

# **DHAMMA DISCOURSES ON VIPASSANĀ MEDITATION**

**Venerable U Kuṇḍalābhivamsa**

**Translated by Daw Than Than Yi**

**Saddhammaramasi Meditation Centre  
Yangon      2001      Myanmar**

# **Dhamma Discourses**

**on**

## **Vipassanā Meditation**

**Venerable U Kuṇḍalābhivamsa**

**Mahāsi Nāyaka,**

**Agga Mahā Kammatṭhānācariya**

**Saddhammaramsi Sayadaw**

**Translated by Daw Than Than Yi**

**Edited by the Editorial Board  
Saddhammaramsi Meditation Centre**

*Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti.*  
**The Gift of Truth surpasses all gifts.**

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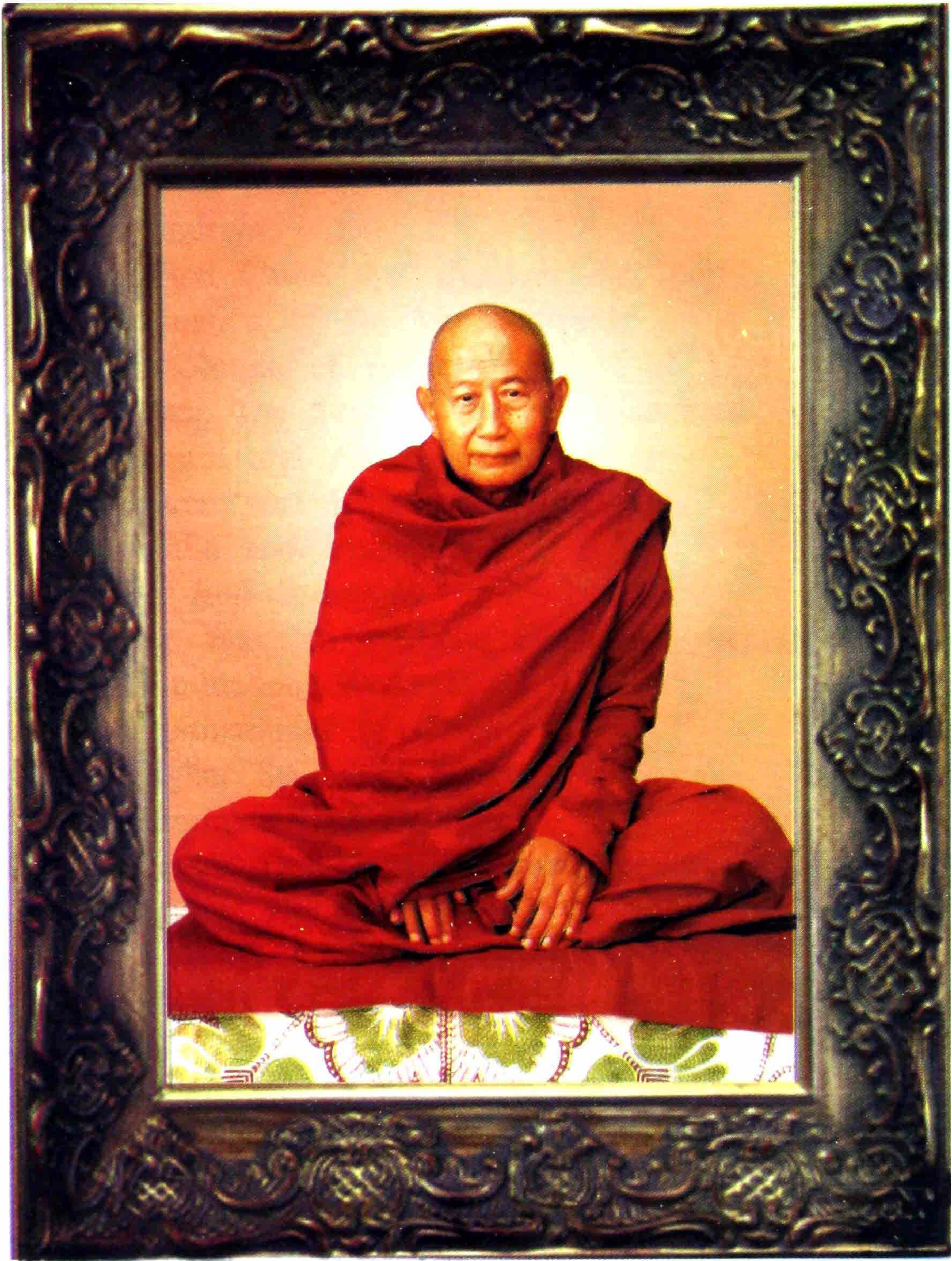
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## **PREFACE**

It is owing to past meritorious deeds that all good Buddhists are experiencing, from among the five extremely hard to attain conditions (*Dullaba*), the condition of finding the teaching of the *Buddha* which is called *Buddhuppāda*. They have also obtained a human existence which is called *Manussatta bhava*. They are hearing the sublime dhamma which is called *Saddhammasāvana* and according to circumstances, they are endowed with faith which is called *Saddhamma Sampatti*.

While experiencing these hard to attain conditions good Buddhists, in order to be liberated from the dangers and sufferings of their existence such as old age, sickness and death and with the aim and desire to attain *nibbāna*, go to quiet forest monasteries, to monasteries in the mountains and to various meditation centres to practise *vipassanā* meditation according to the methods of the teachers concerned. It is the best kind of work for them.

Among those virtuous yogis who thus practise *vipassanā* meditation, there are some who comprehend the nature of *dhamma* within a few days or a few months. There are some who do not comprehend the nature of *dhamma* distinctly in spite of practising for many days and many months and who may therefore become disheartened, give up and retreat.

In order that yogis may be able to comprehend the nature of *dhamma* by practising for a short while only, the



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five controlling faculties within the continuum of their consciousness must be balanced and sharpened. This will be possible only if yogis practise according to the nine causes which sharpen the controlling faculties such as noting respectfully and intently to know the passing away of matter and mind.

The five controlling faculties will become balanced and sharpened in persons who practise *vipassanā* meditation according to the nine causes which sharpen them. When the controlling faculties become balanced and sharpened, concentration will become strong and therefore, the nature of *dhamma* will be comprehended quickly.

By studying and considering the experiences of yogis from the reports made to him, our benefactor the Venerable Saddhammaramasi Sayadaw found, in a practical way, that the nature of *dhamma* could be comprehended quickly by persons who came to practise *vipassanā* meditation, only if the five controlling faculties were balanced and sharpened. Therefore, based on loving-kindness and kind intentions with the wish to help all disciples, both monks and laity, to comprehend the nature of *dhamma* quickly, he has, without thought to fatigue, untiringly, given daily discourses, explaining in detail the ways by which the controlling faculties may be sharpened.

These discourses and instructions given by our benefactor, the Venerable Sayadaw, were greatly appreciated by the disciples and yogis who heard them. They found that when put into practice in meditation, concentration developed exceptionally well. This made them specially interested in practising fully the nine causes which sharpen the controlling faculties.

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Some yogis who were able to comprehend the nature of *dhamma* exceptionally by practising according to the nine causes which sharpen the controlling faculties, regretted having heard the discourses so late and the time that had been spent in practising meditation before having heard them.

Some yogis took notes as they wished to read the discourses over and over again. Some who wished others who had not heard the discourses to hear them as well, recorded the discourses with cassette recorders.

Some yogis also submitted their requests to the Venerable Saddhammaramāsi Sayadaw for the discourses to be published in book form. They believed that by distributing the books as *dhamma dāna* for yogis at other meditation centres to read, those yogis would also be able to comprehend the nature of *dhamma* quickly by practising accordingly and thereby benefit greatly.

It is because of the requests submitted to him that the Venerable Saddhammaramāsi Sayadaw, although pressed for time in making the newly established Saddhammaramāsi Meditation Centre complete in all respects, in delivering discourses and in giving instruction in meditation, has unstintingly written this book guided by loving-kindness (*Mettā*) and bestowed it upon us.

**U Ukkaṇṣa (Dhammacariya)**

Ghandārāma Monastery, Kyaikwaing

Yangon.



## **TRANSLATOR'S NOTE**

The Saddhammaramāsi Sayadaw U Kuṇḍalābhivamsa is well known for his wise and patient guidance of yogis in the practice of *Vipassanā* Meditation. His *metta* (loving-kindness) and *karuṇā* (compassion), which are reflected in his gentle manner, give encouragement and inspiration to yogis to try harder in their meditation.

Sayadaw felt the need for an English translation of the *dharmā* talks given during the ten-day retreats because of the increasing number of foreign yogis. The work of translation was assigned to me.

I have tried my best to render faithfully his clear and simple manner of expression.

Many people have helped in making the publication of this book possible. I am most grateful to all of them.

This book will undoubtedly be of great benefit to all practising yogis.

**Than Than Yi**

# Chapter One

## The First Dhamma Discourse

### Benefits of *Vipassanā*

IN THE EARLY STAGE of meditating, the benefits of *vipassanā* will not be very evident; but in the middle and later stages the benefits of *vipassanā* meditation (insight meditation) will manifest themselves. As concentration develops to a moderate extent, the benefits of a clear and calm mind, of a strong and determined mind, of freedom from illness and pain can be attained. The benefit of sharpened wisdom can also be acquired. From the stage where one is freed from the rounds of rebirth in the *apāya* (the four woeful states of existence) — the stage which one should want and wish for, insight into the noble laws of *dhamma* will be achieved.

The Exalted One, Lord *Buddha* preached that in the *satipaṭṭhāna vipassanā* meditation there are seven fundamental benefits to be gained without doubt.

#### The Seven Fundamental Benefits

1. Purification of mind
2. Overcoming sorrow
3. Over coming lamentation
4. Cessation of physical suffering



5. Cessation of mental suffering
6. Attainment of *ariya magga*
7. Realization of *nibbāna*, cessation of all sufferings

When stating that *vipassanā* meditation makes the mind clear and calm, we should find out why the mind is not clear and calm. Greed, hatred, ignorance are the causes which defile the mind; but when *vipassanā* meditation is practised, there will be freedom from greed, anger and delusion in every instance of contemplating and noting.

As it is not possible to desire anything while contemplating and noting there will be freedom from greed; there will also be freedom from anger for it is inconceivable that anger could arise while practising *vipassanā* meditation. There will be freedom from delusion, for it is inconceivable that you should be distracted and confused while practising *vipassanā* meditation. Thus, the mind will be clear and calm because it is free from greed, anger and delusion. If peace of mind is what you wish to acquire, you must practise meditation; it will not be very evident in the beginning, but later, a clear and calm state of mind will become noticeably perceptible.

When stating that the mind becomes strong and firm, we should find out why the mind is weak; greed is the cause. When persons with an avaricious nature find a sense object of desire, their craving is so great that their minds waver; they lose control of themselves. When persons with strong feelings of anger find a sense object of anger, they become angry and lose control of themselves; they waver. We may say that their minds are weak.

To strengthen such weak minds *vipassanā* meditation should be practised. While meditating, with every observation

and noting, greed and anger which cause the mind to waver, will disappear. Even when they find sense objects of desire, their minds will no longer be perturbed and agitated, or waver, because of these sense objects; they will no longer crave for them. When they find sense objects of anger, their anger will no longer be so aroused; their minds will be stronger and firmer.

It is *vipassanā* meditation that strengthens the mind. Is it good to have a weak mind? No, it is not. It is only a weak mind that is aroused by a sense object, causing extreme greed and anger. If you wish for a firm and strong mind, you must practise *vipassanā* meditation.

It is possible to become free from illness and pain by meditating. When you reach the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into arising and passing away of all phenomena) you will clearly perceive that common illness and pains disappear. The present *dhamma* audience may already know this. Yogis who observe well and note properly during meditation find that they do not wish to take medicines when common ailments and pains occur. They find that the curative effects of medicines are slow. Yogis have often reported that by observing and noting, common ailments such as neck pains, headaches and constricting pains are quickly cured.

Yogis whose observations and notings have gained intensity and consequently have attained the *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* find that without taking medication, their illnesses are cured by just observing and noting. Usually, common ailments such as headaches or muscle cramps which yogis initially had, would often be cured when they reached the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*.



Persons with serious and chronic illnesses which could not be cured by physicians nor by the best medicines have been cured by striving in their meditation and attaining *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* (insight arising from equanimity).

It is very evident that diseases which are at an early stage are cured when yogis persevere in meditation and attain *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa*. Yogis who have been cured of diseases which physicians and the most effective medicines could not cure, develop complete faith in the *dhamma*. Their unshakable-faith and belief are of great advantage to the *sāsanā* (teachings of the *Buddha*). Thus it is clear that the benefit of illnesses being cured can be attained.

However, meditating without special effort will not bring about a cure. Persons suffering from serious illnesses must meditate with great perseverance until *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* is attained. If they do so, the illnesses are invariably cured.

Wisdom becomes sharp. This is very evident in persons who have advanced moderately through the stages of knowledge or insight. Yogis who, before practising meditation, could not understand advanced Buddhist literature when reading them, have discovered that after they attain *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* and leave the meditation centre, they can read, understand and appreciate advanced Buddhist literature and read them to completion. Thus the benefit of sharpened wisdom is evident.

Students who practise *vipassanā* meditation and reach the advanced stages of knowledge or insight, also find that when being taught their lessons in class, they learn exceptionally well and often pass their examinations with distinctions. That is why nowadays, some students practise *vipassanā*

meditation when they can find time. The benefits are great indeed; with whatever objectives meditation is practised, practising it will be very beneficial. Thus, the benefits of sharpened wisdom for students are quite evident. But these are ordinary benefits.

The real, fundamental benefit of practising *vipassanā* meditation will be clearly realized after progressing through the stages of knowledge and attaining *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa* (knowledge of entering the stream of the Path). All old evil deeds committed by yogis because of their wickedness in countless and numberless existences, which could send them to woeful states of existences, will be annihilated when they attain *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa*. *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa* will annihilate them.

If there are any old evil deeds committed by yogis because of ignorance and foolishness when they were young, in this existence, which could send them to woeful states of existences, all will be annihilated. *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa* will annihilate them. They will never have a chance to cause rebirth in the lower existences of *samsarā* (rounds of rebirth). *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa* annihilates them forever. These yogis need no longer fear the rounds of rebirth for they have gained *vipassanā ñāṇa*, the ability of attaining insight, having attained *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa*. When they die, they will have no doubts as to whether they might go to hell or be reborn as animals. They will be assured of never falling into those existences.

When they die, they will no longer have doubts as to whether they might be reborn in the existence of *peta* (hungry ghost) — they will not get to that existence. When they die, they will have no doubts as to whether they might



get to the extremely ugly and dreadful existence of *asurā* (demons). They will know that they will no longer get into such existences and they will be able to face the rounds of rebirth without fear. *Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa* also annihilates coarse greed, anger and delusion. Therefore, the *pañca sīla* (five precepts) are fully observed and well kept; consequently, the yogis cannot get to the woeful states of the lower existences.

The present *dhamma* audience who are not noble beings, i.e. *puthujjana* (ordinary worldlings) also have to observe the *pañca sīla* (five precepts) so that they may be well kept. But this observance is different from that of *sotāpanna* (stream--winners). Persons who are not noble beings i.e. ordinary worldings, must take special care to safeguard the observance of the five precepts.

When persons who are not noble beings have an opportunity to kill another, they must reflect as follows: "It is not right for a person such as I, who is mature, to kill another; it is not right for a person such as I, who is of noble lineage to kill another; it is not right for a person such as I, who has behaved with pure morality ever since I was young, to kill another, etc." and thereby develop *hiri ottappa* (moral shame and moral fear) to safeguard their *sīla* (morality).

Also when they have an opportunity to steal another persons's property, they must reflect in a similar manner, i.e. "It is not right for a person such as I, who is mature, to steal another person's property; it is not right for a person such as I, who is of noble lineage, to steal another person's property; it is not right for a person such as I, who has behaved with pure morality ever since I was young, to steal

another person's property etc.," and thereby develop *hiri ottappa*. Only by doing so is *sīla* safeguarded.

Also, when they have an opportunity to harm the children and wives of others, they must reflect in a similar manner, i.e. "It is not right for a person such as I, who is mature, to harm the children and wives of others; it is not right for a person such as I, who is of noble lineage, to harm the children and wives of others; it is not right for a person, such as I, who has behaved with pure morality ever since I was young, to harm the children and wives of others etc.," and thereby develop *hiri ottappa*. Only by doing so is *sīla* safeguarded.

They must also reflect in this manner when they have an opportunity to lie or to take intoxicants. Only by doing so is *sīla* protected. Persons who are not noble beings need much reflection to safeguard their *sīla*. Only by reflecting is *sīla* safeguarded.

Persons who have become *sotāpanna*, do not need to reflect specially in order to safeguard the five precepts; they will be automatically observed and safeguarded. Thoughts of wanting to kill another, to steal another's property, to harm the children and wives of others, to lie and to take intoxicants can no longer occur. They will automatically abstain from evil thoughts and deeds; therefore it will not be difficult for them to safeguard the five precepts.

Consequently, they will never fall into the lower existences. In the rounds of rebirth, persons who become *sotāpanna* will always be reborn in more exalted existences than in this life. They will always attain existences where they will have nobler minds, greater wealth and riches, a

more exalted lineage, more beautiful and comely appearances than in this life.

Persons who are common worldlings also are trying to make their lives better. Everyone is trying to improve their status in life. Some even risk their lives in striving for more wealth.

However, persons who have become *sotāpanna* by practising insight meditation need no longer strive like common worldlings for a better life because *dhamma* uplifts their lives automatically. They will always reach existences which will be better and nobler than in this life, where they will have nobler minds and natures, where they will be of nobler and better lineage, where they will have more wealth and riches and where they will be more beautiful and comely.

Noble beings such as *sotāpanna* will never be reborn in existences which are lower than in this life. They will always attain existences which are better. This is the benefit of practising *vipassanā* meditation. Should they forget to practise *vipassanā* in the rounds of rebirth, they will forget for only seven existences after which they will be specially remorseful of their forgetfulness and by practising *vipassanā* meditation again will become arahant — persons who have attained the last and highest stage of the Path. Impurities and defilements will no longer exist and they will attain *nibbāna* — the best and noblest benefit of practising insight meditation.

When we say that persons who are *sotāpanna* (stream-winners) take delight in the pleasant existences, nevertheless, they will very rarely derive happiness from the sensual pleasures of the world. Very rarely will they derive pleasure



from pleasing sights, pleasant sounds, pleasant smells, pleasant tastes and touch; from nice houses and cars; from a happy family life — all worldly pleasures based on the five sense impressions.

Rather, they will derive their happiness from *dāna* (charity) doing acts of giving, finding the wherewithal to do the giving. They will derive their happiness from *sīla* (morality). They will be happy from observing the *aṭṭhaṅga sīla* (eight precepts). They will derive their happiness from *samatha* (tranquility) meditation. If it is a time when the practice of *samatha* is prevalent, they will practise *samatha* meditation and be happy, absorbed in *samatha jhānas* — wilful concentration on an object.

They will be happy with *veyyavacca* — attending to the needs of ceremonies and activities concerning the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* and to the needs of elders. They will be happy attending to the needs at meditation centres, monasteries and pagodas and may thus forget to practise *vipassanā* meditation. But for how many existences can they forget? For seven existences only. In their seventh existence they will be especially remorseful and by practising meditation will become *arahant*, free from impurities and defilements and attain *nibbāna*.

Being happy only with their *dāna* (charity), *sīla* (morality) and *samādhi* (concentration), can they fall into *apāya* (the woeful states of existence)? No, they cannot. This deliverance from falling into the woeful states of existence is the benefit of practising *vipassanā* meditation.

## Difficulty of getting an Opportunity to practise *Vipassana* Meditation

I shall continue my discourse by talking about the difficulty of getting an opportunity to practise *vipassanā* meditation. It is only in our existence as human beings that *vipassanā* meditation can be practised. We shall never get an opportunity to do so in *apāya* (the four woeful states) i.e. hell, animals, *peta* (those absolutely devoid of happiness) and *asurā* (another class of unhappy beings similar to the *peta*). The strength to practise *vipassanā* meditation will be lacking; the desire to practise it will also be lacking. The very fact that these existences are the lower states of existence, overwhelmed by troubles and loathsome sights, sounds and sensations, makes it impossible to practise *vipassanā* meditation. The strength to practise it will not exist.

When we get to the realm of the *deva* (celestial beings) we shall not get an opportunity to practise *vipassanā* meditation because we shall be overwhelmed by pleasant and delightful sights, sounds and sensations and by happiness and joy. As you, the *dhamma* audience have already heard, it does not take a troublesome period of nine to ten months in a mother's womb to be reborn as a *deva* in the heavenly realms. Like an object falling suddenly from the sky, arrival in the respective abodes will be spontaneous because it is an apparitional existence, *upapatti bhāva*.

A male *deva* will appear spontaneously as a 20 year old in full regalia. a female *deva* appear spontaneously as a 16 year old in full regalia. They will have comfortable existences. Also, during the period of their existence, they will not have to undergo the trouble-some extremes of a very hot or a very cold climate as in the realm of human beings:

the climate will always be equable. Food and clothing will be obtained automatically just by inclining their minds towards those objects.

Should they wish to go to some other place, they will be able to do so easily just by inclining their minds towards those places. Should they wish to hear sounds and to see sights many miles away, they will be able to do so with the ears and eyes of *deva* just by inclining their minds towards those sounds and sights. Their lives will be very complete.

They will not see anything loathsome, unpleasant or distressing; they will see no one who is old, sick or dead. There will be no *deva* who, because of old age, have to get about with the help of a staff. There will be no one with a bent back, no one who is hard of hearing or white-haired.

There will be no *deva* who have to be hospitalised because of sickness; no corpses to be buried because of death. When they die, just as the sparks from a fire are extinguished, they will disappear. Therefore, the loathsomeness of death will not be seen.

In such a happy existence, they will be overwhelmed with desirable objects and sensations; they will not see undesirable things like old age, sickness and death and consequently will not know regret or remorse. Their time will be spent in pleasurable activities. Therefore, it will not be possible to practise meditation during their existence in the realm of the *deva*. It is only during existence in this, our present human abode that *vipassanā* meditation can be practised. But if we were to ask whether it would be possible



to practise *vipassanā* meditation during every existence in the human abode, the answer is — "No." We shall find that in most existences it is not possible to practise *vipassanā* meditation.

It is possible for the *dhamma* audience to practise *vipassanā* meditation because you are in the human existence and human beings; because you are now alive and well; because it is the time when *sīla* (morality), *satipaṭṭhāna* (mindfulness) and *vipassanā* meditation is flourishing and the teachings of the *Buddha* are to be found. Is it easy to get the opportunity to practise *vipassanā* meditation? No, it is not; it is extremely difficult.

During an existence in the four woeful states, it will not be possible to practise *vipassanā* meditation. Nor will it be possible to practise it in the realm of the *deva*. It is only during life in the human existence that *vipassanā* meditation can be practised. But it will not be possible in every human existence; in most existences it will not be possible.

At the present time, the *dhamma* audience have the opportunity to practise meditation because the *pārāmī* (special moral virtues or perfections) acquired in past existences have had a chance to benefit you in this existence.

You are able to practise meditation because right now, you are human beings; because you are alive; because you are living at a time when you can listen to the sublime *dhamma* which is flourishing because it is a time when you can find the teachings of the *Buddha*. Is it not difficult to get an opportunity to practise meditation? It is, indeed, extremely difficult.

Should we not be glad to have the opportunity to practise meditation; an opportunity which is so hard to get? Yes, we should, because we do it gladly. While we have the opportunity and the time, we should practise meditation to the full extent of our physical and mental strength as instructed by the Lord *Buddha*.

The *dhamma* audience practise *vipassanā* meditation because of the wish to attain *nibbāna* which is free from all suffering. But meditation is not to be practised lightly. The resultant benefit of practising meditation is deliverance from all suffering deliverance not only for a while, but forever, which is *nibbāna*. That is why you cannot meditate lightly; you must do so respectfully.

Since you practise meditation because you wish to attain the noble state of *nibbāna* and deliverance from all suffering you cannot attain your wish by practising meditation lightly or by practising with just a little of your ability; you must do so to the utmost of your physical and mental strength.

There are some worldly matters which can be accomplished without using your physical and mental strength to the full extent; with no special effort. Is it so in practising meditation? It cannot be so. The Lord *Buddha* said that persons who wish to attain *nibbāna* and deliverance from all suffering must practise meditation to the utmost limits of their physical and mental strength. Therefore, must we not try our utmost in practising meditation? We must.

The happiness that we want, the happiness of *nibbāna*, is no ordinary happiness. It is everlasting; happiness which will forever free us from all suffering. Therefore, the Lord *Buddha* said that persons who want such happiness will not

get it if they do not practise meditation to the utmost limits of their physical and mental strength. That is why we must practise meditation without thought for our bodies and our lives.

*Motto: Consider not Body and Life;  
to them you must be unkind.*

I have given a reasonably complete discourse about the benefits of practising *vipassanā* meditation and about the difficulty of getting an opportunity to practise it. Now, I will continue by talking about the first cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties).

Persons who practise meditation can gain insight and can progress in their meditation only when their controlling faculties are sharpened. Therefore, the nine causes which sharpen the *indriya* must be followed and practised; it is because of these nine causes that the *indriya* are sharpened. Commentators state that persons who wish to progress in their meditation by sharpening their *indriya* must follow the nine causes. In order that *dhamma* audience and future generations may know about it easily, our benefactor the most Venerable Mahāśī Sayadaw has arranged a mnemonic verse which you are to repeat after me.

*Motto: To sharpen the Indriya five,  
There are causes nine.*

## **Five *Indriya***

There are five *indriya* (controlling faculties) and nine causes which sharpen them. While meditating, the *indriya* are



present in every noting, and when they become equally keen and well balanced persons who have not experienced *dhamma* will do so. Those who have already experienced will make further progress and those who are worthy of gaining noble *dhamma* will do so. Therefore, you must strive to sharpen the five *indriya* evenly.

The Five *indriya* (controlling faculties) are:-

1. *Saddhindriya* - Strong Confidence or Faith
2. *Viriya-indriya* - Strong Effort
3. *Satindriya* - Strong Mindfulness
4. *Samādhindriya* - Strong Concentration
5. *Paññindriya* - Strong Wisdom

which exist in that order. Confidence is the basis.

*Saddhā* has been translated into the Myanmar language by learned Sayadaws of Myanmar as belief which makes the mind bright and clear; i.e. belief in the *Buddha*, in the *dhamma* and in the *sangha*, in *kamma* and in its effects (the law of cause and effect). These five beliefs constitute *saddhā* (confidence).

What makes our minds bright and clear? Taking refuge in the *Buddha* — because of our belief in Him makes our minds bright and clear. The *Buddha* in whom we take refuge possesses *arahatta magga ñāṇa* — knowledge of the last and highest stage of the Path which annihilates all defilements such as *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (delusion).

Does the *dhamma* audience not believe that the *Buddha's* continuity of consciousness is free of greed, anger and

delusion? You do believe. That belief is called *saddhā*. The Lord *Buddha* also possesses omniscience, infinite knowledge, knowing all that is to be known. His knowledge of the world and of all phenomena was acquired by His own intuitive wisdom.

Does the *dhamma* audience believe in the Omniscience of the *Buddha*, in His absolute knowledge of the world and of the truth? You do. That belief is *saddhā*. Thus, your belief in the *Buddha*'s knowledge of the last and highest stage of the path, *arahatta magga ñāṇa* and in His Omniscience will amount to belief in all of His nine qualities as well.

Also, it will amount to belief in His immeasurable and infinite qualities. Because of your belief your minds will be bright and clear. Do your minds not become bright and clear when you offer flowers, water and light to the *Buddha* while taking refuge in Him? You do. Why? Because of your belief.

Because of your belief in the *dhamma* you take refuge in it and when reading Buddhist texts or reciting prayers or when meditating, your minds become bright and clear. Why is it so? Because you believe.

The clearness of your minds will be particularly evident when you meditate and attain the higher stages of knowledge or insight.

