

THE BUDDHA'S WORDS

The Siamese, Cambodian and Laotian Buddhist Era seems to be one year later than that of Burma, Ceylon and India. In fact this is not so. The difference is that while the latter regards the year of the Maha Parinibbāna as B.E. 1, the former takes it to be the first anniversary after the Master's Passing Away. For example this year is B.E. 2518 according to the Siamese, Cambodian and Laotian Calendar, but it is B.E. 2519 according to the Burmese, Ceylonese, and Indian Calendar.

THE BUDDHA'S WORDS

**Published on the auspicious occasion of
His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej's
Forty-Eighth Birthday Anniversary**



**THE BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION OF THAILAND
UNDER ROYAL PATRONAGE
41 ADITYA ROAD
BANGKOK.
5th DECEMBER B.E. 2518.**

13948

Cover : Nanda Chareonpan

Foreword

In 1966, the Buddhist Association of Thailand published **"Growing the Bodhi Tree in the Garden of the Heart, verses of the DHAMMAPADA"** newly translated into English and rearranged in the order of the Buddhist Way of Training by Bhikkhu Khantipālo. The Association's aim was to publish a book which would serve as a concise poetic compilation of Buddhist thought. It was hoped this English translation would be distributed in hotel rooms throughout Thailand so that foreign visitors could read it at random and gain a better understanding of Buddhist doctrine and the path toward happiness. The book was beautifully produced and was distributed freely, but there were not enough copies to circulate to all leading hotels. It is our hope that this book will achieve the popularity of *The Teaching of Buddha* by B.D.K., which the Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai (Buddhism Promoting Foundation) managed to place in almost all hotels in Japan.

This year, we shall be celebrating the 48th birthday anniversary of our royal patron, H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej. The forty-eighth birthday is an important event in one's life as it marks the completion of the fourth cycle of life by Siamese reckoning. The Association feels that it is thus an appropriate and auspicious time to attempt once again to propagate Dhamma to those who visit our Buddhist land. No doubt other Buddhist societies and organizations of which His Majesty is royal patron and defender of the faith will also do their best to uphold and strengthen the Buddhasāsa on this occasion. We should like to dedicate any merit gained by this publication to H.M. King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the beloved father of the nation, who has done so much for us, his subjects, especially in reigning over us as a Dhammarājā.

Bhikkhu Khantipālo, an English monk at Wat Bovornives, the monastery where H.M. the King resided during his ordination period, has again very kindly compiled a book for us. The Thai Wattana T. Suwan Foundation has very kindly agreed to provide financial assistance to cover the entire publication costs of this book. This Foundation has supported our Association in numerous ways and its generous support of our annual publication, *Visākha Pūja*, is greatly appreciated. Mr. Boontham and his charming wife, Mrs. Boonpring and the whole T. Suwan family have earned our lasting gratitude. From next year onwards, the Foundation will not only assist in the annual publication of *Visākha Pūja* but will also support the annual publication of *Seeds of Peace* in two special issues to appear on the holy days, *Māgha Pūja* and *Āsālaha Pūja*. This new publication is aimed at younger people who may not yet be interested in or committed to Buddhism as a way of life.

Without the generous support from this worthy and meritorious family Foundation, the Buddhist Association would never have been able to implement its successful publications programme.

The editor of *Visākha Pūja* and his staff have kindly steered the manuscript of this book through the press. The Association looks forward to their continuing assistance in the years to come. Their voluntary efforts have earned our gratitude and thanks.

All of us in the Buddhist Association have actively worked to spread the Buddha's teachings and have tried to put them into practice. Our efforts may not have achieved any great success. However, we wish to dedicate what merit has accrued from our conscientious efforts to His Majesty, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, our beloved and wise patron, on this

auspicious birthday anniversary of his. May His Majesty and the royal family have long lives, good complexions, happiness and strength—physical as well as spiritual. May His Majesty's Government be righteous, working towards peace and justice. May His Majesty's subjects live in harmony and may the prosperity of the nation and of the world be assured. May our foreign friends who read this book and hopefully benefit from it join us in celebrating the auspicious birthday of His Majesty the King.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Dharmasakti', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Sanya Dharmasakti
President of the Buddhist Association of Thailand
Under Royal Patronage

