name is **Jimmy Macfarlane**. Do you have a friend by that name?"

"Oh yes! Is he dead?"

"He died about a year ago. Why did he keep calling you 'Toady'?"

"Really? Oh God ... I have not been called 'Toady' for a long time. Only Jimmy called me so. When we were schoolboys, I reared three or four toads, because I loved them. So he called me 'Toady'. Mummy, do you hear him calling me 'Toady'?"

"How can I know if he didn't call you so?"

"How did he die, mummy?"

"He served in the navy. During the Second World War, while their ship was anchored at Scotland, the enemy planes bombed their ship and he was thrown away to the sea. He was drowned in the sea. He said that his mother is living in their old house."

Terrence suddenly got up and held his girl-friend's hand, saying: "Come, let's go to Jimmy's mother. I know the place."

They came back about two hours later. They had talked to Jimmy's mother and they found that what Estelle Roberts said was true.

"Terry, your friend Jimmy left a message for you. You watch out at nine o'clock Monday morning. He will show you some sign

that you can remember”, said Estelle Roberts.

On Monday morning Terrence must report for duty at his office. He overslept, however. So he was rushing through a church yard to report for duty on time. Just then the clock upon the clock-tower rang nine times. Terrence bent down a little to pass under a low branch of a pine tree. His cap, however, was caught on the branch and thrown onto the ground.

While Terrence picked up the cap, he remembered Jimmy’s message. At the same time he also remembered that Jimmy used to tip off his school cap time and again on their school-boy days.

“Oh, my friend Jimmy, you still remember me from the spirit world.”

• Communication between the Public and their Dead Relatives

For over fifty years Estelle Roberts gave her service to the Public to help them to communicate with their dead relatives from the spirit world. The public communication with the dead was held in prominent public halls all over England as well as in Europe and Ireland. Thousands of people usually filled the public halls to have a chance to communicate with their dead relatives.

The news about holding public communications with the dead was usually announced in advance in journals and newspapers. So people thronged the public hall on the appointed day. Many dead relatives from the spirit world also came to the place of communication.

Estelle Roberts went to the hall one hour in advance and made contact with the spirit world.

“I come here to form a bridge between you and your living relatives. I shall help you to communicate with them. You all please help me too.”

The persons from the spirit world also wanted to communicate with their relatives. They wanted to tell their relatives that they did not die and that they were still alive. They wanted to put an end to the grief and worry of their parents

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and relatives. They had tried to contact with their relatives, but they couldn't. So they had been waiting for the golden opportunity to communicate with their relatives through a medium.

The time for communication arrived. Members of the Board of chairmen and Estelle Roberts took their places. The spiritual meeting began with a prayer. Then a prominent member of the board of chairmen gave an introductory speech.

Then Estelle Roberts walked to the front on the stage, holding the microphone in her hand. Invisible persons from the spirit world surrounded her, imploring her to let him or her communicate with his or her parents. Estelle had to request them to speak one after another.

The audience was waiting in great expectation. Estelle Roberts, pointing her right hand towards the audience, said into the microphone: "Molly Johnson, your daughter Lexli gave you a message. 'Mother, you looked at my photograph and wept this morning. I'm sad to see you weeping, I'm with you. I don't die. I'm alive. I talked to you, but you couldn't hear me. Mother, please don't cry any more.'"

Mrs. Molly Johnson was very pleased to hear the message. Estelle Roberts announced again: "Mr. Herrickson, I had a message for you from your son John. He said that he died by motor-cycle accident. Here is the message: "Daddy and Mum, I'm terribly sorry to make you unhappy with my accident. It happened so quickly that I couldn't avoid it. But I don't die. I still live on. Don't worry about me. I have everything I need. Don't keep that motorcycle. I can now move faster than a motorcycle."

Some messages were short, some were long, and some were not clear. Only the persons concerned would understand. Those who received the messages were very much delighted, shouting words of thanks to Estelle Roberts. The spiritual meeting lasted for about one hour. Then the spirit guide, Red Cloud, reminded Estelle Roberts to stop the meeting. He always watched the situation carefully and he didn't want Estelle to be overburdened and harmed.

When Estelle Roberts announced that it was time to stop the spiritual meeting, many people in the audience and many persons from the spirit world felt frustrated, because they didn't have the chance to communicate with their relatives that day.

It is good news to know that when people died and were born in the spirit world, they still remembered and loved their parents and relatives in the human existence.

• **Direct Voice Contact with the Spirits**

Estelle Roberts and Red Cloud used a small trumpet to produce the voice of the spirit. Red Cloud taught the spirits or earth-bound deities how to use the trumpet.

