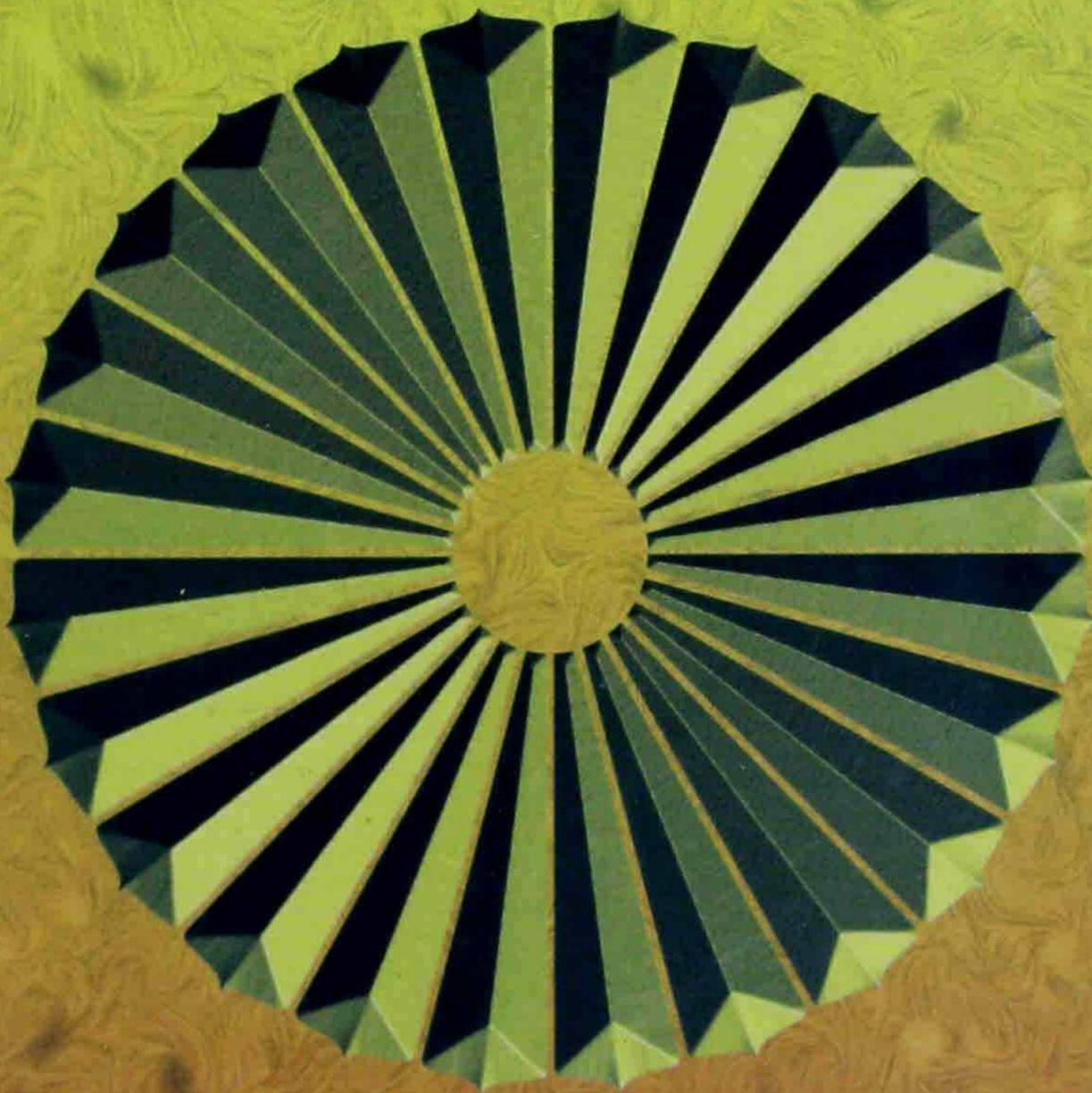


# DHAMMA RATANA

**VOLUME 1**

**BY**



**ASHIN KUNDALÁBHIVAMSA**

**MAHÁSI NÁYAKA, AGGA MAHA KAMMATTHÁNACARIYA**

**SADDHAMARANSI CENTRE SAYADAW**

**Translated by Dr. Kay Mya Yee**

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**VOLUME I**

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The Venerable Sayadaw U Kundalabhivamsa  
of  
Saddhammaransi Meditation Centre  
Myanmar

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## Preface

In this book, the readers will find the lucid explanation about dāna, sila, samatha and vipassana meditation. The methods of contemplation to overcome pain and sufferings (Dukkha Vedana) which especially the beginners in vipassana meditation have much difficulties to master, are also presented with clarity. Furthermore, the way of Kamma, the way of Jhana and the way of Wisdom are explained in such a way for the readers to understand easily.

The meditators should have some knowledge about the stages in the progress of insight while they are practising the vipassana meditation. Therefore, the successive development of vipassana wisdom, according to the stages of insight is expounded in a simple manner so that the readers comprehend them clearly. To encourage the meditators, this book also dealt with the ways to undertake meritorious deeds so as to be saved from apāya, though they are not yet sotapans in this very life.

Moreover, for those striving to be a sotapan in this very life, the conditions to become sotapan, the four constituents for a sotapan are explicitly compounded. In addition to the above mentioned dhamma, how to control the over-excited mind, how to encourage the mind when it is oppressed, how to let it be joyful when necessary and how to establish equanimity when it is to be indifferent, are the essential factors for the meditators to comprehend lucidly. As the vipassana meditation is the work of conscious mind, it is of utmost importance to learn how to subdue and culture the mind in order to achieve the noble dhamma, magga and phala.

**Saddhammaransi Sayadaw**

## A Note

The Ven: Saddhammaransi Sayadaw U Kundalābivamsa was born in the year 1921 and at the age of nine, he was noviciated. In the year 1940, he was ordained as a noble monk with Sayadaw U Dhammapīya as the preceptor. He studied at the Medini Monastery, Kyaukgone, Yangon and became a lecturer in the same monastery.

In the year 1977, he practised the vipassana meditation, under the guidance of the most Ven: Mahasi Sayadaw at the Mahasi Sāsanayeiktha Meditation Centre. He became a meditation teacher in the year 1978. With the permission of the Ven: Mahasi Sayadaw, the Saddhammaransi Meditation Centre was established in the year 1979 by Sayadaw U Kundalābivamsa.

Saddhammaransi Sayadaw expounds dhamma discourses and gives instruction for the vipassana meditation and at the same time he publishes many books since then. Thus he propagates the Buddha's Sāsana not only in Myanmar, but also in many other countries. Since 1994, the Western Countries such as U.S.A., Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, Netherland, Belgium, as well as the Eastern Countries like Malaysia and Singapore sponsored for the Dhamma Dhuta (Dhamma messenger) programs. The numerous retreats guided by Sayadaw in these countries foster and propagate the Theravāda Buddha's Sāsana (The Elders' view of the Buddha's Teaching). The number of people coming from these countries to study and practise the vipassana meditation under the Mahasi's guidance, at the Saddhammaransi Meditation Centre, increases month after month.

Sayadaw preaches at the Saddhammaransi Meditation Centre on every Sabbath Day in the morning session after giving nine precepts to the practising yogi and the pious Sabbath observers. He also delivers the noble dhamma sermons on every full-moon day in the afternoon session. The tape

recorded suitable dhamma discourses are chosen from the numerous preachings, to be translated and published as "Dhamma Ratanā". "Ratanā" is rendered as "pleasant, desirable". Therefore the dhamma discourses in this book are conducive for the development of supramundane pleasure and happiness.

Sayadaw usually repeats the important points in his dhamma talks and also let the listeners repeat the mottos after him. Since this book contains the translated dhamma talks, the readers will notice repetitions. For instance, when he wants to emphasize the difference between rupa and nāma, he repeats, "the sitting body is the unconscious matter, rupa, the noting mind is the conscious mind, nāma." "the standing body is the unconscious matter, rupa; the noting mind is the conscious mind, nāma" ... and so forth. The readers will find the repetition not only in the same dhamma talk but also in others too. Repetition helps one to understand more thoroughly. Thus repetitions illuminate Sayadaw's noble intention and compassion for the listeners of the dhamma and the readers of this book.

It is hoped that, the readers will understand thoroughly and remember well the nature of the dhamma by studying repetitive statements in this book with patience. If anything is found amiss in this book, it is the sole responsibility of the translator. It is also hoped that the readers will be successful in practising dana, sila and the vipassana meditation and attain magga, phala and Nirvana after reading "Dhamma Ratanā".

May the readers be able to develop supramundane pleasure and happiness in this very life and thereafter, by wearing the "Dhamma Ratanā" or the "Dhamma Gem".

Mya Yee  
Translator

September 1997

## Acknowledgement

I wish to express my gratitude to the members of the Translation Sub-committee, Board of Services, Saddammarasin Meditation Centre, Myanmar for reviewing the manuscript.

I also wish to thank Daw Wynn Wynn Thu for her steadfast and patient copying of the manuscript.

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September 1997

Mya Yee  
Translator

## The Three Essence

Today's Dhamma talk will be on the three essence, in connection with K 50,000 worth alms-offering by U Ba Khine and Daw Tin Tin at the ceremony of ordination of monkhood, ceremony for the initiation of novicehood and the ceremony for the initiation of nunhood of their sons and daughters. Lord Buddha had pointed out in the Dhammapada Pali the essence. The Athakatha master also explicitly explained the three essence. Some people take things which are not essence as essence and they do not recognize the real essence as essence. The listeners of to-day's dhamma talk will find things which are essence and which are not essence in themselves.

There are three types which are essence and three types which are not essence. There is difference between things which are considered as essence by people who have less perfection of virtues and by those who have mature perfection, like Buddha-would-be. Those people with less perfection regard wealth as essence and think that riches and properties are dependable and lasting. They also consider their physical bodies as better and more substantial essence than wealth and properties. If anything happened to their physical bodies they rather let any amount of wealth be spent. If there is danger to their lives they would let the riches be spent and even let parts of their bodies be destroyed and, preserve their lives. To them life is more valuable essence than the physical body.

### Wealth and Dana

There are more people with less perfection of virtues and they consider what is not essence as real essence. However, Buddha-would-be and those with mature perfection regard riches, physical body and life not as essence. I believe that listeners will know themselves. In one existence, Buddha-would-be was a son of millionaire Brahmin. Upon the death of his parents he asked his treasurers to open the treasury.

There he found unaccountable riches and wealth in the names of his great-grand-parents, grandparents and parents. Only the names of the owners and the riches were found, however the owners were dead and gone, leaving their accumulated wealth behind. He felt remorseful and pondered thus, "Properties and riches are not essence and they are also left behind. Since wealth and properties are associated with five enemies, they are not essence".

Wealth and properties can be destroyed at any time by fire, flood, bad rulers, robbers and unworthy heirs. Nowadays, you can see for yourselves how riches and properties are damaged by storm, fire, flood, robbers, etc,....

**Motto:** As associated with five enemies, wealth and properties are not essence.

Then which is the essence? The true essence is dāna, giving away riches and properties which are not essence. There are two kinds of dāna essence. (1) Dāna by giving away materials things and properties. (2) Dāna done by volition. After giving charity what is left behind is merit, as the consequence of good volition and deeds. Although you give away materials as dāna, it is no longer rupa (matter) dāna but it is nāma dāna. This benefit of good volition and deeds is intangible and unperceivable. It is the essence which exists in yourself and could not be harmed by five enemies. This essence is a forceful support for the attainment of nirvana. Therefore you all should offer alms-dana with unshakable volition and happiness and extract essence from wealth and properties which are not true essence.

**Motto:** From wealth and properties extract dāna essence.

Most of the Buddhist in Myanmar spend their honestly earned money thriftily and wisely and save up what is left, with the aim of giving alms- dāna and charity. They donate for the construction of monasteries, pagodas, ordination of

monkhood, novicehood and nunhood. It is, in fact, very fortunate to be in the presence of Buddha's Sasana. Today U Ba Khine and Daw Tin Tin extract dāna essence from their wealth, which are not essence, by offering K 50,000 worth of alms-giving dāna.

### **Physical body & Sila**

"Physical body is not the essence" said Buddha-would-be. It is always associated with various diseases. You may be healthy today however you may not be tomorrow. There is none who is not afflicted by disease. "He who said not to have any disease, is a stupid one", remarked Buddha. Everyone suffers pains or diseases more or less. Whatever you have in your physical body could be considered as diseases. Whatsoever excretes from your body, such as tear, saliva, sweat, excrements, etc. are diseases for the reasons that if they do not regularly or normally excrete, then something is wrong and also if over-excrete then you do not feel well. Anyhow which is essence?

"Extract essence from the physical body by paying obeisance to Sanghas, parents, elders; by observing precepts; by attending to the needs of Sanghas, parents and elders". said Buddha-would-be. Though you may be fit to pay obeisance to Sanghas, parents and elders or to attend to their needs today, you may not be able to do so tomorrow if you are afflicted with sickness. Paying respect to Sanghas, parents, elders, to observe precepts and to attend to their needs are done by your physical body. Hence it is said to extract essence from your physical body.

**Motto:** Physical body which is associated with diseases is not the real essence.

You may be healthy today, but you are not sure for tomorrow. Though you can meditate today, you may not be able to do so tomorrow. Everyday you all observe precepts, pay respects to the Three Gems, parents and elders and also

attend to their needs. All these are carried out by your physical body, therefore it is a delight that you could extract sila essence from your body. Attending to the needs of Sanghas, parents and elders may also be regarded as sila.

**Motto:** Extract Sila essence from the physical body.

Sila essence is dependable as it will be a supporting factor for the attainment of nirvana. The first (zawana) thought moment, is beneficial right in the present existence, whereupon you will be wealthy and healthy. The consequences of 7<sup>th</sup> (zawana) thought moment will be manifested in the next existence, such as to be born in a better life. The middle (zawanas) thought moments will be effective from third existence until you attain nirvana. Everyday you are extracting sila essence from your body which is not a real essence, by observing precept, by paying obeisance to Sanghas, elders and parents and by attending to their needs.

### **Life and Vipassana**

You might suffer diseases, however you must extract sila essence (from your body) which is beneficial and supportive to attain nirvana. You should be elated that you could extract sila essence because you have the opportunity to be alive in the presence of Buddha's Sasana. Buddha-would-be said, "Life also is not essence, since it is not dependable and lasting". It is impermanent since rupa-life and nama-life are always becoming and vanishing. Those who have attained Udayabbaya Nāna Stage will perceive it lucidly. Whatever you note, you will find it is becoming and dissolution, becoming and dissolution. Therefore this life is suffering from impermanence (anicca). In a minute or in a moment life can be destroyed. It is not lasting nor dependable. It is not essence.

**Motto:** As tormented by impermanence, life is not a real essence.

Rupa-life and nāma-life are ever tormented by the process of becoming and dissolution. As life can be destroyed in a moment and it is always tortured by impermanence, it is not dependable. It is therefore not an essence. Vipassana is the real essence. Thus reflected Buddha-would-be. Vipassana is the only means of escaping from this suffering or torture.

**Motto:** Extract vipassana essence from life.

In fact, vipassana actually means to note repetitively the intrinsic nature of the three characteristics. (i.e. impermanence, suffering, selfless.) in whatsoever manner they may appear in yourself. It is the vipassana as practised by yogi who have reached Udayabbaya Ñāna and Bhanga Ñāna Stages. The actual vipassana (impermanence, etc.) is not vividly apparent to the beginners. The beginners strive to note the nature of movement i.e. paramattha- reality or absolute truth, not the form i.e. pannatta- conventional truth. That is vipassana for the beginners. They note closely and mindfully the movements in each action while sitting, walking, etc., but not the form as legs, hands, etc.

There are three types of essence:

- (1) Dana - giving away or charity
- (2) Sila - observing precept
- (3) Vipassana - insight meditation

Dāna and sila essence gives life-pleasure of human beings, devas and brahmas, but does not guarantee liberation from the cycle of existence. It is the essence which will bring you happiness and sensual pleasure while journeying in samsara. By practising Samatha, you will enjoy brahma-life for years, however it will not take you to the end of the journey. Vipassana is the only dependable essence which can take you to nirvana. "Satisfied not by dāna, sila and samatha" Buddha often reminded. "You may reach the highest realm of the 31 planes, nevertheless one day you will return to the realm of sufferings" said Buddha. Dāna,

sila and samatha will not emancipate you from the cycle of existence, but your life will be complete with sensual pleasure and happiness. No one would like to have poor and unhappy existence as a wayfarer of samsara. So they have to give dāna, observe precept and practise samatha, which are not real essence.

### **Insight Meditation**

Vipassana is the only way out from the rounds of samsara. Due to the 4 golden opportunities you all are fortunate to be able to practise insight meditation. These 4 opportunities, pointed out by Buddha, are:

- (1) To be a human being
- (2) To be alive
- (3) To be in a favourable situation to listen to dhamma
- (4) To be in the presence of Buddha's Sasana

Where there does not exist Buddha's Sasana then there is no opportunity to practise insight meditation. Insight meditation is the only guarantee for the emancipation from samsara.

"Suppose, Lord Buddha, the moon, Lord Buddha, the sun does not arise there exists no sasana. In the absence of sasana one may not hear even the name of paramattha, dhamma and insight meditation, for there will be no mention of them" said Buddha. In the absence of sasana it is possible to give dāna, to observe moral conduct and to practise samatha, however these practices will not close the door to lower abodes. Now you have the 4 golden opportunities, thereupon you should endeavor to practise insight meditation under right guidance. Vipassana is most dependable and substantial essence for the emancipation from samsara. So do not let the time pass away, practise insight meditation diligently whenever time is available for you.

Though you may encounter difficulties at first in practising insight meditation, conscientious practice will overcome them. You will experience dukkha vedana at the

beginning, suk-ha vedana in the middle and upekkha vedana at the end. Thereupon dhamma is not easily gained as disturbed by kilesas such as anger, greed and ignorance. When you suffer pain, anger arises now and then, therefore there is no progress in meditation. It is important to know the right method of noting vedanas. I will discuss it briefly.

When you experience pain and numbness, be patient and do not change position. Frequent changing position will weaken concentration. There should be no worries and anxieties about whether you will gain dhamma or not, whether pain will last forever. The nature of vedana is to be painful and the duty of yogi is to note the pain. When the pain increases yogi becomes tense physically and mentally. Relax both physically and mentally and try to observe whether the pain is on the skin, in the flesh, in the bone, nerves or in the marrow, so as to know the extent of pain. Thus fixing your mind right on the pain you are concentrating on vedana. Then note the arising and disappearing of pain and also its shifting from one part of the body to another. Pain may increase or decrease with each noting. You must note diligently. Then concentration will become firm and stronger.

With each noting pain may increase and reach the maximum. Then it may decrease again and disappear or shift to another part of the body. Now you have developed a stronger noting mind and begin to comprehend the intrinsic nature of vedana. In other words vedana is not continuous, it is always changing, therefore it is impermanent, to note the changing and shifting vedana is suffering and uncontrollable. When you note "painful", "painful", pain disappears. Afterwards it arises again you note it, it disappears again. Arising is becoming and disappearing is dissolution. Whereupon pain is no longer the principal object for noting, however the noting mind is fixed on the process of arising and disappearing. Thereupon noting mind begins to overcome the pain.

When your concentration is strong and mature, arising is no longer distinct, nevertheless disappearing becomes the

main object of noting. Yogi who have reached the Bhanga Nāna Stage will experience it vividly. Since they do not know how to express, some yogi said that as soon as they aimed to note, there was no more pain, it just disappeared. What actually happens is, as soon as there arises intention to note, pain disappears and there exists just the noting mind and no pain to be noted. Pain arises and disappears instantly, hence there is nothing to note. Vedana is not permanent, so also is the noting mind. Yogi, therefore, thinks that it is better to experience vedana, so that his mind does not wander away but has to note vedana. Thereupon anger (because of pain) no longer exist, that means noting mind has overcome vedana.

**Motto:** The repeated arising anger in Dukkha Vedana must be discarded.

Since concentration is well developed, after the Sammasana Nāna Stage, noting is smooth and there is no experience of dukkha. At the early Udayabbaya Nana Stage the process of becoming and dissolution is not so vivid and yogi feels lightness in both body and mind. He is also physically and mentally pliable and workable . Noting goes on of its own accord, easily and smoothly. Those yogi who have to change posture frequently in the early stages of insight-knowledge, at this Udayabbaya Nana Stage could sit for one hour without changing. Those who did not change frequently in the lower stages of insight-knowledge could sit one or 2,3,4,5 hours without changing. As the meditation practice gains momentum, noting will go on of its own accord, smoothly and easily. It appears to yogi that he is effortlessly watching arising and vanishing of objects which are vivid and clear.

During the lower stages of insight-knowledge yogi needs to put more effort to note but not in the higher stages. As he has perfectly practised both physically and mentally, noting goes on automatically. Then there is peace and calm in both

body and mind. Some yogi said that they have never experienced before such mental peace and calm. Moreover in a sitting posture their body is erect like a doll, without shifting now and then. This is what yogi will experience in the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage. It is vipasana piti- (joy) or bliss of meditation. Leave alone the common people, not even devas can have such opportunities.

While practising in a secluded place yogi may experience vipassana joy and bliss. Perhaps some sort of attachment to this joy and bliss develops and yogi may cherish it instead of discarding it. The repeated desire for this joy and bliss (sukha vedana) is regarded as the manifestation of rāga (lobha) in sukha vedana. The repeated arising rāga in sukha vedana must be discarded, so that progress in meditation practice may not be slackened.

**Motto:** Repeated arising attachment to pleasure means internal arrest in progress.

Respectfully and mindfully reflect to make sure whether it is physical or mental pleasure. If mental peace and calm is more distinct, then note mentally "peaceful" "peaceful". Concentration becomes keen and yogi is cognizant of the fact that feeling of joy arises and disappears swiftly when noted. Quick arising and disappearing with each noting appears to yogi as unpleasant. In other words it is dukkha or painful to note successively the continuous process of arising and disappearing of joy. As he could not keep pace with this process of fleeting arising and disappearing, he begins to realize that there is nothing to recognize as joy but tiredness only. Now sukha is seen as dukkha. Whereupon rāga (attachment to joy) is overcome and eliminated by successive noting. It is a fact that no one desires dukkha, therefore note it instantly when it arises.

**Motto:** When sukha arises it must be noted as dukkha.

In upekkha vedana, moha arises, therefore there is no progress. It is more apparent in the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage which is quite close to magga and phala. However yogi takes quite a long time to reach magga and phala. With ardent noting, concentration progress and yogi reaches Sankhārupekkha Nāna. It is the stage of insight viewing things equally. Upekkha vedana is conspicuous in this stage. There is no fear or fondness. One is no longer disturbed by worldly or unworldly likings and dislikings. No attachment to whatsoever is happening. At this stage noting is easy and it carries on of its own accord. Well practised yogi, perhaps may remember such experiences.

**Motto:** Free from fear and fondness  
 Equal view of sufferings and happiness  
 Contemplation comes with no difficulty  
 Sankhāru's three characteristics of equanimity  
 (Mahasi)

When noting becomes effortless yogi is deluded and may not perceive arising and passing away of objects in their true nature. Delusion (moha) sets in when noting is easy and performs of its own accord.

**Motto:** The repeated arising delusion in upekkha vedana, must be dispelled.

In order to achieve his desirous goal yogi must contemplate and dispel the delusion. Upekkha vedana is quite conspicuous in Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage. Progress in meditation is slow as yogi needs not put much effort to contemplate and goes easy. He used to tell the instructor, "Contemplation is good", but could not explain what he meant by "good". He is no longer aware of becoming and dissolution, hence there is no progress in insight development. Upekkha vedana is so subtle that it is not easy to note it, therefore, it is better for the yogi to leave it and

revert to noting what is distinct and clear i.e. rising and falling which he has well practised. With improved practice and mature knowledge, those who have the Bhanga Nāna as base can easily recognize the faults and dangers at the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage. When concentration becomes firm and strong, the process of becoming, noting, cessation of arising and passing away is more apparent to yogi. Thus delusion is dispelled as the awareness of impermanence arises. Bhanga Nāna and moha (delusion) are antithesis. When moha manifests in upekkha vedana, it must be instantly eliminated.

After listening to this sermon on "Three Essence" may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana which is free from all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

May all beings in ten directions be free from all kinds of danger or harm. May they be free from both physical and mental sufferings.

May they be able to bear the burden of life with physical and mental happiness.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## **Seven Constant Propagating Kusala (Nibaddha Kusala)**

**(30.7.96)**

The Dhamma talk will be about the benefits of offering waso robe. Every year the devotees offer waso robes to monks and also listen to dhamma talk on the benefits of waso robe offering which is a nibaddha kusala. Nibaddha kusala means constant propagating meritorious deeds which you all have gained. If one with nibaddha kusala does not attain sotapanna in this life, due to some circumstances he will be liberated from apāya in the second existence, just like a sotapan. So said the learned teachers who could comprehend the Lord's desire. Our Benefactor Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw had composed a verse pertaining to the above statement so that the dhamma listeners and the future laities will aspire to do nibaddha kusala which prevents suffering in apāya in the subsequent existence.

**Motto:** Taking Refuge in the Three Gems, observing five precepts and drawing lots.  
Fortnightly dāna, waso robe offering,  
Donating cisterns for drinking water and monasteries building  
Donors of these seven dānas,  
Like sotapanna will not return to apāya.

### **Nibaddha Kusala of Refuge in the Three Gems**

To take refuge in the Three Gems forever is a nibaddha kusala. The dhamma listeners of good parentage and students of good teachers take refuge in the Three Gems since childhood in accordance with the admonishments of good parents and good teachers.

Buddho me saranam aññam natthi. For me there is none other than the Buddha to take refuge in.

Dhammo me saranam aññam natthi. For me there is none other than Dhamma to take refuge in.

Sangho me saranam aññam natthi. For me there is no other than Sangha to take refuge in.

Whenever you recollect you remember and acknowledge that there is no other refuge than Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, and thus propagate meritorious consciousness. Hence to take refuge in the Three Gems is a nibaddha kusala.

### **Nibaddha Kusala of Five Precepts**

The dhamma listeners of good parentage and students of good teachers, strictly observe five precepts, according to the guidance of good parents and good teachers, just like fastening a lower garment (paso).

When there arises a chance to take life, listeners of dhamma remind themselves, "I'm not going to kill now nor never, never." That is meritorious consciousness, hence you propagate nibaddha kusala.

Similarly, whenever there appears a chance to steal, to commit sexual misconduct, to tell lies, causing unhappiness and destruction to others, to take intoxicants, you reprimand yourself by saying "I'm not going to steal; I'm not going to commit sexual misconduct; I'm not going to tell lies; I'm not going to drink". By doing so, you always gain nibaddha kusala.

It is of utmost importance for the Buddhists not to tell lies. The listeners of dhamma also should take a good care not to infringe the precept of lying; as there are many ways of telling lies intentionally or unintentionally. Day in and day out you talk for various reasons; whereupon if you are not mindful, you would not have nibaddha kusala. Therefore you will inevitably suffer in apāya. People used to exaggerate; for example to praise a person more than he deserves; or to be-little or blame a person though he is not that bad. Exaggeration, in a way, is just lying, therefore you all must be careful not to breach the precept by exaggeration. Then only you will be liberated from apāy. Observation of five precepts, therefore is a constant propagating kusala

forbidding suffering in apāya in the next existence.

### **Nibaddha kusala of Drawing lots**

In the Buddha's life-time, there were 500 or 1000 more monks in each monastery. With faith in dhamma, pious people would like to offer alms to each and every monk. Due to financial limitation, however, they could offer to a few only. Thereupon they approached the elder monks and requested to let them offer alms to 5 or 10 monks only by drawing lots. They invited and brought the monks home and offered alms-food, robes and other requisites every week, every month and every year. After offering in that week, in that month and in that year they always thought about the offering for the next week, next month and next year. Thus they propagate merits all the time. Therefore offering by drawing lots also is a nibaddha kusala.

### **Nibaddha kusala of Fortnightly alms-food offering**

During the Buddha's life-time, righteous laities usually offered alms-food to monks every full-moon day and every last waning day of a month. Likewise, now-a-days in some places there is this practice of alms-food offering to two, three or as many monks as of fortnightly they could afford. After offering on the full-moon day, they are again busy with wholesome mind, preparing for the next offering on the last waning day of the same month. At the same time, they delight in reflecting, "We are going to offer alms-food on the coming last waning day of this month." Thereupon the fortnightly alms offering is a nibaddha kusala, meaning that one develops a meritorious disposition continuously.

### **Nibaddha kusala of Waso robe offering**

Waso robe offering is celebrated every year. Furthermore the listeners of dhamma always enjoy the thought to offer Waso robe for the next year. Thus they develop wholesome mind all the time. Monks receiving the robes also strive hard during the lent, more than before and after the

lent. The student-monks try conscientiously to finish learning at least a volume or a book of scriptures. In the same manner, the meditating monks practise diligently to gain the noble dhamma during the lent. Whenever the monks wear the waso robes, donors gain merits. How? "The waso robes, donated by us will be worn by the student-monks when they study scriptures. In the same way, the meditating monks will wear the waso robes while practising vipassana meditation" reflecting thus waso robe donors gain merits constantly. Hence waso robe offering is also a nibaddha kusala.

### **Nibaddha kusala of donating cisterns for drinking water**

The donors of cisterns for drinking water, well, artesian well, housing for drinking pots and drinking fountains, gain merits whenever travellers, monks, noble persons and donors from all directions drink and use water from these places. How? Everytime when the donors reflect or thought of how travellers, monks, noble persons, donors would enjoy by drinking and using the water from the cisterns, well, artesian wells, water pot and drinking fountain that, they have donated, they are filled with joy and wholesome mind. Thereupon they gain merit all the time and that is why the donation of cisterns, surface wells, artesian wells, drinking water pots and water fountains, is a nibaddha kusala.

### **Nibaddha kusala of building Monasteries**

The donors of monastery for teaching scriptures are happy and gain merits whenever sayadaws lecture scriptures, give dhamma talks and study dhamma in the monasteries donated by them. If the monastery is donated to be used as a meditation centre, the thought of monks, yogi and noble persons, practising meditation in his monastery will propagate much merit in him. The offering of monasteries is a nibaddha kusala since it promotes constant merits in the donor's mind.

The athakatha teachers who explicitly conceive the Lord's concept of teaching, have explained that those who

have done these seven nibaddha kusalas, similar to sotapan, and will be saved from apāya in the immediate existence though they may not be a sotapan in this very life.

The most Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw had composed the following verse relating to the seven nibaddha kusala, so as the listeners of dhamma and the future laities may have distinct idea of nibaddha kusalas and gain merit by undertaking them. Let us repeat it.

**Motto:** Taking refuge in the Three Gems, observing five precepts and lots drawing, Fortnightly dāna, waso robe offering,  
Donating cisterns for drinking water and monasteries building  
Donors of these seven dānas  
Like sotapanna will not return to apāya

Though it is likely that those who have nibaddha kusala will not suffer in apāya in the second and may be in the third existence, it is not certain for the fourth and fifth existence. That is the reason why you all are constantly practising mindfulness meditation, the only way to close the door to apāya. If circumstances are favourable, you can be completely liberated from apāya in this very life. In other words, it is the forever end of suffering in apāya. So said the Buddha and guaranteed as a prelude to the Mahā Satipatthana Sutta.

"There are four mindfulness dhamma namely, contemplation of body, that of feeling, that of consciousness and that of dhamma. The 4 foundations of mindfulness practice is the only way which can save one from apāya and simultaneously results in the attainment of ariya magga. There are no other branches, this is the one and only one way for the realization of nirvana, the end of all sufferings," preached the Buddha. The four mindfulness meditation which the listeners of dhamma are practising, is the one and only way to close the door of apāya and to attain the sublime

magga. Indeed, there is no other way to do so. It is also the one and only one path to nirvana which is free from all sufferings. You always aspire for it, everytime you carry out the meritorious deeds. This is the reason why you should practise the mindfulness meditation doubtlessly.

**Motto:** If you wish to gain noble magga practise satipatthāna.

If you wish to attain the noble magga which can put the end to sufferings in apāya, practise mindfulness meditation.

You will attain it one day, according to your perfection and the strength of concentration.

**Motto:** If you wish to realize Nirvana practise satipatthāna

Since childhood, under the guidance of good parents and good teachers, you all have aspired for the happiness of nirvana whenever you do meritorious deeds. The 4 mindfulness meditation which you are practising now, is the one and only one path with no other branches, to realize and attain nirvana. This is what the Enlightened One guaranteed before teaching the Maha Satipatthāna Sutta.

Well known physicians went to all directions announcing that their medicines were so good that they can cure all kinds of diseases. In the same manner the Buddha guaranteed that the Four foundations of mindfulness meditation can promote the attainment of ariya magga which ends the sufferings in apāya and which also leads to realization of nirvana. This is the announcement the Lord made before teaching the Mahā Satipatthāna Sutta.

Listeners of dhamma, do you believe it? I'm certain that you are practising the mindfulness meditation as you have faith in it.

One cannot attain ariya magga nor realize the happiness

of nirvana by physical exercises, by elocution nor by reading. Then what is the mean or way to attain ariya magga and nirvana? It is no other than the work of conscious mind which is not easy for the ordinary persons with less perfection; as it is profound and subtle. Some offer dāna, some observe sila and some practise samatha meditation in order to reach nirvana. Is it possible to attain nirvana by means of dāna, sila and samatha? No, never. There is no other way or branch to attain nirvana other than mindfulness meditation. If one sincerely and truly wants to attain nirvana, the most reliable way is to practise mindfulness meditation.

Vipassana meditation means controlling of mind, which is not an easy task. Yogi met with a lot of difficulties at the beginning of practice. When the mind is subdued by the 4 foundations of mindfulness meditation, it becomes subtle and cultured. Then it is an asset for the attainment of ariya magga and realization of nirvana which you always aspired for. Thus the Lord has taught: Contemplation is the work of conscious mind which is hard to control or restrain, for it delights in wandering off. The mindfulness meditation is difficult, profound and subtle as the practising yogi has experienced at the beginning.

It is not an easy task to manage the mind for the reason that it usually delights in any sense-objects it comes into contact. It is also hard to obstruct it. Mind swiftly appears and dissolves; it may be happy now, but distressed in the next moment; it has faith in dhamma now, however not in the next minute. Hence it is uncontrollable.

The mind likes to dwell upon are mostly unwholesome ones, such as craving, attachment, anger, hatred, etc.:. It never delights in wholesome dhamma like Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, and nāma and rupa. Therefore with much difficulties yogi endeavour to settle his mind on these wholesome dhammas. If the mind is not restrained, it always enjoys in the unwholesome sense-objects.

The listeners of dhamma under the guidance of good parents and good teachers, since childhood, they could

control their mind. Whereupon they now can delight in dhamma. It is the nature of mind to dwell upon unwholesome sense-objects and to wander off on its own accord. Hence to control the mind is a difficult task. It is the nature of the conscious mind but not that of the individuals.

This very mind when subdued and cultured by the mindfulness meditation, according to the Buddha's instruction, will send one to the most aspired nirvana; so said the Buddha. Many Elders and noble monks have attained the noble dhamma, that is magga, phala and nirvana by following the Buddha's guidance. I believe that is why the listeners of dhamma talk sincerely practise the mindfulness meditation.

Though it is difficult at the beginning of meditation practice, you all have experienced that it is not so in the middle and later stages of practice. This is again due to the subdued mind which enables yogi to attain nirvana. Our Benefactor Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw had composed a verse on the nature of the mind, wishing the dhamma listeners to practise with faith and sincerity. Thereupon they could apprehend the nature of the mind, that is once it is tamed, the gross mind could lead one to nirvana.

**Motto:** Hard to restrain, swift and wandering  
 This harsh, gross consciousness goes roving  
 When subdued by observation and mindfulness  
 It becomes mild, subtle and gives one happiness

After listening to this dhamma talk on the benefits of waso robe offering and the seven constant propagating kusalas, may you all be able to practise in compliance to the Buddha's teaching. With diligent contemplation, may you all immediately realize your most aspired nirvana, the end of all sufferings by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## The Four Conditions which are Difficult to Attain

All Buddhists and the listeners of dhamma are opportune to have the four conditions which are difficult to attain. Therefore, you all are fortunate to be in the position to carry out good deeds. These four conditions are conducive for both mundane and supramundane benefits. People work hard to lead a wholesome livelihood. On the other hand, they also give dana, observe sila and practise samatha and vipassana meditation as they are fortunate to have these four conditions.

The Buddha preached this dhamma related to the Erakapatta Naga (dragon), whereupon eighty four thousands worldlings were freed from the sufferings in apāya. \*

These four conditions which are hard to attain are

1. To be a human being
2. To be alive
3. To listen to 4 Satipatthana dhamma which can close the door to apāya and help to become an ariya.
4. To be in the presence of the Buddha's Sasana

To be complete with these four conditions is unexpected. In the past existences you may have 1 or 2 or 3 of these conditions, however hardly all four. One may be born as a human being but he may not live long. Some die at the fetus stage, some die a few days or a month after they are born. Perhaps one lives long as a human being, however does not have a chance to listen to the noble dhamma if he is in a place

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\* During the Kassapa Buddha's time one day a monk travelling in a boat on the Ganges river happened to break a blade of grass growing in the river because of the speed of the boat. This was a breach of the vinaya rule. Consequently when he was about to die, he felt that a blade of grass wrapping round his neck. Thereupon he remembered that he had failed to report the incident. However at that moment not a single monk was around him to report to. He passed away unhappily. He was reborn as the Erakapatta naga with a body as huge as a small boat.

By the virtue of your parami or good deeds you have performed in the past life, you all have the four conditions which are difficult to have

**Motto:** When the four conditions are received  
Ariya magga should be achieved.

You give dāna, observe sila, practise samatha and vipassana meditation as you have the four conditions which are difficult to have. Thence you can be an ariya, if you practise the right method. Among dana, sila, samatha and vipassana meditation, the last one should be your choice, since it is the best to take you to nirvana in this very life. Just giving dana and observing sila will result in rebirth in the worlds of human and deva. Whereas samatha meditation will take you to the realm of Brahma. Therefore vipassana meditation is the only reliable one for the attainment of nirvana. If you practise the vipassana meditation, your most aspired goal which you wished for everytime you give dana and whenever you observe sila, will be achieved. With successful vipassana meditation, you will gain magga and phala. Thereafter through successive progress of insight you'll finally attain nirvana.