It will not be evident when you begin meditating nor when you attain *Nāmarūpa Pariccheda ñāṇa* (knowledge of the reality of mind and matter) when you can distinguish between mind and matter, for you will have to control your wandering mind; you will also have to control your body from swaying or moving, keeping it upright and erect. Thus, since you will have to control your mind and body, the clearness of your mind will not be evident yet.

At the stage of *Paccaya Pariggaha ñāṇa* (knowledge of causes and effects) the mind has to be controlled to prevent it from wandering; the body has to be controlled to prevent it from making any movement and to keep it erect. Therefore, the clearness of the mind will not be evident yet. At the third stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and nonself) not only will the mind be clouded but also there will be depression and unhappiness and it will become more evident that the mind is not clear yet.

Experienced *dhamma* audience and veteran yogis will have often heard that *Sammasana ñāṇa* is a distressful stage of insight. When you comprehend the Three Characteristics, you will have aches, pains, tingling sensations, dizziness, itching, nausea and swaying of the body and you will encounter suffering. Therefore, not only will your mind be unclear, but it will also be disturbed. You will be short-tempered and unhappy; you will become depressed and you will not want to practise meditation.

You may want to leave the meditation centre and go home. When this happens, the meditation teachers must give you words of encouragement by saying that these things happen at this stage, but that on attaining the higher stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and passing away of all phenomena), you will gain a special happiness commensurate with the wretchedness of this stage and so forth. It is to the yogi only that this stage is wretched. According to the stages of knowledge and of insight, it is considered to be good. When yogis tell me about their clouded minds, they usually say "Although Your Reverence says it is good, I, your humble disciple am almost dying," and so forth.



Later, by meditating reverently, earnestly and continuously *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* is attained. Then body and mind become light and subtle, body and mind become pliable, body and mind become proficient; it will seem as if the noting mind is noting the sense object automatically — the happiness and joy of *vipassanā* meditation will arise. Then the clearness of the mind will be very evident.

When the yogi who has attained *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* goes to a secluded monastery and meditates on the nature of body and mind which become and pass away, the joy and happiness of insight meditation will arise. The Lord *Buddha* stated that this joy and happiness cannot be enjoyed even by *deva*, let alone ordinary humans (who have not attained insight).

It is because of meditating with faith and diligence that the mind becomes clear. Thus, it is evident that the mind becomes clear when you read and recite the teachings of the *Buddha*, when you take refuge in the *Buddha* and when you meditate with faith. It is owing to faith that clearness of the mind occurs.

It is evident that the mind becomes clear when, because of faith, you take refuge in the *sangha*. The present day *sangha* in whom you now take refuge are the successors of the *ariya sangha* — the noble ordained disciples of the *Buddha*'s time. You have faith in their good qualities; you believe that they are *sangha* who practise virtue and honesty, who observe the practices that lead to *nibbāna*, who act for the good of mankind and because of your faith, when you take refuge in the *sangha*, your mind becomes clear.

When you take refuge in the *sangha*, when you offer them alms, your mind is clear because of your faith. If you

did not believe in them, it would be otherwise. If a person whom you cannot trust comes to your house or to your office, your mind becomes disturbed, you wonder what trouble he may cause you and your mind is not clear.

Also, because of your belief in *kamma*, your mind will be clear when you perform wholesome deeds. *Kamma* is invisible and intangible but inherent in *kamma* is the potentiality of producing its due effect till you reach *nibbāna*. Does the *dhamma* audience not believe this? You do believe. That belief is *saddhā*.

*Kamma* (volitional activity) is a mental phenomenon. The robes, alms-food, monasteries, medicines and monetary donations which are to be used in the act of giving are material phenomena which can be seen and handled. Therefore, they may be destroyed by water, fire, rulers, thieves and evil inheritors (i.e. evil offsprings).

When these material phenomena have been donated, the *cetanā* (volition) will remain with the donor. This *kamma* will not be a material phenomenon; it becomes a mental phenomenon.

Although it is a mental phenomenon which cannot be seen or handled, does the *dhamma* audience not believe that this *kamma* remains with you? You do believe. That belief is *saddhā*.

Because you believe that the *kamma* of your wholesome deeds will remain as a personal possession till you attain *nibbāna*, if it has not benefited you yet, will your minds not become clear when you do wholesome deeds? You will. Why? Because of your belief.

Also, when you reflect on the effects of your wholesome deeds your mind becomes clear. Because you believe that you will enjoy the benefits of your wholesome deeds either in this existence or in future existences till you attain *nibbāna*, will your minds not become clear? You will, because of your belief. That belief, faith and confidence (*saddhā*), is the basis for sharpening the *indriya* (controlling faculties).

When practising *vipassanā* meditation, confidence is the best basis. If *saddhā* (faith and confidence) is strong, *virīya* (effort) will become strong. When practising *vipassanā* meditation, confidence in the *dhamma* is of prime importance.

Does the *dhamma* audience believe that present insight attained in meditation by complete noting will close the doors to the lower states of existence and enable you to attain *nibbāna*? You do. Your belief that the doors to the lower states of existence can be closed, that *nibbāna* can be attained when noting of rising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting, stepping forward, placing the foot down, bending, stretching, holding, taking etc. has been fully practised is *saddhā*.

This confidence in the *dhamma* is of prime importance. If, because of your confidence, you believe that the doors to the lower existences can be closed, that *nibbāna* can be attained, effort will become stronger. Will you not be able to practise meditation without rest and sleep because you believe? You will; because of your belief.

But if you practise meditation without truly believing, with doubts, simply because others are doing so, won't your effort be weak? It will be weak. However, the present

*dhamma* audience does not practise with doubts. While noting rising, falling, etc. you have great confidence that the doors to the woeful states of existence can be closed, that nibbāna can be attained. Accordingly, the effort with which you practise meditation continuously, without rest, will be strong. As effort which enables you to practise meditation continuously and diligently becomes strong, so will *sati* (mindfulness).

When mindfulness becomes strong, all sensations which arise can be closely noted and accordingly, *samādhi* (concentration) will develop. When all sensations which arise are closely noted, the beginning and end of all sensations are established by the noting mind; *khanikā samādhi* (momentary concentration) develops and concentration becomes strong. As concentration becomes strong, *paññā* (wisdom) develops.

Only when concentration develops will *dhamma* develop. That is what yogis must heed. You must develop concentration when you begin meditation. If a yogi wishes to gain *dhamma* speedily without developing concentration, the experiencing of *dhamma* will be delayed. If the yogi notes "this is material phenomenon, this is mental phenomenon" when concentration has not yet developed, will the experiencing of *dhamma* be speedy or will it be slow? It will be slow. You must pay special heed to that.

When practising meditation, you must develop concentration at the beginning. When concentration has been developed, *dhamma* will develop of its own accord. That is why at the beginning, the development of concentration must be of prime importance. As confidence becomes strong, effort becomes strong; as effort becomes strong, mindfulness becomes strong; as mindfulness becomes strong, concentration becomes strong.

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wisdom will develop. When wisdom is well developed knowledge and insight to which the *dhamma* audience should aspire i.e. knowledge from the stage when the doors to the woeful states of existence are closed to noble *dhamma* will then be attained.

### **The First Cause that sharpens the *Indriya***

The discourse on the five *indriya* (controlling faculties) is now reasonably complete. Next, I will talk about the first of the nine causes which sharpen the *indriya*.

Briefly, it can be stated that in the continuum (*santana*) of the *dhamma* audience are physical and mental phenomena arise and quickly pass away. Commentators have stated that one of the causes which sharpen the *indriya* is the inclining of your mind, while practising meditation, towards the passing away of phenomena.

### **Inclination of the Mind towards Dissolution of Phenomena**

To remember this first cause easily, our Benefactor the Most Venerable Mahāṣī Sayadaw has arranged this verse.

*Motto: Every arising of matter and mind,  
Every passing away;  
We must surely note.*

It means that you must practise meditation by inclining your mind towards the rapid passing away of arising of physical and mental phenomena in the continuum of your being.

When we say that in practising meditation the mind must be inclined towards the passing away of phenomena, it does not mean that you should note 'passing away', without actually experiencing it. If you do so, it will delay the realization of insight. You must note in the usual way — rising, falling, sitting touching, lifting, stepping forward, placing down, etc.

But while noting, your mind must be inclined towards the passing away of phenomena. When you note 'rising', as soon as you have noted it, it has passed away. When you note 'falling,' it will be a new noting. When you note 'rising' again, it will be a new noting. In this way, you must incline your mind towards the arising and passing away of phenomena.

By inclining your mind frequently in this way towards the arising and passing away of phenomena, concentration will increase. By paying constant and particular attention to inclining your mind frequently towards the arising and passing away of phenomena, concentration will gradually strengthen and you will gain insight into the dissolution of phenomena.

In reality, insight into the dissolution of phenomena can be gained only when you attain *Bhanga ñāṇa* (insight into passing away of phenomena). But by frequently inclining the mind towards 'passing away' — the five *indriya* (controlling faculties) will become even and sharpened and before reaching the stage of *Bhanga ñāṇa*, you may gain insight. Some yogis gain insight within about 10 days of beginning their meditation; but when they do, insight is not very clear.

Some yogis have reported that when noting the rising and falling of the abdomen, the rising movement ends and

disappears without flowing into the falling movement, the falling movement also ends and disappears without flowing into the rising movement — there is a small break between each rising and falling. They asked me whether these breaks were really there and I had to reply, "Why do you ask? Haven't you experienced it yourself?"

When concentration becomes moderately strong, there is no longer any continuity between rising and falling. You will feel that there is a break between them. The rising movement will not flow into the falling movement and the falling movement will not flow into the rising movement. You will see the breaks between them.

The yogi will realize that the movement of rising will be cut off at the end of the rising without being followed immediately by the movement of falling: that the movement of falling will be cut off at the end of falling without being followed immediately by the movement of rising. But because *dhamma* has not developed fully, that realization will be faint.

Similarly, yogis find that when you note while walking — lifting, stepping forward, placing down — the action of lifting does not flow into the action of stepping forward: it is left behind like a shadow. The action of stepping forward also does not flow into the action of placing the foot down: it is left behind like a shadow. The action of placing the foot down too does not flow into the action of lifting the foot.

They report that all these movements are left behind like shadows. Yes, they have comprehended the dissolution of things. However, they will not be able to comprehend it always: it will be possible only when the five *indriya*

(controlling faculties) are balanced. At times when yogis cannot comprehend it, noting should be continued as usual.

Because the dissolution of things cannot always be comprehended when comprehension is not clear yogis begin to doubt. But yogis must not doubt. They must incline their minds to the fact that they have comprehended, to a moderate extent, the dissolution of things and that in future they will be able to comprehend it clearly.

Because concentration will mature, strengthen and become keen — when the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* is reached by proceeding step by step with noting — yogis comprehend as if with their eyes, the dissolution of things. When you note 'rising', you will comprehend the movement of rising passing away instantaneously. When you note 'falling', the instantaneous passing away of the movement of falling will be comprehended.

When you reach the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, it will be a strong insight. Forms will no longer be evident — the abdomen, the body will no longer be evident; only movements and realities will be evident.

Yogis will comprehend very evidently, as if seeing with their eyes, that when noting 'rising', the distending and pushing of the abdomen pass away instantaneously and when noting 'falling', the falling movements of the abdomen pass away instantaneously.

Similarly, when noting the lifting, stepping forward and placing down of the foot, yogis comprehend, as if seeing with their eyes, the successive movements in lifting, in stepping forward and in placing down the foot. Then, by progressing step by step with noting and developing con-



centration till it becomes strong and keen, yogis perceive that not only do sense objects pass away instantaneously, but that it is also followed by the instantaneous passing away of the noting mind.

When noting 'rising' (of the abdomen), the instantaneous passing away of the movement of rising followed by the instantaneous passing away of the noting mind is perceived. Also, when noting falling, the instantaneous passing away of the movement of falling followed by the instantaneous passing away of the noting mind is perceived.

Will you then not know that the sense objects, the material phenomena of rising and falling, as well as the mental phenomenon of the noting mind are impermanent? You will. In *pāli*, impermanence is called *anicca*. Since childhood, you have heard of *anicca* from your parents and teachers. Now, where have you found it? Within your bodies. You have perceived the real, the true *anicca*.

You have found it by meditating with your mind inclined to the passing away of matter and mind. Had you not done so, you would not have comprehended the dissolution of things for a considerable time; you would be merely noting well. Some yogis are unable to comprehend *anicca* (impermanence) because they do not incline their minds towards the passing away of matter and mind. That is why commentators have stated that when you meditate, you must incline your mind to the passing away of phenomena.

Commentators are those who were in a position to know most about the wishes of the Lord *Buddha*; their explanatory statements are mainly from His *pāli* teachings. Therefore, they should be followed and practised as they are on a par with the teachings of the *Buddha*.

When noting the lifting, stepping forward and placing down of the foot, the dissolution of matter and mind will be comprehended. When noting the lifting of the foot, in addition to experiencing the instantaneous passing away of the movement of lifting, the passing away of the noting mind will also be experienced. When noting 'stepping forward', in addition to experiencing the instantaneous passing away of the movement of stepping forward, the passing away of the noting mind will also be experienced. Also when noting the placing down of the foot, in addition to the instantaneous passing away of the movement of placing down the foot, the passing away of the noting mind will be experienced as well.

By experiencing the impermanence of things, do you not realize that the material phenomena of lifting, stepping forward and placing the foot down, as well as the noting mind, are impermanent? You do. The *pāli* word for impermanence is *anicca*. So rapid is the dissolution of phenomena that it appears to oppress you and causes suffering which is called *dukkha* in *pāli*.

How can we protect ourselves from the suffering caused by the oppression of the rapid dissolution of things? We cannot protect ourselves in any way. It is in the nature of things to pass away and oppress you; you can have no control over it — in *pāli* it is called *anatta*. Where have you found *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* that you have heard about since childhood? Within your own bodies. Where will you arrive at when you attain complete insight into *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*? You will attain *nibbāna* for which you have prayed every time when doing good deeds.

The principal aim is to perceive *anicca*. If other people should ask you how to meditate in order to perceive *anicca*, you must tell them to meditate with their minds inclined towards the passing away of things — for *anicca* can usually be perceived by doing so. If not, it will take a considerable time to perceive impermanence. Only when you meditate with your mind inclined to the passing away of things will you experience the dissolution of the objects of consciousness as well as of the noting mind and thereby perceive true *anicca* (impermanence), true *dukkha* (suffering), and true *anatta* (the absence of a permanent ego).

When you meditate with your mind inclined towards the dissolution of things and experience the true characteristic of impermanence you will also see the true characteristic of suffering and the uncontrollability of things. On this matter our Benefactor the Most Venerable Mahāṣī Sayadaw has written a motto as derived from the *pāli* texts for the *dhamma* audience and future generations to remember easily.

*Motto: Among the true characteristics  
perceive but one;  
The rest will also be perceived.*

When Buddhists talk about impermanence, suffering and the absence of a permanent ego, some people with other religious beliefs say it is a pessimistic doctrine. For those who can only look to worldly matters, this is true; but for those who can look to supramundane matters, it is not true.

Buddhism is optimistic because it is only by perceiving impermanence, suffering and the uncontrollability of things that the bliss of *nibbāna* can be attained.

Thus, because you have listened to this discourse on the benefits of practising insight meditation, the difficulty of getting an opportunity to practise it and on the first of the nine causes which sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties), may you be able to practise accordingly and thereby attain the bliss of *nibbāna* to which you should aspire, speedily and without difficulty.



## Chapter Two

### The Second Dhamma Discourse

#### Respectful and Attentive Meditation

When we say that meditation should be practised reverently and intently, it means that all bodily movements should be gentle and slow. When movements and activities such as sitting, standing, bending, stretching, holding, taking, pouring, inclining, eating, drinking, etc. are done gently and slowly, we may say that they are done reverently.

*Motto: Meditation must be done,  
Respectfully and well.*

Meditating intently means that you must meditate so that your mind will be focused on the present and so that you will comprehend ultimate reality. When practising meditation the two most important points to bear in mind are to focus your mind on the present and to meditate so that you will realize ultimate reality.

In order to keep your mind focused on the present, you must perform all bodily movements gently and slowly.

Should you perform them as you would normally have done before practising meditation — smartly and quickly — the movements will be fast while the noting mind and concentration will be weak, so that the noting mind will not be able to note with an accurate focus on the present. Consequently, the yogi will not be able to attain insight into the nature of phenomena.

The material and mental phenomena which are in the continuum of your beings exists in the immediate present only. While noting, should you miss them by a hair's breadth or by just a second, these material and mental phenomena will no longer be there. Because of that, although you may be noting, it will not amount to accurate noting and concentration will not develop. You will be noting phenomena which no longer exist; this will not be proper noting and therefore, you will not attain insight.

To give an example, the arising of material and mental phenomena are like two strata of clouds which collide in the sky and create lightning that lasts for just a flash and instantly vanishes. Before the flash of lightning it is not possible to find the lightning in any cloud; after the flash also, it will not be possible to find the lightning in any cloud.

Similarly, we cannot know where the material and mental phenomena which arise in our bodies exist before they arise, we cannot see them. When conditions permit them to arise, they arise and pass away rapidly. It cannot be said that they are left behind in some part of our bodies; we cannot see them. They exist only in the present instant of their arising. Therefore, you will attain insight into the nature of material and mental phenomena only if you note the

present accurately.

*Motto:     Arising from somewhere unseen,  
              To vanish somewhere unseen;  
              Mind and matter like lightning  
              Arise and pass away.*

Therefore, when practising insight meditation, in order that you may be able to note with accurate focus on the present, all bodily movements should be made gently and slowly in a manner resembling that of a sick person. Our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāṣī Sayadaw, stated that yogis should liken themselves to a patient with a painful back.

A patient with a painful back may be strong, but because he is afraid of hurting his back, when sitting, he will do so gently and slowly, and when standing up, he will do so gently and slowly. When holding or taking something, he will do so gently and slowly. Why? Because he knows that it will hurt his back if he does otherwise. Only if you can perform your bodily movements like him, will you be able to focus accurately on the present and attain insight.

To note so that you may comprehend ultimate reality you must note 'rising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting, stepping forward, placing down, standing, bending, stretching' etc., according to the method shown by our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāṣī Sayadaw.

### **Apparent and Ultimate Reality**

Apparent reality may be seen with the eyes — forms and matter such as our abdomens, heads, bodies and limbs. Ultimate reality cannot be seen with the eyes — they are

phenomena such as distension and contraction, heat, cold, hardness, softness, etc. But they are not separate; they occur together. The phenomena of ultimate reality are within the forms and matter of apparent reality.

When noting 'rising, falling, sitting, touching', the forms of the rising and falling abdomen, the head, body and limbs that are sitting, the sides of the posteriors that are touching the seat etc., are apparent realities which can be seen with the eyes.

When noting 'rising', the phenomena of the successive stages of stiffening from within the abdomen are the ultimate reality of *vāyo* (the element of motion). When noting 'falling', the phenomena of the successive stages of contracting movements from within the abdomen are the ultimate reality of *vāyo* (the element of motion). When noting 'sitting', the phenomenon of stiffening of the body is the ultimate reality of *vāyo*. When noting 'touching', the phenomenon of hardness is the ultimate reality of *pathavī* (the element of extension). The phenomenon of 'hotness' is the ultimate reality of *tejo* (the element of heat). These ultimate realities cannot be seen with the natural eyes; they can be perceived only with the eye of understanding — with the intellect.

When noting 'rising', do not heed the apparent reality of the form of the abdomen. Note intently so as to experience the ultimate reality of the successive stages of stiffening and pushing from within the abdomen. Note the present accurately by noting the successive stages of stiffening as they occur.

When noting 'falling', do not heed the apparent reality of the form of the abdomen. Note intently so as to



comprehend the ultimate reality of the successive stages of movements from within the abdomen. Note the successive stages of movements as they occur, note the present accurately.

When noting 'sitting', do not heed the apparent reality of the forms of your head, body and limbs. Note intently so as to realize the ultimate reality of the phenomenon of stiffness which arises because of your wish to sit and which is caused by the pressure of air within your body. The successive stages of stiffening must be noted intently as they occur; the present must be noted accurately.

When noting 'touching', do not heed the apparent reality of the forms of the sides of the posteriors. Note intently the phenomena of hardness and heat which are the ultimate realities.

When walking and noting 'lifting, stepping forward, placing down', do not heed the apparent reality of the form of the foot. Note intently so as to comprehend the ultimate reality of the phenomenon of the upward movement. Note the successive stages of the upward movement as they occur: note the present accurately.

When noting 'stepping forward', do not heed the apparent reality of the form of the foot. Note intently so as to comprehend the ultimate reality of the phenomenon of the forward movement. Note accurately the successive stages of the forward movement as they occur.

When noting 'stepping down', do not heed the apparent reality of the form of the foot. Note intently so as to comprehend the ultimate reality of the phenomenon of the downward movement. Note accurately the successive stages

of the downward movement as they occur.

*Motto: Discard apparent reality;  
Note accurately ultimate reality.*

When you are able to note the present accurately and to comprehend ultimate reality, you will comprehend various phenomena starting with the phenomena of the four elements. The process will be as follows. When you are able to detach yourself from the apparent reality of the form of the foot while noting 'lifting' and to note accurately the successive stages of moving as they occur, you will experience not only the phenomenon of upward movement but also the phenomenon of lightness which occurs. This will be the experience of the elements of *tejo* (the element of heat) and of *vāyo* (the element of motion) from among the four elements.

When you are able to detach yourself from the reality of the form of the foot while noting 'stepping forward' and to note accurately the successive stages of moving forward, you will comprehend not only the phenomenon of moving, but also the phenomenon of lightness which occurs. This will be the experience of *tejo* and *vāyo* from among the four elements.

*Tejo* is an element of vapour, an element of heat a light element. *Vāyo* is an element of air — a light element. The experience of these elements is attained because of noting intently.

*Motto: The elements of heat and air  
Are distinctly light.*

When you are able to detach yourself from the apparent reality of the form of the foot while noting 'placing down' and to note accurately the successive stages of the downward movement as they occur, you will experience not only the phenomenon of moving but also the phenomenon of heaviness. This will be the experience of *pathavi* (the element of extension) and of *āpo* (the element of cohesion).

*Pathavi*, the element of extension is a hard element. an earth element — a heavy element. *Āpo*, the element of cohesion is an element of water — a heavy element. The experience of these elements is attained because of noting intently.

*Motto: Pathavi and Āpo,  
the two elements,  
Are distinctly heavy.*

### ***Samatha and Vipassanā***

I will now talk about *samatha* (tranquility) meditation and *vipassanā* (insight) meditation about which the *dhamma* audience should know. Are you *samatha* yogis or *vipassanā* yogis? You are *vipassanā* yogis. Since you are *vipassanā* yogis and wish to practise pure *vipassanā*, you should know about the inherent nature of *samatha* and of *vipassanā* in order that you may be able to practise pure *vipassanā*.

Persons who practise *samatha* meditation keep their minds calm by fixing their minds on an object of consciousness of apparent reality and contemplating on apparent reality. Contemplation must be done from the aspect of permanence to fix the sense object of apparent reality on the mind. Thus, *samatha* meditation is the contemplation of

a sense object of apparent reality from the aspect of permanence. Only by doing so will you attain your goal of noble *samatha* insight.

For example, persons who wish to practise *samatha* meditation by means of *pathavī kasina* (earth meditation device) must make a circle on the ground about the size of a round tray, sit before it, look at it with unblinking eyes and contemplate by saying mentally '*pathavī, pathavī*' or 'earth, earth.' Contemplation must be done so that the circle of earth will not vanish from the mind, so that it will be imprinted on the mind.

The patch of earth is apparent reality; contemplation has to be from the aspect of permanence. Therefore, meditation which is practised by contemplating a sense object of apparent reality from the aspect of permanence is *samatha* meditation.

*Motto: Contemplate the permanence  
Of a sense object,  
Contemplate apparent reality;  
That is samatha.*

Persons who practise *vipassanā* meditation keep their minds calm by fixing their minds on a sense object of ultimate reality and contemplating on ultimate reality. Therefore, contemplating a sense object of ultimate reality from the aspect of impermanence is *vipassanā* meditation. Only by contemplating in this manner can you achieve *vipassanā* knowledge and acquire noble insight.

For example, when contemplating 'rising, falling', when we note 'rising', we detach ourselves from the apparent



reality of the form of the abdomen and note intently so as to realize the ultimate reality of stiffening and pushing (expansion) from within. The ultimate reality of expansion vanishes as soon as it has been noted. We must contemplate by inclining our minds towards dissolution and impermanence. Those yogis who reach the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* (insight into passing away of all phenomena), will personally experience dissolution and impermanence.

When noting 'falling' we must detach ourselves from the apparent reality of the form of the abdomen and note intently to comprehend the ultimate reality of contracting movements from within. The ultimate reality of contraction vanishes as soon as it has been noted. We must contemplate by inclining our minds towards dissolution and impermanence. Thus, when the sense object of noting is an ultimate reality and when noting is on impermanence, it is *vipassanā* meditation.

*Motto: Sense objects of ultimate reality,  
Their impermanence,  
Vipassanā does contemplate.*

Apparent reality and ultimate reality occur together, but we should contemplate to comprehend ultimate reality as much as possible and detach ourselves from apparent reality as much as possible. When apparent reality is evident, ultimate reality may become indistinct. When ultimate reality becomes evident, apparent reality will no longer be evident; it will submerge and disappear.

At the beginning of practising *vipassanā* meditation when insight knowledge is still weak, the apparent reality

of the forms of the body, limbs, abdomen etc., will be specially evident. The ultimate reality of the movements of expansion and contraction, of hotness, coldness, softness etc., will not be evident; they will submerge and disappear.

*Motto: When apparent reality is evident,  
Ultimate reality disappears.*

When the stage of *Bhāṅga ñāṇa* is reached, insight becomes strong and the apparent reality of forms is no longer evident; only ultimate reality will be evident.

When contemplating on 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' etc., and noting 'rising', the apparent reality of the form of the abdomen will no longer be evident; only the ultimate reality of stiffening and pushing will become evident. When noting 'falling', the apparent reality of the form of the abdomen will no longer be evident; only the contracting movements of ultimate reality will become evident. Thus, when insight knowledge strengthens and ultimate reality becomes evident, apparent reality submerges and disappears.

*Motto: When ultimate reality is evident,  
Apparent reality disappears.*

Only when yogis who practise *vipassanā* know about the inherent nature of *samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation will they be able to practise pure *vipassanā* and attain insight quickly.

### Three-fold Sensation

In the second cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties), which states that meditation must be done respectfully and intently, the noting of 'rising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting, stepping forward, placing down' are contemplation and notings on the body. These notings should be done respectfully and intently and I have given a reasonably complete account about it. I will now continue by talking about how meditation should be done respectfully and intently on *vedanā* (feelings or sensations).

Persons who practise insight meditation will encounter three kinds of *vedanā* within which there are three kinds of unwholesome tendencies or inclinations. Only when these three kinds of unwholesome tendencies are eliminated will you attain noble insight into the happiness of the Path and Fruition, and of *nibbanā*.

According to the teachings of the *Buddha*, feelings or sensations are as follows: -

1. *Sukha Vedanā* - sensations of happiness or pleasure.
2. *Dukkha Vedanā* - sensations of pain or suffering.
3. *Adukkha-masukha Vedanā* - sensations which are neither pleasant nor painful, neutral feelings; sensations of indifference or equanimity.

Yogis who practise meditation encounter feelings or sensations as follows:-

1. *Dukkha Vedanā* - sensations of pain or suffering.

2. *Sukha Vedanā* - sensations of happiness or pleasure.
  3. *Adukkha-masukha Vedanā* - sensations which are neither pleasant nor painful, neutral feelings; sensations of indifference or equanimity.
1. In sensations of suffering dwells the tendency of *patigha nusaya* (hate or ill-will) which is *dosa* (anger)
  2. In sensations of pleasure dwells the tendency of *rāga nusaya* (desire or lust) which is *lobha* (greed).
  3. In sensations of indifference or equanimity dwells the tendency of *āvijjā nusaya* (ignorance) which is *moha* (delusion)

We say that the tendencies "dwell" in the sensations because of their frequent occurrence.

