

INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN

BUDDHISM



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INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN
B U D D H I S M

Compiled by

The members of
The Klang & Coast
Buddhist Association

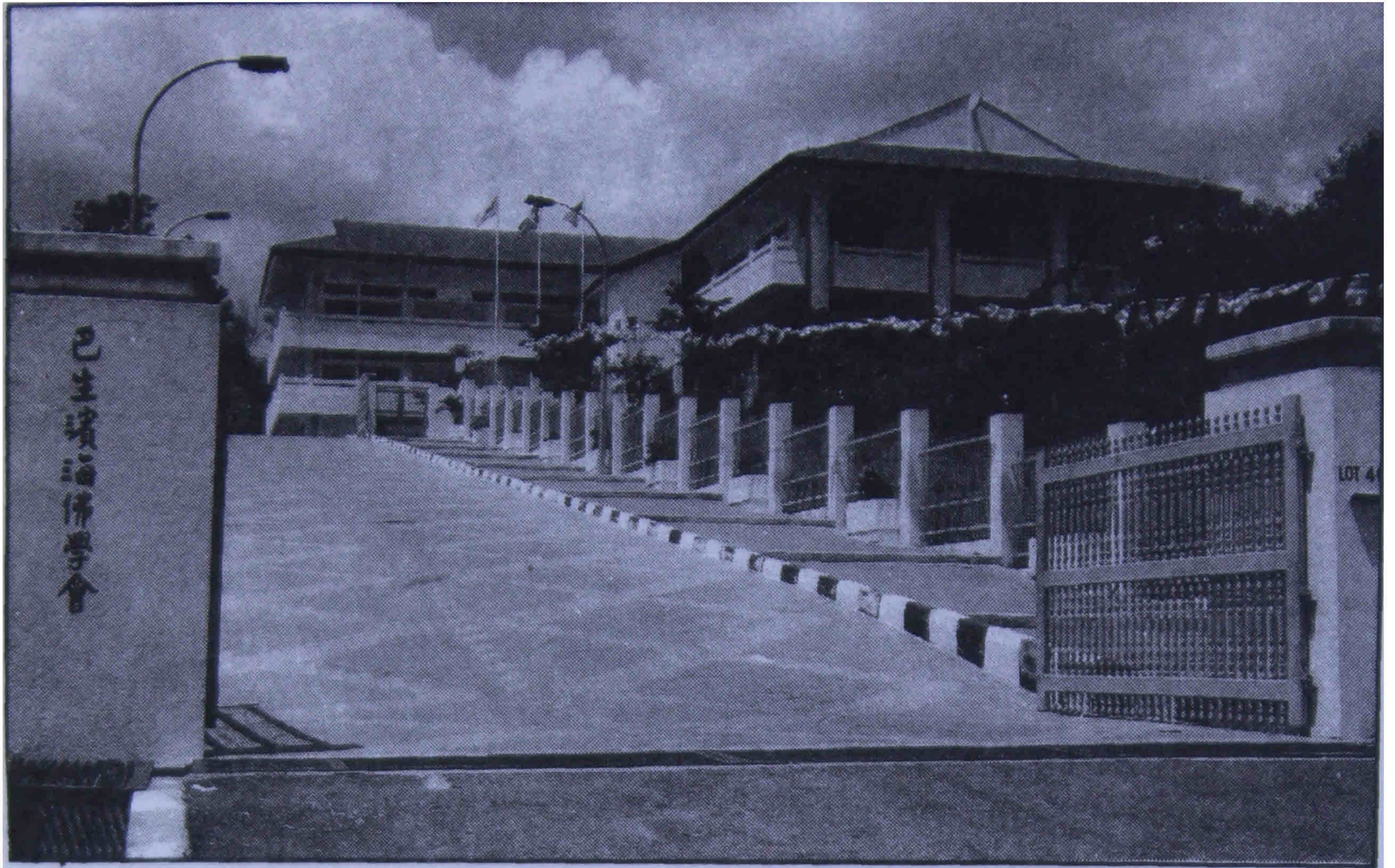
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Sabbadanaṃ dhammadanaṃ jināti.
The Gift of Dhamma excels all gifts.

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INWARD PATH. PENANG
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CONTENTS

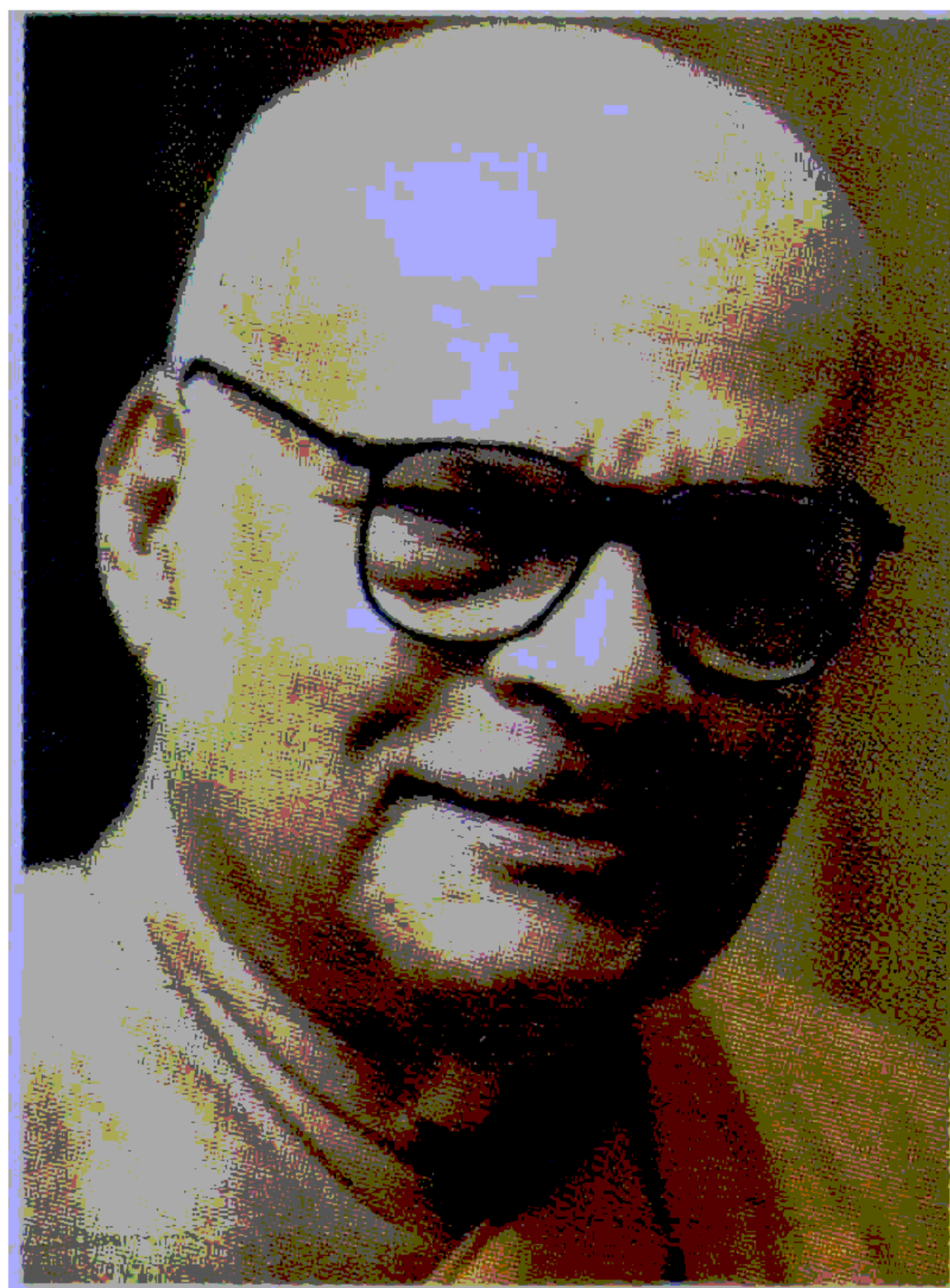
The Life of the Buddha	1
The Four Noble Truths	10
The Eightfold Noble Path	24
Dependent Origination	32
The Law of Kamma	38
Three Refuges	46
Five Precepts	50
Ten Meritorious Deeds	67
Threefold Training	
Giving (<i>Dāna</i>)	91
Morality (<i>Sīla</i>)	98
Buddhist Meditation	101
Buddhist Meditation Satipatthana Way	104
Recollection of the Buddha	107

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- Bro. Cheok Bee Hua — Ten Meritorious Deeds.
- Bro. Chan Chin Wah — Dāna (Giving), Sīla (Morality), Buddhist Meditation, Buddhist Meditation-Satipaṭṭhana Way

DEDICATION



The Most Venerable Dr. Kirinde Sri Dhammananda Mahā Nāyaka Thera J.S.M., DLitt., Chief High Priest of Malaysia, has been our Dhamma teacher for the past 25 years.

We sincerely dedicate this sixth reprint to him, in appreciation of his noble works in making known the Dhamma that had benefited the masses.



THE LIFE OF THE BUDDHA

THE BIRTH

On the **full-moon day of May** in the year **623 BC**, there was born in **Lumbini Park** near **Kapilavatthu** on the borders of Nepal, a noble Prince of the aristocratic **Sakya** clan. His father was **King Suddhodana** and his mother, **Queen Mahā Maya**. There was great rejoicing among the people over the birth of this illustrious Prince. An ascetic named Asita, also known as Kāladevala, being a tutor of the King, visited the palace to see the royal baby. The overjoyed King brought the child to him to pay reverence, but to the King's surprise, the child's feet turned and planted themselves on the matted locks of the ascetic's head. Instantly, the ascetic rose from his seat and foreseeing the child's future greatness, saluted him and this was then followed by the King himself.

On the 5th day after the Prince's birth, many learned Brahmins were invited to witness the Naming Ceremony and to suggest a suitable name for the Prince. Seven wise men, after examining the characteristics of the child, predicted that he would either become a Universal Monarch or a Buddha. However the eighth, **Kondanna**, who was the youngest, firmly declared that he would definitely retire from the world and become a Buddha. Consequently, the Bramins gave him the name of **Siddhattha Gotama** meaning "wish-fulfilled." His family name was Gotama. On the 7th day, Prince Siddhattha's mother died, and **Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī** her younger sister, who was also married to king Suddhodana, became his foster-mother.

THE PLOUGHING FESTIVAL

A remarkable incident took place in his childhood during the Ploughing Festival, a festive occasion when both nobles and common people worked together in the field. When the young Prince was left alone by himself, the thoughtful child, mature in intellect though young in age, sat cross-legged and intently concentrating on inhalation and exhalation, gained one-pointedness of mind and developed the First Ecstasy or Mental Absorption. The King was surprised on seeing his son in deep meditation and saluted him saying: “This, dear child is my second salutation.”

PRINCE SIDDHATTA'S YOUTH

Prince Siddhattha received a good education during his youth and was specially trained in the art of warfare. At the early age of 16, he married his beautiful cousin Princess Yasodhara also of the same age. After his happy marriage, he led a luxurious life, blissfully unaware of the vicissitudes of life outside the palace gates.

With the march of time, truth gradually dawned upon him. Amidst comfort and prosperity, he began to realize the universality of suffering. One glorious day, as he went out of the palace, he met with a strange sight of a **decrepit old man**, a **diseased man**, a **corpse**, and a **dignified hermit**. The first three sights convinced him of the inexorable nature of life and the universal sickness of humanity. The 4th signified the means to overcome the ills of life and attain calm and peace. Realizing the worthlessness of sensual pleasures highly prized by ordinary men and the value of renunciation in which the wise seek delight, he decided to leave the world in search of truth and peace.

THE GREAT RENUNCIATION

When this final decision was made after much deliberation, the seemingly happy news of the birth of a son was conveyed to him. However, he was not overjoyed and regarded the first and only offspring as an impediment. Normally an ordinary father would have welcomed the joyful tidings, but Prince Siddhattha, the

extraordinary father as he was, exclaimed: “An impediment (*rāhu*) has been born; a fetter has arisen.”

The infant son was accordingly named **Rāhula** by his grandfather. The palace was no longer a congenial place. The time was ripe for him to depart. He ordered his charioteer **Channa** to saddle his favourite white horse **Kanthaka** while he went to the chamber-room occupied by his sleeping wife and child to have a look at them before he left. He was not unduly worried about their welfare as they would be well taken care of in his absence. Leaving all behind with a light heart, he stole away from the palace at midnight and rode into the dark on his horse, attended only by his royal charioteer. It was in his **29th year**, the turning point of his career, that Prince Siddhatta made the **Great Renunciation**.

As a penniless wanderer, he journeyed far and crossing the river **Anoma**, he shaved his hair and beard, adopted a simple yellow garb of an ascetic living in voluntary poverty. Even when he arrived at **Rajagaha** city where **King Bimbisara** offered him half of the kingdom, he rejected the offer, stating that he wanted to find out a way to stop old age, sickness, worries and death.

THE SEARCH

As a seeker of Truth and Peace, he approached **Alara Kalama**, an ascetic of repute and speedily learnt his doctrine and developed the 7th **Arūpa Jhāna**, the Realm of Nothingness, an advanced stage of concentration. Dissatisfied with Kalama's system, he left him and approached **Uddaka Ramaputta** where he mastered his doctrine and attained the final stage of concentration, the Realm of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception. Again he felt that his quest of life was not achieved. He was seeking for **Nibbāna**, the complete cessation of suffering. He found that nobody was competent to teach him what he sought as all were enmeshed in ignorance. Though disappointed, he was not discouraged in seeking for the incomparable state of Supreme Peace. He continued to wander and arrived in due course at **Uruvela** where he

4 • INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN BUDDHISM

resolved to settle down for his meditation and to achieve his ultimate goal.

HIS STRUGGLE FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

Hearing of his renunciation, Kondanna and four sons of the other sages namely **Bhaddiya**, **Vappa**, **Mahanama** and **Assaji** also renounced the world to join his company. For **six long years**, Siddhattha led a superhuman struggle practising all forms of severe austerity so much so that his delicate body was almost reduced to a skeleton and resulted in the exhaustion of his energy. Consequently, realizing that Enlightenment could not be gained with an exhausted body, he abandoned **self-mortification** and adopted an independent course: the *Majjhima Paṭipadā* or **Middle Path**. His decision to take some food, however, disappointed the five ascetics who attended on him. At a crucial time when help would have been most welcome, his only companions left him, but he was not discouraged. After a substantial meal offered by **Sujātā**, a generous lady, he sat under the famous **Pipal tree** at **Bodhgaya** to meditate with the earnest wish and firm determination not to rise from his seat until he attained Buddhahood.

THE ENLIGHTENMENT

On the full-moon night of **Wesak** in **588 BC**, while meditating with mind tranquilized and purified, in the first watch, he developed that supernormal knowledge which enabled him to **remember his past lives**. In the second watch, he developed the clairvoyant **supernormal vision** which enabled him to see the death and rebirth of beings. In the last watch of the night, he developed the supernormal knowledge with regard to the **destruction of passions** and comprehending things as they truly are, thus attaining **Perfect Enlightenment**. The famous **Pipal tree** is now called the **Bodhi tree** for it was under this tree that Prince Siddhatta attained **Sambodhi** or **Perfect Wisdom**. Having in his **35th year** attained Buddhahood, that supreme state of Perfection, he devoted the remainder of that precious life to serve

humanity both by example and precept, dominated by no personal motive.

THE SEVEN WEEKS AFTER THE ENLIGHTENMENT

After the Enlightenment, for seven weeks the Buddha fasted, and spent his time under the Bodhi tree and in its neighbourhood.

1. The whole of the 1st week, the Buddha sat under the **Bodhi tree** in one posture experiencing the Bliss of Emancipation.
2. During the 2nd week, as a mark of **gratitude** to the Bodhi tree that sheltered Him during His struggle for Enlightenment, the Buddha stood gazing at it with motionless eyes.
3. During the 3rd week, the Buddha paced up and down on a “**jewelled promenade**” (*Ratana Cankamana*) near the Bodhi tree.
4. The 4th week He spent in a “**jewelled chamber**” (*Ratana-ghara*) meditating on the Abhidhamma.
5. The 5th week was spent under the **Ajapala Banyan** tree in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree. Here the Buddha declared what the qualities of a true Bramin were in answer to the question by a conceited brahmin.
6. The Buddha spent the 6th week under the **Mucalinda tree**. At that time, there arose a great rainstorm with cold winds and gloom for seven days. Thereupon Mucalinda, the Serpent King of the lake, came out and coiled himself around the body of the Buddha and sheltered the Lord’s head with his large hood to protect the Buddha.
7. The Buddha spent the 7th week under the **Rajayatana** tree where the two merchant brothers, **Tapussa** and **Bhallika** from Ukkala (Orissa) offered Him rice cakes and honey. When the Buddha finished His meal, they prostrated themselves before His feet and sought refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. Thus, they were the first lay disciples who took the two-fold refuge.

THE BUDDHA PROPOUNDS THE DHAMMA

After His meal, the Buddha began to contemplate and was reluctant to teach His Dhamma to the people. He thought that people would not be able to understand His Noble and deep teaching for they were shrouded by ignorance. Thereupon, **Brahma Sahampati** came and invited Him to teach the Dhamma saying that there will be those who could understand the Dhamma. On surveying the world, the Buddha perceived that there were beings who could understand and realize the Dhamma and He accepted the invitation of Brahma Sahampati.

On the 50th day after His Enlightenment, the Buddha proceeded to **Benares** to expound the Dhamma to his friends, the five ascetics namely **Kondanna, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama** and **Assaji**. He arrived at the **Deer Park in Isipatana** on the **full-moon day of Asalha**, two months after Wesak and delivered His First Discourse, the **Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta** or the **Discourse on Turning the Wheel of Dhamma** which led to the five ascetics attaining *Sotāpatti*, the first stage of sainthood and all became monks under the Buddha. Later the Buddha preached to them the **Anattalakkhana Sutta** or **Discourse on Non-Self** hearing which all attained Arahanship or final stage of sainthood. The Buddha also succeeded in expounding His Dhamma to a rich young man, **Yasa** and his **54 friends** who joined the Holy Order and became Arahants. **Yasa's parents and his wife** also attained *Sotapatti* and became the first lay disciples who took the Three-fold Refuge of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. Thus, within a short period of time there were 60 monks, all of them Arahants.

Lord Buddha despatched them in various directions to spread the Dhamma. Lord Buddha himself also left Benares and journeyed to **Uruvela** where He succeeded in preaching the Dhamma to **30 young men** who entered the Order and received the Higher Ordination. At the same time, there were three matted hair ascetic brothers: **Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa** and **Gaya Kassapa** living separately with 500, 300 and 200 disciples respectively. With much effort and at times using His psychic powers, the

Buddha succeeded in convincing them to enter the Order. The Buddha even delivered to them the **Adittapariyaya Sutta** or **Fire Discourse**, hearing which all attained Arahantship. Accompanied by His retinue of 1000 *Arahants*, all former matted hair ascetics, the Buddha proceeded to Rajagaha to meet King Bimbisara in accordance with the promise He made before His Enlightenment. King Bimbisara attained *Sotāpatti* after hearing the **Mahā Narada Kassapa Jātaka**. Later on, King Bimbisara offered his Bamboo Grove for the use of the Buddha and His disciples.

CONVERSION OF SĀRIPUTTA AND MOGGALLĀNA

Not far from Rajagaha in the village of **Nalaka**, there lived a very intelligent youth named **Upatissa** also known as **Sāriputta**, scion of the leading family of the village. He had a very intimate friend **Kolita**, also known as **Moggallāna**, the son of the leading family of another village. Together they had left the luxury of the household life and became ascetics under a teacher named **Sanjaya**. Very soon, they became dissatisfied with his teaching and returned to their own villages, with the understanding that whoever would first discovered the Path of Release should teach the other. It was at this time that the **Venerable Assaji**, one of the first five disciples, was on alms round in Rajagaha. Impressed by his calm and serene manner, Upatissa offered his seat and water to the Venerable Assaji when the latter was having his meal. On being asked by Upatissa to teach him the doctrine, Venerable Assaji uttered a **4-line stanza**, skillfully summing up the Master's Teaching of cause and effect:

*Ye dhamma hetuppabhava – tesam hetu tathagato
Aha tesan ca yo nirodho – evam vadi Maha-Samano.*

*“Of things that proceed from a cause –
their cause the Tathagata has told
And also their cessation –
Thus teaches the Great Ascetic.”*

8 • INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN BUDDHISM

Immediately on hearing **half the stanza** consisting of two lines, Upatissa attained *Sotāpatti*, the first stage of sainthood. In accordance with the agreement, he returned to his friend Kolita, who also attained *Sotāpatti* after hearing the **whole stanza**. Accompanied by their followers, the two friends went to see the Buddha and requested for admission into the Order. The Venerable Moggallāna attained Arahantship after **one week** but the Venerable Sāriputta passed a **fortnight** in reviewing and analyzing with insight all levels of consciousness, attaining Arahantship while **fanning** the Buddha who was giving a discourse to the wandering ascetic Dighanakha. That very evening, the Buddha summoned all His disciples to His presence and conferred the titles of **First and Second Chief Disciples** of the Sangha respectively on the Venerables Sāriputta and Moggallāna.

THE BUDDHA VISITS HIS BIRTHPLACE

King Suddhodana knowing that the Buddha was preaching the Dhamma in Rajagaha, dispatched **Kaludayi**, a childhood friend of the Buddha, to invite Him to Kapilavatthu. However on meeting the Buddha and hearing the Dhamma, he attained Arahantship. When the Buddha returned to Kapilavatthu, his father **saluted Him for the third time** when He used His psychic powers to subdue the pride of His relatives and elderly Sakyans who did not pay Him due reverence. The Buddha then proceeded to preach to them the Vessantara Jātaka. In due course. He even succeeded in inviting His step-brother **Nanda** and cousin **Ānanda** to join the Holy Order. When the Buddha visited the palace, **Princess Yasodhara** and her son **Rāhula** came to pay their respects and the latter was admitted into the Order though at a tender age of seven years only. After the death of King Suddhodana, Mahā Pajapati Gotami and Princess Yasodhara joined the Order of Nuns formed by the Buddha and later attained Arahantship.