The listeners of dhamma already discern the 4 foundations of mindfulness, namely, the contemplation of the body, the contemplation of feeling, the contemplation of consciousness and the contemplation of dhamma. Practising these 4 foundations of mindfulness is the only way for the freedom from apāya and the attainment of nirvana. Accordingly you all are earnestly practising it and will certainly attain nirvana. Some may query whether dāna, sila and samatha meditation should not be practised. Certainly they also must be practised, as they have reciprocal effects. Because of dāna one can observe sila, because of sila one could develop concentration by samatha meditation, since samatha will not be successful if your sila is not perfect. Vipassana meditation, in turn depends upon mature concentration. Thus each one is supporting the other. When you offer alms-food, your mind is already filled with loving-

kindness for the one to whom you offered. You offer alms-food so that the receiver may be well and happy.

Consequently with loving-kindness in mind, it is again easy to observe sila and not to infringe it. Since you know very well the owner will be very unhappy if his properties are stolen, you will never commit stealing. Similarly with other precepts such as killing, sexual misconduct, etc.:. You, therefore, develop loving-kindness because of conscious mind, you are not going to make others unhappy and miserable. Thereupon your sila is perfect and as a reciprocal effect you develop concentration easily.

To say prayers, to tell beads are the samatha practice which foster the concentration. Thereupon it is no longer difficult for you to practise vipassana meditation. There is no vipassana wisdom without concentration. Noting whatever and whenever the sense objects manifest will strengthen your concentration which in turn will develop vipassana wisdom. Thereupon magga, phala and nirvana will be easily attained. "Dāna alone, sila alone and samatha alone cannot save one from apāya" said the Lord. Although one may enjoy sensual pleasure in the Deva world, due to his dana and sila or one may be in the Brahma world by virtue of samatha meditation, if he has not practised vipassana meditation, freedom from apāya is uncertain. That is the reason why vipassana meditation is the only practice which is dependable for the end of sufferings.

### **Difficult to be a human being**

While residing at Zetavan monastery, Savatthi, the Exalted one came to the waiting congregation of monks and devotees. As there was no time to preach sermon, the Lord put some earth dust on his thumb nail and knowingly asked the monks, "Oh! my good sons, what would you say comparing the earth dust on my nail with the earth dust on the earth?" "Your most Rev. the amount of the earth dust on your nail is incomparable to that of the dust on the earth" respectfully replied the monks. "Yes, it is so. The number of people who will not return to apāya is comparable to the dust on my nail. Those who will

return to their abode, apāya, is comparable to the dust on the earth. That shows how difficult it is to be a human being. You, therefore, should not forget," instructed the Enlightened one.

"Do not you forget" is the usual advice of the Lord when the time is short for a dhamma discourse. Many agree to this advice in general, however it does not mean not to forget to live a happy life as a human being, as a Deva, or as a Brahma. On the other hand the Buddha's advice is to remember to practise insight meditation. That means not to forget to be mindful. When you see, hear, sit, walk, eat, etc., To be mindful means to practise vipassana meditation, the only mindful means to practise vipassana meditation, is the only way which can free the living beings from apāya and sufferings of aggregates and to attain nirvana. The reason why the Exalted One had perfected his parami during the 4 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds, 8 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds and 16 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds with no regard for his body life and wealth is not for the people to enjoy worldly pleasure. However, it is to save them from apāya and to send them to nirvana, Buddha, therefore frequently reminded "forget not", "Forget not".

**Motto:** The dust on the nail is compared to the number of none apāya returner.

The dust on the earth is compared to the number of apāya returners.

Whilst a human being, not to forget is the reason.

"Not to forget" means to remember to practise the four foundations of mindfulness.

### **Difficult to be alive**

Death of day-old and month-old babies, deaths of people at your age, older or younger than you are the vivid illustration of how difficult it is to be alive. To be alive one has to struggle for food, clothings and shelters. In other words you have to work incessantly, day in and day out for a sound economy to

keep yourself alive. If you do not put such effort, you may not live long. Not only to be alive, but it is also important to lead a healthy wholesome life. To live longer is to perform more meritorious deeds and to gain wisdom. That is why the Lord Buddha has expounded the five factors essential to be alive.

1. To take suitable food and to behave properly. Unsuitable food and improper behaviour (not adaptive to weather, etc:) may shorten your life.
2. To know the extent of taking food.  
If you over-eat, you will not live long. For example, you are fond of sweet things. Your indulgence in sweet things will cause you disease such as diabetes
3. Digestion. It is important to take food which are suitable for your digestive system, especially for the older people. Indigestion also is a danger to your life.
4. Proper moral conduct. It is a known fact how one with no moral conduct endangers his life by stealing, life-taking, sexual misconduct, lying and drinking. A person with a healthy physique seems to live longer, nevertheless if he has no moral conduct and commits crimes, he will not live long. As you have seen and heard, nowadays, there are many vivid examples of how people of misconduct met with grotesque death.
5. Good companions

To live with good sons and daughters, agreeable wife and husband is a happiness leading to a longer life.

The aggregate of the body is composed of four corporealities namely-

1. Kamma Rupa (Karmic Corporeality)
2. Cittaza Rupa (Mind-produced Corporeality)
3. Uduya Rupa (Weather produced Corporeality)
4. Ahāya Rupa (Food-produced Corporeality)

When these four corporealities are well-balanced, one will live longer. Because of bad children or disagreeable wife and husband, one is unhappy, thereupon the mind-produced corporeality is no longer in a good condition. Then the Karmic corporeality and the food-produced corporeality are weakened.

If one of the 4 legs of a table is broken, the table is no longer useful. Similarly, if one of the corporealities is weakened, then the equilibrium among the corporealities is disturbed. Thus life is in danger. One will live longer when the 4 corporealities support each other. "These are the prime factors for longevity" remarked Buddha.

**Motto:**        Suitable food, knowing the extent, good digestion  
                  Good friends and moral conduct perfection  
                  Are the five for a longer life

### **Difficult to listen to the noble dhamma**

Though one is endowed with the three opportunities (being a human being, being alive, and in the presence of the Buddha's sasana) one may not be able to listen to the noble dhamma due to physical or mental (unfavourable condition). Furthermore one may be a human being, alive and in good conditions to listen to the dhamma, however the Buddha's sasana does not flourish. About 40 years ago, people were quite satisfied with dana and sila and were not in the habit of listening to the dhamma. The monks also preached only the benefits of dana and sila, however not on vipassana meditation. At that time, it was a great prestige to be the donors of pagodas and monasteries. People respected and had faith in them.

Moreover the monks themselves were contented just to follow the vinaya rules. Nowadays you all are opportune to listen to the noble dhamma because you are favoured with the 4 conditions which are hard to attain. Lord Buddha preached 21 times at 21 places in the Guru Province alone. Because of the favourable weather, sumptuous food, and sound economy people there were healthy and strong to listen to the dhamma. Present day Myanmar is also in such a favourable condition, that the devotees can practise vipassana meditation with mature concentration and well developed wisdom. Moreover they have no difficulties to listen to the dhamma.

In the presence of the Buddha's Sasana one has a great chance to listen to the dhamma and practise vipasana medita-

tion. However in the absence of sasana, it is difficult to listen to the noble dhamma and not only that there is not even the mentioning of the name of vipassana meditation. "Suppose the Buddha the moon, the Buddha the sun has not enlightened, there will be no sasana. Thereupon no mention of dhamma on vipassana meditation. According to your parami, you are fortunate to be in the presence of the Buddha's sasana. Without the enlightenment of the Buddha, there is no sasana, therefore, it is difficult to be in the presence of the Buddha's Sasana" said the Lord.

### **Difficult to Be in the Presence of the Buddha's Sasana**

It takes 4 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds, 8 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds and 16 incalculable worlds and a hundred thousand worlds for the enlightenment of Buddha. There are more worlds where the Buddha does not arise than the number of worlds where there is enlightenment of Buddha. Therefore, it is difficult to have all the 4 opportune conditions. Now you have the 4 conditions which are difficult to have. That is the reason why you should determine to practise vipassana meditation. Beginning from this present life, if you practise, you will certainly be a sotapanna, free from apaya and subsequently will attain nirvana.

The Athakatha masters remarked that to be in the presence of the Buddha's sasana is "Buddhuppadha navana Khana". Buddha is Buddha + uppadha means enlightened + navama means 9 + Khana means opportune time. In other words it is the 9<sup>th</sup> time, a good chance where the Buddha has enlightened and the sasana flourishes. It is the time where the Buddha has arisen, thereupon one can become a sotapanna, sakadagan, anāgan and arahant after passing the 8 bad times. You should be much delighted to meet this 9<sup>th</sup> time and practise vipassana meditation.

You might be in hell, in the animal world or in the peta world for numerous existences where you could not practise to attain magga, phala and nirvana. It, therefore, can be regarded as a bad time where there exists no three gems. To be born in a place devoid of dana, sila and vipassana meditation, or to be

a Brahma in the Rupa- brahma Realm, where there is no nama, is also a bad time. Without the conscious mind it is a fact that one could not practise vipassana meditation and no gain of dhamma. Furthermore in many lives, you might have erroneous views, such as there is no next existence. This also is termed as a bad time.

In the absence of the Buddha's Sasana, you could not listen to the noble dhamma and practise vipassana meditation; you could not even differentiate wholesome and unwholesome deeds; could not practise the four righteous practices. Therefore it is a bad time too. Undoubtedly you might have lived many existences in the absence of the Buddha's Sasana. Eventhough, you are in the presence of the Buddha's Sasana, to be satisfied with dana, sila and samatha meditation, but not vipassana meditation, may be considered as a bad time. The reason is that dana, sila and samatha meditation could not free one from the sufferings in apāya. Now you are in the 9<sup>th</sup> time, a good chance and if you practise ardently, you will attain nirvana, free from all sufferings.

**Motto:** Have passed the eight bad times  
 With the enlightenment of Buddha, you are in the  
 ninth good time  
 Whilst it is opportune to be a sotapanna  
 Noble yogī must strive to be an ariya

### **Four Foundations of Mindfulness**

If you practise the right method it is inevitable that you will attain nirvana. What are the right methods? It is, of course, the four foundations of mindfulness

#### **1. Kayanupassana Satipatthana-**

To contemplate the body. To contemplate the movements of the body precisely, in the four postures; such as walking, standing, sitting and lying down. If your noting is objective and fixed on the present happening (i.e. any movements of the body) the dhamma or the nature of the movement will be vivid to you. According to one's parami one could perceive the

dhamma lucidly as soon as his mind dwells upon the present manifestation. Whenever and whatever arises and if you note presently, then we can say your contemplation is precise. If your mind is diffused or wanders instead of noting, your noting is not precise and the nature of the movements of the body will not be clearly seen; when you are mindful and note precisely then the nature of the movements will be vivid to you.

## **2. Vedanānupassanā Satipatthan-**

To contemplate the feeling. When you note mindfully the feelings such as itching, numbness, pain, pulling, pushing, etc the concentration will be strengthened and the dhamma will be apparent to you.

## **3. Cittānupassanā Satipatthan-**

To contemplate the consciousness. Reflect whether you are happy or sorry, you are glad or angry. You will discover that your mind is changing. It is sad now, however it is glad in the next moment; it is angry but not in the next minute. You keep on noting these swift changes of your conscious mind.

## **4. Dhammanupssanā Satipatthan-**

To contemplate the dhamma. Upon seeing or hearing, just note them as mere seeing or hearing. Do not follow the sound or let the sight influence you.

These 4 foundations of mindfulness are found and practised by the Buddha himself. He expounded and explained explicitly in such a way that people may be able to practise them without difficulties. If one practise objectively and sincerely, he can gain magga and phala within 7 days. By virtue of his parami, he can also be a sotapan free from sufferings in apāya in the subsequent life. Moreover he is undoubtedly free from the danger of being born in hell, animal world, and peta world. He will go through the cycle of existence with no fear and doubt.

You may have a desire to find out whether you yourself or the other one is really a sotapan. The easiest way is to watch

whether he will confide instead of hiding the misdeeds (physically, verbally, mentally) he has committed. A sotapan never hides his misdeeds, but confide in a suitable person. This is one characteristic of a sotapan. There are many other means of judging a sotapan. A sotapan has only 7 existences to undergo and even if he forgets the dhamma and enjoys dāna, sila and samatha during these existences, somehow or other, in his last existence, he will be remorseful and practise vipassana meditation, then attains nirvana. During these seven lives he enjoys only good births.

At one time, while residing at the Zetavan Monastery, Savatthi, the Exalted One put some dust on his thumb nail and compared it to the amount of sufferings a sotapan has to encounter and the dust on the earth compared to that of sufferings which have been already eliminated. The realization that, there is just seven existences to undergo will make him feel relieved and foster his concentration. Thus the Lord meant to say that sotapan is a noble ariya who can certainly attain nirvana.

After listening to this sermon on "The four conditions which are difficult to attain", may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana, the end of all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## The Unobstructable Four Conditions (24.8.89)

Everyone is afraid of dangers and harms and take preventive measures with all their might and with whatever wealth they possess. Even so if these measures could not prevent the dangers, they may seek others' help. They are very much disturbed and unhappy when danger unavoidably falls upon them. As there are dangers which could be prevented, so also there are dangers which cannot be prevented.

(1) Decay (2) Sickness (3) Death (4) Subsequent ill-result of misdeeds are the four dangers which no one could obstruct. Not even the most developed and advanced science, nor alchemist, nor mantras, nor super-normal power could prevent them. Buddha himself could not help. The Blessed One has remarked that no one could escape from these four dangers.

### Decay

**Motto:** Decay, sickness, death and the ill-effect of misdeeds are the unobstructable four.

Those approaching poisonous snakes, equip themselves with sticks, knives, etc.:. In the same way, we who are getting nearer and nearer to the dangers of old age, sickness and death, must protect ourselves by firm and strong dhamma.

There are two ways of growing old, physically and mentally. You become slow in movements, you need help in sitting down and getting up and in other activities. These are the signs of growing old physically. Your memory begins to fail, you do not remember the names of dear and near ones, relatives, friends, etc.:. You forget the purpose of getting into the room and hence to go out and recall. These are the characteristics of mental decay. Just reflect the fact that

if you live the full life-span, you are certain to grow old physically and mentally. In old age with failing memory, to practise dhamma is not an easy matter. Thus reflecting, pride in youthfulness will be toned down and prepare you to practise dhamma.

**Motto:** Reflect upon the danger of old age before you grow old.

As soon as a baby is born aging sets in. It is just like a budding mushroom grows out of the ground with earth dust on it. The aging process is not so apparent because of youthful physique. However aging process carries on since birth.

**Motto:** It is convenient to practise dhamma before you grow old.

If you practise dhamma in your youth according to the instructor's guide, it can be easily attained, as you are physically and mentally pliable and workable. Your memory too is quite strong. Those between the age of 20-40 years, under the right instructor and right method, may gain dhamma within a month. However, those near 60 years of age may take two months as their health is not so good. Those between 70-80 years of age, with no foundation of dhamma will find difficulties in practising dhamma.

**Motto:** It is not convenient to practise dhamma at old age.

Sons and daughters, after attaining dhamma themselves, would like their old parents to practise dhamma and send them to a meditation center. The old parents, with their failing memory and also because of inability to sit long, or to walk straight and disturbed by frequent nature calls, could not concentrate. After 10 or 15 days of meditation, the

instructor is not satisfied with the old folks, thinking that they were not contemplating attentively. Thus both the instructor and old folks are unhappy. Though the old folks want to go home, they are reluctant to do so because they know that their children will not be satisfied with their practice.

**Motto:** It is a mistake not to attain dhamma although you are growing old.

When at home they wish to participate in the family discussion, however the children do not give them a chance. They wish their parents to spend time by meditation, but not to worry about the domestic affairs. Feeling hurt that they are left out, they become very unhappy and angry. Why? because they have not attained dhamma. The sons and daughters nursing their senile parents, become unhappy and not so attentive. At the same time they are afraid that they are committing some misdeeds. Sayadaw has to comfort them by telling that it was not so. Why this unpleasantness in the family? If the parent have attained dhamma, both parties will be happy. Practise dhamma before you grow old, so that you can have the following opportunities in old age.

When the parent contemplate and gain dhamma, the children are very much happy and satisfied that they pay respect and offer the old parents in kind and cash. Then both parties gain merits. Reflect frequently upon the characteristics of old age. People used to take pride in their youthfulness and commit mistakes and misdeeds. By pondering upon the fact that one day you will be old, lessen your pride in youthfulness and become interested in dhamma and, practice before you are too old. Reflect upon it frequently so that you see yourself growing old in your mind eye vividly.

## Sickness

**Motto:** Though you are not yet sick, anticipate the danger of sickness.

Think of the conditions you will experience, when you are sick bed-ridden, although you are healthy now.

**Motto:** It is most favourable to practise dhamma, before you are inflicted with disease.

In your youth while you are physically and mentally fit, when you practise meditation you do not suffer much pain. Therefore you can develop concentration in a short time and gain special and noble dhamma.

In order to gain dhamma we need five factors.

(1) Faith (2) Health (3) Honesty (4) Diligence and (5) The knowledge of arising and passing away. Health takes 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Practice meditation when you are young and healthy and reflect upon old age i.e. think of yourself as an old sick man, lying in bed, in a state which is uncondusive for meditation. You are surely to commit more demerits and less merits, since you have not attained dhamma. Reflecting thus your pride in healthiness will be alleviated.

**Motto:** To practise dhamma when you are sick is not favourable.

Sick and lying in bed, uncertain of life and death, then only you are remorseful and begin to practise dhamma. How could you concentrate if so stricken by sickness. As no wisdom arise you are disheartened. Everyone is not always fit and healthy, they may suffer some kind of unserious sickness. By giving lame excuses i.e. overstating the ordinary pains and aches if you fail to practise dhamma, then it will be a great loss to you. "It is better to practise dhamma so

that you will suffer only physical pain but not mental pain" said Buddha.

A ninety year old millionaire, Nakulapita, stricken by disease and in the last stage of life-span, went to Buddha and requested "Oh, The Blessed One, I am too old and sick, I may not be able to come and see you again. Please favour me with a sermon". In order to let him realize the true nature of life., Buddha told him that there was no one who was unstricken by sickness. The learned one (Athakatha master) expands Buddha's sermon by explaining that whatsoever excretes from the body is regarded as disease e.g. tears, sweat, saliva, etc.:. Over excretion, like sweating cause one to be weak, whereas if constipated, one may suffer a sort of uneasiness. In fact everyone suffers one kind of sickness or other though not so serious. When Buddha said, "Practise to be not stricken mentally but only physically "the millionaire was glad and comforted as it suited him perfectly.

He went to see Ashin Sariputtara who asked him whether Buddha had delivered a sermon since he appeared to be very peaceful and calm. Whereupon the millionaire replied, "Why not to a man like me," as he had been honored as the most intimate one of the Blessed One. Ashin Sariputra also held the Supreme Honor in Wisdom. When the Elder asked about the sermon, the millionaire said that it was to practise not to be mentally sick but only physically. The Elder again asked him "Did you request the Lord to explain the meaning of to suffer physically but not mentally. And also to suffer both mentally and physically?" Since the millionaire had not done so, requested the Elder to explain to him, for he was too old and sick to visit the Elder again.

One suffers both physically and mentally because he has not attained the knowledge to differentiate rupa and nama. When he is physically painful he is also unhappy i.e. mental pain. The Elder explained the twenty false views of self-(five aggregates and four views of self). To illustrate one false view of self you regard your body as 'I'. when

physically painful, you regard it "That it is 'I' who is painful". On seeing something 'That it is 'I' who perceives." That it is 'I' who condition". "That it is 'I' who knows.

**Motto:** If you perceive rupa and nama as 'I', you will suffer both physically and mentally.

You may suffer both physically and mentally when you cannot note rupa and nāma as two separate dhammas. The listeners of this sermon, am sure, can note vedana and differentiate rupa and nāma. Thus concentration is sustained, wisdom arises and overcome vedana. Sometimes it seems that suffering is detached from yogi, thence he is no more noting vedana. Noting of the dissolution is predominating though there is bodily pain which he is no longer aware of therefore there is no mental pain.

By noting rupa and nāma as soon as they arise, there will be only physical pain but no mental pain. Therefore it is wise to practise dhamma when you are healthy.

**Motto:** By noting the arising rupa and nāma separately, there will be only physical pain but no mental pain.

In reality to physically suffer and not mentally is experienced by the arahants only. Even Sotapannas suffer both physically and mentally. If you can note rupa and nama as they arise you may not suffer mentally, if not you may suffer both. Those approaching the poisonous snakes prepare themselves to prevent the danger, likewise we must practise contemplation right now in order to avoid dangers of old age, sickness, death and the ill-effect of misdeeds.

You should try to overcome vedana. After four or five days of practice, aches and pains will be quite intensive. Then you must be patient and keep on noting. Patience begets Nirvana. Once a monk while meditating the whole

night, caught cold and became very sick. It was so much so painful that he could not even take care of his robes while rolling side to side. An experienced elder monk Rev: Pintapatika reminded him to be patient when stricken by vedana. The sick monk said "Sadhu" and began to note the vedana and passed away after becoming an Anagan. This is one of the many cases in which vedana is overcome and dhamma achieved through patience. No one, in fact, can escape terminal disease. We should take a lesson.

It is important to have good friends to remind you to be patient and note vedana. When vedana arises, try to find out whether it is a terminal disease, or just in the skin, flesh, bone or marrow. It is natural to suffer, when pain arises and yogi's duty is to note it. Yogi becomes tense both physically and mentally when vedana increased. He must relax and fix his noting mind right on the pain. Pain increases with each noting and it may also decrease with each noting. It is easy to note when mind is fixed directly on the pain. Both vedana and noting mind are nama and both are very swift. However in the end vedana is overcome by the noting mind.

By successive noting yogi will notice that vedana moves from one place to another and it also disappears after reaching the height. As a matter of fact, yogi now recognizes the true nature of vedana. As vedana increases, yogi also notes ardently. Whereupon disappearing becomes prominent than the noting of pain. This, in fact is, how noting overcome vedana, Yogi is also aware of the passing away of suffering, the knowing of the pain and the noting of that knowing mind. Yogi is then very much interested in the passing away of these three factors and realizes all the three are impermanent i.e. Anicca. To note the dissolution continuously is not a pleasant one i.e. Dukkha. It carries on of its own accord that is Anatta (Selfless). The three characteristics of Vedana are now distinct to him and he gains dhamma.

**Motto:** Reflect upon the danger of sickness in anticipation of suffering it.

It is most appropriate to practise dhamma before you are sick.

It is most inconvenient to practise dhamma when you are sick.

It is a great mistake not to gain dhamma when you are already sick.

You have not attained dhamma, however vedana is gaining over you. You are miserable and unhappy thinking "Am I going to die? Will doctors be efficient to cure me?" If you die in this state, you surely will go down to the lower abode.

## **Death**

**Motto:** Reflect upon the danger of death in anticipation of dying.

We are not certain whether we will be still alive or dead. We cannot foresee how long we will live, what disease will inflict us, when death will come, where we will die. However most certain is that we will die one day. The internal dangers are the 96 different kinds of diseases, whereas weapon, poisons, accidents, etc.: are the external danger. We cannot bribe and make appointment with death and its emissaries. We cannot be friend with him. Besides we have not recruited armies to attack death. Though we are still alive, today. We are not sure for tomorrow. Therefore, it is advised that you ponder upon the fact that death is not far off.

**Motto:** No appointment has been made, nor bribe can win best.

Not enough force to face death.

Who knows that we will be still alive tomorrow, so postpone no more,

Practise now and evermore.

The reflection upon the danger of death will subdue the pride in being alive. It also inspires to practise dhamma before death falls upon you.

**Motto:** Better ponder upon the danger of death before it visits you.

Now is the most opportune time for you to practise dhamma for the reasons that you are still alive, a human being, you have a chance to hear the noble dhamma, you are born in the time of Buddha's Sāsana. Take this golden opportunity and practise insight meditation. Whereupon you will realize Nirvana which is free from sickness.

**Motto:** It is the most favourable chance to practise dhamma before you die.

Those who have not reflected upon the danger of death, enjoy sensual pleasures and forget to carry out meritorious deeds. Not only that they also fail to meditate. These people with little moral deeds and no vipassana practice will be very much frightened when the unpleasant thoughts and fearful symbols appear in their mind on their death bed. They die with fear and delusion which is not a desirable one.

**Motto:** When delusion occurs near death, it is indeed the most unfavourable matter.

If they die in delusion, it is a certainty that they will be reborn in (apāya) lower worlds, the realms of sufferings.. Furthermore they will also encounter with sufferings and misdeeds along the coming existences.

**Motto:** It is a great mistake to die without attaining dhamma.

Ponder upon the dangers of decay, sickness, death until they are apparent vividly in your mind and practise meditation. Then only you will attain Nirvana which is free from these dangers. Old age starts as soon as a baby is born. Because of youthfulness, it is not so obvious. A baby is growing (getting old) day by day, and month by month. This process of aging is normally regarded as growth and development.

Old age sends one to sickness; sickness, in turn, sends one to death. A cowherd goads his cattle to the grazing ground, similarly decay and sickness are, all the time driving us to death. By contemplation only we can escape from these three dangers.

**Motto:**      Becoming is always accompanied by decay.  
                   It is nearer to sickness as decay sends us to it.  
                   It is nearer to death as sickness drives us towards  
                   it.  
                   No bribery can win the dangers of decay, sick-  
                   ness and death.  
                   Contemplation surely will save us from these  
                   dangers.

A man is surrounded by enemies, however there is a way to escape to a safe place. If he does not try to escape there is no one else who is more stupid. Similarly, there is a place, Nirvana which is free from all these dangers and the way magga, to that safe place. He, who does not take that magga does not develop dhamma is the most stupid one. It is better to develop magga dhamma by insight meditation as soon as possible.

**Motto:**      Facing dangers of decay, sickness and death  
                   Parents, if alive feel helpless  
                   Sons and daughters are unable to cure  
                   Develop magga dhamma to overcome these dan-  
                   gers for sure.

### Ill-effect of Misdeeds

The dangers of decay, sickness and death are so far discussed to a certain extent. Let us consider the ill-effects of misdeeds. In this world all beings and creatures do not wish to encounter with these three dangers. However none could avoid them. So also nobody desires to have ill-effects of misdeeds, but who could prevent them. They surely have to face these dangers; even arahants could not escape from the ill-effects of misdeeds.

There are numerous instances of such effect. Samavadi and her five hundred ladies-in-waiting of King Brahmadat, Baranasi, on one afternoon went to the River to play in the water. When it got late, in order to warm themselves, they set fire to a bush on the river bank. When the fire died down, to their astonishment, they found a Silent-Buddha in the pile of ashes. It so happened that Silent Buddha was the one who used to come to the palace for alms. Samavadi and the ladies were so frightened to be punished by the King, they gathered some more wood and set fire again, hoping that the Silent-Buddha would die in the fire. The Noble one did not succumb to death as he was enjoying the ecstatic jhana state. For that evil deeds they suffered for more than hundred thousand years in hell. In the after-hell existences they were put to death by house-fires for more than 500 existences. In the Gotama Buddha's time, by listening to the dhamma through Khuccuttara, they all became Sotapanna.

However the ill results waited for their turn. One day an uncle of Magandi, the jealous rival, painted the house where Samavadi and her ladies-in-waiting lived, with grease on the pretence of making the building stronger. Afterwards he locked the building and set fire. All of them were burnt to death.

Another case is about Ashin Moggallan. In his one early existence would-be Moggallan pretended to take his old and blind parents to their relatives. In the forest, shouting

"Bad men are coming" he himself beat them to death. He was reborn in niraya and suffered there for more than one hundred thousand years. After suffering in hell, in his next existences, he was beaten to death by bad men for more than 500 existences. In his very last birth as a result of killing his parents he was beaten to death by bad men. Though escape twice by getting out of the key hole and through the roof, in the third time he let himself be beaten by the roughers because he realized that he could never escape the ill-effect of killing his blind parents. He was beaten till his bones were broken into pieces. As the possessor of super normal power, by developing the ecstatic Jhana state, he saved his life and went to Buddha. He passed away into Nirvana after paying respect to Buddha. It is quite obvious that no one can escape the ill-effects of misdeeds.

The good Buddhist are very careful not to commit serious misdeeds.

After listening to this sermon may you all be able to practise accordingly and in short time attain Nirvana which is free from old age, sickness, death and ill-effects of misdeeds by effortless practice.

Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu

## **The Four Constituents for Sotapan' and Twenty-four Types of Sotapan (29.9.94)**

On the day of M.E. 1356, first waning moon of Nattaw, at the 45th Anniversary Celebration for the admonishment of our Benefactor Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw, the sermon on "The Four Constituents for Sotapan and the Twenty-four Types of Sotapan "will be delivered. Since a sotapan has a safe-guard for his life-existences many aspire for it. There is a guarantee that a sotapan will be liberated from apaya. However to be a sotapan one has to acquire the four constituents for sotapan. If you all have already acquired them it is to be delighted, on the otherhand if you have not yet acquired them, it is of utmost importance to strive for them.

Said the Lord Buddha, "The four constituents, for the attainment of Sotapan, should be acquired and practised. They are.....

- (1) to take refuge in noble persons who could help you to attain magga ñāna and phala ñāna.
- (2) to listen to noble dhamma which could help you to gain magga ñāna and phala ñāna.
- (3) to cultivate right and proper attitude to gain merit.
- (4) to practise what is adaptive to magga ñāna and phala ñāna.

It is a certainty that you will become a sotapan in this very life if you have acquired these four constituents. If you have already acquired them practise vipassana meditation delightfully. If not you should try to acquire them.

**Motto:** Refuge in noble persons, listen to dhamma.  
Develope proper attitude and practise for magga  
and phala  
These are the four requirements for sotapanna.

### **To take refuge in Noble Persons**

However in the Buddha's absence, take refuge in an arahant; if not available then take refuge in an anagan; if not possible it is sakadagan; if not, take refuge in a sotapan. Even if a sotapan is not to be found then take refuge in those who have practised vipassana meditation. I sincerely believe that all of you take refuge in sayadaws of various vipassana meditation centres, and listen to dhamma and also that you practise vipassana meditation after developing proper attitude. For these reasons i.e. you have already acquired the four constituents, there is no doubt that you all can be sotapans in this very life, if you practise diligently.

### **To listen to dhamma**

Except Buddhas and silent-Buddhas, there is no one who has attained magga nana and phala nana without listening to dhamma. Even Ashin Sariputtara and Ashin Moggalan had to listen to dhamma in order to gain dhamma. You all better listen to satipattan dhamma. You would not gain dhamma if you do not listen to it. Those who are not earnest to listen to dhamma will not become a sotapan.

### **Develop proper attitude**

If you aspire to be a sotapan you must develop proper attitude. By listening to dhamma one can develop proper attitude. For instance, as soon as you get up in the morning, you may see or hear pleasant or unpleasant sights and sounds. If it is pleasant you are inclined to cherish it and get attached to it. Moreover there develops a desire for it, that is (Lobha) greed. When it is an unpleasantness you must be prepared to perceive it in such a way so as not to be angry (dosa) and perturbed. You undoubtedly will not be a sotapan with lobha and dosa in your mind. Therefore you must be able to perceive both pleasantness and unpleasantness in such a way to gain merit but not to develop lobha and dosa which are impurities (kilesa). How to do so?

When you experience pleasant sight and sound, ponder,

" Now things are pleasant and I'm happy. This is so, because I've done good to others in the past. To be happy and to have pleasantness in the future; I must be good to others in the present too. By doing so, I may gain merits and realise nirvana. " There upon you no longer cherish the pleasantness nor develop desire for it since there is no attachment to it. Thus you gain merits.

**Motto:** Good deeds done in the past  
Deserves the present good results  
Good deeds done in the present.  
In future things will be pleasant.

If it is unpleasantness, instead of putting blames on others, reflect thus. "I'm unhappy and disturbed now for the reasons that I've done so to the others in the past existences. Therefore I must be good and not to commit unmeritorious deeds. Hence I'll not be unhappy and disturbed in the future." Thus you gain merit, you are fortunate enough to be a human being, to be sons and daughters of good parents and to be under the guidance of good teachers due to your past good deeds. If you can develop a proper attitude, especially towards undertaking more meritorious deeds and surely will realise nirvana. Whether it is pleasantness or unpleasantness, if you could perceive them with proper attitude, you gain merits instead of developing lobha and dosa.

Demeritorious deeds will certainly give you ill-effects, nevertheless if you can perceive the ill-effects with proper attitude they will be reversed. In order to overcome the ill-results there is nothing more than under-taking good deeds and to develop proper attitude. To develop a proper attitude towards unpleasantness than pleasantness is important. If you can do so you have acquired merit.

**To practise what is adaptive to magga and phala**

Whenever we give alms-offerings don't we pray for happiness and to attain nirvana. To practise what is adaptive

to magga and phala is to give charity which is a support for the realization of nirvana. Moreover it is to observe precepts and to engage in samatha and vipassana practice. Of course, vipassana meditation, the most adaptive to magga and phala, will result in the attainment of magga and phala. You all should always aspire for the realization of nirvana. Insight meditation is the most proper practice for the realization of nirvana. Whenever there is opportunity to practise vipassana, never miss it. You all are now practising in accordance with Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw's guidance.

### **Three Ways of Meditation**

There are three ways of vipassana meditation; namely sitting, walking and general noting. In sitting practice note attentively and in detail. While sitting with closed eyes there is less chance of your mind wandering elsewhere. However in walking practice you may be perturbed by seeing things and persons especially when your concentration is weak. Thereupon progress in dhamma will be slow and also in gaining magga and phala. Most of the yogi like sitting practice because they can note ardently.

In general noting instead of noting in detail, you usually give sporadic attention to the actions and movements you made. Thence concentration is not strong, no progress and no gain of dhamma. It is a fact that concentration must be strong in order to develop insight knowledge. Therefore concentration is the first and utmost thing in vipassana meditation. Remember that if you have not properly cultivated concentration there will be retardation in gaining dhamma. If you keep on reflecting " I am noting rupa and I am noting nama, " rising " and " falling" concentration will never develop.

Noting in sitting practice with closed eyes can promote concentration better than walking practice and general noting. In walking practice and general noting you may not know how to control your eyes. The best thing is to keep your eyes down cast while walking or in general noting. If you cannot do so, it is better to practise with closed eyes. Ashin

Kissāyana, holder of the highest honour in dhamma and who could conceive the meaning of dhamma as intended by the Lord Buddha, explained how to develop concentration. "Although your eye sight is good, you close your eyes or down cast them and act like a blind person "said Ashin Kissāyana. While engaged in sitting or walking practice, as your eye sight is good, naturally you will look around. Thence your concentration is distracted and progress in dhamma is obstructed. Therefore it is better to close your eyes at the beginning.

•  
**Motto:** Eye sight may be good, but act as a blind person.

Ashin Kissāyana said, "Although your hearing is perfect, act like a deaf person. "Since your hearing is perfect, act like a deaf person." Since your hearing and ear sensual surface are not damaged, you can hear clearly. Then your mind will surely be distracted by what you heard. Hence no concentration, no insight knowledge and no hope for sotapan. Therefore it is better to behave like a deaf person.

**Motto:** Hearing may be good, but act as a deaf person.

"Although you are a good speaker, act like a dumb, "advised Ashin Kissāyana. You may be a good speaker and can hold listeners attention, however while practising for the attainment of magga and phala, behave like a dumb person. If you talk for a minute your contemplation will be disturbed for a duration of ten minutes. Therefore it is much better not to talk while noting.

**Motto:** May be a good speaker, however act like a dumb person.

"Though strong and healthy, you must act like a sick man," remarked Ashin Kissāyana. In order to attain magga and phala when you practise meditation you must move about

like a sick man. If you behave like a healthy and strong person, you may not be able to note each and every movement as you are a beginner. The nature of rupa and nama will be too swift for a beginner, hence your noting does not settle on what is happening but on what has already happened. In other words you are noting the past and not the present. Remember it is important not to miss even a second in noting. If you are noting the past, then you will not gain dhamma, no concentration and no vipassna wisdom. Subsequently you will not attain magga and phala, thereupon you could not aspire to be a sotapan. All what had been said is just opposite to the expectation in the mundane world where one has to be quick and always on the move. In the supramundane world it is required to move about softly and gently like a sick man. If you sincerely wish to be a sotapan, act (while practising) in compliance to Ashin Kissāyana's advice. Then only you will gain magga and phala and become a sotapan.

**Motto:** Though healthy and strong act like a weak person.

Ashin Kissāyana's advice is very beneficial to you and it is also a great support for the attainment of sotapan. Ashin Kissāyana, an arahant, held the highest honour in dhamma and in expanding the brief discourses expounded by the Lord Buddha.

Out of the three types of noting, general noting is the most difficult one. During the first few days most yogi said that they could not note the general movement. Though you may find it not so easy at the beginning, after practising for four or five days, you will be able to note according to the instructor's guide. I shall discuss briefly how to contemplate general movements. Buddha had instructed in detail about the noting in the four different postures. When you want to get up after sitting practice or listening to dhamma talk, do not get up at once. Reflect upon your mind and you will be aware of the desire to get up. You will also find that you cannot get up without the desire to stand up.

Then note, "want to get up." When you rest on your hands, you will notice the element of motion pushing you up, then note "pushing", "pushing". Your body gradually moves upwards. All these processes are known as standing.

Note the nature of movement in standing up mindfully and attentively, but not the form. Then you will apprehend that the desire to stand up as the cause and the standing up movement as the effect. Now it is easy to note because you know the cause and effect. It is important that you must note the desirous mind. After getting up you stand for a while and there arises the desire to walk. Then note "desire to walk" "desire to walk". When you walk note the walking movement mindfully. The desire to walk is the cause and walking movement itself is the effect. If you can note the desirous mind, then you could decide that you have attained two stages of insight-knowledge. The desire to walk is consciousness, therefore it is nāma, and the walking movement or body is unconsciousness, therefore it is matter or rupa. This knowledge of differentiating between nāma and rupa is called Nāma-rupa paricceda Ñāna, which you have experienced yourself. Do you need to ask someone else? The desire to walk is the cause and walking movement is the effect. Therefore you gain the knowledge of cause and effect that is Paccayapariggaha Ñāna. If you can note the desire-mind before making any bodily movements you will easily comprehend these two stages of insight-knowledge.