When sensations of suffering and pain occur and you are unable to meditate, while these feelings last, *dosa* (anger) will arise frequently. Therefore, it is said that anger dwells in sensations of suffering.

When sensations of pleasure arise and you are unable to meditate, while these feelings last, *lobha* (greed) will occur frequently. Therefore, it is said that greed dwells in sensations of pleasure.

When sensations of indifference or equanimity occur and you are unable to meditate, while these feelings last, *moha* (delusion) will occur frequently. Therefore, it is said that delusion dwells in sensations of indifference.

When practising *vipassanā* meditation, sensations of suffering will be encountered first. Anger dwells within the sensation of suffering. Only by meditating to overcome the sensation of suffering so that it may be taken out like a thorn, can anger be eliminated.

I will now talk about how to meditate in order to overcome sensations of suffering, for it is the principal aim of practising *vipassanā* to meditate so that sensations of suffering will be overcome. When this is achieved, it can be said that a 50% success has been achieved in the practice of *vipassanā* meditation because anger has been eliminated.

When practising *vipassanā* meditation at the first stage of *Nāma-rūpa Pariccheda ñāṇa* (insight into the reality of mind and matter), sensations of suffering will not be very evident. Nor will they be very evident at the stage of *Paccaya Pariggaha ñāṇa* (knowledge of causes and effects). But when you reach the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics of existence), when you comprehend *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anatta* (the uncontrollableness of things), sensations of suffering will become specially evident.

Yogis who practise *vipassanā* meditation according to the method shown by our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw, will contemplate and note 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' when meditating while sitting. But at the beginning, when concentration has not yet developed, although you may be noting, you will not be able to discern mind and matter.

When noting 'rising', you will think "the rising movement is the rising of my abdomen: I am noting. When noting 'falling', you will think "the falling movement is the



falling of my abdomen; I am noting." When noting 'sitting' you will think "I am sitting; I am noting". When noting 'touching' you will think "I am touching; I am noting". You will not know the difference between mind and matter.

When you have meditated for three or four days, you will come to realize that when noting 'rising', the movement of rising is separate from the awareness and noting of the rising movement; that when noting 'falling', the movement of falling is separate from the awareness and noting of the falling movement; that when noting 'sitting', the action of sitting is separate from the awareness and noting of sitting; that when noting 'touching', the action of touching is separate from the awareness and noting of touching.

You will come to realize that 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' are material phenomena without consciousness; that the awareness and noting of 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' are mental phenomena with consciousness. At this stage of *Nāma-rūpa Pariccheda ñāṇa* (knowledge of discerning mind and matter), when you are able to distinguish between mind and matter, sensations of suffering will not be very evident.

Later, when concentration becomes strong and sharp by progressing through the stages of meditation, you will discern cause and effect. You will realize that because rising, falling, sitting, touching occur first, awareness and noting follow. You will comprehend that the rising, falling, sitting, touching which occur before the noting mind are the causes; that the consciousness of the noting mind is the effect. When you reach the stage of *Paccaya Pariggaha ñāṇa* (knowledge of cause and effect) and comprehend cause and effect, sensations of suffering will not be very evident yet.

When you progress in meditation and reach the stage of *Sammassana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics of existence), sensations of suffering such as pain, tingling, constriction, aching, dizziness, itching, nausea and swaying will become specially evident. Just as a thorn which has pierced you is pulled out from your body, you must meditate to overcome these sensations of suffering.

### Three Ways to meditate Unpleasant Sensation

Nowadays, yogis who practise *vipassanā* meditation to overcome sensations of suffering differ in their meditation in three ways.

1. Meditating with the aim of making the painful sensations disappear.
  2. Meditating by establishing an aggressive state of mind with the intention of annihilating the painful sensations.
  3. Meditating to know the intrinsic nature of the painful sensations.
1. When you meditate with the aim of making the painful sensations disappear, it is because of your desire to become comfortable again, to be free from pain, which is *lobha* (greed). Do you meditate to rid yourselves of greed or to increase your greed? You meditate to rid yourselves of greed. Now, however, because of your desire to make the painful sensations disappear, every noting will contain a defilement; you will not be able to gain insight or progress in your insight for a considerable time. Therefore, you should not, you must not, adopt this manner of meditation.

In the text of the Pāli Canon, the Lord *Buddha* stated that should sensations of suffering arise, you must contemplate so as to be aware that you are experiencing them. So, if yogis contemplate with the aim, "they must go away, they must go away" it will not be in accordance with the teachings of the *Buddha*. As a result, insight will not be gained for a considerable time and progress of insight will not be achieved for a considerable time too. That is why you must not adopt the method of meditating with the aim of making the sensations of suffering disappear.

2. When you meditate by establishing an aggressive state of mind and resolve to annihilate the sensations of suffering at one sitting, within a single day, the laws of morality will be made crooked (will be broken), for an aggressive state of mind is anger. Also when the sensations of suffering do not disappear, anger and displeasure will arise. Do you practise meditation to rid yourselves of anger and displeasure or to increase them? You meditate to rid yourselves of them. Now, however, there will be growing anger; every noting will contain a defilement and consequently you will not be able to gain insight or make progress in insight for a considerable time. That is why you should not adopt this method.
3. The right method is to contemplate and note so that you will know the intrinsic nature of the sensations of suffering. Only when you know their intrinsic nature will you be able to perceive their arising and passing away. Only when you know their arising and passing away will you comprehend *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering), and *anatta* (the uncontrollableness

of things). Only when you experience *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* will you be able to attain noble *dhamma* to which you should aspire. That is why you must first of all contemplate and note to know the intrinsic nature of the sensations of suffering.

### Elimination of Anger

To know the intrinsic nature of the painful sensations of suffering, you must first of all resolve to be patient with these sufferings. **"Only by being patient can *nibbāna* be attained"** is the most useful thing to bear in mind when you practise insight meditation. Anxious thoughts and worries such as "Will I have to endure these sensations of suffering for the whole sitting; for a whole hour?" should not arise, you must keep the mind calm. The sensations of suffering will be painful in accordance with their intrinsic nature, but my duty is to note — that is the mental attitude that you must adopt. As suffering increases, the yogi will tend to become tense in both mind and body. You must not let this happen; you must relax your mind and body a little.

Afterwards, you must focus your noticing mind directly on the painful sensations and observe intently to know whether the pain is located on the skin, or in the muscles, or right through to the bones and the marrow etc., to know the state and condition and the extent of the pain. Only when you know these facts by observing intently should you proceed, noting mentally, 'paining, tingling, throbbing' etc. The second, third and later notings should be done in a similar manner after observing intently all the conditions of the painful sensations.

When you are able to focus your noting mind directly on the painful sensation and realize the extent of the pain,

noting intently, *samādhi* (concentration), will have developed sufficiently; you will have obtained a good basis. You should not note superficially or quickly "paining, painning, tingling, tingling, throbbing, throbbing," etc. Instead you must note intently the ever-changing nature of the sensations.

When you have noted intently to realize the extent and amount, the changing nature of these painful sensations and have developed concentration, you will know that the pain increases when you note 'paining, painning' four or five times. As you progress in your noting, the pain reaches its highest intensity and then lessens of its own accord. Even though the pain lessens and eases, you must not relax your noting; you must continue to note intently as usual.

As you continue noting intently four or five times and the pain increases and then lessens, you will know the inherent nature of painful sensations.

Subsequently, when you continue noting and concentration develops to a higher degree, you will find that with every noting of 'paining, painning', the pain increases. Yogis will know this from personal experience. Pain reaches its highest intensity and then decreases of its own accord. You will find that with each noting the pain eases, that it moves to another place and you will comprehend more fully the nature of painful sensations.

Afterwards, when you continue noting and concentration strengthens, yogis will find from personal experience that with each noting of 'paining, painning', the pain arises and passes away. This is the comprehension of arising and passing away of phenomena and then the sensations of pain are overcome.



Subsequently, by continuing with your noting, concentration develops further and when you note 'paining' you will no longer experience the arising of pain, you will experience only the passing away of pain. When you experience the phenomenon of pain passing away as soon as you begin noting, you will no longer experience pain. It has been overcome by the noting mind. The mind will no longer be disturbed; anger, unhappiness and displeasure will no longer occur. The tendency of hate (*patigha nusaya*) or anger (*dosa*) will be successfully eliminated.

*Motto: Anger dwelling in suffering,  
We must eliminate.*

Afterwards, when concentration strengthens further by continuing with noting, yogis who have a keen intellect will perceive not only the disappearing of the phenomenon of pain when you note 'paining', but also the disappearing of the noting mind. You will know that pain is impermanent, that the noting mind is also impermanent; you will comprehend *anicca* (impermanence).

So rapid is the process of passing away that it will seem to oppress you and you will comprehend suffering. How can we protect ourselves from the oppressive process of dissolution? We cannot protect ourselves in any way. You will comprehend that dissolution occurs of its own accord, that you cannot control it, you will comprehend the uncontrollableness of ever changing phenomena — *anatta* (the absence of a permanent ego).

Thus, by acquiring insight into *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*, not only will you eliminate anger which dwells in sensations of suffering, but you will also attain insight into

the exceptional and noble laws of the path and fruition, and of *nibbāna*, to which you should aspire.

My talk on how *dosa* (anger) or *patigha nusaya* (the tendency of hate) is eliminated by noting intently sensations of sufferings, is now more or less complete.

### Elimination of Greed

I will now talk about how *lobha* (greed) or *rāga nusaya* (the tendency of desire) is eliminated by noting intently sensations of pleasure or happiness.

When you reach the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena), greed will tend to arise in the blissful sensation of happiness. In the third stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics of existence), if the yogis note the sensations of suffering which occur, respectfully and intently, as instructed by their teachers, they will be able to reach the fourth stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena) within a few days.

When yogis first reach the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*, they will feel light, fine and well in body and mind and consequently, those who had to change their sitting posture once or twice within an hour in the lower stages of insight will no longer do so; those who could sit in meditation for an hour without changing their posture in the lower stages of insight will now be able to sit for two, three or four hours at a stretch without doing so.

Yogis who gain insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena and have therefore observed both body and mind, will find that the sense objects to be noted, such as the arising and falling of the abdomen will arise as if

of their own accord; that the noting mind also will seem to be noting of its own accord. Because of the ease with which noting can be done, yogis will experience a peacefulness of body and mind never before experienced in their lives. Because of *vipassanā piṭi*, they will experience sensations of happiness, a peacefulness of body and mind, which they have never experienced before.

Pleasure and liking will arise frequently in sensations of happiness. Thus, it is said that *rāga nusaya* dwells in the sensations of happiness. In order to eliminate greed, we must contemplate and note until sensations of happiness are perceived distinctly as being sensations of suffering.

*Motto: Surely we must note  
When happiness occurs,  
Until suffering appears.*

How must you note the well-being of body and mind, the sensations of happiness? You must note what is distinct. If physical well being is distinct, you must note intently 'feeling well, feeling well', to comprehend it as fully as possible. When you reach the advanced stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*, the happy feelings will no longer be continuous; there will be breaks between them. You will find that only after a happy feeling has arisen and passed away will another arise and pass away.

As the process of arising and passing away of phenomena increases in rapidity with increasing intensity of insight, the rapidity with which the process of arising and passing away of phenomena occurs will seem oppressive and the yogi will experience it as a kind of suffering. This experience will eliminate *rāga nusaya* (the tendency of

desire) or lobha which occurs repeatedly in sensations of happiness.

If mental well-being is distinct, you must note it intently as 'feeling well, feeling well' to comprehend it as fully as possible. When you reach the advanced stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*, the mental well being will not be continuous; there will be breaks between them. You will find that only after one mental well being has arisen and passed away will another arise and pass away.

As the process of arising and passing away increases in rapidity with the increasing intensity of insight, it will appear to be oppressive and the yogi will experience it as a kind of suffering. This experiencing of suffering will eliminate *rāga nusaya* (the tendency of desire or lust) i.e., *lobha* (greed) which occurs repeatedly in sensations of happiness.

*Motto: Surely we must note  
When happiness occurs,  
Until suffering appears.*

### Higher Stages of Insight

Subsequently, by continuous noting you will reach the stages of

1. *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* - Insight into passing away of phenomena or knowledge of the dissolution of composite things;
2. *Bhaya ñāṇa* - Knowledge that all dissolving things are fearful, or knowledge of fear;

3. *Ādīnava ñāṇa* - Knowledge of the wretchedness of the fearful world or knowledge of misery;
4. *Nibbidā ñāṇa* - Knowledge which reflects on feelings of weariness aroused by composite things that are dangerous or knowledge of weariness;
5. *Muñcitukamyatā ñāṇa* - Knowledge of the desire for release from composite things which cause feelings of disgust or knowledge of desire for deliverance;
6. *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa* - Knowledge arising out of further contemplation or knowledge of re-observation;
7. *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* - Knowledge arising from equanimity or knowledge of equanimity about formations.

### Elimination of Delusion

When yogis who reach the stage of *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* (knowledge arising from equanimity) encounter frightful and apprehensive objects of consciousness in worldly matters or frightful objects of consciousness in supramundane matters, they will not have much fear; they will be capable of indifference. When they encounter desirable or pleasurable objects of consciousness in worldly matters or in supramundane matters, they will not have much desire or pleasure; they will be capable of indifference.



Yogis who reach the stage of *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa* will be indifferent to mental formations, volitional actions, conditioned things and they will be able to contemplate and note very easily. The rising and falling of the abdomen will be as if arising of their own accord and the noting mind will be as if noting of its own accord. Noting will be so effortless that the yogi will seem to be an observer, sitting and looking on. Because of the effortless noting, perseverance will become lax. Because perseverance becomes lax, *moha* (delusion) i.e. *avijjā nusaya* (the tendency of ignorance) will occur repeatedly and will come to dwell in sensations of indifference or equanimity.

*Motto: Delusion dwelling in equanimity  
We must eliminate.*

Thus, we must practise insight meditation so that we are able to comprehend distinctly that sensations of equanimity are in fact *anicca* (impermanence) and thereby eliminate the tendency of ignorance (*avijjā nusaya* = *Moha*) which dwells in the sensations of equanimity. But to do so will not be very easy because sensations of equanimity are very subtle and difficult to note. Therefore, noting should be resumed in the usual way on rising and falling to comprehend the dissolution of phenomena.

Yogis who attain the stage of *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa* will already have acquired the base of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* (insight into passing away of all phenomena). Therefore, when noting with particular attention to 'rising, falling', etc., reverently and intently, they will experience the phenomenon of 'rising' passing away instantaneously. When noting 'falling' they will

experience the phenomenon of 'falling' passing away instantaneously. They will also experience that it is followed by instantaneous passing away of the noting mind.

When the processes of passing away are experienced while noting and contemplating, you will know that the sense objects of rising and falling, as well as the noting mind, are impermanent. Thus, when *anicca* (impermanence) is comprehended, *moha* (delusion) i.e. *avijjā nūsa* (the tendency of ignorance) which repeatedly dwells in sensations of equanimity, will be eliminated. Consequently, noble *dhamma* to which you should aspire, will be gained.

Thus, because you have listened to the *dhamma* talk on the method by which the bodily movements of rising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting, stepping forward, placing down, etc. are to be noted respectfully and intently and the method by which the three tendencies which dwell in the three kinds of sensations are eliminated, may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the happiness of *nibbāna* to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.

## Chapter Three

### The Third Dhamma Discourse

#### Continuous Noting

By noting continuously, yogis who have not yet experienced *dhamma* will do so, those who have already experienced *dhamma* will make further progress and those who are worthy of gaining noble *dhamma* will gain it.

Discontinuous noting is not helpful. If notings are not continuous, and are widely spaced, yogis who have not yet experienced *dhamma* will not do so, those who have already experienced it will regress and those who are worthy of gaining noble *dhamma* will not gain it.

*Motto : Notings must be made  
With no rest or no breaks.*

#### Three Ways of Contemplation

In accordance with the teachings of the *Buddha*, our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw has

instructed us in Three Ways of Contemplation which should be continuous:

1. Sitting meditation which should be practised continuously for an hour, keeping the body still and the mind from wandering.
2. Walking meditation, where more mindfulness is needed in noting than in sitting meditation as there are more distractions. Yogis may look at something that they see, or listen to something that they hear, or speak to someone whom they meet.
3. Detailed notings of activities such as making the bed, washing clothes, bathing, etc. when you are not practising sitting or walking meditation. Even more mindfulness is required here than in walking meditation to sustain continuous noting. At first, some yogis find it very difficult to make continuous detailed notings of general activities, but once they succeed, they are well on their way to making progress in their meditation.

Apart from four hours of sleep around midnight which is the rest period for a yogi, the three types of noting should be done continuously, at appropriate times, with no breaks in between.

Notings must be done with great mindfulness to develop concentration and to ensure continuity. Then only will insight be gained and progress be made towards attaining *nibbāna*, for the purpose of *vipassanā* meditation is to experience the *dhamma* and to be free from all suffering.

Our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw, has given the simile of a man rubbing flint to light a fire.

Just as continual rubbing is required to light a fire, so also is continuous noting necessary to strengthen concentration.

## **Sampajañña: Clear Comprehension**

To be able to practise general detailed notings, you must note according to the teachings of the *Buddha* on *sampajañña* (clear comprehension). Based on the *Buddha's* teachings, commentators have explained the **Four Basic Kinds of Clear Comprehension** i.e. right knowledge based on right attentiveness (*sampajañña*):

1. *Sātthaka Sampajañña* - Clear Comprehension of Purpose. Choosing what is most beneficial and advantageous for oneself. By deciding to take part in meditation retreat, you have made the most beneficial choice of spending your time.
2. *Sappāya Sampajañña* - Clear Comprehension of Suitability. Choosing the meditation centre that will be most suitable for you and the meditation teacher who will suit you most.
3. *Gocara Sampajañña* - Clear Comprehension of Domain of Meditation i.e. the practising of continuous noting.



It is the most important of the four *samipajañña*. All yogis must resolve to practise continuous noting during the retreat at the meditation centre.

4. *Assammoha Samipajañña* - Clear Comprehension of Reality. To practise continuous noting in order to discern mind and matter, experience the *dhamma* that there is no "I" and later to discern cause and effect and to progress in *dhamma*.

As *samādhi* (concentration) develops with the diligent practice of continuous noting, *assammoha samipajañña* is achieved. At first, when noting 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' it will not be evident, but as *samādhi* develops, you will realize that 'rising' is separate from the awareness and noting of it; that 'falling' is separate from the awareness and noting of it; and similarly with sitting, touching, etc. Rising, falling, sitting, touching are physical phenomena without consciousness (*rūpa*) while the awareness and noting of them are mental phenomena with consciousness (*nāma*). The comprehension of the *dhamma* that the body is composed of nothing more than *rūpa* (matter) and *nāma* (mind), that there is no "I", that "I" is only a concept for conventional usage, is gained. With continuous noting, cause and effect will be comprehended.

In order to attain knowledge of matter and mind and of cause and effect, continuous noting, *gocara samipajañña* is essential.

## Dhamma attained by noting Forward and Backward Movements

According to the teaching of the *Buddha*, *sampajañña* (clear comprehension) may be achieved by four kinds of continuous forward and backward noting while walking, while standing, while sitting and while lying down.

### 1. While Practising Walking Meditation ...

In walking meditation, forward movement noting is made when you note intently every stage of the movement of each step as you walk forward. Note to comprehend ultimate reality i.e. the four elements, as much as possible and discard apparent reality (*paññatti*) i.e. the form of the foot, as much as possible. Note to experience the feeling of lightness i.e. *tejo* (the element of heat, an element of lightness) and *vāyo* (the element of motion, an element of lightness) as you lift the foot; and the feeling of heaviness i.e. *pathavī* (the element of extension, a heavy element) and *āpo* (the element of cohesion, a heavy element) as you lower it and place it down.

*Motto:     The elements of pathavī and āpo  
              Are distinctly heavy.  
              The elements of tejo and vāyo  
              Are distinctly light.*

When you reach the end of your designated path, stop a while and note intently and closely your intention to turn, before turning, to retrace your steps. This may not be easy at first, but as *samādhi* develops,

you will be aware of the intending mind. You will be aware of the body turning because of the wish to turn. Thus, you will discern matter and mind.

*Motto: It is the mind that wants to do;  
It is the body that does it.  
It is neither you nor I,  
But Mind and Matter.*

When you stop and turn at the end of your designated path, that is the backward movement. The continuous noting of every stage of the turning movement is the noting of the backward movement.

Among the three ways of contemplation — sitting, walking and general detailed notings — walking meditation is most helpful in strengthening continuous noting and concentration.

It is important to practise continuous noting so that the *dhamma* is comprehended distinctly. Continuous noting must be done respectfully, not lightly. The mind, intending or wishing to do, must be noted first. Then all actions should be performed slowly and gently and noted. Yogis will realize that it is the intending or wishing mind that causes the body to do whatever is intended or desired. Thus, yogis will discern cause and effect.

## 2. While Practising Standing Meditation ...

While standing, if you wish to bend, note the intending mind first, then note each stage of the bending movement. Discard as much as possible, the apparent

reality (*Paññatti*) of the form of the body, the head and the limbs; and note intently to comprehend as much as possible, the ultimate reality (*paramatha*) of the feeling of heaviness, the elements of *pathavī* and *āpo*, as you bend down. That is the noting of the forward movement.

Before straightening up again, note the intending mind first, then the stages of the upward movement and the feeling of lightness, the elements of *tejo* and *vāyo*, as the body straightens up. That is the noting of the backward movement.

As *samādhi* develops, with the correct method and noting, the perception of the four elements (*Mahābhūta*: *Mahā* means great and *Bhūta* means grow or develop. *Mahābhūta* means to develop greatly) will be achieved. The *dhamma* is hard to see, it is difficult and deep. But yogis must practise continuous noting until the elements of lightness and heaviness are experienced. You will then become interested and absorbed in meditation and you will make progress in *dhamma*.

### 3. While Practising Sitting Meditation ...

In sitting meditation, notings of forward and backward movements may be made distinctly when you pay obeisance to the *Buddha* while saying your prayers.

Before bending forward, note the intention to do so first. As you bend forward, note the ultimate reality of each stage of the bending movement, the feeling of heaviness caused by *pathavī* and *āpo*. If you are particularly mindful and bend forward slowly and gently, like someone who is ill, you will experience

a feeling of heaviness as you bend forward. Discard apparent reality as much as possible and concentrate to comprehend ultimate reality as much as possible. Note each stage of bending forward closely. That is the noting of the forward movement.

When your head touches the floor, note 'touching, touching'. Then note the intention to raise your head. As you raise your head and your body to an upright position, discard apparent reality as much as possible and note each stage of the rising movement to comprehend the ultimate reality of lightness caused by *tejo* and *vāyo*, as much as possible, until you are sitting erect again. That is the noting of the backward movement.

In a retreat, yogis will generally be able to comprehend the nature of lightness and heaviness. You will also experience aches and pains; you will comprehend the nature of suffering. Most yogis will reach the stage of *sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics of existence) where suffering will be very evident. Yogis will comprehend the nature of suffering.

As *samādhi* (concentration) develops, after comprehending the ultimate reality of lightness and heaviness, yogis will discern the stages of each movement and the breaks between the stages. Yogis will find that one stage arises and passes away, then another arises and passes away. Yogis will attain *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena).

As *samādhi* develops to a greater extent, at the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* (insight into passing away of



phenomena), yogis will comprehend the dissolution of phenomena. At this stage, only the passing away of phenomena is distinct. It is a strong insight. Therefore, forms are discarded automatically, apparent reality (*paññatti*) is submerged; only lightness and heaviness is evident; when insight is weak, apparent reality is evident; when insight develops and grows strong, apparent reality is discarded; it is submerged.

Due to the distinct passing away of phenomena, *anicca* (impermanence) is comprehended. Physical phenomena, as well as the awareness and noting of them are comprehended as impermanent. The rapidity of the passing away of phenomena will oppress you and will cause you to realize *dukkha* (suffering). The inability of yogis to prevent the rapid passing away of phenomena will bring about the realization of *anattā* (the absence of a self or the uncontrollableness of things).

### While Lying Down ...

When you are about to lie down, note the intention to lie down first. Then perform every movement slowly and note as you lie down. When your head touches the pillow note 'touching, touching'. When you are lying down note 'lying down, lying down'. That is the noting of the forward movement.

While you are lying down, note 'rising, falling' until you are sleepy, then note 'sleepy, sleepy' until you fall asleep.

As soon as you wake up note 'awake, awake'. Then note the intention to get up. When you get up slowly, note each movement intently until you are standing up. That is the noting of the backward movement.

## Merit in *Sampajañña* Notings

When noting the intending mind, you are practising *cittānupassanā*. When noting your bodily movements, you are practising *kāyānupassanā*. When noting, while praying, that your mind is clear and calm and filled with *pīti* (joy), you are practising *vedenānupassanā*. When aches and pains occur and you note, you are also practising *vedanānupassanā*. When you hear others praying or talking, or when you hear other sounds and note 'hearing, hearing', you are practising *dhammānupassanā*.

When you make the *Buddha* an object of thought before praying, you gain the preliminary merit of paying homage to him. Therefore, when you practise *vipassanā* meditation you are free from fault and acquire the five kinds of merit mentioned above.

*Motto: If you wish to acquire a lot of merit,  
practise vipassanā.*

In sitting, walking and in general detailed notings, it is important to discard apparent reality (the form of the body and limbs) and to concentrate on comprehending ultimate reality (the four elements of *pathavi*, *tejo*, *āpo* and *vāyo*). Once you have comprehended ultimate reality, you will be able to progress through the stages of *vipassanā* knowledge. By diligence in the practice of continuous noting, it is possible to attain the insight of a *sotāpanna*, a *sakadāgāmi*, an *anāgāmi* and an *arahant* and be liberated from all suffering. The *dhamma* is profound, subtle and hard to comprehend, but by practising *vipassanā* meditation, it can be comprehended.

To sit noting for an hour without moving the body or allowing the mind to wander, the yogi must find a quiet spot, sit cross-legged or on folded legs or in any position which will be comfortable for a long time. Sit upright with head erect and concentrate on the abdomen. Breathe in, and when the abdomen expands, follow and note as closely as possible the stages by which the abdomen rises, from the start of the rising movement until the end, noting 'rising, rising'.

When you breathe out and the abdomen contracts, follow as closely as possible the stages by which it falls, from the start of the falling movement until the end, noting 'falling, falling'.

*Motto: Sit cross-legged with upright back,  
Still and quiet in body and mind.  
Keep head erect.  
Concentrate on the abdomen.  
Note, O yogi, the rise and fall.*

Continuous noting in sitting meditation can be achieved by practice; it is not as difficult as in walking meditation where there are more distractions and where more mindfulness is needed in noting or as in general detailed notings which require particular concentration. After 20 minutes or half an hour of sitting meditation, yogis may begin to have pain, numbness and aches in their legs, thighs, back, chest etc. When the aches, pain and numbness are distinct, yogis must note them intently.

But in noting the painful sensations there should be no desire for the sensations to disappear, no aggressive state

of mind to annihilate them. Notings should be made to know the increase and decrease in the intensity of the sensations and to know the changes in their location.

If there is desire for the sensations to disappear, there will be *lobha* (greed) in the notings and therefore, unknowingly, notings will be discontinuous and widely spaced. Indriya will not be sharpened and progress in knowledge will not be made.

When noting sensations, yogis should note intently, to know as much as possible, the nature of the aches and pains etc. First of all, the mind must be focused on the place where the pain occurs to discover whether the pain is on the skin or in the nerves or in the bones and to know the extent of the pain; then the yogis must note 'paining, aching, etc. After that they must note separately the increase and decrease in the intensity of pain and the changes in location of sensations.

As concentration develops to a moderate extent, by noting the aches and pains separately, three, four or five times, not too slowly nor too quickly, yogis will discover that the aches and pains will lessen by degrees until they are relieved of them or that the aches and pains will change their location.

As concentration develops to a greater extent, yogis will find that by noting the aches and pains separately as 'aching, paining', they can experience the pain increasing at every noting, then decreasing at every noting until they are relieved of the aches and pains.