THE BUDDHA'S MINISTRY

During the course of the Buddha's ministry which lasted for 45 years, it was a great success for He was generously supported by His many lay disciples. His chief male lay-disciple was the millionaire **Anathapindika**, who donated the famous **Jetavana Monastery** at **Savatthi** where the Buddha spent 19 rainy seasons. His chief female lay-disciple was the **Lady Visakha** who donated the **Pubbārāma Monastery** in the east of Savathi where the Buddha spent six rainy seasons. The Buddha was very skillful in His Preaching of the Dhamma that he even succeeded in converting the notorious killer **Angulimāla** who also joined the Order. On the whole, the Buddha did face some problems especially from His brother-in-law **Devadatta**, who was always plotting against Him but was never successful. Before the Buddha's **Parinibbāna** in 543 BC, which was in His 80th year at a place called **Kusinara**, He had His last meal from Cunda the smith, while His last convert was a wandering ascetic named **Subhadda**. The Buddha even delivered a last message to His disciples:

“Behold, O disciples, I exhort you. Subject to decay are all component things. Strive on with diligence.”

Thus, we came to know that the **Buddha was a human being**. As a man He was born, as a man He lived, and as a man His life came to an end. Though human, He became an **extraordinary man**.

REFERENCE

A Manual of Buddhism by Narada Maha Thera



THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS

After 6 years of strenuous striving in His last life, the Buddha finally realized the Truth when he attained Supreme Enlightenment under the Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya, India. This monumental event happened on the full-moon day of Wesak in 588 BC. This topic of the “Four Noble Truths” is the very heart and core of Buddhism. These Truths, made known by the Buddha after His Enlightenment, constitute the essence of the Dhamma (Teaching), pervading every aspect and every part of it.

WHAT ARE THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS?

They are:

1. The Noble Truth of Dukkha or Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*)
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Dukkha (*Samudaya Sacca*)
3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Dukkha (*Nirodha Sacca*)
4. The Noble Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Dukkha (*Magga Sacca*)

WHY ARE THEY CALLED NOBLE TRUTHS (*ARIYA SACCA*)?

They are truths because they are real and form an incontrovertible fact of life. Whether Buddhas arise or not, they exist in the world. It is the Buddhas who reveal them to mankind.

They are called Noble (*Ariya*) because they were discovered by the Greatest Noble Being i.e. one who is far removed from the passions. Alternatively, they are Noble Truths owing to the establishment of nobleness by the discovery and penetration of

them i.e. those who have penetrated the Four Noble Truths are called *Ariyas* or Noble Ones.

WHAT IS THE NOBLE TRUTH OF SUFFERING?

1. Birth (*Jāti*) is Suffering

According to Buddhism, the duration of each phenomenon consists of 3 phases viz. genesis, static or development, and dissolution. The moment of **genesis is birth**, the moment of **dissolution is death** and the **static phase is ageing**.

By the birth of a being is meant the genesis of the new mind and matter after death upon dissolution of the old existence i.e. the first germ of life in the new existence. No suffering or pain as such exists, of course, at the first moment of genesis but since birth serves as the **basis for later appearance of physical and mental suffering** throughout the whole of the ensuing existence, birth is considered as suffering.

2. Ageing (*Jarā*) is Suffering

Ageing means becoming grey-haired, toothless, wrinkled, bent, deaf and poor in eyesight. In other words, decay has set in, very recognizably, in the aggregates of mind and matter of a particular existence. Ageing of the mind is not so apparent and indications of it such as failing memory and senility become noticeable only when one becomes very old and then only to those close to oneself. Ageing is just the **static moment** of the aggregates of mind and matter and has no essence of pain or suffering in it. But because of ageing, there occurs failing of vitality, impairment of the sense faculties, weakening of health, loss of youth, strength and good looks. People are really afraid of growing old. Since it forms the **source of physical and mental suffering**, ageing is said to be fearful *dukkha*.

3. **Death (*Marāṇa*) is Suffering**

Death is the extinction of the life-principle, which has been in ceaseless operation since the time of birth in a particular existence. All mortals are in constant fear of death. But death is not by itself pain or suffering as it is the moment of dissolution of the life-principle of the aggregates of mind and matter. However, when death comes, one has to abandon the physical body and leave behind one's family and friends together with one's properties. The thought of leaving the present existence and the uncertainty of the future is very frightening. As death draws near, all mortal beings are subjected to severe attacks of disease and illness, which rack the body with unbearable pain. Death, being the **basis for all such physical and mental agony**, has thus been named *dukkha* by the Buddha.

4. **Sorrow (*Soka*) is Suffering**

Sorrow is the burning in the mind of one affected by the loss of relatives, destruction of property or possessions, deterioration of health and longevity, lapses in morality, deviation from right view to wrong view, any other loss, ruin or suffering. This sorrow is a form of mental displeasure (*domanas-sa*) but has **inner consuming** as its characteristic and as such is intrinsic suffering, *dukkha-dukkha*. Overwhelming distress occasioned by sorrow can cause heartburn leading to premature ageing and even death. Being thus a basis for other physical pain too, sorrow is fearsome and is therefore named *dukkha* by the Buddha.

5. **Lamentation (*Parideva*) is Suffering**

Lamentation is wailing by one affected by loss of relatives, property and any other losses or suffering. Absent-mindedly and hysterically, the distressed one clamours, proclaiming the virtues of the dead and the quality of the lost property or denouncing the enemy or agency responsible for the loss. In

reality, lamentation is merely the **material quality of sound** and therefore not suffering in essence. But such wailing and hysterical proclamations produce physical discomfort and pain. The Buddha had therefore declared lamentation as suffering. To cry is to be subjected to pain which is therefore suffering.

6. **Physical Pain (*Dukkha*) is Suffering**

Bodily pains such as stiffness, aches, soreness, tiredness, itchiness, feeling hot or cold are suffering. These physical pain are true intrinsic suffering called *dukkha-dukkha*. Even animals flee to safety at the slightest hint of getting beaten or shot at because they are afraid of physical pain. It is important to know that sickness and disease come under this category of physical pain. Physical pain is generally followed by mental distress and for thus serving as a cause for mental pain, it is named *dukkha*, dreadful suffering.

7. **Mental Displeasure (*Domanassa*) is Suffering**

The Pali word “*domanassa*” means bad-mindedness or **mental pain**. It denotes all sorts of mental aversion or displeasure such as worry, depression, dislike, hate, fear, misery, etc. Mental displeasure also is intrinsic suffering which not only **oppresses** the mind but also tortures the body such as causing stress, insomnia, and loss of appetite with consequent impairment of health and even the advent of death. It is a truly formidable *dukkha*.

8. **Despair (*Upayasa*) is Suffering**

Despair is ill-humour or dejection produced by **excessive mental agony** in one affected by loss of loved ones, property and any other losses or suffering. It causes **repeated bemoaning** over the loss resulting in **burning of the mind** and physical distress and can even lead to insanity or suicide. Despair is therefore suffering because of the intense burning of the

mind and physical pain accompanying it. People, accordingly recognize the state of despair as a fearsome *dukkha*.

As an illustration, sorrow (*soka*) is like cooking of oil or dye-solution in a pot over a slow fire. Lamentation (*parideva*) is like its boiling over when cooking over a quick fire. Despair (*upayasa*) is like what remains in the pot after it has boiled over and being unable to do so any more, goes on cooking in the pot till it dries up.

9. Association with the Hateful is Suffering

Association with the hateful is meeting with **disagreeable beings or undesirable objects**. Such meeting is not itself unbearable pain but in such situations, reaction sets in at once in the form of mental disturbance and physical discomposure. As it serves as a cause of mental and physical distress, it is designated by the Buddha as *dukkha*, dreadful suffering.

10. Separation from the Beloved is Suffering

Separation from the beloved is not itself a painful feeling. However when separation takes place, by death or while still alive, from beloved ones or when parted from one's treasured possessions, mental agony sets in at once. As it promotes various mental afflictions, the Buddha had called the separation from the **loved ones and desirable objects**, *dukkha*, dreadful suffering.

11. Not Getting what One Desires is Suffering

Not getting what one desires is not itself a painful feeling. But the **unfulfilled desire** often results in great disappointment, despair and may even lead to suicide. Suffering also arises out of desire for some **unobtainable object** such as the desire to be free from suffering. Without practising and developing the Eightfold Noble Path, freedom from suffering is unobtainable by mere wishing and not getting what one wants causes mental anguish. Here the object of one's desire also includes the

worldly gains and wealth which cannot be attained by mere desiring. Not getting them as one desires is also *dukkha*.

12. In short, the Five Aggregates of Clinging are suffering

A sentient being is made up of the Five Aggregates or Groups which form the objects of clinging or grasping. The Five Aggregates of Clinging or Grasping (*Upādāna-khanda*) are:

- a. The aggregate of matter or material forms (*Rūpa-khanda*)
- b. The aggregate of feeling (*Vedanā-khanda*)
- c. The aggregate of perception (*Saññā-khanda*)
- d. The aggregate of volitional activities or Kamma-formations (*Sankhāra-khanda*)
- c. The aggregate of consciousness (*Viññāṇa-khanda*)

All sentient beings exist as such only with these Five aggregates forming their substantive mass. They cling to their **body**, which is merely an aggregate of material forms, regarding it as “I, my body, permanent, etc.” Hence the group of material forms is called an aggregate of clinging. The mental groups made up of **feeling, perception, mental activities** and **consciousness** are also grasped at, taking them to be “I, my mind, it is I who thinks, permanent, etc.” Hence they are also called aggregates of clinging.

Example of the Five Aggregates of Clinging at the moment of seeing:

- a. The eye and the visible object are the Material Aggregate.
- b. Feeling pleasant, unpleasant or neutral is the Feeling Aggregate.
- c. Recognizing or remembering the object is the Perception Aggregate.
- d. To will to see and turning the attention on the object is the Volitional Activities Aggregate.
- e. Just knowing that an object is seen is the Consciousness Aggregate.

SUFFERING BECAUSE OF THE FIVE AGGREGATES OF CLINGING

1. *Dukkha-dukkha* or Intrinsic suffering

The eleven types of suffering starting from the suffering of birth to the suffering of not getting what one wants are all obvious types of suffering known as *dukkha-dukkha*, or intrinsic suffering. They arise only because there are the five aggregates of clinging; without them, such suffering will not arise.

In short, because there is body or the material aggregate, physical and mental sufferings dependent on the body arise. Because there are feeling, perception, volitional activities and consciousness aggregates, physical and mental sufferings based on them also arise. **Thus the Five Aggregates of Clinging are *dukkha-dukkha*, intrinsic suffering.** Cases of *dukkha* not so obvious which occurs as a result of the operation of the Law of Change is called *viparinama dukkha*, suffering due to change.

2. *Vipariṇāmā dukkha* or Suffering due to change

Pleasurable physical sensations arising from agreeable tactile impressions (touch) are called pleasant bodily feelings. Joyful states of mind arising from reviewing pleasurable sense objects are called pleasant mental feelings. These two forms of happy states please all beings. They go after these states all the time, even at the risk of their lives and when these are attained, their happiness knows no bound.

However, while they are rejoicing with blissful contentment, if the sense objects which have given them so much happiness and delight disappear or get destroyed, great would be their agitation followed by agony. When the wealth which they have accumulated in the form of money or property suddenly get lost through one reason or another; when death or separation comes to their loved ones; intense grief and distress ensue, which can even cause derangement. Thus, these two forms of happiness namely pleasant physical and mental feelings are also a type of suffering because of

change. Because they arise dependent on the five aggregates, the Five Aggregates of Clinging are *vipariṇāmā dukkha*, suffering due to change.

3. *Sankhāra dukkha* or Suffering due to conditioning

The word *sankhāra* in “*Sabbe sankhāra dukkha* or all **conditioned things** are suffering” here means conditioned things or resultants of determining conditions. It has a different meaning from the *sankhāra* in “*sankhāra-khandha*” which means **volitional activities**.

The Five Aggregates of Clinging are always in a state of flux, impermanent and none of them are self-existing. They arise out of various causes. They are conditioned. Their existence depends on certain conditions and when these conditions and causes cease to exist, they too cease to exist. As death awaits constantly, having to rely on the impermanent aggregates of clinging for physical substance or support is dreadful, like living in a building which shows signs of collapsing any moment.

The transitory nature of the Five Aggregates of Clinging require constant effort at **conditioning** for the maintenance of the *status quo* e.g. the body needs constant feeding in order to survive, feelings of happiness require constant contact with agreeable sense objects. Even the everyday medial neutral feelings need effort at conditioning e.g. without adequate rain, there is a shortage of water and everyone suffers the effect of the drought. This implies laborious effort which, of course is *dukkha*. Therefore, the Five Aggregates of Clinging are *sankhāra dukkha*, suffering due to conditioning.

SUMMARY

The Five Aggregates of Clinging are intrinsic suffering, suffering due to change and suffering due to conditioning. In short, the Five Aggregates of Clinging are the Noble Truth of Suffering.

WHAT IS THE NOBLE TRUTH OF THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING?

According to the Buddha, the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering is “*Taṇhā*” or Craving which leads from birth to birth, which accompanied by pleasure and greed, finds ever fresh delight now here, now there, everywhere. What is this “*Taṇhā*” or Craving? It is of three kinds:

1. *Kāma-taṇhā*, the sensual craving, the desire for enjoyment of sensuous pleasures.
2. *Bhava-taṇhā*, craving for eternal existence, holding the eternity-belief.
3. *Vibhava-taṇhā*, craving for non-existence (self-annihilation), believing that there is nothing after death.

WHERE DOES THIS *TANHĀ*, CRAVING ARISE AND TAKE ROOT?

“Wherever in the world, there are delightful and pleasurable things, there this *taṇhā*, craving arises and takes root.”

WHAT ARE THE DELIGHTFUL AND PLEASURABLE THINGS IN THIS WORLD?

They may be summarized as the following:

- a. The six sense bases: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.
- b. The six sense objects: visible object, sound, smell, taste, touch and mind objects.
- c. The six types of consciousness viz. seeing consciousness, hearing consciousness, etc.
- d. The six types of sense impressions or contacts.
- e. The six types of feeling, perception, volition, etc. arising from the six types of contact.

1. *Kāma-taṇhā* or Sensual Craving

Sensual craving is craving for pleasurable sense objects whether belonging to one’s own person or to other persons. They include:

- a. Beautiful sights and visible objects such as appearance, form or body.
- b. Pleasing sound and sound objects such as voices and persons making the sound.
- c. Delightful smell and its source such as perfume and persons using it.
- d. Delicious taste and the food producing the taste, men and women who prepare and serve the delicious food.
- e. Tactile sensations of rapture and objects producing such sensations.
- f. Wishing to be born as a *deva*, a man, a woman, longing to enjoy the sensual pleasures as a *deva* or as a human being. Taking delight in such pleasurable thoughts is also sensual craving.

Because of ignorance (*avijjā*) or “not knowing things as they truly are,” one holds the erroneous perception, thought and view (The Three Hallucinations) by considering:

- a. The impermanent as permanent
- b. Suffering as happiness
- c. Non-self as self
- d. The loathsome as beautiful

Thus thinking what is unpleasant to be pleasant, liking is developed for it. Liking it and desiring it leads to craving which drives one into activities in order to fulfill the craving. Such activities are the *kammas* (causes) and *sankhāras* (volitional activities) responsible for the formation of new aggregates of mind and matter in the new existence. Influenced by craving, even the death consciousness clings tenaciously to objects seen at death’s door, and after it vanishes, the rebirth consciousness arises holding on to the last seen objects to give rise to a new being consisting of the Five Aggregates of Clinging which are suffering. Thus *Kāma-taṇhā*, sensual craving is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

2. *Bhava-taṇhā* or Craving for eternal existence

This is the craving based on the belief in the permanence or stability of existence. It is the craving accompanied by the **wrong view** that the soul or living entity does not perish even when the physical body dissolves away. It enters into a new body and remain there. Even if the world crumbles and breaks up, it remains eternal and never perishes.

Religions outside the Teaching of the Buddha mostly hold this view of **eternalism**. Some believe that when a person dies, he remains permanently in heaven or suffers eternal damnation in hell according to the God's wish. Others believe that a being transmigrates from one existence to another according to kamma and exists permanently. For instance, a bird on a tree flies to another tree when the first tree falls down. When the second tree falls down again, it flies to a third one. Likewise, the soul or living entity, on dissolution of a gross body or form on which it is dependent, moves on to another coarse body, itself remaining everlasting, undestroyed.

Bhava-taṇhā, craving for eternal existence takes delight in the view that the soul or living entity is permanent, enduring. This "I", which has been in permanent existence since eternity, feels the sensations and will go on feeling them. Believing thus, it takes delight in every object experienced by the six senses and also in objects one hopes to come to enjoy in the future. So it wishes to enjoy a prosperous life now and in future; to be born in good happy existences; to enjoy the good life of human or celestial being. Some wish to be born always a man, some a woman. All these wishes are craving for existence. Because of this craving, a conditioning influence or potential power is built up for the arising of a new life consisting of the **Five Aggregates of Clinging** which are suffering. Thus *Bhava-taṇhā*, craving for eternal existence is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

3. *Vibhava-taṇhā* or Craving for non-existence

This is the craving based on the belief that there is existence only while alive, there is nothing after death. It is the craving which is accompanied by the **wrong view of non-existence** which holds that nothing remains after death; there is complete annihilation. This craving likes the idea that after death, existence is annihilated without any special effort. The reason is that one who holds this view shrinks from the practice of meritorious deeds and does not abstain from evil deeds. The evil deeds committed are also innumerable. If new life occurs after death, these evil deeds will bear unwholesome effects which they cannot relish. Only if nothing happens after death and there is no new existence will their misdeeds be without effect and they can escape scot-free from all consequences of their evil actions. Hence this great appeal of the nihilistic view.

At the same time, holding that the time for enjoying is now, the present life before death, they are too eager to go after any desirable object of pleasure. Hence they go all out in pursuit of their pleasure without thinking of the consequences. Such ardent pursuit of sensual pleasures leads to commission of *kammas* (causes) and *sankhāras* (volitional activities), every act of which constitutes to formation of new life. Everytime there is delight in, and enjoyment of pleasures of the present life, the sensual craving is imparted to the consciousness. Even at death, it clings to the objects seen at death's door, and after it vanishes, the rebirth consciousness arises holding on to the last seen objects to give rise to a new birth of the **Five Aggregates of Clinging** which are suffering. Thus *Vibhava-taṇhā*, Craving for non-existence is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

SUMMARY

The true cause of suffering lies in the three cravings namely craving for sensual pleasure, craving for eternal existence and craving for non-existence.

WHAT IS THE NOBLE TRUTH OF THE CESSATION OF SUFFERING ?

According to the Buddha who had completely realized the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering, it is the complete fading away and extinction of this Craving, its forsaking and giving up, the liberation and detachment from it. The truth of the cessation of suffering is then the **extinction of its origin, craving**.

In Buddhism, there are 4 stages in the extinction of craving.

1. *Sotāpatti* or 1st Stage of Sainthood

One who has realized the 1st Sainthood is called a *Sotāpanna*. The 1st Sainthood knowledge extinguishes gross sensual cravings that can give rise to rebirth in the woeful states. So the *Sotāpanna* is not capable of breaking the **five precepts** involving killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, telling lies and taking of intoxicants. He has also destroyed self-illusion and doubts. As he has not eradicated all the fetters that bind him to existence, he will suffer **seven more rebirths** at most.

2. *Sakadāgāmī* or 2nd Stage of Sainthood

One who has realized the 2nd Stage of Sainthood is called a *Sakadāgāmī*. The 2nd Sainthood knowledge further weakens the grosser forms of sensual craving and ill-will to the extent that he will suffer not more than **one rebirth** in the sensual plane. Hence he is also called a **Once-Returner**.

3. *Anāgāmī* or 3rd Stage of Sainthood

One who has realized the 3rd Stage of Sainthood is called an *Anāgāmī*. He has destroyed the fetters of sensual craving and ill-will but the subtle forms of craving (such as existence in the fine material plane) and ignorance are still dormant. Thereafter, he is not reborn in the sensual plane but in the Pure Abodes where he attains the Final Stage of Sainthood

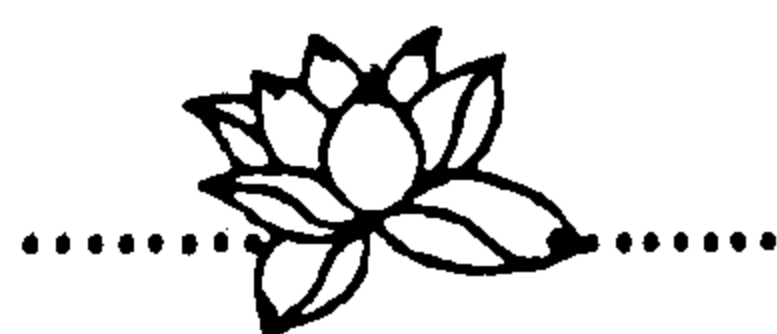
and lives till the end of his life. Hence he is also called a **Non-Returner**.

4. *Arahantship* or Final Stage of Sainthood

One who has realized the Final Stage of Sainthood is called an *Arahant*. An *Arahant* has completely destroyed all forms of craving and eradicated all the fetters that bind one to existence. He understands: “Birth is exhausted, the Holy Life has been lived out, what has to be done is done, there is no more of this to come.” He has completely realized *Nibbāna*, the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.

REFERENCE

The Great Discourse on the Wheel of Dhamma (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*) by the Venerable Mahasi Sayadaw of Burma.



THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH

WHAT IS THE NOBLE TRUTH OF THE PATH LEADING TO THE CESSATION OF SUFFERING ?

There are two extremes namely:

1. Indulgence in Sensual Pleasure which is base, common, vulgar, unholy, unprofitable; or
2. Self-mortification which is painful, unholy, unprofitable.

Both these two extremes, the Perfect One has avoided, and has found out the **Middle Path**, which makes one both to see and to know, which leads to peace, to discernment, to **Enlightenment**, to Nibbāna. It is the Noble Eightfold Path, the way that leads to the cessation of suffering, namely:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|---|---------------|
| 1. Right View or Understanding | – <i>Sammā-diṭṭhi</i> | } | WISDOM |
| 2. Right Thought | – <i>Sammā-sankappa</i> | } | |
| 3. Right Speech | – <i>Sammā-vācā</i> | } | MORALITY |
| 4. Right Action | – <i>Sammā-kammanta</i> | } | |
| 5. Right Livelihood | – <i>Sammā-ājīva</i> | } | |
| 6. Right Effort | – <i>Sammā-vāyāma</i> | } | CONCENTRATION |
| 7. Right Mindfulness | – <i>Sammā-sati</i> | } | |
| 8. Right Concentration | – <i>Sammā-samādhi</i> | } | |

1. WHAT IS RIGHT VIEW ?

- a. Right view of the Ten Subjects as taught by the Buddha, namely:
 - i. There is moral significance in **almsgiving**.
 - ii. There is moral significance in **large offerings**.
 - iii. There is moral significance in **small gifts**.
 - iv. There is the result and fruit of well-done and ill-done **kammas (actions)**.
 - v. There is moral significance in what is done to one's **mother**.
 - vi. There is moral significance in what is done to one's **father**.
 - vii. There are beings of **instantaneous rebirth**.
 - viii. There is **this world**.
 - ix. There is **another world**.
 - x. There are in this world **sages and recluses** of right attainment, of right practice, who having realized by their own **super-knowledge** the truth regarding this world and other worlds, **make it known to others**.
- b. Right view of the **Law of Kamma** i.e. all beings are owners of their own Kamma.
- c. Right view through penetration into the true nature of **mental and physical processes**.
- d. Right view through penetration into the **root cause** and other causes of the physical and mental processes leading to realization of the **cause and effect** relationship.
- e. Right view by realization of **Insight Wisdom (Vipassanā Ñāṇa)**. There are 10 stages of this mundane Insight Wisdom beginning from the Knowledge of Comprehension (*Sammasana Ñāṇa*) to the Knowledge of Conformity (*Anuloma Ñāṇa*).

- f. Right view by attainment of the **Four Stages of Sainthood** (*Ariya Magga Ñāṇa*).

Now, in understanding wrong view as wrong and right view as right, one practises “**Right View**.” In making efforts to overcome wrong view and arouse right view, one practises “**Right Effort**.” In overcoming wrong view with attentive mind and dwelling with attentive mind in the possession of right view, one practises “**Right Mindfulness**.” Hence, there are three factors that accompany and follow upon right view, namely: **Right View**, **Right Effort** and **Right Mindfulness**.

2. WHAT IS RIGHT THOUGHT?

- a. Thoughts of Renunciation – *Nekkhamma*
(that is opposed to sensual desire)
- b. Thoughts of Loving Kindness – *Avyapāda*
(that is opposed to ill-will)
- c. Thoughts of Harmlessness – *Avihimsā*
(that is opposed to cruelty)

“Thoughts” here does not mean thinking or conceptualizing. It is used in the technical sense of **directing the mind** to the object or the **application** of the mind on the object.

Now, in understanding wrong thought as wrong, and right thought as right, one practices **Right View**. In making efforts to overcome evil thought and to arouse right thought, one practices **Right Effort**. In overcoming evil thoughts with attentive mind and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right thought, one practices **Right Mindfulness**. Hence there are three factors that accompany and follow **Right Thought**, namely: **Right View**, **Right Effort** and **Right Mindfulness**.

3. WHAT IS RIGHT SPEECH?

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

Now, in understanding wrong speech as wrong, and right speech as right, one practices **Right View**. In making efforts to overcome evil speech and arouse right speech, one practices **Right Effort**. In overcoming wrong speech with attentive mind and dwelling in possession of right speech with attentive mind, one practices **Right Mindfulness**. Hence there are three factors that accompany and follow **Right Speech**, namely: **Right View**, **Right Effort** and **Right Mindfulness**.

4. WHAT IS RIGHT ACTION?

- a. Refraining from injuring or killing any living being.
- b. Refraining from taking what is not given.
- c. Refraining from wrong conduct in (sexual) pleasures, intoxicants and gambling.
- d. Immoral physical and verbal actions such as deceit, trickery, usury and ungratefulness are considered wrong speech and actions.

Now, in understanding wrong action as wrong, and right action as right, one practices **Right View**. In making efforts to overcome wrong action and arouse right action, one practices **Right Effort**. In overcoming wrong action with attentive mind and dwelling in possession of right action with attentive mind, one practices **Right Mindfulness**. Hence there are three factors that accompany and follow **Right Action**, namely: **Right View**, **Right Effort** and **Right Mindfulness**.

5. WHAT IS RIGHT LIVELIHOOD?

Refraining from trading in the 5 kinds of merchandise, namely:

- a. **Weapons**
- b. **Living beings**
- c. **Meat**
- d. **Intoxicants**
- e. **Poisons**

In general, refrain from livelihood based on **wrong conduct** to be avoided under **Right Action** and **Right Speech**.

Now, in understanding wrong livelihood as wrong, and right livelihood as right, one practices **Right View**. In making efforts to overcome wrong livelihood and to establish right livelihood, one practices **Right Effort**. In overcoming wrong livelihood with attentive mind and dwelling in possession of right livelihood, one practices **Right Mindfulness**. Hence there are three factors that accompany and follow Right Livelihood, namely: **Right View**, **Right Effort** and **Right Mindfulness**.

6. WHAT IS RIGHT EFFORT?

Right Effort is concerned with the development of the mind. There are four **Great Efforts**:

- a. **The Effort to Avoid**

Here one arouses the will to **avoid the arising of evil**, unwholesome states of mind that have not yet arisen. He makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives. How? By watching over and restraining his senses e.g. by noting seeing, hearing, smelling, thinking, etc. at the moment of seeing, hearing, smelling, thinking, etc.

- b. **The Effort to Overcome**

Here one arouses the will to **overcome the evil**, unwholesome states of mind that have already arisen. He makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives. How?

He does not retain any thought of greed, ill-will, delusion or any other unwholesome states that may have arisen. He abandons them, dispels them, destroys them, causes them to disappear e.g. by noting them mindfully as they arise.

c. The Effort to Develop

Here one rouses the will to **arouse wholesome** states of mind that have not arisen. He makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives. How? He develops the seven factors of Enlightenment, namely: Mindfulness, Investigation of physical and mental processes. Energy, Pleasurable Interest, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity.

d. The Effort to Maintain

Here one rouses the will to **maintain the wholesome** states of mind that have already arisen and not allow them to disappear, but develop them to full maturity (*bhāvanā*). He makes effort, stirs up his energy, exerts his mind and strives. How? By applying the mind firmly on the object of concentration either in Tranquility or Insight Meditation.

7. WHAT IS RIGHT MINDFULNESS?

Right Mindfulness is the quality of **complete awareness** developed through the **Four Foundations of Mindfulness**. Here one dwells in contemplation of the Body, in contemplation of Feeling, in contemplation of Mind, in contemplation of Mind Objects: ardent, mindful and clearly comprehending, after putting away greed and hatred.

a. How does one dwell in contemplation of the Body?

Through mindfulness of Respiration, the Four Postures, Clear Comprehension, 32 Parts of the Body, the Four Elements and Meditation on Corpses.

b. How does one dwell in contemplation of Feeling?

Through Mindfulness of pleasant feeling, unpleasant feeling and neutral feeling, one beholds how feelings arise; beholds how feelings pass away; beholds the arising and passing away of feelings. Thus one understands that the expression “I feel” is only a conventional expression. One understands that in the ultimate sense, there are only feelings but no “I” or Self who experiences the feelings.

c. How does one dwell in contemplation of the Mind?

Through Mindfulness of the Mental States such as the greedy mind, angry mind, deluded mind, contracted mind, distracted mind, concentrated mind, developed mind, freed mind, and their opposing states. Thus one beholds how consciousness arises; beholds how consciousness passes away; beholds the arising and passing away of consciousness. Thus one understands that the mind is not a permanent entity. When the greedy mind arises, there is only greedy mind but no “I” or Self who is greedy.

d. How does one dwell in contemplation of Mind Objects?

Through Mindfulness of Mind Objects, Namely:

- i. The five mental hindrances viz. sensual desire, ill-will, drowsiness, distraction, doubts.
- ii. The Five Aggregates of Clinging.
- iii. The Six Sense Bases and their Objects.
- iv. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment.
- v. The Four Noble Truths.

Thus one beholds how mind objects arise; beholds how mind objects pass way; beholds the arising and passing away of mind objects. One understands that mind objects are impermanent, suffering and not self or “I”.

Through the Application of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, one develops **Right View** by realization of **Insight**

Wisdom leading finally to the realization of Sainthood Knowledges and the attainment of Nibbāna, the cessation of all suffering.

8. WHAT IS RIGHT CONCENTRATION?

This is **one-pointedness** of mind developed through **Tranquility** meditation by **fixed** concentration with the mind only on the **meditation object**, to the exclusion of all others or **momentary** concentration developed by **Insight** meditation through the application of the **Four Foundation of Mindfulness**.

Right Concentration is present in all wholesome consciousness and hence is accompanied by at least Right Thought (application of mind), Right Effort and Right Mindfulness. The **three Factors**: Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration form the **Concentration group** of the Eightfold Noble Path by which one penetrates into the true nature of mental and physical processes thereby attaining Right View by realization of Insight Wisdom.

Article compiled by Chan Khoon San

REFERENCE

The Noble Eightfold Path And Its Factors Explained by Venerable Ledi Sayadaw

The Word Of The Buddha by Venerable Nyanatiloka



DEPENDENT ORIGINATION (PAṬICCA SAMUPPĀDA)

WHAT IS THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION?

According to this law, every phenomenon owes its origin to another phenomenon prior to it. It may simply be expressed as “depending on this, this originates.” An example of Dependent Origination in nature is given below:

There being clouds in the sky, it rains.
It having rained, the road becomes slippery.
The road becoming slippery, a man falls down.
The man having fallen down becomes injured.

Here a shower of rain depends on the clouds in the sky.
The road becoming slippery depends on the rain.
The fall of the man depends on the road becoming slippery.
The injury of the man depends upon his fall:

Conversely:

If there were no clouds in the sky, it would not have rained.
Then the road would not have become slippery.
Then the man would not have fallen.
Then he would not have become injured.

HOW DOES THE LAW OF DEPENDENT ORIGINATION WORK?

In this chain of events, we see one incident depends on one prior to it and gives rise to one after it. Everything that we find in this

world can be brought in a chain of dependence like this. Nothing can originate without depending on something else previous to it, and no originated thing can be conceived of, which does not give rise to something else in its turn. Thus the process goes on. Anything can be traced upwards to where it originated from and everything can also be traced downwards to that which is produced depending on it.

QUESTION OF THE FIRST CAUSE?

Here an objection can be raised as to what was the first cause or where does the process of causation end? In primitive times, people saw the wonders of Nature and became curious to get some satisfactory explanation of them. Being ignorant of the Law of Dependent Origination and out of fear of the unknown forces of Nature, they naturally tried to explain them by superstitious belief in gods or goddesses. The primitive man believed that the wind blows because the Wind God goes in a procession to get married. If Science had accepted it and did not trace it according to the Law of Dependent Origination, we would not have known that the movement of wind is due to differences of atmospheric pressure.

A theistic or superstitious explanation puts an end to all free inquiry. We cannot ask, who created the God or depending on what the God originates. Here there is an absolute check in the advancement of knowledge. The Law of Dependent Origination does not investigate into the First Cause, for the very concept of a “first cause” means a stop to further advancement of knowledge. Regarding the first beginning of beings, the Buddha has said:

“Inconceivable, monks, is the beginning of this Saṃsāra (cycle of birth and death), not to be discovered is any first beginning of beings who obstructed by ignorance and ensnared by craving, are running and faring in this round rebirths.”

IS DEPENDENT ORIGINATION THE SAME AS DIRECT CAUSATION?

The Law of Causation as understood by Aristotle and others considers the cause and effect as two distinct events, one producing the other. According to Dependent Origination, two events cannot be considered as quite distinct from one another, for there are links of the same process, which admits of no break. No single event in the world is ever isolated. A cause by itself cannot stand.

Example:

Clay is the cause of the pot; the medieval logicians assert. Yes, clay is necessary to produce the pot but alone it is not sufficient. If there were no water, no wheel, no potter, no intention of the potter to make a pot, the pot would not have been produced. All these are unavoidable for the production of the pot. If one of them were absent, the pot could not have been produced. Therefore it is not correct to say that the clay is the cause of the pot. The correct expression is “Depending on clay, the pot is produced.” Thus the most scientific and rational explanation of a phenomenon is only possible according to the Law of Dependent Origination.

DEPENDENT ORIGINATION TO EXPLAIN THE ORIGIN OF SUFFERING

Of all the Teachings of Buddhism, none has given rise to greater misunderstanding, to more contradictory and absurd interpretations, than the doctrine of Dependent Origination. In many cases, there were attempts to present Dependent Origination as an explanation of the primeval beginning of all things and one saw in “Ignorance”, the First Cause out of which in the course of time, all conscious and physical life had evolved. All that in spite of the Buddha’s repeated and definite declaration that an absolute first beginning of existence is something unthinkable, that all such speculation may lead to insanity and that one could

never imagine a time when there was no Ignorance and Craving for existence. Why then did the Buddha teach the doctrine of Dependent Origination?

It was to show through which causes and conditions, Suffering comes into being, now and hereafter. It is only through knowing the origin or cause of Suffering, that Suffering can be removed. The Buddha meditated over the cause of death, decay and misery as He traced them upwards in the chain of Dependent Origination.

a. What does death, decay, Suffering depend on?

They depend on birth. For these take place after a person is born. So Suffering depends on Birth.

b. What does Birth depend on?

Birth depends on Existence or *Bhava*. Nothing comes out of nothing. A thing is produced out of something. So Birth is not possible if there were no previous Existence of a being.

c. What does Existence depend on?

Existence depends on Clinging. All beings cling to life and sensual pleasures. It is our clinging and striving on which our Existence or *Bhava* depends.

d. What does Clinging depend on?

Clinging depends on Craving. Without craving, how can one have any clinging? A man craves for wealth. So he clings and strives or struggles to obtain wealth.

e. What does Craving depend on?

Craving depends on Feeling. When there is pleasant feeling, there is craving to enjoy it. Even painful feeling may be a condition to craving, as dependent on painful feeling there may arise the desire and craving for happiness. So Craving depends on Feeling.

f. What does Feeling depend on?

Feeling depends on Contact. When our senses come into contact with the external objects, then only we feel them.

g. What does Contact depend on?

Contact depends on the Six Sense Bases i.e. eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind without which there would not be any consciousness of the external objects.

h. What do the Six Sense Bases depend on?

The Six Sense Bases depend on Mentality and Matter. The Six Sense Bases are a name for the five physical sense organs and the mind-base, the latter being a collective term for the five kinds of consciousness (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching), the mind element and the mind-consciousness element. The physical sense bases are derived from matter while the mind-base consists of mentality.

i. What do Mentality and Matter depend on?

Mentality and Matter depend on Consciousness. The arising of a being consisting of mentality and matter depends on the Rebirth Consciousness for if this consciousness were not to appear in the mother's womb, mentality and matter would not arise.

j. What does Consciousness depend on?

Consciousness depends on Volitional Activities. Here consciousness means those classes of consciousness (including the rebirth consciousness) which are the result of volitional or intentional actions done in a former existence.

k. What do Volitional Activities depend on?

Volitional Activities depend upon Ignorance. Here ignorance means the ignorance of the Four Noble Truths and not understanding the Dependent Origination of all the phenomena of

existence. Volitional Activities are those, either moral or immoral, which are rooted in ignorance. They are also called Kamma-formations and provide the Kammic energy for rebirth, thereby prolonging the cycle of birth and death or *Samsāra*.

This is how the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering is explained by the formula of Dependent Origination. When the Four Noble Truths are fully comprehended, Ignorance is completely eradicated.

Without Ignorance. There are no Volitional Activities.
 Without Volitional Activities, there is no Consciousness.
 Without Consciousness, there are no Mentality and Matter.
 Without Mentality and Matter, there are no Six Sense Bases.
 Without the Six Sense Bases, there is no Contact.
 Without Contact, there is no Feeling.
 Without Feeling, there is no Craving.
 Without Craving, there is no Clinging.
 Without Clinging, there is no Existence.
 Without Existence, there is no Birth.
 Without Birth, there is no Decay, Death and Suffering.

This is how the Noble Truth of the Extinction of suffering is explained by the formula of Dependent Origination.

REFERENCE

The Buddha-Dhamma by Bhikkhu Jagdish Kasyapa M.A.



THE LAW OF KAMMA

In Buddhism, there are five orders or laws (*Niyāmas*) that operate in the physical and mental realms. They are:

1. *Utu Niyāma* : the caloric or physical inorganic order
e.g. seasonal phenomena of weather,
nature of heat, energy, chemical reactions, etc.
2. *Bīja Niyāma* : germinal or physical organic order e.g.
rice from rice seeds, sweet taste of sugar,
different ways of plant propagation, etc.
3. *Kamma Niyāma* : moral or cause and effect order. Moral
and immoral acts produce desirable and
undesirable results.
4. *Citta Niyāma* : order of mind or psychic law e.g. processes
of consciousness, power of mind, tele-
pathy, mind reading, recollection of past
lives, divine eye, psychic power, etc.
5. *Dhamma Niyāma* : order of the norm e.g. the natural phe-
nomena occurring at the advent of a
Bodhisatta in his last birth, gravitation
and other similar laws of nature.

Every mental and physical phenomenon can be explained by these all-embracing five orders which are laws in themselves. Kamma as such is only one of these five orders which demand no law-giver or enforcer as is the case with all natural laws.

WHAT IS KAMMA?

The Pali term Kamma (Sanskrit: *Karma*) literally means action or doing. Any kind of volitional or intentional action whether mental, verbal or physical is regarded as Kamma. It covers all that is included in the phrase: “thought, word or deed.” Generally speaking, all good and bad actions constitute Kamma. In its ultimate sense, Kamma means all moral and immoral volition (*kusala akusala cetanā*). Involuntary, unintentional or unconscious actions, though technically deeds, do not constitute Kamma, because volition, the most important factor in determining Kamma, is absent. Without intention, a deed is sterile; it produces no reaction of moral significance. However, if a deed done in “culpable negligence” proves harmful to others, the lack of mindfulness, circumspection or consideration will constitute unwholesome Kamma and will have its result. Though harm was not intended i.e. the deed was not motivated by hate, yet there is present another unwholesome root, delusion, which includes for instance, irresponsible thoughtlessness.

HOW DOES THE LAW OF KAMMA OPERATE?

Kamma is action and *Vipāka*, fruit or result is its reaction. Kamma is the cause and *Vipāka* is the effect. According to the Law of Kamma, every volitional activity is accompanied by its due effect. The Saṃyutta Nikāya I (227) states:

*“According to the seed that’s sown,
so is the fruit ye reap therefrom.
Doer of good will gather good.
Doer of evil, evil reaps.
Sown is the seed, and
thou shalt taste the fruit thereof.”*

Kamma is a law in itself which operates in its own field without the intervention of an external independent ruling agency.

The Law of Kamma acts in the following manner:

1. All moral actions give moral resultants.
2. All immoral actions give immoral resultants.
3. A person does moral/immoral actions and he gets moral /immoral resultants. It is not possible for one person to perform moral/immoral actions and another person to receive the moral/immoral results.

Kamma does not necessarily mean past actions. It embraces both past and present deeds. It is not fate. Nor is it predestination, which is imposed on us by some mysterious unknown power to which we must helplessly submit ourselves. It is one's own doing which reacts on one's own self, and so it is possible to divert the course of our Kamma to some extent. How far one diverts it will depend on oneself.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF KAMMA?

Ignorance (*avijjā*) or “not knowing things as they truly are” is the chief cause of Kamma. Dependent on Ignorance arise Volitional Activities (*sankhāra*) states the Buddha in *Paṭicca Samuppāda* or Dependent Origination. Associated with ignorance is its ally, craving (*taṇhā*), the other root cause of Kamma. Unwholesome actions are conditioned by these two causes. All good deeds of a worldling, though associated with the three wholesome roots of generosity, loving-kindness and knowledge are nevertheless regarded as Kamma because the two unwholesome roots of ignorance and craving are dormant in them.

No Kamma is accumulated by one who has eradicated craving and had understood things as they truly are. Buddhas and Arahants do not accumulate fresh Kamma as they have eradicated ignorance and craving, the root causes of Kamma. However, they will still receive the results of their past Kamma.

WHO IS THE DOER OF THE KAMMA? WHO REAPS THE VIPĀKA?

The answer is given in the Visuddhi Magga (Path of Purification).

*“No doer is there who does the deed.
Nor is there one who feels the fruit.”*

According to Buddhism, there are two types of truth viz. conventional truth absolute truth. For conventional purposes, we use such terms as man, woman, animal, being, self and so forth. In reality, there is no unchanging entity or any being in the form of a man, woman, animal or anything permanent that can be called a self. The so-called fleeting form consists only of mental and material processes which are constantly changing, not remaining the same for two consecutive moments. This so-called being consists of the five Aggregates or groups of existence (five *khandas*) which are the aggregates of **Matter, Feeling, Perception, Mental Formations and Consciousness**. There is no doer apart from the action, no thinker apart from the thought. Who then is the doer of Kamma? Who feels the effect?