In walking practice you note "left foot forward" "right foot forward" or "lifting", "moving forward", "dropping" and so on. When you come to the end of the corridor, you want to stop. You will be aware of this desire if only you pay full attention to it. However there are many times you are not aware of it. Then you start noting "desire to stop" "desire to stop" at about 3 or 4 steps before you reach the end of the corridor. You will be conscious of the element of motion pushing your body while walking. The desire to stop is the conscious mind and the body which stops is the unconscious matter. By walking practice you can also realize

the Nāma-rupa paricceda Ñāna. So also the desire to walk is the cause and walking movement is the effect. If there is no desire, then there is no walking movement. There again the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna is vividly comprehended. You determine all these insight-knowledge through your own experience.

You may want to know how long it will take you to realize these stages of insight. It will not be too long, it may be realized within two days or 4 or 5 days. Athakatha teachers said you become a Sula-sotapan if you attain these 2 stages of insight-knowledge. Is it not wonderful to become a sula-sotapan (junior sotapan) just by practising about 4 to 5 days. When you want to sit, note attentively "desire to sit" "desire to sit". The element of motion pushes your body downwards and there is gradual dropping down of your body which is known as sitting down. Then note "sitting" "sitting". Mind you, it is not to note the form which is the conventional names (paññatta). It is to note the nature of downward movement in sitting and the heaviness in that movement, which is (paramatta) ultimate reality.

Your mind now settles on the present moment and what you experience is the element of extension and the element of cohesion, both manifest in heaviness. You put water or earth in a bucket and lift it. What you will find, of course, is heaviness. By noting respectfully in sitting movement you gain dhamma. The desire to sit is the conscious mind, therefore it is nāma, and sitting movement is the unconscious matter, therefore it is matter or rupa. Here again you learn Nāma-rupa paricceda Ñāna. The desire to sit is the cause and the effect is the sitting movement. The insight-knowledge of cause and effect is lucidly comprehended, that is Paccayapariggaha Ñāna.

**Motto:** The desire to sit is nāma.  
The sitting action is rupa.  
It is not "I" nor "you" who sit, but just nāma and rupa.

When the pair of nāma and rupa are clearly perceived.

The purpose of sitting is achieved.

The purpose of sitting is to note "sitting" "sitting" which is vipassana practice. This vipassana practice is achieved when you personally perceive and differentiate nāma and rupa. In lying down, the desire to lie down will be quite apparent if your concentration is strong. Mindfully and diligently note "desire to lie down" "desire to lie down". Note "lying down" "lying down" when your body gradually lowers down sideways. The desire to lie down is conscious mind, therefore it is nāma, the movement of lying down is physical phenomena, therefore it is rupa. The desire to lie down is cause and the lying down movement is the effect. Thereupon while lying down, by dint of conscientious noting you gain two stages of insight knowledge i.e. The Nāmarupa paricceda Ñāna and the Paccaya pariggaha Ñāna. Moreover, that is not what someone has told you, the knowledge is through your personal experience. This is the benefit of noting the desire-mind.

Athakathā masters confirm that one becomes a sulasotapan by attaining these two stages of insight-knowledge. When one is convinced about cause and effect the wrong view of rootless or causeless (a-hetuka ditthi) is completely dispelled. Thereupon he establishes a footing in Buddha's Sasana and will never be shakened by any kind of inconsequential cause and effect views (visamahetu ditthi). Furthermore he has also developed a strong belief that the right benefits are the return of righteous physical, verbal and mental behaviour, and that wrong deeds, deserve ill-results.

An illustration of inconsequential cause and effect view is the belief that living beings are created by Brahmas and Pissano. The creators, undoubtedly have a good intention to create all living beings to be equal. In other words, to create all to be healthy, wealthy, to have good personality etc.:. Nevertheless, as you all know, all are not equally healthy. Some are strong and healthy but some are physically or

mentally retarded. Some are poor, the others are rich; some are pretty, some are so ugly, that they dare not show up in the crowd. The creation (cause) has inconsequential results (effect). Thus you find that cause and effect are not congruous. Yogi no longer have faith in creation belief as they have already comprehended personally that there is no other cause than deeds (kamma) and that one reaps as one sows. The ill-effects are due to misdeeds (physically, verbally, mentally) and good results due to good deeds i.e. cause and effect but nothing else.

After attaining the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna, yogi no longer has faith in creation hence he is established in the Buddha's sasana. In reality, firm establishment in the Buddha's sasana is possible only after one has actually realized magga and phala. These two sayings are not contradictory. The realization of magga and phala is based on the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna, therefore the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna is the cause and magga and phala are effects. However the Athakathā masters mention the name of Paccayapariggaha Ñāna in lieu of magga and phala as effect. Another way, they meant to say that if one, who has already attained the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna, ardently practised he is undoubtedly to realize magga and phala. Therefore it can be said that one who has attained the Paccayapariggaha Ñāna is established in the Buddha's Sasana. For a sula-sotapan, only his next existence is safe from apāya unless he practises vipassana meditation in that very existence. For you all, mahā-sotapan is within easy reach, therefore practise with unshakened faith so that you will become a mahā-sotapan without failure.

### **The Twenty-four Types of Sotapan**

How to practise vipassana meditation adaptable to magga and phala has been discussed to a certain extent. Now I shall take up the twenty-four types of sotapan. You can decide to which type you belong. Since you are fortunate enough to exist in the presence of Buddha's Sasana and to be endowed with the remaining three constituents to become a sotapan,

try your utmost best to practise vipassana. Thereupon it is evident that you will become a sotapan. Types of sotapan can be classified into three categories according to-

1. number of existences they will undergo
2. the predominating factors, and
3. Way of practice.

1. **Number of existences**

- (a) Sattakkhattuparama sotapan will undergo 7 existences and realize nirvana in the last existence .
- (b) Kolankola sotapan will undergo 2 to 6 existences before realizing nirvana.
- (c) Ekabiza sotapan will realize nirvana in the second existence.

2. **Predominating factors (Dhura)**

- (a) Saddhā dhura - faith predomination
- (b) Nāna dhura - Wisdom predomination

3. **Way of practice**

- (a) Dukkā patipadā dandhābhiññā Sotapan practise with difficulties and strain, and slow in gaining dhamma.
- (b) Dukkāpatipada Khippābhiññā Sotapan  
Practise with difficulties and strain but quick in gaining dhamma
- (c) Sukhāpatipadā dandhābhiññā Sotapan  
Practise without difficulties and strain but slow in gaining dhamma
- (d) Sukhāpatipadā khippābhiññā Sotapan  
Practise without difficulties and strain and also quick in gaining dhamma.

Multiply three numbers in the first category, by two numbers in the second category, you get six then multiply by four numbers in the third category and you will get twenty-four types of Sotapan.

The first category of sotapan is quite simple and need no further explanation.

In the second category, type (a) yogi who is predominated by faith may not perceive dhamma vividly. He may keep on noting, "rising and falling", "sitting", "touching" "lifting", "walking" etc.; however the nature of these movements are not so clear to him. There may be progress to certain extent and he attains the Nāma-rupa paricceda Nāna. Nevertheless he is aware of just the middle part of rising and that of falling; and the form of light he experiences is just a faint one, like a glow-worm. He is not yet able to differentiate nāma and rupa. The instructor has to explain so that he would understand well what he has perceived while practising.

Second category type (b) yogi predominated by wisdom, could differentiate nāma and rupa analytically. His concentration is so strong that he perceives "rising" as a separate entity from the noting mind, "falling" as a separate entity from the noting mind. Similarly he notices that "sitting" "touching" are separate entities from the noting mind. "Rising" and "falling" are unconscious matter, therefore they are rupa, whereas awareness of them is conscious mind, therefore it is nāma. He can distinguish nāma and rupa lucidly through his own experience. The knowledge, that in himself and the others there is only nāma and rupa, no such entity as "I", dispells perceptibly sakkāya dhitthi (wrong view of aggregates) and attadhitthi (wrong view of self). Although "I" is a conventional usage, we use the term "I" in our usual conversation for the sake of convenience but not as an "atta" entity. By discarding these two wrong views the door to apāya is closed. Thus a firm foundation is established and that is the reason why we all should practise ardently. According to Rev. Mahasi Sayadaw's method of vipassana meditation you can achieve this within 4 or 5 days.

By virtue of strong concentration wisdom dominated, yogi is also aware of the fact that because of rising movement there is noting, so rising movement is the cause and the awareness of it is the result. In the same manner sitting posture

is the cause and the awareness of it is the result. Touching is the cause and the awareness of it is the result. Thus the knowledge of cause and effect is developed through his own personal experience. Yogi with faith-predomination will comprehend this knowledge only when he was told and explained by the instructor. He should not be disheartened by reflecting that he might not gain dhamma. Just follow the right method and then concentration will develop leading to vipassana wisdom and progress of insight knowledge.

In the third category which is classified by way of practice.

Type (a) yogi has to practise with strain and difficulties and he is also slow in gaining dhamma. This is due to two reasons. He may not have practised samatha (meditation for tranquillity) as well as vipassana concentration in the past existences.

Type (b) yogi experience difficulties in practising but quick in gaining dhamma. This is so, because he has practised vipassana concentration but not samatha concentration. If one has practised vipassana concentration in the past existences, he is quick in gaining dhamma. Vipassana concentration leads to the development of wisdom and samatha concentration makes practice easy and strainless.

Type (c) yogi has no strain and difficulties but slow in gaining dhamma. This again is due to practise in samatha concentration but lack in vipassana concentration in the past existences. You gain dhamma only when you have wisdom.

Type (d) yogi has no difficulties in practice and at the same time gain dhamma quickly. This is the result of practice in both samatha and vipassana concentration in the past existences.

If you are endowed with the four factors for sotapan, no matter to which type you belong you certainly will become a sotapan. Do you believe in that? You all are practising because you have faith in dhamma. Difficulties in practice and slow gain in dhamma are not because of someone's fault but because you have not practise samatha and vipassana

concentration in the past existences. The Blessed One said that one day you will become a sotapan if you practise in both samatha and vipassana concentration with firm faith.

It is important that special attention must be given to those who are slow in gaining dhamma, for the reason that they may be disheartened and might not become a sotapan. They should be encouraged to keep on meditating. Those who experience difficulties and strain and also slow in gaining dhamma and those who have no difficulties but slow in gaining dhamma should also be encouraged. When encountered with sufferings yogi should remember that he must forbear them. Patience or forbearance is of utmost importance in insight meditation. Concentration will be deterred by frequent change in posture. "Patience begets nirvana" is the saying most appropriate for the meditators.

If you do not experience much suffering you should note respectfully and attentively, otherwise there will be lapse in practice. This could happen especially to those who experience no difficulties but slow in gaining dhamma. This is because of practice in samatha but no vipassana concentration in the past existences. Most of the yogi when they come for dhamma discussion used to tell that their noting is "good". How about in the afternoon?" The answer is "good noting". The same answer for the evening too. It is the same for the next day and the following day. However they have no idea what is "good".

The instructor has to advise them, "Note attentively the beginning and the end of rising movement and also the same with the falling movement." Day by day, there is improvement in practice. Then the instructor explained "The beginning of rising is becoming and the end of it is dissolution". Now yogi notes mindfully and the nature of rising and falling becomes lucid to him. Whereupon he perceives the separate parts of the beginning and the end of each rising and falling movement.

For those who experiences suffering and difficulties in practice, it is better to note dukkha vedana. There are three

ways of noting dukkha vedana.

- (1) Contemplation for the disappearance of dukkha vedana
- (2) Contemplation to get rid of dukkha vedana at one sitting
- (3) Contemplation to discern the nature of dukkha vedana

(1) When you contemplate for the disappearance of dukkha vedana that means you desire for sukha, which leads to arising of greed (lobha). Greed is kilesa (impurity). With kilesa in between notings, it is impossible to attain dhamma as the progress in meditation is retarded. Most of the yogi contemplate for the disappearance of dukkha vedana. This way of contemplation should not be practised since it is not congruent with the Buddha's instruction. Buddha advised to contemplate so as to perceive the intrinsic nature of dukkha vedana i.e. variation in intensity of pain and shifting places.

(2) Yogi who contemplates to get rid of dukkha vedana at one sitting is said to develop dosa or harsh mind. Remember yogi meditate in order to eradicate dosa; however they are practising now with kilesa in between notings. Thereupon there is no concentration, so no progress in meditation and no chance of gaining dhamma; not to practise this.

The correct way to overcome vedana is to contemplate so as to understand the nature of vedana. Try to notice the seat of pain, is it in the skin, in the flesh, in the bone, the nerve or the bone-marrow? When the pain increases yogi tends to be physically and mentally tense. He must relax and not to worry thinking "Is it going to be painful the whole sitting"; instead he should reflect thus 'Vedana is naturally painful and my duty is to note it. I must be patient'. Then note the pain or numbness attentively and analytically; so that you will know the seat of pain, the extent of vedana and the nature of vedana.

After four or five notings vedana will reach the height and begins to decrease. Yogi feels somewhat relieved. Now he realizes the nature of vedana i.e. vedana is not a continuous suffering, it may increase or decrease at times. Thereupon reflection and worries occur less and less. By virtue of repetitive

and diligent noting, concentration gains strength. With each noting vedana increases and then decreases and yogi notices that vedana shifts from one place to another. As contemplation is strong, concentration gain momentum and with each noting vedana arises and disappears, arises and disappears. Arising is becoming and disappearing is dissolution.

The noting mind now attentively dwells upon the process of becoming and dissolution and no longer on pain. Thus vedana is overcome by the noting mind, thereupon yogi has attained Bhanga Ñāna. When pain is noted, arising of pain is no longer distinct; however disappearing becomes the main object for noting. To the yogi the nature of pain is more prominent than the seat of pain. He is no longer aware of pain since the noting mind has dominated it. As the concentration gains strength, yogi experiences the dissolution of both the object of noting and the noting mind itself. One with more mature concentration could even experience the disappearance of pain, of the act of knowing and of the consciousness of knowing. Thereupon he reflects thus, "Nothing is permanent, there is just arising and disappearing, therefore it is anicca, all that become and dissolve are undoubtedly suffering, therefore it is dukkha, since you have no control over the process of becoming and dissolution it is anatta." Yogi now vividly comprehends the three characteristics., Vedana anicca, Vedana dukkha and Vedana anatta. According to one's own parami, one will realize nirvana.

After listening to this sermon on "Four constituents for Sotapan and 24 types of Sotapan" may you all be able to practise in compliance to the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation may you all immediately realize the most aspired nirvana which is free from all sufferings, by practising with ease.

## Four Constituents for Sotapan and Six Benefits of Sotapan (30.9.93)

Today's sermon will be on "four constituents to be a sotapan and six benefits of sotapan". Lord Buddha had pointed out the four constituents for those who sincerely aspire to be a sotapan in this very life.

They are: —

1. To take refuge in noble masters.
2. To listen to noble dhamma
3. To develop proper attitudes in order to gain merits
4. To practise dhamma adaptive to Magga and Phala

The Buddha's advice is very much appropriate for the listeners of today's discourse. It is a necessity. To have these four constituents, to be a sotapan.

**Motto:** Take refuge in noble persons, listen to dhamma (Develop proper attitude and) practise for magga and phala

These are the four required for a sotapanna.

### 1. To Take Refuge in Noble Teachers

In Buddha's time, of course it is the Lord Buddha in whom we should take refuge. However, in the absence of the Lord, we should take refuge in arahats; if arahats are not to be found then take refuge in an anāgan; if not possible it is satadāgan; if not take refuge in a sotapan. Even if a sotapan is not available, then the guardian of three pitakas (3 Baskets), if not then the guardian of 2 pitakas; if not then the guardian of one pitaka. When a guardian of one pitaka is not within reach then take refuge in those who practise vipassana meditation. Listeners of this discourse surely have taken refuge in sayadaws. Then you have the first constituent for a sotapan.

## 2. To Listen to Noble Dhamma

Except Buddhas and Silent Buddhas (Individually Enlightened Ones) no one could be a sotapan without the audition of dhamma. To listen to dhamma is like watering a young mango plant. While practising vipassana you feel quite happy and make progress after listening to dhamma. A young plant grows well and bears flowers and fruits if it is regularly watered. Similarly by listening to dhamma you gain magga and phala. If you failed to listen to dhamma, like an unwatered young mango plant you feel depressed, and you would like to leave the meditation centre; the young mango plant dies when not regularly watered. Likewise, if you leave the meditation centre, you are just like the dead. If you do not want to die, like the withered plant, then listen to dhamma without fail.

## 3. To Develop Proper Attitude

In order to gain merit you should develop proper attitude. You will come across pleasant as well as unpleasant sensations whether you desire it or not. When it is a pleasant one you develop lobha by getting attached to that pleasant experience. How to develop a proper attitude in such a case? Instead of developing attachment to it, reflect thus, "I have pleasant and happy experience now, because I have done something good in the past existences. To be happy in the future, I must carry out good deeds at present." Then you would engage in more meritorious deeds to gain happiness and consequently attain nirvana. If it is unpleasant, dosa would arise leading to unwholesome deeds. Here also you should ponder, "Things are unpleasant and I'm unhappy. This is so because, I've done bad deeds in the past existences. I must be good in this present life, so that I wouldn't have unpleasantness in the future." Thinking thus you expel dosa.

Ill-effects, certainly are the results of bad deeds. However if you can develop a proper attitude towards it, reflecting as mentioned above, the ill-effect will become the cause of good deeds as you will shy away from unwhole-

some deeds. Thus there is no more danger of suffering in apāya. To become a sotapan you must harbour a wholesome mind instead of an unwholesome one. If you have an unwholesome mind, undoubtedly you will never be a sotapan. Unwholesome mind and noble dhamma are antithesis.

#### 4. Practice adaptive to Magga and Phala

The listeners of this sermon are practising vipassana meditation according to Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw's instruction with an aspiration for nirvana. When you offer dana alms-food, etc., you pray for the attainment of nirvana. At the end of receiving precepts sila you again pray for magga and phala. Thereupon it is evident that you have an inclination towards nirvana, whatever and whenever good deeds you carry out. Since these dana and sila are the supporting factors for the attainment of nirvana, they can be regarded as practices adaptive to magga and phala. Nevertheless the best practice is vipassana meditation under correct guidance. Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw had instructed explicitly how to practise vipassana meditation. Not only that he had also composed many mottos for the same purpose, like the following one.

- Motto:** Q. What is to be noted for the development of vipassana wisdom?  
 A. The correct way is to note the five groups of clinging.

The five groups of clinging are the five aggregates which form the objects of clinging. You grasp these five aggregates with craving, incorrect view, etc.:- You find these five aggregates within yourself as well as in others' selves. Then which is to be noted? Of course, it is to note the aggregates in yourself. Vipassana Meditation by guessing aggregates in others' selves is not the correct way. First you must contemplate your own five aggregates; then you will gain dhamma. When you comprehend the nature of your own aggregates, then only you will be able to perceive the nature

of others' aggregates. Since no clinging to your own aggregates is developed, there will be no grasping of the others too.

**Motto:** Q. Why and when those aggregates must be noted?

A. They must be duly noted at the moment of becoming, to prevent clinging.

Many foreigners take interest in Buddhism, especially vipassana meditation. They would like to know why one needs to practise vipassana meditation. Is it to have the mastery of clairvoyance and clairaudience? A young student once asked sayadaw, "I would like to practise vipassana meditation. How many days do I need to master clairvoyance and clairaudience?" In fact, vipassana meditation is not for prosperity in business nor to gain the power such as clairvoyance and clairaudience. It is to eradicate cravings and clinging to the aggregates. In other words, it is to be free from sufferings and to realize nirvana. In order to develop vipassana wisdom, it is therefore, important to note at the moment of becoming, that means to note the present, not the past which is gone nor the future which does not exist yet.

**Motto:** Reflect not upon the bygone past nor expect the new future.

Note the present moment of becoming dissolution of rupa and nāma for sure.

Out of past, present and future, it is to note objectively the present moment. If late for a fraction of second dhamma is past and gone. Thereupon other thoughts such as wrong view, sensual attachment, etc.: will take its place and progress in dhamma is stagnant. If you thought of the future and reflected "whether I gain dhamma", your mind is wandering and there is no chance for the attainment of

nirvana. Therefore it is to endeavour to note at the moment of occurrence and not to reflect upon the past nor to expect the future. In practising meditation, it is required to note the external as well as internal objects of noting. When vipassana wisdom is immature, it is better to note what is happening in your body (kāyānupassanā). Out of four foundations of mindfulness, it is most feasible to note the body which is inclusive of all behaviour and action such as sitting, touching, rising, falling, standing, bending, stretching, etc:- The whole body is covered with receptacles (sensual surfaces - kāyapasāda) except the nails and tips of hair. These are the internal objects of noting.

At the Bhanga Nāna Stage where concentration is mature to a certain extent, you begin to perceive the nature of dhamma. You will be able to note the external object of noting such as seeing, hearing, taste, smell and thinking. How one could know that he is at the Bhanga Nāna Stage? At this stage wisdom develops and dissolution is very lucid to the practising yogi. He will be able to note the external objects of noting as mere seeing, mere hearing, etc.: while noting "rising" "falling" the initial stage of rising and that of falling are not apparent to yogi, however the end or disappearing is very vivid. He is no longer concerned with pannatta. In sitting practice, form of body, legs, hands, etc. are not clearly perceived but yogi is aware of stiffness of his body (as pushed by the element of motion.) All the time what he is noting is dissolution. It will be more distinct if he developed a disposition towards it. At every noting he comprehends vanishing behaviour and action.

With full development of the Bhanga Nāna Stage, the object of noting, the noting mind and conscious mind disappear whenever yogi notes. For example, in sitting practice when he notes "sitting" "sitting" the form of sitting body and the noting mind vanish and he is only conscious of the element of motion pushing the body. So also in all other postures of practice. This is the first factor in strengthening the controlling faculties. In other words, it

is the attention directed towards impermanence of all objects of consciousness. Since the new yogi has learned about this first factor by listening to the sermon, he is very much interested to perceive the process of becoming and dissolution. As he is still at the Udayabbaya Ñāna Stage, his concentration is not strong enough and wisdom has not well developed, he would not be able to do so. He has to strive hard to note successively and continuously. Then he will perceive the dissolution of both the object of noting and the noting mind.

The process of becoming and dissolution is so fast that yogi could not keep pace with it and also the same time he realizes that the psycho - physical phenomena is impermanent i.e. anicca, to be harassed by this fast process of becoming and dissolution is suffering i.e. dukkha; this harassment is uncontrollable and unobstructable i.e. anatta. With distinct comprehension of the three characteristics no clinging arises, thereupon it is a certainty that yogi would be liberated from sufferings; at first he clings to his own aggregates and afterwards it is the others' aggregates that is craved for. Whereupon there is no chance of liberation. Therefore it is important to practise vipassana meditation.

With the maturation of vipassana wisdom, awareness of fright and fear arises in the wake of constant and rapid dissolution of all phenomena — Bhaya Ñāna Stage. Thus it comes to be realized these rapidly dissolving nāma and rupa are undesirable dhamma of inferior and evil nature — Adinava Ñāna. Such rapid dissolution of nāma and rupa are then seen to be unsubstantial, devoid of pleasure and tiresome. — Nibbida Ñāna. With the strengthening of Nibbida Ñāna which sees and knows all nāma and rupa are suffering, a desire arises to renounce this body - mind complex — Muncitu kamyata Ñāna. With the arising of this desire one realizes, the need for further effort by noting so that one may be able to renounce — Patisankhā Ñāna. Sometimes yogi does not put effort and let go without noting. Since the momentum of noting has gained, noting goes on of its own accord.

## **The Six Benefits**

So far we have discussed the four constituents for a sotapan. Buddha had explained that there are six benefits enjoyed by a sotapan. They are —

1. Firm establishment in wholesome dhamma
2. No regress in wholesome dhamma
3. Limitation of number of existences to suffer
4. Development of higher wisdom which is not pertained to puthujjanas
5. Perfect knowledge of causes
6. Comprehension of effect in accordance with cause

### **1. Firm Establishment in Wholesome Dhamma**

A sotapan is unlikely to infringe five, eight and nine precepts or moral conduct and the 37 constituents of enlightenment. A sotapan always observes wholesome dhamma especially the five precepts even at the risk of his life. For example bad people with dominating influence threatened to kill him if he failed to kill someone; that he would be killed if he did not steal; that he would be killed if he refused to commit adultery; that he would be killed if he did not take intoxicated drinks; that he would be killed if he refused to tell lies to ruin others. A sotapan will never commit deeds which infringe the five precepts even if there arises opportunities to do so. This firm and unshakable moral conduct is the landmark of a sotapan. Therefore a sotapan will be liberated from sufferings in this existence as well as in the following existences as he is well established in dhamma.

**Motto:** When in dhamma firmly established  
You already gain the benefit.

### **2. No Regress in Wholesome Dhamma**

There is no regress in observing wholesome dhamma such as faiths moral conduct, moral shame, moral dread, knowledge, charity and wisdom. It is not only in this very life, even after death the merits of observation of these

wholesome dhamma do not regress, in fact they even propagate. Faith in a sotapan is so firm and strong, that no one has to persuade him to give dana. In this meditation centre, yogi who have gained dhamma are so enthusiastic to give dana that they have to be requested to wait for the proper time. In this centre it is not allowed to persuade anyone to offer dana. The volitional donation is more beneficial than the one persuaded by others. Donation out of own faith leads to the attainment of higher magga and phala. Better existence are also the results of such dana.

**Motto:** No regress in dhamma  
Has a benefit of good result

### 3. Limitation of Number of Existences

Number of existences for a Sotapan is limited to only seven existences to undergo sufferings. Once at Zetavon Monastery, Savatthi, as there was no time to preach, Buddha put some earth dust on his thumb nail and said, "Which is more my good sons, the earth dust on my thumb nail and the dust on the earth of the world?" The monks replied that they were incomparable and definitely the earth was much more. Then the Lord explained, "The amount of earth dust on my thumb nail is comparable to the amount of sufferings that a sotapan, in the presence of sasana has to undergo. The number of existence to suffer is limited for a sotapan. The amount of sufferings he has already discarded is comparable to the dust on the earth. (ref: Nakhasikha Sutta)

**Motto:** The dust on the nail is equal to the remaining sufferings  
The dust on the earth is equal to the expelled sufferings  
A sotapan has gained the benefit of limited sufferings

#### 4. Development of Higher Wisdom

A sotapan has developed higher wisdom which is unrelated to puthujjana. Once a yogi after attainment of dhamma said, "I could not grasp the meaning of dhamma explained in the book on vipasanna before. Now everything in the book is so lucid to me that I read it over and over again." Being a sotapan he has a higher wisdom and could enjoy the dhamma. Since he has completely discarded incorrect views and doubts, his mind is free from defilements and his wisdom is more clear and bright. In puthujjana, doubt such as "Will I gain dhamma just by noting "rising", "falling", "sitting," "touching", is a great hindrance to the progress of dhamma. With such doubts in mind it is also unreliable for the freedom from apāya. Since a sotapan has eliminated these two defilements, his mind is lucid and higher wisdom develops.

**Motto:** The benefit attained by sotapanna  
Is the higher wisdom not concerned with  
puthujjana.

A puthujjana usually harbours incorrect views and doubts and also gross kilesa such as lobha and dosa in his mind. However a sotapan has dispelled incorrect views and doubts and no longer develops harsh mind which is the cause of sufferings. Moreover he has discarded lobha, dosa and moha which lead to apāya. Thence he is undoubtedly liberated from sufferings in apāya. Moha ignorance is the darkest of the three unwholesome dhamma and deters the development of wisdom to decide right and wrong.

#### 5. A Perfect Knowledge of Cause

A sotapan has perfect comprehension of cause; for instance, he can definitely decide, what is the cause; which cause is wholesome or unwholesome. The reason is that a sotapan has a higher wisdom than a puthujjana. He also perceives clearly that the wholesome cause will produce

wholesome benefit. For example you aspire for the attainment of nirvana however, you practise a self-harassing method. Would you gain nirvana? Since the cause (self-harassing practice) is not the right method for the effect (nirvana) you are apart from nirvana. The insight meditation is the correct method for the realization of nirvana.

To be more explicit, here is another illustration. At mid-day, one sits in the middle of four big fires (Pāncātapa Practice), believing that all kilesa will be burnt by the heat of four big fires and the mid-day sun (is very hot especially in India). Perhaps he may not develop craving (kilesa), however he is in anguish of the heat, that is dosa; he is also anxious whether he would be able to stand the heat, that is doubt. With anger and doubt could one expect to gain nirvana? All these are the results of unwholesome cause-self harassment practice. A sotapan has eradicated all doubts and wrong causes, and developed higher wisdom. Therefore he is in the know of the relationship of right cause and right effect.

**Motto:** Knowledge of a correct cause is the benefit of a sotapan  
 Knowledge of the cause which is hard to perceive is gained by a sotapan.

## 6. Comprehension of Effect

Unlike puthujjana a sotapan can perceive distinctly what cause can produce what benefit. The wholesome benefits are the products of wholesome physical and verbal action and thoughts. "One suffers unhappiness because of his unwholesome physical, verbal and mental deeds", thus a sotapan understands better about the relationship of cause and effect. Thereupon he suffers less as he could not commit misdeeds.

**Motto:** Knowledge of the effect which is hard to perceive is the benefit a sotapan receives.

A sotapan can comprehend clearly what is difficult for a puthujjana such as good deeds return good benefits: unwholesome deeds deserve unwholesome benefits. In other words, when one has done good deeds, one will enjoy happiness and be free from suffering and pain. Without the knowledge of the fact that unwholesome effects are the results of unwholesome deeds, a puthujjana is bound to commit misdeeds. Thereupon he will be unhappy and sorrowful. However he could not understand why he has to suffer but not the others. On the other hand, a sotapan even with a mediocre wisdom has the ability to perceive the right relationship of cause and effect.

Some Heads of Departments confirmed that vipassana meditation is a great help in making important decision in their work. Though it takes time out from his work, he realized that vipassana meditation made his mind lucid and right. He meditates an hour a day without failure. The correct and quick decision is the benefit of clear mind, the outcome of vipassana meditation.

After listening to this sermon "four constituents for a sotapan and six benefits of sotapan" may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation may you all be able to practise with ease and immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana which is free from all sufferings.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## **Five Supporting Factors (Anuggahita Sutta)**

**(8.1.97)**

The Dhamma discourse will be on "Anuggahita Sutta" from Inguttho Pali. Anuggahita = to praise or to support + Sutta = explanation. Vipassana wisdom will be gained when you all practise insight meditation. The most significant thing for you is to support it in order to attain nirvana. Lord Buddha explicated in this Sutta, the five supporting factors for the attainment of nirvana, namely,

- (1) Sila
- (2) Knowledge
- (3) Dhamma Discussion
- (4) Samatha meditation
- (5) Vipassana meditation

Buddha drew a simile of planting a tree and vipassana wisdom which should be supported by these five factors so as not to be destroyed.

**Motto:** If you plant a young tree,  
water and fence it for security.  
To clear rotten old roots and weeds is a sure  
need  
Remove insects and their webs  
So that it can grow best

### **(1) Sila**

When you plant a tree you need to fence and water it. Old rotten roots and weeds must be cleared away, so that it can thrive well. Insects on the leaves and branches must be removed and their webs on the branch, leaves and new shoot must be taken away. With the insects eating the leaves and webs entangled the branches and new leaves, tree will not grow well. After the development of vipassana

wisdom, it is necessary to fence it with sila. If the tree is unfenced, cattle and other animals can trample the tree, similarly if yogi infringed sila, vipassana wisdom will not progress. With no infringement of sila, there will be progress in vipassana wisdom. No dhamma will be gained, if one committed one of the five heinous actions with immediate destiny (anantarika kanma). Monks as well as laities should observe the four types of sila, namely:-

### **Four Types of Sila**

(a) Patimokkha samvara Sila - Morality consisting in Restraint with regard to the Disciplinary Code. Worldlings usually observe five precepts, whereas it is eight or nine precepts for the practising yogi. The monks must observe 227 disciplinary codes. Vipassana wisdom will not develop if even five precepts are not observed.

(b) Indriya samvara Sila - Morality consisting of purity of Restraint of senses. Six sense - doors must be restrained, so as lobha, dosa and moha would not arise when a sensual object comes into contact with the sense surface of eye, if pleasant lobha arises and if unpleasant dosa arises. The same way with sound, smell, taste, touch and thought. If these six - sense doors are uncontrolled and with lobha and dosa, vipassana wisdom may not develop. When the fencing around the tree is not strong enough tree can be destroyed, similarly if sila is not strictly observed there may not be a chance for the development of vipassana wisdom.

(c) Azivapāri suddha Sila - morality consisting of Restraint with regard to livelihood. Monks are forbidden to accept donations related to fortune-telling and medical care. However they are allowed to receive four requisites donated for teaching dhamma scriptures, giving instructions for meditation and how to practise. Worldlings should lead a right livelihood, free from killing, stealing, cheating, etc:- sammā āziva.

(d) Paccaya sannissita Sila - reflection upon using the four requisites. "Alms food is taken not for the enjoyment of pleasure; not to be youthful; not to be strong as a boxer. Nevertheless it is taken to be able, healthy and strong enough to practise dhamma and for the attainment of magga, phala and nirvana without strain and difficulties." A monk gains merit if he reflect thus while partaking a meal.

For the meditators, while residing at a meditation centre, they should ponder, "This place is quiet and conducive for meditation, thereupon I must try my best to practise meditation." While taking your meal you should reflect, "We take these varieties of food not for beautiful body-built nor for the enjoyment and pleasure but for longevity of aggregates of four elements, as long as we live, so as to practise two branches of Buddha's Sāsana and that the former disease may be cured and the new disease may not arise, and the four bodily postures be comfortable."

When the four morality conducts are not breached it is certain that vipassana wisdom will develop. Sila is a fence around the vipassana wisdom.

**Motto:** Sila is likened to the fence around a young tree.

## 2. Knowledge

You gain knowledge by listening to dhamma talks, reading scriptures and so on. Audition of dhamma is likened to watering a tree. If a tree is regularly watered, it grows and thrives, so also after the audition of dhamma talks, there is progress in meditation. Sometimes yogi may find difficulties in meditation and became depressed after a length of time and wanted to go home. If he did not listen to dhamma talks, he is likely to be more depressed. When a tree is not regularly watered, it withers and dies. Similarly without audition of dhamma and going back home is just like a dead tree.

### 3. Discussion

Discussion of dhamma among the meditators is unbeneficial because it causes laxation in contemplation and slackens the progress in dhamma. It is better to discuss daily with the meditation instructor as guided by Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw.

**Motto:** Discussion is likened to clearing old rotten roots.

Old rotten roots and weeds around the tree is to be cleared away, so as it may grow well. Similarly, discussion with the meditation instructor is to clear away doubts and difficulties in practice. Sometimes yogi finds problems in noting or his noting is not in compliance with the instructor's guidance. Sometimes his method of noting may be entirely wrong. At the Paccaya parigghaha Nāna Stage, "rising and falling" are so subtle, that yogi could not find the object for noting. Thereupon he tried to breathe hard or might stop breathing. In vipassana meditation breathing should not be over-done or controlled, as a matter of fact, it must be natural. If you do so, you cannot contemplate long and easily get tired. This is entirely incorrect.

In noting rising and falling, there can be many mistakes. For example, in olden days, at a meditation centre in a district, the meditation instructor taught in-breathing as becoming and out-breathing as dissolution. One day a yogi from that centre came to meditate at the Mahasi meditation centre. After a few days, while the meditation teacher was discussing with a yogi, instead of waiting for his turn, he asked the teacher whether in-breathing was becoming and out-breathing as dissolution. The teacher scolded and stopped him from disturbing. On his turn the teacher enquired who had instructed him to note in such a way and corrected him.

There is both becoming and dissolution in-breathing and also the same in out-breathing. If he did not have the chance to discuss with an instructor, he might not gain dhamma. The instructor has to correct yogi's wrong way of

practice by pointing out that the initial stage of rising is becoming and the end of it is dissolution. Thus discussion is compared to the clearing of old rotten roots and weeds around the tree. Just as the tree, thrives well, so also vipassana wisdom develops in strength.

#### 4. **Samatha Meditation**

Insects may destroy the tree, likewise lobha, dosa and moha obstruct the progress of vipassana wisdom.

**Motto:** Samatha is likened to removing the insects.

#### **Four Ways of Protection**

Samatha meditation is dhamma to protect our body. In a state, chief of state such as president, prime minister and ministers have soldiers, police and body guard for their security as they are indispensable in building the state. Similarly our body should be protected from internal and external enemies, for we gain dhamma i.e. magga, phala and nirvana, by contemplating our body. So it is valuable to us. If we do not contemplate or meditate, our body just like a banana trunk, is of no use for us. There are four ways of protecting our body.

- (a) **Buddhanussati** meditation - reflecting upon the attributes of Buddha
- (b) **Metta** - meditation - loving-kindness meditation
- (c) **A-subha** meditation - meditation of impurities of body
- (d) **Maranāsatī** meditation - reflection of death

#### (a) **Buddhānussati** meditation

External enemies may destroy us only for this very life, however the internal enemies endanger us for several existences and can even send us to apāya. For that reason we must protect ourselves from the internal enemies rather than the external one, so as to gain vipassana wisdom and attain magga phala and nirvana. This explanation is in compliance with what Buddha had preached.

Buddhānussati meditation is to reflect upon the attributes of Buddha. The listeners of dhamma talk and the meditators already have the knowledge of reflecting the Lord's attributes saying "Arahan", "Arahan" or "Buddha", "Buddha", or 'Sammāsam Buddha' "SammāsamBuddha", repeatedly, are in a way contemplation of Buddha's attributes. Thus you can dispel moha (delusion) which makes you to perceive wrong as right. Moha is the worst of all nivaranas (hindrances) for it forbids kusala (wholesome) deeds.

On seeing something, being unable to see the true nature, you might develop attachment to the object of sight if it is pleasant. If it is unpleasant dosa arises. On hearing a sound you get angry if it is unpleasant, thereby you develop dosa; if pleasant you develop lobha. Similarly there arises lobha or dosa whenever there is contact of sensual object with the sense-surfaces of eyes, nose, tongue, body and mind. These sight, sound, odour, savour, touch and thought are perceived as wholesome due to moha, although they are sufferings in reality. In other words, these sight, sound, etc: are impermanent or in flux and harass us all the time.