Thus, by noting continuously the painful sensations as they occur, while contemplating on the rise and fall of the

abdomen so that there are no breaks in the notings, the controlling faculties will be sharpened and insight will increase quickly.

While practising sitting meditation, while noting 'rising, falling, sitting, touching, etc.' one's thoughts may sometimes wander to external objects of consciousness such as one's town, village, house, school, to the market, to matters that must be attended to. When this occurs, the wandering mind must be noted as 'wandering, thinking, planning' and so on, so that there is no break in the notings.

It is only when you practise *vipassanā* meditation that you become more aware of the flitting and wandering nature of the mind. Like a monkey in the jungle, the mind of *puthujjana* (ordinary worldings) flits from one object of consciousness to another very rapidly; that is its nature. It is extremely difficult to control the mind; it can be effectively controlled only by continual noting.

Yogis whose *samādhi* (concentration) is still weak cannot be aware, during sitting meditation, of every instant when the mind wanders rapidly. When asked by their meditation teacher, "Is there any wandering of the mind?" they will usually reply, "No, your Reverence." However, the meditation teacher knows that yogis are unaware of wandering of the mind because their *samādhi* is weak.

### **Mātikāmātā**

The Noble *Buddha* Himself taught that it is difficult to discipline the mind effectively. Once, in the time of the *Buddha*, there was a *dāyikā* called *Mātikāmātā* who attended



most satisfactorily to the dietary needs of monks according to their likings of which she was aware.

Upon hearing about her, a certain monk went to the *Buddha* to learn the methods of meditation and then asked for permission to reside at the monastery which was supported by *Mātikāmātā*.

On arriving at the monastery, he found it empty, dusty and in need of cleaning. He wished that *Mātikāmātā* would send someone to clean the monastery. She was aware of his wish and sent someone to do the cleaning.

He wished that she would send him some cordial to drink. Again, she knew of his wish and sent him some cordial. He wished that she would send him rice gruel and some suitable food to eat with it at dawn. This wish was also fulfilled. He then wished for some fruits to be sent at mid-morning and the fruits were sent. His next wish was for *Mātikāmātā* to come personally to the monastery with food offerings for his morning meal. She came and offered him alms food.

After his meal, the monk asked if she was indeed *Mātikāmātā*. She replied that she was. He asked if she was capable of knowing the thoughts of others. She asked the reason for his question. He told her that he wanted to know because she had fulfilled all his wishes.

When she replied that there were many monks who were capable of knowing the thoughts of others, he said that he was asking about her and not about others. As she was unable to evade his question, she said that a person who could know the thoughts of others would act as she had done.

Learning that she was indeed capable of knowing the thoughts of others, the monk became extremely uncomfortable and apprehensive. He thought, "All worldlings are prone to think right and proper thoughts as well as inappropriate and wrong thoughts. If I should think inappropriate thoughts, I shall be caught red-handed like a thief with stolen goods. I must flee from this monastery," and told her that he would be leaving to go to the *Buddha*. Despite her request for him to remain, he said that he did not wish to stay on and left to join the *Buddha*.

When he arrived, the *Buddha* asked him why he had returned. He replied that he had not dared to stay on at *Mātikāmātā's* monastery because she was aware of his thoughts and he was afraid to be caught like a thief with stolen goods, thinking inappropriate thoughts.

The *Buddha* stated that he should return as that monastery was most suitable for him. When the monk submitted that he was afraid, the *Buddha* replied that he should observe only one thing to dispel his fears and uttered these words, "It is good to be able to discipline and tame the mind which is so hard to control, which changes so rapidly, which settles on objects of consciousness at will, because it will enable you to attain worldly happiness, the happiness of celestial beings and the bliss of *nibbāna*."

By nature the mind changes rapidly. The arising and dissolution of thoughts is exceedingly fast; it falls on objects of consciousness at will. Therefore, it is very difficult to control and subdue it. It is only by practising *vipassanā* meditation that the wild, wicked and unruly mind can be disciplined and subdued. A mind which has been truly subdued by *vipassanā* meditation can attain the true happiness

of *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*.

*Motto: The wild, unruly mind, so hard to control;  
Changes so rapidly and falls where it will.  
By watching and noting and admonishing it,  
It becomes subdued and well-behaved.  
Then, the peace of nibbāna is gained.*

The *Buddha* continued by admonishing the monk not to think inappropriate and wrong thoughts and to return to *Mātikāmātā's* monastery to meditate. The monk obeyed the *Buddha* and returned to the monastery.

*Mātikāmātā* offered him suitable and nutritious food. He was therefore able to practise continuous noting effectively. His *indriya* (controlling faculties) were sharpened and within three days he attained noble insight and became an *arahant*.

## Sitting Meditation

In sitting meditation, yogis should note continuously 'rising, falling, sitting, touching' and so on as instructed by our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw. If the mind should wander, you must note the wandering mind as 'planning, thinking' and so on, continuously. In this way the controlling faculties will be sharpened and insight can be attained quickly.

If yogis should hear others talking or hear the sounds of birds or sounds of hammering etc. while practising sitting meditation you must note 'hearing, hearing' to prevent thoughts from arising and to maintain continuous noting.

Also, when images of monasteries, pagodas, celestial beings etc. appear due to the influence of *samādhi*, you must keep out thoughts by noting continuously 'seeing'. Similarly, if you should smell something, you must note continuously 'smelling, smelling.'

Thus, in sitting meditation, the noting of 'rising, falling, sitting, touching — *kāyānupassanā*; the noting of aches and pains as they occur — *vedanānupassanā*; the noting of seeing, hearing, smelling as they occur — *dhammānupassanā* will be continuous noting; there will be no break. Thereby, the *indriya* (controlling faculties) will be sharpened and progress in insight will be made.

## Walking Meditation

As instructed by our benefactor, the Most Venerable Mahāśī Sayadaw, an hour of sitting meditation must be followed by walking meditation so that notings may be continuous:

1. If you walk fairly fast, you should note each step as one noting: 'left foot forward, right foot forward.'
2. If you should walk fairly slowly, you should note each step as two notings: 'lifting, placing down'.
3. If you should walk more slowly, you should make three notings for each step: 'lifting, stepping forward, placing down.'
4. You may also make six notings for each step. Commentators have suggested making six notings as follows: 'raising, lifting, stepping forward,

placing the foot down, touching the floor or ground and finally, pressing the foot against the floor or ground before raising the heel of the other foot.'

5. Or you may make six notings for each step as follows: 'wanting to lift, lifting, wanting to step forward, stepping forward, wanting to place down, placing down.'

The benefits derived from walking meditation are:

1. The building up of stamina to enable you to walk long distances.
2. An increase in the energy of effort in practising *vipassanā* meditation.
3. Being healthy and free from disease.
4. Having a good digestion.
5. Developing strong *samādhi* (concentration) which is not easily destroyed.

When changing from walking to sitting meditation, the changing movements must be done gently and slowly and noted closely. The concentration developed in walking meditation is a strong *samādhi* based on movement and is therefore less liable to be destroyed by external distractions. It should be carried on to sitting meditation and used as a foundation upon which to build the *samādhi* of sitting meditation which like that of lying down meditation, is a *Samādhi* based on stillness and therefore liable to be destroyed more easily when the yogi gets up and moves.

If yogis resolve to practise sitting meditation for an hour, keeping the body still and the mind from wandering,



notings will usually be continuous. The individuals who look after the yogis will take special care to see that their notings are not disrupted.

When practising walking meditation, the individuals who look after the yogis will take reasonable care to see that notings are not disrupted. But yogis themselves may not be able to note as attentively as in sitting meditation and notings may be disrupted and widely spaced because of distractions. They may listen to sounds that they hear or look at something that they see or speak to someone whom they meet so that notings will be discontinuous and widely spaced.

To prevent this from happening, the scriptures state that even though you are a person with clear eyesight, you should behave like someone who is blind. Even though you are a person with good hearing, you should behave like someone who is deaf. Even though you are a wise and intelligent person who is capable of speaking well, you should behave like someone who is dumb. Even though you are a person who is healthy and energetic, you should behave like someone who is weak and ill. By keeping still, one can accomplish what should be accomplished. Therefore, when lying down, one should be still.

Yogis who wish to practise continuous noting to attain *magga* (path) and *phala* (fruition) should follow the scriptural advice.

*Motto: Even a person with good eyesight  
should act as if blind.  
Even a person with good hearing  
should act as if deaf.*

*Even a person who speaks well  
should act as if dumb.*

*Even a person who is healthy and strong  
should act as if weak*

When practising walking meditation, for notings to be continuous, yogis should take particular care not to let their eyes stray. You can look straight ahead or sideways with mindfulness. Do not look up or look back; or else you will regress in your notings. When you see someone pass by it should be merely seeing. You should not look to see whether it is a male or a female, whether tall or short, fair or dark etc. Some yogis say, "How can it be done? It is impossible." But with *samādhi* (concentration), it is possible. While walking, the yogi will be noting and therefore will note 'seeing, seeing' and not the person who passes by.

Yogis should lower their eyes to see a yard or two ahead. In a place where it is possible to walk with closed eyes, they should do so if their *samādhi* has not developed yet. This will help to develop *samādhi* more easily.

The eyes should be specially watched to prevent them from looking here and there as they are most capable of destroying *samādhi*. When careful watch is kept on the eyes, yogis will find that *samādhi* will develop quickly and interesting insight into the *dhamma* will be realized.

When you are not practising sitting or walking meditation, when you return to your living quarters, you must make continuous detailed notings of your general activities. This may seem easy, but it can be difficult. Notings may become widely spaced. Even after ten days or so, some yogis are unable to make detailed notings well because the noting

mind is slow and the actions such as bending, stretching, sitting, standing, taking, holding etc. are fast.

Since childhood, yogis have mostly performed such activities energetically without mindfulness. It is only now that notings are made to develop *samādhi*. Therefore, you are unable to note the present accurately. That is why you must perform all activities slowly. But if bodily movements are controlled and made very slowly, there will be too much *vīriya* (effort) and knowledge will not be gained.

If bodily movements are neither too fast nor too slow, but are made naturally at a suitable pace and notings are made accurately on the present, yogis will discover such phenomena as lightness, heaviness, pushing and pulling, and by continuous noting the controlling faculties are sharpened and progress in insight will be made.

In ancient times there were many elders who meditated earnestly to attain *magga* and *phala*. Their example of continuous noting should be followed.

### The Mindful Elders

Once, an elder met some young monks who were his pupils and for whom he had great affection. He was so delighted to meet them that while engaged in conversation with them, he bent his hand quickly without mindfulness. As soon as he realized that he had done so, he stretched out his hand and bent it again with mindfulness.

Seeing him stretching out his hand gently and then bending it again gently, the young monks asked him respectfully the reason for his actions. He told them that he had done so because ever since he began practising

meditation, he had not performed any physical action without noting, but because of his delight in seeing them and in speaking to them, he had been forgetful. He should, indeed, be emulated.

Once, there was an elder who resided alone in a forest monastery and practised continuous noting. He had to walk across farmlands to reach the only village where he could get alms food. On his way to the village his mind would sometimes wander and he would walk without noting, but as soon as he was aware that he had lapsed he would retrace his steps and walk with mindfulness again.

The farmers who saw him retracing his steps several times and then continuing to the village thought he was looking for something that he had lost. However, the elder paid no attention to the farmers or to what they said but proceeded on his way to the village, noting continuously. As a result of his continuous noting, he became an *arahant* within twenty years of his monkhood. He too, should be emulated by yogis who wish to attain *magga* and *phala*.

By repeating one's actions with continuous noting and retracing one's steps with continuous noting whenever a lapse occurs, the *indriya* (controlling faculties) will be sharpened and rapid progress in insight will be made.

## **Benefits of continuous Noting in Sitting and Walking Meditation**

Commentators who knew the wishes of the *Buddha* most—have stated that yogis who practise continuous noting in sitting and walking meditation and in general detailed notings

will receive seven benefits instantly.

1. The benefit of safeguarding the six sense bases of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind from the arising of the defilements of *lobha* (greed), *dosa* (anger) and *moha* (delusion).
2. The benefit of being pure and free from the three physical wrongdoings of killing another, stealing another's property and harming the wives and children of others.

They will also be pure and free from the four verbal wrongdoings of lying, malicious speech, abusive and harsh speech and useless chatter.

They will benefit from being pure and free from the three mental wrongdoings of scheming to make another's property their own by wrongful means, of scheming to kill or torture another, of rejecting the law of *kamma* i.e. rejecting the belief that doing good will have good effects and that doing evil will have bad effects.

3. The benefit of being pure in *sīla* (morality) especially in *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla* (eight precepts) and in the *pañca sīla* (five precepts).

*Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla* is

- i. To always abstain from killing another.
- ii. To always abstain from stealing another's property.
- iii. To always abstain from sexual misconduct.
- iv. To always abstain from lying.
- v. To always abstain from back-biting and tale-bearing.
- vi. To always abstain from coarse and harsh speech.

- vii. To always abstain from useless chatter.
- viii. To always abstain from wrong livelihood.

These *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla* (eight precepts) may be observed by yogis who wish to practise meditation without abstaining from eating after mid-day.

If these eight precepts are fully observed, the five precepts will also be fully observed. If the five precepts are fully observed, the above eight precepts will also be fully observed. They differ only in the number of precepts but when fully observed they are similar. Although the precept to abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs is not mentioned in *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla*, it is considered to be included because it is a misconduct and must be observed in the precept to abstain from sexual misconduct.

Back-biting and tale bearing, harsh speech and useless chatter are also similar in principle to lying and therefore, they are included when the five precepts are fully observed.

Abstaining from the three physical wrongdoings and the four verbal wrongdoings which concern one's livelihood, will amount wrongdoings to abstaining from wrong livelihood.

Therefore, the five precepts and *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla* are considered to be similar.

#### • The danger of not guarding your-eyes

Commentators have expressed, according to the wishes of the *Buddha*, the virtues of restraint and subjugation of the senses which sons and daughters of good



parentage who wish to safeguard their *sīla* (morality) should heed.

It is stated that if one should look wrongfully at the offspring of others with lustful eyes, scrutinising their bodies in detail, the damage that one does to oneself is many times more than the pain from being poked in the eyes with red-hot irons. This is true because being poked in the eyes with red-hot irons will blind you for single lifetime only. Whereas the evil results of wrongfully lusting after another's offspring and then committing sexual misconduct will send you to hell where there is not a trace of happiness, and in later existences, you will always be reborn in ignoble circumstances.

Should you be reborn as a human being, the low status and evil consequences which you will have to endure will be frightening.

The Consequences of Committing Sexual Misconduct are:

- a. Many people will bear you ill-will.
- b. You will have many enemies.
- c. You will be poor.
- d. You will be devoid of health and happiness.
- e. You will be born as a woman.
- f. You will be born as neither a man nor a woman (as an aberration).
- g. You will be born repeatedly of ignoble lineage.
- h. You will be disgraced and shamed.
- i. You will be deformed.
- j. You will be anxious in all matters.

k. You will be separated from loved ones.

*Motto: Committing sexual misconduct  
Will cause many to hate you  
And bear you enmity.  
Riches will not come your way;  
Nor happiness be with you.  
Born as an aberration;  
Born repeatedly of low lineage;  
Disgraced and shamed and deformed;  
Always anxious, separated from loved ones.  
These are the evil consequences.*

Yogis who practise continuous noting will be safeguarding *ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla* (eight precepts) the *pañca sīla* (five precepts) and the virtues of restraint and will therefore, be free from the danger of enduring the evil consequences of sexual misconduct.

#### • How monks should behave towards females

The *Buddha* taught that it is important for monks to observe their *sīla* well — to see that rules of morality are not broken in their relations with females. Therefore, all sons and daughters of good parentage who aspire to worldly and to supramundane benefits should follow His teachings with great respect.

When it is unavoidable for monks to associate with females, young and old, they must regard them as their mothers or aunts or older sisters or younger sisters or daughters according to the age of the respective females and conduct themselves in a proper manner.

It is because members of the *sangha*, throughout the generations, have complied with the *Buddha's* teachings on rules of conduct, that the doctrine of the *Buddha* has brought increasing worldly and supramundane benefits up to this day.

Although rules of conduct for females when associating with monks were not laid down explicitly by the *Buddha*, it follows that the rules of conduct for monks, when associating with females should be observed in converse by all females. Females must regard the monks with whom they have to associate as their fathers or uncles or elder brothers or younger brothers or sons, according to the age of the respective monks and behave in a proper manner.

It is because all females of good lineage, throughout the generations, have behaved in a proper manner when associating with monks that the doctrine of the *Buddha* has brought increasing worldly and supramundane benefits up to this day.

### • Speech befitting the *sāsanā*

Nowadays, boys and girls and young men and women associate less frequently with members of the *sangha* and when occasion arises are unable to make submissions to them in a suitable manner in accordance with the teachings of the *Buddha*.

Instead of saying, "That is true, your Reverence" or "That is so, Venerable Sir" or "with respect, Venerable Sir", you will often hear them answer "Yes".

Young Buddhist males and females may respect and revere members of the *sangha*, but because verbal

communication seldom occurs, they do not know that they should refer to themselves as "Your disciple" and not by name. It is not impolite to do so, but nevertheless, it is not in the correct tradition of the *sāsanā*.

Since young Buddhist males and females do not know how to speak or to make submissions to the *sangha* in a proper manner, they become reluctant to meet and to associate with them and as a result, Buddhist culture has declined.

Monks, on their part, think it improper to teach young men and women whom they do not know very well, to speak befittingly and overlook their wrong usage in conversations and submissions.

Therefore, young Buddhist males and females, when associating with members of the *sangha*, should regard them according to their respective ages, as one's parents or relatives and say "That is true, Your Reverence" or "with respect, Venerable Sir" or "That is not so, Your Reverence" or "That is not true, Venerable Sir" as the case may be. Males should refer to themselves as "Your disciple" and females as "Your female disciple" and address *sanghas* as "Your Reverence" or "Venerable Sir".

At first, young males and females who are not accustomed to the correct usage may feel somewhat reluctant to address the *sangha* in the proper way, but once they become accustomed to doing so, they will have no difficulty. Also, since they will be conforming to the culture of the *Buddha's* doctrine, they will gain increasing benefits.

4. Yogis who practise continuous noting will have the benefit of being loved and respected by their fellow yogis. However, yogis whose notings are not continuous and who practise superficially will not be looked upon well by fellow yogis and will not be happy.
5. Yogis who practise continuous noting will have the benefit of living in accordance with the wishes of the *Buddha*.

Once, the *Buddha's* step-mother Gotami, who revered him greatly, paid homage to him with these wishes: "Noble *Buddha* whose diligence is great, may you live long. Noble *Buddha* who is more noble than the five universal monarchs, may you live for the duration of the universe".

Whereupon, the *Buddha* told her that homage should not be paid with such wishes and rejected her homage.

When she asked how suitable homage should be paid, the *Buddha* stated: "To behold reverently the disciples of the *Buddha* whose minds send them forth to *nibbāna*, who practise with diligence, who practise continuously and are united, is to pay homage to the *Buddha*.

"Step mother Gotami, to behold reverently and pay homage to my disciples who have minds that send them forth to *nibbāna*, who practise continuous noting with the desire to attain *nibbāna* quickly, is to pay homage to me".

Thus, because the *Buddha* stated that all His disciples who practise continuous noting are to be

regarded as equal to Him, yogis who practise continuous noting have the benefit of living in accordance with the wishes of the *Buddha*.

- 6 Yogis who practise continuous noting and meditation have the benefit of fully utilizing the time and the opportunity which they have obtained, both of which are hard to come by. They have the benefit of not allowing time and opportunity to slip away.

The four great opportunities for obtaining insight into the *dhamma*:

- i. To live in a time of the *Buddha's* teachings.
- ii. To live in a place where the *Buddha's* doctrine flourishes.
- iii. To have good and right beliefs.
- iv. To have perfectly functioning six sense bases of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind.

*Motto: To worship the Buddha who has been enlightened  
To live in a place where the doctrine flourishes,  
To have right views and six sense bases,  
That are complete,  
Are opportunities indeed.*

7. Yogis who practise continuous noting have the benefit of providing fellow citizens with the chance to make suitable offerings of *dāna*.

It means that there are no defilements such as *lobha* (greed) and *dosa* (anger) in the continuum of a yogi who is practising continuous noting. During that time, the yogi is like a fertile field in which to plant



the seeds of good deeds so that the *dāna* (charity) of various food offerings made by the people will gain them many benefits such as abundance of riches in every existence.

### • Merit while Eating Food Offerings

Yogis may acquire merit in three ways while eating food offerings.

- a. **Eating with *sīla*** : First of all, yogis should reflect on the purpose of eating. It is neither for pleasure and enjoyment nor to make the body beautiful, but to enable yogis to practise *vipassanā* meditation. Therefore, yogis should eat moderately, without greed, to sustain themselves and to gain merit.
- b. **Eating with *samatha*** : Yogis should also reflect with *mettā* (loving kindness) on the donors of the food offerings and on those who have helped in the preparation of the food (*veyyāvacca*) and radiate loving kindness to all beings in the ten directions. This will amount to eating with *samatha*.
- c. **Eating with *vipassanā*** : Most importantly, yogis should eat with *vipassanā* mindfulness. When they see the food, they should note 'seeing, seeing'; when preparing to take the food, note 'preparing, preparing'; when taking the food, note 'taking, taking' and so on with each intention and action, in accordance with the teaching of the *Buddha*.

When eating, yogis should note 'tasting', 'chewing', 'swallowing'. At first, it may be difficult to note all actions, so, yogis should note what is distinct. As chewing is the most distinct action in

eating, you should concentrate on noting 'chewing'. When *samādhi* develops, all actions can be noted.

A yogi once told his meditation teacher that he noted while eating only when the food was not tasty or not to his liking; he said it helped to get the food down. When the food was tasty and to his liking he enjoyed the food without noting. You should not follow his example. You should always note while eating.

Once, there was a young novice who attained arahantship while noting and eating. He would go on his daily round for alms food at about 8:30 am or 9 o'clock in the morning and take his meal by about 10:30 am or 11:00 am, by which time the food was cold.

However, one day while he was about to have his meal, an elder monk warned him not to scald his tongue when eating. He was puzzled, but then realized that the elder had warned him to eat with mindfulness and not to burn himself with *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* while eating. He followed the elder's advice and ate with mindfulness, noting continuously. He gained exceptional insight and became an arahant.

The *sampajañña* (clear comprehension) of continuous noting should be practised in walking, sitting, standing, lying down. Monks should note continuously when handling and wearing their robes, in handling their alms bowl etc. All yogis should note continuously when eating, drinking, chewing, tasting, swallowing, even when performing their

excretory functions to maintain continuous noting; in falling asleep, in waking; in speaking and in keeping silent.

*Motto: Whatever is done with awareness and noting,  
Is done with clear comprehension.*

Yogis should practise continuous noting, respectfully and intently, with their minds inclined towards dissolution to sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties) and to gain insight.

When doing so, they should take special care to note all phenomena, movements and activities closely. They should pay particular attention to the mind intending or wishing to do something, before slowly and gently doing it. Also, to observe *paramatha* (ultimate reality) and not *paññatti* (apparent reality); to perceive the four elements of *pathavī*, *āpo*, *tejo* and *vāyo* and three characteristics *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*, for the purpose of *vipassanā* meditation is to realize the *dhamma* and to be liberated from all suffering i.e. to attain *nibbāna*.

Thus, because you have listened to the *dhamma* discourse on the third cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties) which is noting continuously without breaks, respectfully and intently, with your mind inclined towards dissolution, may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna*, to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.

## Chapter Four

### The Fourth Dhamma Discourse

#### Seven Suitable Things

THERE ARE SEVEN THINGS that are suitable and seven that are not.

The seven things that yogis should depend upon to sharpen the controlling faculties and to gain insight are :

1. A suitable monastery and meditation centre at which to meditate.
2. A suitable village for obtaining alms food.
3. Suitable speech.
4. A suitable person to stay with.
5. Suitable food.
6. A suitable climate.
7. A suitable posture for meditation.

1. A Suitable Monastery or Meditation Centre should fulfil the following Five Conditions:

- i. It should not be too far from your home as anxieties may arise as to the safety etc. of your home and family and hinder progress in meditation nor should it be too near as you may be distracted

by frequent visitors from home which will also hinder progress.

- ii. It should be secluded and quiet.
- iii. It should have few insects such as gadflies, flies and mosquitoes so that samādhi may not be disturbed. If it is a forest monastery, it should be free from the danger of wild animals such as tigers, leopards and elephants.
- iv. Food, clothes and medicines and articles of use should be easily available.
- v. There should be a meditation teacher who will be a good friend and instruct you well to attain insight into the *dhamma*.

By meditating at a monastery or meditation centre which fulfils these five conditions, a yogi's *indriya* (controlling faculties) will be sharpened and progress in insight will be made.

*Motto: Not too far,  
Secluded and quiet.  
With few insects and no dangers,  
With easy availability of food, clothes  
and medicines,  
With a good friend and instructor;  
These five conditions should be fulfilled.*

Of the above five conditions, the fifth, which is to have an effective meditation teacher who should be regarded as a good friend, is exceedingly important. A meditation teacher who knows the nature and disposition of the yogis and can guide them correctly will enable yogis to gain the insight that they desire.

### • The Meditation Teacher

He should be capable of teaching the correct method of meditation, observing and discerning the nature of the yogi and teaching him accordingly.

He should be capable of teaching the correct method of meditation by relevant illustrations from pali scriptures and commentaries and from his own experiences in attaining the different stages of insight under the guidance of various teachers.

Generally, yogis may be divided into those who have a keen intellect and those who do not.

After obtaining the correct method of meditation, yogis with a keen intellect are able to gain insight into the nature of *dhamma* within a few days and are able to report distinctively on their findings. When the nature of matter and of mind are explained to them based on their findings, they become more keen to continue meditating and are able to make rapid progress in attaining insight.

Yogis who do not have a keen intellect may not gain clear insight into the nature of *dhamma* even after meditating for quite a while, though they have obtained the correct method of meditation. In order that they may sharpen their controlling faculties and gain insight into the nature of *dhamma* and progress in insight, it must be explained to them in detail that they must meditate respectfully, intently and continuously; that they must not adhere to or depend upon things that are unsuitable; that they must adhere to and depend upon things that are suitable.

Thus, it is of special importance to have a meditation teacher who can be looked upon as a good friend, to guide



and instruct you to gain insight into the nature of *dhamma* and to make progress in insight. A yogi who has a good and virtuous teacher is almost certain to gain insight.

Once, when the *Buddha* was residing in the village of Magaraka in the state of Sakka, Venerable Ānandā said, "O Lord *Buddha*, a person who can depend on a good and virtuous friend is half assured of gaining noble *dhamma*. The Lord *Buddha* replied, "Do not speak thus, Ānandā. Dependence on a good and virtuous friend will give you absolute assurance of attaining noble *dhamma*."

In deference to the words of the Lord *Buddha*, it is of particular importance to depend on a good and virtuous friend i.e. a good meditation teacher.

#### • Four Kinds of Meditation Centres

Nowadays, the teaching of *vipassanā* meditation (insight meditation) is flourishing; all wise persons are practising *vipassanā* meditation in their free time. However, it is essential that they choose a meditation centre which suits them. Otherwise, they may not attain insight and may become disheartened, resulting in wasted time and effort.

The Lord *Buddha* stated that there are Four Ways of Meditation Centres from which to choose.

- i. A meditation centre at which *dhamma* cannot be realized and where material requisites are scarce.
- ii. One at which *dhamma* cannot be realized but where material requisites are plentiful.
- iii. One at which *dhamma* can be realized but where material requisites are scarce.

