

THE BUDDHA

PEERLESS BENEFACTOR OF HUMANITY



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(Retired)

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Newspaper Editor, Retired.

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WILL ENSURE GOOD FUTURE EXISTENCES

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The Mahā Karuṇā Image of the Buddha

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U SHWE AUNG, THE AUTHOR

[U Shwe Aung is a noted scholar of the Piṭakas who holds very high Piṭaka examination certificates, such as Sakyasiha Dhāmmariya (Vatamsaka) and Dhammacariya (Siromani) besides a B.A. degree from Yangon University and an M.A. (Sanskrit) degree from Bombay University.]

U Shwe Aung's short biography

He is the eldest of the five children born to farmer U Su and Daw Ohn Shin, Phalay village, Kawa Township, Bago Division.

He was born on 7th June 1928. As both his parents passed away while he was still young, he and his brother and three sisters were brought up by their grand parents.

He started learning at the age of seven at Phalay Village Central Monastery. When he was thirteen, he became a novice and continued to learn the Piṭakas. At the age of eighteen, he joined the Mahā Wisutārāma Monastery of Bago for further studies and at twenty years of age, he was ordained monk at the same monastery.

After ordination, he pursued his studies at Sippamanju Monastery of Min-ma-naing Kwetthit, Aungmingala Taikkthit Monastery of Ahlone and Nyaungdon Monastery of Bahan in Yangon; and then under Venerable U Kyai of Payagyi Taik in Mandalay.

He appeared for several very advanced Pitaka examinations with outstanding success and holds many certificates.

In 1954, he served as a teacher in Venerable U Kyai's monastery. In 1955, while serving a teacher in Eindawya Dhamma Ramsi Monastery of Yangon, he learned English and passed the Matriculation Examination in 1956 and the Intermediate of Arts examination of the Yangon University in 1958.

“BUDDHA”

When his childhood Sayadaw passed away in 1959, he returned to his native village monastery at Phalay. Then he spent the lent in Mahā Visutārāma monastery of Bago that year.

In 1960, he returned to the life of a layman and worked in the Civil Supplies Department. He also attended the Adult University and passed the B.A. examination in 1965, taking the subject combination of pure mathematics, applied mathematics and Burmese language and literature.

On 2-12-1962, he married Daw Khin Sein, daughter of U Maung Win and Daw Naing of 2nd Street, Thayettaw Quarter Kemmendine Township and two sons have been to them.

In 1968, he worked with the Buddha Sasananuggaha Ahphwai. In 1970, under the Columbo Plan Scholarship, he studied Sanskrit at the University of Bombay and was awarded M.A. (Sanskrit) degree.

On return to Myanmar, he joined the Religious Affairs Department of the Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs. He also served as an external examiner in the Philosophy Department of the Yangon University. On 1st June 1988, he retired from the post of Additional director of the Religious Affairs Department. From 1 June 1993, he has been appointed as an advisor of Ministry of Religious Affairs.

The following are the books on Piṭakas he has written and published.

- (1) The essence (Rasa) of Rasa Literature
- (2) From Attavāda to Anattavāda
- (3) Siddhanta Komudi (First volume)
- (4) Dhammapada (Yamaka Vagga and Theravada Foundation)
- (5) The Buddha (or) Peerless Benefactor

Books he has written and are not yet published are

- (1) Siddhanta Komudi (Third Volume)
- (2) Dhammapada (Appamada Vagga, Citta Vagga, Puppha Vagga)
- (3) Readers
- (4) Search for Happiness
- (5) New outlook on life

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Besides, he writes articles for religious magazines from time to time.

He is now living with his wife Daw Khin Sein at No. 102, 2nd Lane, Thayettaw Quarter, Kemmendine Township, Rangoon Division.

U HLA MAUNG, THE TRANSLATOR

Was born of U Pan Maung, a village school teacher, and Daw Phwa Sein at Kyaydaw village of Toungoo Township in March 1913; passed the HSF examination from St. Luke's school in 1932; worked as a typist in commercial firms and with three Government Inquiry Committees; served as official reporter in the Constituent Assembly just before Independence and then in the Chamber of Deputies after independence; served as an editor in the Working People's Daily till retirement in March 1974; worked as an editor in the Burma Pitaka Association till 1988 when he resigned.

He sat for B.A. examination as an external student and passed it in 1954 and passed the B.L. examination in 1956.