Tanhā (craving) a follower of moha makes you to develop attachment to these sight, sound, odour, etc: Thereupon you could never be emancipated from the rounds of samsara. Buddha comprehended all truth, therefore by reflecting His attributes you may be able to see the truth. Contemplation of Buddhānussati meditation is the same as protecting your body.

**Motto:** Ignorance is to be eliminated by contemplation of Buddha's attributes.

#### (b) Metta Meditation

According to the stage of insight, a yogi while meditating may get angry. Yogi sometimes reports that she was unsatisfactory and angry for nothing. The reason is that she is at the stage of Sammasana Nāna. This anger is

regarded as lucidity of insight and sign of progress in dhamma, though yogi may not understand it. She may think that it is a lapse in dhamma. Do not reflect and dwell upon anger as it can obstruct vipassana wisdom. Anger is likened to insects which destroy the young tree. It must be expelled by samatha meditation.

**Motto:** Dosa is to be eradicated by radiating loving-kindness.

There are two methods of radiating loving-kindness (i) radiating for the development of merit and perfection, (ii) radiating for the attainment of jhāna absorption. To radiate for the development of merit is not so difficult as the listeners of dhamma could do it perfectly.

Mental loving-kindness is to radiate loving-kindness mentally for the people you come across or contact with.

Verbal loving-kindness - Experienced yogi tell new meditators, with loving-kindness, how to sit, when to walk, how to walk with down cast eyes, where to walk and not to walk, etc., so as they may be happy at the meditation centre. If they are unlikely to listen to your helping words you might get angry and they might also be annoyed. Thereupon it is better not to say anything, just leave it to themselves and be indifferent or send them to the persons concerned.

Physical loving-kindness is to radiate loving-kindness by action and behaviour which will make others happy. If young yogi do not accept your help, do not be disturbed and show unwholesome manners, since it can indirectly or directly effect both.

For the development of jhana absorption by radiating loving-kindness it must be done methodically. The proximate enemy of loving-kindness is lobha, whereas distant enemy is dosa and soka (worries and anxieties). While radiating loving-kindness to a person, you may develop attachment to him or her and worry about his or her health i.e. soka.

One who is meditating samatha bhāvana for the attainment of jhāna absorption should endeavour to be free from these enemies i.e. lobha and dosa. Soka is treated as based upon dosa.

**Motto:** Opposite sex and dead person,  
 Enemies and indifferent person  
 One you loved most,  
 Are the five not to be radiated loving-kindness  
 foremost

### **How and whom to radiate loving kindness**

To whom you should not radiate loving-kindness first and foremost are:- dead persons, opposite sex, most loved ones, indifferent persons and enemies. As you all know, it is unnecessary to radiate loving-kindness to dead person since they could not receive it. It is also not to radiate to opposite sex as raga can arise. If a man radiate loving-kindness to a particular woman, gradually he may develop fondness and love (rāga) for her. The same with a woman radiating loving-kindness to a particular man. When you radiate loving-kindness to the most beloved ones, you may develop worries and anxieties (dosa). You ponder "Are they doing well? Is anything wrong with them?" and so on, instead of radiating loving-kindness. Worries and anxieties are enemy of loving-kindness.

When you radiate loving-kindness to those whom you do not love nor hate i.e. you are indifferent to them, the development of loving-kindness will be slow. Radiation of loving-kindness for your enemies may make you angry upon seeing his face in your mental vision. Therefore it is not to radiate these five persons first and foremost.

To whom should you radiate loving-kindness first? Of course, it is you and yourself as Buddha had pointed out, you yourself is the one you loved most. So begin to radiate loving-kindness to yourself first. "May I be free from harm. May I be free from mental suffering. May I be free from

physical suffering. Physically and mentally at ease, May I be able to bear the burden of life happily". By radiating loving-kindness to yourself thus, loving-kindness for others too is developed to certain extent. When you gain jhāna absorption radiate loving-kindness to persons whom you should love and who are indifferent to you, neither fond of nor hate. Your enemy should be the last to receive your loving-kindness.

Your already developed jhāna absorption could be destroyed if you cannot radiate loving-kindness in this order. There-upon you change to persons whom you should love and then to whom you are indifferent. If not possible, then shift to radiating loving-kindness to yourself and develop jhāna absorption. In fact to develop jhāna absorption, it is to radiate loving-kindness to yourself, the most loved one. Your loving-kindness is strong when you have well developed jhāna absorption, thence you can radiate loving-kindness to any person. Let us try to radiate loving-kindness.

"May I be free from danger, from mental suffering, from physical suffering and be able to bear the burden of life with physical and mental ease."

You can do so in the same way for those to whom you should love, for those to whom you are indifferent and for your enemies.

There is another way of radiating loving-kindness i.e. to those living in ten direction. Listeners of dhamma have a good knowledge of it. So let us try to radiate for those living in ten directions together, since there is no time to radiate for beings in each directions.

"May all being in the ten directions be free from all danger. May they be free from mental suffering. May they be free from physical suffering. Physically and mentally at ease, may they be able to bear the burden of life happily."

### (c) **A-subha meditation**

When dosa arises it is to be annihilated by loving-kindness meditation, whereas when lobha arises it is to be

eradicated by contemplation of impurities of body (a-subha). It is one of the guarding dhammas of body. If you can perceive yourself as a-subha, then you also can see otherselves in the same manner.

**Motto:** Lobha must be expelled by contemplating the impurities of body.

There are two ways of contemplating impurities of body (a-subha). First one is to contemplate the impurities of a corpse; second is to contemplate the impurities of a living body. Contemplation of a-subha on a corpse is no more practised now a-days as the corpses are usually sent to a mortuary. How to contemplate the impurities of a living body is quite clear and easy. First you contemplate your body as a-subha. Whatever excretes from your eyes, nose, mouth and body are impurities. When you get up in the morning you wash your face in order to clean the impurities from eyes, nose and mouth. The whole day you wipe away sweat from the body.

If you see your body as filthy and loathsome, you do not attach to it and no lobha arises. When there is attachment to yourself, you seek various ways and means for your comfort with lobha. Moreover you become attached to otherselves and work with lobha for their happiness and success. If it is a lawful means it is alright; if not you have to face a lot of problems. Therefore, if you can perceive your body as a-subha, lobha is expelled simultaneously.

**(d) Maranāsati meditation**

Self exaltation like "I'm the best", "I'm the most successful one", "I'm the most well-to-do", "If they can do, I could do too", should be dispelled by recollection of death—maranā sati meditation. Seek a secluded place and reflect thus, "Death will come to me", "death will come to me." And also by contemplating "I'll be quite happy if I could live for a day; for a night; for half a day; for the

duration of a meal; for the duration of half a meal; for the duration of four or five intakes of food; for the duration of one intake of food, for the duration from an inhalation to an exhalation.

**Motto:** Māna must be annihilated by recollection of death.

When you are aware that you may die today or tomorrow, conceit and pride will be discarded. It is inevitable, you will never gain dhamma with conceit and pride in your mind. There are many instances to cite. As insects destroy a young tree, so also lobha, dosa, moha and māna (conceit and pride) obstruct the development of vipassana wisdom. That is the reason why these nivaranas (hindrances) must be annihilated by four dhammas protecting the body namely samatha meditation.

## 5. Vipassana Meditation

Supporting vipassana wisdom by vipassana meditation is analogous to removing webs from the tips of a young tree.

**Motto:** Vipassana meditation is similar to removal of webs.

When sensual objects likened to the webs which entangled the tips of a young tree, come into contact with the sense-surface of eye, ear, nose, mouth, body and consciousness, there develops āramanānussaya (inherent tendency for defilements due to sensual objects). In other words, there develops latent lobha, dosa and moha. When it is a pleasant sensation lobha arises, if it is an unpleasant sensation dosa arises, especially if yogi fails to note. Thereupon no gain of dhamma.

By dint of strong concentration and mature vipassana wisdom, these pleasant or unpleasant sensations arises and

disappear simultaneously when yogi contemplate them. For example, on hearing a sound, it is perceived just as a mere sound and no tendency for defilements develops. Upon noting "hearing" "hearing", each syllable will disappear, so also with smelling and eating, when yogi notes "smelling", "smelling", the odour will disappear, on noting "eating", "eating" yogi will perceive the dissolution of each eating action. By noting thus defilements are dispelled just like removing the webs entangled at the tips of a young tree.

However, attachment to savour is not easily expelled by noting. There are many instances of suffering in apāya, due to the craving for savour. A yogi reported that she could practise general noting at home, after meditating at the centre. Nevertheless she did not note when the food was tasty; she noted if the food was not to her taste and was not aware of the taste. Did she mean that she enjoyed the taste when it was delicious? In that case, she was eating with lobha tanhā, instead of contemplating "eating" "eating". It is to note while eating whether it is tasty or not, just like clearing the webs entangle at the tips of a young tree.

Similarly, it is important to note bodily impression and mental thought whether they are pleasant or unpleasant. Thus contemplation of sensual feelings and thoughts are analogous to removal of webs. When the tree is free from the entanglement of webs, it grows well, similarly when there is no inherent tendency for defilements, vipassana wisdom is strengthened. Thereupon-yogi attains magga, phala and nirvana. Let us conclude the dhamma talk by reciting.

"If you plant a young tree,  
Water and fence it for security  
Clear rotten old roots and weeds  
It is a sure need  
Remove insects and their webs  
So that it can grow best."

After listening to this dhamma discourse on "Five Supporting Factors" may you all be able to practise in compliance to the Buddha's teaching. With diligent contemplation may you all immediately realize your most aspired nirvana, which is free from all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## **The Five Conducive Conditions (Five Sappāya Dhamma) (15.9.93)**

The Atthakatha teachers have explained fully that practising yogi will attain dhamma provided that they have conditions which are conducive for meditation practice. Buddha has pointed out the five conducive conditions. (Sappāya dhamma). They are:

- (1) Accommodation
- (2) Climate
- (3) Food
- (4) Company
- (5) Audition of dhamma

These five conducive conditions are the forceful supporting factors for the practising yogi to attain dhamma. They will gain dhamma according to their perfections. Therefore yogi should endeavour to practise dhamma when they have a chance to enjoy these conducive conditions.

### **(1) Accommodation**

Accommodation is a powerful supporting factor for a practising yogi. When yogi has to practise in an unsuitable accommodation such as a place with a leaking roof and unsafe, he would be unhappy, anxious and disheartened. Therefore concentration cannot be well developed and it is difficult to attain magga and phala nāna. If you are fortunate enough to meditate in a conducive condition, ponder upon it thus, "must practise diligently, must practise diligently." Merit is gained by reflecting thus, in turn these merits can also be supporting factors for meditations.

### **(2) Climate**

Buddha has remarked, "Climate also is another powerful supporting factor for the attainment of dhamma." When you enjoy an equable climate remind yourself not to forget

and reflect thus, "must try to practise to my utmost." On the other-hand when the climate is not equable it becomes a disturbing factor for the practising yogi. In the extreme weather yogi is uneasy and miserable and gain no dhamma. Hence, there is no concentration and no insight wisdom. It is important to choose a place with suitable climate or practising dhamma.

Suppose you have good friends and meditation instructors in Kalaw and Taunggyi, nevertheless to practise meditation in those places in winter is unthinkable. As it is too cold there, some of the meditation centers have to be closed in winter time. So also to meditate in places like Mandalay and Pakhokku, with high temperature during Summer, is not conducive for the attainment of dhamma. So, you see, an equable climate is a forceful supporting factor for meditation practise. So with delight reflect upon the equable climate in which you are meditating, "must practise earnestly, must practise earnestly".

### (3) Food

Buddha said that food is also an important supporting factor in meditation practice. When you are provided with agreeable food, be thankful and reflect, "practise diligently; practise diligently". On the other hand when food is not agreeable yogi is dissatisfied, thence he could not concentrate well enough to develop wisdom. Therefore he is far from magga and phala. There are many instances of even would-be-arahants who could not cultivate dhamma because of disagreeable food.

Once, (60) monks, after receiving The Buddha's instruction on meditation, at Zetavan Monastery, Savatthi, went to a village called Mātikā, at the foot of a hill, in search of a place for meditation. The mother of headman of that village was also known as Mātikamāta. She saw the (60) monks entered the village stepping mindfully one by one in a line. She was so pleased and became pious that she sent a man to fetch the monks to her house. On their arrival

she offered alms and enquired respectfully about their purpose. Upon hearing that they were going to a place suitable for meditation practice, she at once knew that the monks had no particular place in mind.

She at once requested the monks, "Please, your reverences, reside at my monastery. By offering alms to you and by listening to dhamma and by observing precepts, I would gain a lot of merits." The monks kept silent. Silence means consent. All of them stayed in her monastery and although they ardently practised, no dhamma was gained. The learned elder monks suggested "It is improper to slack in practice, after all, you've received the instructions on meditation practice from the most venerable Lord. You all should go to the jungle and each one takes a place under a tree or a bush and practise separately. If there is any emergency you'll hear the bell."

One day Mātikamāta came to the monastery with food, medicine and other requisites which the monks might need. She found no one in the monastery and was very unhappy, thinking that the monks had gone to another place. Those with some knowledge about the regulation of monasteries, comforted her by suggesting to strike the bell. On hearing the bell, the monks came into the monastery one by one from their respective meditating place. Thereupon she respectfully asked, "Your reverences, is there anything wrong? When you came to this village you all were together, however now each of you came from different places."

The monks replied that in order to practise dhamma they separately stayed at different places and that there was nothing wrong. Mātikamāta, on hearing that, was very pleased and interestingly asked, "What is this dhamma for the monks? Is it only for the monks? Could I practise that dhamma?" After explaining that it was just the name and that everybody could practise that dhamma, the monks instructed her how to reflect upon the 32 constituents of body and how to ponder upon impermanence i.e. decay and death.

She happily went home and contemplated upon arising and disappearance of rupa and nāma and became an anāgam in a short time. Not an ordinary anāgam, but one endowed with special power. When she reflected upon the condition of the monks, she found that they had not even developed concentration. Again it dawned upon her it was not due to the accommodation, not the weather, not company but food was the main cause. Thereupon she arranged varieties of food which would be suitable for each monk and offered to them when they came to her house for alms. The monks being satisfied with agreeable food attained arahatship in a few days. So it is evident that if food is not suitable, even those who would attain arahatship could not do so. It is a fact that dhamma is gained when yogi have agreeable food.

At the end of the lent, after bidding farewell to Mātikamāta, the 60 monks went back to the Blessed One. The Lord greeted them by enquiring about their conditions during the lent. The monks related how they became arahats. "Oh, the Blessed One, Mātikamāta has taken good care of us especially with regard to food. She provided us with food which was agreeable to each one of us, as if she could read our mind. That is the reason why we realized dhamma." Likewise you all should be thankful and reflect upon the agreeable food, thus, "I must practise, I must practise."

#### (4) Company

When you have an agreeable yogi who is not talkative, as your room-mate, you surely will be happy, can concentrate well and gain dhamma soon. "Company is a forceful support for a practising yogi" said Buddha. Be careful not to be a nuisance to others and disturb their practice, otherwise you would be a danger to dhamma. Always bear in mind, "Other yogi's meditation practice must not be slackened because of me. I must take care. Failure of one noting may cause them to miss ariya magga in other words, ariya magga is be-headed". Thus reflecting you gain merit.

When you meditate in a group, it is very important

that you do not become a disturbing factor. You should not talk, discuss not even about dhamma. Some yogi would like to tell their friends in practice, about their special experience in dhamma. That also must be avoided and controlled. To note is the main duty of a yogi, hence it is better not to talk while practising in a meditation centre. Cultivate loving-kindness and reflect as mentioned above. Thereupon, the other yogis will have faith and respect for you.

It is a pleasant sight to see a yogi ardently noting every movement of actions in detail i.e. while he is walking, while he is bending or stretching, sitting, eating, etc.:. It is just like a cool effect in your eyes when a special eye drop is put in them or when a special medication is made around your eyes. Let the closely noting yogi have the preference and pray that they may be able to practise peacefully and happily. That is how an agreeable company is a forceful support to another one in practice.

#### **(5) Audition of Dhamma**

To hear dhamma is another powerful supporting factor. When it suits you or agrees with what you have experienced in your practice, you are elated, thence there is progress in dhamma. Sometimes you may also think that the dhamma is delivered especially for you because it coincides with what you have comprehended. Yogi, you all have listened to these dhamma for years, are you not tired of them. (No, your reverence, it is an enhancement to our practice.) Vipassana Samāditthi (right view on vipassana) is just like a mango sapling. The sapling will die when it is not regularly watered. In the same manner, a yogi will encounter difficulties in meditation practice, then disheartened and wants to go home, if he does not listen to dhamma quite often. That means just like the dying mango sapling. Do you want to die? (No, your reverence.)

Frequent hearing of dhamma develops knowledge whereupon contemplation will be successful. You learn to note in detail and there will be progress in your practice.

The dhamma discourses are delivered in order to explain the significant points about vipassana contemplation and also to heighten the concentration. In practising vipassana meditation, to develop concentration comes first, progress in dhamma is second. Be mindful and attentive then only dhamma will be gained.

Out of 24 hours in a day, if there are only 7 sittings for noting and the rest of the day is gone by without any noting, how could there be progress in meditation? You must, therefore, be mindful in all action and movement, i.e. walking, standing, sitting, lying down, eating, sleeping, etc.:. At first you will find it not so easy, however, with more and more practice you will be successful. Hence concentration develops and you are mindful in almost all actions and movements. You will also realize that to practise all by yourself, not in a group is very peaceful and you can note every action in detail. Concentration becomes strong so meditation progress.

How to note the action in detail? It is not to note the form or the body i.e. legs, arms, etc., but the nature of movement only, that means abstract reality (paramattha). When you lie down, note the movement of lying down—dropping down sideways gradually. When you stand up note the rising movement, when you sit down note the gradual dropping movement; note the pushing movement in stretching and the drawing movement in bending. Note the minute detail of every movement. When you comprehend the nature of these movements you are delighted, however could not express it. In other words, you gain dhamma when you comprehend the nature. When you sit down your body gradually drop and you also notice the heaviness in that dropping down movement. In standing up too, you will notice it is rising up slowly and there is buoyancy in that movement.

**Motto:** The becoming and dissolution can be apparent when only the nature is comprehended.

When the nature is not lucidly comprehended, but just a guess work, then there would be no concentration. If you note the movement closely and attentively you will comprehend buoyancy or heaviness, pushing or drawing, heat or cold. The main purpose of meditation is to gain dhamma first, progress afterwards only.

In this life, dhamma is the one which can bring merits by eliminating demerits. Dhamma is profound and incomprehensive. Dhamma is found only in the presence of Buddha's sasana. It takes aeons of age for a Buddha to be enlightened, hence dhamma is hard to gain or to comprehend. In fact, it is only in the presence of Buddha's sasana that we can gain dhamma and escape from the sufferings of apāya. Since we cannot gain dhamma in the absence of Buddha's sasana it is inevitable to undergo the sufferings of the lower world.

Yogi, striving hard to note each stage of movement in detail will be aware of buoyancy or lightness (e.g. in standing up) i.e. heat element (tego dhātu) and motion element (vayo dhātu). He will be also aware of heaviness (e.g. in sitting down i.e. extension element (pathavi dhātu) and cohesion element (āpo dhātu) Whereupon he gains dhamma and is pleased and gain merits. His mind wanders no more, and the result is strong concentration and progress in contemplation too. When concentration is well developed, becoming and dissolution are apparent to the yogi. At the higher stage of Udayabbaya Nāna yogi comprehends the becoming and dissolution lucidly. The process is arising and instant disappearing, arising and instant disappearing. Arising is becoming, disappearing is dissolution. Yogi now perceives the nature of becoming and dissolution prominently in accordance with the Motto: "When nature is clearly comprehended, then becoming and dissolution become apparent".

As he wants to apprehend more distinctly he works earnestly for a strong and mature concentration. He is now very mindful and attentive. At first there may be some difficulties, nevertheless his concentration is strengthened and

the becoming and dissolution are very lucidly perceived and finally he gained dhamma. "Suppose a person may live his full life-span, may be more than a hundred years, however he has not perceived the nature of becoming and dissolution. If he has practise too, it may not be in the right way. Another one may live just for a day but he has acquired the knowledge of the nature of becoming and dissolution, that means he has gained dhamma. The latter one is more noble than the first person and one day he certainly will realize nirvana." Thus said Buddha.

How to contemplate to comprehend becoming and dissolution? Be mindful and attentive. Then you will apprehend buoyancy or heaviness; pushing or drawing heat or cold in the movement of your actions. In other words you begin to perceive the abstract reality (paramattha) that means dhamma is not far off. You see no more of massive body i.e. the disappearing of leg or arms as a whole, but just the nature of phenomena i.e. becoming and dissolution (Udayavaya).

**Motto:** The nature of phenomena will certainly be comprehended by instant noting of the becoming or arising.

In walking practice, fix your mind on the movement of the foot, not the form and note "left foot forward," "right foot forward". Note in the same manner when you stand or sit. In sitting you will find your body dropping down gradually then note that dropping movement and heaviness. When you step forward note the lightness or buoyancy and note the heaviness when you put down the foot. You will be also aware of pushing-drawing movement when you stretch or bend. Thence you comprehend the abstract reality (paramattha).

While noting buoyancy or heaviness stage by stage in forward stepping movement or putting down movement, you will also notice that there is interval in between each stage

and that it is not a continuous process. If one stage is becoming the next one arises only after the first one disappears. Thereupon you comprehend becoming and dissolution distinctly through your own experience. Contemplate mindfully till concentration is developed. The controlling power of concentration (samādhindriya) will be strengthened if the controlling power of mindfulness (satindriya) or attention is well and strong.

### **The five benefits**

Buddha has pointed out the five benefits of listening to dhamma as follows:-

- (1) You will hear what you have not heard before
- (2) Dhamma becomes lucid and plain
- (3) Doubts are overcome. You may doubt whether you'll gain dhamma. This can be overcome by listening to dhamma.
- (4) Wrong views are eliminated
- (5) Mind is clear.

Some yogi used to tell the meditation instructor that she has developed concentration to a certain extent and yet while noting, her mind become harsh and wild, and intend to grumble and abuse. Such state of mind has never before happened to her. The instructor should explain to her that it was due to the past circumstances and it could happen too. When the harsh mind is pacified and mild, yogi better continues to note as before. It may not increase because vipassana is the most effective weapon. You will understand why such state of mind occurs if you listen to dhamma. By listening to dhamma you will find that your doubts are cleared. If there are any disturbances or anxieties, listen to dhamma talk, especially delivered by a good preacher. Thence disturbances and anxieties will be dispelled and your mind becomes calm and clear.

Here is an instance of how wrong view was overcome by listening to dhamma. Once Buddha was residing at the Zetavan Monastery, a rich man Anathapin, as usual, prepared

grand alms offering and let it under his daughters' management. Some of them were sotapanna and the others were anāgam as the benefit of hearing dhamma. He had a son, Kāla, who was not pious and not respectful to Buddha. The father was ashamed of his son and would be very unhappy if Kāla, the son of a pious man like him, should be reborn in apāya. One day he told Kāla that he would be rewarded 100 dollars if he went to Buddha, observed precepts and listened to dhamma.

In those days people stayed overnight at the monastery after listening to dhamma and came home in the morning. Kāla went to the Zetavan Monastery, slept somewhere instead of observing precepts and listening to dhamma. The next morning the rich man prepared a delicious breakfast and waited for his son. Kāla came home, sat at the breakfast table, however would not touch the food unless he was rewarded first. The father knew at once that this son had not listened to dhamma. Will a person who has listened to dhamma be greedy like him? Again the rich man told his son that he would be rewarded 1000 dollars if he could recite the dhamma after listening to it.

Kāla went to the monastery and listened to the dhamma. When he was about to remember the dhamma, Buddha changed to another topic. Thereupon Kāla had to be more attentive in listening to dhamma. Buddha also included instructions on how to contemplate and note, in the sermon. Kāla, finally, become a sotapanna after gaining dhamma. The next morning when Buddha came to the rich man's house Kāla followed Buddha in more serene manner. At the same time, he was hoping that his father would not give the money in the presence of the Lord, and also not to mention about it. Nevertheless the rich man had 1000 dollars on the table and told Kāla to take it. Kāla was reluctant and showed a shameful manner. The father was surprised and told Buddha all about the rewards he had promised to his son. Thence Buddha explained that now Kāla was a sotapanna, not an ordinary person. This, infact, is the good benefit of listening to dhamma.

The sublime bliss and joy of a Sotapanna surpasses not only the sensual pleasure of King of all Universe (King Cakkyavade) but also that of King of Devas and King of Brahmas. When the influence and effect of merits cease or come to an end, a one-time Brahma might have to undergo sufferings and miseries of the lower world.

**Motto:** Shining, Shining in the Brahma World.  
Grunting, Grunting in the sty of pigs.

The above narration of Kāla illustrates how Kāla after becoming a Sotapanna was liberated from apāya as the benefit of listening to dhamma.

After listening to this sermon on the "5 Conducive Conditions" may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all realize your most desirous Nirvana which is free from all sufferings, by practising with ease and lightning wisdom.

Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu

May all beings in 10 directions be free from all kinds of danger.

May they be free from physical and mental Sufferings. May they be able to bear the burden of life with physical and mental happiness.

Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu

## The Four Supreme Exertions (10.8.95)

In vipassana meditation exertion is an essential factor. How much do you need to exert? For a sincere meditator, it is to exert until he reaches his ultimate goal that is to be free from apaya. In other words to become a sotapan. In the Padhana Sutta, Lord Buddha had preached the way and method of exertion to attain sotapanna, namely the four supreme exertions. You need to strive hard in order to be a sotapan in this very life. In a way it is to practise these four supreme exertions while engaged in vipassana meditation. The four supreme exertions are...

1. To exert to prevent those demerits or unwholesome deeds which have not yet happened.
2. To exert to dispel those demerits or unwholesome deeds which had already happened.
3. To exert to develop those merits or wholesome deeds which have not yet developed
4. To exert to propagate those merits or wholesome deeds which already developed

Since the listeners of this sermon are well versed in these four supreme exertions, it is required for them to put them into practice.

### **To Prevent the Demerits**

**Motto:** Exert to prevent the demerits which have not yet happened, so that they will not be apparent.

You have not committed any wrong deeds, however you see and know that the other person committed stealing, killing and other misdeeds.

If there is an epidemic of contagious disease such as cholera, dysentery and small-pox, people take precaution to prevent them. Similarly when you see and know the other person commit misdeeds, you must exert and prevent your-

self from doing so. If you practise vipassana meditation, demerits will not happen.

### **To Discard the Demerits**

**Motto:** Exert to discard immediately the already committed demerits.

### **Three types of unwholesome deeds.**

If a person fails to observe the precepts in one way or the other, he is bound to commit physical and verbal unwholesome deeds. There also occurs repeated desire in your mind when your wishes are not fulfilled, in a way that is developing lobha. You will also be full of worries and anxieties, when something went wrong, that is anger. You might want to use force or to accuse and blame someone. However these desires are not overtly manifested as physical action and verbal expression. The practising yogi may have such experience, nevertheless they can dispel them by noting as soon as they arise. There is another type of unwholesome disposition which has developed and accumulated by the continuous indulgence of them all along the past existences. (anusaya akusala).

So there are three types of unwholesome deeds, one is the physical and verbal unwholesome deeds, second is the repeated desire in the mind and third is the latent unwholesome disposition. The sotapanna magga and phala could be attained if these types of already developed unwholesome deeds are eliminated. It is, therefore, of vital importance to dispel them to become a sotapan.

### **The poisonous tree**

The Athakatha masters cited an analogy of these three types of already developed unwholesome deeds, and a poisonous tree. In the Buddha's time, there were poisonous trees in the forest. People were afflicted with disease, if they happened to breathe the poisonous air. For that reason, it was important to destroy the tree. It is not only to cut down the tree tops, branches and the trunk, but also to dig

out the roots altogether. If not the poisonous tree will grow again when there is enough water and air and is dangerous to the people. The physical and verbal demerits are likened to the tree tops and branches, whereas the trunk is to the unwholesome desire. You can see the tree tops and the branches from a distance distinctly. In the same way, the physical and verbal misdeeds such as killing, stealing, telling lies and sexual misconducts committed by a certain person can be noticed by the other people easily. The person himself knew it too.

A tree trunk could not be judged from a distance, when you come near it, then only you could see how big is the tree-trunk. Similarly the unwholesome desires in one's mind could not be seen or known to others. The person himself knows it very well when he contemplates. The latent unwholesome disposition is like the roots of a poisonous tree. The root could not be seen even if you were standing on them, for they are covered with earth and buried in the ground. It could be seen only when the earth is removed or they were dug out of the ground. In the same way, the unwholesome latent disposition could not be seen easily. If the roots are not totally destroyed, the tree can grow again at any time when there is sufficient water and air. So also if the unwholesome latent-disposition is not entirely eliminated by vipassana meditation, it could arise time and again, and cause many troubles. The Satipatthana or vipassana meditation is, therefore, the root-destroying dhamma.

Just cutting the tree tops, branches and the trunk is not enough to kill the poisonous-tree. Likewise observation of sila which discards physical and verbal unwholesome deeds, the practice of samatha meditation which dispels the unwholesome desire are not reliable to save one from apaya. Magga and phala will be attained only when the latent defilements are eliminated by the vipassana meditation. If the vipassana meditation is not practised, one could be reborn in apaya.

### **To Develop the Merits**

**Motto:** To exert to develop merits which are not yet developed.

There might be a few Buddhists who have not yet built monasteries, bridges, or offered robes, alms-food medicine, etc;. If one is unable to build monasteries, bridges, etc;, all by himself, he can share with others. This is how to develop the merits which you have not yet developed. There are quite a number who have not yet practised the vipassana meditation. They should strive to practise it. People should exert to foster the already developed merits. How? Many have offered waso and kathina robes in the past, even then they offer them this year. They are also thinking of offering waso and kathina robes in the coming years. Many have offered alms-food before, nevertheless they offer alms-food again and again. Since childhood many offered flowers, water, light, alms-food throughout their life. That is propagating the already developed meritorious deeds. If you develop the four supreme exertions according to the Buddha's advice, nirvana will be undoubtedly gained.

### **To Propagate the Merits**

**Motto:** To exert to propagate merits which are already performed.

To eliminate the already committed unwholesome deeds is the most essential factor in these four supreme exertions. These unwholesome deeds fall into three parts: (1) physical action and verbal expression (2) unmanifested desires and (3) the latent disposition. The unwholesome physical actions and verbal expression are to be expelled by observing sila, such as abstaining from life taking, stealing, sexual misconduct, telling lies, taking intoxicated drinks. A man of moral conduct will never commit these unwholesome deeds as sila prevents him from doing so.

**Motto:** Physical and verbal demerits are expelled by sila.

The physical actions and verbal expressions are likened to the tree-tops and branches. Therefore sila is regarded as the dhamma which cuts the tree tops and the branches. The unmanifested desires in the conscious mind due to the unfulfilled wishes are likened to the tree-trunk. This is to be expelled by samatha meditation. When the Buddha's attributes are reflected upon repeatedly, concentration developed. Whereupon the unmanifested desires are eliminated and there arises tranquility in the conscious mind. Thus the unwholesome deeds are discarded.

**Motto:** Unwholesome deeds developed in the conscious mind is to be expelled by samatha meditation.

Saying prayers, offering flower, water light, etc., are counted as samatha practice. By doing so the unwholesome desires are controlled and calmed down for the time being. Samatha meditation therefore, is the dhamma which cuts the tree-trunk.

Those unwholesome deeds accumulated during the innumerable past existences and have developed as latent disposition is to be dispelled by vipasana meditation.

**Motto:** Unwholesome latent disposition is to be expelled by wisdom.

These latent disposition will be eliminated only when they are noted by vipassana meditation. If they are left unnoted, they will not be discarded. Magga wisdom is the dhamma which can eliminate the latent disposition. Furthermore magga and phala can be attained by vipassana meditation only. Hence vipassana meditation practice, in a way, eradicates the unwholesome deeds. The poisonous tree can grow again if the roots are not totally destroyed, so also the unwholesome latent disposition can foster if vipassana meditation is not practised. Thus vipassana meditation is the dhamma which destroys the roots. In other words the

practice of Satipathan meditation cuts the roots.

Undoubtedly the poisonous tree will grow again when there is adequate water and air although the tops and branches and the trunk are cut down. Similarly by observing sila and practising samatha meditation, but not vipassana meditation (the root cutting dhamma), one is not certain to be saved from apaya. When the tree roots are entirely destroyed, the branches and the tree trunk will die and they are only useful as fuel. It is, therefore, evident that the highest dhamma is the vipassana meditation, the root cutting dhamma and the most dependable one. Everyone wants to have the best of best. You all now have the best of everything by practising vipassana meditation. However it is important to be under the right guidance.

Out of the three tasks (cutting the tree tops and branches, cutting the trunk and destroying the roots) which is the most difficult task? Of course, to destroy the roots is the heaviest one. A tree has numerous roots. How many roots do we have? Ten roots which have developed from the past existences could not be easily destroyed, unless it is done in the correct way.

### **Root-cutting Dhamma**

According to the Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw's guidance, there are three ways of practising vipassana meditation, namely (a) sitting practice, (b) walking practice and (c) general noting practice. To contemplate the sitting practice, choose a secluded place, take a posture suitable for a long sitting. Straighten your back, hold up your head, close your eyes and fix your mind on the abdomen. Inhalation will make the abdomen to rise, then note "rising", "rising". The abdomen falls, due to exhalation, then note "falling", "falling". Note "rising" from the beginning to the end of its appearance, without letting the mind to wander off. The form of the body such as legs, hands, head are not to be noted as they are only conventional reality (pannatta). Are the hands, legs, and head pannatta or paramattha? (They

are pannatta.) In vipassana meditation, it is to note only the ultimate reality (paramattha) but not pannatta.

**Motto:** Ignore the conventional terms but observe the ultimate reality.

The abdomen becomes tense and full and rises up; this process is paramattha. Is the "rising" pannatta or paramattha? It is paramattha. Again it moves and falls gradually. This process is the nature of paramattha. Is the "falling" pannatta or paramattha? It is paramattha. If the noting is superficial all these processes will not be distinct to the meditator. Concentration will develop only when noting is objective and mindful. The question and answer method of preaching was practised by the Lord to ascertain that the dhamma is perfectly and correctly comprehended by the listeners.

Due to the element of motion the abdomen becomes tense and full, this is known as "rising", then it moves and falls down, it is "falling". Note the process of rising and falling presently and precisely. If the mind is not stable by noting two sections, "rising", "falling", then note three sections as "rising", "falling" and "touching". Ignore the form of the body as much as possible and try to note the "heat" or the "hardness" caused by the touching of the buttocks with the floor. "Hardness" is the element of existence and the heat sensation is the element of heat. If the noting of three sections can control the mind, keep on noting "rising", "falling", "touching". However if mind still wanders, note four sections, "rising", "falling", "sitting", "touching". Again do not note the form of the body. Nevertheless note the nature of stiffness of the body caused by the intention to sit, as "sitting" "sitting".

To perceive the ultimate reality and to ignore the conventional reality is the most essential factor in vipassana meditation. Try and note the present happening as precisely as possible and keep pace with the process of "rising" and "falling". In vipassana meditation to note paramattha and to

be precise on the present happening are the two important factors. Some yogi with some knowledge of dhamma said that they would like to practise the "genuine" vipassana. However, when asked they could not explain what is the "genuine" vipassana. In vipassana meditation, the main theme is to note paramattha and to leave the pannatta alone. Moreover it is essential to note objectively whatever is happening presently; in other words to let your mind dwell on the present happening, the vital factor in vipassana meditation.

## 6. Walking Practice

There are four ways of noting in the walking practice

1. One noting of each step, such as "left foot forward", "right foot forward".
2. Two notings of each movement, such as "lifting", "dropping"
3. Three notings, such as "lifting", "moving", "dropping".
4. Six notings, such as "raising", "lifting", "moving", "dropping", "touching", "pressing".

The three notings is the most practised way of noting in the walking practice. When the foot is lifted, note attentively to perceive the lightness in the gradual upward movement. When the foot is moving forward, note objectively the phenomena of movement; when the foot is dropped, try to apprehend the slow dropping down movement. Whereupon, the nature of phenomena becomes conspicuous to the meditator and he comprehends the ultimate reality, and the forms such as legs, hands and heads are ignored. Remember, it is very important to note paramattha.

People usually noted the forms as "my legs", "my arms", "my head", "his legs", "his arm", "his head", etc: since the time immemorial. Due to this wrong view, there are misnomer as "men", "women", "I", "you", "pretty", "ugly", etc: Thus attachments and desires developed and we have suffered for uncountable existences. Thereupon the conventional reality is the cause of sufferings, therefore, it

is to be ignored as much as possible. The ultimate reality leads to happiness and if you could perceive it distinctly, it will be a foundation for the progress of dhamma.

When the concentration is strengthened by attentive noting, the meditator himself will be aware of the lightness in "lifting", while contemplating "lifting", "moving", "dropping". Note the process of lifting objectively and ignore the form of the foot. That is the correct way of noting

In noting "dropping", heaviness in the dropping foot will become conspicuous, then note it and ignore the form of the foot. The lightness is the element of motion and heat, the heaviness is the element of existence and cohesion. Now the meditator comprehends the four elements that means progress in dhamma. As he is successful in contemplation, he is happy and the stages of insight improved successively. It is important to conceive the dhamma. He is now more interested in meditation and vipassana wisdom develops with each noting. Whereupon there is no more difficulty for the progress of dhamma.

"Dhamma is auspicious for it fosters wholesome deeds and expels the unwholesome ones. Furthermore it is profound and deep; it is also inconceivable. By dint of contemplation; there is improvement in dhamma which leads to freedom from apāya" said the Buddha. The dhamma will not be gained if the noting is superficial. For this reason the right method in vipassana meditation is of utmost importance.

**Motto:** The apparent lightness is due to the elements of heat and motion

The apparent heaviness is due to the elements of existence and cohesion

The most salient four elements (mahābhūta) are now vividly conceived by the meditator. Before practising meditation, though you have heard and read about them, you did not conceive them. Now you experience them in yourself. It is therefore, regarded as a gain in dhamma.

### General Noting

This is essential for the meditators who are striving hard for the attainment of magga and phala. It is to note the "intention" before you act or move, when you want to stand up. If you observe your conscious mind attentively you will realize the intention to stand up. Then note "intend to stand", "intend to stand". Then you make effort to push up your body by your hands. Note "standing", "standing", when the body slowly moves upwards. "Standing" is a conventional term, the moving process is the ultimate reality or paramattha. Keep pace with the upward moving process, thereupon you will distinctly perceive the lightness in that upward movement.