Volition or intention (*cetanā*) is itself the doer.
Feeling (*vedanā*) feels the fruit or effect.

Apart from these mental processes, there is none to sow and none to reap. So Kamma is not an accretion of the self or soul since there is no permanent self or soul to begin with.

WHERE IS KAMMA?

An action (*Kamma*) once performed, is finished as far as its performance is concerned. It is also irreversible. What remains of the action is its potential, the inevitability of its result (*Vipāka*). Even within a lifetime, a person has performed a lot of actions, either moral or immoral. So he must have accumulated a lot Kamma. Where is all this Kamma? In answer to this question by King Milinda. The Venerable Nagasena replied:

“Kamma is not stored somewhere in this fleeting consciousness nor in any part of the body. But dependent on mind and body, it rests, manifesting itself at the opportune moment, just as mangoes are not said to be stored somewhere in the mango tree, but dependent on the mango tree they lie, springing up in due season.”

In the same way, fire is not stored in a match but under the right conditions of friction, the match will produce fire. Kamma is an individual force or potential which is transmitted from one existence to another.

CLASSIFICATION OF KAMMA

1. FUNCTION

There are four classes of Kamma according to function. Every birth is conditioned by past good or bad Kamma that predominates at the moment of death. The Kamma that conditions future birth is called **Reproductive Kamma**. Now another Kamma may intervene to assist and maintain or to weaken and obstruct the fruition of the Reproductive Kamma. Such actions are called **Supportive** or **Obstructive Kamma** respectively. According to the Law of Kamma, the potential energy of the Reproductive Kamma may be totally annulled by a more powerful opposing past Kamma, which seeking an opportunity may quite unexpectedly operate, just as a counteractive force can obstruct the path of a flying arrow and bring it to the ground. Such an action is called **Destructive Kamma**, which is more powerful than the other two in that it not only obstructs but also destroys the whole force.

2. PRIORITY OF EFFECT

First is *Garuka* or weighty Kamma which produces its effect in this life or the next for certain. Among the weighty or serious actions, the moral ones are the *Jhānas* or Mental Absorptions

while the immoral ones are the 5 immediately effective heinous crimes namely: matricide patricide, murder of an Arahant, wounding of a Buddha and creating a schism in the Sangha or Order.

In the absence of a Weighty Kamma to condition the next birth, a **Death Proximate** Kamma may operate. This is the action one does or recollects immediately before the dying moment. Owing to its significance in determining the future birth, the custom of reminding the dying person of his good deeds and making him do good still prevails in Buddhist countries.

Habitual Kamma is next in priority of effect. It is the action one constantly performs and recollects and towards which one has great liking.

The last is **Cumulative** Kamma which embraces all that cannot be included in the above three. This is, as it were, the reserve fund of a particular being.

3. TIME OF TAKING EFFECT

There are moral and immoral actions that produce their effects in this very life or in a subsequent life or in any life in the course of one's wandering in *Saṃsāra*. These actions are **Immediately Effective**, **Subsequently Effective** and **Indefinitely Effective** Kamma. When such actions that should produce their effects in this life or subsequent lives do not operate, they are termed **Ineffective**.

4. PLANE WHERE EFFECTS TAKE PLACE

The last classification is according to the plane in which the effects take place, namely:

- a. Immoral actions that ripen in the Sensual Plane (*Kāmaloka*)
- b. Moral actions that ripen in the Sensual Plane (*Kāmaloka*)
- c. Moral actions that ripen in the Form Plane (*Rūpaloka*)
- d. Moral actions that ripen in the Formless Plane (*Arūpaloka*)

IS ONE BOUND TO REAP ALL THAT ONE HAS SOWN IN JUST PROPORTION?

While the Law of Kamma ensures a close correspondence between our deeds and their fruits, there is another side to the working of Kamma which is just as important. This is the **Modifiability of Kamma**, the fact that the Law of Kamma does not operate with mechanical rigidity but allows for a considerable range of modifications in the ripening of the fruit. It is this dynamic aspect of Kamma which the Buddha declared in Anguttarra I (249) as follows:

“If anyone says that a man must reap everything according to his deeds, in this case there is no religious life, nor is there an opportunity afforded for the entire extinction of sorrow. But if anyone says that what a man reaps accords with his deeds, in that case there is a religious life, and an opportunity is afforded for the entire extinction of sorrow.”

Like any physical event, the mental process constituting a Kammic action never exists in isolation but in a field. Thus its efficacy in producing a result depends not only on its own potential but also upon the other variable factors of its field, which can modify it in various ways. We see for example, that a particular Kamma either good or bad, may sometimes have its result strengthened by Supportive Kamma, weakened by Obstructive Kamma, or even annulled by Destructive Kamma. The occurrence of the result can also be delayed if the condition for its ripening is not complete; and that delay may again give chance for Obstructive or Destructive Kamma to operate. However, not only these external conditions can cause modifications. Internal conditions such as the total qualitative structure of the mind from which the action issues also play a part. To one rich in moral or spiritual qualities, a single offence may not entail the

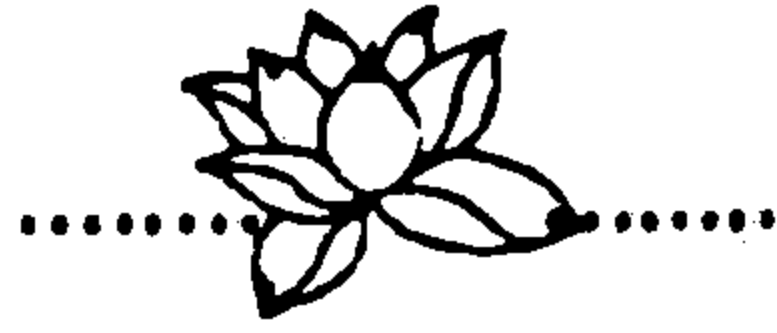
weighty results the same offence will have for one who is poor in such protective virtues. The Buddha compares this with the taste of water from a cup wherein a lump of salt has been added against the taste of water from the Ganges River in which the same lump of salt has been thrown in.

So intricate is the net of Kammic conditioning that the Buddha declared Kamma-result to be one of the four “unthinkables” and warned against treating it as a subject of speculation. But though the workings of Kamma escape our intellection, the important practical message is clear. The fact that Kamma-results are modifiable frees us from the shackles of predestination and fatalism and keeps the road to liberation constantly open before us.

The Kamma doctrine of the Buddha is a teaching of moral and spiritual responsibility for oneself and others. Any individual’s moral choice may be severely limited by the load of greed, hatred and delusion and their results which he carries around; yet every time he stops to decide on a course of action, he is free to throw off the load, at least temporarily. At this precious moment of choice, he has the opportunity to rise above all the menacing complexities of his unfathomable Kammic past. It is through right mindfulness that man can firmly grasp that fleeting moment, and it is mindfulness again that enables him to use it for making wise choice.

REFERENCE

The Buddha Doctrine of Kamma and Rebirth by Narada Maha Thera



THREE REFUGES (TISARANA)

GOING FOR REFUGE

*Many folks go seeking for a refuge
In the midst of forests and on the tops of hills,
To groves they go, to trees and shrines of many kinds,
Thus do they flee, by fear tormented.*

*Refuge such as this is not secure,
Refuge such as this is not supreme,
By going to a refuge such as this,
One is not released from every ill.*

*But who goes for Refuge to the Buddha
Likewise to the Dhamma and the holy Sangha too,
He sees with perfect wisdom (in himself)
The (action of the) Fourfold Noble Truths.*

*Which are the state of ill and how it doth arise,
And how to cross over beyond the state of ill,
And last the Noble Eightfold Path which leads
Towards allaying all the mass of ill.*

*Refuge such as this is the secure,
Refuge such as this is the supreme,
By going to a refuge such as this,
One is sure released from every ill.*

A man **first learns** about the Buddha's teaching by hearsay. Then he tests what he has heard as far as he can. When he has done this enough to **feel convinced** that it is **reliable**, he outwardly expresses his conviction by pronouncing, the **THREE REFUGES**, the **TISARAṆA** as they are called in Pali. The Three Refuges is the main requirement to become a bonafide Buddhist. The Pali word, *saraṇa* denotes refuge, shelter, protection, salvation, object of faith or guide.

The taking of the refuge has certain aspects that should be made familiar. They are distinguished as the refuge; going forth for refuge; possessor of refuge; kinds of refuge (by lay people); outcomes of refuge; weaknesses of refuge; and breach of refuge.

1. REFUGE (**SARAṆA**)

By deriving the word **SARAṆA** from **SARATI** (to crush), the **SARAṆA** or refuge can be taken as something that combats, that is to say, something that **slays and destroys fear and anxiety, suffering and defilement** of the mind by craving that severally or together lead to states of misery. It is then a term for the Three Jewels. The Threefold Sacred Refuge in Buddhism, that is Refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha Order.

BUDDHAṀ SARAṆAṀ GACCHĀMI – I go to the Buddha
for refuge,

DHAMMAṀ SARAṆAṀ GACCHĀMI – I go to the Dhamma
for refuge,

SANGHAṀ SARAṆAṀ GACCHĀMI – I go to the Sangha
for refuge.

a. **Why do we take refuge in the Buddha?**

We take refuge in the Buddha merely means to accept the Buddha as **our guide** in our daily life. It was the Buddha that shows us the way to salvation and truth. However, we must bear in mind that we must not take refuge in the Buddha **out of fear** of Him. As a lay Buddhist, we do not seek

refuge in the Buddha with the mere intention we could gain purity and salvation by faith. Nevertheless, it is not within the power of the Buddha to wash away our **impurities**. The Buddha is merely a guide, a teacher who shows us the **correct path** whereby we purify ourselves. We reflect on the Nine Virtues of the Lord Buddha.

b. **Why do we take refuge in the Dhamma?**

We take refuge in the Dhamma merely means to accept the teaching of the Buddha as our guiding principles in our ways of living. Since the Buddha can no longer instruct and advise us personally, **His doctrine** will be the **guiding light for us**. His message remains fresh and true although the Dhamma had been preached to humanity for more than 2,500 years. **Truth cannot and will not change with time for if it changes, then it cannot be the truth.** The Truth helps to get rid of our fear.

c. **Why do we take refuge in the Sangha?**

We take refuge in the Sangha merely means to accept the Sangha as **living testimony** in our daily ways of life. The Sangha is a community of holy orders who preserve and record the teachings of the Buddha. Besides, it is from the Sangha that we seek for opinion, instruction and advice not only on the Dhamma but any problems and difficulties we might encounter in our daily life. It is the **field of merits** to the world.

2. **GOING FORTH FOR REFUGE (SARANAGAMANA)**

a. **Going forth for refuge in the Triple Gem.**

This is the undefiled state of mind in one who has **confidence** in the **Three Jewels** and venerates them. It is, in fact, the act of adopting them for one's guiding principle, one's supreme value.

- b. It is the means of realizing that these three refuges are the three objects of sublime faith which can actually destroy various sorts of danger and peril.

3. POSSESSOR OF REFUGE

Those who have that state of mind just described or those who know in their hearts that these sacred refuges are the true objects of sublime faith and he decides: “These Three Jewels are my refuge, my guiding principle.” When we recollect the three refuges, we are considered the possessor of refuge.

4. KINDS OF REFUGE (BY LAY PEOPLE)

Two kinds:

- a. Without understanding, only faith exists – just bow and take refuge.
- b. With understanding and with faith – understand the virtue of the Triple Gem and also the law of karma.

5. OUTCOMES OF REFUGE

- a. Living a life of ease and comfort.
- b. Pure mind.
- c. No worries.
- d. No defilements.
- e. No bad dreams.

6. WEAKNESSES OF REFUGE

It occurs due to not knowing the virtues of the Triple Gem, or being in sceptical doubt, or wrongly understanding their essence.

7. BREACH OF REFUGE

- a. Blameless or faultless breach (not accompanied by demerits) – when we die, we cannot take refuge anymore.
- b. Reprehensible or faulty breach (accompanied by demerits) – due to lack of understanding, greed or illusion, go for other refuge.



THE FIVE PRECEPTS (PAÑCA SĪLA)

FIVE PRECEPTS

1. *Pāṇātipāta*

Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi

The taking of life

I undertake the training rule to abstain

2. *Adinnādānā*

Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi

The taking of things not given

I undertake the training rule to abstain

3. *Kāmesu Micchācārā*

Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi

Sexual misconduct

I undertake the training rule to abstain

4. *Musāvādā*

Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi

False speech

I undertake the training rule to abstain

5. *Surā Meraya Majja Pamādaṭṭhānā*

Veramaṇī Sikkhāpadam Samādiyāmi

Intoxicating liquor, spirits and drugs that cause heedlessness

I undertake the training rule to abstain

In today's discussion, the topic is the Five Precepts, and I would like you to join in the discussion, to share and learn from one another. Please feel free to interrupt me if you wish to clarify any point or contribute in any way, OK?

To begin with I would like to touch briefly on the practice of Buddhism in general. We can practice Buddhism either as a monk or as a lay follower. It is not easy for us to become a monk. We must have a lot of affinity with Buddhism in our past lives before conditions in this life become favorable for us to don the robe and join the ranks of the homeless – in Chinese we say “chut ka”. But for the majority of us, like you and I, we can still practice Buddhism as a lay disciple because we still have many attachments to worldly things.

We have our many commitments, to fulfill and many responsibilities too. We have a family and young children to look after and provide for, old parents to care, and to some maybe brother and sisters who still depend on us for the material things in life.

Some of us are in the midst of building a career or running a family business or your own business. Because all these we cannot, at this point of time, renounce the world yet and become a monk. Indeed if we were to forsake all these dependants of ours, our act of abandonment. We have to take care all these things before we can peacefully renounce.

But I believe if it is time for us to renounce, all these problems would be resolved. Our dependants would somehow be provided for or taken care of. There will be understanding and happiness in our love ones to see us leave home to become a monk. But until then we are still practice Buddhism well as a lay follower and amidst all our worldly affairs. But why do we want to practice Buddhism? Is it because we believe we can find much peace and happiness in the practice? Because we know life is suffering and we wish to escape from this suffering in life? Yes, indeed, Buddhism will help us understand life better and there is not better way to start than by observing the Five Precepts.

Now the Five Precepts were declared by the Buddha more than 2500 years ago when he was in this world. I would like you to reflect on this fact for a moment. What was the world like 2500 years ago? How do people live their lives then? The level of their knowledge and understanding? Their beliefs, their problems? And what about the intervening years? The long periods of war and strife and lives were lost wantonly, then the shorter periods of peace and harmony; in the 2500 years civilization would have risen and fallen, empires could have been built and destroyed? But wherever it is, it must be vastly different from our lives today and yet throughout all these changing times for 2500 years in the history of human kind, the Five Precepts have remain steadfastly true in all situations, under all circumstances. The Five Precepts has remained as applicable today as it was 2500 years ago when first proclaimed by the Buddha. I think this fact alone should make us appreciate the Five Precepts and convince us that it cannot but bring us much peace and happiness if we observe it ardently. For some 2500 years it had withstood the test of time and I sincerely believe the Five precepts will remain applicable and true for all times. Conditions of human existence may have undergone tremendous changes since the Buddha's time but the precepts need not be changed to suit the changing conditions.

The Five Precepts are designed to discipline and purify the three avenues of human action. Since we now realize the value of the Five Precepts we should undertake to apply it in the conduct of our life's henceforth. In Buddhism, we believe the entire spectrum of lives activities can be summed up in three words – speech, deeds and thought. If you examine the Five Precepts carefully you will notice that it covers all three areas. In other words we can obtain guidance, or we can apply the Five Precepts in all human activities. If the Five Precepts are applied in our daily life we will be prevented from doing evil or harmful acts that will bring us more pain and suffering. We will not say things that hurt, that cost losses to others who believe us, our action

will be pure and without any ulterior motive. We will think good thoughts and behave accordingly, without feelings of fear, greed and hatred. With a clean mind, don't you think we will lead a happier life?

In short, the observance of the Five Precepts will help us develop our positive qualities. And the more stringent the effort we make to observe the Five Precepts, the greater will be our rewards for maintaining a high moral life.

The Buddha has assured us that by observing the Five Precepts stringently it is inevitable that we will enjoy the benevolent results in due course. I think you can reason this out for yourself. If our conduct in life is always righteous and honorable, we never do harm to anybody or behave irresponsibly under the influence of liquor, is there any reason we need to fear in life? Indeed, on the contrary, people would be only too happy to give us help when we need it!

Now that we have understood the benefits of observing the Five Precepts, should we not make it a point to apply it in our daily lives from now? Some of you may still hold the wrong notion that if you do not take the precepts, you could not then break them! Nothing is further from the truth. Why are we as Buddhists urged to take the Five Precepts? Here, I would like to digress a little.

We are all human beings living in this world but the similarity stops here immediately. There are all sorts of people in the world, some are born deformed, invalid, spastic. Others into happy, wealthy families enjoying great luxury from the day they are born, some are rich and powerful, others rich but not happy, the examples can go on and on. We all know the differences, but the explanation for this? In Buddhism we believe in the Law of Karma. Because of these people do not keep the precepts, they do evil things intentionally, perhaps in past lives and so in this life they suffer accordingly. These are the manifestations of the working of the natural, universal moral law of Karma, which is impersonal and operates irrespective of whether it is known,

understood or believed. I shall give you an example of this. Like the fire, if you put your hand into the fire you'll be burnt, whether you know the fire burns or not. Whether you believe the fire burns or not; even if a baby were to accidentally put his hand into the fire, he will get burnt just the same. Therefore if you do things against the precepts you'll suffer the consequences, just the same. But if you take the Precepts you'll be making a conscious effort to observe them thereby enjoying the benefits. The Five Precepts are also not only given to those who call themselves Buddhists. It is not something that belongs to Buddhists. It does not mean that if you are not a Buddhist, it does not work on you. No, it is the truth and applies equally to every one. We are the results of our past action and we are the makers of our destiny.

The Five Precepts are also not given to us by a God. In Buddhism we do not subscribe to the concept of a God. The concept of a God is a view held by the creationist. The creationist holds the view that the entire universe was created by a super powerful being. In Buddhism, we find this theory powerful being is kind and benevolent, all of us would be created equally, rich, beautiful and intelligent. None of us should have any defilement and all of us should be living happily together like one big family. But we know this is not the case in this world. The Buddhist explanation appears more rational when it states that we are the result of what we have done in the past, and we will be what we do in this life. We reap what we sow. So let us try our best to observe the Five Precepts in order to lead a high moral life, a blameless life and thence to reap the benevolent results in the future.

The Five Precepts are also not given to us as a commandment. It is not something forced upon us. Indeed in Buddhism, nothing is ever forced upon its followers. In fact, one of the things that first attracted me to Buddhism was the principle of *EHĪ PASSIKO*, literally it means "Come and See". The Buddha invited us all to examine his teachings, to apply our wisdom and logic to arrive at a conclusion that the teachings are correct and proper and benevolent, until and unless we are satisfied, we are convinced, then

and only then, does the Buddha want us to accept his teachings. In Buddhism we discourage blind faith. Buddhism is a religion of understanding. We must know why we do or act in a certain manner. Not blind following, for this will lead us to unrealistic requests. And if such requests are not fulfilled, we become disheartened. Such blind faith leads to delusion which is one of the undesirable states of mind that Buddhism seeks to eradicate.

These precepts are self-governing rules of conduct which the individual voluntarily accepts and endeavors to keep, not to please a God, but to bring himself morally into conformity with the results of his thinking. We do not keep the precepts because it was commanded by a God. Nor are we promised great material rewards because we practise it. But if we were to allow it to be the governing principle in the conduct of our lives, in our interpersonal relationship, we cannot, but must, in due course, receive its good result.

Now that you have some ideals on the Five precepts I hope this will inspire you to search further and deeper to improve your understanding of this basic Buddhist practice of taking the precepts.

Let us then have a look at the Five Precepts that we have talked so much about.

1. *PĀṆĀTIPĀTĀ* (KILLING)

If only men were to observe this Precepts more closely, the world today would have been a much happier place to live in. As it is, men are being killed everyday all over the world. People are being killed for seemingly trivial reasons. And the extend to which people are prepared to go to in order to kill is unbelievable. Government leaders will spend huge sums of money to purchase or manufacture weapons of destruction, but will not spare any to buy food. Look at Africa, for instance. People are starving to death, but money continues to be spent on getting more efficient weapons to kill more people, to kill people faster. Whenever killing takes place, it invariably also inflicts pain, torture,

suffering and others acts of cruelty. Even a bomb which can kill numerous people at one time, is not enough. They still want chemical and biological weapons to inflict torment as it kills. This is cruelty indeed. Weapon manufactory and trading is becoming increasingly more profitable and more and more people are getting involved in it for the profit. Such pain and cruelty would be avoided if only more people were to pay heed to this Precept.

This Precept does not only prohibit the killing of human beings alone. The killing of animals too is prohibited. There is cruelty too, and pain and suffering, when an animal is killed. To keep this precept we should also refrain from such activities as hunting and fishing. Or consuming live creatures as food.

Killing dehumanizes the mind of both the killer and the victim. And if we wish to retain kindly feelings of love and compassion we should refrain from killing as much as possible, even the lowly insects. Only with a kind heart can we develop loving kindness in us.

In Theravada Buddhism, monks and novices are allowed to consume meat if we did not see the animal being slaughtered, or hear its cry and did not know it was specifically killed for the purpose of supplying us food. I know this explanation may not fully satisfy your question but the Precept should not be observed out of context of the whole Dhamma. When we go deeper into the Dhamma we will have a better understanding of observing the Five Precepts.

Now there are also other more subtle forms of killing which a conscientious preceptor would want to observe. For instance, we should take care to prevent pollution in all forms, which initially may kill only animals, but due to long exposure human lives could be lost because of excessive pollution. Exhaustive and excessive utilization of our natural resources is another form of subtle killing. It will bring about environmental changes that will affect animal lives, and later, human lives too. So we should exercise proper care and concern in our lives.