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We acknowledge our great debt to all the scholars whose translations have been used in this book. With a very few exceptions they have had their work published by the Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, Sri Lanka (Ceylon). The books from this Society which have been used are as follows :

The Life of the Buddha, according to the Pāli Com.	}	by Ven. Nyāṇamoli Thera
Three Cardinal Discourses of the Buddha		
Raṭṭhapāla Sutta		
The Practice of Loving-kindness		

Anguttara Nikāya, an Anthology, Part 1.	}	by Ven. Nyāṇaponika Mahāthera
The Way of Wisdom		
Buddhism and the God-idea		
The Simile of the Cloth & The Discourses on Effacement		
The Four Nutriments of Life		

Samyutta Nikāya, an Anthology, Part 1. by J.D. Ireland

Samyutta Nikāya, an Anthology, Part 2.	}	by Ven. Nyāṇānanda Bhikkhu
Ideal Solitude		

I andaraka and Potaliya Suttas	}	by Ven. Nārada Thera and Ven. Mahinda Thera.
Apaṇṇaka, Cula Mālunkya,		
Upāli Suttas		

The Removal of Distracting Thought	}	by Ven. Soma Thera.
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The Three Signata,

**by Prof. Dr. O.H. de A.
Wijesekera.**

Everyman's Ethics,

by Ven. Nārada Mahāthera

Apart from the WHEEL booklets, the translation of the Kālāma Sutta by Ven. Khantipālo Bhikkhu, published under the title "A Criterion of True Religion" by Mahā-makuta-rāja vidyālaya, has also been used.

We thank all the translators for their works and the Buddhist Publication Society and Mahāmakut for permission to reproduce their books.

INTRODUCTION

THE HEART OF BUDDHISM

There are few people who go through life without some troubles, of mind or of body. Everyone feels the touch of pain some time in their lives; either they are sick, or old age is painful, or they fear the pain of dying, death and what follows.

But many people do not know that if only they took some interest in the state of their minds, much pain and suffering, especially mental troubles, would be cleared away. We hurry to a doctor when the body is sick but when the mind is sick with greed and desire, anger and aversion, or with dull delusion, we do little or nothing. Perhaps we think that this state of the mind is natural and nothing can be done about it. If so, we must go on suffering.

But it is difficult to train one's mind for the mind is swiftly changing. We need to start our training by taking in hand our actions of body and speech. When we train body and speech with the moral precepts which one may undertake, then one can train the mind well in meditation.

This training of mind, speech and body is the teaching of the Buddha, the Awakened One, he who awoke from the sleep of the defilements of the mind, greed, aversion, and delusion, to become the Buddha, in India over 2500 years ago. He was born in a royal family as the heir to the throne but he saw that luxury and the pleasures of this world merely cover up the troubles of people; they do not cure them. So he gave up his palace, luxury and family and wandered in the forest to look for the way to cure his own mind and to know with

waters of this life, a state beyond words to describe. They have seen Dhamma, known Dhamma for and in themselves and are the greatest teachers. They constitute the third of the Three Treasures the Sangha, for the guidance of a Buddhist.

The Heart of Buddhism is shown in this verse spoken by the Buddha:

Every evil never doing
And in wholeness increasing,
And one's heart well-purifying:
This is the Buddhas' Sāsana.

The Sāsana or Instruction of the Buddhas — all those who have Awakened through the three parts of the Dhamma, is summed up here. In the first line moral conduct is indicated, in the second the practice of meditation as the most wholesome of actions, while in the third wisdom for purifying the heart is taught.

May all beings be happy.

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S = Saṃyutta Nikāya
A = Aṅguttara Nikāya
M = Majjhima Nikāya
Sn = Suttanipāta
Vin = Vinaya Pitaka
D = Dīgha Nikāya

1

**THE BUDDHA
AND HIS
TEACHING**

cessation of suffering, an effort must be made.... To realize, 'This is the way leading to cessation of suffering,' an effort must be made.