- iv. One at which *dhamma* can be realized and where material requisites are plentiful.
  - i. At the first type of meditation centre, due to inadequate instruction and guidance by the meditation teacher or to other causes, yogis are unable to realize the *dhamma* even after meditating for ten or fifteen days. Material requisites such as water, food and clothes will be scarce. Yogis should not remain at such a meditation centre for whatever reason. They should leave as soon as possible without informing the authorities.
  - ii. At the second kind of meditation centre yogis are unable to realize the *dhamma* even after meditating for ten or fifteen days but material requisites will be plentiful due to the good fortune of the resident *Abbot* (sayadaw). Yogis should not remain at such a meditation centre for whatever reason. They should leave as soon as possible after informing the authorities.
  - iii. At the third of meditation centre, yogis will realize the *dhamma* distinctly within a few days, but material requisites will be scarce. Yogis must tolerate the scarcity and be patient. They should remain at this kind of meditation centre until the *dhamma* is fully realized.
  - iv. At the fourth kind of meditation centre, yogis will realize the *dhamma* distinctly within a few days and material requisites will be plentiful. When a yogi who has not realized the *dhamma* fully is asked to leave after a specified period so that others may have a chance to practise meditation, the yogi should request permission to remain and to continue with his practice.

Thus, as stated by the Lord *Buddha*, yogis should avoid the first and second kind of meditation centres and choose the third and fourth kind where clear insight can be gained.

## 2. A Suitable Village for Obtaining Alms Food.

*Sanghas* who enter a meditation centre should choose one near a village where they can go for their alms round and where suitable alms food can be obtained easily. This condition does not concern lay yogis.

## 3. Suitable Speech

Yogis who practise meditation should engage only in the ten kinds of speech which concern the nature of *dhamma*. They are:

- i. Speech about fewness of desires.
- ii. Speech about being easily contented.
- iii. Speech about living separate from friends and associates.
- iv. Speech about living in a quiet and secluded place.
- v. Speech about repeated effort (*vīriya*) in meditation.
- vi. Speech about *sīla* (morality).
- vii. Speech about *samādhi* (concentration).
- viii. Speech about *paññā* (wisdom).
- ix. Speech about the *magga* (path), *phala* (fruition) and *nibbāna* i.e. the Path of Emancipation.
- x. Speech about the knowledge of Emancipation.

*Motto:*    *To have few desires,  
               To be easily contented,  
               To be separate and quiet,  
               To strive repeatedly,  
               Sīla, samādhi, paññā, path of emancipation*

*And knowledge of Emancipation.  
Yogis may talk about these ten.*

### **i. Speech About Fewness of Desires**

Speech about fewness of desires states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* desired by yogis cannot be obtained by those who have bad and great desires; they can be obtained only by those with few desires.

Persons with bad desires are those who pretend to have faith and confidence in the *Buddha*, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*, in *kamma* and in its effect; who pretend to have *sīla*, wide learning, *samādhi*, and wisdom. They are not deserving of gaining noble *dhamma*.

*Motto: Those pretending to have qualities  
they do not possess are persons  
with bad desires.*

Persons with great desires are those who do have faith and confidence in the three refuges, who do have *sīla*, wide learning, *samādhi* and wisdom, but who make it known that they possess these qualities. They are not deserving of gaining noble *dhamma*.

*Motto: Those who make known the qualities  
they possess  
Are persons of great desires.*

Persons with few desires are those who have faith, *sīla*, wide learning, *samādhi* and wisdom, but who have no

desire for others to know about it; they strive as much as possible to make their qualities complete. They are deserving of gaining noble insight

*Motto: Those who keep secret the good qualities  
they possess  
Are persons of few desires.*

## ii. Speech About Being Easily Contented

Speech about being easily contented states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and nibbāna cannot be gained by yogis who are not easily contented with whatever property and riches they acquire; they can be gained only by yogis who are easily contented.

One may be easily contented in three ways:

- a. To be free from desire and to be easily contented with whatever riches one has and acquires even though one may see or hear about the wealth and influence of others.
- b. To reject the wish to acquire riches by illegal or wrongful means even though one may be poor and to be contented with whatever riches one may acquire by legal and rightful means.
- c. Not to yearn for the riches which one may have had in one's youth nor to hope and wish for the riches which one may acquire in the future should conditions be favourable, but to be contented with whatever one has now. Persons who possess these three kinds of contentment are worthy of attaining noble *dhamma*.

Persons who wish to attain noble *dhamma*, males and females of good parentage who wish to prosper and advance in life should heed and follow the advice of the Lord *Buddha* as expounded in the *Suāṇṇahamisa Jataka*. The Lord *Buddha* stated that the love and respect of others and the riches and gain that may be acquired will decrease for persons who have great desires and who are not satisfied with whatever riches they acquire; whereas, they will increase for those who have few desires and who are contented with whatever riches they acquire.

Once, when the Lord *Buddha* was residing at the Veluvanna monastery in the state of Sāvatti, an *upāsaka* (lay devotee) submitted that he would offer *dāna* to the *bhikkhunīs*. He requested the *bhikkhunīs* to come to his house and to take two or three large cloves of garlic each.

One day, while a festival was taking place, a *bhikkhunī* named Thonlanandā, accompanied by other *bhikkhunīs*, arrived at the *upāsaka's* house for the *dāna* of garlic. However, as it was a feast day, there was no garlic in the house. She was requested to go to the cultivated fields and to ask the watchman there for some garlic.

The *bhikkhunī* and her retinue of nuns went to the fields and helped themselves to much more than the two or three cloves of garlic which had been allowed and were censured by the watchman for taking the property of others without limit.

When the nuns and monks who had few desires and who were easily contented heard about it, they submitted the matter to the Lord *Buddha* who stated. "O Bhikkhus, a person with great desires who is not contented with the riches and property that he has, will no longer be loved even



by his mother; she will come to hate him. Those who do not respect him yet will not come to respect him; those who already respect him will lose their respect for him."

Prosperity will not come to a discontented person and whatever prosperity he already has will not remain; it will decrease.

*Motto: Even a mother will come to hate  
One who is discontented.  
Lack of respect and prosperity  
Can occur instantly.*

A person with few desires who is easily contented with whatever he gets in riches and property will come to be esteemed by those who do not esteem him yet; those who already esteems him will come to show him boundless esteem.

Prosperity will come to an easily contented person and whatever prosperity he already has will endure and increase.

*Motto: One who is contented wins esteem  
And prosperity which lasts.*

The Lord *Buddha* continued; "O *bhikkhus*. It is not only now that Thonlanandā is not easily contented. She had great desires and was discontented in the past too," and related her past thus:

In days gone by, when King Brahmadatta ruled the state of Baranasi, the would-be *Buddha* was a brahmin. When he came of age he was married to a brahmin lady

of the same caste. They had three daughters named Nandā, Nandāvadi and Sundari Nandā. Later, the would-be *Buddha* passed away.

He was reborn as a golden *himisa* (a ruddy sheldrake/goose) who could recall its past existences. On seeing its strong and beautiful body covered with golden quills, it reflected on the existence from which it had come and found that it had come from a human existence.

With its knowledge of former existences, it saw that its former wife and daughters were poor and working as servants for others. So, seeing that its quills were of pure gold it thought of giving them a quill each to make them rich.

Accordingly, it went to the house of its former wife and daughters and rested on the edge of the roof. Whereupon, they asked, "O golden *himisa*, from where have you come?" It replied, "I have come from the forest. I am no other than your father."

Then saying, "I have come to take care of you and make you rich by giving you a quill each from my wings which are of pure gold", he gave each of them a golden quill and flew off to the forest. In the same way, when circumstances permitted, it would come and give each of them a golden quill and they became rich.

One day, the brahmin's wife called her daughters and conferred with them thus: "Daughters, your father is an animal. The mind of animals is hard to know. It will be difficult for our livelihood when he does not come. Let us pull out all his quills when he comes this time." The daughters rejected her suggestion for fear of causing suffering

to their father, the golden himsa. However, the brahmin lady was avaricious and could not be contented. So one day when the golden himsa came, fearing that he would learn of her intention by going to the daughters first, she forestalled him by calling out, "Please come to me first." Then, with both hands, she pulled out all the quills from the golden himsa.

But because the quills had been pulled out with great cruelty, they turned white like the quills of a paddy bird. The golden himsa was put into a large pot to be bred as it could no longer fly, but the quills which grew afterwards were all white.

After thus relating the past, the Lord *Buddha* stated, "O *bhikkhus*, it is not only now that Thonlanandā, the *bhikkhuni*, has great desires and discontentment. She was so in past existences too and thereby lost the gold from the golden himsa. She will now lose the right to eat garlic. I shall decree that any *bhikkhunī* who eats garlic will be guilty of a transgression" and He decreed that abstaining from eating garlic should be one of the disciplinary rules for *bhikkhunīs*. Thus, because of Thonlanandā's discontentment, all *bhikkhunīs* lost the right to eat garlic.

To sum up the Jataka, the Lord *Buddha* stated. "The present Thonlanandā was the brahmin lady, the three daughters are now three sisters and I was the golden himsa."

### iii. Speech About Staying Separate from Companions

Speech about staying separate from companions states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* are not *dhamma* which can be attained by persons who eat, drink and live happily with their families, relatives

and friends. These *dhamma* can be attained only by those who meditate in whatever time is available while living separate from their families, relatives and friends.

There are two kinds of companions: External and Internal. The external companions are one's family, relatives and friends and the internal companion which is in the continuum of your being is *taṇhā* (craving), which gives rise to desire and pleasure.

Some people may live separate from their families, relatives and friends, but they delight in the *taṇhā* which is in the continuum of their beings.

They recall and enjoy the pleasurable and desirable past experiences of their youth and enjoy anticipating the pleasurable and desirable things that they may experience in the future. Such persons are said to have *taṇhā* as a companion and are not worthy of attaining noble *dhamma*.

#### iv. Living in a Secluded and Quiet Place

Speech about living in a secluded and quiet place states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* are not *dhamma* which can be gained by persons who delight in living in noisy places filled with sounds of music, songs and other noises. These *dhamma* can be attained only by persons who are happy living in a secluded and quiet place.

#### Three Kinds of Quietness:

- a. To live alone in a quiet place, separate from companions and friends, engaged in *dhamma* is quietness of body — *kāyaviveka*.

- b. To practise *samatha* meditation in order to achieve the eight attainments is quietness of mind — *cittaviveka*.
- c. With a foundation of *jhāna*, to practise insight meditation on conditioned things and mental formations until analytical knowledge and arahatship are attained is quietness of all things — *upadhiviveka*.

To live alone in a quiet and secluded place, separate from friends and companions, practising pure *vipassanā* meditation without *samatha* meditation is quietness of body.

To note and meditate without the mind wandering between notings, without thinking and planning, so that the thinking mind is pure and clear is quietness of mind.

To progress in the stages of *vipassanā* knowledge until knowledge of the path, knowledge of fruition and *nibbāna* are attained is the quietness of all things.

These three kinds of quietness follow each other in gaining increasing happiness. Only when there is quietness of body can there be quietness of mind; only when there is quietness of mind can the quietness of all things, which is the quietness of the path, fruition and *nibbāna*, be gained.

#### v. Speech About Repeated Effort (*Vīriya*) in Meditation

Speech about repeated effort in meditation states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* are not *dhamma* which can be attained by lazy persons who do not practise meditation. These *dhamma* can be attained only by those who strive repeatedly until they gain noble *dhamma*.

## Two Kinds of Effort

To strive so that all unwholesome *dhamma* which have already arisen, which are arising and which are about to arise in the continuum of your being can be discarded and so that all wholesome *dhamma* may arise, increase and be complete is called right effort or *vīriya*. That *vīriya* is of two kinds: Effort of Body and Effort of Mind.

To strive so that all bodily actions are always concerned with what is good, such as meditation, is effort of body. To strive so that whatever is to be noted can be noted is effort of mind. When *vipassanā* meditation is practised, the nature of *dhamma* can be discerned only when these two kinds of effort are evenly balanced.

To exert particular effort during an hour's meditation, to keep the body still and erect and to keep the mind from wandering is effort of body. To exert particular effort to note the rising and falling of the abdomen, the paining, the tingling; to note the mind when it wanders to external objects of consciousness is effort of mind. *Vipassanā* meditation has to be practised with both kinds of effort.

## vi. Speech About *Sīla* (morality)

Speech about *sīla* states that *sīla* produces *samādhi* (concentration), concentration produces *vipassanā* knowledge and knowledge of the path and fruition. Therefore, *sīla* is the basis for attainment of the path, fruition and *nibbāna*. In addition, persons with *sīla* will enjoy five kinds of benefits and those without it will have to bear five kinds of punishment.



**The Five benefits of *Sīla* (Persons with *Sīla*):**

- a. Will obtain riches and property easily and have abundance of riches.
- b. Will be renowned for their good qualities.
- c. Will be gladly accepted in any company.
- d. Will see only good objects of consciousness when nearing death and will therefore die without being confused.
- e. Will reach the luxurious and pleasurable plane of existence of *deva* (celestial beings) because they do not die with a confused mind.

**Persons who do not have *sīla*:**

- a. Will not obtain riches easily and will not have much riches.
- b. Will be notorious for their bad deeds.
- c. Will be afraid to approach any large assemblage and will have to do so with diffidence.
- d. Will see bad objects of consciousness when nearing death and will therefore die in a confused state.
- e. Will reach the low existence of hell because they die with confused minds.

**vii. Speech About *Samādhi* (concentration)**

Speech about *samādhi* states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* cannot be attained by those with unsteady, weak and wandering minds; they can be attained only by those with strong and stable minds.

Persons who begin meditation with *samatha* must meditate until they achieve *upacara samādhi* which is achieved just before attaining *jhāna* and *appana samādhi* which is achieved when attaining *jhāna*.

Persons who begin meditation with *vipassanā* must meditate until they achieve *khanika samādhi* (momentary concentration) by fixing the noting mind on whatever arises in body and mind.

Nowadays, very few persons meditate to achieve the path and fruition by beginning with *samatha*. Most begin meditation with *vipassanā* where they must note every phenomenon of matter and mind which arises, without missing anything, to achieve *khanika samādhi* when the noting mind becomes fixed on every phenomenon as it arises. They will then comprehend the *dhamma* about matter and mind.

#### viii. Speech About *Paññā* (wisdom)

Speech about *paññā* states that the nine supramundane *dhamma* of the path, fruition and *nibbāna* cannot be attained by persons with little wisdom. They can be attained only by persons with much wisdom and great intellect.

Persons who believe in *kamma* and in its effects and therefore know that *kamma* is one's possession, that it is the potentiality of *kamma* which causes one to be reborn for many existences in hell and in diverse futile conditions of aging, sickness and death, long for the ceasing of *kamma*. They strive to attain knowledge of the path and fruition that brings about the end of *kamma*.

Persons who meditate with diligence, according to the correct method, can attain knowledge of the path and fruition which brings about the end of *kamma*, in this existence, when they gain *vipassanā* insight and perceive distinctly the arising and passing away of all material and mental phenomena.

### ix. Speech about the Path, Fruition and *Nibbāna*

Speech about the path, fruition and *nibbāna* i.e. the path of emancipation states that after path consciousness arises. Fruition consciousness arises immediately two or three times. When fruition is attained, fruit consciousness arises many times.

There are two kinds of *nibbāna* : *saupādisesa nibbāna* and *anupādisesa nibbāna*.

Of those two, the peace which is attained by *arahant* before finally passing away when all defilements in the continuum of their beings can no longer arise is *saupādisesa nibbāna*.

The time after *arahant* finally pass away, when material and mental formations no longer arise, when all are totally extinguished is *anupādisesa nibbāna*.

### x. Speech About Knowledge of Emancipation

Speech about knowledge of emancipation or reflective knowledge (*Paccavekkhana ñāṇa*) states that when yogis have practised *vipassanā* meditation from the stage of *Nāma-rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa* (knowledge of matter and mind) to the stage of *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* (knowledge arising from equanimity) and *Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa* has strengthened and become complete, they will attain the peacefulness of *nibbāna* where all material and mental objects of consciousness are extinguished.

To reflect that this state of peacefulness is knowledge of the path and knowledge of fruition; to reflect that all the defilements within the continuum of one's being which

can send one to the lower existences have been extinguished is reflective knowledge.

#### 4. A Suitable Person to Stay With

Yogis who practise meditation should stay together with like-minded yogis only and not with those who are not like-minded. In particular, they should stay together with yogis who practise close noting. By doing so, the controlling faculties (*indriya*) will be sharpened and progress in insight will be made.

Yogis who have to stay together with persons who are not like-minded will be unable to develop concentration; they will only feel *domanassa* (displeasure). Therefore, they will not gain *vipassanā* knowledge and will not progress in insight. Yogis who can stay together with like-minded persons have peace of mind and therefore soon develop concentration and *vipassanā* knowledge, progress in their meditation and gain insight.

#### 5. Suitable Food

Yogis who practise *vipassanā* should avoid unsuitable food and eat only a moderate amount of suitable food.

Unsuitable food causes sluggishness, irregular urinary and bowel functions and thereby, the inability to note well and to progress in insight.

A moderate amount of suitable food makes you feel light and agile in all four postures of meditation i.e. walking, standing, sitting and lying down. Therefore, the controlling faculties will be sharpened and progress in insight will be made.

When eating suitable food, one should eat in moderation. One should never overeat as it will cause sluggishness and inability to note well: the nature of *dhamma* will not be experienced. The Lord *Buddha* preached to King Pasenadi Kosala about the inability to perceive the *dhamma* because of a large appetite.

Once, when the Lord *Buddha* was residing at Jetavana monastery in Savatthi, King Pasenadi Kosala ate a very large morning meal of rice with accompanying curries. After the meal he felt sluggish and uncomfortable, but before he had rested to overcome his sluggishness and discomfort, he thought of the *Buddha* and proceeded to the Jetavana monastery. On arrival, he paid homage to the *Buddha* and sat in a suitable place nearby.

However, he felt very sluggish and sleepy because of overeating and found it troublesome to sit before the *Buddha*. He could not lie down because it would not be proper in the presence of the *Buddha* and because he had great difficulty in preventing himself from swaying and falling, he had to sit in extreme discomfort. As a result, he began to perspire profusely and his attendants had to fan him from either side.

The Lord *Buddha* saw him suffering and asked, "O King Kosala, are you in great discomfort? Did you not rest to overcome it?" The King replied, "My Lord, I always suffer great discomfort after a meal just as I am suffering now" and the Lord *Buddha* spoke thus: King Kosala, a glutton will suffer like you. There will be no deliverance from the rounds of rebirth and from the suffering of old age, sickness and death.

A glutton will be oppressed by drowsiness and torpor and will have to toss and turn in bed like a well-fattened pig. Drowsiness and torpor will weaken his intelligence and make him incapable of noting and meditating to perceive *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *aṇatta* (the absence of a self). Therefore, he will be reborn repeatedly in new existences and will undergo the sufferings of old age, sickness and death repeatedly.

### The Five Kinds of Gluttons:

- i. One who is incapable of getting up and has to ask another to help him up after eating.
- ii. One who does not even wish to pull up his *paso* (lower garment) which has slipped from around his waist while eating.
- iii. One who has to lie down there and then, tossing and turning after he has eaten.
- iv. One who fills himself up to the top of his gullet.
- v. One who eats to the extent of bringing up whatever he has eaten.

It is beneficial to know one's limit. The Lord *Buddha* also stated that those who eat within limits receive three benefits. He then taught a stanza meaning of which is as follows:

Persons who are mindful in all things and who know the extent which they should eat will enjoy the following benefits:

- i. Being free from sickness and disease.
- ii. Being youthful.
- iii. Having a long life.



The Lord *Buddha* instructed a youth called Uttara to learn the stanza and to recite it to King Kosala when serving a meal. The youth Uttara followed the *Buddha's* instructions and King Kosala gradually began to eat less until he was satisfied with a moderate amount of food. He became light and comfortable and he gave a grand and magnificent religious offering that had never been given before.

### Rules to Follow when Eating

Venerable *Sariputta* taught a stanza for all persons who truly wish to attain *nibbāna* to follow. It states that all persons who fear the *samsāra* (rounds of rebirth) and who truly wish to attain *nibbāna* should reduce their intake of food by four mouthfuls if they eat large mouthfuls and by five mouthfuls if they eat small mouthfuls and drink a proportionate amount of water instead. Thus, they will become nimble and light and will be able to meditate comfortably in all four postures and will thereby attain the goal of *nibbāna*.

*Motto: Eat five mouthfuls or so  
Less than what you can;  
Happiness in the four postures  
Will certainly be gained.*

Persons with naturally small appetites due to poor health, who reduce the amount that they can eat by one or two mouthfuls and drink water instead, will feel light and agile in all four postures of meditation and will improve in their notings.

Physicians and medical texts have pointed out that a small reduction in food intake helps digestion and improves health.

But yogis who practise meditation need to eat suitable food because malnutrition will hinder progress in sharpening the controlling faculties and in gaining insight. Therefore, suitable nourishment should be specially arranged and provided for them.

There are stories from the time of the *Buddha* to testify that insight into the nature of *dhamma* was gained only when suitable nourishment was offered.

Once when the Lord *Buddha* was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Savatthi, sixty monks came to learn how to meditate so that they would be able to meditate during the rains retreat. They then travelled to find a suitable, quiet place to meditate and arrived at a large village at the foot of a mountain called Mātika, in the state of Kosala. In reference to the name of the village, the head man was also known as headman Mātika and his mother was known as Mātikamātā (mother Mātika).

When Mātikamātā saw the sixty monks on their alms round walking with mindfulness and downcast eyes as befitting monks who had learnt to meditate with the Lord *Buddha*, she was filled with devotion. She invited them to her house and offered them alms food.

Later, she asked them to which locality they were travelling and was told that they would travel until they found a suitable place. She realized that they were

looking for a quiet place in which to meditate and therefore invited them to reside at the village monastery during *vassā* (rains retreat). She added that it would benefit her greatly by enabling her to receive the precepts from them and that she would support them to the best of her ability with alms food.

The sixty monks accepted her invitation to reside at the monastery for the period of *vassā*. However, having learnt the principles of meditation from the *Buddha*, they considered it improper to live together neglectfully and heedlessly. So they agreed to live separately to meditate and to meet only under special circumstances, such as ill health, when a bell would be sounded.

One day, she went with some companions and attendants to the monastery to offer the monks butter and molasses to eat in the evening, but there was no one there. One inquiring whether the monks had left for another locality, she was told by the attendants that they were around and that they would assemble if the bell was sounded.

When the monks were assembled, Mātikamātā inquired, with respect, why they had come singly whereas they had all come together in a single file when they first came to her house. She asked if there was dissension among them.

They answered that there was no dissension among them but that they had been meditating separately on the *dhamma* for *bhikkhus* each in a quiet place and had therefore come singly.

When *Mātikamātā* heard that they had been meditating, she had a strong desire to meditate too, for she had a base of mature perfections (*pārāmi*). She asked if the *dhamma* for *bhikkhus* could only be practised by the *bhikkhus* and if there was any prohibition against women practising it.

On being told that there was no prohibition at all, that it could be practised by anyone, whether layman or *bhikkhu*, male or female, she asked to be taught the method of meditation.

The *bhikkhus* therefore taught her to meditate on the thirty-two parts of the body and on the impermanence of all material and mental phenomena

*Mātikamātā* returned home and practised meditation by noting intently until impermanence was comprehended. Within a few days, she advanced through the three stages of the path and fruition, attaining super-normal knowledge and analytical knowledge and became an *anāgāmi*.

On becoming an *anāgāmi* with supernormal knowledge of the divine eye, she was able to observe the sixty *bhikkhus* to find out whether they had attained exceptional insight. She discovered that they had not even developed *jhāna samādhi* or attained *vipassanā* knowledge.

Was it because they did not have special merit and virtues from previous existences? With supernormal knowledge she found that they did possess special merit and virtues.

Then, was it because of inadequate and unsuitable accommodation? With supernormal knowledge she saw that accommodation was suitable and adequate.

Then, was it because there was dissension among them that they had not gained noble *dhamma*? With supernormal knowledge she saw that they were all on good terms with one another.

Then, was it because of inadequate and unsuitable food? With supernormal knowledge she saw that their *indriya* (controlling faculties) had not been sharpened and therefore they had not attained insight because of inadequate and unsuitable food.

Mātikamātā then arranged for adequate food that was suitable for all the monks to be offered daily. Within a few days, the five *indriya* of the *bhikkhus* were evenly sharpened and *jhāna samādhi* and *vipassanā* knowledge were developed by stages until they became *arahant*.

Thus, it is very evident that only when suitable and adequate food is eaten will the controlling faculties be evenly sharpened and noble *dhamma* be attained.

## A Suitable Climate

Yogis should meditate in a suitable climate. In a place where it is neither too hot nor too cold, yogis need not choose the time of year in which to meditate. But in very hot places they should choose a time when it is not too hot and in cold places they should choose a time when it is not too cold.

When the *Bodhisatta* (*Buddha-to-be*) was practising austerities in the Uruvela forest, the very hot temperatures during the summer, the heavy rains during the rainy season and the extreme cold during the winter were an annoyance and a hindrance to him in attaining noble *dhamma*, he had to strive to free himself from the mental disturbances caused by them.

Yogis who practise meditation nowadays, should also avoid extremes of climate and choose an equable climate when meditating.

It is only beginners, whose *samādhī* (concentration) is still weak, who find extremes of climate a hindrance to the attainment of insight. It is not so for those who have been able to progress through the stages of knowledge by ignoring the sufferings of extreme heat and cold and have reached the stage of *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa* (knowledge arising from equanimity).

Therefore, yogis should strive to reach *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa* while they are able to meditate in an equable climate.

## 7. A Suitable Posture for Meditation

Yogis who practise meditation should choose the best posture — that which suits them most — from among the four postures of walking, standing, sitting and lying down.

If the nature of *dhamma* can be comprehended most distinctly by the yogi in walking meditation, more time should be spent noting in the walking posture than in the standing, sitting and lying down postures.



When yogis practise meditation in the sitting posture and find that concentration does not develop, they must depend specially on walking meditation.

When concentration has developed in walking meditation, concentration will also develop in sitting meditation and notings will improve.

When concentration that has been developed in walking meditation is maintained undisturbed by changing from walking to sitting meditation with mindfulness, yogis will find that notings in sitting meditation will improve.

Since the concentration that is gained by noting while walking is based on the movement of the feet as an object of consciousness, it is not easily destroyed; it can be sustained for a long period of time. Consequently, it continues into sitting meditation and improves noting by helping to establish concentration in sitting meditation.

### • The Five Benefits of Walking Meditation

The Lord *Buddha* stated in the Anguttara text of the Pali Canon that persons who can develop concentration in walking meditation will enjoy five benefits:

- i. The ability to walk long distances without tiring.
- ii. Invigorating one's energy while meditating.
- iii. Being free from disease.
- iv. Having a good digestion.
- v. Having longlasting concentration which is not easily destroyed.

These benefits are obtained instantly. The concentration which is developed in standing meditation can be

destroyed when you sit down; that which is developed in sitting meditation can be destroyed when you lie down. However, the concentration which is developed in walking meditation remains firm when you stand, sit or lie down and therefore is longlasting and hard to destroy.

If the standing posture is the best for you in noting and in comprehending the nature of *dhamma* distinctly, more time should be spent meditating in the standing posture than in the walking, sitting and lying down postures.

If the sitting posture is the best for you in noting and in comprehending the nature of *dhamma* distinctly, more time should be spent in the sitting posture than in the walking, standing and lying down postures.

It is stated by meditation teachers that beginners should not meditate in the lying down posture because they tend to fall asleep when concentration develops a little. That is why beginners should note in that posture only at bedtime before falling asleep.

But those who have practised meditation and have therefore gained a base of *samādhi* and can comprehend the nature of *dhamma* distinctly only in the lying down posture, may note in that position if they are elderly or unwell and can no longer meditate in the walking, standing and sitting postures.

Thus, because you have listened to the discourse on the fourth cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties) which is to do what is fit and proper, to depend on and adhere to what is suitable, to avoid and abstain from

what is not fit and not proper and not to depend on or adhere to what is unsuitable, may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna*, to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.

## Chapter Five

### The Fifth Dhamma Discourse

YOGIS WHO PRACTISE MEDITATION may sometimes be able to note well because of harmony between their accommodation, the climate, the meditation posture and their effort. At such times, when *samādhi* develops and noting is good, you must take note of the reason why this happens.

By thus recording and remembering the reasons, yogis will be able to think about them when they are unable to develop concentration and improve their notings. It is by taking note of and remembering the reasons why *samādhi* developed previously that is a cause in sharpening the controlling faculties and in making progress in insight.