The intention to stand is the conscious mind or nāma and the act of standing is unconscious matter or rupa. There exist only the pair of nama and rupa. The term "I" is a conventional one used for the convenience's sake of conversation. In fact there is no "I" or "self". The erroneous view of "self" and the attachment to the five aggregates are then completely eradicated. Thereupon some of the roots are destroyed since the attainment of the stage of Namarupa pariccheda Nāna. The intention to stand is the cause and the standing action is the effect, thus cause and effect are now conspicuous to the meditator, i.e. Paccaya pariggaha Nāna. He could decide himself that he has already gained two stages of insight due to noting the "intention". Is it necessary to ask somebody else?

This procedure of noting the intention may not be clear at first for the beginners. However after some days of mindful practice, it will be quite easy for them. Similarly when noting "sitting", just be attentive and then you will be aware of the appearance of intention to sit. Then note "intend to sit", "intend to sit"; your body will move downward slowly. Then note "sitting", "sitting". "Sitting" is a conventional term, the downward movement is the ultimate reality. Try to note this process precisely and you will vividly cognize the heaviness in your body.

The intention to sit is *nāma* and sitting behaviour is *rupa*. Then you realize that there is just the pair of *nāma* and *rupa* and the erroneous view of self and the attachment to the five aggregates are dispelled, i.e. *Nama-rupa pariccheda Nāna*. The intention to sit is the cause and the sitting action is the effect, it is *Paccaya pariggaha Nāna*. By noting the intention, you attain two stages of insight. When you clearly understand how to note the intention in "standing" and "sitting" procedure the rest will be easy. If the noting is superficial, you will not do so. We habitually stand and sit without noting for numerous existences. The Buddha's method of noting, therefore, is the best method. So control your mind.

"The meditator who has attained the *Paccaya pariggaha Nāna* is very much satisfied when he could distinguish cause and effect and at the same time, he develops a firm standing in the Buddha' *Sāsana*. He is now *Sula-sotapan* (Junior *sotapan*) who has no regards for any other wrong beliefs, such as there is no cause for good or bad effect, there is no subsequent existence, etc., Since he could not be influenced by any of the erroneous beliefs, he is saved from *apaya* and will have good subsequent births", remarked the *Athakattha* masters.

By virtue of controlling the mind, *yogi* clearly conceived the fact that good cause leads to good effects and bad cause leads to bad effects. Thereupon if the unwholesome desire arises, he can note spontaneously and dispel it. The non-cause belief and the incongruous creation belief (the roots of a poison-tree) could no longer endanger him. One root, therefore, is destroyed, but there are nine more left. By dint of the Buddha's method we can destroy the roots. If the top and branches are cut by *sila*, and the trunk by *samatha* meditation but the roots are left undestroyed, the poison-tree could grow again, creating dangers to the people. In the same manner, if we could not eliminate the roots, the unwholesome deeds, by *vipassana* meditation, evidently we will never be free from sufferings.

Once the Buddha was residing at Veluvan monastery, Rājagyo. One day on His alm-round, He saw a female pig at the city gate . There flashed light when He smiled. Ashin Ananda respectfully enquired the reason of His smile. Thereupon the Buddha related the story of the pig. In her past existence, she was a Brahma. The monks were shocked and frightened upon learning that, even a Brahma could be reborn as an animal. The Buddha took the opportunity and preached a sermon. "In the life time of the Buddha Kakusan, this pig was a hen near a forest monastery. While eating the thrown away tit-bits of food, she heard the dhamma recited by the monks. Although she did not understand the dhamma, she was pleased and happy.

"One day she died while listening to the dhamma and was reborn as Princess Upari. She turned into a nun of good moral conduct (sila), the top-cutting dhamma. One day she saw the maggots in the pit and contemplated the samatha meditation, the trunk-cutting dhamma. Thereupon she gained the first jhanic absorption and was reborn in the Brahma World when she died. Next she was reborn as a rich man's daughter. She indulged in unwholesome deeds and in her subsequent birth, she became a pig which you see now at the gate of Rājagyo City". Upon hearing the story of the pig, the monks were very much frightened and remorseful.

The reason why a noble Brahma was reborn as a pig is that Princess Upari as a nun observed only sila, the top-cutting dhamma and practised the samatha meditation, the trunk-cutting dhamma, but not the vipassana meditation, the root-cutting dhamma.

**Motto:** As the latent (Anusaya) kilesa is not eradicated completely  
She was reborn as a pig subsequently

The Lord gave a sermon on the spot as He knew that the monks were remorseful and in a condition to gain dhamma. "Oh , my good sons, if only the branches of a

tree are cut but not its roots, the tree can grow again if there is enough water and air. Similarly, the physical and verbal unwholesome deeds, likened to the top and branches of tree, are expelled by sila. Likewise the unmanifested repetitive unwholesome dispositions, likened to the tree-trunk is dispelled by the samatha practice. However, if the latent defilements, likened to the roots of the tree, are not eliminated by the vipassana practice, by magga wisdom, there will be repetitive various-sufferings, such as becoming, decay, sickness, death, sorrows, lamentation, etc., in the coming existences."

After listening to the dhamma, the monks practised vipasana meditation and gained magga wisdom, which eliminated the latent kilesa completely, like cutting the roots of the tree. They became Sotapans and ariyas and were entirely safe from apaya.

**Motto:** Without cutting the roots, but just the branches, the tree can grow again.

If the latent kilesa are not eradicated, one will be in the world of miseries again.

When the latent kilesa are eliminated the emancipation from miseries is evident. To eliminate the latent kilesas, develop mindfulness faithfully.

After listening to the Four Supreme Exertions and the top-cutting dhamma, the trunk-cutting dhamma and the root-cutting dhamma as expounded in the Padhana Sutta, may you all be able to practise according to the Buddha's instruction with diligent contemplation, May you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana, the end of all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## **Happiness and Pleasurable Feeling** **(Sukha Somanassa Sutta)** **(20-3-93)**

Today's Dhamma discourse is on the "Sukha Somanassa Sutta". Sukha=happiness, somanassa=pleasurable feelings; sutta=explanation. In this sutta, Buddha explained how one can enjoy happiness and pleasurable feeling in this very life. If a monk (one striving for freedom from sufferings) is accustomed to the six factors, he can enjoy happiness and pleasurable feelings in this very life. If he continued to practise dhamma, he could eliminate asavo, that means he gains arhatta fruition (phala) where one's mind is directed towards nirvana which is free from all sufferings.

This discourse is very appropriate to the dhamma listeners. The six factors are-

- (1) To delight in dhamma
- (2) To delight in meditation
- (3) To delight in discarding immoral dhammas
- (4) To delight in solitude
- (5) To delight in place free from sufferings
- (6) To delight in freedom from dhamma expanding the cycle of existence

### **(1) Delight in dhamma**

There are various ways of enjoying oneself, such as enjoyment in the company of wife, husband, sons and daughters, enjoyment in playing and listening to music and dancing. Some find enjoyment in taking care of animals. I met a lady who enjoyed in fanning a pet dog on hot days. As for kings and emperors they have a great delight in possessing pomp and wealth and also in possession of elephants and horses. All these happiness and pleasure lead to sufferings in rounds of samsara. Therefore, they are the causes of old age, suffering and death.

However delight in Dhamma results in happiness and

pleasurable feeling in this very life and also the attainment of nirvana in the subsequent existence. Of all the delights, one in dhamma is the most noble one as its effect is the attainment of nirvana which is free from all sufferings in the rounds of samsara. It is more evident in vipassana meditation. Reading and recitation of dhamma scriptures and also teaching the three tipitakas (baskets) are regarded as delight in dhamma. Lecturer monks feel that the day is incomplete if they have not to lecture. Student-monks also are unhappy when they cannot study. That is how monks delight in dhamma. Some even shed tears while reciting or chanting parittas and gathas. (verses from the scriptures). This kind of tear is cold tear for dhamma due to the delight in dhamma.

A yogi who has reached Udayabbaya Nana Stage, practised in a secluded place and comprehended the nature of becoming and dissolution of nama and rupa. Whereupon vipassana piti and sukha developed and he was in a delightful state. The Buddha had remarked that leave alone a common worldling, not even a deva could enjoy such delight. Yogi with strong Udayabbaya Nana will remember their similar experiences. At the mature stage of Udayabbaya Nana after experiencing the pleasure of this happiness and joy, yogi exclaimed thus, "It is the great opportunity to be a human being in this very life. I'm quite certain, I'll attain nirvana with this consciousness". As a matter of fact, he has enjoyed the incomparable delight in dhamma. This bliss and weak joy is regarded also as a preliminary nirvana by the Lord. Though it is the cause for the attainment of nirvana (result), it is connoted as the result. In other words, the Buddha meant to say that one who has enjoyed such bliss and weak joy one day, will attain nirvana inevitably.

## **(2) Delight in Meditation**

There are two ways of meditation; samatha (tranquility) meditation and vipassana (insight) meditation. Samatha meditation dispels nivarana (hindrance) and it result in happiness and pleasurable feelings in this very life, whereas

vipassana meditation sends one to nirvana which is free from all sufferings. People delight in meritorious deeds according to their accustomed inclination in their past existences. Those with inclination towards giving dana and charity and are not greedy (a-lobha) usually delight in giving dana in this life too. They enjoy building pagodas and monasteries and in ordinations of monks.

Those with inclination towards the development of loving-kindness (a-dosa) in their past existences delight in observing moral conduct (sila) and also in undertaking duties such as helping old and sick ones, monks and yogi. A-dosa is metta, which manifests in the desire for happiness in oneself and in others too, and also in observing sila and not breaking the precepts. Some delight in sila and some in dana but not in vipasana meditation. However, those who have inclination towards development of wisdom and expelling moha (delusion) i.e. vipassana meditation in their past existences, delight in practising vipassana meditation. They usually do not enjoy dana and sila. Dana and sila are supporting factors for the happiness of deva realm and human abode, whereas samatha meditation is for Brahma realm. Vipassana meditation is the only way leading to nirvana. Listeners can make a choice. Though one may be reborn in the highest Brahma realm, his next destiny might be in apaya, since he had not practised vipassana meditation.

"Shining, shining in Brahma World, grunting, grunting in the sty of pigs". That is the reason why samatha meditation is unreliable for the attainment of nirvana which is free from all sufferings. Happiness in deva world and human abode are free from sufferings for one existence, not for ever. Nirvana is the only one completely free from all sufferings. In fact practising yogi have explicit knowledge of the difference between samatha and vipassana meditation, thereupon they ardently contemplate vipassana meditation. At the beginning yogi may encounter with dukkha, however in the later stages, he will have happiness. At first because of pain, aches, numbness and so on, yogi may be depressed, therefore

sayadaw has to deliver frequently, dhamma discourse on the benefits of vipassana meditation. "The enjoyment of worldly pleasure undoubtedly ends in unhappiness and sufferings, if not in this very life, it will manifest in subsequent existences. That means suffering in apāya," said the Buddha-would-be hermit.

The benefit of samatha meditation is jhāna absorption whereas that of vipassana meditation is the attainment of nirvana. At the Nāma-rupa pariccheda Nāna Stage, yogi experiences dukkha to a certain extent. To control your body not to sway and to control your mind so that it may not wander, for an hour long sitting is dukkha, especially when concentrations is not strong enough. It will be the same at the Paccayaparigghaha Nāna Stage. However, at the Sammasana Nāna Stage, the worst one of all stages of insight, there is more pain, aches, numbness; giddiness, heaviness, swaying etc. Yogi has no clear idea of what he experienced although about ten days have gone by. He wants to go home as he has not gained dhamma, but only aches, pain, etc.:. After giving many lame excuses, he went home and said that he had not gained any dhamma.

He did not understand that these manifestations of dukkha is dhamma, since he has no knowledge of dhamma. Another way, the vivid manifestations of these dukkha vedana are to be contemplated, therefore they must be taken as dhamma and objects of noting. Noting dukkha vedana is vedanan nupassana i.e. contemplation of vedana. The Buddha reminded to note vedana. Thinking that he has not gained dhamma, yogi is reluctant to go up to the meditation hall. Upon hearing the bell to practice he said, "Here goes the bell. I have to go and sit and suffer for an hour".

At the mature Udayabbaya Nāna Stage, yogi experiences happiness instead of pain, aches, numbness giddiness and so on. At the Sammasana Nāna Stage, the meditation instructor has to encourage yogi telling "You'll have less pain and more pleasure in the next stage of insight". This is not just words of comfort but a truth. If yogi notes respectfully,

attentively and objectively, he will progress in a short time. Some yogi used to complain, "I practise vipassana meditation to gain sukha, however it is all pain, dukkha. I'm nearly dying". As one suffers more pain one has to strive more and note successively, not sporadically. Thence dhamma progresses swiftly. If noting is sporadic and shifting here and there i.e. noting rising and falling for a while and then change to "sitting", "sitting", there is no hope for progress in dhamma even though a month has passed. One must practise without sparing one self and life.

**Motto:** Disregard your body and life but must not spare yourself

Certainly you are not going to die. Practise with utmost physical and mental diligence. Thereupon, it is evident that nirvana will be attained. If you note and overcome whatever dukkha manifests, you will gain dhamma.

**Motto:** Must overcome whatever sufferings may manifest, when you are contemplating

Not long after sitting, yogi experiences pain, aches, numbness, giddiness, swaying, heaviness and so on. To him sensations of pain and aches appear to come from the bone, bone marrows and nerves. When concentration is deepened, sensation of pain is exaggerated. In fact it is not that strong. After days of practice, there is less pain and more progress in dhamma. Some yogi take only a day and a night to overcome this stage. At the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage, in contrast to the Sammasana Nāna Stage, pain is no more distinct. Yogi feels both physical and mental buoyancy and remarked. "Though I'm swaying, it is very light. As if my body is pumped with air and it is just like a floating leaf". At Sammasana Nāna Stage he felt heaviness in his body. Yogi sways in both Sammasana Nana Stage and Udayabbaya Nāna Stage; however the sensation is different. He delights

buoyant swaying at the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage and thus hinders the progress in dhamma.

Meditation instructor has to remind him to note "swaying" "swaying" and not to develop an inclination towards it since it is an obstruction to the progress of dhamma. Yogi experiences both physical and mental buoyancy and subtleness. The instructor keeps a close watch on how the yogi reports, gentleness in his action and walking movements. Thereupon he can assess the improvement in dhamma and also whether yogi is at the Sammasana or the Udayabbaya Nana Stage. If yogi's report is still on pain and aches for several days, he is certainly at the Sammasana Nana Stage. He has not progressed.

Yogi is also bodily and mentally pliable and when he reports, he is very mindful and subtle. Those who used to change 3 or 4 times in one sitting, now do not change their posture during the whole sitting. Furthermore those who could sit without changing for an hour, now can sit for 2,3, and 4 hours.

He is also physically and mentally proficient. The arising of object of noting and the noting seem to be effortless and go on of its own accord. There is no need to control his body or mind. Moreover he feels physical and mental calm and peace. His body is still and erect just like a doll and his conscious mind also continues to note spontaneously. He is happy both physically and mentally. Now yogi enjoys vipassana bliss incomparable to any other joy. At the beginning of meditation practice, it is painful or dukkha, however in the middle yogi finds happiness or sukha. Thus he delights in vipassana meditation. Since samatha meditation is for happiness in just one existence, it is not dependable. As vipassana meditation is the most reliable, we must delight in it.

### **(3) Delight in discarding immoral dhamma.**

One with moral dhamma usually does not want to associate with persons who indulge in immoral deeds. Nor he wants to hear about unwholesome circumstances. Practising

in a meditation centre is, in a way eliminating delusion, greed and anger, the bases for immoral dhamma. When unwholesome consciousness such as rāga and lobha arise, it is to be eliminated by contemplating asubha kammathāna, the meditation- subjects of impurities dosa or anger can be eradicated by metta- bhāvana loving - kindness meditation. Vipassana meditation is the best way of dispelling moha-ignorance or delusion.

**Motto:** When rāga arises dispel by contemplating the body as loathesome and impure (asubha)

Rāga arises when you perceive the loathesome body (asubha) as a desirous one (subha). Attachment to oneself or others' will not arise if you contemplate the meditation-subjects of impurities.

**Motto:** When dosa arises expel it by loving - kindness meditation

Once you develop loving kindness, dosa or anger will disappear. Loving kindness, and anger are antithesis. As soon as you contemplate metta bhavana dosa vanishes.

**Motto:** When moha arises annihilate it by vipassana meditation

When moha arises one is deluded and could not even differentiate nāma and rupa. Delusion is to be dispelled by paññā bhavanā which is vipassana meditation. Hence it means to contemplate insight meditation.

#### 4. Delight in solitude

To enjoy happiness and pleasurable feelings in this very life and to attain nirvana in the subsequent existences, dwell in a solitary place. If you want to be liberated from āsavo dhamma (defilements) practise in solitude. Is it delightful to

stay in a meditation centre undisturbed by sensual sight, sound, smell, music, dance and so on? So to stay in a meditation centre is the same as staying in solitude. You can see clearly how happy are yogi practising in a meditation centre as it is peaceful and quiet. There are three kinds of seclusion (viveka).

- (1) kāya viveka-physical seclusion
- (2) Citta viveka-mental seclusion and
- (3) Upadhi viveka- complete or utter seclusion

### **(1) Physical seclusion**

Yogi comes to a meditation centre, leaving his family, relatives, friends and other business behind. Since you have no concern about them, your movement and behaviour become gentle and calm. It is more so when you meditate in the forest, away from the commotion of life. When you are with friends and relatives or have company, you have to have consideration for them, for example, when you say or do something, you are worried whether the words or the action might annoy your friends. You gain physical seclusion if you practise in the forest.

### **(2) Mental seclusion**

According to the scriptures mental seclusion is the attainment of jhāna absorption. Those who practise samatha meditating gain jhāna absorption which expels (nivarana) hindrances such as lobha, dosa, moha, conceit. Hence their mind is calm and clean, that is mental seclusion. Mental seclusion promotes more happiness than physical seclusion.

As for vipassana meditation, mental seclusion is not readily gained at the beginning of practice in the meditation centre. After practising for several days yogi's mind wanders no more; noting mind settles on the object of noting precisely. With proficient concentration, yogi can note successively and thereupon lobha, dosa and moha have no opportunity to arise. This annihilation of lobha, dosa and moha is mental seclusion. Yogi who had passed Udayabbaya Nāna Stage experiences with mental seclusion more vividly.

Both samatha meditators and vipassana meditators gain physical seclusion when they leave their family and enter a meditation centre. Samatha meditators gain mental seclusion when they attain jhāna absorption whereas vipassana meditation gain mental seclusion where the concentration is mature and noting is precise and objective. Whereupon there is no chance for the development of nivarana (hindrances).

### **(3) Utter or complete seclusion**

Samatha meditators after gaining concentration absorption (jhāna sampatti) switch over to vipassana meditation and attain nirvana. The realisation of nirvana through arahatta magga and phala is regarded as utter seclusion. Vipassana meditation, at the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage, experiences more distinctly the spontaneous arising of object of noting and the noting mind. Hence he needs no effort to note, as the Sankharupekkha Nāna Stage is well-known for "the equilibrium of happiness and suffering". Thereupon his mind is calm and peaceful that is mental seclusion. By virtue of repetitive and continuous contemplation, yogis progress through the stages of insight. On the maturation and fulfilment of vipassana ñāna (insight knowledge) he realizes nirvana after attaining Sotapanna magga and phala for once. Thus he is liberated from rounds of sufferings in apāya. This is how a vipassana meditator enjoys utter seclusion and become a sotapan - stream-winner.

One who realizes nirvana after attaining Sakadāgāmi magga and phala is nearly free from repetitive sufferings of old age, sickness and anxieties in the six realms of Deva and human abode. He returns to the realm of Deva and human abode for once only - once-returner. One who realizes nirvana through anāgāmi magga and phala is completely free from sufferings of kāma sensuous sphere, such as old age, sickness and death. Thus he develops upadhi viveka-non-returner. Those who realize nirvana with arahatta magga and phala are completely free from the sufferings of 31 planes and establish utter or complete seclusion-Arahat, the Noble One.

Through three types of seclusions one has the opportunity to enjoy happiness. Mental seclusion provides happiness more than physical seclusion. Utter seclusion prompts happiness of nirvana more than mental seclusion. The three seclusions have reciprocal effect. Because of physical seclusion one can establish mental seclusion. Utter seclusion is established due to mental seclusion. For these reasons one has just to establish physical seclusion, then mental seclusion. The practising yogi have already established physical seclusion and even some of them have developed mental seclusion. It is, therefore, of utmost importance, to endeavour to gain utter seclusion.

**(5) Delight in emancipation of suffering.**

One is emancipated from suffering (a) when he attains nirvana and (b) when he attains arahatta phala. In this case i.e. No. (5) it is to take delight in the arahatta phala which is free from suffering. One should have a disposition to take delight in arahatta phala so as to live with happiness and pleasurable feeling in this very life and to attain nirvana in subsequent existences. In other words, one should practise satipatthana vipassana meditation which is the only way to arahatta phala, freedom from all sufferings.

**(6) Delight in freedom from dhamma propagating the cycle of existence**

Nirvana is the only place free from dhamma propagating the cycle of existence. What are these dhamma? Tanhā (craving), Māna (conceit or pride) and Ditthi (erroneous view) the three papañca (expansion of the world) dhammas. A greedy person has no contentment. He is never satisfied with what he has and wishes to have more and more, and better and better. Due to his craving and greediness, he is liable to commit any misdeeds, legal or illegable. Furthermore he could not gain dhamma. Without the knowledge of good deeds and bad deeds and their consequences, there is no checking for a greedy man who make mistakes after mistakes. That

is how the world is expanded i.e. creating sufferings after sufferings. Is it happiness or suffering to go round the cycle of existence? That is why craving is the cause of propagation of cycle of existence.

Erroneous view also is one of the propagating dhamma. Because of erroneous views, one develops attachment to wrong thoughts and ideas. That is the reason, why one should delight in the attainment of nirvana, so as to have happiness and pleasurable feelings in this very life and also to gain arahatta phala in subsequent existences. Even one with certain development of pārami could not gain noble dhamma if he delights in diffuseness of the world.

Ashin Anuroddhā, holder of highest designation in possession of divine-eye, took admonishment from Ashin Sariputtara and went to the forest to practise dhamma.

Inspite of fifteen days of strenuous practice he did not gain dhamma. The reason was his delight in diffuseness of 1000 universe, which he saw with his divine eyes. He became weary and took rest under a shady bamboo grove. There he thought up ideas. Lord Buddha knew his seven thoughts and came to him as swift as the stretching of a bending arm. The Lord then said, "Oh! my good son, are you not thinking of these seven ideas?" "Yes, your Lord" replied Ashin Anuroddha. "These seven ideas are certainly related to dhamma, however there is one more factor for you to gain dhamma", said the Buddha and continued to admonish Ashin Anuroddha, "My good son, four magga, four phala and nirvana, altogether making nine dhammas are not to be attained by one who delights in expansion of phenomena, like you. These nine dhammas are for one who delights in non-diffuseness. It is not for him who delights in worldliness." The Buddha returned after giving Ashin Anuroddhā instruction on meditation. The latter meditated according to the Buddha's instruction and gained arahatship in a short time. This is due to his delight in non-diffuseness of the world.

**Motto:** One delights in diffuseness, craving and pride will never gain dhamma.  
One delights in non-diffuseness and contemplation will gain dhamma

It is the dhamma (magga ,phala and nirvana) for one who delights in non-diffuseness and contemplation with mind directed towards nirvana. In other words it is to practise mindfulness meditation with directed attention to nirvana.

After listening to this dhamma discourse on "Sukha Somanassa Sutta", may you all be able to practise in accordance to the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana, which is free from all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu Sādhu Sādhu

**Three factors for the attainment of Nirvana  
(Uddesa Vibhanga Sutta) by  
(10-1-90, 18-1-90, 25-1-90)**

Today's sermon will be on the "Uddesa Vibhanga Sutta". Uddesa means "brief" and vibhanga means "full or elaborate". This sutta constitutes Buddha's brief admonishment on the three factors for the attainment of nirvana and Ashin Kissayana's elaborate explanation on the same. It is very appropriate for the listeners of this sermon and the practising yogis. Could you practise vipassana meditation by physical exercise or by recitation? No, neither of them would do, because vipassana meditation is the work of conscious mind. For that reason it is important to culture or subdue your conscious mind. Since it is a case of subtle phenomenon, it is difficult to subdue your mind.

It is the procedure followed by arahats and courageous men and women; it could not be achieved through ordinary practice. Buddha preached the Uddesa Vibhanga Sutta at Zetavan Monastery. Sāvatti. The Lord admonished the bhikkhus thus "Oh, my good sons, if you wish to attain nirvana, which is free from all sufferings, you endeavour and practise not to let your mind wander elsewhere, not to be internally arrested and not to have attachment to sensual objects." After listening to this very brief admonishment, the bhikkhus were not satisfied. They wanted to know the full meaning of it. To whom should they approach?

They unanimously decided to see Ashin Kissayana who could elaborate Buddha's sermons exactly according to what Buddha meant. "Your Rev: Lord Buddha preached briefly not to let mind wander elsewhere, not to be internally arrested and not to have attachment to sensual objects in Uddesa Vibhanga Sutta. It is so brief that we could not comprehend it. Please give us a full explanation of it" requested bhikkhus. Thereupon Ashin Kissāyana refused, "You all are like a man who looks for the core of a big tree in the branches, instead of looking into the trunk. I

am just like a branch and you've met Buddha who is the tree trunk. You should respectfully request the Lord to explain it."

The bhikkhus, then, replied, "Your Rev: you're the only person whom Buddha always praised as the one who could conceive what Buddha meant and explicate it in full length. Therefore please preach us the explanation of Buddha's admonishment." Whereupon Ashin Kissāyana elaborately explained the three factors for the attainment of Nirvana. In order to pay obeisance to Buddha, Dhamma and also to Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw let us recite the following verse written by Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw.

**Motto:** No internal arrest nor mind wandering  
 No attachment nor thirst and craving  
 By mindful observation and noting.  
 Liberated from heavy burden of sufferings  
 Such as rebirth, old age and dying  
 So said Lord Buddha  
 In Vibhan Uddesa Sutta

If you practise according to the Buddha's advice i.e. not to let your mind wander elsewhere, not to be internally arrested and not to have attachment to sensual objects, the attainment of nirvana is evident. Ashin Kissayana explained the meaning of:

- (1) How mind wanders elsewhere
  - (2) How mind does not wander
  - (3) How it is internally arrested
  - (4) How it is not internally arrested
  - (5) How there is attachment to the sensual objects
  - (6) How there is no attachment
- How mind wanders elsewhere.

When sense objects come into contact with the sense-surfaces of 6 sense-doors, you take interest and think of them. Upon the contact of sense object with the eye sense surface, ear sense surface, nose sense surface, tongue sense

surface, etc: you are happy and think of these experience if they are pleasant. Then there arises lobha. If it is unpleasant you also think of it and get angry and annoyed, thereupon dosa arises. If you think of the sense experiences, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant it means mind wandering. With lobha and dosa would you attain nirvana. Of course, you are far away from it.

### **On Seeing**

**Motto:** When thinking of seeing, mind goes wandering.  
If you note while seeing, no mind wandering.

How to control mind wandering? Upon seeing something instead of taking interest in it and thinking of it, just note "seeing", "seeing." Since it is a matter of very subtle phenomenon, it will not be easy to note at the beginning. However, when concentration is strengthened, upon noting "seeing", "seeing", you will be aware of the becoming and dissolution of both the object of noting (sense object) and the noting mind. With ardent noting you will comprehend the object of noting, the noting mind and the conscious mind are in state of flux. They are not permanent, therefore it is anicca: the continuous becoming and dissolution is painful, so it is suffering; since you could not control this process, it is not-self. Thus the three characteristics are vividly conceived.

All these processes of noting are not difficult for a yogi who has attained higher stage of insight knowledge. However there are only a few who could do so. How yogis at the lower stages of insight knowledge should practise. When a sense object comes into contact with your eye sense-surface, note just as a matter of mere seeing. You will find it not so easy at first; with mature concentration and correct method, you will succeed to note as a mere seeing. When you have established firm mindfulness, noting will improve and there is no more difficulties to note mere seeing.

In walking practice, you notice the lightness in lifting up and moving the foot forward, then note "light" "light". When you put down the foot, you feel heaviness and note "heavy" "heavy". Then a person passed by, you know that someone has passed by, however you are not aware of whether it is "he" or "she", dark or fair, tall or short. Thereupon you experience mere seeing because you don't take interest nor think of the sight. This happens to those who walk with closed eyes or downcast eyes and noting attentively and mindfully in the walking.

In seeing there are 3 stages:-

- (1) desirous mind to look
- (2) the act of looking
- (3) seeing

(1) There is always a desire when you want to do something, for instance, if you want to look, the desire to look arises, then note "desire to look" "desire to look".

(2) Then your upper eye-lid will be pushed upward and the lower pushed downward and your eye balls begin to move; this is the act of looking. Then note "looking", "looking" .

(3) Note "seeing" , "seeing" , when you see.

By dint of repetitive practice and especially those with good foundation of mindfulness will be able to note just mere seeing. The noting of the desire to look is the contemplation of consciousness (cittānupassanā); the noting of the act of looking concerns with the eye lids and eye balls (part of the body), so it is the contemplation of body (kāyānupassanā); in noting "seeing," "seeing", it is the phenomenon or nature that you are noting, therefore it is the contemplation of mind-object (dhammānupassanā). Thereupon you have achieved three foundations of mindfulness. You gain merit and develop vipassana wisdom. So you see how important it is to control your eye. If you can do so, your noting will be in succession and the stages of insight

knowledge progress. If not, it will be strenuous, noting will not be in succession, so there is no gain in dhamma and no improvement and then you are discouraged.

Wise meditation instructors advised to act like a blind man although your eye-sight is good. Concentration is comparatively strengthened in sitting practice because you have closed your eyes. You gain dhamma for the reason that you could control your eyes. There will be success in your practice if you can downcast your eyes. There were several instances where dhamma was realized due to a good control of eyes.

### **Monk Cittagutta**

An Elder monk, named Cittagutta dwelled in a cave called Kurantaka. There were paintings of 7 Buddhas (Vipassi Buddha and 6 others) on the wall of the cave and a gangaw tree at the entrance of the cave. The elder had never look up at the paintings nor at the tree all these time he lived there. He was 80 years old and of 60 years vasa and that long years he had a good control over his eyes and practised dhamma diligently. The King heard about the Elder and requested him three times to visit his palace. Since these requests were not related to any religious affairs, the Elder refused. He did not want his meditation practice be disturbed.

The king thought upon on idea and sent for all breast-feeding mothers from the nearby village, Māhāgama. On their arrival he ordered to wrap a shawl round the body and to seal it, so that they could not feed their babies. The king issued an order that babies must not be fed until the Elder came to the palace. After a week or so, The Elder heard the news and out of great compassion for the babies he went to the Māhāgama village. The king was overjoyed and invited the Elder to his palace for daily alms-food.

The Elder came to the palace together with the monks from the village. Everyday after the meal the Elder gave a sermon. The King and queen saw him off after paying homage. Thereupon the Elder gave blessings: "May the king

be happy. May he be healthy," whether it was the king and his retinue or the queen and her retinue. Back at the village monastery the monks respectfully asked the Elder, "Your Rev.: why are you blessing"may the king be happy and healthy" when the queen and her retinue paid homage to you?" The Elder replied,"Oh! really; I didn't know who came,whether it was the king or the queen together with their retinue. As it is the king who invited me to the palace, I gave blessing to him".

For the reason that the Elder had a good control over his eyes, he noticed that people came to pay respect to him; nevertheless he did not know who all were they, whether it was the king and his retinue or the queen and her retinue. He noted just mere seeing. the King realized that how it was strenuous for the Elder to stay at the village and to come to the palace for alms -food daily. Moreover the Elder had to take a great care in controlling his eyes. Therefore on the seventh day he sent back the Elder to his cave.

The Elder meditated the whole night with no time limit. His concentration was stronger than before, thereupon rupa and nāma were clearly differentiated;becoming and dissolution were more distinct to him,and he comprehended the three characteristics lucidly. In the last watch of the night,he attained arahatship. Why didn't he became an arahat though he meditated during these years before he visited the palace? Why only when he came back? The main reason is the Elder's great controlling power of the eyes. The palace was full of extraordinary sensual pleasure and splendid scenes. So the Elder was more mindful not to be distracted by the worldly pleasure. Whereupon his concentration was greatly strengthened when he came back to the cave. His noting mind settled upon the arising object of noting, from beginning to end that is due to concentration. He therefore, perceived becoming and dissolution distinctly. Then vipassana wisdom developed to the height and became an arahat.

All these are due to the morality of controlling power

of senses which leads to strong and firm mindfulness. First and foremost develop concentration and endeavour to control especially your eyes. Make a determination not to look, "I'm not looking", "I'm not looking", control the eyes and note mindfully. Thereupon your conscious mind becomes very attentive and then you have a good controlling power over your eyes. You may become an arahat like the Elder, according to your parami. Who knows, it will or it will not.

### **On hearing**

**Motto:** When thinking of hearing, mind goes wandering  
If you note while hearing, no mind wandering

Upon hearing something pleasant you take interest in it and think "whose voice is it, it is so pleasant and sweet". You then develop attachment to the voice as well as the person. That is lobha. When it is unpleasant, you are angry and annoyed, that is dosa. With lobha and dosa could you attain nirvana? No, never. You must not be distracted by the sound. When your concentration is weak, just try to note mere hearing, don't think "whose voice is it? and so on. Don't be swayed by the voice, just note it as a mere sound. If it is impossible to note just "mere hearing", then revert to noting "rising and falling" or 'sitting and touching' or general noting, which are distinct to your mind.

Whether it is in sitting practice or walking or general practice, if your concentration is strong, you will be more attentive; your mind settles upon the object of noting thence you will be able to note just the sound. Then note "hearing", "hearing". The sound will appear to be from a distance or sometimes it comes nearer: sometimes it seems to be faint and sometimes to be loud. The comprehension of these changes means improvement in vipassana wisdom. It is something to be delighted, however it is quite difficult to note. If you can note the "sound", then you gain the Bhanga Nana stage. At this stage you hear a word not

as a continuous sound but broken into syllables. For instance, the word "gentleman" is heard as "gen" one syllable, "tle" another syllable and "man" a separate syllable. Whereupon it no longer has meaning; you hear just sound and not as a word. This is paramattha nana, in other words you are noting the sound.

At the upper stage of Bhanga Nana, the hearing of each syllable disappeared when noted, not only that the noting mind as well as the conscious mind successively disappeared. Then try to note "hearing", "hearing". If you could not note the soft sound, then strive to note the loud sound. Don't be discouraged when noting just hearing is not successful. Try and try again; then you will find improvement in noting "hearing" "hearing". If it is not so easy and you get dizzy and feel heat around your head, revert to noting "rising and falling" as usual. When concentration gain strength, you will perceive the object of noting (the sound) together with the noting mind disappear.

"Everything is impermanent, it is anicca. This process of becoming and dissolution is harassing us ever and anon. There is nothing to enjoy therefore it is dukkha. This harassment could not be controlled, so it is anatta". Thus reflecting you comprehend the three characteristics, while noting "hearing", "hearing" you attain nirvana.

### **On smelling**

**Motto:** When thinking of smells,  
mind goes wandering.

If it is a good smell you enjoy it and think of it, thus develop lobha. Dosa arises when the smell is bad; you get angry at both the smell and the person who is responsible for it. Could you expect nirvana with lobha and dosa in your mind.

**Motto:** If you note while smelling, no mind wandering.

It means that you need to note when you get smell. There will be changes in the smell; it may be strong or weak at times. These changes depend upon the strength of your concentration. The smell together with the noting mind and the knowing mind disappear when noted, as your concentration gains strength. Then yogis pondered upon the becoming and dissolution of smell as anicca, then tormenting nature as dukkha; the process of becoming and dissolution occurring on its own accord as anatta. Thus he gains the noble dhamma. It is important for the yogi to develop strong vipassana wisdom and to comprehend the correct way of contemplation.

### **On Eating**

**Motto:** When thinking of eating, mind goes wandering

You enjoy tasty food and think of it and also the person who prepared it. There goes lobha while eating. If not tasty, you think "Food is poorly prepared. I wonder who could prepare such food". Thus you develop dosa on both the food and the person who prepared it. Thereupon, however much you pray for the attainment of nirvana, you are at a distance from it. Moreover it is evident that you might be reborn in apaya if you die at that moment with lobha and dosa arising in your mind. Craving for taste is a very dangerous obstacle in vipassana meditation.

**Motto:** If you note while eating, no mind wandering.

It is of vital importance to note the movements involved in eating. When you sit at the table you see the food, then note "seeing," "seeing"; when you stretch your arm to take food, note "stretching", "stretching"; when you touch the spoon, note "touching" "touching"; when you take food, note "taking" "taking"; when you bend your neck note, "bending" "bending"; when you open your mouth, note

"opening" "opening"; when you put the food into the mouth, "putting" "putting"; when you hold up your neck "holding" "holding"; when you chew, "chewing" "chewing"; when you notice the taste, "knowing" "knowing"; when you swallow the food, "swallowing" "swallowing". These steps of noting in eating were comprehended by the Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw himself when he practised vipassana meditation in his younger days.

At first it may not be feasible to note all the steps; you may miss many of them, however it is not to be disheartened. When concentration is strong enough you will be able to note almost all of them. Of course, you have to be very attentive and mindful. at the beginning just note whatever is more distinct to you. e.g. If stretching of arm is more distinct, then note "stretching"; "stretching"; if it is the bending of neck, then note "bending" "bending", if it is chewing, then note "chewing" "chewing".

Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw put a question: "In eating food, which jaw is moving?" Some said it was the upper jaw, the others said both. As the upper jaw is attached to the head, it is not the upper jaw that moves. It is the lower which actually moves. If you are not attentive you will not be aware of it; you just notice the jaws moving. While chewing notice the jaw moving upward and downward. If you cannot note, don't be discourage and give up. If you don't strive to note, then you will never be able to do so. Note what appears to be distinct to you. Noting will be easy when concentration is strong, and you gain merit.