2. *ADINNĀDĀNĀ* (STEALING)

The 2nd Precept teaches us honesty and respect for other people's things and possession. A Preceptor should always remember that he should never take anything that is not given to him. Things left in his care should be well looked after and carefully kept to be returned to the rightful owner later. Very often we try to justify by saying these things are not very expensive, there are plenty around, if we don't take it someone else will, etc. By thinking this way, we actually take things which we cannot possibly use too! The 2nd Precept actually teaches us against greed, which is a defilement that we should strive to get rid of. It is most harmful to us ourselves. It brings great pain and suffering and feelings of guilt. If we have dishonestly taken something that does not belong to us we will always be full of fear of being found out and great shame brought on us. Even if we were not caught we will not be happy to use the stolen article for always there will be the fear and anxiety of exposure.

Included in this precept is also the dishonest worker who claims overtime by doing his work slowly or waste time doing other things when he should be working. Or the habitual late-comer who is actually stealing his employer's time. The employer should give an honest day's pay for an honest day's work. So you see the Buddha even teaches industrial peace!

In fact, talking about this, some of us who work in large corporations may get to attend seminars and conventions, where they teach you management and self improvement principles, inter-personnel relationship, develop win-win situation, leadership etc, by so called great management gurus, Stephen Covey, Peter Drucker. It may cost your employer RM500 to RM1,000 for each participant. But all these have been taught by the Buddha over 2500 years ago?

If we are kind, if we are honest in all our activities, people will respond very positively to us. By making the Dhamma the direction of your life, you will not only learn but also practise all these positive attributes in your daily life.

The 2nd Precept affirms fair play while renouncing greed and unfair competition. It curbs man's tendency to accumulate riches at the expense of others. The 1st and 2nd Precepts are social obligation leading to friendly co-operation instead of deadly competition.

3. *KĀMESU MICCHĀCĀRĀ* (SEXUAL MISCONDUCT)

This Precept seeks to curb the lustful urges in us. It urges restraint in indulgences of the senses. Those who abide by this precept will have a healthy respect for family life and the institution of marriage. He considers a marriage as sacred and will always work towards its success and happiness. Thus incidence of divorce and broken homes, and its effects on the children, will be understandably lessen. A man with a happy family is always a joy to behold. And members of that family too will be well adjusted members of society, contributing meaningfully and with benevolence.

On the other hand if one were to break this Precept there will be untold misery and suffering too. The quarrelling spouses will adversely influence the children who will grow up with characteristically influenced bad habits like meanness, selfishness, greed and other unwholesome forms of behavior. The cheating party will always live with a sense of guilt and anxiety for fear of being found out; he could also fall victim to blackmail and other forms of fears.

Sexual misconduct does not arise spontaneously but is the mutual participants of two forbidden parties in a developing relationship. If the participants were aware of the precept they would not allow the relationship to develop till they break this precept. In any case should one find oneself entertaining thoughts of breaking this precepts, he should be aware that this is an early sign of trouble, or problem in his matrimonial relationship. Then he should take proper steps to strengthen his family relationship. Knowledge of the precepts is therefore a way of pointing out our problems even before it has become a problem. A wise person

should therefore always take heed and be guided by the Five Precepts.

Then there is also the danger of physical suffering arising from sexually transmitted diseases, the commonest and most dreadful one at present is of course, AIDS, for which there is no known cure. An infected person will also possibly spread the disease around and society at large is in danger and apart from this there are also many other disease and sickness associated with sex which, if one were to observe this precept, we could spare ourselves this pain.

I am sure you all know the many problems and domestic violence that sometime arise out of breaking this precept. So if you value peace at home and mutual respect, do make sure you keep this precept.

4. *MUSĀVĀDĀ* (FALSE SPEECH)

This refers to more than just telling lies. It includes slanderous talk, abusive language, frivolous talk and words which cause others to be disunited or separated, such as carrying tales.

The keeping of this precept has a very significant impact in our modern inter-personal relationship. In the course of our work we have to communicate with one another very often and the person who keeps his word, speaks truthfully, speaks kindly and gently, get his facts clear, does not accuse others of wrongdoing without confirming, is forgiving in nature, is not easily disrupted but has a clear and patient attitude, he will earn much goodwill from his colleagues or others, with whom he has to work with. Such a person will be able to get much work done, will be more able to motivate people and can get people to carry out his instructions more readily. This is the immediate effect of practicing this precept.

If we are not careful and break this precept often, our credibility will also be in doubt. People will doubt what we say even if we were to tell the truth. We will have a poor reputation as a loose talker.

This is one of the most easily broken precepts because sometimes we tend to talk a lot of nonsense. The proper advice is this if we have nothing worthwhile to say, it is better to keep our mouth shut.

In business too, the observance of this precept will help in the long run. Initially we may not make much profit but if one develops a reputation of honesty our customers will advertise that reputation on our behalf and bring in more customers, more business.

5. *SURĀ MERAYA MAJJA PAMĀDAṬṬHĀNĀ* (INTOXICANTS)

In Buddhist thought the mind is of paramount importance and we should take pains to keep it clear at all times. It is this mind of ours that makes us do, makes us do all things we should not do, things that will bring us more pain and sorrow. On the other hand, keeping our mind clear will enable us to see things clearly as they are and to some extent, will help us keep away from doing harmful things. If we are not vigilant with our mind we will be surprised ourselves to see us doing the sort of things when in a clear mind, we will never do. Therefore, to a true Buddhist, the first and most important thing is to keep our mind clear and fully conscious of what we are doing and guard us against doing what is not right or inappropriate.

Important though it is to keep an alert mind, to a practising Buddhist we must go further to develop control over our mind. The Buddha has given us detailed instructions on the control of our mind but that is another subject beyond the scope of our present discussion.

Coming back to the precept of abstaining from the consumption of alcohol or other intoxicants that results in undermining the mind, the Buddha's instructions are consistent in telling us to keep our minds clear. Under the influence of alcohol, many have lost their senses and behave in a highly immoral manner, and do so without a sense of shame, but publicly in front of all.

The consumption of alcohol has often begun as a small social

indulgence, seen as harmless and to be in line with so called common standards of behavior. Many young man has begun his dependencies on alcohol in this manner, but there are enough examples for us to see a young life degenerate into an alcoholic, we must now censure this so called excuse for beginning as a social practice. Most of us do not know when to stop and before long we are already a dependent.

The evil of alcoholism cannot be over-emphasised. Some of the consequences of alcoholism is child abuse and wife beating. There are enough incidents of this in our papers everyday, but the un-reported instances are even more. Families have been abandoned, children un-loved and un-cared for and crimes have been perpetrated due to addiction to liquor.

Fully realising the harmful effects of intoxicants, Buddhism has included abstinence from them among the basis moral precepts.

In the Buddha's days, right up to the present we have numerous examples showing how addiction has brought ruin and ignominy to people's lives and fortunes. This evil has persisted. It is therefore a timely advice that we observe this precept as closely as possible.

Consumption of liquor not only effects us financially but also in terms of our health. Modern medical science has proven to us there are many injuries to our health when consumption of liquor is over indulged. During pregnancy, liquor slows baby's development in the mother and in extreme cases may result in physical handicap or mental retardation.

Usually, when this precept is broken, all the other precepts are also bound to be broken. This is because when a person breaks the 5th Precepts i.e. he become intoxicated, there is no telling what he can do. His inhibitions have all been shed; he is no longer in control of his senses, and not being able to discern between what is beneficial and what is harmful, he is liable to be given to violence, even to kill; to steal or to destroy others' property; to slander; to become sexually aggressive and danger-

ous, and other abusive behavior – thus tremendously increasing the likelihood of breaking the rest of the other four precepts.

From this I hope all of you would realise the importance of keeping the Precepts. We should develop a desire to observe the Five Precepts because we now know its value and usefulness. A preceptor will always be in social harmony, well accepted and respected for his social grace and elegance. Observance of the Five Precepts have been found to be the correct form of behavior in all societies for the last 2,500 years. It will do well for us to keep the Five Precepts too as taught by the Buddha.

BENEFIT OF KEEPING THE FIVE PRECEPTS

The 1st Precept : Refraining from destroying living creatures

1. a complete body
2. ease and comfort in the postures
3. have proper limbs
4. speak and act without fear of opposition
5. strength
6. a good expression
7. is liked by the world
8. not frightened or scared of dangers
9. free from harm by anyone
10. have a beautiful body
11. no sickness to trouble one
12. free from sorrow
13. not separated from what one cherishes
14. a long life

The 2nd Precept : Refraining from taking what is not given

1. have spiritual (*lokuttara*) wealth
2. the word “don’t have” is not heard or known
3. have wealth that cannot be exhausted

4. wealth unarisen will arise
5. wealth arisen will last
6. get the property one wishes for quickly
7. property won't be stolen, destroyed by fire, flood or be confiscated
8. obtain property not depending on others

The 3rd Precept : Refraining from sexual misconduct

1. no enemies
2. loved by all
3. have enough requisites of life – rice, water, bed etc.
4. sleep happily
5. wake happily
6. free from fear or woeful states
7. live in joy and coolness
8. not separated from one cherishes
9. well respected
10. efforts made bear results
11. body complete
12. have a happy family life
13. loved by both man and woman
14. have complete faculties
15. not in doubts (e.g. of friendships)

The 4th Precepts : Refraining from false speech

1. endowed with clear faculties
2. endowed with good set of teeth
3. acquires fineness of speech
4. speak only that which is useful
5. endowed with soft, supple tongue
6. not restless
7. fragrant mouth

The 5th Precept : Refraining from intoxicants

1. known what should or not be done in past, present and future
2. endowed with mindfulness
3. intelligent
4. not a drunkard
5. not looked down upon
6. not slanderous
7. do not speak abusive language
8. not engaged in frivolous talk
9. is trusted by people
10. not wrathful
11. with right view (Buddhist right view)
12. have a lot of wisdom

CONDITIONS FOR BREAKING OF THE FIVE PRECEPTS

Five conditions of *pāṇātipātā* (killing)

1. The being must be alive.
2. There must be the knowledge that it is a living being.
3. There must be an intention to cause death.
4. An act must be done to cause death.
5. There must be death as the result of the said act.

Five conditions of *adinnādānā* (stealing)

1. The property must be in the possession of another person.
2. There must be the knowledge that the property is in the possession of another person.
3. There must be an intention to steal.
4. There must be an act done to steal.
5. By that act the property must have been taken.

Four conditions to *kāmesumiccācārā* (sexual misconduct)

1. It must be a man or woman with whom it is improper to have

1. sexual intercourse.
2. There must be an intention to have such sexual misconduct with such a man or woman.
3. There must be an act done to have such intercourse.
4. There must be enjoyment of the contact of the organs.

Four conditions of *musāvādā* (false speech)

1. The thing said must be untrue.
2. There must be an intention to deceive.
3. There must be an effort made as a result of the said intention.
4. The other must know the meaning of what is said.

Four conditions of *surā meraya majja pamādaṭṭhānā* (taking intoxicants)

1. Knowledge that it is either liquor, spirit or drug
2. Have the intention to take it
3. An effort make to take it
4. Become intoxicated as a result of taking it

If these condition are fulfilled then the Precepts are deemed to have been broken and the law of Kamma would operate.

CONCLUSION

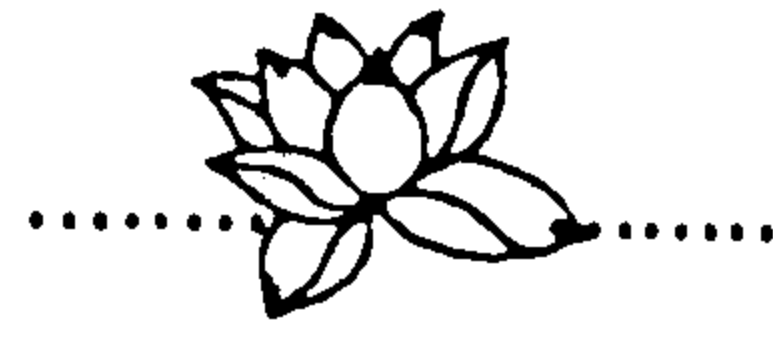
Now, you will notice that the Five Precepts exhorts us to rid ourselves of all negative aspects of life. Telling us not to do this, not to do that. It is of course very good for us to get rid of all these defilements in life, all these tendencies and inclinations to greed, anger, delusion, hatred and other unwholesome acts. Or at least such tendencies in our character would be suppressed by a conscious effort. If such defilements are at least reduced our behavior would always be socially acceptable anywhere and we will also be a well liked person. People whom we come into contact with, will always respond very kindly towards us, be helpful to

us. The Five Precepts deals with the negative virtues.

But the Buddha also taught us the lesser known Five Ennoblers – *Pañca Dhamma*. The Five Ennoblers correspond to the Five Precepts. While the Five Precepts teaches us to mind our negative tendencies, the Five Ennoblers teaches us how to develop the potential goodness in us. The Buddha nature in us. We all have the Buddha nature but due to external influences we have failed to allow the Buddha nature in us to bloom, to express it in our actions.

FIVE PRECEPTS (ABSTENTION)	FIVE ENNOBLERS
1. Killing	– Loving kindness and compassion
2. Stealing	– Patience in right means of livelihood
3. Sexual Misconduct	– Self-restraint in sexual practices
4. False Speech	– Truthfulness
5. Heedlessness through Intoxication	– Watchfulness, mindfulness.

So practised together, the Five Precepts and the Five Ennoblers will turn us into a great person. We will have great confidence, a very positive out-look in life and nothing in the world can stop us from achieving whatever we have set our hearts too. We will find the peace and happiness we have been searching for.



TEN MERITORIOUS DEEDS

For a lot of laymen, they consider themselves good, moral and sufficient as long as they do not commit evil, harm others or do things against their conscience. For Buddhism this is just the beginning.

*To cease from evil, to cultivate good, to purify one's mind.
This is the teaching of all Buddhas.*

~ DHAMMAPADA VERSE 183

TEN MERITORIOUS DEEDS (DASA KUSALA KAMMA)

The Ten Meritorious Deeds help us to carry out the above. It is also the practical method to practise the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Ten Meritorious Deeds are:

1. *Dāna* (giving, generosity)
2. *Sīla* (moral conduct)
3. *Bhāvanā* (mental culture)
4. *Apacayana* (reverence)
5. *Veyyāvacca* (service)
6. *Pattidāna* (sharing/transference of merits)
7. *Pattānumodāna* (rejoicing in other's merits)
8. *Dhamma savanā* (listening to Dhamma)
9. *Dhamma desanā* (teaching the Dhamma)
10. *Diṭṭhijjukamma* (straightening one's views)

The Ten Meritorious Deeds are sometimes referred to as the *Dāna*, *Sīla* and *Bhāvanā* Path.

MENTAL FACTORS OF DEFILEMENT AND PURITY

Buddhism stresses a lot on purification of mind or mental culture. To rid the mind of defilements and to cultivate the mental factors of purity.

MENTAL FACTORS OF DEFILEMENT	MENTAL FACTORS OF PURITY
a. Greed (<i>lobha</i>)	Loving charity (<i>alobha</i>)
c. Hatred (<i>dosa</i>)	Loving sympathy (<i>adosa</i>)
d. Ignorance (<i>moha</i>)	Knowledge/Wisdom (<i>paññā</i>)
e. Jealousy (<i>issa</i>)	Appreciative joy (<i>muditā</i>)
f. Stinginess (<i>macchariya</i>)	
g. Conceit (<i>māna</i>)	
h. Shamelessness towards foolish or evil action	Shamefulness towards foolish or evil action
i. Fearlessness towards foolish or evil action	Fearfulness towards foolish or evil action
j. Wrong view (<i>michadiṭṭhi</i>)	Tranquilization of actions of mind
k. Restlessness (<i>uddhacca</i>)	Mindfulness (<i>sati</i>)
l. Worry/Repentance (<i>kukkucca</i>)	Fitness of mind (<i>citta kamma-nnata</i>)
m. Sloth (<i>thina</i>)	Compassion towards all beings (<i>karuṇā</i>)
n. Torpor (<i>middha</i>)	Equanimity (<i>upekkha</i>)
o. Indecision/Doubts (<i>vicikiccha</i>)	Loving Kindness (<i>mettā</i>)

MIND IS CHIEF

<i>Mind is the forerunner of (all evil) states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with wicked mind, because of that, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox.</i>	<i>Mind is the forerunner of (all good) states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with pure mind, because of that, happiness follows, even as one's shadow that never leaves.</i>
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~DHAMMAPADA VERSES 1 & 2

MERIT

Merit is translated from Pali “*puñña*”, which means that which purifies and cleanses the mind. Meritorious deeds are those actions of body, speech and mind which reduce the mind of mental factors of defilement and cultivate mental factors of purity. It is different from the standard definition in theology which means some spiritual credit granted for good works.

- Field of merit**
- person, being or group to whom a meritorious deed is addressed.
 - In pali *Punnakhetam*.
 - Just as some fields are more fertile and produce better crops, some persons/group are better fields of merit yielding a better crop of merit. Good fields of merit are Buddha, Sangha, mother and father.

TEN MERITORIOUS DEEDS

Ten Meritorious Deeds can be grouped under the three categories of *Dāna*, *Sīla* and *Bhāvanā*.

<i>Dāna</i> (giving)	<i>Sīla</i> (moral conduct)	<i>Bhāvanā</i> (mental culture)
<i>Pattidāna</i> (transference of merits)	<i>Apacayana</i> (reverence)	<i>Dhammasavanā</i> (listening to the Dhamma)
<i>Pattānumodāna</i> (rejoicing in others' merits)	<i>Veyyāvacca</i> (service)	<i>Dhammadesanā</i> (Teaching the Dhamma)
		<i>Diṭṭhijjukamma</i> (straightening One's views)

1. DĀNA (GIVING)

Dāna means giving. It is the moral volition of giving one's possessions to others. It has a much broader meaning than charity. Charity denotes giving to the poor and those in need and it usually covers only material things. *Dāna* helps us to rid ourselves of the defilements of greed, hatred and stinginess.

SOME SPECIFIC EXAMPLES OF DĀNA

	THE RECIPIENTS	THE GIFTS	TIME
a. Kathina	Monks who have completed Vassa	Kathina robe	Only one a year after the Vassa

	THE RECIPIENTS	THE GIFTS	TIME
b. <i>Sanghika-dāna</i>	Members of Sangha	Food and requisites	Anytime during the year. Before noon
c. <i>Pindapata</i>	Individual monk	Food	In the morning
d. Lunch <i>dāna</i>	Individual monk/monks	Food	Before noon
e. Offering of eight requisites	Sangha/ individual monk	Alms bowl, 3 robes, razor, needle, water strainer, belt	Anytime
f. Building of monastery	Sangha	Monastery	Anytime
g. Offering of land	Sangha	Land	Anytime
h. Printing Dhamma books	Public	Dhamma books	Anytime
i. Erecting Buddha images	Sangha	Buddha image	Anytime
j. Pledge of body organs	Those in need	Body organs	Anytime

FACTORS AFFECTING EFFICACY OF *DĀNA*

The merits accrued from a *dāna* is dependent on the following factors:

- a. The recipient or field of merit
 - b. The purity of the offerings as defined by the virtues of giver and recipient.
 - c. The volitions of the giver before, during and after the *dāna*.
 - d. Motive of giver.
 - e. Timeliness of offering.
- a. The recipient or field of merit
- Just as some fields are more fertile and produce better crops, some persons/group are better fields of merit yielding a better crop of merits.

“O Ankura! When giving charities and donations, you must consider wisely whom you give to, for acts of charities and donations are just like seeds. Seeds sown in fertile soil will yield abundant fruits; but you had sown your seed in poor soil, so you reap poorly.”

The Buddha explaining to Deva Ankura (Dhammapada XXIV: 12) why he is enjoying so much less luxuries than Deva Indaka even though they are both in Tavatimsa heaven.

Deva Indaka in last existence had offered a little alms food to Venerable Anuruddha.

Deva Ankura had given much more in charity but not to holy man.

Based on the Dakkhinavibhanga Sutta (the exposition of offerings). They are two board categories of recipients:

- i. *Sanghika dāna* (offerings to Sangha)
- ii. *Puggalika dāna* (offerings to individuals)

The fruit of offering to the Sangha far exceed that of offering to individual.

When Buddha's maternal aunt Mahā Pajapati Gotami offered him a pair of new robes, he told her three times.

“Give it to the Sangha, Gotami. When you give it to the Sangha, the offering will be made both to me and the Sangha.”

Fourteen kinds of offering to an individuals

THE FIELD OF MERIT	THE MERITS ACCRUED
a. An offering to the Buddha	Immeasurable**
b. An offering to a Paccekabuddha	Immeasurable**
c. An offering to an Arahant	Immeasurable**
d. An offering to one striving for Arahantship	Immeasurable**
e. An offering to a non-returner	Immeasurable**
f. An offering to one striving for non-returning	Immeasurable**
g. An offering to a once returner	Immeasurable**
h. An offering to one striving for once returning	Immeasurable**
i. An offering to a stream-winner	Immeasurable**
j. An offering to one striving for stream-winner	Immeasurable**
k. An offering to one outside the Buddha's teaching who is detached from sensual pleasures	a hundred-thousand times a hundred-thousandfold
l. An offering to an ordinary person of moral habit	hundred-thousandfold
m. An offering to a person of poor moral habit	thousandfold
n. An offering to an animal	hundredfold*

- * The Majjhima Nikāya Atthakatha :
In a hundred existences it gives long life, beauty, happiness, strength, knowledge and it makes one free of agitation.
- ** The Majjhima Nikāya Atthakatha says that although the results of giving in each of these cases is incalculable, immeasurable, there is still an ascending gradation in their incalculability, similar to the ascending incalculability of the waters in a great river, etc., up to that of the waters in the ocean. Perhaps the “incalculable, immeasurable” value of these gifts consists in their becoming supporting condition for attainment of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

Sanghika dāna

In a *Sanghika dāna*, we only inform the chief monk that we wish to hold a *Sanghika dāna*.