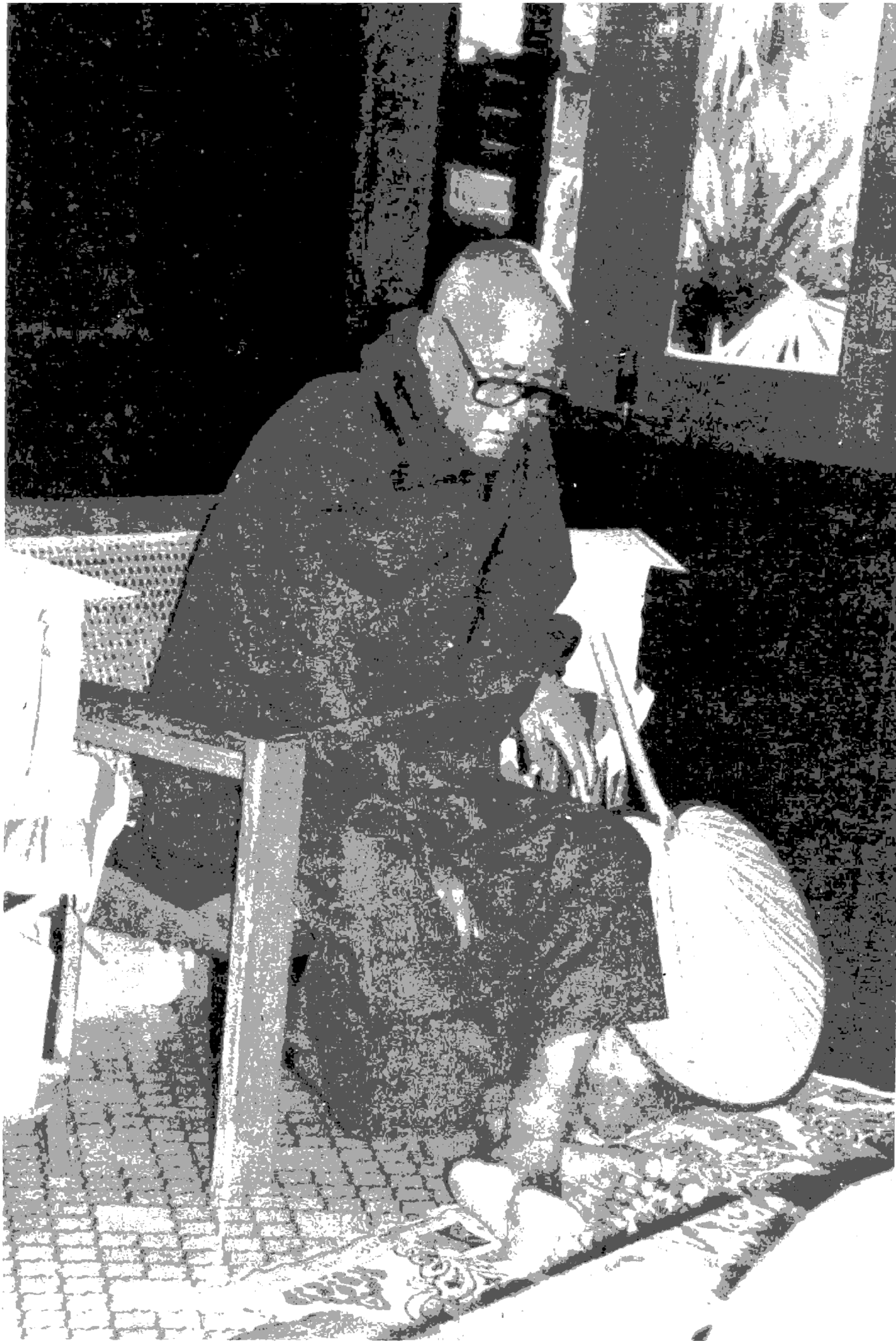
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The translator also wishes to thank `Abba` U Htain Win, the sponsor and publisher of this book, for the trust he has placed in him and his encouragement to go on with the translation.



Thabyekan Sayadaw Ashin Vāsetṭabhivamsa,
Agga Mahā Pandita Abhidhaja Mahā Ratṭhāguru



Venerable Sayadaw Ashin Kumara of
Sasana-wun-saung Monastery, Hmawbi.

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INTRODUCTION

[Those who want to learn about the Buddha, the peerless benefactor of humanity, and emulate his example should read this introduction from the beginning to the end thoroughly.]