**Motto:** If you note while eating, no mind wandering

"If you note while eating, it is not only you, but also the donors will gain merit" explained the Atthakathā masters. The benefits of alms-offering is the highest, especially when it is offered to those who are continuously practising vipassana meditation. The reason is that the practising yogis have expelled lobha and dosa for the time being. In fact, it

is the best to offer to arahats who have completely discarded kilesa(impurities); if not offer to the yogis who are striving ardently for the attainment of nirvana. Upon seeing yogis noting, there develops fresh faith in the donors and they enjoy bliss of their meritorious deeds. Thus by noting while you take meal you promote merits not only for you but also for the donors.

Noting while eating is quite difficult at first, nevertheless when concentration develops, it will be done with less effort. At the stage of nama-rupa nana when you stretch your arm you'll be aware that the stretching arm is separate entity from the noting mind, similarly you distinguish the movement in "touching", "preparing", "taking" "bending", etc: from the conscious mind that notes these movements. If you can perceive the movements and the noting mind as separate entities, you will realize as follows; "It is not 'I' who eat, 'I' is just a conventional name. Eating is just a process of movements. After all, there is rupa (bodily movements) and nāma only". "Thereupon you have eliminated the wrong view of self and the path to apāya is closed. That means you've established a firm footing in the Buddha's Sāsana.

With the progress in insight knowledge and strengthened concentration, endeavour to note the desirous mind. A well practised yogi who could note almost all the steps in eating process said that it seemed to her the food just fell into the throat without the desire to swallow. Is it possible to swallow the food with no desire to do so. If you do not want to swallow, the food will not fall into the throat. After noting 2 or 3 days that yogi said, "It is the desire which makes it possible to swallow. I could note it now". That yogi was young and the element of motion(wind) is strong, therefore it seems to her that the food went down the throat without the desire to swallow it.

Another yogi said she used to note while eating. However if the food is not tasty she notes, but when the food is good, she does not note. Did she mean to say that she wanted to enjoy the tasty food. If it is so, then she

At present you are noting mostly the four elements. It is required to be able to differentiate conventional truth (pannatta) and ultimate truth (paramattha) in noting. To practise genuine vipassana is of utmost significance. The rising abdomen(physical body) is conventional truth; falling and rising movements of abdomen due to the element to motion is ultimate truth. Remember, in vipassana meditation, it is not to note pannatta, but the phenomenon. Pay no heed to conventional truth, however note the ultimate truth. You must not note the form such as head, foot, etc: in "sitting" "touching" however it is to note the heat and tense feeling of sitting and touching, which is paramatha. When you perceive the phenomenon, then you will apprehend becoming and dissolution.

**Motto:** Take no heed of the conventional truth.  
However note the ultimate truth

With the progress in insight knowledge you will gain the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage and later the Bhanga Nāna Stage where the dissolution is more prominent, the vanishing of the object of noting of the noting mind and of the knowing mind promote the comprehension of anicca, dukkha and anatta. Thus nirvana is attained.

If you note "touching", "touching", when there is touching, your mind will not wander elsewhere. Whenever and whatever is touching, just note "touching", "touching". It is rupa (physical body) that is touched and it is nama which is conscious mind that notes "touching". Whereupon yogi can differentiate rupa and nāma and there arises no lobha and dosa. Moreover he realizes that in noting "I touch", there is no "I" as an entity; it is just rupa and nāma. Thus he attains the Nāmarupapariccheda Nāna Stage. Thence he discards the wrong view of self and the wrong view of aggregates. As a footing is established in Buddha's sasana, due to noting "touching" there is no more danger of apāya. Furthermore it is evident to him that there is noting because

was eating with lobha instead of noting. Thus she placed herself at a distance from nirvana. If you note while taking food there do not arise lobha and dosa, so it is evident that you will gain nirvana.

**Motto:** If you note while eating, no mind wandering.

Let me cite a case how nirvana was attained by noting while eating. Once an elder monk and a young novice, uncle and a nephew, lived together in a monastery. The uncle's name was Mahāsanharakkhita, and the young novice's was Sanharakkhita sāmāne. The young novice went out for the alms at about 9.00 a.m. and came back at 10:30 a.m. While he was eating the Elder monk reminded him not to let his tongue be burnt by hot rice and curry. The young novice wondered, "Why? my uncle perfectly knew that the food is already cold. How could they burn my tongue?" Being a wise one, he at once realized that his uncle meant to remind him to note while eating. In other words not to eat with lobha and dosa. Accordingly he contemplated dhamma while eating and became an arahat.

### **On Touching**

**Motto:** If you note when there is touching, no mind wandering

If think of touching, mind goes wandering

Lobha arises when you enjoy the pleasant touch or feeling of fine and soft clothes, sofas, beds, etc: dosa arises if the touch of clothes, cushion, bed, etc: are rough or uncomfortable. "Rising", "falling", "sitting", "touching", "lifting", "moving forward" (in walking) and all other noting which concerned with physical touching are contemplation of body (kayanupassana). In the whole body except the tips of hair and nails there are body sense-surfaces when practice is perfect to certain extent you can vividly distinguish softness and roughness in touching.

of touching; touching is the cause and noting is the effect. Thus the Paccayapariggaha Nāna (knowledge of cause and effect) Stage is realized by the yogi.

Yogi may not be able to note successively the Nāmarupa-pariccheda Nāna Stage, however he could note in detail at the Paccayapariggaha Nāna Stage. While practising in all four different postures with strong concentration, he can note in detail. In walking practice, if the intention to walk appears vividly, then note "intention to walk" "intention to walk". Note "walking" "walking" when the body begins to move due to the pushing by element of motion. The intention to walk is the cause and walking movement is the effect. About 2 or 3 steps before reaching the end of the corridor, the intention to stop arises, then note "intention to stop" "intention to stop"; due to the intention, the element of motion controls the body and stops it. Then note the act of stopping as "stopping" "stopping".

When the intention to sit occurs distinctly, note "intention to sit" "intention to sit"; as the element of motion pushes the body downwards, note the gradual sitting movement as "sitting" "sitting". The intention to sit is the cause and the sitting action is the effect. When you want to stand up the intention to stand will arise, then note "intention to stand" "intention to stand". The element of motion pushes the body upwards and the gradual movement of the body standing up occurs. That gradual upward movement of the body is known as standing; note "standing" "standing". The intention to stand is the cause and the act of standing is the effect.

**Motto:** Intention to sit is nama  
 The act of sitting is rupa  
 It is not 'I' nor 'you' who sit  
 Just nama and rupa that sit  
 If the pair is well conceived  
 The purpose of sitting is achieved

At the Paccaya-pariggaha Nāna Stage, Namarupa-paricheda Nāna does not disappear; in fact it becomes more lucid i.e. differentiation of nama and rupa is more clear. When yogi is very attentive and mindful he could note in detail and objectively. Noting will be sporadic if it is done inattentively and casually. The word 'satipatthana' consists of "sati" meaning attentive or mindfulness and "apatthāna" meaning to fix the mind firmly and objectively. Dhamma will be comprehended distinctly only when sati or mindfulness settles firmly on the object of noting. Thence there will be progress in vipassana wisdom.

There are three ways of taking meal to gain merit

- (1) By reflecting upon morality
- (2) By contemplation of samatha
- (3) By contemplation of vipassana

However you can take meal by contemplating one of the above three ways, when you are at home and not practising meditation. Before taking meals, yogis at Saddhammaransi Yeiktha reflect this "we take these varieties of food, not for beautiful body built, nor for the enjoyment and pleasure, but for the longevity of the aggregates of four elements-----May the four bodily positions be comfortable". Thereupon you gain morality merit.

**Motto:** Reasoning, "Food" is taken to enable us to practise meditation.

Then you are engaged in morality reflection.

Yogi also radiate loving-kindness at every meal to all Sanghas at this Yeiktha, together with the practising nuns, yogi and those carrying out the various duties. This is taking food by contemplating samatha.

**Motto:** Before eating, if engage in loving-kindness radiation

That surely is eating with samatha contemplation

At every meal yogis note each movement or behaviour in the process of taking food, such as "taking" (food) "bending" (your neck); "opening" (your mouth), etc.:. Noting becomes successive due to attentive and respectful contemplation. You will gain magga phala and nirvana by noting in taking food. This is the way to take food by contemplating vipassana. Your mind wanders no more. It is the meditation masters' duty to give instruction on how to take food in order to gain merit. Yogi's duty is to practise according to the instruction.

**Motto:** While eating you note eating behaviour and action  
That is eating with vipassana contemplation

The Buddha advised "Must be mindful of the constituents of body. It is not only to note wholesome movements in four postures, general noting and eating, but also to note unwholesome movements in discharging excretion and urine". First note what is distinct, for instance, the desire to discharge excretion arises, then note "desire to defecate" "desire to defecate". As the element of motion pushes down the stools then note "defecating" "defecating". If there is pain, note "painful" "painful". Noting the desire is the contemplation of mind cittanupasana; noting "defecating" is the contemplation of body-kāyanupassana; noting the pain is the contemplation of feeling-vedananupassana. Thus you gain merit while discharging urine and excretion.

To be in the presence of Buddha's Sasana is to gain merit if you practise according to "His" advice. Noting attentively mind wanders no longer, therefore it is a great support for the attainment of nirvana. If you desire to attain nirvana immediately, then you better note successively and objectively; if noting is sporadic, could you expect to attain nirvana?

### **On Thinking**

**Motto:** When thought arises, you keep on thinking  
Mind goes wandering.

With eyes closed you lie down on the bed to sleep, however you just think of this and that. If it is about pleasant occurrences you develop lobha. How? You enjoy it and would like to go on thinking of that pleasant event instead of noting. If it is unpleasant you get angry and disturbed whatever that experience may be, instead of noting it. So there arises (dosa) anger. That means mind wandering off without noting. Therefore you keep yourself at a distance from nirvana.

**Motto:** If you observe and note instead of thinking  
No mind wandering.

With strong concentration you note as soon as there arises a thought; repetitive practice will make your noting quite rapid and you will be able to note instantly. When there occurs a thought, thence mind no longer wanders and the arising thought disappears simultaneously when noted. Thereupon the arising and disappearing of thought become very distinct, especially at upper Udayabbaya Nāna Stage. At the Bhanga Nāna Stage the disappearance is more prominent and your noting mind is fixed rightly on the arising thought. When concentration is strengthened the disappearing of thought together with the noting mind becomes very vivid and thence you comprehend the three characteristics, anicca, dukkha and anatta.

The words "anicca", "dukkha" and "anatta", which you have heard since your child-hood, are no longer hearsay. Now they are the actual self-experience through your mindful practice. In other words, you find these three characteristics are the phenomenon happening in your physical body. If you comprehended the true nature of these three characteristics, you certainly will attain nirvana.

### **The Five Monks**

In the Buddha's life-time, there was a case, in which the monks could not gain dhamma because of mind wan-

dering. In Zetavan monastery, Savatthi 5 monks practised meditation. One monk believed that it was the eye that created problems in meditation. Therefore he strived to control his eyes and did not note the sensation of the remaining sense-organs. Second monk thought that it was the hearing which made meditation difficult, so he noted hearing only but not the other sensations. The third monk considered the sense of smell was an obstacle in attaining dhamma, thus he kept a good watch over the nose, leaving the other sensation unnoted.

To the fourth one, it was the taste that obstructed progress in meditation and could send one to apaya, therefore he consciously noted to control the tongue. To the fifth monk, the cause of slow progress in meditation was the physical touch. One day all of them met and discussed dhamma, however they could not come to any agreement. Then they went to the Lord and respectfully reported their discussion. "It was perfectly right to watch each sense-door; nevertheless it is not enough to observe and note just one sense-door. You better observe and note all six sense-doors. Magga-phla and nirvana could be attained when all six sense-doors are completely controlled" advised the Buddha. "He" continued, "In one of your past existences, each of you were eaten by the orgresses, because of your indulgence in the six senses. Therefore it is important to control all six sense-doors, if you wish to have happiness of man, deva and nirvana". The monks respectfully requested the Enlightened one to relate the anecdote to them.

In one of his past existences, the Buddha-would-be was a 1000<sup>th</sup> son of king Bramadatta. To be a king he had to wait for the 999 brothers. Although the youngest son he was a wise one. He saw the Silent Buddhas and enquired whether he would be a king in Baranasi in that very life. The Silent Buddha said that he would be a king not in Baranasi, but in Takkasila, Gantara Province, 60 yuzana away from Baranasi, if he could reach it within 7 days. The journey was a dangerous one, as he had to cross a forest

inhabited by orgres. However the young prince determined to take the journey and bade farewell to his parents, friends, and attendants. His 5 attendants vowed to go with him and that they would be very careful on the way not to be eaten by the orgres. The Silent-Buddha provided them with paritta thread and sand to prevent harms and dangers.

When they entered the forest the orgresses enticed them by creating themselves as very beautiful and lovely deities. One of his followers could no longer control himself, however much the prince reminded him that these were orgress and not lovely deities. At last he requested the prince to let him remain with the beautiful deities. No sooner than the prince and his followers left he was immediately eaten by the orgresses. Next the orgresses entertained them with sweet and melodious songs. As the second one could not believe that the sounds were the creation of orgres he stayed back. Again he was eaten by the orgres.

It was the sweet fragrance which attracted the third attendant who also was eaten by the orgres; the fourth one was swayed by the delicious food and the fifth one was seduced by soft and tender touch of body and they became food for the orgres. The prince left alone, continued his journey and was very mindful not to let his mind wander or distracted by six senses. An orgre not even spared the wise prince and created herself as a lovely woman with a baby on one arm and carrying bags and bundles by the other hand and followed the prince from a distance. She told the wood cutters that the man in front was her husband. They criticized him, upon-which the prince replied that she was in fact an orgress, not a human being and not his wife. The orgress said, "Men usually call names such as orgress and ghost when they are angry with their wives".

Finally they arrived at Takkasila and rested near the gate. The orgress could not approach the prince, so she stayed outside the rest house. At the same time the King of Takkasila came out of the city gate with his followers and was very much attracted by the lovely woman created

by the orgress. He sent one of his followers to find out whether she was married or not. She told the King's follower that the man in the rest house was her husband. Upon the refusal of the prince, the King happily took the orgress to the palace. At night the relatives and friends of the orgress feasted on everyone in the palace.

In the morning when the people found out that they had no king, they went out in search of a king. When they learned how the prince, a wise one had escaped all the dangers along his journey, they took him as their king. The prince became a king, because of his perfect control over his six sense-doors and not mind wandering. The King and his followers were eaten by the orgress as they could not control their six sense-doors. "Not only in one existence but also in many many one those who do not control their six sense-doors will be eaten by orgres namely lobha and dosa " said the Buddha.

The five monk were very much frightened and they practised and controlled all six sense-doors according to Buddha's advice. They attained nirvana. I am sure all practising yogis have practised to control the six sense- doors.

### **Prisoner and a cup of oil**

Here is the story of prisoner who was sentenced to death, as mentioned in the Silapattazataka. On the day of his execution, the king issued an order. If he did not want to die, the prisoner must carry a brimful cup of oil and go to the theater where a welknown dancer Zanapathakalyāni, was performing. A man with a big sharp knife was to follow the prisoner and as soon as he let a drop of oil fall on the ground, his head was to be cut. The prisoner had to go through the huge audience; if someone bumped him or if he stole a glance at the dancer he would certainly let the oil drop. He had to be very careful and attentive not to be bumped by the people or to glance at the dancer as he did not want to die. "Is it easy or difficult for the prisoner?" asked Buddha. The monks replied "It is difficult."

"In fact not to let the oil drop is not so difficult as not to miss noting in meditation." said Buddha.

Athakatha masters drew a simile as follows.

- The brimful cup of oil as the mindfulness of body.
- The prisoner as meditators
- The prisoner has to be careful, so that he would not die, that is only for that very existence. However yogis must be mindful so as not to undergo death in numerous existences and to gain nirvana which is free from death and all sufferings.
- The audience and the dancer as the sense objects.

If the prisoner was distracted by the audience or the dancer, he would drop oil; so also if yogis are attracted by the six senses, they will be no more mindful. The noble dhamma will be beheaded, that means no attainment of magga and phala.

- The man holding a sharp knife as the conscious mind.

The conscious mind always watches the noting mind just like the man with a sharp knife watched the prisoner. The conscious mind is always aware whether there is noting or not.

- Oil drop is compared to kilesa.

When kilesa arises, it is just like beheading ariya magga. Therefore yogi must note successively and respectfully so as not to let kilesa develops in between noting. If noting is sporadic eventhough you have parami, it is inevitable that you will not gain the noble dhamma.

- Beheading as missing the noble dhamma or wisdom.

If yogi is attentive and mindful, the noble magga will not be beheaded, therefore it is a certainty to achieve noble dhamma.

The monks with great repentance and fright contemplated successively and objectively. Thus the six sense-doors were under good control and no mind wandering. Thence concentration became mature and they all attained nirvana.

## Internal Arrest

The discussion on mind wandering and how to prevent it has been discussed so far. Now what is internal arrest and how to obstruct it will be dealt with.

**Motto:** Attachment to the pleasure of noting, means internal arresting.

In olden days people used to practise tranquility meditation (samatha contemplation) and changed over to vipassana meditation when concentration was established. Those who practised samatha and attained meditative absorption were usually attached to the pleasure of unper-turbed, peaceful and lucid state of mind. Whereas in vipassana meditation it is required to note what is happening in the constituents of the body. That is what you all are practising at present, according to Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw's guidance.

Before the development of strong meditation, yogi may not be able to differentiate between rupa and nāma. Thereupon when the abdomen rises and falls, he thinks, "It is my abdomen rising and falling. "It is 'I' who note". "It is 'I' who sit". "It is 'I' who touch". He perceives rupa and nāma as a compound entity. Furthermore the object of noting and the noting mind are treated as the same.

With mature concentration he comprehends rupa and nāma as two different entities; rising and falling as rupa and the noting consciousness as nāma. That means he has reached the Namarupa-pariccheda Nāna Stage. In other words he could differentiate the unconscious matter i.e. rupa and the conscious mind i.e. nama. He also realizes that there is just rupa and nāma, but no such entity as "I". The usage of "I" in everyday life is just conventional term and it is used for the convenience's sake of communication. By virtue of steadfast contemplation, there is no more attachment as "I". The incorrect view of self and that of aggregates are expelled, hence the door to apaya is closed.

At the stage of Paccayapariggaha Nāna (the knowledge of cause and effect) yogi is aware of the fact that rising, falling, sitting, touching, etc, are the cause and noting of them is the effect. There is nothing to note if rising, falling, sitting, touching, etc: do not happen ; as a matter of fact there are just cause and effect. Thus no attachment develops. At this stage, images such as pagodas, monasteries, green, blue, yellow colours, etc: will appear in the yogi's mental vision; however they are not very lucid.

At the Sammasana Nāna Stage yogi will distinctly experience pain and numbness, not long after he has sat. After practising for 9-10 days, being harassed by dukkha vedana, he is depressed and wants to go home. He also thinks when sitting gets more painful. In the early days of my practice, there was not much distress; now it is getting worse. The meditation instructor has to encourage him, by telling that after this stage of nāna, he would be quite relieved from such pain and sufferings. Thence there is no attachment but weariness of the body and mind.

By dint of attentive and respectful noting, there is progress in meditation and soon yogi reaches the stage of Udayabbaya Nāna which is just the opposite of the Sammasana Nāna Stage. In the early stage of this nāna, arising and disappearing are not so distinct. Moreover there is less pain and yogi experiences physical and mental lightness, his body and mind are pliable and workable and they are also well practised. At the same time he enjoys bliss and joy as there is peace and calmness in body and mind. He can sit continuously for 2 to 3 hours without changing position. Thus vipassana bliss or rapture (piti) is developed. There appear pleasant and enjoyable mental visions. He saw the mental images of his past experiences; he also saw deities and brahmas and thought that he himself was a deity or a brahma. Seeing deities and brahmas is not dhamma. He has not gained the dhamma yet, nevertheless he will enjoy 5 pitis.

### **Five Vipassana Piti**

1. Khuddaka Piti, the thrill of joy that causes " the flesh to creep".
2. Khanika Piti, instantaneous joy like a flash of lightning.
3. Okkantika Piti, the flood of joy like the breakers on a seashore.
4. Ubbega Piti, transporting joy which enables one to float in the air just as a lump of cotton carried by the wind. Yogi while practising may feel his body elevated when concentration is strengthened. A yogi sat with arms raised; when you went to her for the second time, she sat there with her arms raised. At dhamma interview the instructor asked her whether she felt tired. She said she was not aware of it at all. Sometimes your body may become very soft and at other times very rough; sometimes swaying back and forth as if someone pushed from the back and pulled from the front. Yogi thought, it was super- natural disturbances and became disheartened. If she has an inclination towards such experience, pondering whether it will happen again, it will take time to dispel it. For that reason yogi should develop a strong mind and not to give a chance for such thought.
5. Pharana Piti, suffusing joy, which pervades the whole body like a full blown balloon or like a flood that overflows small tanks and ponds. It is so pleasant and enjoyable which you cannot account for or explain. Such unusual experiences are apt to make one think that one has gained and attained dhamma. You may even shed tears of joy and develop attachment to that rapture so much, so that you no longer continue to note. In sitting practice too, you do not experience pain, in fact it is all the way easy and comfortable. You experience such as soft touch, sweet and fragrant smell and seeing delightful visions. There is no progress in dhamma due to the attachment to this joy and rapture.

**Motto:** Attachment to the pleasure of noting  
Means internal arresting

A yogi, who could not get leave from his office, practised under the guidance of a good meditation instructor. Since he could not join the meditation centre, he practised at home. It has passed 10 years but he had no improvement due to the attachment to piti. This is most likely to happen to those who practise samatha contemplation for jhana absorption.

An elder sayadaw of many disciples possessed super-normal power and absorption and considered himself as an arahat. He was well-versed in the scriptures and instructed his disciples both dhamma and samatha contemplation. He lived at Uccavalikha. One of his disciples, Dhammadinna, who lived in Tarintara, became an arahat with super-normal power. One day he reflected upon his sayadaw's status of dhamma, who had completed 60 years of vasa. To his amazement, he found out that his sayadaw was not an arahat yet, but still puthuzana. He went to the sayadaw who queried him "Why do you come at this time? Is there any special purpose?" The young monk replied that he wanted to know something which was not clear to him. He asked more than 1000 problems which sayadaw could explicate all at once.

The young monk asked again whether sayadaw had gained samatha concentration. Upon which sayadaw let him know that he had practised samatha concentration for a long time. Thereupon the young monk requested sayadaw to create a wild, angry, big elephant. Sayadaw create a white elephant. Again the young monk requested to create that wild angry white elephant to come towards sayadaw, with its tail curled up, its trunk in the mouth and making a loud voice as if to trample sayadaw. The created elephant was so realistic that sayadaw got frightened and prepared to run away. Thereupon Dhammadinna pulled sayadaw's robe and reminded him "An arahat has no fear".

Sayadaw Mahānāga at once realized that he was not yet an arahat as he believed all these years. With great repentance he requested Dhammadinna to be his refuge and to admonish him. Dhammadinna, an arahat, instructed him

how to practise vipassana meditation. Sayadaw contemplated right away and after 3 steps he became an arahat since he had developed a strong concentration through samatha meditation. All these sixty years, he was internally arrested and a puthuzana not an arahat. If he died he would be reborn in the brahma world where life-span is very long. However his next destiny might be the animal world. That is the reason why Dhammadinna came to save his sayadaw from an unhappy destiny. It is evident that the high esteem of samatha jhana method is the cause of internal arrest for the sayadaw.

**Motto:** Dispel the pleasure of noting  
No internal arrest if contemplate each arising

The stage of Udayabbaya Nāna is analogous to absorption (jhana). The lower Udayabbaya Nāna Stage is equivalent to the second jhana; the higher is equivalent to the third jhana. At this higher stage of Udayabbaya Nāna, the object of noting arises and disappears distinctly as soon as it is noted. Thereupon no feeling of pleasantness exists and no development of attachment. The bliss (piti) also fades away. Whereas in the lower Udayabbaya Nana Stage it is not so. Dhamma can be gained only when becoming and dissolution are apparently comprehended. In other words, due to the comprehension of the three characteristics there is no more pleasure to be attached to.

The Sankharupekkha Nāna Stage is similar to the 4<sup>th</sup> jhana. At this stage yogi is beyond pain and pleasure and will not be disturbed by whatsoever is happening around him. One who woke up from the 4<sup>th</sup> jhana said he was not aware of the noise made by 100 carts passed by him. After the Sankharupekkha Nana Stage the progress in insight meditation continues successively.

## On Attachment

**Motto:** Attachment to rupa and nāma as self,  
Cause thirst and burning which no one could  
help.

If rupa and nama are considered as "I" , "you" "man", "woman", there arise thirst and burning desire which are dosa. One will suffer anxieties, worries, unhappiness, burning etc: when his or her desire is not fulfilled. It is not only mentally burnt, but also physically too. Therefore he or she can be afflicted with diseases such as, heart attack, insomnia, hypertension, etc; If you think yourself as "I", you certainly will regard others as "man" and "woman". Thence you begin to attach to them and get burnt. If you do not wish to be burnt, note rupa and nama instead of developing attachment and thirst.

**Motto:** No need to attach to and to be thirsty  
If arising rupa and nama are perceived as separate  
entities

Vipassana meditation will prevent the development of attachment, thirst and burning. The following is an illustration of how one got burnt because of attachment.

In Baranasi, Buddha-would-be was a brahman who got wearied of life and renounced the World. He lived in the forest for so many years and practised samatha contemplation steadfastly. Thereupon he attained super-normal power and absorption. One day he went to a village for salt and some sour thing. Due to his serene and calm behaviour, the king revered him and invited to his palace for every day alms. Furthermore he requested the hermit to stay in his garden to admonish him and his people. 16 years had passed and one day there arose a rebellion at a border area. In those days kings usually led the army to fight the rebellion.

After arranging with the queen, the King left for the

border. The Queen Mudulakkhana, took a great care for the hermit's everyday alms. The hermit came to the palace through the sky at about the time of meal since the King was away. One day while waiting for the hermit the queen dozed off and got up hurriedly upon hearing the hermit. Some of her clothes slipped down. As the hermit could no longer sustain his concentration, attachment to the queen developed. In other words, he was at once burnt by the desire for the queen. He did not stay for the meal, however he put it in his alms-bowl and went back to the garden on foot. His jhana absorption had vanished due to the attachment to the Queen. Attachment and jhana are antithesis.

Back in the garden he just left the alm-bowl with food under his bed-stead. In great distress he could not eat or sleep and did not go to the palace for alms for several days. On the seventh day the king came back after squashing the rebels and first of all he went to see the hermit. There he found the hermit on the bed and rotten food in the alm-bowl. After cleaning everything the King asked the hermit what disease had afflicted him. The hermit replied that it was a sense object in the palace. "The sense-object is the queen" explained the hermit when the King requested him. "It is not a great problem" so saying the King took the hermit to his palace and gave away the Queen. At the same time the King advised that the queen, a wise lady, should try her very best not to ruin the hermit's noble life.

The Queen told the hermit to ask for a house to live in. The King gave them a very old tumbled down out-house. On arriving there, the Queen refused to go in unless the hermit repaired and cleaned it. So he went to the King and ask for spade, baskets, etc: Again he was sent for beddings, water pot, mat, etc: Then the Queen sat beside him and reprimanded thus, "Do you not yet repent? See what you have to do as a brahman and the vast difference from a hermit's life". So saying she pulled his beard hard. The hermit at once realized his grave mistake and went back to the forest with a strong determination not to approach the

village anymore, leave alone to live there. You can imagine the hermit carrying out all these dirty works of a layman.

**Motto:** No need to be attached and thirsty  
If arising rupa and nāma are perceived as separate entities.

The hermit was burnt by the desire for the Queen due to the attachment to her, instead of noting "seeing" "seeing". He had practised samatha contemplation and not vipassana meditation. Samatha is not dependable in such case i.e. not to get attached to and thereby burnt by the desire and not to commit grave mistakes. You must note as soon as you see or there appears a sense object, so that there could be no attachment. When you note, the seeing mind disappears and there is just "mere seeing" and no attachment.

At the Bhanga Nāna Stage the seeing mind vanishes and there is nothing to attach to. If the hermit had practised vipassana meditation he would be able to note "seeing ", upon seeing the queen, and also back in the garden he could note "thinking", "thinking", when he thought of the queen. The thinking mind will disappear, thereupon there is nothing to be attached to, to be thirsty and to be burnt. If he could note "touching" when he lay on the bed, the thought of the queen could never happen. Those who have attained the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage can note and experience dissolution. Thence there arose no desire and no commitment of grave mistake.

If you cannot note, "thinking" "seeing", then revert to noting "sitting" and other physical movements which are feasible for everyone. The thirst and burning desire would be discarded by noting the movements of body. A firm footing is established as the latent inclination for the sense objects (ārammanānusaya) are distructed. No more chance for rebirth in apāya and one would gain nirvana. If latent inclination for sense objects is not eradicated, there develops latent inclination towards the continuity of consciousness. In

other words if you cannot dispel the inclination for sense objects you certainly will get attached to them. Thereupon this attachment will cause desire, thirst and burning (continuity of consciousness- santānānusaya). The product of the latent inclination for continuity of consciousness undoubtedly is new existences.

Santānānusaya is compared to the roots of poisonous tree. As the hermit was a Buddha-would-be he could instantly recollect his mind when reprimanded by the queen and could develop concentration thereupon, If he was an ordinary person, there would be a great loss in his life, for the reason that he could not practise vipassana meditation. In ancient days the wise monks reminded the young novice not to play with super-normal power as he might meet a blind girl. The related story is: In those days many laities as well as monks and novices practised samatha meditation. Upon gaining jhana they went to places by sky-way. One day a young monk heard a sweet song and being attached to it, he lost his jhana, so he had to come down to the ground. There he met a blind girl with the sweet voice and married her. Do not be lacking in vipassana meditation as samatha meditation is unreliable.

**Motto:** No internal arrest or mind wandering  
 No attachment nor thirst and burning  
 By mindful observation and noting  
 Liberated from heavy burden of suffering  
 Such as rebirth, old age, and dying  
 So said Lord Buddha  
 In Vibhan Uddesa Sutta.

Vipassana meditation serves two purposes: you are delivered from apāya and will attain nirvana. Therefore you should practise vipassana meditation with strong faith and determination. "Attachment to the pleasure of noting means internal arrest". When the attachment to the pleasure of noting is eliminated and concentration is well developed you

are away from apaya and nearer to nirvana. In the lower Udayabbaya Nāna Stage, you may enjoy rapture and consider it as noble dhamma. Due to strong concentration, sometimes there may be momentary lapse of Sati which yogi may consider it as dhamma. Yogi may also get attached to the peace and serenity (passaddhi) and noting is deterred. This is the reason why you should diligently and continuously practise to attain the upper Udayabbaya Nāna Stage." Eliminate the pleasure but note each arising, then no arrest but improving".

At the Upper Udayabbaya Nāna Stage rapture fades away and yogi experience only becoming and dissolution. Thereupon no enjoyment and attachment develop. Noting is the best method to dispel desire. As contemplation for samatha jhana could not differentiate rupa and nāma, one will get attached inevitable. "Attachment to rupa and nāma as self, leads to thirst and burning which no one could help". When yogi can note as "mere seeing", "mere knowing", etc: there will be no recognition of "I" or "self". "No need to be attached and be thirsty, if rupa and nāma are perceived as two separate entities". Those who practise samatha meditation usually get attached to and burnt as they are unable to differentiate rupa and nāma. In order to note as "mere seeing" "mere knowing", noting mind must settle on the present happening; if noting is not on time i. creates opportunity for attachment.

At the upper Udayabbaya Nāna Stage, wisdom develops and yogi perceives impermanence, therefore no attachment occur. To be attached to what is not permanent is nonsense or stupidity. At the Bhanga Nāna Stage, there is only dissolution at every noting. The continuous dissolution is anicca: to note the continuous dissolution is dukkha: no control over this process is anatta. Therefore yogi vividly comprehends the three characteristics and prevents attachment, thirst and burning desire. Thus he can attain nirvana which is free from all sufferings.

After listening to "Uddesa Vibbhanga Sutta" which

constitutes the three factors for the attainment of nirvana, namely (1) not to let mind wander (2) not to be internally arrested and (3) not to get attached to sense object, together with the method of how to achieve them, may you all be able to practise in compliance to Buddha's advice. With diligent contemplation may you all immediately realise nirvana which is free from all sufferings, by easy practice.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## The Three Vedana (19-7-95)

Today's sermon will be on The Three Vedana (feeling or sensation). Yogis sincerely striving for the attainment of magga and phala will experience these three feelings (Vedana). When experienced a pleasant feeling (Sukha Vedana) one inclines to reflect upon it often and often that you desire this pleasant feeling more and more or all the time. There arises greed (lobha). When it is unpleasant feeling (Dukkha Vedana) you get angry and every thought of it is accompanied by anger (dosa). In the case of indifference feeling (Upekkha Vedana) you are not sure of anything or not clearly aware of things to do or not to do i.e., ignorance (moha). Yogi must overcome greed, anger and ignorance, so as to fulfill his noble desire.

Buddha talked about Vedana in the following order, Sukha, Dukkha, Upekkha. However in practice, yogi experiences (Dukkha Vedana) unpleasant feeling first. This is according to the procedure of practice. Anger is manifested as ill-will and hatred in unpleasant feeling whereas when there is pleasant feeling greed (raga) is manifested as repeated desire for it. Is there any possibility of gaining moral dhamma if you practise with greed and anger?

It is diagonally opposite to Buddha's Teachings. In Upekkha Vedana i.e., indifference feeling, ignorance (moha) manifested as repeated indecisiveness and delusion. These repeated occurrence of feeling such as greed, ill-will and ignorance must be noted and overcome.

### **Dukkha Vedana**

**Motto:** The repeated occurrence of ill-will in Dukkha Vedana must be eliminated.

Beginners will certainly encounter first with Dukkha Vedana. As instructed by the Rev. Mahasi Sayadaw, when you are going to practise meditation, choose a secluded place, take up a sitting posture which is most suitable for

you, straighten your back with head held up and fix your mind on the rising and falling of your abdomen. When rising, the upward movement due to inhalation, make a mental note "rising". When falling, downward movement due to exhalation, make a mental note "falling". You must also notice the successive movement, i.e., the beginning, the middle and the end of each rising and falling movement. It must be a mindful noting.

If noting of 2 sections, that is "rising" and "falling", is not so effective, then change to noting 3 sections, "rising", "falling", "touching". Touching is the awareness of hardness and heat when your buttocks press the clothes and the floor. Continue noting three sections if it promotes mindfulness. If your mind is not calm and stable yet, you note four sections, "rising", "falling", "sitting", "touching". Sitting is the sitting posture of body. Form of body is not to be noticed. When the intention to sit arises, the element of motion (vayo dhatu) push up the body and keep it in an erect posture. Just note "rising", "falling", "sitting" and "touching".

At first yogi may not be able to note distinctly, however with successive earnest noting, he will be aware of the fact that "rising", "falling", "sitting", "touching" is one process, noting of them is another. In other words the rising movement, the falling movement, the sitting action, the touching action are bodily or physical process. Noticing the rising movement, the falling movement, etc. are mental process. They are two distinct processes whereupon he can now distinguish rupa (matter) and nama (mind). Rupa is matter or corporeality which has no consciousness, Nama is mind which is consciousness. Thus yogi has attained Namarupa pariccheda Nana, the stage of knowledge differentiating nama and rupa. At this stage pain and numbness are not vividly experienced, however there is just tiredness and stiffness. Sometimes noting proceeds easily.

By dint of diligent practice yogi arrives at the stage of knowledge of cause and effect. While noting an object

(of noting e.g. sitting) as it arises he is aware that a mental process of knowing depends upon an object. He realises that 'rising' 'falling' 'sitting' 'touching' are actions which cause him to note 'rising' 'falling' 'sitting' 'touching'. Suppose these 'rising' 'falling' 'sitting' 'touching' movements and actions do not occur, then there is nothing to note. Therefore 'rising' 'falling' 'sitting' 'touching' movements and actions are the cause and the mental noting of them is the effect. Rising and falling may happen to some yogis in the chest or sometimes at the side and for others at the back or on top of the head. 'Rising' and 'falling' must be noted wherever they appear. Yogi will also perceive that they do not occur in one place, but shift to other parts of the body. While thus noting, yogi is aware of the fact that rising and falling movements are the cause and noting them is effect. At the same time feeling of unpleasantness (Dukkha Vedana) is no more vivid to him for the reason that when the pain is noted as soon as it arises, it disappears at once. The process is arising pain, instantaneous noting and dissolution; arising, noting, dissolution, so on and so forth.

When yogi continues noting in this manner, he is no longer aware of the pain, however his attention is more on the process of arising and passing away. This is the third stage of the knowledge of the true nature of phenomena - Sammasana Nāna. This is a worse stage of knowledge because painful feelings (Dukkha Vedana) occur. Not long before sitting for half an hour or so, pain, numbness, itching, giddiness, swaying, heaviness, pressure, etc. become very conspicuous. Especially for those who have not practised samatha in the past, feeling of pain will be more pronounced.

Now yogi is very unhappy and becomes unbearable. Thence he reflects, "Am I going to suffer like this for the whole sitting or may be for the whole day or tomorrow too". Thus reflecting anger arises repeatedly. This is the manifestation of anger in the feeling of pain (Dukkha Vedana). Yogi, in fact, practises in order to dispel anger, hatred, etc. however he is now angry, instead of noting it or warding

it off. To dispel anger, greed and ignorance is an important factor in insight meditation. Buddha advised to note anger when it arises but not to entertain it long. He also reminds that vivid feeling of suffering must be regarded as a thorn or a dart, and to discard it. A man working in a wood may be pricked by a thorn and suppose he does not take it out and keeps on working, his work will not be done in time. Buddha, therefore, pointed out that when feeling of suffering becomes very strong, it must be expelled like a thorn, otherwise your practice will not progress.

### **Three Ways of Contemplation**

**Motto:** When sensation of pain arises, note it right away; just as taking out a thorn.

There are three different ways of contemplation practised by yogi to expel Dukkha Vedana.

- (1) Contemplation for the disappearance of pain or feeling of suffering.
- (2) Contemplation to get rid of pain at one sitting.
- (3) Contemplation to understand the nature of pain.