*Motto:      Stability of mind,  
                 Its causes and signs  
                 Must be well-remembered*

### The Four Ways of Experiencing *Dhamma*

There are four different ways by which persons who practise meditation experience the *dhamma* depending on whether or not they practised *samatha* meditation or *vipassanā* meditation in the past:

1. Those who did not practise either *samatha* meditation or *vipassanā* meditation in the past will be unable to note well; nor will they be able to comprehend *dhamma* for a considerable time. They will be slow in comprehending *dhamma*.
2. Those who practised *vipassanā* meditation only but not *samatha* meditation in the past will be unable to note well, but they will be able to comprehend *dhamma* quickly.
3. Those who practised *samatha* meditation only but not *vipassanā* meditation will be able to note well but they will not be able to comprehend *dhamma* for a considerable time. They will be slow in comprehending *dhamma*.
4. Those who practised both *samatha* meditation and *vipassanā* meditation in the past will be able to note well and comprehend *dhamma* quickly.

The inability to note well and the slowness in comprehending *dhamma* are merely the results of not having practised *samatha* meditation and *vipassanā* meditation in the past. Therefore, one need not be unhappy or dejected, for by practising patiently now, according to the correct method, you will certainly comprehend *dhamma* deservedly.

With respect to the commentaries, we know that the *dhamma* can be comprehended in four different ways through the power of *vipassanā* meditation. The commentaries state that whoever has not gained merit in the past because of failure to practise *samatha* meditation, will have difficulty in practising meditation. Whoever has gained merit by having practised *samatha* meditation in the past will be able to

meditate pleasantly. In addition, whoever has not gained merit in the past because of failure to practise *vipassanā* meditation will be slow in gaining special knowledge. Whoever has gained merit in the past by practising *vipassanā* meditation will gain special knowledge quickly.

Thus, because you have listened to the fifth cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties) which is to take note of and to remember all the factors that develop *samādhi*, may you be able to practise accordingly and gain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna*, to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.



## Chapter Six

### The Sixth Dhamma Discourse

IN VIPASSANA MEDITATION, the judicious and appropriate balanced development of the *bojjhaṅga* (seven factors of enlightenment) will sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties) and lead to *vipassanā* knowledge.

*Vipassanā* meditation cannot be practised either physically or verbally. It has to be practised mentally. Therefore, as it is a mental activity it is extremely subtle, deep and difficult. The mind may sometimes become depressed and sometimes elated.

Sometimes when a yogi is able to note well — when he progresses in his meditation and gains *vipassanā* insight — he may become extremely elated. Elation will cause the mind to become distracted. It will disrupt noting and concentration on the present and it will cause thoughts to become diffused.

Sometimes when a yogi is unable to note well and after a long period of meditation makes no progress and gains no *dhamma* — when he suffers aches and pains — he may become depressed. He may have doubts about continuing his meditation; doubts about making progress at all.

In both cases, the mind will not be calm and concentrated; the *indriya* will not be sharpened, and *dhamma* will not develop.

But the judicious and appropriate balanced development of the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*) will stabilize the mind, sharpen the *indriya* and develop *dhamma*.

*Motto: Contemplate incessantly  
With appropriate Bojjhaṅga.*

## Controlling Elation

An elated and distracted mind is unstable and causes diffusion of thoughts. It must be stabilized and made calm by meditating with the appropriate *bojjhaṅga* (factors of enlightenment); namely *upekkhā* (equanimity), *samādhi* (concentration) and *passadhi* (tranquility).

*Motto: When elated and distracted  
And thoughts are diffused,  
Contemplate with Bojjhaṅga of Upekkhā,  
Samādhi and Passaddhi.*

Elation and distraction of the mind cause diffusion of thoughts. On investigation, it is found that when noting is going well and progress is being made, a yogi considers and dwells on the *sukha* (pleasant or happiness) aspect of meditation only and ignores the *dukkha* (unpleasant or suffering) aspect, forgetting that there is *sukha* as well as *dukkha*.

Noting and contemplation may sometimes be good and sometimes not. Progress may be slow, aches and pains may

arise; that is the *dukkha* aspect. An imbalance of attention to the aspects of both *sukha* and *dukkha* leads to elation and distraction.

When balanced attention is paid to the aspects of *sukha* and *dukkha* while meditating, *upekkha* (equanimity) will arise in every noting and in every respect. Elation and mental diffusion will disappear. The occurrence of *upekkhā* will sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties).

An elated and distracted mind tends to dwell on past such as the successful notings that were made, the progress that was made and the insight that was gained. It also tends to think about future events that may or may not happen such as anticipating improvements in noting. This flitting to and fro of thoughts from the past to the future, without keeping the mind on the present, makes the mind unsettled. But it can be made calm and concentrated by contemplating on the present only. As concentration develops, the *indriya* will be sharpened.

Anxiety arises in the elated and distracted mind; worries about whether one's present satisfactory notings in meditation can be sustained arise. These anxieties must be ignored. One should accept that there are good as well as bad periods of meditation. Both body and mind must be kept calm. Equanimity must be developed. Noting and contemplation must be continued with calmness. Contemplate on the present; concentration will develop, anxieties will disappear and tranquility will arise. Contemplating with the three *Bojjhaṅga* of Equanimity. Concentration and tranquility will sharpen the *indriya*.

## Controlling Dejection

A yogi who is unable to note satisfactorily while meditating or who has gained no *vipassanā* knowledge after a long period of meditation, may become dejected. He must overcome his dejection by controlling the mind.

*Vipassanā* meditation cannot be undertaken physically; physical exercises will not achieve *dhamma*. Nor can *vipassanā* meditation be undertaken verbally, chanting and reciting prayers will not gain you the peace of *nibbāna*. *Vipassanā* meditation can only be done mentally by controlling the mind. It is a difficult and subtle mental process.

The mind is hard to control. It wanders. It goes where it will. It knows no boundaries. It tends to run wild. It tends to settle at random on any object of consciousness. It is especially attracted to and delights in unwholesome objects of consciousness — that is its nature. It has to be controlled and disciplined to dwell on wholesome objects of consciousness such as the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha*, on parents and teachers — to think of their qualities and to be grateful to them. The mind changes so rapidly that it requires great effort to subdue and control it. But it can be done by *vipassanā* meditation although it is not easy. You will discover this from personal experience when you meditate. Only when the mind has been controlled can you attain worldly peace and the bliss of *nibbāna*.

*Motto:   The rapid mind,  
          Hard to control,  
          Goes where it will,  
          Falls where it will;  
          That is its way.*

*This wayward mind  
When watched and tamed  
Will bring you peace.*

Extreme dejection will lessen *vīriya* (effort), decrease *pīti* (joy) in a yogi's strivings in *vipassanā* meditation, reduce wisdom and make a yogi listless and lethargic.

When lassitude occurs, a yogi must revive his sinking spirits by contemplating with three of the *bojjhaṅga* namely *vīriya*, *pīti* and *dhammavicaya* (seeing mind and matter as they truly are).

*Motto: When contemplation weakens,  
Contemplate with Vīriya  
Pīti and Dhammavicaya.*

Lassitude which is brought on by dejection brings about a decline in worldly and spiritual matters. In the *lokanīti* (Buddhist instruction in ethics) it is stated: An indolent person cannot acquire skill and knowledge; an unskilful and unknowledgeable person cannot acquire wealth; a person without wealth cannot acquire good friends; a person without good friends cannot acquire happiness; an unhappy person will not perform meritorious deeds; a person without merit cannot attain *nibbāna*.

*Motto: Indolence gains no knowledge;  
Lack of knowledge gains no wealth;  
Lack of wealth wins no friends;  
Lack of friends is lack of happiness;  
Lack of happiness brings lack of merit;  
Lack of merit loses nibbāna.*

Lassitude caused by despondency will result in lost opportunities of achieving *nibbāna* — the opportunity of human existence and the opportunity of living in a time of the *Buddha's* teachings. Therefore, *vīriya* (effort) should be established speedily.

Lassitude leads to decline in both worldly and spiritual matters while *vīriya* results in advancement and prosperity. Therefore, *vīriya* should be developed speedily in meditation.

### **Cultivate *Vīriya* (Effort) Bojjhaṅga**

A yogi should not be lazy and waste his chances of attaining *nibbāna*. He should be mindful of the difficulty of attaining a human existence; of being alive; of hearing *dhamma* teachings or *vipassanā* meditation — the practice of which will close the doors to the woeful existences; of living in a time of the *Buddha's* teachings. He should be specially mindful of these opportunities and strive to develop *vīriya*. He should not waste these opportunities which are extremely difficult to obtain.

If he should waste these opportunities of attaining *magga* (path), *phala* (fruition) and *nibbāna* because of despondency and lassitude while meditating, he would die as a *puthujjana* (ordinary worldling) and be reborn in the woeful states of *apāya* (unhappy life of lower existences) in some future existences.

The sufferings in *hell* would cause him to shed tears of remorse for having wasted the four great opportunities of attaining *nibbāna*. Pondering thus, a yogi should strive to overcome lassitude by developing *vīriya* (effort) in meditation.

A yogi should be mindful of living in a time of the *Buddha's* teaching, of living in a place such as Myanmar where the *sāsana* (*Buddha's* teaching) flourishes, of having right beliefs, of being healthy in body and mind — four great blessings.

These blessings will be wasted if a yogi gives in to lassitude resulting from despondency. In the rounds of rebirth he will be tormented with remorse. Bearing this in mind, a yogi must develop the *bojjhaṅga* of *vīriya*.

Distress ensues from failure to strive for *vīriya*. The Lord *Buddha* stated in the *Seriva Vanijja Jātaka* that distress will occur repeatedly from failure to strive for *vīriya*.

Once, while the *Buddha* was residing in *Sāvattthi* at the *Jetavana* monastery, a monk who was lacking in *vīriya* because of despondency caused by failure to progress in meditation, was brought to Him by a group of monks and the *Buddha* spoke thus:

"O monks, if you are lacking in *vīriya* when you have found the *sāsana*, you will suffer from prolonged distress and remorse in the rounds of rebirth just as *Seriva*, the wicked peddler who lost a golden bowl worth a hundred thousand, suffered."

All the monks then respectfully requested the *Buddha* to tell them about *Seriva* and the *Buddha* related the *Seriva Vanijja Jātaka* as follows:

In the fifth world system counting back from this world, the *Bodhisatta* (the would-be *Buddha*) was a peddler who sold necklaces and trinkets in the state of *Seriva*. He went on a journey to sell his wares with another peddler named *Seriva* who was extremely avaricious. They crossed



the Nilavaha river and arrived at the city of Aritthapura where they allocated themselves various routes for selling their wares.

The greedy peddler went round the city shouting, "Buy my necklaces, buy my necklaces" and arrived at the house of a very poor old lady, reduced to poverty from wealthy circumstances, who lived with her granddaughter. They had lost all their relatives as well as all the wealth that they had formerly possessed and now earned their living by working as domestic servants.

When the granddaughter saw the peddler, she asked her grandmother to buy her a necklace. But the grandmother said, "We have nothing with which to buy a necklace. How can we buy one?" The granddaughter replied that they had an old bowl, now covered with grime and dust, which had been used in the days of her rich grandfather. She knew not what kind of bowl it was, but asked her grandmother to barter it for a necklace.

So they called the peddler and not knowing what kind of bowl it was, the old lady offered it to him saying, "Please give something appropriate for my granddaughter."

The greedy peddler took the bowl, scratched it with a pin to find out what kind of bowl it was and discovering that it was a gold bowl schemed to take it without giving anything to the old lady and her granddaughter. Throwing the bowl upon the ground he said, "This bowl is worthless. It is of no value whatsoever" and left the house.

Soon after, the other peddler who was the Bodhisatta, arrived at the house of the old lady and her granddaughter, calling out in a pleasant voice, "Please buy my necklaces,

please buy my necklaces". On hearing his pleasant voice, the granddaughter again asked her grandmother to buy her a necklace with the old bowl. But the grandmother said, "Didn't the previous peddler say that the bowl is worthless; with what can we buy a necklace?" Whereupon the granddaughter reasoned with her grandmother saying, "Grandmother, the previous peddler was coarse and harsh. This peddler is pleasant and soft-spoken; he may take the bowl." So the peddler was called in.

Upon examining the bowl and realizing it was of gold, the Bodhisatta told the old lady honestly, "Mother, this is a gold bowl worth a hundred thousand. I do not have any wares worth that amount to sell." The old lady replied, "O peddler, the previous peddler told us it is worthless. It must be the *kamma* from your good deeds that has turned it into gold. I shall give the bowl to you but please give us something suitable in exchange. Please take the bowl" and gave it to him.

The Bodhisatta gave them the five hundred in money from the sale of his goods as well as the remaining goods worth five hundred. He retained only his weighing balance and bag and eight coins for the boat fare and left quickly for the river bank. He paid his fare and was rowed across the river.

Soon after, the greedy peddler returned to the house of the two poor ladies and declared that he would take the bowl for a pittance. The granddaughter chided him for being wicked and dishonest, for wanting the property of others unjustly and told him that an honest peddler, had taken the bowl in exchange for five hundred in money and five hundred worth of goods.

Hearing these words, the wicked peddler was overcome with great distress at the loss of the gold bowl and lost control of himself. He flung away the money from the sale of his necklaces, as well as the unsold goods, at the door of the house, tore off his clothes, took the rod from his weighing balance with which to kill the Bodhisatta and ran quickly toward the river.

There he saw the Bodhisatta in mid-stream, crossing in a boat. He shouted to the boatman to row back to his side of the river, but the Bodhisatta told the boatman to continue rowing to the other side. Seeing the Bodhisatta crossing to the other bank, the wicked peddler became extremely distressed. He was so overcome with anger and distress that his heart broke and he died on the river bank harbouring great enmity towards the Bodhisatta.

The wicked peddler was the would-be Devadatta who bore enmity towards the *Buddha* for five world systems. This was the first instance in which he harboured enmity towards the Bodhisatta who, because of his good deeds, was reborn in noble existences only.

After relating the Seriva Vanijja Jātaka to the group of monks, the *Buddha* stated that having found the *sāsana* a monk who does not meditate with *vīriya* (effort) will fall into the woeful existences for prolonged periods and will suffer grief and remorse repeatedly. Like the wicked peddler seriva who lost the chance of obtaining a gold bowl worth a hundred thousand because he lacked effort, a monk lacking in effort will lose the opportunity of attaining *nibbāna*.

All the monks who heard the *Buddha* heeded his warning, they made great efforts in their meditation and became *arahants*.

Following the example of these monks, everyone in the *dhamma* audience should strive, at the least, to become a *sotāpanna* (streamwinner) — one who has entered the stream that leads to *nibbāna* for the first time. Then only will the doors to the woeful states of existences be closed, you will never be reborn in those existences.

The Lord *Buddha*'s wish was for all His followers to strive for *nibbāna*; to attain *nibbāna*. He did not wish anyone to be contented with a *sotāpanna* or a *sakadāgāmi* (once-returner) or an *anāgāmi* (non-returner). He desired all to strive for arahantship and *nibbāna*.

In the time of the *Buddha* there were many who endeavoured to become *arahant*. In our time, there are not many who do, although there are a few. Most people who undertake *vipassanā* meditation strive to attain the stage of becoming a *sotāpanna* only. The fear of falling into the woeful states of existence spurs them on to attain *sotāpanna*. Similarly, a yogi who is depressed and listless should try hard to overcome depression and listlessness with the *bojjhanga* of *viriya* (effort).

Both the Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw and the Venerable Webu Sayadaw (who was considered by all who knew him to be an *arahant* and who always practised mindfulness) constantly urged their disciples and *dhamma* audience with *mettā* (loving-kindness) and compassion to persevere with their *vipassanā* meditation so as to become *sotāpanna* — to close the doors to *apāya* (the woeful states).

*Motto:      Given a chance he did not take,  
                The foolish peddler  
                Lost a bowl worth a hundred thousand*

*And suffered great distress.  
 Similarly would you be  
 When having found the sāsana,  
 You fail to strive for magga.  
 So, having found the sāsana,  
 Exert yourself, try hard;  
 Arahantships can be yours.*

The basic reason for the would-be Devadatta's great distress and death was his greed, leading to dishonesty and disregard for fairness in commerce. He did not exert any effort to pay a fair price for the golden bowl. His death was caused by avarice.

The second reason was the rage that overwhelmed him, resulting in the desire to kill the *Bodhisatta* (the would be *Buddha*) to whom he had lost the gold bowl.

The third reason was his anger over the loss of the gold bowl, and his extreme distress over his failure to kill the *Bodhisatta*.

Greed in a person will be followed by anger, cruelty and wrongdoing and finally, by great distress. Immeasurable damage will be caused to oneself temporally and spiritually, in this existence and in future existences. Therefore, all good and virtuous men and women who favour the *dhamma*, fear the rounds of rebirth and the consequences of evil, should take heed and strive in their meditation until *vīriya bojjhaṅga* arises.

## Meditation Upon *Pīti* (Joy) *Bojjhaṅga*

There are three kinds of *pīti* which are not the *pīti* of *bojjhaṅga*. They do not help to develop *vipassanā* knowledge. They are:

1. *Kāmāmisa Pīti* - the joy that arises from the enjoyment of the five physical senses. The joy from pleasant sights and sounds, from pleasant smells and tastes and from pleasant touch.
2. *Lokāmisa Pīti* - the joy from worldly success and achievement. The pleasure and satisfaction which arise from helping others, from one's personal achievements and from service to one's country.
3. *Vitṭāmisa Pīti* - the joy and satisfaction which arise from performing *dāna* (acts of giving) and from observing *sīla* (morality); the joy that arises from the knowledge that the effect of one's good deeds will ensure rebirth in good existences only.

The *pīti bojjhaṅga* is the joy that arises from reflecting on the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha*, on parents and teachers, on reflecting upon their qualities and the gratitude which one owes them. It is the joy that arises from *vipassanā* meditation; the joy which helps a yogi to gain *vipassanā* knowledge.

If a yogi becomes dejected and the will to meditate and to perform meritorious deeds weakens, he should contemplate to develop the *pīti bojjhaṅga*. This will strengthen his will and uplift his low spirits.

He should contemplate on the qualities of the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha*, on the qualities of parents and teachers. He should reflect on the gratitude owed to them and thereby develop the *pīti bojjhanga* which will restore his enthusiasm for meditation, both physically and mentally. When *pīti* arises, the will to meditate and to perform meritorious deeds will be strengthened; his mental attitude will be enlivened.

Buddhists take refuge in the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* and contemplate on their qualities, sometimes with prayer beads and sometimes without. Among those who contemplate, some have definitely found that they have been safeguarded from dangers, that special matters have been settled according to their wishes, that they have received benefits which they desired, etc. Others have had no distinct experiences, but they will realize upon careful consideration that they too have been safeguarded from dangers and have received benefits that they desired.

Thus, by considering the benefits received from contemplation on the qualities of the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* and on their special, noble powers — one of the five kinds of *pīti* will arise according to one's basic *pārāmī* (perfections). You will become physically strong, mentally alert and eager and lassitude will disappear.

### **The Five kinds of *Pīti*:**

1. *Khuddakā Pīti* - Small shivers of joy, tears of joy and the thrill of joy which arise just once.



## Two Kinds of tears

Tears may be shed in two ways:

- (i) They may be shed because of love and esteem for the *dhamma*. Tears which are shed for this reason are cool and pure; they do constitute a medication which keeps one free from defilements - a disease, and enables a wholesome state of mind to become uplifted and keen.
- (ii) Tears may be shed because of the death of parents and relatives and because of the loss of wealth and property. These tears are hot and impure; they do not constitute a medication which keeps one free from defilements—a disease.

(Milindapaññā - 81)

- 2. *Khanikā Pīti* - Joy which arises frequently with quivering and twitching of flesh all over the body, now here, now there. Yogis who experienced these quiverings and twitchings asked me what they should do about it. My answer was, "Just note: quivering, quivering" "twitching, twitching". In *vipassanā* that is the correct thing to do; to note what arises as it arises.

Tears of joy may be shed frequently: the thrill of joy will be experienced frequently too.

*Okkantikā Pīti* - A coolness or at times a warmth arises from the lower part of the body, moves upwards through the body and then passes away. At times, the coolness or the warmth suffuses through the body from top to toe and passes away.

Yogis who have experienced this *pīti* have told Sayadaw that the coolness and the warmth were unlike any that they had known before.

4. *Ubbegā Pīti* - Transporting joy which enables one to float in the air or to leap into the air. The yogi will experience a feeling of lightness and may jump in the air; he may even feel an urge to run. He must take special care and be mindful so as not to disrupt his notings and concentration on the present.

The whole body or just some of the limbs may be lifted into the air. While practising walking meditation, a yogi may be blown aside. Yogis with intense *ubbegā pīti* may be blown aside five, six or ten feet. Those with weak *pīti* may feel their limbs have been pulled or jerked.

Persons with strong *ubbegā pīti* can transport themselves into the air and go where they desire.

### Story of a Young Lady who leapt into the Air

In the Atthasalini commentaries it is stated that in days gone by, in the island of Sri Lanka, there was a young lady whose *ubbegā pīti* was so strong that she was transported through the air.

The young lady who was heavily pregnant, lived with her parents in the village of Vattalaka. One day, there was a festival at the mountain-top shrine which could be seen

from their house. At night, before leaving to hear the *dhamma* teachings at the mountain-top shrine, the parents said, "Daughter, as you are heavily pregnant it would not be advisable for you to go out at night. Stay at home and we will listen to the *dhamma* sermons on your behalf as well."

The young lady wanted to go to the festival very much, but she could not disobey her parents. She remained at home.

After her parents left, she stood at the door and gazed at the mountain-top shrine. In the moonlight, she could see the proceedings at the festival clearly. The shrine seemed like a pile of pearls. She could see the lights that were burned in homage, the crowds paying homage with flowers and incense and she could hear the chanting of prayers by the monks. She was filled with intense devotional joy — *ubbegā pīti*. She rose into the air and was transported to the shrine. She arrived before her parents and after paying homage at the shrine, she listened to the *dhamma* discourses.

When her parents arrived they were amazed to see her and asked, 'Daughter, by which road did you come?' She replied. "I came through the air, not by road." Whereupon they said, "Daughter, only *arahant* travel through the air. Tell us truthfully, by which road did you come?" She replied truthfully, "I was gazing at the mountain-top shrine in the moonlight when a great joy arose in me. I no longer knew whether I was standing or sitting but rose into the air and arrived at the shrine."

Strong *ubbegā pīti* can cause a person to float in the air. In days gone by, there were many *arahant* who floated through the air with *ubbegā pīti*.

Also, in the time of the Lord *Buddha*, there were many instances of persons who gained *vipassanā* insight and attained *nibbāna* through the development of intense *pīti*. One instance was that of the King Kukuta, King Mahākappina and his queen, Anojādevī.

### **Mahākappina and Anojādevi**

One day, while the king was in the royal gardens, a group of merchants from the state of Sāvatti arrived to pay their respects and to present the gifts that they had brought with them.

After greeting them, the king inquired whether their king ruled according to the ten duties of a ruler; they replied that he did. He asked whether the country was peaceful and prosperous; they replied that it was. He then asked if there were any special news and developments in their country about which he should know. The merchants replied that the *Buddha* who had attained enlightenment was in their country. Upon hearing this, the king fainted. He was overcome with joy. The merchants respectfully submitted the news a second and a third time. On both occasions the king fainted with joy on hearing the news. But when the news was submitted to him for the fourth time, he remained conscious.

Similarly, when the news of the development of the *dhamma* and of the *sangha* were submitted by the merchants, the king fainted with joy three times but remained conscious after hearing the news for the fourth time. He then rewarded the merchants with a hundred thousand silver coins for bringing him news of the *Buddha*, another hundred thousand for bringing him the news of the *dhamma* and yet another hundred thousand for bringing him news of the *sangha*.

He returned to the palace and informed his queen that he would renounce his kingdom and worldly possessions in her favour.

The king then left on horseback to seek the *Buddha* together with a thousand of his ministers and high officials who also wished to renounce the world. They crossed three rivers safely, invoking the protection of the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* respectively as they crossed the first, the second and the third river.

After crossing the third river, they were guided to the *Buddha* by the light of the coloured rays emitted from the *Buddha's* body. They listened to the *dhamma* and they all became *sotāpanna* (streamenterer) and were admitted into the order of the *sangha*.

In the meantime, the group of merchants went to the palace to request payment of the three hundred thousand silver coins that the king had rewarded them. The queen wished to know why they had been rewarded. On being told the reason, like the king, she also fainted with joy at the news of the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha*. Upon recovering consciousness she said, "I am not as wealthy as the king, but I shall give you three hundred thousand silver coins for bringing me the good tidings of the *Buddha*, another three hundred thousand for the good tidings of the *dhamma* and yet another three hundred thousand for the good tidings of the *sangha*."

She had no desire to inherit the kingdom and riches which were renounced by the king. She saw them in the same light as the king's spittle and she too, renounced them.

Then, together with the wives of the thousand ministers and high officials who had left with the king, she travelled by carriage to seek the *Buddha*.

Following the same route as the king, they crossed the three rivers thinking only of the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* and were then guided to the *Buddha* by the light of the coloured rays emitted from the *Buddha's* body. They paid homage to the *Buddha*, but they could not see the king and his thousand ministers who were now monks as the *Buddha* had made them invisible by his powers. The *Buddha* had made them invisible as he did not wish the queen and her ladies to be hindered by emotion before hearing the *dhamma*. They were, therefore, able to listen without distraction to the *dhamma* which the *Buddha* expounded and they all became *sotāpanna*.

5. *Pharanā Pīti* - the fifth pīti is a peaceful joy which pervades the whole body as oil suffuses through a piece of cotton. For the duration that this pīti arises, the yogi becomes so peaceful and still that he is incapable of moving or speaking; he is incapable of even blinking.

### **Developing *Dhammavicaya* (Investigation of *Dhamma*) *Bojjhaṅga***

When the will to meditate and to do meritorious deeds weakens, the yogi should contemplate with wisdom, upon the truth of the *dhamma* to restore his keenness in meditation and to invigorate himself. He should reflect on the *dhamma* to realize *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*.

"O good yogi, within the form of your body is the natural process of aging from which you cannot escape. You

are certain to become old and unable to take care of yourself. When you grow very old, you will find it difficult to take care of yourself. When you grow very old, you will find it difficult to walk, to stand, to sit, to lie down; you will become slow and cumbersome. You will no longer be able to meditate; you will become forgetful; your mind will wander; you will be unable to remember anything and will therefore be unable to meditate. You will have forgone the *dhamma*." Pondering thus, a yogi should develop *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga* (investigation of *dhamma*) to uplift the spirits and to overcome dejection.

*Motto: Ponder on the perils of old age  
Before they occur.  
Tis opportune to meditate  
Before old age sets in.*

The Lord *Buddha* stated that persons who practised *vipassanā* meditation will attain insight according to their *pārāmī* (perfections) from previous existences. That is why we should all practise *vipassanā* meditation.

A person who practises *vipassanā* meditation, according to the right method, between the ages of twenty and forty years, should gain insight within a month. One who practises *vipassanā* meditation only in his fifties and sixties when he is no longer as healthy as he used to be, will need to practise for two months or even more to gain insight. One who starts practising between the ages of seventy and eighty will find it hard to gain insight.

The characteristics of existence — *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* — will not be very evident; only fatigue will be



evident. Great perseverance will be required to gain any insight at all and few will gain it. Once a person is over eighty, it will be well-nigh impossible to start the practise of meditation. Both body and mind will be too old. The body will be frail and weak; the mind will be forgetful and incapable of remembering or noting.

That is why we should practise *vipassanā* meditation while we are strong and healthy in body and mind.

### **Mahādhana, the Billionaire**

Once, when the *Buddha* was residing in the Migadāya forest, the son of Mahādhana, the billionaire who was worth eighty billion and the daughter of another billionaire who was also worth eighty billion were married and lived happily in *Bāranasī*.

However, the couple were idle and made no effort to increase their wealth nor did they endeavour by meditation to attain the noble *dhamma* of *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*.