(S. LVI, 38)

Threefold Pride

I was delicately¹ brought up, O monks; highly delicate, exceedingly delicate was my upbringing. At my father's house, lotus ponds were made: in one of them, blue lotuses, bloomed, in another white lotuses and in a third red lotuses, just for my enjoyment. Only sandal unguent from Benares did I use, and of Benares cloth were my head dress, my jacket, my undergarment and my tunic. By day and by night, a white canopy was held over me, lest cold and heat, dust, chaff or dew should trouble me. Three palaces I had: one for the summer, one for the winter and one for the rainy season. In the palace for the rainy season, during the four months of the rains, I was waited upon by female musicians only,² and I did not come down from the palace (during these months). While in other people's homes, servants and slaves receive a meal of broken rice together with sour gruel, in my father's house they were given choice rice and meat.

Amidst such splendour and an entirely carefree life,³ O monks, this thought came to me:

'An ignorant, ordinary person, though sure to become old himself and unable to escape ageing, feels depressed, vexed or repelled when seeing an old and decrepit man, being forgetful of his own situation. Now, I too am sure to become old and cannot escape ageing. If, when seeing an old and decrepit man, I were to feel depressed, vexed or repelled, that

¹*sukhumāla*; Comy. explains by *nidukkha* without afflictions, untroubled, carefree.

²*Comy.*: Also all other attendants, including the door keepers, were women.

³*aecanta-sukhumālena*

would not be proper for one like myself.' When I thus reflected, O monks, all pride in youthfulness vanished.⁴

'An ignorant, ordinary person, though sure to become ill himself and unable to escape illness, feels depressed, vexed or repelled when seeing a sick man, being forgetful of his own situation. Now, I too am sure to become sick and cannot escape sickness. If, when seeing a sick person, I were to feel depressed, vexed or repelled, that would not be proper for one like myself.' When I thus reflected, O monks, all pride in my health vanished.

'An ignorant, ordinary person, is sure to die himself and cannot escape death; yet when seeing a dead person, he feels depressed, vexed or repelled, being forgetful of his own situation. Now, I too am sure to die and cannot escape death. If when seeing a dead person I should feel depressed, vexed or repelled, that would not be proper for one like myself.' When I thus reflected, O monks, all pride in life vanished.⁵

(A. III, 38)

⁴ *Comy.*: From this statement it may appear as if pride had been abandoned by the Path (of Sainthood, by which alone the Fetter of Conceit, *māna-saṃyojana*, is entirely eliminated). This, however, is here not the case (as, at that time, Sainthood had not yet been reached by Prince Siddhattha). One has to understand the passage in the sense that pride was discarded by reflective thought. The deities, namely, had shown to the Bodhisatta (at the first of his four encounters) an old man. From then until he reached Sainthood (*ārahatta*), no pride in youthfulness arose in that Great Being.— In the other two sections that follow, the meaning should be understood accordingly."

⁵ This type of pride (Pāli *mada*, lit.: intoxication) is, according to the present text, threefold. 1. pride in one's youthfulness (*yobbana-mada*) 2. in one's health (*ārogya-mada*), 3. in one's life (or: in being alive; *jīvita-mada*). Other types of pride appear in the Buddhist texts under the name of 'conceit' (*māna*).

Good Sleep

Thus have I heard. Once when the Blessed One stayed in the Ālavi country, (he rested) on a heap of leaves spread on a cattle track in a Simsapa forest.⁶

At that time, Hatthaka of Ālavi⁷ passed that place on a walk and there he saw the Blessed One as he was seated in the Simsapa forest on a heap of leaves spread on a cattle track. Having approached the Blessed One and saluted him, Hatthaka sat down at one side. So seated, he spoke to the Blessed One thus :

“Pray, venerable sir, has the Blessed One slept well ?”—

“Yes, prince, I slept well. Among those in the world who sleep well, I am one.”—

“But, venerable sir, the winter nights are cold and this is a week when there is frost. Hard is the ground trampled by the hoofs of cattle, thin is the spread of leaves, sparse are the leaves on the trees, cold are the tawny robes and cold blows the Verambha wind. Yet the Blessed One says that he has slept well and that he is one of those in the world who (always) sleep well.”—

“Now, prince, I shall put a question to you about this and you may reply as you think fit. What do you think of this, prince? There is a householder or a householder’s son, living in a house with gabled roof, which is plastered inside and out, protected against wind, with fastened door bolts and windows closed. And there is a couch in the house, spread

⁶*Comy.*: Where cattle used to go, there was in that forest a broad, level track. To that the Buddha had carried leaves that had dropped by themselves, and having spread his robe over them, he sat down cross-legged.