The spiritual meeting by direct voice contact was conducted at night in a quiet atmosphere. The persons who want to make direct contact with their relatives sat around Estelle Robert, holding hands together in Estelle's living room. A small trumpet with luminous paint shining faintly to be visible in the dark was placed in the middle. The windows were closed and thick curtains prevented outside light from entering the room.

A soft music was played as a background music. All persons were asked to relax their minds. If a person was worrying or thinking seriously or having doubt about direct voice contact, the contact with the spirit world would be disturbed.

The spirits who made the contact must also relax their minds and must be free from worry or anxiety. Estelle was put under hypnosis by Red Cloud. When all conditions were right, the communication by direct voice contact from the spirit world came incessantly.

The spiritual meeting began with the greetings from Red Cloud: "Ladies and gentlemen, may all of you be healthy and happy." Then the trumpet rose up and moved around the room very fast without striking the ceiling or the furniture.

When a spirit wanted to speak to a person holding hands in a circle around Estelle Roberts, the trumpet stopped near the ear of the person, and the voice of the spirit appeared. Although the voices of spirits coming out of the trumpet might not be different in sound,

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their manner of speaking, their choices of words, their enunciation and intonation were different. So listeners could recognize who were speaking.

For example, **Mrs. Ellen Hadfield** was present in one spiritual meeting. Her dead daughter, who became a spirit, spoke to her through the trumpet. She was certain that it was the spirit of her dead daughter, because the manner of speaking, the enunciation and intonation were the same as her daughter used to speak. Mrs. Hadfield explained this matter to newspapermen.

• **Lovers from Different Worlds can be Together Again**

A distinguished person who made contact with his wife in Estelle Roberts' spiritual meetings by direct voice contact was **Sir Henry Segrave**.

Sir Henry Segrave had great ambition to break the record in world car-racing. While he was practising with a race car in Daytona Beach, Florida, a person from England wrote a letter to him to inform him the message given by the spirit of a former world champion in car racing in a spiritual meeting. The message was a warning to Sir Henry Segrave to take care in racing.

When Sir Henry Segrave returned to England, he studied some spiritual meetings. Not long after that he took part in motor-boat racing in Windermere Lake, the largest lake in England. He was trying to break the world record when his motor-boat capsized, killing him.

He became a spirit after death, and he tried to make contact with his wife in the spiritual meetings of Estelle Roberts by direct voice contact. On hearing the news, **Lady Segrave** came to the spiritual meeting of Estelle Roberts.

Soon after the meeting began the moving trumpet stopped by the side of Lady Segrave. A word 'Di' came out of the trumpet – the word only Sir Henry Segrave used to call his wife lovingly. Lady Segrave became very excited, knowing that it was really her husband speaking to her from the spirit world. Then the spirit could not control the trumpet and it fell to the floor.

Red Cloud's voice appeared clearly: "Don't be upset. The trumpet dropped to the floor, because Lady Segrave became excited and Sir Henry Segrave was not skilful yet in using the trumpet. I shall help him to be successful next time."

In the next time as well as in many times afterward Lady Segrave was calm and peaceful and she could relax her mind well. Sir Henry Segrave too became skilful in using the trumpet and he could speak in low tone or high tone as he liked to his wife.

"Di, I was with you on the fourteenth."

"Do you remember that day?"

"Oh, yes. It's your birth-day."

"Were you in the car with me?"

"Of course. Be careful with your driving. You drive too fast."

"Don't worry. I'm a skilful driver."

"Well, wasn't I a skilful driver also?"

They talked to each other delightfully for many minutes day after day for many months. They talked intimately about their old days, about their house affairs, about friends, about Henery's father, about minor things that could be understood only by them. The two lovers could be together again though they were in different worlds.

Lovers can meet and enjoy the time together behind the death-curtain!

After communicating with her dead husband for one year by direct voice contact, Lady Segrave anounced to the world through newspapers with concrete evidences that her husband was still alive in the spirit world!

"It is natural that parents and sons, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters must depart from one another by death. When they are separated by the wall of death, everyone is stricken with grief and despair. It is my duty to help those who are overwhelmed and burnt by grief due to the departure of their beloved ones.

"As I have been very happy and peaceful because I could be together with my husband in the spiritual meetings by

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direct voice contact, although he has passed away more than a year ago, I wish all the people like me to be happy and peaceful.”

For this bold performance by Lady Segrave, both the spirit guide Red Cloud and Sir Henry Segrave praised her with applause.