We do not specify names of any monks, otherwise it is an invitation to individual monks and not to the Sangha as a body.

Common notion is that a minimum of four monks is required for a *Sanghika dāna*. Some commentaries say this is not necessary. Even one monk is sufficient to represent the Sangha. What is important is the intention of the donor.

In a *Sanghika dāna*, the monks present do not attend in their individual capacities. The monks are symbols to help us recall to mind the *Ariya Sangha* during Buddha's times.

We need not choose a monk we like or avoid a monk we like less. Offering to any monk present is the same as offering to the Sangha.

“In future times, Ananda, there will be members of the clan who are ‘yellow-necks’, immoral, of evil character. People will give gifts to those immoral persons for the sake of the Sangha. Even then, I say, an offering made to the Sangha is incalculable, immeasurable. And I say that in no way does

a gift to a person individually ever have greater fruit than an offering made to the Sangha”.

2. The purity of the offerings

There are four kinds of purity of offerings as defined by the virtues of the giver and recipient.

GIVER	RECEIVER	PURITY OF OFFERING
1. Virtuous person	Non-virtuous person	When a virtuous person to an immoral person gives with trusting heart a gift righteously obtained. Placing faith that the fruit of action is great. The giver’s virtue purifies the offering.
2. Non-virtuous person	Virtuous person	When an immoral person to a virtuous person gives with untrusting heart a gift unrighteously obtained. Nor places faith that the fruit of action is great. The receiver’s virtue purifies the offering.
3. Non-virtuous person	Non-virtuous person	When an immoral person to an immoral person gives with untrusting heart a gift unrighteously obtained. Nor places faith that the fruit of action is great. Neither’s virtue purifies the offering.
4. Virtuous	Virtuous	When a virtuous person to a virtuous person gives with trusting heart a gift righteously obtained. Placing faith that the fruit of action is great. That gift, I say, will come to full fruition.

3. Volition of giver before, during and after the *dāna*
 - a. Before the offering (planning and preparation)
 - Should be happy, mindful of thoughts
 - Careful attention given
 - Have faith in *Kamma-vipāka*
 - b. During the offering or serving
 - Should be happy and mindful
 - Do not think of other things
 - c. After the offering
 - Rejoice at the good deed
 - Make aspiration for the attainment of Nibbāna
 - Do not feel regret

Story of a man who regretted his *dāna*

On one occasion, King Kosala told the Buddha about a rich man in Savatthi who passed away without leaving any heir, and consequently all his property had to be removed to the Royal Treasury. Although very rich, he was extremely stingy and did not practise *dāna*. He was reluctant to spend his money even on himself and therefore ate very sparingly and wore cheap, coarse clothes only.

The Buddha explained that in a past existence, this man had also been rich. One day, when a Paccekabuddha came to his house, he told his wife to offer almsfood. She thought that it was rarely that her husband gave her permission to give anything to anybody. So, she filled up the alms-bowl with some food. When the rich man saw that his wife had offered a substantial amount of food to the Paccekabuddha he thought, 'oh, this monk will only have a good sleep after a heavy meal. It would have been better if my servant were given this good food. At least, they would have given me a better service.' By thinking in this way he regretted his generosity.

Because the man had offered almsfood to the Paccekabuddha, he became a rich man in this present life; because he regretted having offered food to the Paccekabuddha, he had no wish to spend anything even on himself.

~DHAMMAPADA XXIV : 11

4. Motive of giver

There are three levels of *dāna* based on the motive of the giver.

a. *Hina* or inferior *dāna*

- *Dāna* given to gain recognition or fame
- *Dāna* given to belittle others
- *Dāna* given with expectation of reciprocation

b. *Majjhima* or middle level *dāna*

- *Dāna* given with worldly results in mind
e.g. to be wealthy, aim to be reborn as a *deva*.

c. *Parita dāna*

- *Dāna* given without worldly motive
- *Dāna* given out of compassion
- *Dāna* given out with aspiration to attain Nibbāna
(*Idaṃ me dānaṃ nibbānassa paccayo hotu* — May this *dāna* of mine be a condition for the realisation of Nibbāna)
- Here the giver will not be influenced by the gradations of merits according to the field of merits.

Story of Prince Piyasi who gave grudgingly

Prince Piyasi established a charity for ascetics and Brahmins, wayfarers, beggars and the needy. And he gave such food as broken rice with sour gruel, and also rough clothing with ball-fringes. And a young Brahmin called Uttara was put in charge of the distribution. Referring to it, he said, “Through this charity I have been associated with Prince Piyasi in this

world, but not in the next.

And Prince Piyasi heard of this words, and he send for him and asked him if he had said that. “Yes, Lord.” “But why did you say such things? Friend Uttara, don’t we who wish to gain merit expect a reward for our charity?”

“But, Lord, the food you gave — broken rice with sour gruel — you would not care to touch it with your foot, much less eat it! And the rough clothes with ball-fringes — you would not care to set foot on them, much less wear them!” Prince Piyasi then asked Uttara to arrange to supply better food and clothing, and the latter did so.

And Prince Piyasi, because he had established his charity grudgingly, not with his own hands, and without proper concern, like something casually tossed aside, was reborn poor after his death in a low heavenly realm. But Uttara, who has given the charity ungrudgingly, with his own hands and with proper concern, not as something tossed aside, was reborn after his death in a good place, a higher heavenly realm.

~DĪGHA NIKĀYA

5. Timeliness of the offering

- a. Gift given to a monk about to set out on a journey
- b. Gift given to a sick monk

RESULTS OF *DĀNA*

1. Wealthy in this or future lives.
2. Rebirth in celestial planes.

WHY DO WE HAVE TO MAKE OFFERINGS TO MONKS?

1. Lay devotees are encouraged to offer food, robes, medicine and monastery buildings to monks.
2. Monks have to keep 227 precepts which restrain them from indulgence in sensual pleasures and forbid them to work to earn money. They are totally dependent on lay devotees for support.

3. Monks are custodians of the Dhamma. They are in a better position to study, practise and teach the Dhamma. Without the Dhamma, Buddhism would be lost.
4. Monks are an 'incomparable field of merit' where lay devotees can perform meritorious deeds and earn merits.
 - Monks are worthy of offering (*Dakkineyyo*)
 - Monks are worthy of reverence (*Anjalikaraniyo*)

THE BUDDHA AND THE FARMER KASIBHARADVAJA

The farmer Kasibharadvaja refused to offer food to the Buddha on one occasion.

Farmer : I plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, I eat. O ascetic, you should also plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, you should eat.

Buddha : O Brahmin, I too plough and sow, and having ploughed and sown, I eat.

Farmer : You claim that you plough and sow, but I do not see you ploughing.

Buddha : I sow faith as the seeds. My discipline is the rain. My wisdom is my yoke and plough. My modesty is the plough-head. The mind is the rope. Mindfulness is the ploughshare and the goad.

I am restrained in deeds, words and food. I do my weeding with truthfulness. The bliss I get is my freedom from suffering. With perseverance I bear my yoke until I come to Nibbāna. Thus I have done my ploughing. It brings the fruit of immortality. By ploughing like this, one escapes from all suffering.

Farmer : May the Venerable Gotama eat the milk-rice! The Venerable Gotama is a farmer since his crops bear the fruit of Deathlessness!

(So saying, the Brahmin filled a large bowl with milk-rice and offered it to the Buddha)

The Buddha refused the food saying that He could not accept food in return for His preaching. The Brahmin then fell to his feet and **offered** the food to the Buddha.

2. *SĪLA* (MORAL CONDUCT)

Sīla means moral conduct. It is the moral volition of refraining from evil done through the doors of body and speech. It is the volition of:-

1. Right speech which is abstention from telling lies, slandering, harsh speech and idle gossip.
2. Right action which is abstention from killing, taking what is not given and sexual misconduct.
3. Right livelihood which is abstention from the wrong livelihood of trading in arms, living beings, flesh i.e. breeding animals for slaughter, intoxicants and poison.

Practice of *Sīla* helps us to reduce the defilements of greed, hatred, shamelessness towards evil action, fearlessness towards evil action.

For the layman the basic morality one has to observe is the Five Precepts which are abstention from killing, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech and taking intoxicants.

BENEFITS OF OBSERVING *SĪLA*

1. Acquires great wealth.
2. Acquires good reputation and fame.
3. Will not have any inferiority complex, possesses complete self-assurance.
4. Lives the full span of life and dies unconfused.
5. Reborn in happy realms (human or *deva*).

3. APACAYANA (REVERENCE)

Reverence is the volition of paying respect to the Buddha, the Dhamma, Sangha, parents, teachers and others who lead virtuous lives without the impure motives of personal gain.

The practice of reverence reduces one's defilement of pride (*māna*), jealousy (*issā*) and ill-will (*dosa*).

It promotes humility and softness of mind.

**There were many instances where
the Buddha spoke on reverence**

1. *"Honoring those worthy of honor, this is the highest blessing."*

~ MAHĀ MANGALA SUTTA

2. *"He who reverences those worthy of reverence, whether Buddhas or their disciples, those who have overcome the impediments and have got rid of grief and lamentation, ...the merit of him who reverences such peaceful and fearless ones cannot be measured by anyone, as such and such."*

~ DHAMMAPADA VERSES 195 & 196

3. *"For one who is in the habit of constantly honouring and respecting the elders, four blessings increase:-*

- a. *Age*
- b. *Beauty*
- c. *Happiness*
- d. *Strength*

~ DHAMMAPADA VERSE 109

Body actions to show reverence

1. Rising from one's seat in the presence.
2. Hands in "anjali" position.
3. Prostration.

STORY OF HOW MAGHA BECAME SAKKA

Sakka (King of the *devas*) was in previous existence a young man named Magha. Magha and 32 companions had done a lot of service, work such as building roads and rest houses. He also took it upon himself to observe seven vows throughout his life. Because of these enormous good deeds, upon his death, Magha was reborn as Sakka.

The seven vows observed by Magha :

	MERITORIOUS DEED
1. He would support his parents.	Reverence
2. He would support his elders.	Reverence
3. He would be gentle of speech.	<i>Sīla</i>
4. He would avoid back-biting.	<i>Sīla</i>
5. He would not be avaricious but would be generous.	<i>Dāna</i>
6. He would speak the truth.	<i>Sīla</i>
7. He would restrain himself from losing his temper.	<i>Sīla</i>

STORY OF THE LADY WHO WAS CURED OF HER SKIN DISEASE

On one occasion, Venerable Anuruddha visited Kapilavatthu. While he was staying at the monastery there all his relatives, with the exception of his sister Rohini, came to see him. On learning from them that Rohini did not come because she was suffering from a skin disease, he sent for her. Covering her head in shame Rohini went to see Anuruddha. He advised her to do some meritorious deeds. He told her to raise some money by selling off her jewellery to build a community hall where people could perform meritorious deeds. Rohini did as she was told. Anuruddha also requested his relative to help in the construction of the hall. Further, he advised Rohini to sweep the floor and fill the water pots even while the construction was still going on. She followed his advice and she began to get better.

When the hall was completed, the Buddha and his bhikkhus were invited for almsfood. After the meal, the Enlightened One asked for the donor of the building but Rohini was not around. So he sent for her. She came and paid her homage to the Buddha, and he then revealed that she had to suffer this terrible disease because of an evil deed she had done out of **anger** in one of her past existences. He told her that she was at one time the chief queen of Benares. The king had a favorite dancer and she was very **jealous** of the dancer. One day, she instructed her attendants to put some itching power in the dancer's bed and her blankets, and to humiliate her by throwing some itching power on her. The poor dancer itched all over and was in great pain and discomfort. Thus itching unbearably, she ran to her bed, which made her suffer even more.

As the result of the evil deed, Rohini had to suffer the skin disease in this existence. The Buddha then exhorted the congregation not to act foolishly in **anger** and not to bear any **ill-will** towards others.

At the end of the discourse, many in the congregation, including Rohini, attained Sainthood. At the same time her skin disease disappeared, and her complexion became clear and smooth.

~ DHAMMAPADA XVII-12

4. **VEYYĀVACCA (SERVICE)**

Veyyāvacca is the moral volition of rendering services to monasteries, meditation centres, charitable organisations, the needy etc. Nursing the sick is highly praised by the Buddha.

5. **PATTIDĀNA (SHARING/TRANSFERENCE OF MERIT)**

Sharing/transference of merit is the volition of requesting others to participate in the wholesome deeds done by a person and thereby to share in the resultant merit.

6. *PATTĀNUMODĀNA* (REJOICING IN OTHER'S MERITS)

This is to be pleased at the good work of one who is recounting his deed.

It also helps to dispel envy, jealousy and ill will between persons.

Praising another person's good work results in getting praise for oneself too.

RESULT

Productive of joy wherever one is born.

STORY ABOUT THE ALMS-GIVING COMPETITION

"The stingy are not happy."

~ DHAMMAPADA 177

Once, King Pasenadi offered alms to the Buddha and other *bhikkhus* on a grand scale. His subjects, in competition with him, organised another alms – giving ceremony on a grander scale than that of the king. Thus the king and his subjects kept on competing in giving alms; which the king finally won because he used princesses, white umbrellas and elephants which his subjects did not possess.

At that time, two of the King's ministers were present. One was happy and praised the king for his charity. He was also glad his king would share the merits of his good deeds with all beings.

The other minister, on the other hand, thought the king was only squandering his wealth and that the *bhikkhus* after the meal would just go back to the monastery and sleep.

After the meal, the Buddha surveyed the audience and knew how the second minister felt. Reflecting that if he were to give a lengthy discourse of appreciation this minister would get more dissatisfied, the Buddha delivered only a short discourse and returned to the monastery.

The king who had expected a long discourse was disappointed and wondered if he had missed out anything; decided to go

and see the Buddha. The Buddha praised him and then explained that one of his ministers did not appreciate the king's charity. If the Buddha had given a lengthy discourse, the minister would have become more and more dissatisfied and accrued more bad kamma.

The Buddha added, "O king! Fools do not rejoice in the charities given by others and go to the lower worlds. The wise rejoice in other people's charities, and through appreciation, they share in the merit gained by others and go to the abode of the *devas*."

7. DHAMMA SAVANĀ (LISTENING TO THE DHAMMA)

SUPREME ATTRIBUTES OF THE DHAMMA

- a. Well proclaimed is the Dhamma by the Exalted One (*Svakkhato Bhagavata Dhamma*)
- b. To be realized by oneself here and now (*Sanditthiko*)
- c. Immediately effective (*Akaliko*)
- d. Inviting all "to come and see" (*Ehipassiko*)
- e. Worthy to be achieved (*Opaneyyiko*)
- f. Directly experienced by the wise (*Paccatam Veditabbo Vinnuhi*)

ACTIVITIES

- a. Attending talks by invited speakers;
- b. Attending seminars;
- c. Listening to audio tapes/Watching videotapes;
- e. Participating in sutta/paritta chanting.

WAY OF LISTENING

- a. Listening attentively and respectfully
- b. Learn and put into practice.

RESULTS

- a. Gain in wisdom
- b. Doubts verified immediately and satisfactorily
- c. Develop calmness and confidence in the mind
- d. Conditioning of mind, making it easy to recollect the Dhamma
- e. Increase in faith, likely to perform *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā*
- f. Understand and penetrate the Dhamma freeing one from all defilements.

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT SUTTAS:

- a. Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta – The Buddha’s first sermon setting the Wheel of the Truth in motion
- b. Anattalakkhana Sutta – Discourse on soullessness
- c. Māha Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta – Discourse on subjects of meditation/foundation of mindfulness

OTHER IMPORTANT SUTTAS TO SHAPE OUR LIVES:

- a. Mangala Sutta – Discourse on blessings
- b. Mettā Sutta – Discourse on loving kindness
- c. Vyagghapajja Sutta – Discourse on acquiring and managing one’s wealth wisely
- d. Sigalovada Sutta – Layman’s code of conduct
- e. Dhammika Sutta – Leading a happy married life

8. DHAMMA DESANĀ (TEACHING THE DHAMMA)

THE HIGHEST GIFT

The gift of truth excels all other gifts.

Under this category, teaching and preaching also include:

- a. The publication of books and other literature on the Dhamma

- b. Encouraging others to contribute towards cost the of publication of Dhamma literature to help spread Buddhism for the good of mankind.

AIM

To introduce one's parents, relatives and friends to taste the cool, happy flavour of the Dhamma – the taste that eliminates pain, sorrow, disease and danger.

Parents are the first *devas*, teachers to their children. Thus, bringing one's parents to perform charity, observe precepts, listen to the Dhamma and practising meditation, truly repays all the food fed to oneself from birth till maturity.

RESULT

Harmony in one's family and circle of friends, bringing about happiness and progress.

To the teacher, it brings about wisdom and reduction of all mental factors of defilement.

Adviser should set an example first

Let one first establish oneself what is proper,

And then instruct others.

Such a man will not be defiled (blamed).

~ DHAMMAPADA VERSE 158

STORY ABOUT THE GREEDY MONK

Venerable. Upananda, an eloquent teacher used to preach to others not to be greedy and to live frugally and be contented.

On one occasion, he went to one village monastery just before *vassa* (rain retreat). Impressed by his eloquence, some bhikkhus invited him to stay. Discovering that they only received one robe each as donation, he left his slippers there and went to another monastery. There he found out the bhikkhus received two robes each, he left his staff and left. At a third monastery

where three robes were offered. He left his water bottle. Finally, he decided to stay at a monastery where four robes were donated to each *bhikkhus*. At the end of vassa, he claimed his share of robes as if he had observed the vassa in the monasteries where he had left his belongings. Then he collected all the gifts and returned to his old monastery. On the way he met two young *bhikkhus* who were having a dispute over the share of two robes and a velvet blanket they had between them. Upananda, who was to arbitrate gave them one robe each and took the velvet blanket for his service.

Unsatisfied with the decision, the two *bhikkhus* reported to the Buddha who commented, “One who teaches others should first teach himself and act as he preached.”

9. *DIṬṬHUIJJUKAMMA* (STRAIGHTENING ONE’S VIEW)

Wrong views have tendencies towards sensuous greed, grudge, speculative opinion, sceptical doubts, conceit, craving for continued existence and ignorance.

By straightening one’s view, one becomes more relaxed and calm knowing that nothing is permanent. There is also a positive change from within us, gained through learning and practising the Dhamma, understanding and penetrating deeply into it one realises and form correct views about:

- a. The universality of impermanence, suffering and absence of self;
- b. The law of *kamma* and *vipāka*;
- c. Law of causation (wheel of life/dependent origination)

AN OLD SAYING:

*“If we wish for health, perform dāna.
If we wish for beauty, observe sīla.
If we wish for wisdom, practise Bhāvanā.”*

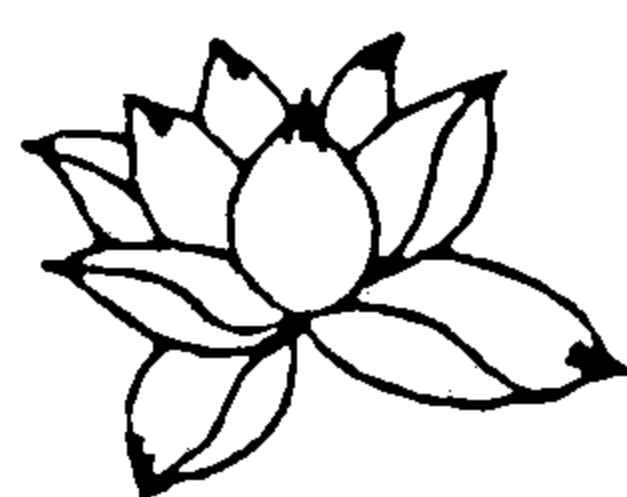
Some are rich but ugly
because in the past they perform charity
but did not observe precepts.

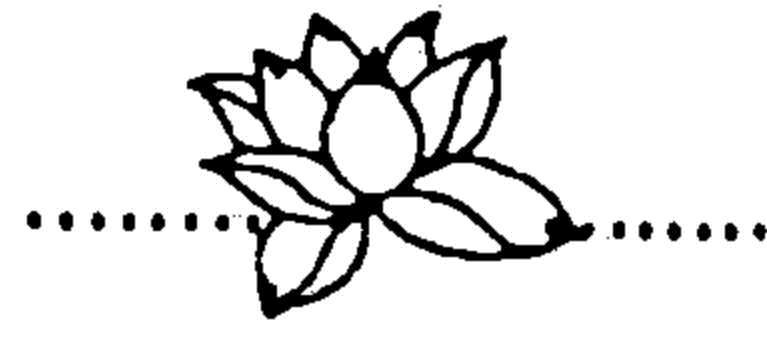
Some are poor but beautiful
because they observed precepts
but did not perform charity.

Some are poor and ugly
because they practised mental cultivation
but not charity and precepts.

Therefore one should perform all three.

THREEFOLD TRAINING





GIVING (DĀNA)

The Buddha said that even throwing away some food with the idea of allowing small creatures to feed on it is a noble gesture that can yield some **remarkable result** one day. Emphasizing on the merits of giving, the Buddha Said:

“Monks, if beings knew, as I know, the ripening of sharing gifts, they would not enjoy their use without sharing them, nor would the taint of stinginess obsess their hearts and stay there. Even if it were their last bit, their last morsel of food, they would not enjoy its use without sharing it, if there were anyone to receive it. But in as much monks, as beings do not know, as I know, the ripening of sharing gifts, therefore they enjoy their use without sharing them, and the taint of stinginess obsesses their hearts and stays there.”

Dāna simply means the **intention** to give a suitable thing. It has the **characteristic** of letting go or abandoning. Its **function** is the destruction of attachment to objects of offering. Its **manifestation** is absence of attachment i.e. a sense of freedom from attachment that appears in the mind of the donor. The **proximate** cause of giving is having objects of offering in one's possession.