(1) Yogi practises for the disappearance or dissolution of Dukkha Vedana, in fact, is seeking for pleasure. In other words when one wants to be free from pain, he is desirous of pleasure. That, in deed, is greed. Will a yogi seeking for pleasure gain moral dhamma? No, not indeed, because kilesa (greed is impurity) arises in between notings. Besides, it is not in accordance with Buddha's advice. There will be no progress in meditation, therefore yogi is unhappy. Buddha's advice is to practise to understand the nature of suffering, however not to dissolve it.

(2) When feeling of pain arises, yogi may reflect thus, I must get rid of it. This again is anger (Dosa). Will a yogi with a harsh mind gain moral dhamma? Yogi must note to understand the nature of the arising and passing away object, if not the progress in meditation will be retarded or the moral dhamma will not be attained. When anger arises

while noting pain, it is said that kilesa (impurities) occurs in between notings, arresting the improvement in contemplation. This is not the way to practise. In accordance with Buddha's Teachings, it is necessary to note in order to understand the nature of arising and passing away process. Thence yogi will be in the right tract and attain the moral dhamma.

**Motto:** The perception of the nature of becoming and disappearing of object brings forth awareness of arising and passing away (Udayavaya Nāna).

Yogi practises to comprehend the nature of pain when it arises. Buddha did not instruct to contemplate to get rid of pain but to understand its nature. If yogi practise to prevent pain is that not against Buddha's advice? "Must get rid of this pain at this sitting" is noting with harsh mind and ill-will. The purpose of noting is to alleviate ill-will, however, yogi is practising now with kilesas (ill-will, anger, etc.) in between notings. Remember this is not the way to note Dukkha Vedana. To practise in order to understand the nature of pain is in compliance with Buddha's advice.

How to contemplate Dukkha Vedana? Buddha advised to be patient. "Patience begets Nirvana" is the saying undoubtedly, the most appropriate for the meditators.

Yogi should not change posture whenever pain arises because frequent change disrupts contemplation. No patience means no firm concentration. No wisdom without strong concentration. No attainment of Magga, Phala and Nirvana without wisdom. Yogi becomes anxious thinking thus, Is this pain going to disappear or not? Am I to suffer the whole day like this? Do not be anxious; to suffer is the nature of pain, to note is the duty of yogi. Be patient, keep calm and ponder "be patient, be patient" and note earnestly when he becomes more tolerable and continues to contemplate conscientiously, perhaps pain may subside or totally dissolve. On the other hand, when sensation of pain intensely in-

creases, so as to put up with it, yogi becomes tense both physically and mentally. When vigor is in excess or when effort takes forefront, noting is no more directed to the present i.e., the process going on at that very moment.

He must relax both mentally and physically and reflect whether the sensation of pain is only in the skin or in the flesh, in the nerves, bones, marrow. Concentration will become stronger with attentive noting. Mind you, it is no longer a general noting but it is noting with enthusiasm. Even though concentration is firm with repeated noting, pain reaching its height, may decrease or become more intense. If the pain is unbearable, yogi might like to change posture. If so, note the intention to change. Perhaps there is less pain, due to the attention shifting from noting "painful" to noting "intending", continue noting without change in posture. If you must change posture, then proceed with the acts of changing legs and hands in successive order and note each and every action in detail. Vedana might disappear with the change of posture because attention on pain is switched to the process of changing.

It is better for the yogi to try and bear the pain and not to change as it could deter the progress in meditation. When concentration is sustained, yogi will notice that pain shifts from one part of the body to another, sometimes it is more painful and sometimes not. Then yogi might reflect thus, "Vedana is changing from place to place. Besides it is not a continuous sensation, it increases and subsides occasionally". The thought that pain is continuous, may lessen the interest in noting. Vedana becomes more painful with each noting and reaches the height and then it again subsides with each noting, as experienced by most of the well practised yogis. With continued noting and fresh effort Vedana arises and vanishes every time when it is noted. It also shifts from place to place. This process becomes vivid at the stage of knowledge of becoming and dissolution (Udayabbaya Nāna). Then yogi recognizes the nature of Vedana i.e., arising and disappearing, impermanance, always

in flux. Whereupon concentration gains momentum and he is now quite aware that noting can overcome pain and also that it is the right way to overcome Dukkha Vedana.

When concentration is mature, yogi is aware of the fact that pain arises and disappears instantly with each noting; the process is arising and disappearing, arising and disappearing, so on and so forth. Later dissolution is more apparent but not the arising. Whereupon he develops a vivid knowledge of becoming and dissolution i.e. Udayabbaya Nāna. Now pain is not so distinct to be noted but the process of arising and passing away becomes the object of noticing. Yogi also clearly perceives that noting consciousness can overcome pain.

At the stage of Bhanga Nāna i.e., the knowledge of dissolution, sensation of pain is not so distinct but the noting of its dissolution becomes more prominent. At this stage concentration is very strong and firm. so when yogi notices, form is no longer vivid to him, but pain is more conspicuous. Whenever he notes the pain, it is no longer there, it just disappears. This successive noting of dissolution makes him think that he is not on the right track. Some yogis have knowledge of dhamma which stated the noting must be on the present and not on the past happenings. Now noting of pain occurs only after the pain has disappeared, therefore he thinks, it is not in accordance with Abhidhamma. He is anxious and asks the instructor, Am I on the right track? I am noting what has passed and not that what is happening in the present. Pain disappears as soon as it is noted, therefore my noting is always late and I am noting only what has already happened.

The instructor has to tell him that at the Bhanga Nāna Stage, it is in compliance with Abhidhamma, to note the past as pain disappears as soon as it arises, hence it is not apparent to yogi to note it. Yogi should understand that too. It is necessary to remind yogi not to reflect upon it, whether on the right track or not, because it could slacken the progress in contemplation. The steady noting in this

manner, lies pain and more awareness of its dissolution-overcomes anger concerning pain just like taking out the thorn.

**Motto:** The repeated arising anger in Dukkha Vedana must be discarded.

When sensation of pain arises, note it right away as if taking out the thorn.

Now yogi overcomes the difficulties of Bhanga Nāna. Stage, completes one stage and has covered half way to Nirvana. Sammasana Nāna, the third stage of wisdom is a worse one, since yogi experiences more pain. The fourth stage, Udayabbaya Nāna is more pleasant for the reason of less pain and just noting its disappearance only. Suppose yogi has practised for nearly ten days and yet there is no progress, then the instructor can judge he (yogi) is at Sammasana Nāna Stage.

The instructor has to be cautious to decide at which stage yogi has arrived. When yogi reaches the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage, the process of arising and passing away is not so lucid to him. He experiences lightness in both body and mind. He is also physically and mentally pliable and workable. It is so in the lower stage of Udayabbaya Nāna.

Those yogis who had to change posture frequently in the early stage of wisdom, at this Udayabbaya Stage, could sit for one hour without changing. Those who did not change frequently in the lower stage of wisdom, could sit one or 2, 3, 4, 5 hours without changing. Sometimes in the lower stages yogi may find his mind wandering away, however, contemplation is now easy and smooth. As the meditation practice gains momentum, noting will go on of its own accord, smoothly and easily. It appears to him that he is watching effortlessly, arising and vanishing of objects which are very vivid and clear.

During lower stages of wisdom yogi needs to put more effort to note but not in the upper stages. As he has perfectly

practised both physically and mentally, noting goes on automatically, thence there is peace and calm in both body and mind. Some yogi said that they have never experienced before such mental peace and calm. Moreover in the sitting posture their body is erect like a doll, without shifting here and there. This is what yogi will experience in Udayabbdaya Nāna Stage. It is vipassana pīti - joy or bliss of meditation. Leave alone the common people, not even Devas can have such opportunities.

While practising in a secluded place yogi may experience vipassana joy and bliss. Perhaps some sort of attachment to this joy and bliss develops and yogi may cherish it, instead of discarding it. The repeated desire for this joy and bliss (Sukha Vedana) is regarded as the manifestation of raga (lobha) in Sukha Vedana.

### **Sukha Vedana**

**Motto:** The repeated arising raga in Sukha Vedana must be discarded.

Repeated arising of attachment to pleasure means internal arrest in progress.

How to contemplate to dispel Sukha Vedana?

Buddha instructs to comprehend Sukha Vedana as Dukkha especially in the higher stage of Udayabbaya Nāna. In this stage it is to note arising and dissolution, however, in the lower stage of Udayabbaya Nāna arising and dissolution are not very distinct and there arises pleasant feeling. Yogi also experienced physical and mental buoyancy. His body and mind are also pliable and workable. At the same time he enjoys joy and bliss as there is peace and calm in body and mind. Whereupon he develops attachment to this physical and mental peace and calm (vipassana pīti). This is the manifestation of raga in Sukha Vedana. In order to eliminate it (raga), yogi must contemplate Sukha until he perceives it as Dukkha. How to contemplate?

Repeatedly and mindfully reflect to make assure whether it is physical or mental pleasure. If mental peace and calm

is more outstanding, then note mentally "peaceful", "peaceful". Whereas if it is physical peace and calm note it "physically peaceful". Yogi, as a matter of fact, has a natural control and knowledge of body than mind. It is therefore, better to note physical calm and peace attentively.

Concentration becomes keen and with ardent contemplation, yogi perceives that feeling of joy arises and disappears swiftly when noted. Quick arising and disappearing with each noting appear to yogi as unpleasant. In other words it is dukkha or painful to note successively the continuous process of arising and disappearing of joy. As he could not keep pace with this process of arising and disappearance he begins to realize that there is nothing to recognise as joy but tiredness. Now Sukha is seen as Dukkha in accordance with Buddha's instruction. Whereupon raga-attachment to joy is overcome and eliminated by repeated noting. It is a fact that no one desires Dukkha, therefore, note it instantly when it arises.

**Motto:** When Sukha arises it must be noted as Dukkha.

### **Upekkha Vedana**

With continuous noting concentration progressed and yogi has passed one stage of nāna, however there is one more to achieve i.e. Sankharupekkha Nāna - the stage of viewing things equally, Upekkha Vedana is consciousness in this stage. There is no fear and fondness. One is no longer disturbed by worldly or unworldly, likings and dislikings. No attachment for whatever is happening. A lady of worldly pleasure used to notice everything in detail. She recorded her favourite songs and listened to them at night. While watching a dance she enjoyed and commented on each step taken by a particular dancer out of 10-15 dancers; so also with songs and vocalists. After attaining dhamma she found the songs and dances no longer interesting and enjoyable. They were meaningless to her. She could review happiness and unhappiness indifferently.

At this stage noting is easy and it carries on of its

own accord. Well practised yogis, perhaps may remember such experience at this stage. Those who have not yet experienced, they will have a chance to do so one day if they are patient. One who has reached this stage of wisdom, can forbear the vicissitude of life. You will have progress in your practice when concentration is matured.

**Motto:** Free from fear and fondness,  
 Equal view of happiness and sufferings,  
 Easy and effortless contemplation,  
 The three equanimity characteristics in the stage  
 of equanimity. (Mahasi)

When noting becomes effortless yogi is deluded and may not perceive arising and passing away of objects in their true nature. Delusion (Moha) sets in when noting is easy and performs of its own accord.

**Motto:** The repeated arising of delusion in Upekkha Vedana must be dispelled.

In order to achieve his desirous goal, yogi must contemplate and dispel the delusion (moha). The fact that delusion repeatedly manifested in Upekkha Vedana is quite conspicuous in this stage of equanimity - Sankharupekkha Nāna. Now yogi is within reach of his ultimate goal, only two more steps to wisdom, Anuloma nāna and Gotrabhu Nāna to complete. These can be achieved in no time with keen concentration and well developed stage of equanimity. However progress is slow in this stage as yogi need not put much effort to contemplate and goes easy. He used to tell the instructor, contemplation is good, but could not explain he meant by good. Whereupon the instructor can decide at what stage yogi has arrived and that he is under delusion. In connection with this state of delusion Buddha has explained that yogi needs to contemplate the sensation of indifference (Upekkha Vedana) until he perceives it as

impermanence so as to dispel delusion. Impermanence and delusion are antithesis.

It is not easy to note the sensation of indifference (Upekkha Vedana) at this stage because it is not vivid, especially for yogi of our time, since they are not yet fully perfect as those of Buddha's time. The analogy of Upekkha Vedana and deer's foot prints is drawn by the learned ones. The hunters watching for a deer just followed the foot prints of the deer. The deer's foot prints approaching and descending a rock platform could be seen distinctly, nevertheless there are no foot prints on the rock platform. Anyhow the hunters were quite sure that the deer has stepped on the platform. The approaching foot prints are compared to Dukkha Vedana and descending ones to Sukha Vedana. The unseen foot prints on the rock platform as Upekkha Vedana. Upekkha Vedana is not easy to note and almost no one could do so. Since this Vedana is not so apparent to you, you better leave it and revert to noting what is distinct and clear. As yogi has a good knowledge of body, it is beneficial to note what is occurring physically.

Instead of taking it easy, yogi should note "rising" and "falling" which he has well practised, if not there will be no progress as delusion can set in. With the improvement of practice and matured knowledge, those who have Bhanga Nāna as base, can easily recognize the fault and danger at Sankkarupekkha Nāna Stage. When concentration is firm and strong, the process of becoming, noting, cessation of arising and passing away, is more apparent to yogi. For instance, while noting the rising of the abdomen, that upward movement vanishes in no time. The mental process of noting vanishes likewise. Thus the meditator is now vividly aware of the fact that both rising and noting vanish immediately one after another. The same applies in the case of "falling."

The noticing of an object and the knowledge of cessation occur in quick succession. It is the pairwise sequence, the dissolution of an object and the passing away of the consciousness of noting that dissolution. Now Yogi

perfectly comprehends the impermanence of rupa- (rising and falling movement) and nama- (the noting consciousness). Hence wisdom develops and eradicates the delusion or ignorance (moha).

**Motto:** When sensation of indifference (Upekkha Vedana) arise, note till it is apparent as impermanent.

When delusion arises contemplate until impermanence is apparent. Then revert to the process of noting "arising" and "falling."

The three types of Vedana, how greed (lobha), anger (dosa) and delusion (moha) arise repeatedly in these Vedana and how to dispel them have been fully discussed. Upekkha Vedana is not conspicuous to yogi therefore it is better to revert to noting "rising" and "falling" process which you have practised so well, whereby expel delusion.

#### **Four Types of yogi**

Yogi experiences sensation of pain, happiness and delusion according to their previous perfection. It is not the same for everyone. There are four types of yogis according to four ways of realizing dhamma in Dukkha Vedana and Sukha Vedana.

- (1) Yogi experiences pain and difficulties and he is also slow in attaining dhamma.
- (2) Yogi experiences pain and difficulties but he is quick in attaining dhamma.
- (3) Yogi experiences no difficulties and pain, but slow in attaining dhamma.

Yogi used to say "Contemplation is good" day in and day out, however he could not explain what is good and he is slow in progress.

- (4) Yogi experiences no difficulties and pain and he is also quick in attaining dhamma.

Those who have practised neither samatha nor vipassana in their past existences, will experience difficulties and slow in attaining dhamma.

Those who have not practised samatha but only vipassana, will experience difficulties but they are quick in attaining dhamma.

Those who have practised samatha but not vipassana will experience no difficulties but slow in attaining dhamma.

Those who have practised both samatha and vipassana will experience no difficulties and quick in attaining dhamma.

You may be one of the four types. Buddha said all four types of yogi could attain dhamma.

When pain arises you must note it till it vanishes, then only you will improve in practising meditation. If pain is unbearable do not be disheartened, but contemplate with patience. As a matter of fact, it is better to be physically painful but not mentally. Vedanas will be overcome if you can practise to be physically painful but not mentally and then attain dhamma.

After listening to this sermon on three kinds of Vedana, the repeated occurrence of anger in Dukkha Vedana., greed in Sukha Vedana, delusion in Upekkha Vedana and how to eliminate them, may you all be able to practise in accordance with Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all realize your desirous Nirvana which is free from all sufferings, by practising in ease and with lightning wisdom.

Sādhu            Sādhu            Sādhu

May all beings in ten directions be free from all kinds of danger and harm.

May they be free from both physical and mental sufferings.

May they be able to bear the burden of life with physical and mental happiness.

Sādhu            Sādhu            Sādhu

## The Factors of Enlightenment (Bojjhanga Sutta)

"The Bojjhanga Sutta" is the title of today's sermon "Bojjhan" or "Bodhi" means an ariya who discern the Four Noble Truths and "anga" means factors. In other words, it means the Factors of Enlightenment. These factors can cure diseases. Moreover if one develops them, one will become an ariya. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment are .....

1. Sati Sambojjhan ... Mindfulness especially vipassana mindfulness
2. Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan ... Investigation of the Law. Here it renders vipassana wisdom, which analyses anicca, dukkha and anatta.
3. Viriya Sambojjhan ... Energy, especially vipassana energy put forth in noting nāma and rupa.
4. Piti Sambojjhan ... Rapture due to the progress of insight.
5. Passaddhi Sambojjhan ... Tranquility at the stage of Udayabbaya Nāna.
6. Samadhi Sambojjhan ... Concentration.

Khanika (momentary) concentration on each and every noting of the object of noting from the beginning to the end, while practising the vipassana meditation. In accordance with Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw's instruction, while noting "rising" "falling", the concentration is established from the beginning to the end of "rising" and the same with "falling."

7. Upekkha Sambojjhan ... Equanimity. At the higher stages of Nāna, especially at the mature Udayabbaya Nāna stage and the Sankharupekkha Nāna stage the noting mind arises simultaneously with the object of noting. There is no suffering nor pleasantness.

## 1. Sati Sambojjhan

By practising satipatthāna meditation, one can become an ariya and whenever satipatthāna meditation is practised, the seven Factors of Enlightenment are developed. In satipatthāna meditation a yogi has to be mindful at every noting such as "sitting", "touching", "rising", "falling", "walking", "standing", etc.:. You certainly will miss the arising object of noting, if you are not mindful. The word "Satipatthāna" is composed of "Sati" = mindfulness + "upa" = settle or dwell + thana = exist. It means the mind settles or fixes on the object of noting. There is, as a matter of fact, no excess in mindfulness. It is always lacking. Mindfulness will foster vipassana wisdom. Whenever you practise vipassana meditation, by noting "sitting", "walking", standing", etc: the Factor of Mindfulness is developed. To be mindful is the utmost importance in vipassana meditation.

## 2. Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan

Dhamma = Law + vicaya = investigation of dhamma. It is rendered here as wisdom (Nāna) especially vipassana wisdom. At the beginning of vipassana meditation, the Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan is not yet developed as yogi could not distinguish nāma and rupa. He thinks, it is himself who is sitting and it is his abdomen which is rising; it is himself who is sitting and it is he who is noting. It is the same way in noting other behaviour. The "rising" and the noting mind appear to him as a whole not as separate entities. When concentration is established, then only yogi realizes that noting mind and "rising" are two separate entities.

Furthermore he notices that "rising" and "falling" are rupa which has no consciousness. The noting of "rising", "falling" is the conscious mind. Now he can distinguish between nāma and rupa and also realizes that there are just nāma and rupa and nothing else in himself. Thereupon, he has gained the stage of Nāmarupa Pariccheda Nāna. Thence the Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan is developed. Nāma = con-

sciousness + rupa = body + pariccheda = differentiating + nana = insight or wisdom. It means the wisdom which can differentiate between nama and rupa. It is better for a yogi, to know the stage of insight that he has attained. Vipassana wisdom is Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan. Though the stages of insight has progressed the Factor of Enlightenment has not done so.

At the Paccaya parigghaha Nāna stage, yogi comprehends that, he could note "rising", "falling", "sitting", "standing", and so on due to the manifestation of "rising" behaviour, "siting" behaviour, "touching" behaviour and so on. Thereupon it is apparent to him that the "rising", "falling", behaviour etc: are the causes and the noting of them is the effect. Moreover he notices that "rising" shifts from the abdomen to the side of his body, to the arm, chest, neck and the top of his head. At that stage yogi reports, "I do not know how to note as "rising" is no longer at the abdomen. It has shifted to the arm or the chest". The meditation instructor tells him to note "rising" and "falling" wherever they manifest. Thus the yogi apprehends the cause and effect. Yellow, blue or green colours may also appear in his mental eyes. All these are due to the Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan.

The meditation instructor, from the very beginning, advises the yogi to make general noting, in detail so as to gain dhamma in a short time. At the Nāma-rupa pariccheda Nāna stage, the meditator could not follow the advice, however at the Paccayaparigghaha Nāna stage, he is able to note general action in detail. When he is especially mindful, he could note the intention. After sitting for an hour, the intention to stand up arises, then note, "intend to stand", "intend to stand". Due to this intention the element of motion pushes up the body by the hands. When the body moves upward, note, "standing" "standing". Note objectively and mindfully to apprehend the nature of the phenomena or paramatta. In vipassana meditation, it is necessary to note the nature.

Note the process of upward movement of the body precisely. Thereupon lightness or buoyancy in the body will be distinctly noticed. It is not to note legs, arms, head, etc.: After standing up, yogi has to be especially mindful, then only he will perceive the intention to walk vividly when it occurs. Then note "intend to walk", "intend to walk". Note "walking", "walking" when the walking movement of the body starts. Then note "left foot forward", "right foot forward", when you start walking and also "lifting", "pushing forward", "dropping" according to the moving action of the foot. When the intention to stop arises about 2 or 3 steps before stopping, note "intend to stop", "intend to stop". Note "stopping", "stopping" when the body prepares to stop, that is when the stopping action occurs.

When the intention to sit arises, note "intend to sit", "intend to sit". Then the intention to sit causes the element of motion to push the body downwards. Then note "sitting", "sitting" as the sitting behaviour appears. It is to note the nature of the process of sitting behaviour, however not the form of the body. If you can apprehend the heaviness in the moving process of sitting behaviour, you then cognize the nature of the phenomena. Thus you can note the intention to sit, that of touching, that of standing, that of walking, before you sit, touch, stand and walk. Thereupon you have achieved one stage of insight, namely Nāma-rupa pariccheda Nāna. And the Factor of Enlightenment, Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan is developed. The intention to stand is nāma and the standing behaviour is rupa and they are perceived as two separate entities. That means you can now differentiate nāma and rupa.

At the same time you comprehend the cause and effect. The stage of insight you now achieved is the Paccayaparigghaha. Nāna and the Factor of Enlightenment developed is the Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan. Thus you have gained two stages of insight, however the Factor of Enlightenment has not changed. It is required to note the intention prior to the actual movement in noting the behaviour. It is

essential to note the conscious mind in detail when practising vipassana meditation. Then only there will be progress in the stages of insight.

**Motto:**           Intention to sit is nāma  
                           The act of sitting is rupa  
                           It is not "I" or "you" who sit  
                           Just nāma and rupa that sit  
                           If the pair is well conceived  
                           Then the purpose of sitting is achieved.  
                           Intention to stand is nāma  
                           The act of standing is rupa  
                           It is not "I" or "you" who stand  
                           Just nāma and rupa that stand  
                           If the pair is well conceived  
                           Then the purpose of standing is achieved.

The Yogi establishes a firm foundation upon comprehending the cause (intention to sit) and the effect (sitting behaviour). The Athakathā masters remarked that the yogi has a good standing which will prevent him from sufferings in apāya, beginning from the subsequent existence and he is a Sula-Sotapan (junior sotapan). No other belief can influence him and he is much relieved as he has no doubt in the cause and effect relationship. He no longer has faith in the belief that there is no cause for sufferings or happiness. He is also free from the "creation" belief which is incongruent to cause and effect. The creation is cause and to become a living being is effect. It is certain that the creator such as God, Brahma and Pissano create with loving-kindness for all living beings to be equal. But in fact not all are equally created. Some are of good health, good wealth and have good personality. However there are people who are of mediocre health, wealth and appearance. There are also people of very low birth. Even the twins are not equally healthy and wealthy. It is quite evident that the cause (creation) and the effect (living beings) are incongruent.

Cause and effect relationship is conspicuous to you through your own experience. In other words you can understand clearly that if one has done bad deeds, one will have sufferings; if he has done good deeds, he will then enjoy pleasantness, if one harbours unwholesome disposition, he will encounter unpleasantness and so on. The good cause of the past existence will lead to good effect in the present. Certainly one will have good births in the round of samsara.

At the Sammāsana Nāna Stage the yogi experiences all kinds of sufferings such as, giddiness, swaying, aches, numbness, pushing and pulling, itching, etc.:. Thereupon he analytically realizes that his body is merely a mass of sufferings. Thus the Factor of Enlightenment, Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan is developed. The stage of insight is the Sammāsana. Nāna, the analytical knowledge of phenomena. In other words, to comprehend the impermanance of vedana. Vipassana meditation is practised not to experience aches and pains, however yogi is presently suffering from them. Since it is not in accordance with his wish, vedana goes on of its own accord, it is anatta or uncontrollable. The Factor of Enlightenment, Dhammavicaya Sambojjhan develops when the three characteristics, namely anicca, dukkha and anatta are lucidly realized.

By virtue of the repetitive noting vedana is overcome. If the yogi experienced too much vedana, he is likely to be oppressed and begins to ponder thus, "the Buddha preached that dhamma is subtle and blissful. Though it was not so painful at the beginning, however after practising a few days I am now suffering. It is just the opposite of the Buddha's Teaching. I doubt whether I will gain dhamma." Thereupon the meditation instructor encouraged him, "At the Sammasana Nāna Stage, yogi usually experiences more pain and aches. When you pass this stage, there will be pleasantness. It is a good sign of progress in dhamma, although it is unpleasant for the yogi. You will find happiness in a few days". As the vedana is overcome by earnest noting, yogi has pleasantness and suffers less pain.

Unlike the Sammasana Nāna stage, at the Udayabbaya Nāna stage though he may still sway as before, there is no feeling of heaviness and he feels buoyant and light in body. His body is light just like a leaf floating in the air. He has reached a higher stage of insight. He is both physically and mentally subtle: his body and mind are light; his behaviour and actions are pliable. Moreover he finds that he is both physically and mentally proficient. Those yogi, in the lower stage of insight who have to change posture two or three times in an hour sitting, now at the Udayabbaya Nāna stage can sit without changing. Those who can sit an hour without changing, can now sit for 2,3,4 or 5 hours, because his body is both physically and mentally pliant.

#### **4 Piti Sambojjhan**

Furthermore the noting mind and the object of noting now occur simultaneously as his body and mind are proficient and well practised. Thereupon noting becomes easy and continues on its own accord. There is also physical and mental tranquility which foster vipassana piti. The Factor of Enlightenment, the Piti Sambojjhan has developed and the stage of insight has also changed to the Udayabbaya Nāna stage.

A yogi reported thus, "My body is calm and erect like a doll, and noting is effortless. It appears to me I'm just watching it with no concern. I would not know, how to express my feeling of pleasantness and quietude." A yogi practising in a secluded place, gains dhamma when vipassana wisdom is mature. Thence he enjoys both physical and mental rapture which, leave alone an ordinary person, not even a deva could have a chance to experience," remarked the Lord. This is the Piti Sambojjhan. At this stage of Udayabbaya Nāna, yogi enjoys vipassana piti so much, so that he mentally proclaimed, "It is a good opportunity for me to be a human being in this very life. I'm certain, I shall realize nirvana with this disposition." Thus the Piti Sambojjhan is developed.

#### **Five kinds of Piti**

1. Khuddaka Piti, the thrill of joy that causes the flesh to creep or a creep in the chest just for one time.

2. Khanika Piti, instantaneous joy like a flash of lightning. The flesh creeps or a creep occurs in the chest quite often. Then note "creeping", "creeping". Sometimes feels like crying then note "want to cry" "want to cry."

3. Okkantikā Piti, the flood of joy like the breakers on a sea-shore. Sometimes it starts from the upper part of the body and spreads downwards; or sometimes it starts from the lower part of the body and pervades to the upper part. Yogi feels as if he is splashed with cool water, however it is unlike the natural heat and cold of the environment.

4. Ubbega Piti, Transporting joy which enables one to float in the air just like a lump of cotton carried by the wind. Sometimes hands and legs lifted up by themselves or the body moves afloat. Yogi may feel like crying or sometimes laughing. He may also experience as if he is being pushed and pulled by someone. He may also hear sound. All these are due to the Factor of Enlightenment, Piti Sambojjhan. To those who are timid by nature it seems to be a ghost or a spirit is making all these sound and pushing and pulling as he finds no one when he looks around. Thence the rumour spreads that the meditation centre is haunted. Therefore yogi is frightened and dhamma does not progress. However all these are due to the Piti Sambojjhan. The knowledge about this Sambojjhan will help yogi to contemplate as before. Sometimes it could be so strong that yogi falls down as if pushed by someone. He may shed tears which is known as cold tears due to vipassana piti. The tear due to economic ruins is hot tear.

Quite often yogi may like to cry or laugh. "Am I going mad? I want to cry now and then I want to laugh again." You are not mad. When you want to cry just note "want to cry", "want to cry", if you want to laugh then note "want to laugh", "want to laugh". Incessant noting will overcome these feelings. An ordinary person may think, it is ridiculous to note "want to cry" when one wants to cry. To a meditator, however, it is different. If one can note the desire to cry,

he will overcome it and no longer wants to cry. If he notes "want to laugh", then he will laugh no more. The Buddha's method is useful in controlling the conscious mind.

5. Pharanā Piti, the suffusing joy which pervades the whole body like a full blown balloon or like a flood that overflows small lakes and tanks. The sensation of eye, ear, nose, tongue and body are quite blissful.

Dhamma may progress due to piti. The Piti Sambojjhan develops at the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage. The Passaddhi Sambojjhan also develops at this stage of insight. Yogi experiences the physical and mental tranquility which he would not be able to express. It is so calm and tranquil that he could sit erect like a doll and it happens of its own accord.

### **Samādhi Sambojjhan**

The Samādhi Sambojjhan is more conspicuous at the mature Udayabbaya Nāna Stage. The noting mind is fixed on the object of noting as soon as it appears. This is due to the strong concentration, the Samadhi Sambojjhan. The noting mind settles firmly on the object of noting from the beginning to the end of "rising" and "falling". That is known as Khanika Samadhi (momentary concentration). Sometimes yogi may not be able to move his touching hands or his body, while sitting. All these are due to the strong concentration which has pervaded to the bodily behaviour. That is termed as Appanā Samadhi attainment or full concentration, existing during absorption. This again is due to the well established posture, (ariya patha)

### **Upekkha Sambojjhan**

Upekkha Sambojjhan is vivid at the mature Udayabbya Nāna Stage, however it is more conspicuous at Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage. The noting mind and the arising of the sense object occur simultaneously. There is no fear or happiness and the equilibrium between suffering and happiness exists firmly.

**Motto:** Free from fear and fondness  
 Equal view of sufferings and happiness  
 Contemplation comes with no difficulties  
 San-kharū's three characteristics of equanimity

At the Banga and Baya Nāna stages there occurs fright, however at the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage the thought of the external sense objects no longer causes fear. Furthermore there develops no attachment nor fondness of the sense objects or the dhamma. Yogi can perceive pleasantness with no attachment and, the pain and sufferings without unhappiness. Thus the Factor of Enlightenment, Upekkhā Sambojjhan is developed. Since dhamma has well developed in all aspects the ordinary aches and pains can be cured easily by noting them. The experienced yogis are quite aware of the fact that by dint of physical and mental tranquility, dhamma could cure not only the ordinary diseases but also the serious ones. While contemplating, they could spot the exact seat of the disease and by successive noting of it, the disease disappears.

Here is the case of an elderly yogi who suffered from stiffness of her hand. The ordinary medicine could not cure her. She came to the meditation centre. The stiffness of her hand became more serious. While meditating, she felt that the nerves from her hand were pulled out or massaged. It also appeared to her as if somebody was pulling or pushing her hand. She kept on noting these manifestations and consequently reached the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage. This stage of insight is well known as a curing stage of ñāna. The stiffness of her hand was cured, however, it was not distinct as she had not used her hand often while contemplating. When she went home, she found out that she could move her hand as normal, she could touch her head; she could move her hand backward and forward. At the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage she had struck the equilibrium between pleasantness and unpleasantness, thus the Factor of Enlightenment, Upekkha Sambojjhana has developed.

Another illustration of the establishment of equanimity at the Sankarupekkha Nāna Stage is:- a lady of worldly pleasure took delights in dance and songs. She used to record her favourite songs and listened to them frequently. When she attended a dance-show, she paid attention to a particular

dancer out of 10 or 16 dancing girls and was critical of her dancing steps. One day she came to the meditation centre and went home after gaining the Sankharupekkha Nāna Stage. At home she played the song as before however they were no longer pleasant and enjoyable. This illustrates that because of her attainment of the Sankharupekkha Nāna Stage, she was no longer interested in the pleasantness or the unpleasantness. She could view them equally. The Upekkha Sambojjhan has developed according to the stages of insight. Then the object of noting and the noting mind appear simultaneously.

To develop the Factors of Enlightenment, it is the best to practise satipathāna meditation or vipassana meditation. Thus the Factors of Enlightenment are the characteristics of an ariya who has acquired the Four Noble Truths. One should be mindful to be an ariya, if not he may never be one. Whatever you do, it must be wisdom predominated; do it energetically, otherwise you will not be an ariya. You must contemplate diligently, so that your noting conscious mind never misses the arising sense-objects.

1. While practising the vipassana meditation, to be mindful to note the occurring sense-objects, is the Factor of Mindfulness, the first Constituent of Enlightenment.
2. While practising the vipassana meditation, the development of vipassana wisdom is the Factor of Investigation of the Law or dhamma, the second Constituent of Enlightenment.
3. While practising vipassana meditation, to endeavour to note the appearing sense-objects, is the Factor of Effort, the third Constituent of Enlightenment.
4. The development of piti (rapture) during the vipassana meditation is the Factor of Rapture, the fourth Constituent of Enlightenment.
5. The development of physical and mental calm during the vipassana meditation is the Factor of Tranquility, the fifth Constituent of Enlightenment.

6. The development of concentration during the vipassana meditation is the Factor of Concentration, the sixth Constituent of Enlightenment.
7. The indifferent contemplation of pleasure and pain during the vipassana meditation is the Factor of Equanimity, the seventh Constituent of Enlightenment.

One can become a sotapan or an ariya, when these seven Constituents of Enlightenment are developed during the vipassana meditation. Moreover various diseases can be cured too.

By listening to this discourse on "The Factors of Enlightenment", may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana, the cessation of all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu

## Types of Cetiya

### 5.11.96

#### **Tanzaungmone Month and Light Festival**

Today is the fullmoon day of Tanzaungmone, so it is more appropriate to deliver a Dhamma Discourse on Tanzaungmone- month. First we should know the meaning; secondly about the light festival in that month and thirdly the types of cetiya (pagoda). In ancient times, round about Pagan Era, this month was called "Tanzaungmone" "Tan" means light or power, "saung" connotes to fetch, "mhone" connotes to destroy or dispel. The full meaning is therefore "to fetch light or power to destroy or dispel darkness". In those days astronomy was very popular and most people studied it. Moreover this particular month was regarded as the month of kyattika Planet and the light festival was celebrated in honour of the Fire-god, the guardian of this planet. It was believed that, this Fire-god used to descend to earth during this month and the king and his people, as a tradition offered lights to him. The guardians or devas of various planets were worshipped with great respect in those days.

Nowadays the custom of worshipping the guardians of planets is replaced by the light festival offering light to various cetiyas in the Deva world, the Brahma world and the world of human beings. The reason for the change in the manner of worship is due to the elders, well-versed in dhamma scriptures who pointed out that offering lights to cetiyas is more beneficial and meritorious than to the guardian devas.

#### **Culāmani Cetiya**

Buddha-would-be Prince Siddhatha enjoyed worldly pleasure for 16 years as a young prince and 13 years as a king. At the age of 29 years, while on his way to the Royal Garden, devas created at an interval of 4 months, four omens namely decay, sickness, death and a monk for the Prince. Upon seeing these omens, he realized the sufferings in a human life, became remorseful and renounced the world at mid-night of the same day. On the bank of Anoma River,

he cut his knot of hair and threw it into the sky together with his crown and made a vow, "May my crown and the knot of hair hang in the sky if I'm destined to be a Buddha; if not may they fall onto the ground." The knot of hair and the crown hung in the sky at a distance of one yuzana (8miles). The king of devas, seeing it through his deva eyes came with a golden flower basket to receive it. He took it to Tavatamsa (the second plane of deva realm) and enshrined it in a newly built cetiya, three yuzanas high. It was decorated with seven kinds of gems and known as "Culāmani Cetiya", meaning cetiya of Buddha-would-be's hair and crown. People now worship and offer lights to this cetiya, especially in the month of Tanzaungmone and celebrate a light festival in honour of Culāmani Cetiya.

**Motto:** Culāmani Cetiya in Tavatamsa  
It has a height of three yuzanas

If you wish to see this cetiya with your own eyes, you should practise to attain super-normal power. However it is not much practised by the people nowadays and they believe the existence of this cetiya in the deva world, through the dhamma scriptures. As a matter of fact, to have faith and reverence in this Culāmani Cetiya is most significant in worshipping it.

### **Dussa Cetiya**

Another cetiya is in the Ekkaniṭṭha Brahma world built by Gatigāra Brahma who was a friend of the Buddha-would be during the time of Kassapa Buddha. On learning that Prince Siddattha had renounced the world and was going to be a monk, he offered him eight requisites. That is the first acknowledgement of the 8 requisites for monks. We should have a thorough knowledge of the 8 requisites. Perhaps some interested foreign yogi should enquire, you must be prepared to give a complete account of it. Some may have and some may not have the idea of 8 requisites. They just buy from the shop without enquiring about it. They are (1) Under garment (2) Upper garment (3) a great robe

of double layer (4) an alms bowl (5) a razor blade (6) thread and needle (7) a yellow belt and (8) a water filter.

Gatigāra Brahma took the Buddha-would be's garment and enshrined it in a cetiya called "Dussa Cetiya" which is 12 yuzanas high. The Buddha-would-be Prince, being a fully perfected one, adorned the robes neatly. Dussa means an under garment of a prince. The Ekkanittha Brahma realm is the highest in the Brahma world . Although we can not see it ourselves, we can worship it with firm faith and thus gain merits.

**Motto:** Dussa Cetiya in Ekkanittha  
Has a height of twelve yuzanas

During the month of Tansaungmone light is offered to all cetiyas in the realm of human beings. There are three types of cetiyas according to the zatathakatha, namely (1) Sarīrika Cetiya, parts of living Buddha's body (2) Paribhoga Cetiya, properties and things used by Buddha and (3)Uddissaka Cetiya, built or made in remembrance of the lord.