Man begins his life with greed (lobha). 'Lobha' is defined in Pāli 'bhava nikantika lobha', which means [craving (taṇhā) that adores bhava (existence)]. In order to prevent his life from being ruined, man strives with lobha (greed) to get whatever he wants. This is only natural.

It, however, is the nature of atta (love of self), which the virtuous ones do not practise but strive to be able to get rid of.

It is true that one has to build one's life according to the Buddhist doctrine. Life, however, is not to be built like the hti (pinnacle) of a pagoda. It has to be built only like a 'scaffolding'. However strongly a scaffolding is built, once the purpose for which it is built is served, it inevitably has to be pulled down, to be done away with.

Only according to other doctrines, life is built like the 'hti' and as long as life is built as such, man will never escape from the whirlpool of saṃsarā (round of rebirths) and will drift in it bobbing up and down, enjoying pleasures at times and contending with pains and miseries (suffering) at other times, but at all times clasping 'soka' (grief) to his breast.

Four Desires

As man drifts along in the whirlpool of saṃsarā, clasping 'soka' to his breast, he usually has four kinds of desires for his life. Of these four, the first is the building of a family called 'kāma'.

According to it, he does not want to live alone but with wife (or husband) and children he has to love. He wants to live together with those he loves and he strives to enable him to do so. Even though he strives, however, he may not succeed. He goes on striving hoping to attain his desire so that his life may not be ruined.

His second desire is to be materially affluent. It is called *Attha* (Wealth and Luxuries). According to it, man has no wish to live in poverty; he wishes to live in affluence. Accordingly, he strives so that he may attain this desire. Even though he strives, however, he may not succeed. But he goes on striving hoping to attain his desire. Even when he does so, he is never contented; he goes on striving to get more and more. Thus, his desire is never satiated. He continues to desire more and more.

The third is the desire to live according to the dhamma. Man's desire does not end with the building of a family and acquiring of wealth and luxuries according to the ‘*attha*’. It is imperative for him to live according to the dhamma. In his building of a family and acquiring of wealth and luxuries, he might have used ‘*adhamma*’ (evil or wrong methods). However, it is his inborn nature to practise according to the dhamma. For this reason, to strive to live and act by the dhamma is one of the four desires of man.

Man, however, is not contented with living according to the dhamma. He longs for freedom which is called ‘*mokkha*’. These are four desires of man concerning his life. In fact, they are the desires of the worldlings.

Three Important Parts

According to the Buddhist teaching, everything has three parts, namely *Assāda* (enjoyment, happiness), *Ādinava* (suffering, disadvantages) and *Nissaraṇa* (way of escape, liberation). Therefore, *kāma* has three parts; *attha*, dhamma and *mokkha* have also three parts each. Each of these parts is more profound than the one before.

Enjoyment Part

The first is the enjoyment, happiness part called ‘*Assāda*’; the second is suffering, disadvantage part called ‘*Ādinava*’ and the third is escape, liberation part called ‘*Nissaraṇa*’.

In truth, as long as man does not find enjoyment or happiness in his work, he does not want to do anything. In the building of a family or household according to Kāma, if he does not find any enjoyment to derive from it, he strives to find it. In seeking wealth according to attha, if he does not find enjoyment to derive from it, he strives to find it. In living according to the dhamma, if man does not find any enjoyment to derive from it, he strives to find it. In looking for escape (mokkha), if man does not find any enjoyment to derive from it, he strives to find it. Striving to find enjoyment is striving for one's own welfare.

Suffering Part

According to nature, the part that comes after enjoyment is the part of suffering, disadvantage called *Adinava*. This part, however, will not be perceived with ordinary intelligence and insight. That is the reason why those with ordinary intelligence and insight come to the end of their lives while they are still seeking enjoyment without having a chance to experience suffering, disadvantage nature.

In truth, everything has adorability called 'rasa'. There is 'rasa'. It is contained both in the enjoyment part and in the suffering part. But those with ordinary intelligence and insight can only see the rasa in the enjoyment part. They are, however, unable to see the rasa in the suffering, disadvantage part. For this reason while they are looking and looking for enjoyment in everything, their lives come to an end.

In fact, there is the adorable 'rasa' in everything but the 'rasa' in the suffering, disadvantage part is not only more subtle than that in the enjoyment part but is also more profound; not only more profound but is also more valuable. That is the reason why those with higher intelligence and insight are able to perceive the 'rasa' in the enjoyment part and then, are also able to see the suffering, disadvantage part which comes from behind. Seeing the suffering, disadvantage part means seeing the 'rasa' in that part.