The rich man's son had to pay respect to the king of Benares three times a day. On his way to the king, he would be enticed and persuaded to join in their drinking by a group of tipplers. Eventually, he became a dipsomaniac.

The rich man's son would engage in merriment and drinking daily. His drinking companions increased in number day by day and finally his entire inheritance was squandered.

He then asked for his wife's fortune and continued indulging in merrymaking and drinking until her inheritance was squandered too. They had to sell their houses, estates, articles of use and furniture and were reduced to a life of begging.

One day, the *Buddha* saw the rich man's son with a begging bowl in hand, standing at the door of a refectory for novices begging for leftovers from their meal and smiled. When Ānandā asked the *Buddha* respectfully what had caused him to smile, the *Buddha* replied by narrating with compassion — how the rich man's son and his wife had lost their worldly prosperity and happiness as well as the bliss of the *dhamma* by failing to exert themselves in both worldly and spiritual matters.

The rich man's son and his wife could have become wealthy persons of the first rank if they had worked hard for gain and profit in the primary (first) stage of their lives. In *dhamma* matters, the rich man's son could have become an *arahant*, his wife could have become an *anāgāmi* (non-returner) if they had practised meditation diligently.

If they had worked hard for gain and profit in the middle stage of their lives, they could have become wealthy persons of the second rank. The rich man's son could have become an *anāgāmi* and his wife a *sakadāgāmi* (once-returner) if they had practised *vipassanā* meditation diligently.

In the last (third) stage of their lives, they could have become wealthy persons of the third rank if they had worked hard for gain and profit; the rich man's son could have become a *sakadāgāmi* and his wife could have become a *sotāpanna* if they had persevered in their meditation.

Now, however, due to their lack of effort in all three stages of their lives, they had lost their worldly prosperity and happiness as well as the peace and happiness of *magga* (path) and *phala* (fruition). They were without hope and were like an old crane with broken wings in a dry pond with no water and no fish. Having no home was like the dry

pond. Having no food was like having no fish in the dry pond. Being unable to go elsewhere to earn a living, because of their destitution, was like the old crane with broken wings that could not fly.

There is always deterioration of body and mind depending on one's age. That is why we should start practising *vipassanā* meditation while we are strong in body and mind.

*Motto: Meditate while you are young  
When dhamma can be gained.  
Meditate only when you are old,  
There'll be no dhamma just regrets.*

We should not be conceited about our good physical and mental health. We should reflect on the perils of disease and ill-health. If we practise *vipassanā* meditation only when we are afflicted with disease and pain, it will be like having two thorns in the flesh. The bodily pain will be like one of the thorns; the mental pain and distress will be the other.

That is why the *Buddha* stated, "Let there be pain in the body but not in the mind". The *Buddha* said that no one is free from illness and disease; those who think they are, do so because of ignorance.

### **Nakulapitā ...**

Once, there was a rich man named Nakulapitā who lived in Susumāragiri City in the Bhagga country. For five hundred existences he and the *Buddha* had been father and son. He was now in the last stage of life, about eighty or ninety years old, weak, ailing and in pain and therefore

thought of the *Buddha*. He went to the *Buddha* and requested the *Buddha* to preach the *dhamma* to him before his death.

In order to give comfort and solace to Nakulapitā, the Lord *Buddha* preached an appropriate sermon thus: Let there be pain in the body but not in the mind. No one is free from sickness and pain; it is only the ignorant who think so.

After hearing the sermon, Nakulapitā went to pay homage to the Venerable Sāriputta who asked him why he was looking so delighted. Nakulapitā replied that he had just come from the *Buddha* who had preached to him.

When Venerable Sāriputta asked what the *Buddha* had preached, he answered, "Let there be pain in the body but not in the mind." Then Venerable Sāriputta inquired whether he had asked the *Buddha* the meaning of the sermon. Nakulapitā said that he had failed to do so and requested Venerable Sāriputta to explain.

Venerable Sāriputta therefore supplemented the *Buddha's* sermon by explaining that as long as you regard *rūpa* (body) and *nāma* (mind) or the five aggregates as "I", you will feel both bodily and mental pain.

But by practising *vipassanā* meditation and realizing that the five aggregates are not "I", you will be free from mental pain even though you may suffer bodily pain.

Only *arahant* are definitely capable of always overcoming mental pain. For all those who have not attained arahantship, from *puthujjana* to *anāgāmi*, there will be pain in the body but not in the mind only while meditating and noting, when pain is overcome. At other times, when not noting, there will be pain in both body and mind.

Yogis will be able to overcome mental pain at the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, when they experience the passing away of all phenomena.

*Motto: Think of body and mind as "I";  
Then there will be pain in body and mind.  
Note the phenomena of body and mind  
as they arise  
Then there will be bodily, but no mental pain*

Reflection on the perils of disease and ill-health develops *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga*. "O yogi, within the form of your body is the reality of disease and ill health from which you cannot escape. You are certain to suffer pain and ill-health from which you cannot escape; you may even become bed-ridden. When pain and suffering afflict you, you will not be able to meditate unless you already have a basis of *samādhi* (concentration) developed from the practice of meditation while you were well. Therefore, you should persevere in practising *vipassanā* meditation before you are afflicted with disease, pain and suffering."

Pondering thus, a yogi should develop *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga* to restore his enthusiasm for meditation and to overcome dejection and lassitude.

*Motto: Reflect on the perils of sickness  
and disease before they occur.  
'Tis opportune to meditate while you are well,  
for dhamma can't be gained when you are ill.  
To have no regrets when you are ill,  
Meditate while you are well.*

Reflecting on death will also develop *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga*. "O yogi, within the form of your body is the reality of death from which you cannot escape. You are certain to die. If you are unable to be mindful because of intense suffering from disease and ill-health when death approaches, you will die in an unmindful state and descend into *apāya* (the woeful states). Therefore, you should strive with diligence in your meditation while you are well so as to close the doors to *apāya*."

Pondering thus, a yogi should develop *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga* and invigorate himself to overcome dejection and lassitude.

*Motto: Reflect on death  
Before it arrives.  
Tis opportune to meditate  
Before death comes your way.  
To die perplexed without the Truth  
Is cause for great regret.*

When a yogi attains *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, the arising of phenomena will no longer be distinct. Only the passing away will be distinct. The rapid and constant passing away of phenomena may cause the yogi to become depressed. But do not be discouraged. Do what has to be done today; for we do not know when death will arrive. Practise *vipassanā* meditation while you have the opportunity to do so, while you meet the four conditions that are so hard to obtain:

1. to be human;
2. to be alive;
3. to be born at a time of the *Buddha's sāsana*;

4. to hear the *dhamma* on the practice of *vipassanā* meditation.

*Motto: No bribes have we to give the king of death,  
No army to repulse him.  
That is why we do not know for sure  
If we will be alive tomorrow.  
That is why we should meditate today  
Without postponement to tomorrow.*

Thus, by developing the *dhammavicaya bojjhaṅga*, the *indriya* (controlling faculties) will be sharpened and insight will be attained.

Because you have listened to the *dhamma* discourse on the sixth cause which sharpens the *indriya*, which is the judicious and appropriate balanced development of the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*), may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna* to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.



## Chapter Seven

### The Seventh Dhamma Discourse

SINCE THE OBSCURE beginning of *samīsāra*, we have been reborn in uncountable existences. We are in this existence, still undergoing the sufferings of *samīsāra* such as old age, sickness, death, apprehension and lamentation because we have not yet attained noble *vipassanā* insight.

Therefore, we should try to attain *vipassanā* insight by reflecting thus — while I am in the present human existence with intellect and understanding, while I am alive, while I can listen to the teachings on *vipassanā* meditation and while I am meeting the *Buddha's sāsana* — I should try my best to meditate, without concern for my body and my life, to attain noble *vipassanā* insight.

*Motto: Spare not body and life;  
To them you must be unsympathetic*

### Concern for Body and Life

Even animals are considerate towards body and life, what more we humans with intellect. But we should not be considerate. We should make a firm resolve to attain noble

*vipassanā* insight during this existence in order to be liberated from old age, sickness and death. As you progress through the stages of knowledge and insight, you will be able to overcome and be liberated from illness.

Some individuals, contrary to the *iriyāpatha* (bodily posture) have an inclination for comfort and ease in leading their lives. When sitting, they will change their position or stand up as soon as they feel a bit warm or stiff. When standing, as soon as they feel a bit tired, they will sit down or walk about or lie down to make themselves comfortable.

When having to sit without moving for an hour while meditating, individuals of this type who have an inclination for comfort, will become anxious in case they should develop chronic aches and stiffness, urinary troubles and constipation which might harm their health and shorten their lives. Such anxieties will creep in and make them considerate towards body and life while meditating. As a result, the *indriya* (controlling faculties) will not be sharpened and progress will not be made.

When sleep is reduced to four or five hours during the meditation course, individuals who are used to long hours of sleep will have anxieties about the loss of sleep. Fearing that it might affect their health and shorten their lives, they will be considerate towards body and life. Consequently, the *indriya* will not be sharpened and progress will not be made.

It is not only concern for one's own body and life which will hinder progress in meditation; even concern for others will do so.

In days gone by, monks who lived in cities and towns would go to live in forest monasteries during *vassā* — a

period of retreat for monks during the rainy season (rains retreat) Once, an elderly monk and a young *sāmaṇera* (novice) who were capable of attaining *phala samāpatti* were late arrivals at the forest monastery where they were to stay during *vassā*.

Accommodation at the monastery was allotted according to seniority of monkhood. The elderly monk obtained a place for himself, but there was no room for the young *sāmaṇera*. Throughout the three months of *vassā*, the elderly monk was anxious and worried about the health of the *sāmaṇera* who had no place of his own. He was therefore unable to attain *phala samāpatti*. However, the *sāmaṇera* was able to attain *samāpatti* throughout the three months of *vassā* as he had no anxieties about the elderly monk who had obtained a place at the monastery.

When the elderly monk and the *sāmaṇera* met at the end of *vassā*, the *sāmaṇera* asked whether the three months of rains retreat at the monastery had been satisfactory. The elderly monk replied that it had not because he had been worried and concerned about the *sāmaṇera*.

The slightest anxiety and concern can hinder the progress of insight for persons whose *samādhi* (concentration) is weak. Therefore, one should practise *vipassanā* meditation without consideration and concern either for one's body and life or for others.

*Samatha* and *vipassanā* meditation require mental effort. The slightest worry or concern is a hindrance to the sharpening of the *indriya* and to the progress of insight. That is why it is important for yogis who are progressing in the stages of insight not to learn of family matters which could

cause them concern. Family members should not visit the yogis when they are progressing in their meditation because yogis whose *samādhi* is not very strong will be hindered in their progress.

When yogis progress through the various stages of insight and reach *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, they will find only the passing away of phenomena with every noting — they will find that nothing is dependable or permanent. They will realize that there is nothing for concern, that everything passes away and therefore, they will be able to meditate without concern for body and life.

At the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, painful sensations such as dizziness or a feeling of being pricked by pins will reappear. However, when yogis continue diligently with their notings, concentration will mature and strengthen, notings will improve and the form of the body will no longer be evident — concern for body and life will be discarded of its own accord. Yogis will no longer be anxious or worried about body and life. That is why yogis should strive to attain the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*. Yogis should reflect thus: "We are still undergoing the sufferings of old age, sickness and death because we have not yet attained noble *vipassanā* insight. Therefore, we should strive in our meditation without concern for body and life."

Yogis who, since before meditation have suffered from ailments such as aches and pains in the knees and chest, cannot tolerate the aches and pains while their *samādhi* is weak. But they must not give in. They must continue noting intently, "paining, paining". On attaining the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, the aches and pains may become intolerable — the yogis may feel that the pain might even kill them. But by

continuing with determination without concern for body and life, they can be cured of their ailments.

Thus, because you have listened to the *dhamma* discourse on the seventh cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties) which is to meditate without concern for one's body and life may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna* to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.

## Chapter Eight

### The Eighth Dhamma Discourse

PERSONS WHO PRACTISE *vipassanā* meditation will find the various physical sufferings arise depending on the stage of insight knowledge. They may be afflicted with intense and intolerable aches and pains, sluggishness and feelings of tightness. Sometimes, they will find that despite observing and noting the sufferings closely and intently, they do not lessen but increase in intensity. Yogis may then become tired and weary of practising meditation.

### Vipassanā Effort to overcome *Dukkha Vedanā*

If this happens, they must overcome their weariness with *vipassanā vīriya* (effort) by noting with particular concentration and thereby sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties). They must be able to overwhelm their sufferings by continuous noting.

*Motto:     The usual sufferings which arise  
              While meditating  
              Must be overcome.*

When they are overcome, the sufferings which yogis had initially, before meditation, will also be overcome. As *samādhī* (concentration) develops, at the stages of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* and *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa*, yogis will find that they are cured of their initial ailments and illnesses.

That is why some yogis do not take medicines for common ailments, for they know that they can be cured by noting.

The usual sufferings which arise during meditation will vary in distinctness depending on the stage of insight. At the stages of *Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa* (insight into mind and matter) and *Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa* (insight into cause and effect) — sufferings will not be very evident. But at the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the Three Characteristics of Existence) — they will be very evident.

Yogis will progress through the stages of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*, *Bhaṅga ñāṇa*, *Bhaya ñāṇa*, *Ādīnava ñāṇa*, *Nibbidā ñāṇa*, *Muñcitukamyatā ñāṇa* and when they reach the stage of *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa* — sufferings will become evident again. These sufferings are known as 'later sufferings', while the sufferings at the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* are known as 'earlier sufferings'.

Yogis should have some knowledge of the sufferings that arise at the different stages of insight. Otherwise, they may think that they have regressed when suffering arises again as they progress in insight to the stage of *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa* and will become discouraged.



## The Stages of Insight Knowledge

I shall therefore give a summary of the stages of insight knowledge so that yogis may know when sufferings arise and how you should overcome them.

1. The first stage is *Nāma-rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa* (insight into mind and matter) where you will be able to differentiate between mind and matter. Most yogis will reach this stage in two, three or four days. At first, as you note: 'rising, falling' of the abdomen, you will think that it is 'your abdomen' that is rising and falling, that 'you' are noting. You will not be able to separate body and mind.

Similarly with sitting, touching etc. You will think that 'you' are sitting, touching etc.; that 'you' are noting. You will not know the difference between mind and matter.

But as concentration develops, you will realize that the rising of the abdomen is one thing and noting of it is another; and likewise with sitting, touching etc. After three or four days of continuous noting, yogis will attain calmness and stability of mind and a reasonable improvement in their notings. You will come to realize that the sense object and the noting of the sense object are separate entities. The wandering mind will become evident — but do not be discouraged, just note 'wandering, wandering' a few times. As notings keep up with the wandering mind, the mind will no longer wander. Then, continue noting what is most distinct.

Being aware that the mind wanders although the body is still will enable yogis to realize that body and

mind are separate things; that they are not "I". You will gain *Nāma-rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa*.

At this stage, when noting 'rising, falling' the beginning and the end of the rising and falling movements are not as distinct as the middle of the rising and falling movements. Sufferings are not evident yet. Yogis may sometimes see small lights, like fireflies, appear during meditation.

2. As concentration develops, yogis will reach the stage of *Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa* (insight into cause and effect). Yogis will come to realize that it is because of a sense object that the noting mind arises.

With continuous noting, as rising and falling of the abdomen become subtle and indistinct, yogis may find rising and falling occurring all over the body — sometimes on the back, sometimes on the top of the head and sometimes on the arm.

Sometimes the rising and falling becomes a revolving movement. Then note, 'revolving, revolving'. Yogis may become perplexed. However, you must continue noting wherever the rising and falling occur, transferring your focus of attention and noting whenever the rising and falling shift.

In *vipassanā* meditation, you must note what is distinct and note whatever arises as it arises. When the rising and falling of the abdomen become so subtle and indistinct that noting is impossible, change you noting to 'sitting, touching'.

At this stage, the beginning of the rising and falling movements of the abdomen are distinct. Pain and suffering are not evident yet.

Notings will improve as yogis continue with their meditation. Green, blue and yellow lights which arouse the interest of the yogis and images of monasteries, pagodas, celestial beings etc. may appear. But they will not be very distinct. At times, sufferings such as aches and pains may also occur, but sufferings are few at this stage.

Yogis will come to realize that it is because of a sense object that the noting mind occurs. Noting intently, you will comprehend the relationship between cause and effect. You will attain *Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa*.

3. Continuing with notings, yogis will reach the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* (insight into the three characteristics of existence) — whereby intense and intolerable sufferings such as aches, dizziness, nausea, itching, sluggishness, feelings of tightness and other unpleasant sensations will occur — causing yogis to reflect that there is nothing but suffering in the whole body.

Frightful images may also appear during meditation, then note: 'seeing, seeing'. But if fear of frightful images is more distinct, note 'fear, fear' and you will overcome your fear. In *vipassanā* meditation you must note what is most distinct.

After five six or ten notings of the intense sufferings, aches and pains will arise in some other part of the body and noting will have to be transferred there. Yogis will come to realize that sufferings do not occur in one place only — that pain is not fixed in location. Rather, that it is constantly changing places and can arise anywhere in the body.

At the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa*, suffering will be very evident. But you will find that pain arises and passes away. You will comprehend *anicca* (impermanence), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anatta* (the uncontrollableness of things) will follow. It is important to experience *anicca* first, then only will yogis comprehend *dukkha* and *anatta*.

*Motto: Among the true characteristics of Existence  
Comprehend but one, and  
The rest will be comprehended.*

If yogis cannot note to overcome their sufferings, they may become discouraged. The meditation teachers must give them encouragement and tell them that although they are undergoing unpleasant and painful experiences according to the nature of insight they are making progress and that the next stage of insight will be good.

Yogis may become short-tempered and even claim that meditation has made them so. The meditation teachers will have to point out, patiently, that because they are short-tempered by nature, they are short-tempered now and that meditation should not be blamed.

It takes eight or ten days to reach the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* and progress can be made to the next stage with concentrated noting in four or five days. Yogis with keen intellects whose notings and *samādhi* are strong may reach the next stage in a day or two. Those with slow intellects may be eight or ten days. Some may remain at this stage for about a month, which is not considered to be satisfactory.

Therefore, you should strive to overcome the sufferings that arise at this stage — by concentrated continuous noting, to reach the next stage.

"*Nibbāna* can be attained by patience" is a saying worth remembering by yogis. You must overcome sufferings by patience and concentrated noting, and bear in mind that your duty is to note continuously.

Once, there was a monk whose desire to attain *nibbāna* was so great that he meditated continuously for a day and a night. The next day, he caught a chill and suffered from severe colic pains. He could neither sit nor stand, so he had to lie down. He tossed and turned with discomfort, his robes became disarrayed and his fellow monks had to re-arrange them for him.

Then a wise monk reminded him that *sanghas* should have forbearance and patience. He accepted the wise words by saying, "sādhu" and with patience and concentration began noting the colic pains from the navel to the lower chest. Noting continuously and intently, he became an *anāgāmi* (non-returner) before his death and was reborn in the *brahmā* world.

Do not become tense when you suffer from severe pain. If you do, there will be an excess of *vīriya* (effort) and weakening of concentration. You will not be able to note the pain accurately with focus on the present and the pain will become more intense.

Instead, relax body and mind a little and concentrate on the pain. You must realize the nature, the location and the extent of the pain. It can be done. You must note intently, not superficially. Noting must be focused on the pain as it occurs.

If the pain is unbearable and you want to change your posture, do not do so at once. Note 'wanting to change, wanting to change'. Just by noting your desire to change, the pain may become bearable and you may be able to continue noting it without changing your posture.

However, if it should still be unbearable and you wish to change your posture, transfer your noting to the changing movements which should be performed gently and slowly. Afterwards, return to noting the pain and you will find that it will be bearable. Note accurately until you comprehend the inherent nature of pain, its arising and passing away, its characteristics of *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*.

As samādhi develops, with every noting the passing away of the pain will become more distinct and you will begin to overcome the pain.

When pain is intense, yogis will reflect that pain cannot be prevented in any way — that pain occurs according to its nature. When so much suffering occurs repeatedly in body and mind, yogis may become exceedingly weary. When this happens, you must not give in to your weariness by ceasing to note. Instead, you must note with special diligence and concentration.

When walking, you must note respectfully and energetically. You must also make detailed notings respectfully, and as much as possible, on activities such as bending, stretching, taking, holding, etc. By doing so, notings will improve. In sitting meditation also, notings will improve and painful sensations will be overcome.

There are two kinds of *dukkha vedanā* (painful sensations), those that yogis were already suffering from prior to practising meditation and those that arise during meditation.

It is also extremely important for yogis to be able to note that the painful sensations which arise during meditation are overcome. When they are overcome, yogis will be able to note the painful sensations which existed initially and overcome them too.

When noting the painful sensations, with every noting, yogis with a keen intellect will be able to perceive the passing away of pain and the passing away of the noting mind. Yogis with a very keen intellect will perceive not only the passing away of pain but also the passing away of the awareness of pain and the passing away of the noting mind. Yogis will comprehend *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta* and according to their *pārāmī* (perfections) they will gain progress in insight.

4. The next stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa* (insight into the arising and passing away of phenomena) is the opposite of *Sammasana ñāṇa*. There are no painful and unpleasant feelings or frightful images as in the previous stage. It is a pleasant stage. Body and mind will be healthy and strong. Body and mind will be light and subtle.

Yogis will not need to change their sitting positions as often as before. Yogis will be able to meditate for longer periods. Noting will become automatic. The yogi will feel like an observer, sitting and watching the noting. The pleasantness of this stage will give rise to *vipassanā pīti* — a joy which is greater than any



other joy, worldly or celestial. Yogis will become refined and gentle. The calm expression on a yogi's face will indicate he has reached the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*.

Yogis will become attached to the feelings of pleasantness. To overcome their attachment, they must note the pleasant feelings as "pleasant, pleasant" for in feelings of happiness dwells *rāga nusaya* (attachment). In pali, we say that *rāga nusaya* 'dwells' in feelings of happiness when it occurs frequently. The feelings of happiness must be noted.

When you advance in the stage of *Udayabbaya ñāṇa*, arising and passing away will be so rapid that yogis will come to experience the feelings of happiness as suffering. If you cannot keep up in your notings with the rapidity of arising and passing away, you must note 'knowing, knowing'. Once the sensations of happiness are seen as suffering, *rāga nusaya* will be eliminated.

*Motto: In feelings of happiness dwells rāga  
Which must be eliminated.  
When feelings of happiness arise,  
Notings must be made until suffering is realised.*

5. As insight knowledge progresses, at the stage of *Bhaṅga ñāṇa* (insight into the dissolution of composite things) the passing away of phenomena becomes distinct. The object of consciousness and the noting mind pass away quickly and *anicca* (impermanence) will be comprehended. Then, because of the rapidity of the

passing away of phenomena, yogis will comprehend *dukkha* (suffering) which cannot be prevented in any way and they will comprehend *anatta* (the absence of a self — the uncontrollableness of things).

6. At the stage of *Bhaya ñāṇa* (knowledge of fear) — the rapid dissolution of phenomena causes yogis to see the body as frightful.
7. At the state of *Ādinava ñāṇa* (knowledge of misery) — yogis will see the body as a decaying form, as faulty and dangerous. They will no longer see the body as something desirable.
8. When the stage of *Nibbidā ñāṇa* (knowledge of weariness) is reached, yogis will become weary with the impermanence of the body. But they must keep on noting with their minds focused on the present. They must not become lazy.
9. When the stage of *Muñcitukamyatā ñāṇa* (knowledge of the desire for release) is reached, yogis will have a desire to be free of this existence — to be free from all existence. Yogis with a keen intellect will feel the desire for release most distinctly. Yogis will have a desire to stop noting. But noting is now automatic and cannot be stopped.
10. When yogis reflect that they must not stop noting if they wish to gain *vipassanā* knowledge, they will reach the stage of *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa* (insight arising out of further contemplation). Yogis will decide to resume noting again — the will to note will be restored.

## A Simile

The stages of knowledge mentioned above are similar and therefore, in order to distinguish between them, commentators have given the simile of a fisherman catching fish with a fishing basket. Thinking that he had caught a fish, he grabbed hold of it. On finding that it was not a fish but a snake with three stripes around the neck, he was filled with fright. But realizing the danger, he held on to it firmly to prevent it from harming him. He became tired of holding on to it and decided to fling it away as far as possible. He increased his grip on the snake and flung it away as far as he could.

His fright at finding it was a snake is compared to the stage of *Bhaya ñāṇa* where the yogi sees his body as frightful. The three stripes on the snake are likened to the three characteristics of existence — *anicca*, *dukkha* and *anatta*. The realization of danger is compared to *Ādīnava ñāṇa*. The weariness of holding on to the snake in order to prevent it from harming him is compared to *Nibbidā ñāṇa*, the stage at which the yogi becomes weary of meditating. Deciding to fling it away is compared to the stage of *Muñcitukamyatā ñāṇa* and the desire to be free. The increased grip on the snake is compared to *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa* when the yogi decides to renew his effort in meditation.

At the stage of *Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa*, which can be reached in about a month, intense sufferings will arise as at the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa*. But yogis who suffered intensely at the stage of *Sammasana ñāṇa* will not suffer so much now. Whereas those who did not suffer too severely at the earlier stage will undergo more intense pain at this stage.

Yogis will feel as if a heavy weight is pressing them down. Pains and aches will arise here and there. The arising and passing away of pain will be very rapid, yogis will find it hard to keep pace in their notings with the rapid arising and passing away. Yogis may become short-tempered because of their inability to note. Some have been known to state that it was driving them mad. They were told by their meditation teachers to note 'feeling mad, feeling mad' for you must note what is distinct.

Yogis may become discouraged and must be encouraged by their meditation teachers and be told that this will be the last occurrence of pain before attaining *vipassanā* knowledge. Great care must be taken at this stage for yogis may become restless and undergo a change in attitude of mind. They may become irreverent towards the *Buddha*, the *dhamma* and the *sangha* and towards their meditation teachers.

Their mental attitude must be modified in order to reach the next stage of *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa* (knowledge arising from equanimity) when yogis will become indifferent to both happiness and suffering. They will be able to face either with equanimity.

*Motto: No fear and liking will there be,  
Just impartial noting of happiness and suffering  
Effortless and easy notings  
With Equanimity, is Saṅkhārupekkhā*

At the stage of *Sanikhārupekkhā ñāṇa*, yogis are no longer restless as at the previous stage. They become still and quiet, with no desire to move. There will be no

sensations of either happiness or suffering. Noting will become effortless. There will be no fear or liking as at earlier stages. Yogis will develop equanimity towards *dukkha* and *sukha*. Because noting becomes easy and effortless, effort and concentration become lax and *moha* (delusion) will occur frequently. That is why *moha* dwells in sensations of equanimity. Yogis must note to comprehend *anicca* (impermanence) and thereby overcome *moha*.

*Motto: In sensations of equanimity  
Dwells delusion  
Which must be eliminated.*

I have given the gist of the methods by which the three kinds of *vedanā* (sensations or feelings) that arise during *vipassanā* meditation may be overcome. (see talk in Chapter Two, the "Three-fold Sensation" on page 40)

Thus, because you have listened to the eighth cause which sharpens the *indriya* (controlling faculties) which is to meditate without concern for body and life — with *vipassanā* effort, to overcome the sufferings that arise, may you be able to practise accordingly and attain the peace and bliss of *nibbāna*, to which you should aspire, easily and quickly.

## Chapter Nine

### The Ninth Dhamma Discourse

#### Meditating with continuous Noting

IF A YOGI RESOLVES to note continuously in whatever time is available, whatever actions can be noted and decides not to leave the meditation centre until he has attained the noble *dhamma* path of *magga* (path) and *phala* (fruition) — if he decided not to give up striving until he has attained his goal, it will cause the *indriya* (controlling faculties) to be sharpened and progress to be made in gaining *vipassanā* knowledge.

*Motto: Do not give up; keep on striving  
Until you reach the end of the path.*

There are four goals that a yogi should strive to attain — to become a *sotāpanna*, a *sakadāgāmi*, an *anāgāmi* and an *arahant*. In the days of the *Buddha*, to become an *arahant* was the goal of many people.