### **The Three Types of Cetiya**

The reason, why Lord Buddha had allowed the three types of Cetiya to be worshipped when he was alive, was because.

Once while the Lord Buddha was residing at Zetawun Monastery, Savatthi He went round the villages. The people living in the Savatthi took flowers, sandal wood and other offerings to the monastery and without seeing Lord Buddha, they put the offertories at the monastery sadly and left. Ashin Ananda reported about this incident to the Lord, then the Lord had allowed to worship the three types of Cetiya when He was still alive.

The three types of Cetiya allowed were----

(1) Sarīrika Cetiya -parts of His body such as muscles, blood, bones, etc: are worthy of Sarīrika Cetiya but when the Lord Buddha was

still alive must not build a Cetiya. After the Lord Buddha's death only it was allowed to build.

- (2) Paribhoga Cetiya-Lord Buddha's belongings such as robes, umbrella, footwear etc, are worthy of Paribhoga Cetiya. Even Bodhi tree is worthy of Paribhoga Cetiya.
- (3) Uddissaka Cetiya- Buddha's images made of marble stones, bronze, wood and paintings can be worshiped as Uddissaka Cetiya.

That was what the Buddha had preached.

Another group of Dīkā masters classified as follows-

- (1) Paribhoga Cetiya- enshrined with the requisites used by Buddha
- (2) Dhātu Cetiya- enshrined with Buddha's relics such as hair, teeth, bones.
- (3) Dhamma Cetiya- enshrined with dhamma scriptures such as Satipatthana, four Noble Truths, Pathan, Paticca Samuppada (Dependent Origination) inscribed on gold, silver and bronze plates.

Suppose a foreigner would like to build a Cetiya, it is wise to suggest to build a dhamma cetiya. The reason is, it is easy to get dhamma scriptures whereas relics like hair, bones, teeth available in the present days may not be genuine. Moreover there is a saying that " a word can be regarded as a Cetiya".

### **Five types of Cetiya**

Some Athakathā masters categorise cetiyas into five types.

- (1) Paribhoga Cetiya- enshrined with requisites used by the Buddha
- (2) Dhātu Cetiya- enshrined with the relics of the Buddha
- (3) Dhamma Cetiya
- (4) Uddissaka Cetiya- built or made in remembrance of the Buddha
- (5) Pāda Cetiya- foot prints of the Buddha

People built mostly Uddissaka cetiyas and also worship images, paintings and pictures of Buddha. Pāda or Foot-prints Cetiya is the foot-print made by Buddha's resolution to indicate that the lord had been there in his life-time. The light festival celebrated in honour of cetiya on special day, is a meritorious custom. While offering or after offering to cetiyas, it is of great importance to develop a wholesome disposition. How to do so? Contemplate vipassana meditation. Offering and worshipping should not be done as a custom or as a matter of duty. It should be accompanied with reflection upon the innumerable attributes and power of the Lord with faith and respect. You gain more merits if you offer light, alms, flowers, etc. to cetiyas as if you do so to a living Buddha. When cetiyas are built in unsuitable and improper places, people may not pay respect and worship, thereupon they commit demerits instead of merits. It is of utmost significance to build cetiyas in appropriate places where people will like to worship with obeisance.

### **Three Events**

As a matter of fact, there are three events which could not be undone once they have been done; firstly the first marriage, secondly the construction of cetiyas and thirdly tattoo marks on the body. In Myanmar Buddhist culture, marriage especially the first one is considered as a great importance in one's life. The broken marriages are not readily accepted by the society. However in other cultures, it is not so. Anyway they do recognize the serious social and economical problems faced by the estranged or separated husbands and wives and also by the children of broken families.

Cetiyas once constructed are not to be destroyed or taken down. If it is too old or damaged by some causes such as storm and earthquakes, and unholy persons, it is not to be destroyed but to enshrine it in the new cetiya. To destroy or damage a cetiya is considered as an act of demerit and it can even send one to apāya. The reason is that this act of demerit is counted as the same as killing the Buddha and at the same

time it is a disrespect and damage to His attributes. Myanmar government takes a great care in reconstructing the old cetiyas without committing the unmeritorious act. There were many cases of death and also economic and social failures of the persons who unrespectfully destroy cetiyas.

Young men like to have tattoo marks on their body, believing that it will prevent danger or as an attraction. As nothing results from the tattoo marks as expected though they are now over 30 or 40 years of age they do not like the tattoo marks any more. Nevertheless the ugly marks could not be removed at all. However the modern young people no longer indulge in making tattoo marks.

### **Cetiya and Vipassana**

Offering such as alms, light, flowers, etc., to cetiyas must be made with faith and respect, thence your mind will become peaceful and you develop more reverence to the Buddha. Offer dana to cetiyas as if you were offering to the living-Buddha. Thus you gain meritorious benefits and there arises joy. Thereupon it is most opportune for you to contemplate vipassana meditation. Note what is distinct to you, if not, your concentrations will lapse. When you note here and there in your body, instead of fixing at one distinct manifestation, dhamma will not progress. Meditation instructors may guide you in various ways, however you choose what is most suitable to you and note it. If the joy (piti) is more distinct then you note that joy. Rev: Mahasi sayadaw had instructed how to contemplate on offering dana to cetiyas. Here is a verse composed by him.

**Motto:** We have offered dana to cetiyas and gained  
 merits many a time before  
 However the present dana we enjoy more.  
 While thus enjoying, contemplate becoming and  
 dissolution.  
 Perception of becoming and dissolution results in  
 comprehension of anicca  
 Comprehension of anicca leads to apprehension  
 of dukkha

**Progress of Insight with Emphasis on  
Sankharupekka Nana  
(24-5-94)**

The title of today's sermon is "Progress of Insight with emphasis on the Sankhārupekkha Nāna." Every meditator should strive for the attainment of Sankhārupekkha Nāna which is the most appropriate stage of insight to conceive the higher wisdom and its benefit lucidly. However it could be attained only after acquiring the lower stages of insight. There are three ways of practice to gain dhamma.

- (1) Way of Kamma
- (2) Way of Jhana
- (3) Way of Wisdom

**(1) Way of Kamma**

To gain better existence, it is required to develop wholesome volitional kamma by giving dana and observing sila. Because of these meritorious deeds one is destined to be born in the human and deva worlds. It is, therefore, important to develop noble mind so that merits accrue to you. Human and deva worlds can provide one with opportunities to carry out meritorious deeds such as dana and sila. If you do not seize this opportunity with the belief that dana and sila lead to prolongation of round of rebirths, and fail to give dana and to observe sila, the immoral deeds will step in and send you to apāya. If there is no wholesome deeds, then unwholesome deeds develop for the reason that in a man's life there are either merits or demerits. Taking into account of these, it is of utmost significance that we should try our best to develop a better way of Kamma.

**(2) Way of Jhana**

• By practising samatha mediation one will gain Jhana power and will be reborn in one of the 20 Brahma Worlds after death. Since it is a place of bliss and joy, they live

on joy and there is no need for food. Bodies of Brahma glow with brightness and they enjoy a long life. There is no craving, lust or greed and anxieties in the Brahma worlds nevertheless those kilesa may develop in individual mind. In other words, Brahma as individual could not be regarded as emancipated from kilesa. The benefit of the way of Jhana is superior to that of kamma, however it cannot save one from apāya. Vipassana meditation is the only way of liberation from apāya.

### **(3) Way of Wisdom**

It is the way of vipassana meditation. You all should endeavour to acquire way of wisdom rather than way of Jhana. At present learned teachers no longer encourage or instruct the way of Jhana, because it results in prolonged existence and at the same time has no safe guard for freedom from apāya. Jhana power gained through samatha (tranquility) concentration is not of higher value. Though it may send one to the Brahma worlds, there is no guarantee that he may not be reborn in apāya. Without vipasanna meditation it is an infallibility that one will suffer in the lower abode.

"Shining, shining in the Brahma World  
Grunting, grunting in the pig sty"

The way of Kamma is reliable only for one or two existences which are not free of old age and sickness. Thereupon the way of Wisdom is the most dependable one for the realization of nirvana and it prohibits suffering in apāya. The only thing is that you are to be sincere and true in striving for nirvana and to develop vipassana wisdom which begins from the Nāma-rupa Paraccheda Nāna.

There are 13 stages of vipassana wisdom, from the Nāma-rupa Pariccheda Nāna to the Gotrabhu Nāna. Magga Nāna, Phala Nāna and Paccavakkhanā Nāna are the three higher stages of insight. The first thirteen stages are the basic foundations for the realization of nirvana. Magga Nāna, Phala Nāna and Paccavakkhanā Nāna will be achieved if the

vipassana wisdom is fully developed. No one could pray or just wish for these stages of insight, however it is attainable only through ardent practice of insight meditation.

Nāma rupa Parriccheda Nāna means, nāma= conscious mind', rupa = matter', nāna = knowledge', paraccheda = distinguishes between mind and matter. It is the stage of insight where one can distinguish mind and matter. Under the correct instruction one can attain this stage of insight after four or five days of meditational practice. According to the guidance of Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw, beginners practise meditation by noting "rising" and "falling" "sitting" "standing" "moving forward" "stretching" "bending" etc: At first it may not be evident to the practising yogi and he may think "It is 'I' who note," when the abdomen rises, "It is my abdomen rising", when the abdomen falls " It is my abdomen falling" "It is 'I' who sit;" "It is 'I' who stand", etc: This is due to lack of vipassana wisdom.

With mature concentration, vipassana wisdom develops, and he perceives that "rising" (of the abdomen) is a separate entity from the noting mind, "falling" is a separate entity from the noting mind; "sitting" is a separate entity from the noting mind and so on. "Rising" "falling", "sitting" "standing" etc: are the unconscious matter or rupa; noting is the conscious mind or nāma. A yogi predominated by wisdom can comprehend rupa and nāma distinctly. On the other hand, one predominated by faith, perceives rupa and nāma separately only when the meditation instructor points it out. "There is nothing in this body besides rupa and nāma. There is no "I" or "self"; conventional term "I" is used for the convenience sake of communication," Thus faith predominated yogi realizes when the instructor explained. Whereupon the erroneous views of "self" and that of aggregates are dispelled. This is the initial step in the way of wisdom to close the door to apāya and to establish a firm foundation for the attainment of nirvana.

With repetitive practice while noting "rising" and "falling", the wisdom predominated yogi readily realizes that

the "rising" and "falling" are the objects of noting and at the same time they are the cause of noting; the noting of "rising" and "falling" is the effect. According to the stages of insight he has achieved, a yogi will experience "rising" and "falling" at various parts of the body; it manifests at the side, on the chest, in the arms, at the top of the head, etc: He has to note wherever. "rising" and "falling" manifest. These shiftings are the signs of dhamma, that is "rising" and "falling" is the cause and noting is the effect. He is now at the Paccaya Pariggaha Nāna Stage, the knowledge that distinguishes between cause and effect. I am certain that most of the practising yogi have attained this stage of insight.

When the concentration is strengthened yogi reaches the stage of Sammasana Nāna, which is the worst stage of insight. He reflects upon the impremancy of phenomena, that means the vanishing of both the object of noting and the noting mind itself anicca. At the same time he realizes that all that arise and immediately pass away are not worthy of cherishing and relying on; they are therefore suffering, dukkha. Another realization is that nothing happens in obedience to his will, but only of its own accord, anatta. Those without samatha meditation in the past existences encounter these process of arising and disappearing distinctly. However this worse stage of insight is passed through in a short time by those who have practised samatha meditation in the past existences. For the latter, there is not much suffering, nevertheless experiences more pleasantness in vipassana meditation.

Not long after sitting yogi encounters with pain, numbness, aches, itching, etc: (Dukkha Vedana) lucidly. Well practised yogi will remember these experiences. In such state yogi would like to change posture frequently. Thereafter progress in meditation is retarded. It is of great importance for the yogi to be patient so as to gain dhamma and to note objectively and successively. Even though yogi experiences dukkha vedana at first, later on he reflects upon his

body thus, "Since it is changing, it is impermanent; these pains and aches are unlike before. I come to meditate and gain dhamma and happiness of nirvana, however these sufferings are beyond my control." Reflecting thus he is in distress because of physical and mental suffering. Thence he perceives his body as a massive suffering. The three characteristics are apparent to him.

The next stage is the Udayabbaya Nāna. Udaya = becoming + vaya = dissolution + nāna = knowledge. At the beginning of this stage, becoming and dissolution process is not so evident and there is pleasant experiences, because of less pain and aches. He also experiences physical and mental buoyancy, physical and mental pliance and physical and mental workability. Moreover he finds that he is both physically and mentally proficient. Those yogi, in the lower stages of insight, have to change posture after sitting for one or two hours, now at the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage they can sit for 2 or 3, 4, 5 hours without changing. For him noting goes on of its own accord and the object of noting also manifests spontaneously' thereupon noting comes with ease.

Some yogi reported, 'My body is erect like a doll and noting goes on effortlessly. It appears to me, I am just watching it unconcerned. I would not be able to express my feeling of pleasantness and quietude.' A yogi practising in a secluded place gains dhamma when vipassana wisdom is mature. Thence he enjoys both physical and mental pitisukha (Happiness) which, leave alone a common person not even devas, could have a chance to experience" remarked the Buddha. At this early stage of Udayabbaya Nāna, the process of arising and passing away is very vivid to the yogi, from the initial stage to the end arising is becoming and passing away is dissolution.

With steadfast noting yogi reaches the Bhanga Nana Stage; the knowledge of dissolution. Usually the initial stage of becoming is not clear but the end stage is very lucid. If he does not perceive the end stage the meditation

instructor reminds him to note the end stage of becoming. In walking practice, it is to note attentively the end of "lifting" (of the foot), the end of moving forward, etc: The perception of the end is the same as perceiving the dissolution.

When the Bhanga Nāna is strengthened, yogi is aware of the fact that not only the object of noting but the noting mind also disappears. Thus he perceives the impermancy or anicca. He then ponders, "All that arise are impermanent". The recognition of one characteristic may be regarded as the cognizance of the remaining two. The Bhanga Nāna is considered as a very strong insight, whereas the first four stages of insight, (Nāma-Rupa Pariccheda Nāna to Udayabbaya Nāna) are immature or weak vipassana wisdom. During these four stages yogi notes only form and has to be attentive to control his mind. The form such as head, leg, arm disappear with the maturation of concentration at the Bhanga Nāna Stage. Yogi finds it difficult to note as there is no form as the object of noting. He has no idea of how and what to note and thinks that dhamma is in regress. Yogi has to be encouraged thus, "When you got through this stage of nana there will be improvement".

Next is the Bhaya Nāna = awareness of dread or fear. The disappearing of all phenomena are so swift that there arises fright. Thus it comes to be realized that all these psycho-physical phenomena, so rapidly dissolving are undesirable dhammas of an inferior and evil nature. This is the Adinava Nāna = knowledge of misery. Such rapidly disappearing psycho-physical phenomena are then seen to be insubstantial and devoid of pleasure, unreliable, and tiresome. This is the Nibbida Nāna = knowledge consisting in the contemplation of wearisomeness or disgust. This stage is also based upon the Bhanga Nāna

With strong Nibbida Nāna which sees and knows all psycho-physical phenomena as suffering, a desire arises to renounce the body-mind complex. This is the Muncitu Kamyata Nāna = knowledge of desire to renounce. Yogi no

longer wants to note, but he keeps on noting spontaneously. With the arising of this desire, one realizes the needs for further effort by noting so that one may be able to renounce. This is the Patisankhā Nāna = knowledge of re-observation.

The Patisankhā Nāna is a worse stage of insight and similar to the Sammasana Nāna stage in suffering pains, aches, giddiness, etc: . These vedanas are very vivid to those who had not experience as such in the Sammasana Nāna stage; however the nature of changing of these vedanas is different. In the stage of the Patisankha Nāna, changing of pain, aches, giddiness, etc: is very rapid and yogi often want to change posture. His body, legs, arms, etc: shake or shift often, therefore noting gets worse. Since many days have passed without much improvement in dhamma, yogi is depressed and give so many lame excuses to go home. The instructors can judge which stage of insight this yogi has attained and encourages him thus, "It usually happens at this stage of ñāna; mind is unstable and faith in the Buddha and Dhamma relapses; sometimes yogi even finds fault with dhamma. Nevertheless if you overcome this stage, you will be rewarded with the audition of progress of insight."

### **Sankhārupekkha Nāna**

Next is the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage which is peaceful and pleasurable. According to one's perfection one will gain Magga Nāna and Phala Nāna successively. If yogi's wisdom is not strong enough to attain magga and phala, meditation instructor should allow him to listen to the progress of insight. He should not let yogi go without it.

**Motto:** Free from fear or fondness  
 Equal view of suffering and happiness  
 Contemplation comes with no difficulty  
 Sankhāru's three characteristics of equanimity.

There is no more desire and fright related to mundane or supra-mundane world. Yogi at this stage is no longer disturbed by unpleasantness or fear as in the Bhanga Nāna Stage; or by strong delight as in the Udayabbaya Nāna Stage.

He is capable of withstanding the vicissitude of life. Hence all should strive for the attainment of Sankhārupekkha Nāna. If you are patient, you will be happy and consequently noting becomes easy and effortless. You also feel that you are just observing the conscious mind.

**Motto:** Prolonged contemplation without changing  
There is no mind wandering  
More and more subtle is the dhamma  
The three significant characteristics of Sankhārupekkha.

The object of noting becomes subtle and there is a good control over the noting mind. Contemplation is likened to the soft touch of cotton. In other words the noting mind settles on the object of noting just like a cotton swab absorbs water as soon as it touches it (water). There is no mind wandering, especially when the Sankhārupekkha Nāna is strong. Since the noting mind is fixed on the sense object, there need no effort. As the sense object and the noting mind are so subtle that yogi is unaware of "rising" and "falling" but only the conscious mind. He also experiences soothing feeling as if sprinkled with a spray of cool water. On noting a sound yogi hears it as a mere sound and note "knowing" "knowing". Yogi tries to note the frightful experience as in the Bhaya Nāna Stage, however it does not manifest. He also lets loose his noting conscious mind but it does not wander off. This is the special characteristics of Sankhārupekkha Nāna.

Those who contemplate Sankhārupekkha Nāna can be classified into 3 types.

- (1) Puthujjana
- (2) Sekkhatose who are striving for the realization of nirvana
- (3) Arahants

Among these three types, there are similarity and differences or significances in contemplating Sankhārupekkha Nāna. All three (puthuzanas, sekkhas and arahants) contemplate this nāna in the same way.

### Differences or Significance

#### (a) Effectiveness:

Puthujjanas and 7 Sekkha, (each of those who has attained Sotapatti magga, Sotapatti phala, Sakadāgāmi magga, Sakadāgami phala, Anāgāmi magga, Anāgāmi phala and arahatta magga) gain merits by contemplating Sankhārupekkha Nāna. Whereas there is no merits or demerits for the arahat as it is the last existence for him. Thus it is the significant feature of Sankhārupekkha Nāna, i.e. ineffective for arahats.

#### (b) Distinction

To the puthujjana and sekkha, Sankhārupekkha Nāna is distinct and sharp at times but not always and yogi, therefore thinks there is laxation in his contemplation of dhamma. When it is not sharp, yogi who believes himself to be a striver for nirvana, is depressed, thinking that he is not such a one. If he has the knowledge of the fact that Sinkhārupekkha Nāna is not always distinct, he would be much relieved. It will be distinct when concentration is strong, in other words, when the controlling powers (Indriya) are balanced. For arahats Sinkhārupekkha Nāna is ever distinct. This is the difference in Sankhārupekkha Nāna between arahats and puthujjana and sekkha.

#### (c) Contentment

Both puthujjana and sekkhās practise vipassana meditation, however there is no contentment for them. Puthujjanas contemplate in order to dispel kilesa and to achieve the progress of insight; whereas sotapans strive for higher Magga Nāna and Phala Nāna. Since they have not completely eliminated kilesa and realized nirvana, they are not yet content. An arahat is content and satisfied as he has utterly

eradicated all Kilesas and thus there is no need to strive for higher Magga Nāna and Phala Nāna.

**(d) Elimination**

Puthujjana has to endeavour to expel three attachments namely (1) erroneous views of "self" and that of the aggregates; (2) clinging to mere rites and rituals such as behaving like animal, strong self-tormenting practices and taking refuge in incorrect faith; (3) perplexity or doubt about the past and future existences, also in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha. Sotapan has already discarded the three attachment, he, therefore, has to practise for the attainment of higher Magga Nāna and Phala Nāna. An arahat who had completely dispelled kilesa, contemplates so as to have bodily happiness (kāya sukha) in the present life which is the last existence for him.

**(e) Passing time**

Puthujjana contemplates with enjoyment at Sankhā rupekkha Nāna. Sotapan also contemplates and enjoys at Sankhārupekkha Nāna stage and at the same time he develops ecstatic state of fruition (Phala-samāpatti). An arahat contemplates and develops ecstatic state of fruition. His contemplation is well balanced he passes time by noting anatta, anicca and dukkha.

No matter what progress of insight you may have reached, it is necessary to contemplate at Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage. You may be at this stage for quite a while, however it is not to be disheartened, because one day you will achieve the remaining two vipassana wisdom. They are Anuloma Nāna (adaptive knowledge which rises in connection with the Four Noble Truth) and Gotrabhu Nāna (knowledge which destroys the lineage of common worldlings.) After these 13 progress of insight, Ariya Magga Nāna, Ariya Phala Nāna and Paccavekkhana Nāna (retrospective knowledge) follow in succession. Thus there are 16 progress of insight.

**After listening to this sermon on "Progress of Insight with Emphasis on Sankhārupekkha Nāna," may you all be able to practise in accordance with Buddha's instruction with diligent contemplation. May you all be able to practise in ease and immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana which is free from all sufferings.**

**Sādhu      Sādhu      Sādhu**

## The Sublime Happiness

### (Sītibhāva Sutta)

#### 8.10.95

Today's sermon will be on the "Sītibhāva Sutta". 'Sītibhāva' means the sublime happiness or nirvana + "sutta" means explanation. In this Sutta the Buddha explained the six factors for the attainment of the sublime happiness or nirvana. Whenever meritorious deeds are performed you always wish for the sublime happiness of nirvana.

The 6 factors are:

- (1) To control the over excited mind
- (2) To encourage when the mind is oppressed
- (3) To be joyful when necessary
- (4) To be indifferent when necessary
- (5) To develop inclination towards the noble magga and phala
- (6) To delight in the sublime happiness of nirvana

#### (1) To control the over-excited mind.

When the mind is scattered and restless, it should be calmed down. A yogi with a limited time (15 days leave) to practise vipassana meditation is likely to be over excited for the attainment of dhamma and becomes restless both physically and mentally. While sitting to meditate he is tense; his body is more stiff and erect than it should be; he holds up his head higher than necessary. His conscious mind is also over zealous so that he will not miss to note whatever manifests. As he wants to gain dhamma in a short time, he becomes over anxious and put more effort. However in such a mental state the attainment of dhamma is impossible.

The Athakathā masters advised briefly to control the restless mind by strengthening concentration. It is difficult to control the mind. Moreover it cannot be done by any means other than the Buddha's advice. That is the reason why the Lord has frequently preached on how to control the mind. Other methods will cause the mind to be more scattered. The

mind is free to delight in anything of its own accord. However if the mind is tamed and cultured, it can lead you to magga and phala.

Mind is so swift and changeable that it is happy in this moment but not in the next, it is pleasant now, but not the next moment. It is not easy to subdue mind, hence it dwells on any sense objects it likes. The mature meditators are well aware of the nature of mind. The sense objects it chooses to settle upon are mostly unwholesome ones, though the practising yogi would like to let their minds dwell upon rupa and nāma. That is the nature of the mind but not that of the individuals. Since your childhood, you have been under guidance of good parents and teachers, and therefore you have a proper control over your mind.

You should not let the mind have its own way; it must be well controlled, subdued and cultured. So that it will take you to magga and phala and nirvana. Rev: Mahasi Sayadaw has composed the following verse for the meditators, in order that they may be able to tame their mind and practise ardently.

**Motto:**     Hard to restrain, swift and wandering,  
                   This harsh, fierce consciousness goes roving  
                   It becomes mild, subtle and gives us happiness

It is necessary to restrain the mind when it scatters. It is the duty of the experienced yogis to guide the new comers. Will you say, "I don't know, how to guide them, though I've heard about it". When noting does not settle on the arising sense object, in other words, if a yogi cannot note exactly what is happening at the present moment, then mind becomes restless. Yogi may reflect thus, "My contemplation was quite alright before. Will I gain dhamma during the rest of my leave? Only a few day is left" and so on. He was thinking of what has happened in the past and also what will happen in the future, however not what is happening in the present. Thereupon yogi should be instructed to note the present and not the past nor the future. How?

It is to note the restless mind as "restless" "restless", since the restless mind also is a sense object to be noted. When yogi's noting mind can keep pace with the restless mind, after a certain length of time, mind will no longer scatter, because it is noted spontaneously whenever it becomes restless. Noting therefore, has overcome the restless mind.

Will the experienced yogi say, there is no way to control the restless mind, when the new yogi told them that they could not control their mind by noting "restless", "restless", "thinking" "thinking". I am sure, you all would guide them by saying, "Relax physically and mentally by pondering. I may or may not gain dhamma. Nevertheless I must try noting. Then you will be less tense and can note what is happening in the present. Thus your concentration will be strengthened." If the mind is too restless and scattered, it is better for a yogi to develop the three factors of enlightenment, namely equanimity, concentration and tranquility.

**Motto:** Develop equanimity, concentration and tranquility, the three factors of enlightenment whenever there is over-excitement.

Equanimity (Upekkhā) factor of enlightenment means to view things neutrally whether wholesome or unwholesome. The desire for pleasantness is the cause of restlessness. Whether it is pleasant or unpleasant, you note it as it is. In other words, if it is pleasant just note "pleasant"; on the other hand when it is unpleasant just note "unpleasant" instead of developing greed or anxiety. That means yogi is not influenced by pleasantness or unpleasantness, he is indifferent to them. Then equanimity is developed and noting will be well balanced. Thus the scattered mind is put under control.

"I am going to note whatever manifests at the present moment", this way of reflection is the cause of concentration; thence you gain concentration when you contemplate incessantly. Note the sense objects of the present not letting the mind wander to the past nor the future. That means mind is

fixed on the present manifestation. Thus the factor of enlightenment namely concentration is developed.

**Motto:** Reflect not upon the by-gone past nor expect the new future  
Note the present becoming and dissolution of nāma and rupa for sure.

Do not think of whatsoever has happened in the past whether it is good or bad. And also do not expect for the future, such as whether dhamma will progress or not? The future is not here and therefore nothing has happened yet, nor concentration develops. Just fix your mind precisely on the present happening.

With physical and mental worries and anxieties, will you gain dhamma? You worry whether dhamma will progress; you are also anxious to gain dhamma and ponder; "It is doing alright now; will it be so in the coming days?" Thus your mind has no tranquility (passadhi) whereupon it becomes restless and diffused. You may also worry whether you will be able to report to the instructor at the dhamma discussion. All these are the causes for the scattering mind. Relax physically and mentally then only there will be tranquility and calmness in your mind. Concentration develops when there is tranquility in your mind.

## **2. Encourage the mind when it is oppressed**

At some stages of insight yogi may lose interest in meditation and become less energetic. Thereupon he should be encouraged to reflect wisely. The Athakathā masters advised to exert more as a protection from lethargy. At the beginning yogi is quite satisfied with his practice, however in the later stages, he becomes wearisome and wants to go home. He may also think that it was a mistake to come to the meditation centre, since he could not find any substantial benefit of meditation. A yogi experiencing the lethargic state of mind should be instructed to exert more and to contemplate. How will you go about it?

"Don't go home . Just listen to me, follow what I have told you". Certainly you will not do that. At the start yogi notes, " rising" "falling" i.e. 2 sections noting. When there is no progress in dhamma, he is advised to note 3 sections such as "rising" "falling" and "sitting". If not improved then note 4 sections, such as "rising" "falling" "sitting" and "touching". Even if the 4 sections noting could not help yogi, then advise him to note 5 sections as follow: "rising" "falling" "touching by right foot", "rising" "falling" "touching by left foot, "rising" "falling" "touching by the right buttock", "rising" "falling" "touching by the left buttock," "rising" "falling" touching of hands". Even then if yogi still feels weary and lacks in concentration , the Athakatha masters adviced to develop the three factors of enlightenment, such as energy, rapture and investigation of dhamma.

**Motto:**       Develop energy, rapture and investigation,  
                   The three factors of enlightenment  
                   When there is lack in dhamma improvement

In order to develop energy, one should recollect the reality of sufferings in hell thus, "If dhamma is not gained in the present life, the chance to return to hell is inevitable. I must exert more effort. If I go home and don't meditate, I shall not gain dhamma in the subsequent existences: Thus to suffer in hell is a certainty". The Buddha also preached, "Don't miss the grand opportunity of being a human being in the presence of the Buddha's Sasana. One who fails to grasp this golden opportunity will suffer in hell and will repetitively experience worries and anxieties of such unhappiness. Though fortunate enough to encounter with the Buddha's Sasana in this very life, if you have not practised insight meditation, you will suffer in hell and always worry and repent". Upon lucid realization of sufferings in hell, yogi will put more effort and then he is less oppressed. Thus the factor of enlightenment, energy, will be developed.

## Two pedlars

At one time when the Buddha was residing at Zetavan Monastery, Savatthi, a monk came back from the forest, where he practised dhamma with no result. He just spent time by seeing the Lord and listening to His dhamma. The other monks asked him whether he has gained any dhamma whereupon the answer was in negative. The monks brought him to the Lord and reported the situation.

"Oh monk, if you lacked in exertion and failed to gain dhamma in this present life, you might become melancholic and despondent for many worlds to come just like the pedlar who missed a golden cup worth a million", admonished the Buddha. Upon hearing this, all the monks respectfully requested the Lord to relate to them about the pedlar.

In one of his past existences Buddha-would-be was a pedlar. One day he went out on a business journey and met another pedlar who was full of avarice. They made an agreement not to cross each other routes. The greedy pedlar went around announcing, "pretty wares, pretty wares". By and by he approached a house where an old grandmother and a granddaughter were living. On hearing the pedlar the girl asked the grandmother to call the pedlar and to buy some pretty things for her. The old woman replied, "Since we have to work as house maids, how can we buy such costly things". The old woman and the girl were once well-to-do people, however now their economics were in ruin. The young girl told her grandmother that there was an old cup among the heap of broken pots and pans since her grandfather's day and that the cup may be bartered with a necklace.

The greedy pedlar was called in and shown the old cup and they told him to take it in exchange for a suitable necklace. The pedlar scratched the cup and at once knew that it was a cup of gold. On his second thought he would like to take it for nothing. Thereupon he threw it on the ground saying "It is not worth even two pyas" and left the house.

Soon after the Buddha-would-be pedlar came near the house shouting, "pretty things to wear". The young girl again

entreated her grandmother to barter a necklace for her with that old cup. The old woman said, "The previous pedlar has told us that the cup is not worth 2 pyas". The girl reasoned with her grandmother that the previous pedlar seemed to be greedy and conceited, while the present one seemed to be honest and soft-spoken and may be he would agree to barter the cup with a pretty necklace. The Buddha-would-be pedlar came in and examined the old cup and then from the scratch he found it was a golden cup. He honestly told the old lady, "Oh! Mother, this is a cup of gold and it is worth a million. Surely, I have no wares worth that much". The old lady said, "Oh! Pedlar, the other one has told us that it was not worth even two pyas. May be the cup turns into gold due to your fortune . We give you this old cup in exchange for a suitable necklace for your young sister".

Then the Buddha-would-be gave them 500 in money which was the proceeding from the sale as well as all the remaining pretty wares worth 500. He retained only his bag, a weighing balance and only eight coins in money for the boat fare to cross the river. Then he hurried to the river hank, gave the fare to the boatman and crossed the river.

Not long after, the wicked pedlar came back to the old woman's house and told them that he would take the old cup in exchange for some pretty wares. The ladies chided him of being dishonest and told him all about what the Buddha-would-be pedlar had given them in exchange for the old cup. At these words the greedy, wicked pedlar realized with great pain and suffering that he had lost the golden cup of million worth. Losing his senses, he flung away everything together with the wares at the door of the old woman and the girl. He also stripped his clothes into rag in anger and left for the river bank with a rod from his weighing balance to kill the Buddha-would-be pedlar. Arriving at the river bank, he saw the Buddha-would-be pedlar in the middle of the river in a boat rowing to the other bank. He called out to the boat man to row back to his side of the river. The Buddha-would-be pedlar told the boatman to row him to the other bank away from the wicked pedlar.

Upon seeing the boat getting further away from himself, the wicked pedlar overcame with great anger and fury that he broke his heart, vomiting blood and dropped to his death on the river bank, harbouring a great enmity towards the Buddha-would-be. This wicked pedlar in times to come was would-be Devadatta and the incident is the first enmity Devadatta harboured against the Buddha. The Buddha-would-be pedlar due to his meritorious deeds spent his cycle of life in good births only. When you are free from anxieties and worries your energy is strengthened.

**Motto:** Refusing a cup of gold a hundred thousands worth.  
 Lost in his own conceit and suffering in pangs of  
 wrath  
 In similitude of the stupid vendor  
 If now the sasana is denied and magga is refused  
 Then the suffering in pain will ensue  
 But when the sasana is accepted and with exertion  
 of viriya  
 There arises an arahatta

At the end of narration the Buddha said, "If you do not attain magga and phala, which is likened to a boat, you would not realize nirvana, the other side of the river. Moreover you will suffer great anxiety and decay and sickness in the endless rounds of samsara". The monks diligently practised and all realized arahatship. When you really perceive sufferings in apāya and ardently meditate, you will improve your concentration.

### (3) To be joyful when necessary

While meditating, yogi may become unhappy and do not want to contemplate any more. Then he should reflect wisely and make himself happy. This could happen when a yogi reached the Bhaya Nāna Stage. He may perceive his 5 aggregates as dreadful; at the Adinava Nāna Stage, the 5 aggregates are inferior and evil in nature to him; again at the Nibbida

Nāna Stage the 5 aggregates seem to him as insubstantial, devoid of pleasure and tiresome. Thus yogi will be oppressed and feel unhappy at these stages of insight. "Vipassana Meditation is the real path to nirvana. This also is the only path trodden by the Buddhas and arahants. I should be thankful to be following this only path by practising vipassana meditation. Certainly I shall be free from apāya and samsara i.e. attainment of nirvana", pondering thus his mind will be elated and become happy and joyful.

**(4) To be indifferent when necessary**

At the Sankhārupekkha Nāna Stage contemplation goes on spontaneously, however there is no progress in dhamma. Just like the driver of the cart drawn by two equally strong horses let loose his rein unconcerned, so also yogi needs no encouragement nor control over his contemplating mind nor put more effort. Nevertheless dhamma does not progress. How to contemplate to improve it? The best thing is to let this equilibrium remain, as it can be disturbed when encouraged or controlled. In other words, the mind is well balanced by spontaneous contemplation of the sense object and the noting mind. Then the concentration will be strengthened and dhamma is improved.

**(5) Develop inclination towards the noble magga and phala**

The Athakatha masters explained that yogi should rather develop inclination towards the noble magga and phala than mundane or jhana achievements. In other words to have a disposition reflected upon the noble magga and phala or to bend the mind towards the noble magga and phala.

**(6) To delight in the sublime happiness of nirvana**

To delight in the sublime happiness of nirvana by wishing to realize nirvana immediately. Your mind must be directed towards nirvana, as the object of contemplation.

The Lord preached that if one has developed these six factors of dhamma, he will undoubtedly realize nirvana.

After listening to this sermon on "Sitibhāva Sutta", may you all be able to practise in accordance to the Buddha's instruction. With diligent contemplation, may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nirvana, the end of all sufferings, by practising with ease.

Sādhu, Sādhu, Sādhu

## ERRATA

PAGE	LINE	INCORRECT	CORRECT
Content	No.8	Conductive	Conducive
-	No.14	Tazaungmone	Tanzaungmhone
Preface	Line 20	compounded	expounded
Page 48	Line 3	of	by
52	Line1,5, 12,21,30	Kissāyana	Kaccāyana
Page 53	Line16,19, 21	Kissāyana	Kaccāyana
Page 104	heading	Root-cultina	Root-cutting
Page 124	Line 5,24, 31	Kissāyana	Kaccāyana
Page 125	Line 8,23	Kissāyana	Kaccāyana
Page 128	Line 24	on idea	an idea
Page 129	Line 13	retunue	retinue
Page 148	Line 17	puthuzana	puthujana
Page 149	Line 5	puthuzana	puthujana
Page 156	Line 9,22	indifference	indifferent
Page 160	Line 6	tract	track
Page 165	Line 23	conscienousness	conspicuous
Page 167	Line 24	matured	mature
Page 182	Line 2,4	Tansaungmone	Tanzaungmhone
-	- 7	Tanzaungmone	Tanzaungmhone
-	Line 8	saung	zaung
Page 183	Line 13	Tansaungmone	Tanzaungmhone
Page 193	Line 16	impremancy	impermanancy
Page 195	Line 8	impermancy	impermanancy
Back Cover	No.10	climinated	eliminated

## POINTS TO NOTE

1. From wealth and properties extract dāna essence.
2. Extract Sila essence from the physical body.
3. Extract vipassana essence from life.
4. Decay, sickness, death and the ill-effect of misdeeds are the unobstructable four:
5. Sila is likened to the fence around a young tree.
6. Knowledge is similar to watering tree.
7. Discussion is likened to clearing old rotten roots.
8. Samatha is likened to removing the insects.
9. Vipassana meditation is similar to removal of webs.
10. The repeated occurrence of anger in Dukkha Vedana must be eliminated.
11. When sensation of pain arises, note it right away; just as taking out a thorn.
12. The repeated arising rāga in Sukha Vedana must be discarded.
13. When Sukha arises it must be noted as Dukkha.
14. The repeated arising of delusion in Upekkha Vedana must be dispelled.
15. When sensation of indifference ( Upekkha Vedana ) arises, note till it is apparent as impermanent.
16. Exert to prevent the demerits , which have not yet happened, so that they will not be apparent.
17. Exert to discard immediately the already committed demerits.
18. Exert to develop merits which are not yet developed.