It was for this reason that the Venerable Sayadaw Hsibani proclaimed at the time the country of Myanmar fell under alien rule, 'Death would have been better!' Such personages are called 'patriots' (myochit arjanīs). They are never contemptuous of other nationalities; they would never tolerate other nationalities to be contemptuous of theirs. In fact, it is the duty and responsibility of

the patriots to prevent adhamma (unlawfulness, injustice) to overwhelm the loka.

Pāramī and Adorable Rasa

Every country has its own patriots and Myanmar also has them. They are able to see Assāda (enjoyment, happiness) the act of possessing as Ādīnava, the act of suffering, disadvantage and to see the sacrifice for the loka as the adorable rasa. In truth, the common people with ordinary intelligence and insight will not realize that sacrificing one's interest and well being is much more adorable than possessing. Only those who have passed beyond that stage can realize it. We have read about such personages in the jātakas (Buddha's birth stories). We also can read about them in history books. These personages are called in Pāli ‘men of pāramī’. Their deeds are called ‘pāramī deeds’. In truth, pāramī is sacrificing one's interest for the well-being of many, sacrificing one's life for the common welfare in everything.

A country or nation which has many persons who can sacrifice their lives for their country and nation will certainly become a top country or nation. Here ‘top’ does not mean in material or technological progress which is not really adorable. What is adorable and desirable is moral development.

In this connection, the Buddha's exhortation in Verse 98 of the Dhammapada given below is worthy of note and should be practised: –

**Gāme vā yadi vā raññe, Ninne vā yadi vā thale,
Yattha arahanto viharanti, Tam bhūmi rā mañeyyakam**

It means: A place may be in a village, or in a forest, or in a valley, or on a hill. If arahats dwell in it, that place is the most delightful in the world.

In seeing the adorable ‘rasa’, maturity is of primary importance. Before one is mature, one sees only the rasa in possessing. When one becomes mature, one no more sees the rasa in possessing. One sees only the Ādīnava (suffering, disadvantage) in possessing. The seeing (view) is changed. One sees the adorable rasa only in discarding. When one gets more mature, one sees the adorable rasa only in escaping.

In reality, there are two kinds of discarding; that which is not free from ‘I’ and that which is free from ‘I’. The discarding not free from the ‘I’ is merely called ‘discarding’ and

the discarding free from the 'I' is called 'escape'. The discarding not free from the 'I' falls into the category of *Adīnava* (suffering, disadvantage) while the discarding free from the 'I' falls into the category of '*Nissaraṇa*' (escape, liberation).

In connection with the latter, the Buddha's exhortation in Verse 103 of the *Dhammapada* given below is worthy of note and should be practised:—

**"Yo sahaṣṣaṃ sahaṣṣena; Saṅgāme mānuse jine;
Ekañca jeyya mattānaṃ, saṃ saṅgama juttamo.**

It means: A warrior may conquer thousands of men in the battlefield; but he is not really the noblest conqueror. Only the one who conquers himself is indeed the noblest conqueror.

According to the above *gāthā*, it is more difficult to conquer oneself than thousands of men in battle. The conqueror of thousands of men in battle is, therefore, regarded as an ordinary conqueror and only the one who conquers himself is called the noblest conqueror.

The fighting in a battlefield is a battle in which the enemy side and one's side fight. Life is also a battle in which the dhamma side and the adhamma side constantly fight. If one can conquer adhamma, one becomes the conqueror.

There are, however, two kinds of conquerors - ordinary conqueror and the noblest conqueror. In conquering adhamma by dhamma, the conqueror with the involvement of the 'I' is just an ordinary conqueror and the conqueror without the involvement of the 'I' is the noblest conqueror.

Every country has its own crop of conquerors (or heroes). They sacrifice their well being and their lives for their country and nation. They sacrifice their wealth and property, they sacrifice their limbs and lives. They have the mental attitude as Venerable Sayadaw Hsibani said, 'Death would have been better!' (at the time Myanmar fell under alien rule). In fact, they sacrificed their lives to prevent the prevalence of adhamma.