⁷Hatthaka was a son of the King of Ālavi and became a Non-returner (*anāgāmi*). He was praised by the Buddha as a model for lay followers (II, Ch. xii, 3) and declared as the foremost among those who win a following through the four Bases of Popularity (*sangaha-vatthu*).

with a long-fleeced, black-woollen rug with a bedspread of white wool, a coverlet decorated with flowers, spread with an exquisite antelope skin, having a canopy overhead and scarlet cushions at each end. Also a lamp is burning there and his four wives attend on him pleasantly. What do you think, prince: would that person sleep well or not or what is your opinion about it?"—

"He will surely sleep well, venerable sir. He will be one of those in the world who sleep well."—

"What do you think, prince? Might there not arise in that householder or householder's son vexations of body or mind, caused by lust, so that, tormented by them, he would sleep badly?"—

"That may well be so, venerable sir."—

"Now, prince, the lust by which that householder is tormented and which causes him to sleep badly, that lust, O prince, has been abandoned by the Tathāgata, cut off at the root, made like a palm-tree stump, unable to grow again and not liable to arise in future. Therefore, prince, have I slept well.

"What do you think, prince? Might there not arise in that householder or householder's son vexations of body or mind, caused by hatred ^{and} caused by delusion, so that, tormented by them, he would sleep badly?"—

"That may well be so, venerable sir."—

"Now, prince, the hatred and the delusion by which that householder is tormented and which cause him to sleep badly, that hatred and that delusion have been abandoned by the Tathāgata, cut off at the root, made like a palm-tree stump, unable to grow again and not liable to arise in future. Therefore, prince, have I slept well.

He who is utterly set free,
The Holy One sleeps always well.
By lust's desires untainted he,

Serene and from attachment free,
Who, cutting through all bonds,
Removed all smarting pains of heart."

(A. III, 34)

An Ancient Path

Bhikkhus, it is just as if a person wandering through the jungle, the great forest, should see an ancient path, an ancient road, travelled along by men of former times. And as if he should go along it and going along it should see an ancient town, an ancient royal city, inhabited by men of former times, having parks, groves, ponds and walls,—a delightful place. And then that person should inform the King or the King's chief minister, saying, 'My lord, you should know that when wandering through the jungle, the great forest, I saw an ancient path, an ancient road, travelled along by men of former times. I went along it and saw an ancient town, an ancient royal city inhabited by men of former times, having parks, groves, ponds and walls,—a delightful place. Sire, rebuild that city.' And then the king or the king's chief minister were to rebuild that city, so that in time it became rich, prosperous and well populated, expanded and developed.

So also, bhikkhus, have I seen an ancient path, an ancient road, travelled along by fully Enlightened Ones of former times. And what, bhikkhus, is that ancient path, that ancient road, travelled along by fully Enlightened Ones of former times? It is just this Noble Eightfold Path, that is to say, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

This is that ancient path, that ancient road, travelled along by fully Enlightened Ones of former times, and going along it I came to know ageing-and-death, I came to know the origin

Now I will tell the Going Forth
How he, the mighty Seer, went forth
How he was questioned and described
The reason for his going forth.
The crowded life lived in a house
Exhales an atmosphere of dust;
But life gone forth is open wide:
He saw this, and he chose the Going Forth.

By his so doing he refused
All evil action of the body,
Rejected all wrong kinds of speech
And rectified his livelihood besides.

He went to Rājagaha town,
The castle of the Magadhans;
There he—the Buddha—went for alms;
With many a mark of excellence.
King Bimbisāra from within
His palace saw him passing by,
And when he saw the excellence
Of all the marks, 'Look, sirs', he said;
'How handsome is that man, how stately,
How pure and perfect is his conduct;
With downcast eyes and mindful, looking
Only a plough-yoke's length before him;
His is no lowly lineage.
Send the royal messengers at once
To follow up the path the bhikkhu takes.'

The messengers were sent at once
And followed closely in his wake:
'Now which way will the bhikkhu go?
Where has he chosen his abode?
He wanders on from house to house,
Guarding sense doors with real restraint
Fully aware and mindfully.
He soon has filled his begging bowl;
His alms round is now done. The Sage
Is setting out and leaves the town,
Taking the road to Paṇḍava
He must live on the Hill of Paṇḍava.'