Lady Segrave died in 1968. She was also reborn as a spirit and could be together with her husband in the spirit world. They came together to Estelle Roberts and thanked her heartily for her contribution to their happiness for many years.

The detailed experience of Estelle Roberts was described in a book written by Estelle Roberts herself, entitled **“Fifty Years as a Medium.”**

• **Mrs. Leonora Piper, a White Crow and a Benefactor**

In the United States of America, there were also well known persons with extrasensory perception. **Mrs. Leonora Piper** was such a person. She married **William Piper** at the age of 22. Three years later, she gave birth to a daughter. Then an old wound started giving her trouble.

She consulted a blind person with extrasensory perception. She fainted while being examined by the person. The next week she attended a regular meeting of that person in which he communicated with the spirits of the dead.

Mrs. Piper fell into hypnosis. She got up, picked up a writing paper and a pencil from the table, wrote something quickly, and handed the paper to a man in the circle. When she regained her consciousness, that man thanked her for giving him a message from his dead son.

In communicating with the spirit world, three spirits could send messages to their living relatives through Mrs. Piper simultaneously: one could control her right hand to write automatically, another could control her left hand to write down a message, and the third one could control her tongue to speak out a message. During that time Mrs. Piper would be under hypnosis without awareness.

The world famous American philosopher, **William James**, Pro-

fessor of Psychology in Harvard University, supervised Mrs. Piper's contact circle for one and a half years and studied her extrasensory perception. He made the following remark:

*"If you want to refute the statement that all crows are black, you need not try to show that all crows are not black. You just find a white crow. If you can show a white crow, then that statement that all crows are black is annulled. **The white crow I have found is Mrs. Piper. When she is under hypnosis, she can see, hear, and know what cannot be normally seen, heard and known.**"*

Mrs. Piper was invited to England several times. The famous English Physicist, **Sir Oliver Lodge**, arranged Mrs. Piper's contact circle at his house. He often admired Mrs. Piper that on account of her, he came to believe in future existences.

Mrs. Piper died in 1950. When her daughter wrote a book about her mother, Sir Oliver Lodge, wrote in the introduction as follows.

"Mrs. Piper was a great benefactor of mankind. She had done much good to the people with her power of extrasensory perception. She pacified the grief of many broken families by helping them to communicate with their dead beloved ones. She made clear in the most practical and exact manner that there are future existences after death."

• **A Message from the Spirit World Appears in News Week Journal**

In the United States there are welfare committees to look after lonely aged persons who are far away from their sons and daughters. **Dr.Kubler Ross** worked in one of these committees.

Dr.Kubler Ross has been endowed with extrasensory perception since birth. Some people became spirits after death, and they came to Dr.Kubler Ross to say words of thanks.

A special news appeared in News Week journal, published on May 1, 1978. An old American Lady by the name of **Mary Swarts** passed away and came to thank Dr.Kubler Ross in the form of a spirit. On request by Dr.Kubler Ross, the spirit wrote a message of

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thanks, which appeared in News Week Journal.

Dr.Kubler Ross also met spirit guides, and they told her about the spirit world. The American public was very interested in Dr. Kubler Ross' research and the research of other scholars. When a survey was made in 1978, seventy percent of Americans believed in the next existence after death.

• **There should be no Doubt about Past Existences and Future Existences**

As the Omniscient Buddha has taught the Doctrine of Dependent Origination, describing the rounds of birth and death of all living beings with causes and reasons, and the Doctrine has been verified by millions of Arahants and noble persons as well as by vipassanā meditators nowadays, there should be no doubt about our past existences and future existences. If you still have some doubt, please come and meditate in International Pa-auk Forest Buddha Sāsana Meditation Centres to know your past existences and future existences convincingly.

Just as the world-famous American philosopher **William James** has said that “if you can show a white crow, then the statement that all crows are black is annulled”, so too ‘if you get a good evidence of a past existence and a future existence, then the statement that there are no past existences and no future existences is annulled.”

In Buddhism, if the knowledge a Bodhisatta has learnt and the good merit he has acquired in his uncountable existences during the period of four asaṅkheyyas (incalculable aeons) and one hundred thousand world-cycles, while he was fulfilling Ten Perfections, were not accumulated in his mental-material stream, he could not become a Buddha, and thus no Buddha would appear in the world.

Now our Buddha has said that uncountable number of Buddhas have already appeared in the world and every Buddha was the noblest in the world because of the fact that his accumulated good merit was greater than the total merit of all other living beings, and he attained Omniscient Wisdom as the result of his great accumulated good merit when he was fully self-enlightened.

Dr.Mehm Tin Mon