Intention to give with **right view** with regard to the **Law of Kamma** (cause and effect). Good will beget good, and bad will beget bad. Therefore, it is always carried out with **pure loving-kindness and compassion**.

Suitable thing to give means according to Vinaya Pitaka and Sutta Pitaka. In the Vinaya or the Monastic Discipline, four types of *dāna* are allowable for monks and novices. They are called *Nissaya* in Pali or the necessities (four requisites) which the monastic life requires namely: robes, food and drinks, dwelling places, and medicines. In the Suttanta classification, there are ten kinds of *dāna* namely: food, drinks, clothing, transportation, flowers, incensory or perfumed powder, scented ointment, bed, dwelling places, and facilities for lighting.

Characteristic of abandoning means that we perform giving (*dāna* in Pali) to help us slowly to let go our **greed, hatred and delusion**.

Its **manifestation** is absence of attachment means that donor at the moment of giving has attained a wholesome state of mind.

Having objects of offering in one's possession means that whatever objects to give must be from **rightful means** without breaking the **Five Precepts**.

ALMS GIVING

Alms giving is the **basic process** of doing merit in Buddhism and alms allowable to monks according to Vinaya are alms food and drinking stuff (*Piṇḍapāta* in Pali), monk's robes (*Civara* in Pali), lodging facilities (*Senāsana* in Pali), and medicines (*Bhessaja* in Pali). Apart from the four necessities for the monks, devotees are advised not to give the following things and services.

1. Do not donate living animals
2. Weapons
3. Liquor or addicting drugs
4. Cigarettes
5. Offering a baby
6. Teaching artwork to monks

CORRECT WAY OF GIVING ALMS

In doing *dāna* or giving, the donor should go about the **planning and preparation** happily. During offering the food, he or she

should be happy and not absent-minded and think about other things while making the offering. After the offering, he or she should recall the good deed and rejoice in the good opportunity of doing *dāna* or giving.

Another important factor after performing *dāna* is to have proper aspiration. You can recite the formula:

“May this dāna of mine be a condition for the attainment of Nibbāna.”

Lastly, remember to share your merits, because whenever you do any good deeds, you make merits (*punna* in Pali). You can also recite the formula:

“I share these merits of mine with relative, friends and all beings. May all beings be happy sharing my merits. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!”

TIME AND KINDS OF FOOD TO BE PRESENTED TO MONKS

1. Breakfast and lunch — standard food such as rice, desserts, preserved and dried food, fish and meat.
2. Anytime and the monks can keep for seven days — honey, sugar and syrup, fat, ghee, butter and cheese.
3. Anytime and the monks can keep for all time — medicines.
4. Fruit juice — afternoon, evening and also at night. Fruit for fruit juice should not be larger than the fist, or about the size of an orange. These fruits are lime, jujube, green prune, tangerine, orange, apple, plum, tamarind, etc. As for preparing it, first remove all seeds, squeezing and let it filter with a clean white cloth seven times. You may mix spices, salt, sugar or herbs suitable to each kind of fruit as you wish. This kind of fruit juice for monks should not be boiled. It can be offered to the monk from noon to midnight. After that it, cannot be consumed by the monk because it might become liquor by fermentation.
5. Ten kinds of meat are not allowed to be consumed by monks and novices. They are the flesh of human, elephant, horse,

dog, hyena, snake, tiger, leopard, bear and lion. Any meat offered to the monk and novice must be free from these conditions, namely:

- a. Knowing in advance the food to be offered,
- b. Seeing the animal being killed for him,
- c. Hearing the animal screaming before slaughter for him

There are seven exceptions when monks are allowed to consume the food that was promised or told in advance. However, it should be taken under his good consideration.

1. When the monk is ill or has broken heels and cannot go alms collecting.
2. From the end of the *Vassa*(rains retreat) up to 4 months after the Kathina robe offering ceremony. This is about 5 months period of time.
3. When it is time for monks to make their robes.
4. During a long distance of travelling exceeding about 10 miles.
5. During a boat trip, both on and off board the ship, as well as during the trip.
6. When there is a fourth monk joining in a meal from alms gathering that is enough for 2 or 3 monks.
7. When the monk is invited from any group of monks to have a meal.

Moreover, in any case if the monk is insane, it is not forbidden to take the food under the above discussion.

SANGHIKA DĀNA

There is sometimes a misconception that a **minimum** of four monks is required for a *Sanghika dāna* i.e. a *dāna* intended for the Sangha or Order of monks. In point of fact, even one monk is sufficient to **represent the Sangha**. What is important is the intention of the donor. In such a case, the donor approaches the monastery and informs the abbot or the monk-in-charge of accepting *dāna* to the Sangha as a whole and not to individual

monks. Thus, the donor should leave it to the Sangha to decide which monk or monks they wish to send to represent the Sangha. If the Sangha is able to send only one monk, then that one monk too can well represent the Sangha. It is still a *Sanghika dāna* as what is important is that the donor has intended the offering for the Order as a whole. Thus, it is the intention, or the state of mind, that counts.

In the Commentaries, there is an account of one monk being sent to represent the Sangha and how the merits made by the donor were considered considerable, as the donor's intention was to donate to the sangha as a whole.

FIVE KINDS OF GIFTS MADE BY MAN OF VIRTUE (SAPPURISA DĀNA)

1. *Dāna* made with faith in the law of cause and effect (*Saddhā dāna*).
2. *Dāna* made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared fresh. Wholesome and clean (*Sakkacca dāna*).
3. *Dāna* made at the right time, on the proper occasion (*Kala dāna*) e.g. when it is meal-time food is offered, when it is Kathina season, robes are offered, etc.
4. *Dāna* made with the view of rendering assistance to the recipient or show kindness to him (*Anuggaha dāna*).
5. *Dāna* made without affecting in any way one's dignity and the dignity of others (*Anupaghata dāna*).

All these five kinds of gifts give rise to great wealth, riches and prosperity. In addition, *Saddhā dāna* results in fair, handsome appearance. As a result of *Sakkacca dāna*, one's followers and attendants are attentive and obedient. Resulting from *Kala dāna* are benefits that come at the right time and in abundance. As a result of *Anuggaha dāna*, one is well disposed to enjoy the fruits of one's good deeds and is able to do so in full. As a result of *Anupaghata dāna*, one's property is fully protected against the

five destructive elements viz. water, fire, confiscation, thieves and opponents.

FIVE ELEMENTS THAT STRENGTHEN THE BENEFICIAL RESULTS OF *DĀNA*

To summarize all that we have considered, there are five elements that strengthen the beneficial results of *dāna*:

1. The **donor** observes the Precepts and is of good moral conduct.
2. The **recipient** is also morally virtuous.
3. The **materials** offered have been acquired justly and rightly.
4. The **offering** is made with happiness before, with pure satisfaction and delight during, and with rejoicing after making the offer.
5. The donor has complete **faith** in the law of cause and effect.

The **five elements** should accompany the *dāna* for it to be of greatest purity and benefit; when they are lacking when offerings are made, to that extent will the *dāna* be deficient in beneficial results. As regards having faith in the law of cause and effect mentioned above, we should reflect thus:

“I will have spent a certain amount of my wealth by offering this dāna but it will not be spent in vain. Through this act of dāna, I have developed volition which is much more precious than the wealth I will have spent. My wealth is liable to be destroyed by water, fire, confiscation, thieves and opponents, but this mental action of volition is indestructible and will follow me through the rounds of existence till I attain Nibbāna.”

Ability to keep the mind clear and pure in this manner is having faith in the law of cause, the mental action volition. Thus it is important to develop, through reflecting on the law of cause or the law of effect, faith which is conducive to **purity of mind**, for it is the 5th element that strengthens the **beneficial results of dāna**.

DĀNA AS A STARTING POINT FOR THE REALIZATION OF NIBBĀNA

Dāna (giving) is the first stage in the three-fold training of *Dāna*, *Sīla* and *Bhāvanā* (giving, morality and meditation).

During the **Buddha dispensation** you may, starting from *dāna* followed by observing precepts (morality) and practising *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* meditation reach path (*Magga*), enter fruition (*Phala*) and realise Nibbāna. This is possible if one has done a deed of *dāna* and then goes to a quiet spot and thinks about the *dāna* again and again. This thinking over *dāna* is *Cāganusati Bhāvanā*, contemplation of liberality.

This good deed can develop stage by stage, joy, peace of mind and body, happiness of mind and body, tranquility of mind. As these mental states occur to you, you note, joy, joy... peace, peace... happiness, happiness..., plus other **mental states**. As you thus note on and on, you will develop **momentary concentration** and stage after stage of insight knowledge comes to you and you may successfully attain Nibbāna.

This is how one realises Nibbāna – extinction of all suffering and sorrow even in this life, with *dāna* as the starting point, *Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!*

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MORALITY (SĪLA)

For the most part, the Buddha's teachings are about **giving, morality and development of the mind**. A person who lacks morality will have to face disadvantages in his worldly and spiritual life. His bad reputation will spread among good people. When he approaches people, he will suffer from disfavour and timidity. An immoral person will **die confused and full of fear**.

1. Morality has the **characteristic** of controlling one's physical and verbal actions and also orientating them towards right direction, it also serves as the basis or foundation of all meritoriousness.
2. Its **function** is to prevent one from becoming immoral through uncontrolled physical and verbal actions. It helps one to remain spotless in conduct, free from blame by wise.
3. Morality is **manifested** as purity in thought, word and deed. When the wise reflect on the nature of morality, they come to realise that it is the purity of physical action, the purity of verbal action and the purity of mental action.
4. The **proximate cause** of morality is moral shame (*hiri*) for doing an immoral act and moral dread (*ottappa*) for doing an immoral act.

Shame arises from **within** and **dread** arises from **without**. Suppose, for instance, there is a piece of iron, one end of which is heated, and the other end smeared with filth. The filthy end one would not touch **owing to disgust**, and the other end **through fear**. Shame (*hiri*) is compared with the former and dread (*ottappa*) with the latter.

A man of **virtuous conduct** enjoys many benefits such as a gladdening heart which leads to joy and happiness. This in turn results in delightful satisfaction, arising of calmness of mind and body followed by bliss. The tranquil state of mind and body brings about the **development of concentration**, which enables one to attain Nibbāna. Besides what we have just mentioned, a virtuous man will acquire great wealth, gain fame and good reputation. He will not have any inferiority complex and will live the full span of life and die unconfused.

Observance of morality not through desire for fame nor through desire for reaping beneficial results of one's good deeds, but through **understanding** that the observance of precepts is a **noble practice** for the pure life, and through realization that one should indeed cultivate these practices, solely for their **noble-ness** is known as **Superior Morality** unassociated with any form of greed. This is the type of morality we should seek to observe.

SĪLA (MORALITY) AS A STARTING POINT FOR THE REALIZATION OF NIBBĀNA

In the Sagatha Vagga of the Saṃyutta Nikāya we find the Buddha explained that when a person of **mature wisdom** born with **three root-conditions** (a being whose consciousness of the moment of rebirth is accompanied by three root conditions of greedlessness, hatelessness, undeludedness), well established in morality, ardently develops concentration and insight wisdom, he can **attain Nibbāna** in the **present life**. Here the Buddha mentioned the three-fold trainings: *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā* (morality, concentration and insight wisdom). For most of us who are **striving hard** for the attainment of Nibbāna the Buddha

mentioned the other three-fold training for *Dāna*, *Sīla* and *Bhāvanā*. (Giving, morality and *Satipaṭṭhāna Vipassanā* meditation).

One who has done a deed of observance of *Sīla* (morality) and then goes to a quiet spot and thinks about the morality again and again. This thinking over one's morality is *Sīlanussati Bhāvanā*, contemplation of morality-satipaṭṭhāna vipassanā meditation. This good deed will give rise to joy, peace of mind and body, happiness of mind and body, tranquility of mind in succession.

Then, as these mental states appear, you note : 'joy, joy' if it is joy, 'happiness, happiness' if it is happiness, 'peace, peace' if it is peace and also other mental states.

If you thus note on, you will develop **momentary concentration** and stage after stage of **insight knowledge** comes to you and you may successfully attain Nibbāna. This is how one realises Nibbāna – extinction of all suffering and sorrow even in this life, with morality (*Sīla*) as the starting point.

NIBBĀNA

Nibbāna means **extinction** of all suffering and sorrow. Though Nibbāna is causeless, not conditioned by any cause and always exists, it is not realise its peace without a cause. It can be realised only through a cause. That cause is nothing but the Noble Practice.

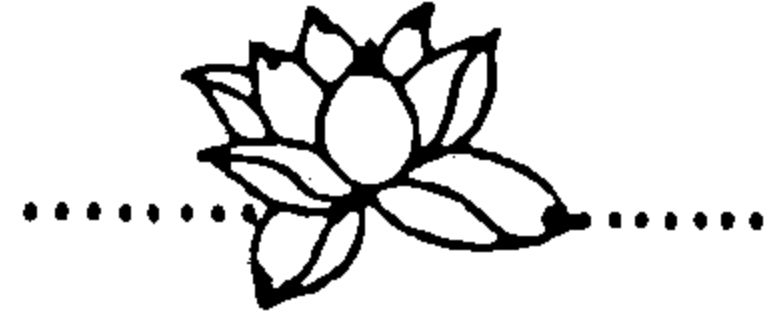
Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

REFERENCE

The Triple Gem by Venerable Pyinnyathitha

The Great Chronicle of Buddhas by Venerable Mingun Sayadaw Bhaddanta Vicittasarabhivamsa

How to Become a Good Buddhist. Dhamma Talks in Malaysia Part 1 by Venerable Ashin U Thondara



BUDDHIST MEDITATION

Buddhist meditation is also called *Vipassanā* Meditation or **insight meditation**. The word insight is rather difficult to explain because it is related to the **four supramundane paths**, the fruits of holiness and the realization of **Nibbāna**. When a person has mature knowledge of insight meditation he roots out the defilements in stages by the four paths and immediately following these attainments, he can be absorbed in the corresponding fruits of holiness and realization of **Nibbāna**.

To understand this **realization of Nibbāna**, a person should meditate. There are **five hindrances** of the mind by reason of which the mind is neither pliable, nor ready to meditate. They are called **sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, remorse and worry and doubt**. To get free of these hindrances, there is no simple way other than by **insight meditation**. When the mind is free from these five debasements it is pliable, pure, ready to get psychic knowledge and become an eye witness to the true nature of life.

A person, being rid of these five hindrances which obstruct the heart and weaken insight knowledge, will know his own good or another's good and will know the good of both, and will realize the excellence of knowledge. So you should know that the more your **insight meditation matures**, the more you will understand the teaching of the Buddha.

When the mind is free from five hindrances, it becomes penetrative, so penetrative that it realizes the true nature of **five aggregates** (five *kandhas* in Pali) as they really are. These five aggregates make up a whole which is man. Man exists nowhere outside these five aggregates, just as the table exists nowhere outside the four legs and so many pieces of planks, it is made of. These five aggregates are **body, feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness**.

In the teaching of the Buddha, a person who has striven to realize the **true nature of five aggregates** has established themselves the **purity of view** arising from the attainment of holy paths and fruition thereof, can be subdivided into the following:

1. PURITY OF VIEW ARISING FROM THE PATH OF 'STREAM-WINNER' AND THE FRUITION THEREOF

A person who has attained this purity of view with regard to no self and no soul is called *Sotāpanna* (= one who has entered the stream that leads to Nibbāna). At the most is to be born only seven times.

A *Sotāpanna* can be further called one who destroyed ego, has no doubts in the teaching of the Buddha and has also destroyed external rite and ritual.

2. THE PATH OF 'ONCE-RETURNER' AND THE FRUITION THEREOF

A person who has attained *Sakadāgāmī*, he or she is reborn only once if he or she does not attain Arahantship.

A *Sakadāgāmī* can be further called a person who has weakened very much the two more mental impurity (= sense of desire and hatred).

3. THE PATH OF 'NON-RETURNER' AND THE FRUITION THEREOF

A person who has attained *Anāgāmī*, he or she will not be reborn here but rebirth take place at *Brahma* world.

An *Anāgāmī* can be further called a person who has finally overthrown the above two mental impurity (= sense of desire and hatred).

4. THE PATH OF ARAHANTTA AND THE FRUITION THEREOF

A person who has attained *Arahant*, he or she has destroyed rebirth.

An *Arahant* can be further called a person who destroys the ten fetters.

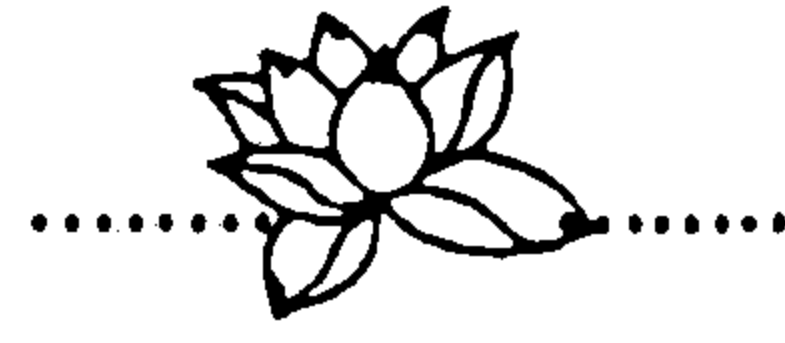
The Ten Fetters are:

- a. External rite and ritual
- b. Ego
- c. Doubts in the Buddha Dhamma
- d. Sense desire
- e. Hatred
- f. Desire to live in the form world
- g. Desire to live in the formless world
- h. Conceit
- i. Any inequilibrium state of mind
- j. Ignorance

REFERENCE

The Triple Gem by Venerable Pyinnyathitha

The Manuals of Buddhism by Venerable Mahathera Ledi Sayadaw
Aggamahapandita, D.Litt



BUDDHIST MEDITATION (SATIPAṬṬHĀNA WAY)

Buddhist meditation or insight meditation is based on the **four foundations of mindfulness** as mentioned in the **Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta**. The Mahāsi approach, popularised by the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw of Burma lies in the use of **rising and falling movements** of the **abdomen** (as one breathes) as the **main object** for the beginner. We are using the Mahāsi approach in this course.

Satipaṭṭhāna is a compound of three words, namely: “*Sati*, *Pa*, and *Thana*”. The latter two can be combined into one word “*Patthana*”. *Sati* means **noting** and *Patthana* means **firmly established on the object** of meditation. There are four foundations of mindfulness or **four kinds of objects**, namely — body, object of feeling, object of consciousness and mental objects such as seeing or hearing. Thus, normally speaking, *Satipaṭṭhāna* means **noting on the arising object with firmly established mindfulness**.

Let us say the meditators are practising the sitting meditation, watching the abdomen and noting the arising objects, beginning with the rising and falling of the abdomen. As they breathe in, the abdomen rises. This object is the **present objects** and is certain, not the **past** nor the **uncertain future one**. The rising of the abdomen, which is observed as stiffness, tension and movement is the presently arising objects. This is noted by the noting mind **continuously** without break. Such a practice is the **mindfulness of the body**. The same applies to the other objects such as the mindfulness of feeling, consciousness and mental objects.

After defining the word “*Satipaṭṭhāna*”, it is necessary to describe the quality of mindfulness or *sati* (in Pali) in terms of **characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause**.

Mindfulness or *sati* has the **characteristic of not floating away**, that means, sinking (into the object of meditation). When a cork or dried hollow pumpkin is thrown into the water, it will float on the surface of the water. If one throws a stone into the water, it will sink at once. So too, **one’s noting mind must sink into arising object and not float on the surface**.

It has the **function** or quality of not losing sight or missing the object. **One must note the object clearly**. This is given in Pali as *Asammosa Rasa*. Of course, in the beginning, the meditator will find it difficult to catch the object. However, they should be determined not to lose the objects.

Mindfulness or *sati* is **manifested** as coming into face to face with the object. Just like when two persons meet each other, they face each other and look at each other’s face to recognise who he/she is. To do so, one needs aim and adjustment. The immediate benefit is the **manifestation of protection** – *Arakkha paccupatthana*. This is one’s mind will be protected from defilements (*kilesas*). Defilements or *kilesas* have the **nature of tormenting and burning**, like fire, so much so that when one is overcome by lustful thoughts or ill-temper, one can die of heart disease. **Defilements weaken not only the mind but also the body**. Hence, just as one prevents fire from starting and spreading by using fire-proof devices, one should also prevent the defilement fires from starting and spreading with the **mindfulness practice**.

The **proximate cause of mindfulness** or *sati* is firm recording (*thirassana*). Just as a good recording equipment can record any sound to be played back clearly, so too if the recording of our observation is firm, we can develop **steadfast mindfulness**. Noting every arising object firmly and continuously with effort and mindfulness or *sati* possessing the above qualities, the mind will be free of defilements and be pure and noble. When one is said not to be fallen away from the Buddha’s culture, for every

mindfulness one's mind is pure and noble, and thus will not fall away from the Buddha's teachings.

Compiled by Bro. Chan Chin Wah

REFERENCE

Dhamma Talk at KCBA by *Venerable Sayadaw U Panditabhivamsa*



RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA (BUDDHĀNUSSATI)

BUDDHĀNUSATI

1. Mindfulness with Buddha's Virtues as object.
2. First of Four Guardian Meditations, other three being:
 - a. Development of Loving Kindness (NON HATE)
 - b. Loathsomeness of the Body (NON LUST)
 - c. Mindfulness of Death (URGENCY)

BENEFITS OF RECOLLECTING BUDDHA'S VIRTUES

Frequent and devoted meditation:

1. Acquires abundant faith which purifies mind so that mindfulness and concentration is easily established.
2. Full of joy : helpful during difficult times when one faces a lot of pain.
3. Overcomes fear and dread. Instills confidence in oneself, helps to dispel phobias, anxiety, doubt and the like.