Nowadays, we should at least try to become *sotāpanna*. Some people think that it is not possible to become an *arahant* in the present day and age. That is not so, because the four opportunities stated by the *Buddha*, which are hard to obtain but which can enable us to achieve the peace of *nibbāna*, still exist. They are:

1. To obtain a human existence.
2. To be alive.
3. To hear the teachings on *vipassanā* meditation which will close the doors to *apāya* and enable you to attain *nibbāna*.
4. To meet with the *sāsanā* (the teachings of the *Buddha*).

The four great opportunities for obtaining *nibbāna* as stated by commentators, also exist. They are:

1. To meet with the teachings of the *Buddha*.
2. To live in a place where the *sāsanā* flourishes; a place which is suitable for the practice of *vipassanā* such as Myanmar where there are learned monks who can teach the scriptures and the correct method of *vipassanā* meditation to attain *nibbāna*.
3. To have right beliefs — that good thoughts and actions will bring good results and bad thoughts and actions will bring bad results.
4. To be sound in body and mind, complete with the six sense bases of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind.

*Sanghas* should resolve not to leave the meditation centre — to try to the best of their ability to note



continuously until the noble *dhamma* of *magga* and *phala* has been attained.

However, lay yogis may have to leave the meditation centre due to circumstances. But they should not abandon their notings. They should make a firm resolve to keep on noting as much as possible while going about their daily work and activities — to note and meditate for an hour or half an hour or fifteen minutes, as much as time permits, in the early morning and in the evening.

If they do not abandon their notings but continue to note closely whenever possible, the *indriya* can be sharpened to a fit and proper extent and the reality of the *dhamma* can be realized according to one's *pārāmi* (perfections) from past existences.

However, even though you may be a person who is endowed with special *pārāmi* from past existences and even though you may have been taught the correct method of *vipassanā* meditation completely, if you do not practise to completion, you will not attain *nibbāna*.

For example, just as an egg cannot be hatched unless a hen sits on it for the full period that is required to hatch it — so too, *nibbāna* cannot be attained unless a yogi notes continuously and practises to completion.

Therefore, when yogis leave the meditation centre, they should not abandon continuous noting. They should note continuously in whatever time is available and whatever actions can be noted. The *indriya* will be sharpened and insight will be gained according to one's *pārāmi* from previous existences.

In former times, there were individuals who attained noble *dhamma* by practising *vipassanā* meditation whenever they could while carrying on with their business and duties.

### Attainment of Insight while studying

Once upon a time, a monk named Maliyadeva, who reached his third *vassā* (rains retreat), went to the newly established Mandalārāma monastery to study the scriptures. While studying there, he also practised *vipassanā* meditation during whatever time was available.

One day, he went on his round for alms food to the village of Kalla and was offered rice gruel by an *upasikā* (lay devotee). His countenance and bearing inspired great devotion in her — she felt as if he were her son. So she invited him respectfully to her house. After offering him excellent alms food, she inquired respectfully, "At which monastery do you reside?"

The *sangha* replied, "In order to study, I reside at the Mandalārāma monastery." Whereupon she submitted respectfully, "Throughout the period of your studies at the monastery, may I take responsibility for your alms food?"

So, the monk Maliyadeva who was regarded as a son by the *upasikā*, went to her house daily for alms food. After receiving the offerings, he would pronounce the blessings, "May you be happy; may you be free from sorrow and suffering," and he would then leave. Throughout the three months of *vassā* (rains retreat), these two phrases were his only blessings.

By studying the scriptures, Venerable Maliyadeva was able to discard defilements such as *lobha* (greed) and *dosa* (anger). He practised *vipassanā* meditation whenever time

was available and thereby gained *patisambhidā* (analytical knowledge) and became an *arahant* on the full moon day of thadingyut (*pavāranā* day) — a ceremony at the termination of the *vassā*. He gained the noblest fruition of arahantship. He became a *patisambhidā patta arahant* (an arahant learned in the scriptures).

Knowing that he had attained arahantship, the Abbot of the Mandalārāma monastery called for Venerable Maliyadeva and said, "There is a large audience assemble today as it is *pavāranā* day, so would you deliver the sermon in the evening." Venerable Maliyadeva consented to the Abbot's order.

The young *sāmaṇeras* (novices) heard about it and went to inform the *upasikā* who had been offering alms food daily to Venerable Maliyadeva. They asked her to be present at the monastery in the evening to listen to discourse but she said with disbelief, "*Sāmaṇeras*, please do not tease me. The *sangha* does not know how to deliver a discourse. Throughout the three months of *vassā*, the only two phrase that he would say were: "May you be happy. May you be free from sorrow and suffering."

The *sāmaṇeras* replied that they did not know whether or not he was capable of delivering a discourse, but as he had been ordered to do so by the Abbot, she should be at the monastery in the evening to listen to his discourse.

In the evening, the *upasikā* went to the monastery taking flowers and incense with her to pay homage and listened to the discourse from a place at the back of the *dhamma* audience. She chose the furthest place as she was afraid, that Venerable Maliyadeva would be incapable of delivering a discourse correctly and well; that he would

become confused and disgrace himself in front of the large *dhamma* audience.

When the time arrived for Venerable Maliyadeva to deliver his discourse with fan in hand, he expounded at length from the *tipiṭaka* on the meaning of the two phrases, "May you be happy. May you be free from suffering" until dawn. The *upasikā* was completely rid of wrong view and doubt. Thus, closing the doors to *apāya*, she became a *sotā panna* (stream-winner).

## The Four Noble Truths

In the discourse delivered by Maliyadeva, "May you be happy" refers to the highest bliss of *nibbāna* which is *nirodha sacca* (the third noble truth). "May you be free from suffering" refers to all suffering which is *dukkha sacca* (the first noble truth).

*Dukkha sacca* and *nirodha sacca* are the two truths on effects. Based on these two truths, Maliyadeva included the teachings from the *tipiṭaka* on *tanhā* (craving) which is the cause of suffering; *samudaya sacca* (the second noble truth); and the noble eightfold path, *magga sacca* (the fourth noble truth) which is the cause of *nirodha sacca*, in his discourse.

In the *tipiṭaka* and in the teachings of the *Buddha* expounded during the 45 years of His ministry, there is no teaching which excludes the four noble truths, all pertain to the four noble truths.

We can be liberated from suffering (*dukkha sacca*) only when we attain the bliss of *nibbāna* (*nirodha sacca*). Until

then, we cannot be free from suffering. We will continue to encounter physical and mental suffering.

We can attain the bliss of *nibbāna* only if we practise for the advancement of virtue with the eight factors of the noble eightfold path. This can be accomplished only by the practice of *vipassanā* insight meditation. The eightfold path is practised by yogis when noting. The three factors concerning *sīla* (morality) are observed because there is no physical or verbal wrongdoing, let alone mental wrongdoing. The yogi will be pure in *sīla*. The three factors concerning *samādhi* (concentration) will also be observed.

When you pay particular attention to the 'rising' and 'falling' of the abdomen, you are practising right effort. When you note the rising and falling, you are practising right mindfulness. When you concentrate on the rising and falling, you are practising right concentration. The two factors concerning wisdom will be observed too. When your mind is only on the rising and falling, you are practising right thoughts. When your mind is focused on the rising and falling and you realize that the 'rising' of the abdomen is one thing (*rūpa*, matter) and the noting of it is another (*nāma*, mind), you will have right understanding. Therefore, *magga sacca* is observed.

The discernment of matter and mind will lead to the comprehension that the body is nothing but suffering and to the comprehension of physical and mental suffering. Yogis will perceive the *dukkha sacca* (truth about suffering). As yogis progress in insight, this perception will become more distinct.

When noting, *tanhā* (craving) cannot arise in the yogi. Therefore, *samudaya sacca* will be discarded. Persons who

practise *vipassanā* meditation eliminate *taṇhā* (*samudaya sacca*) which causes sufferings (*dukkha sacca*) at every instant of noting.

There will be no noticeable occurrence of craving and attachment (*samudaya sacca*) which cause physical and mental suffering (*dukkha sacca*) when the *samādhi* (concentration) of persons who practise *vipassanā* meditation matures. There will be no palpable arising of the defilements during meditation; defilements will be temporarily remote.

As *samādhi* matures and strengthens stage by stage, with continuous noting and you reach the path of stream attainment (*sotāpatti magga*), craving and attachment which can cause you to fall into the woeful states of *apāya*, are totally extinguished. You will be liberated from the sufferings of *apāya* and be reborn only in the happy existences of *samsarā*. You may become a *sakadāgāmi* and an *anāgāmi*.

With continuous meditation, *samādhi* (concentration) will mature and strengthen stage by stage, until *arahatta magga* and *phala* are attained. You will then be liberated from all suffering as the cause of suffering, *taṇhā* (craving), will be totally extinguished. The best, the noblest, the true bliss of *nibbāna* will be attained.

Thus, the blessings "May you be happy; May you be free from suffering" include the four noble truths and therefore, they also include the teachings of the *tipiṭaka*. Persons who practise *vipassanā* meditation will realize the four noble truths.

*Motto:     Note when phenomena arise  
              And you will learn the Truth  
              Of Magga, Dukkha, Samudaya and Nirodha.*

Venerable Maliyadeva was able to attain noble *dhamma* and to become an *arahant* by practising *vipassanā* meditation in whatever time was available while studying the scriptures. Taking this into account, we know that it is possible to attain noble *dhamma* by practising *vipassanā* meditation in whatever time is available to us while attending to our own affairs.

But if you have to leave the meditation centre, due to circumstances, and abandon noting as soon as you leave, you will miss attaining noble *dhamma* even though you may be endowed with special *pārāmi* from former existences; you will lose *nibbāna*. Therefore, wise persons will not abandon their notings when they leave the meditation centre.

### **Attaining Noble Insight when Teaching and Practice are complete**

In order to attain noble *dhamma* in this existence, complete teaching and complete practice of the *dhamma* are essential. If one or the other is incomplete or lacking, you will miss attaining noble *dhamma* although you may have special *pārāmi* to do so from previous existences.

*Motto: If teaching or practice is incomplete,  
Noble Dhamma will not be attained.  
If teaching and practice are complete,  
Noble Dhamma will be gained  
In this present life.*

Even in the time of the *Buddha*, there was evidence of persons who should have attained noble *dhamma*, but who did not, due to incomplete teaching and practice.



The billionaire Mahādhana's son and his wife who lived in Bāranasī at the time when the *Buddha* was residing in the Migadāya forest, were two such individuals. As I have already related in a previous *dhamma* discourse, the *Buddha* stated that because they failed to practise *vipassanā* meditation, they had missed attaining noble *dhamma*. The billionaire's son could have become an *arahant* and his wife an *anāgāmi* if they had practised *vipassanā* meditation in the primary (first) stage of their lives. He could have become an *anāgāmi* and his wife a *sakadagāmī* if they had practised *vipassanā* meditation in the middle (second) stage of their lives. He could have become a *sakadāgāmi* and his wife a *sotāpanna* if they had practised in the final (third) stage of their lives.

Although they lived in the time of the *Buddha* who could teach them the complete way to *nibbāna*, because they did not practise *vipassanā* meditation, they missed attaining noble *dhamma*. Their experience should make us mindful.

It is very evident from their experience that no matter how well and completely you may be taught the *dhamma* to attain *nibbāna*, you will not attain it unless you practise it to completion.

Incomplete listening to the teaching of the *dhamma* will also cause you to miss attainment of noble *dhamma*.

Once, when the *Buddha* was residing in the state of Sampa, a *dāyakā* named Pessa and a wanderer named Kandaraka went to the *Buddha* who preached to them the sermon on the four kinds of individuals.

Before the *Buddha* had explained to them the four kinds of individuals in detail. Pessa asked permission for

both of them to leave with the excuse that they had many special matters to see to.

If Pessa had stayed to hear and reflect on the explanation of the four types of individuals, he would have attained noble *dhamma* of *sotāpanna* and entered the stream to *nibbāna*. However, he missed doing so as he did not remain to hear the end of the discourse.

Therefore, even though you may be an individual with special *pārāmī*, (perfections) gained from having practised *vipassanā* meditation in previous existences, it is still possible to miss attaining noble *dhamma* in this existence if the preaching and instruction or the practice of the *dhamma* is incomplete or if you associate with wicked friends.

For just as Pessa who had special *pārāmī* missed becoming a *sotāpanna* so too did prince Ajātasathu miss attaining noble *dhamma* because of his association with his wicked friend Devadatta. He was deserving of becoming a *sotāpanna* on the day that the *Buddha* preached the *samaññaphala sutta*, but missed it because he associated with Devadatta and killed his father, King Bimbisara. Even now, he is suffering in hell for his wicked deed.

Therefore, all good sons and daughters of good parentage should take care and be mindful not to associate with persons who have wrong ideas. The younger generation in particular should take special care.

If continuous noting is complete, you can achieve your goal of becoming a *sotāpanna*. To reach your goal is like taking a photograph where preparations have to be made by both the photographer and the person to be photographed, but the photo is taken in a second. The preparation of

continuous noting has to be made, but the goal can be attained in a second when the five *indriya* (controlling faculties) are well balanced, keen and sharp. If a person has belief in the *dhamma* and tries hard in meditation, *magga* (path) and *phala* (fruition) can be attained while sitting, standing, walking, etc.

Incomplete teaching of the *dhamma* can also cause one to miss attaining noble *dhamma*. The ailing brahmin *Dhanañjānī* missed attaining noble *dhamma* because Venerable *Sāriputta* failed to preach the *dhamma* in its entirety to him.

Once, when the *Buddha* was residing at the Veluvana monastery in the state of Rājagaha, an old brahmin named *Dhanañjānī* who revered Venerable *Sāriputta* for his wisdom was suffering intensely from a fatal illness. While suffering, he remembered the *Buddha* and Venerable *Sāriputta* and sent a man to submit the news of his severe illness to them.

As instructed, the man submitted to the *Buddha* that the old brahmin was too ill to come to see him and that he paid homage to the *Buddha*. The man then submitted to Venerable *Sāriputta* that the old brahmin could not come as he was suffering intensely from his illness and that he paid homage to him. Also, as instructed, he appealed to Venerable *Sāriputta* to visit the house of the old brahmin out of compassion for him.

Venerable *Sāriputta* went to the old brahmin's house, sat in the place that had been prepared for him near the old brahmin's bed and asked about the condition of his illness. The brahmin *Dhanañjānī* replied that his condition was becoming more severe and unbearable at every moment. Realizing that the old brahmin would not recover from his

illness and would die, Venerable Sāriputta preached the following discourse to him.

Using the method of asking questions, he said; "Animals are more exalted than creatures in hell as they have less suffering; *peta* are more exalted than animals because they have less suffering; *asurā* are more exalted than *peta* because they have less suffering; humans are more exalted than *asurā* because they have more happiness; *Cātummahārājikā* celestial beings are more exalted than humans; *Tāvātimsa* celestial beings are more exalted than *Cātummahārājikā* celestial beings; *Yāmā* celestial beings are more exalted than *Tāvātimsa* celestial beings; *Tusita* celestial beings are more exalted than *Yāmā* celestial beings; *Nimmāṇarati* celestial beings are more exalted than *Tusita* celestial beings; *Paranimmitavasavatti* celestial beings are more exalted as regards prosperity and wealth than *Nimmāṇarati* celestial beings."

Then he stated that *brahmā* are more exalted than *Paranimmitavasavatti* celestial beings and preached the four sublime states (*brahmavihara*) to the old brahmin. He preached the method of cultivating:

1. *Mettā* (loving-kindness) — the sincere wish for the welfare and happiness of all living beings. We radiate *mettā* thus: may all beings in the universe be well and happy; may they be free from danger; may they be free from physical and mental suffering; may they be able to maintain themselves happily.
2. *Karunā* (compassion) — the wish for all beings who are under going pain and suffering to be liberated.

3. *Muditā* (appreciative joy) is joy in the happiness and prosperity of others and the wish that they may continue to be happy and prosperous.
4. *Upekkhā* (equanimity) towards the sorrow and happiness of others, accepting that they are caused by one's good deeds or misdeeds (one's *kamma*).

After preaching the discourse, Venerable Sāriputta returned to Veluvana monastery where the *Buddha* resided and the old brahmin died not long after his departure.

From the monastery, the Lord *Buddha* knew clearly by his wisdom that Venerable Sāriputta had preached only the four sublime states (*brahmavihāra*) and had omitted to preach the *dhamma* on the setting up of the *satipaṭṭhāna* (four foundations of mindfulness) and the four noble truths leading to *magga* and *phala*. Even before Venerable Sāriputta arrived at the monastery, the *Buddha* told the monks that the old brahmin had died without attaining noble *dhamma* because of incomplete teaching of the *dhamma* by Venerable Sāriputta.

Soon after, Venerable Sāriputta arrived. He paid homage to the *Buddha* and submitted that the brahmin Dhanañjānī had also paid homage to the *Buddha*. Thereupon the *Buddha* asked why he had returned without preaching the *dhamma* in its entirety to the brahmin Dhanañjānī who deserved to attain noble *dhamma*. He said that the brahmin had now died and was a celestial being in the inferior *brahmā* world. Venerable Sāriputta therefore had to go to the *brahmā* world to complete the teachings of the *dhamma*.

Ordinary earthly beings may think that a *brahmā* existence is very noble. Indeed, the *brahmā* plane of existence is a noble plane of existence, but individual *brahmās* are *puthujjana* (ordinary worldings) who have not

attained noble *dhamma* from the stage of a *sotāpanna* to that of *arahatta magga* and *phala* and are therefore not yet liberated from *apāya*. That is why the *Buddha* stated that the *brahmā* existence which the brahmin Dhanañjānī attained was inferior.

Although one may have physical radiance and enjoy a peaceful and luxurious life in the *brahmā* world, it will be for the duration of one's *kamma* only. At the end of that period, one may return to a human existence and commit evil deeds and so be reborn in the ignoble existences of hell, animals, *peta* and *asurā* — the four existences of *apāya*. Therefore, because a *brahmā* existence as a *puthujjana* is connected to the ignoble existences of *apāya*, it is still considered to be ignoble in the teachings of the *Buddha*.

### A Female Piglet

The connection between the two existences is illustrated in the commentary on the *dhammapada* with the tale of the female piglet.

Once upon a time, when the Lord *Buddha*, together with Venerable Ānandā and a following of monks went for alms food from Veluvana monastery to Rajagaha, he saw a female piglet and smiled. When Venerable Ānandā asked respectfully about the reason for his smile, the *Buddha* related the tale of the female piglet.

In the time of the *Buddha* Kakusandaha, the piglet was a hen which lived near a refectory. It died while hearing the recitation of the meditation suttas and was reborn as a princess named Ubbari.

The princess attained the first *jhāna* while meditating on a group of maggots in a latrine. When she died she was reborn in the *brahmā* world. When the power (influence)

of her good deeds ended, she died and became the daughter of a rich man in the world of human beings. But as she committed evil deeds, when she died, she became a lowly piglet in Rājagaha.

From this tale, it is evident that one may fall into an ignoble existence in *apāya* from a noble existence as a *brahmā*.

An incomplete teaching of the *dhamma* may enable you to reach noble existences, but because you can then be born again in ignoble existences, sayadaws and *sanghas* in Myanmar do their best to preach and instruct so that the teaching of the *dhamma* is complete.

Persons who practise *vipassanā* meditation must also practice in whatever time is available. When teaching and practice of the *dhamma* are complete, they will attain noble *dhamma* in this existence according to their own *pāramī* (perfections).

Having heard the *dhamma* discourses on the nine causes which sharpen the *indriya* (controlling faculties) may all sons and daughters of good parentage, day by day, strengthen the power of your *saddhā* (belief and confidence) in the *dhamma*; the power of your *vīriya* (effort) in goodness; the power of your *sammā sati* (right mindfulness); the power of your ability to calm your mind by *sammā samādhi* (right concentration) and the power of your *paññā* (penetrative knowledge and wisdom).

Having strengthened them, may they be of help and support in the attainment and realization of noble *dhamma* into *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*.

*Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!*



## Glossary

Ādīnava ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of misery
Adukkha - masukha vedanā	...	Sensations of equanimity
Ājīvaṭṭhamaka sīla	...	Eight precepts of morality with right livelihood as the eight precepts
Anāgāmi	...	non - returner
Anatta	...	The uncontrollableness of things, the absence of a permanent ego
Anupādisesa nibbāna	...	The time after arahant finally pass away, when material and mental formations no longer arise, when all are totally extinguished
Anicca	...	Impermanence
Āpo dhātu	...	The element of cohesion
Apāya	...	Woeful states of existences
Appanā samādhi	...	Concentration achieved when attaining jhāna
Arahant	...	Person who has attained the last and highest stage of the Path
Arahatta magga ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of the last and the highest stage of the Path which annihilates all defilements
Ariya sangha	...	The noble ordained disciples of the Buddha's time
Assamoha sampajañña	...	Clear comprehension of reality (without bewilderment)
Avijjānusaya	...	The tendency of ignorance
Aṭṭhaṅga sīla	...	Eight precepts

Asurā	...	Demon
Bhanga ñāṇa	...	Insight into passing away of phenomena, knowledge of dissolution
Bhaya ñāṇa	...	Knowledge that all dissolving things are fearful; knowledge of the fear
Bhikkhu	...	Monk
Bhikkhunī	...	Buddhist nun
Bodhisatta	...	The Buddha-to-be
Bojjhaṅga	...	Factors of enlightenment
Brahmavihāra	...	The four sublime states
Catummahārajikā	...	Belonging to the four great kings
Cetanā	...	Volition
Cittānupassanā	...	Contemplation of the mind
Cittaviveka	...	Quietness of mind (mental detachment)
Dāna	...	Giving, charity
Dāyikā	...	Female supporter or donor
Deva	...	Celestial being
Dhamma	...	Truth, the way of truth
Dhammānupassanā	...	Contemplation on dhamma
Dhammavicaya	...	Investigation of the truth
Domanassa	...	Displeasure, grief
Dosa	...	Anger
Dukkha	...	Unpleasantness, suffering
Dukkha vedanā	...	Sensation of pain or suffering
Dukkha sacca	...	The Noble Truth of suffering
Gocara samipaṇṇā	...	Clear comprehension of domains of meditation
Hiri Ottapa	...	Moral shame and moral fear
Indriya	...	Controlling faculties
Iriyapatha	...	Bodily posture
Kamma	...	Volitional activity

Kāmamisa pīti	...	Joy that arises from the enjoyment of the five physical senses
Kāyānupassanā	...	Contemplation on the body
Kāyaviveka	...	Quietness of the body (bodily detachment)
Karuṇā	...	Compassion
Khaṇika samādhi	...	Momentary concentration
Khaṇika pīti	...	Joy which arises frequently with quivering and twitching of flesh all over the body
Khuddaka pīti	...	Small shivers of joy, tears of joy and the thrill of joy which arise just once
Lobha	...	Greed
Lokāmisa pīti	...	The joy from worldly success and achievement
Lokaṇīti	...	Buddhist instruction in ethics
Mahābhūta	...	The four essential elements
Magga	...	Path
Magga Sacca	...	The Noble Truth of the Path leading to cessation of suffering
Mettā	...	Loving kindness
Moha	...	Delusion
Muñcitukamyatā ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of the desire for release from composite things which cause disgust or knowledge of desire for deliverance
Muditā	...	Appreciative joy
Nāma	...	Mind
Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa	...	Analytical knowledge of mind and matter
Nibbidā ñāṇa	...	Knowledge which reflects on feelings of weariness aroused by composite things that are dangerous

Nimmānārati	...	Name of the fifth deva-world
Nirodha Sacca	...	The Noble Truth of cessation of suffering
Okkantika pīti	...	A coolness or a warmth arises from the lower part of the body, moves upwards through the body and passes away
Paccavekkhanā ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of retrospection
Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of causes and effects, knowledge of discerning condition
Pañca sīla	...	Five precepts
Paññā	...	Wisdom
Paññatti	...	Apparent reality or concept
Paramatha	...	Ultimate reality
Pārāmī	...	Special moral virtues or perfections
Paranimmitavasavatti	...	Name of the highest deva - world
Passadhi	...	Tranquillity
Paso	...	Lower garment for men
Pathavī	...	Earth
Pathavī dhātu	...	The element of earth or extension
Pathavī kasina	...	Earth meditation device
Patighānusaya	...	The tendency of hate or ill - will
Patisambhidā	...	Analytical knowledge
Patisambhidā pata arahant	...	An arahant learned in the scriptures
Patisaṅkhā ñāṇa	...	Knowledge arising out of further contemplation or knowledge of re-observation
Peta	...	Hungry ghost
Phala	...	Fruition
Phala samāpatti	...	Attainment of fruition

Pharanā pīti	...	A peaceful joy which pervades the whole body
Pīti	...	Joy
Puthujjana	...	Ordinary worldlings
Rāgānusaya	...	The tendency of desire or lust; attachment
Rūpa	...	Matter
Saddhā	...	Confidence, faith
Sakadāgāmi	...	Once returner
Samādhi	...	Concentration
Sāmaṇera	...	Novice
Samatha	...	Tranquillity meditation
Samatha jhāna	...	Wilful concentration on an object
Sammasana ñāṇa	...	Insight into the three characteristics of existence
Samisara	...	Rounds of rebirth
Samṗajañña	...	(Clear comprehension) right knowledge based on right attentiveness
Samudaya sacca	...	The Noble Truth of origin of sufferings
Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of equanimity
Sappāya samṗajañña	...	Clear comprehension of suitability
Sāsanā	...	Teaching of the Buddha
Sati	...	Mindfulness
Satipatṭhāna	...	Four foundations of mindfulness
Satthaka samṗajañña	...	Clear comprehension of purpose
Sa-upadisesa nibbāna	...	The peace which is attained by arahant before finally passing away when all defilements in the continuum of their beings can no longer arise
Sīla	...	Morality

Sotāpanna	...	Stream winners
Sotāpatti magga ñāṇa	...	Knowledge of entering the stream of the Path
Sotāpatti magga	...	Path of stream attainment
Sukha	...	Pleasure, happiness, pleasantness
Sukha vedanā	...	Sensations of happiness or pleasure
Taṇhā	...	Craving
Tāvātimsa	...	Name of the second deva world
Tejo dhātu	...	The element of heat
Tipiṭaka	...	Three basket of Buddhist Canon
Tusita	...	Name of the fourth deva world
Ubbegā pīti	...	Transporting joy which enables one to float in the air or to leap into the air
Udayabbaya ñāṇa	...	Insight into arising and passing away of all phenomena
Upacara samādhi	...	(Neighbourhood concentration) Concentration achieved just before attaining jhāna
Upadhiviveka	...	Quietness of all things
Upapatti bhāva	...	Rebirth process
Upāsakā	...	Lay devotee (male)
Upāsikā	...	Lay devotee (female)
Upekkhā	...	Equanimity
Vassā	...	Rains retreat
Vāyo dhātu	...	The element of motion
Vedanā	...	Feeling or sensation
Vedanā nupassanā	...	Contemplation of sensation
Veyyavacca	...	Attending to the needs of ceremonies and activities concerning the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha and to the needs of elders

Vipassanā	...	Insight meditation
Vīriya	...	Effort
Vittāmisā pīti	...	The joy and satisfaction which arise from performing dāna and from observing sīla; the joy that arises from the knowledge that the effect of one's good deed will assure rebirth in good existences only
Yāmā	...	Name of the third deva world



## Motto to note

- Every arising of mind and matter,  
Every passing away;  
We must surely note.
- Meditation must be done,  
Respectfully and intently.
- Notings must be made  
With no rest or breaks.
- Whatever is done with awareness and noting,  
Is done with clear comprehension.
- Even a mother will come to hate  
One who is discontented.  
Lack of respect and prosperity  
Can occur instantly.
- Stability of mind,  
Its causes and signs  
Must be well - remembered.
- Contemplate incessantly  
With appropriate Bojjhaṅga.
- Spare not body and life;  
To them you must be unfeeling.
- The usual sufferings which arise  
While meditating  
Must be overcome
- Do not give up; keep on striving  
Until you reach the end of the path.