Now when he came to his abode,
The messengers went up to him ;
Though one of them turned back again
To give the king the answer to his question :
'The bhikkhu, sire, like a tiger,
Or like a bull, or like a lion,
Is seated in a mountain cave
Upon the eastern slope of Paṇḍava.'

The warrior heard the runner's tale.
Then summoning a coach of state,
He drove in haste out of the town,
Out to the hill of Paṇḍava.
He drove as far as he could go,
And then descended from the coach ;
The little distance that remained
He went on foot, till he drew near the Sage.

The king sat down, and he exchanged
Greetings, and asked about his health.
When this exchange of courtesy
Was done, the king then spoke to him
These words : 'You are quite young, a youth,
A boy in the first phase of life.
You have the good looks of a man
Of high-born warrior-noble stock,
One fit to grace a first-rate army,
To lead the troops of elephants.
I offer you a fortune : take it.
Your birth I ask you also : Tell it.'

'There is a prosperous country, sire,
And vigorous, right up against
The foothills of Himālaya.
Inhabited by Kosalans
Whose race is named after the Sun,
Whose lineage is Sakyan.
But I have not gone forth to seek sense pleasures.
I have gone out to strive, seeing danger in them,
And seeing safe refuge from them in renouncing.
That is my heart's desire.'

There is this wind that blows can dry
Even the rivers' running streams ;
So while I thus subdue myself
Why should it not dry up my blood ?
And as the blood dries up, then bile
And phlegm run dry, the wasting flesh
Becalms the mind : I shall have more
Of mindfulness, of understanding,
I shall have greater concentration.
For living thus I come to know
The limits to which feeling goes.
My mind looks not to sense desires :
You see a being's purity.
Your first squadron is Sense-Desires,
Your second is called Boredom, then
Hunger and Thirst compose the third,
And Craving is the fourth in rank,
The fifth is Sloth and Accidie,
While Cowardice lines up as sixth,
Uncertainty is seventh, the eighth
Is Malice paired with Obstinacy ;
Gain, Honour and Renown, besides,
And ill-won Notoriety,
Self-praise and Denigrating Others—
These are your squadrons, Namuci ;
These are the Black One's fighting squadrons ;
None but the brave will conquer them
To gain bliss by the victory.
I fly the ribbon that denies
Retreat. Shame on life here, I say.
Better I die in battle now
Than choose to live on in defeat.
There are ascetics and divines
That have surrendered here, and they
Are seen no more: they do not know
The paths the pilgrim travels by.
So, seeing Māra's squadrons now
Arrayed all round, with elephants,
I sally forth to fight, that I
May not be driven from my post.

establishes and reveals, expounds, explains and clarifies (that) : *All conditioned phenomena are dukkha.*

O monks, whether there is the appearance of Perfect Ones or there is not the appearance of Perfect Ones, there is this established condition of Dhamma, this fixed law of Dhamma: *All dhammas are not self.* That, a Perfect One has fully awakened to, He fully understands. So awakening and understanding, he announces it, points it out, declares, establishes and reveals, expounds, explains and clarifies (that) : *All dhammas are not self.*

(A. III, 134)

2

**THE ROUND
OF BIRTH
AND DEATH**

Inconceivable is the beginning of this wandering on in birth and death ; not to be discovered is a first beginning of beings who, obstructed by ignorance and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths.

Which do you think, O monks, is more : the flood of tears which, weeping and wailing, you have shed upon this long, way—hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths united with the undesired, separated from the desired—this or the waters of the four great oceans ?

Long have you suffered the death of father and mother, of sons, daughters, brothers and sisters. And whilst you were thus suffering you have, indeed, shed more tears upon this long way than there is water in the four great oceans.

And thus, O monks, have you long undergone torment, undergone misfortune, filled the graveyards full ; verily, long enough to be dissatisfied with all forms of existence, long enough to turn away and free yourselves from them all.

(S. XV, 3)

Just as a stick thrown up into the air sometimes falls on its butt, sometimes on its side and sometimes on its tip, similarly, bhikkhus, do beings obstructed by ignorance and fettered by