ARAHAM : ACCOMPLISHED OR WORTHY ONE

1. ARAKA : FAR, REMOTE

Far from all vices having complete expunged all traces of defilements by means of the Noble Path.

2. ARI-HAN : ENEMIES DESTROYED

The enemies or defilements are destroyed by the Noble Path (*Arahatta Mangga*). Therefore he is accomplished.

3. ARA-HATA : SPOKES CUT OFF

This Wheel of *Samsāra* (Rounds of Rebirth) whose HUB is made of ignorance and craving for existence, whose SPOKES are kamma formations (*sankhāra*) and the rest, whose RIM is ageing and death has been revolving throughout time that has no beginning.

The penetration of this Dependent Origination in all aspects through Omniscience = spokes cut off and wheel destroyed.

4. ARAHATI : WORTHY

When a Perfect One has arisen, important deities and humans pay homage/offerings to no one else. He is most worthy.

5. A-RAHA : ABSENCE OF SECRECY (RAHA-BHAVA)

Fools in the world vaunt their cleverness, yet do evil in secret for fear of getting a bad name.

The Perfect One has no such secrecy.

SAMMĀSAMBUDDO : SUPREMELY ENLIGHTENED

**BUDDHA — ENLIGHTENED BEING POSSESSED OF
FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS**

1. SAVAKA BUDDHAS

Disciples who attain Enlightenment, Arahants.

2. PACCEKA BUDDHAS

Solitary Buddhas who attain Enlightenment by themselves. Do not reveal or preach it to the masses.

3. **SAMMĀSAMBUDHAS**

- a. Supreme Buddhas who attain Enlightenment with Omniscience and Great Compassion.
- b. Possess full qualities of the Ten Powers (*Dasabala*).
- c. Possess Six Incomparable abilities not shared by others.
- d. Possess the Buddha Eye by which he can enlighten others.

Supreme qualities obtain through practice of Ten Perfections, four incalculables and 100,000 world cycles (Minimum).

Appearance of a Supreme Buddha is a very rare event.

Six Incomparable Qualities

- a. *Asāyaṇusaya Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of the inclinations and tendencies of all beings.
- b. *Indriya Paropariyatti Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of the mental faculties + their state of maturity in all beings.
- c. *Sabbannuta Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of Omniscience and Omnipotence.
- d. *Ana Varana Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of penetrative clarity without obstruction i.e. unrestricted access to objective field.
- e. *Yamaka Patihariya Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of performing the Twin Miracle.
- f. *Māha Karuṇā Samapatti Ñāṇa* — Knowledge of attainment of Great Compassion by which he looks at the world.

Five Eyes of the Buddha

- a. Buddha Eye — Incomparable Qualities No 1 & 2.
- b. Dhamma Eye — Path Knowledges.
- c. *Samanta* Eyes — Omniscient and Unobstructed Knowledge.
- d. *Paññā* — Knowledge of destruction of all defilements.

- e. *Dibbacakkhu* — Divine Eye by which He sees all the worlds.

Omniscient Knowledge

Knowledge of the Five *Neyya Dhammas* (*Neyya* = all that should be known)

- a. *Sankhāra* — All conditioned things, mental and material.
- b. *Vikāra* — Alteration or the arising and passing away of mental and material phenomena.
- c. *Lakkhama* — General and specific characteristic of mental and material phenomena.
- d. *Paññati* — All concepts, names and terms.
- e. *Nibbāna* — The extinction of craving, the unconditioned.

With the power of Omniscience, the Buddha possesses Three Supreme qualities whereby He enlightens others.

- a. Knowledge of all truths.
- b. Knowledge of teaching in suitable way to give proper benefit.
- c. The particular teaching method based on the true state of inclination and maturity of the disciple.

Possessor of the Ten Powers (*Dasabala*)

- a. Knowledge of what is and what is not causal occasion i.e. knowledge of all causes and conditions.
- b. Knowledge of past future and present fruition of deeds, their causes and conditions.
- c. Knowledge of all destinations (ways of rebirth).
- d. Knowledge of the world as it really is, in its diverse shapes and forms.
- e. Knowledge of diverse characters (inclinations) of beings.
- f. Knowledge of the state of faculties of beings.
- g. Knowledge of defilements in purification of emergence

from the attainments of meditation.

- h. Knowledge of past lives without limit.
- i. Knowledge of decease and rebirth of beings.
- j. Knowledge of the destruction of the cankers (*āsavakhaya*).

VIJJĀCARAṆA SAMPANNO : ENDOWED WITH KNOWLEDGE AND CONDUCT

THREE KINDS (*TEVIJJĀ*) AND EIGHT KINDS OF DIRECT KNOWLEDGES

- 1. Knowledge to remember past lives of self and others (*Pubbenivasānusati*)
- 2. The Divine Eye (*Dibbacakkhu*)
- 3. Knowledge of Extinction of Cankers (*Āsavakkhaya*)

Five more knowledges are added to make Eight

- 4. Insight Knowledges (*Vipassanā*)
- 5. Knowledge of Psychic Powers (*Iddhividha*)
- 6. The Divine Ear (*Dibbasota*)
- 7. Power to read thoughts of others (*Cetopariya*)
- 8. Power to create replicas of oneself (*Manomaya Iddhi*)

15 VIRTUOUS CONDUCT (*CARAṆA*)

- 1. Faith in Kamma, Triple Gems, Future lives, etc. (*Saddhā*)
- 2. Mindfulness in performing meritorious actions (*Sati*)
- 3. Shame to do evil (*Hiri*)
- 4. Dread to do evil (*Ottapa*)
- 5. Endeavour to perform meritorious deeds (*Viriya*)
- 6. Broad Knowledge (*Suta*)
- 7. Wisdom (*Paññā*)

These seven good states (*Saddhāmma*) are possessed by all Ariyas

8. Knowledge of right amount to eat (*Bhojanga-mattaññu*)
9. Devotion to wakefulness (*Jagariyanuyoga*)
10. Guarding doors of sense faculties (*Indriyasamvara*)
11. Restraint through Virtue (*Sīla*)
12. 1st Jhāna Concentration
13. 2nd Jhāna Concentration
14. 3rd Jhāna Concentration
15. 4th Jhāna Concentration

Possession of *Vijjā* = Fulfillment of Omniscience

Possession of *Caraṇa* = Fulfillment of Great Compassion

Through Omniscience, He knows what is beneficial and what is harmful for all beings.

Through Compassion, He warns them of harm and exhorts them to do good.

SUGATO : WELL GONE, WELFARER

1. SOBHANA GAMANA : GOOD MANNER OF GOING

He has gone without attachment of Safety by the Eightfold Noble Path.

2. SUNDARA GATA : GONE TO EXCELLENT PLACE

He has gone to the Excellent, the Deathless Nibbāna.

3. SAMMA GATATTA : RIGHTLY GONE

Has rightly gone, without returning back to the Defilements abandoned at each Path.

Gone rightly, from time of making Resolution up till Enlightenment, by working for welfare and happiness of the whole world through fulfillment of the 30 Perfections following the Middle Path without deviating towards the two extremes — Eternalism or Annihilation or towards — indulgence in sense pleasures or self-mortification.

4. SUGADA : PERFECT SPEAKER

He speaks only fitting speech in the fitting place.
Such speech as (below No. 5), the Buddha speaks at the proper time.
Such speech as (6), the Buddha knows the time to expound.

Six Kinds of Speeches

1. Untrue and unconnected with good Not pleasing to others	Lies causing harm to others
2. Untrue and unconnected with good Pleasing to others	Flattery
3. True but unconnected with good Not pleasing to others	Bad worldly news
4. True but unconnected with good Pleasing to others	Good worldly news
5. True and connected with good Not pleasing to others	Reprimand to a wrong doer
6. True and connected with good Pleasing to others	Teaching the Dhamma and Vinaya

LOKAVIDU : KNOWER OF THE WORLDS

- 1. World of Formation – *Sankhāra Loka*
- 2. World of Beings – *Satta Loka*
- 3. World of Locations – *Okasa Loka*

1. **SANKHĀRA LOKA**

Formations or conditioned things — mental and physical phenomena, their causes and conditions, formation/dissolution:

- a. E.g. constituents of matter and properties, great elements, producers of material phenomena, etc.
- b. Six types of consciousness conditioned by the sensory organs and contact with sense objects. Because of contact, feelings arise thereby conditioning other mental phenomena.

“Within this fathom long body lies the world the arising, cessation and the way leading to the cessation of the world.”

2. **SATTA LOKA**

All living creatures is what is meant here.

He know the beings of the 31 planes of existence, their habits, tendencies, whether keen or dull faculties :

- a. Apāya/Woeful States — Hell, Ghost, Demon, Animal (4)
- b. Human Realm (1)
- c. Deva Realm — Four Great Kings, Tavatimsa, Yama, Tusita, Nimmaraṭi, Paranimitta (6)
- d. 1st Jhāna Plane — Maka Brahma, Minister, Retinue (3)
- e. 2nd Jhāna Plane — Radiant Gods, Abhassara (3)
- f. 3rd Jhāna Plane — Aura Gods, Subhakinha (3)
- g. 4th Jhāna Plane — Great Reward Gods, Vehapphala (1)
- h. Asaññasatta — Beings without mind (1)
- i. Pure Abodes — Five levels according to the Five Powers (5)
- j. Formless Plane — Four mental planes (4)

Total : 31 planes of existence

3. **OKASALOKA**

The space-time continuum is what is meant here.

The 10,000 world systems (galaxies) and the various realms inhabited by celestial beings (*deva-brahma-lokas*)

Other world systems in various stages of evolution or devolution found all over this infinite space in the form of millions and trillions.

The Buddha knows all the other world systems – *What he taught is equivalent to four leaves in His hand. What he knows is equivalent to all the leaves in the forest.*

Thus His knowledge of the World is complete. So He is called Knower of the Worlds.

**ANUTTARO PURISADAMMA SARATHI :
INCOMPARABLE CHARIOTEER OF MEN TO BE TAMED**

1. **INCOMPARABLE**

He surpasses the whole world in virtue, concentration, wisdom, deliverance and knowledge and vision of deliverance. Therefore He is incomparable or peerless.

2. **SARATHI**

A charioteer, trainer or breaker-in of the human steer.

3. **PURISADAMMA**

A vile person, the unconverted man is compared to an untrained horse (or the untrained mind)

HUMANS	ANIMALS	DEVA & YAKKHAS
Saccaka the Jain Ambattha Angulimara	Nandopananda Nalagiri Dhanapalaka	Alvaka Sucloma Baka Brahma

“I discipline men to be tamed sometimes gently and I discipline them sometimes roughly. I also discipline them sometimes gently and roughly.”

The Buddha can guide men so well that in a single session, they may go in eight directions without hesitation.

Thus He is called Incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed.

SATTHA DEVA MANUSSANAM : TEACHER OF GODS AND MEN

1. SATTHA

- a. People who want to progress require a teacher or leader to guide them to their goal.
- b. Buddha taught the perfect way of self development via the Eightfold Noble Path – end of Suffering.
- c. He is like the caravan leader who brings the caravan across a dangerous wilderness to a land of safety.

2. DEVA MANUSSANAM

- a. This is said in order to denote those who are the Best and also those persons capable of progress.
- b. Even an animal, through listening to the Buddha's Teachings can acquire a good rebirth which can act as a condition for attaining the Path & Fruition Knowledges in their 2nd or 3rd rebirths e.g. Manduka, the frog deity of Campa.
- c. He bestows the blessings of the Dhamma on all of the gods, men and animals who are capable of progress.

BUDDHO : ENLIGHTENED

1. Embodiment of Omniscience & Great Compassion.
2. One who has realised the Four Noble Truths and made others realise the same.
3. One who has awakened himself as well as others from the deep and long slumber of Nescience.

Therefore He is Enlightened as well as Enlightener

4. As a lotus, fair and lovely
By the water is not soiled
By the world I am not soiled
Therefore, Brahmin, I am Buddha
5. Known are the things to be known
Cultivated are the things to be cultivated
Destroyed are the things to be destroyed
Therefore, Brahmin, I am the Buddha

Answers to two brahmins who were struck by his radiance and beauty and asked whether he was a *deva*, *gandhabba* or *yakkha*.

BHAGAVA : EXALTED, BLESSED

Term signifying the respect and veneration accorded to the Highest of all beings and distinguished by the Special Qualities.

1. ABOLISHMENT (*BHAGGAVA*)

Has abolished all kinds of defilements, stains and cankers, all kinds of misconduct, craving, wrong views, Māras, etc.

Māras of defilements, of the aggregates, of kamma-formations, Māra the deity and Māra as death.

*“He has abolished every evil state
Blessed his name may rightly be.”*

2. FORTUNATENESS (*BHAGYAVA*)

- a. Excellence of his physical body which possess all the marks of a Great Man acquired through his merits.
- b. Excellence of his Dhamma body (9 Supramundance States and all His Teachings over 45 years)
- c. Esteem by worldly people and those who resemble him.
- d. Fit to be relied upon by laymen, *bhikkhus* and *deva* because he always gives the best advice.

3. ASSOCIATED WITH BLESSINGS (*BHAGEHI*)

- a. Lordship over his own mind
E.g. making body minute, light, gigantic, arriving where he wants, producing what he wants, self-mastery, supernatural powers, immediate accomplishment at his wish performing a case.
- b. Dhamma
The 9 Supramundane States consisting of the 8 Path & Fruition Knowledges and Nibbāna.
- c. Fame (*Yasa*)
The Buddha’s exceedingly pure fame spread through the three worlds acquired through the Special Quality of veracity (Truthfulness).
- d. Glory (*Siri*)
He has the glory of all limbs, perfect in every respect, comforting to those who look upon his physical body.
- e. Wish
Succeeded in every wish he entertained, e.g. Resolution at the feet of Dipankara Buddha, fulfillment of 10 Perfections, attainment of Enlightenment.

f. Endeavour

He has the Right Effort, which is the reason why the whole world venerates him.

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| i. Let the skin remain | } | I shall not rest
or relax until I
attain what I set
out to do |
| ii. Let the sinew remain | | |
| iii. Let the bones remain | | |
| iv. Let the flesh and blood dry up | | |

CONCLUSION

The traditional recitation of the Nine Virtues of the Buddha is:

<i>Iti pi so Bhagava:</i>	Such indeed is He, the Exalted One:
1. <i>Araham</i>	1. Worthy
2. <i>Sammāsambuddho</i>	2. Supremely Enlightened
3. <i>Vijjācaraṇa-sampanno</i>	3. Endowed with Knowledge and Conduct
4. <i>Sugato</i>	4. Well-gone
5. <i>Lokavidu</i>	5. Knower of worlds
6. <i>Anuttaro purisa dhamma-sarathi</i>	6. Incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed
7. <i>Sattha deva-manussanam</i>	7. Teacher of gods and men
8. <i>Buddho</i>	8. Enlightened and
9. <i>Bhagava ti.</i>	9. Exalted.

Donation List

The Klang and Coast Buddhist Association wish to thank Madam Monica See for contributing the costs for cover design, films, typesetting and layout texts, many thanks to all donors who have made the printing of this edition possible. May the merits obtained be to the good health, prosperous and the attainment of highest happiness of the donors, and may all beings share in the merits accrued through this publication. We apologize for any inadvertent omissions or misspelling of names. Sadhu – Sadhu- Sadhu.

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Our departed Vipassana meditation teacher Mae Chee Khoo

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The KCBA is much encouraged by the support and generosity of the donors that enabled this Dhamma Literature to be printed. Whatever balance of funds will be channeled towards future publications for free distribution. May the merits obtained from this publication be dedicated to all the donors departed and loved ones. May they enjoy better and more blissful condition in their new rebirth – Sadhu ! Sadhu ! Sadhu !

巴生滨海佛学会

PERTUBUHAN PENGANUT BUDDHA KLANG DAN PANTAI

THE KLANG & COAST BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

Lot 465, Km 2, Persiaran Tengku Ampuan Rahimah,
41200 Klang, Selangor Darul Ehsan. Tel/Fax: 603-33721902

每周例常活动表 WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

星期Day	时间 Time	活动 Activities
日 Sun	8:45am - 9:00am	周日佛学班集合 Sunday Dharma Class Assembly
	9:00am - 9:30am	诵经礼佛 Chanting Sessions
	9:30am - 12:00am	周日佛学班上课 Sunday Dharma Class
	9:30am - 10:30am	周日弘法会 Sunday Dharma Talk
	9:30am - 1:00pm	图书馆开放 Library
	10:30am - 11:30am	英文佛学研讨班 English Dharma Adult Class
	10:30am - 11:30am	诵经 Chanting Sessions
	12:00am - 1:00pm	歌咏组练唱 Choir Group
	1:00pm - 2:30pm	二胡班练习 'Er Hu' Class
	12:30pm - 2:30pm	青年团集会 Youth Circle
一 Mon	8:30am - 10:00am	施医赠药 Free Medical Service
	1:00pm - 2:00pm	施医赠药 Free Medical Service
	8:30pm - 10:00pm	团康活动 Youth Activities
二 Tue	8:15pm - 10:00pm	中文佛学研讨班 Chinese Dharma Class
	8:15pm - 10:00pm	英文组诵经 English Chanting Sessions
三 Wed	8:15pm - 10:00pm	念佛团诵经 Chinese Chanting Sessions
四 Thu	8:15pm - 10:00pm	英文组弘法活动 English Dharma Class
	8:30pm - 10:30pm	青年团共修班 Youth Dharma Class
	8:30pm - 10:00pm	书法班 Calligraphy Class
	8:15pm - 10:00pm	香功班 'Xiang Gong' Class
五 Fri	8:30am - 10:00am	施医赠药 Free Medical Service
	1:00pm - 2:00pm	施医赠药 Free Medical Service

✿农历初一及十五上午十一时礼佛上供，下午八时礼佛拜愿。

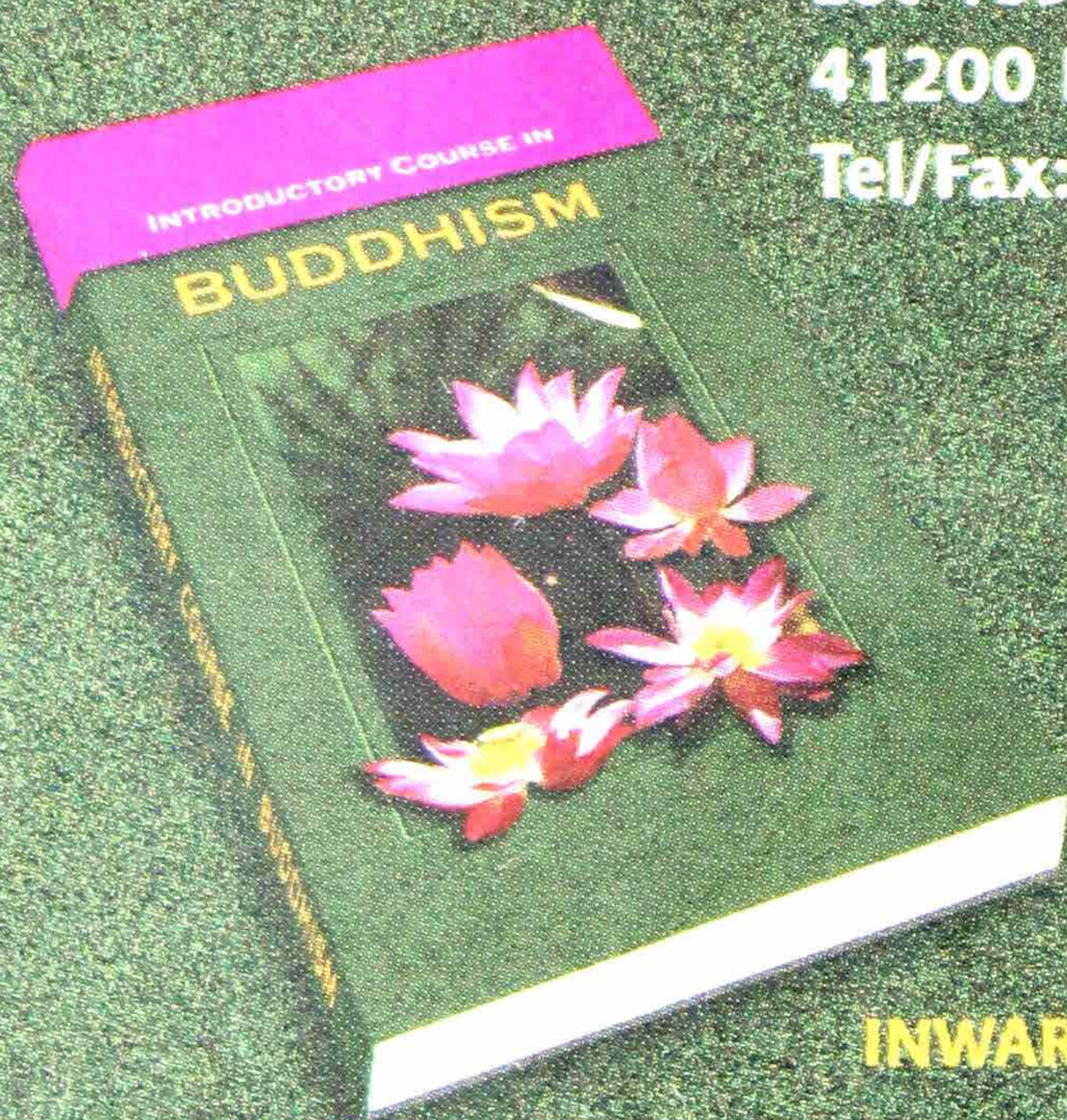
✿Full Moon & New Moon Days 11:00am Offering Service, 8:00pm Blessing Service.

ACTS OF CHARITY

Acts of charity inspired by loving-kindness live long in human memory, generating love and respect among people and thus laying a foundation for the unity of the whole world.

~Mahāsi Sayadaw~

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INWARD PATH, PENANG