There, however, are conquerors who claim when benefits arise out of their sacrifices, saying 'It is we who have sacrificed and we should therefore enjoy these benefits'. Such conquerors are called those who make sacrifices involving the 'I'. According

to Verse 103 of the Dhammapada, those conquerors are just conquerors of thousands of the enemy but are not the conquerors of their own selves. The real enemy who should be conquered is one's own self, not thousands of the enemy. In truth, one who can conquer oneself has nothing more to fear in the loka, but one who has not conquered himself has everything to fear.

Those who have not yet conquered themselves include the ones who crave for and are attached to wealth and property, to high offices, or to honours and awards arising out of their sacrifices. Some crave for and are attached to two kinds of these benefits and some to all the three kinds. They crave for and are attached to these things because they have not conquered their own selves yet.

They cannot yet conquer their own selves means that they have not yet conquered the ‘I’. When they have not yet conquered the ‘I’ involvement in everything, they are happy only when the ‘I’ is involved, not otherwise. The sacrifice they make, in the last analysis amounts to sacrificing for their own good, not for the good of the loka. In fact, they are working for their own good in the guise of the good of the loka.

Those who have conquered themselves have no attachment to wealth and property arising out of their sacrifices, to high offices, honours and awards, and other benefits. Their sacrifices are freely made without hoping for any self welfare. They have pāramī nature. If their deeds involve the ‘I’, they are devoid of pāramī nature.

Under the Buddhist doctrine, desire is lobha (greed) and giving away is alobha (non-greed). Lobha is akusala (demeritorious) and alobha is kusala (meritorious). Kusala has greater power than akusala. The benefits earned without having any desire to have them is nobler than those earned by wanting to have them; they are purer and cleaner. Prince Siddhattha made sacrifices for the loka in every existence of his since he had been Hermit Sumedha. He sacrificed his life and gave away what he possessed for the sake of the loka. He did them freely and generously without hoping any gain for himself. As the result he was reborn into families of wealth or of high and noble status in most of his existences. With regard to paññā (wisdom) also, he was of a very high standard in his existences.

When he ultimately attained the Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and became the Buddha, he was the supreme among not only men but also the devas. In short, he became the noblest of all beings. These were the achievements which no being except the Buddha could attain.

The Buddha had no desire or longing for these achievements. He had never hoped for them. He had sacrificed for the loka with pure volition (cetanā). It is, therefore, only necessary to have pure volition (to have what one wishes). This is called 'Muttacāga' in Pāḷi which means giving away with a free will. Good deeds done with a free will are sure to bring about deserving results. No one can prevent them. It is, however, important not to be attached to them. Not being attached to the results is called the conquest of oneself 'Nissaraṇa' (escape).

If sensual pleasures (kāmaguṇa) are compared to a marsh, existence (bhava) might be likened to a lotus flower. Just as a marsh is despicable, sensual pleasures are also despicable. Just as a lotus is delightful, an existence is also delightful. Just as a lotus cannot exist apart from marsh, existence cannot be aloof from sensual pleasures. However, though the lotus grows in a marsh, only when it is not smeared with mud, is it sweet smelling and very pretty. If the lotus were in a marsh and smeared with mud, it would neither be sweet smelling nor pretty.

In the same manner, if one's existence happens to be in the forest of sensual pleasures and is polluted by these sensual pleasures, it will neither be sweet smelling nor pretty. One must, therefore, strive to see that one is not polluted by sensual pleasures if one wants one's life to be sweet-smelling and pretty. To do it, one must see to it that one is not attached to the results that arise out of one's deeds. In truth, one cannot get rid of sensual pleasures (kāmaguṇas); one can only get rid of craving for the sensual pleasures.

The marshier the soil, the prettier the lotus that grows. Likewise, the stronger the sensual pleasures, the pleasanter the existence. The life of a rich man is pleasanter than that of a poor man. The life of a king is pleasanter than that of a richman. That is the reason why one should strive to make one's life more and more pleasant.

The beauty of a lotus, however, is to adorn the lake and the beauty of existence is to adorn the loka. The Bodhisatta fulfilled pāramīs for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds to

beautify his existence more and more because the more his existence became beautiful, the more would he be able to adorn the loka. He strove to make his existence more and more beautiful not for his own sake but for that of the loka. He became the Buddha not for his own sake, but for saving the veneyyas for the good of the loka from the saṃsarā dukkha.

Therefore, the attainment of Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) was not the primary goal of the Buddha. It was just a ‘raft’ (to convey him to his goal). The goal was to convey the veneyyas by that raft to the other bank of the Saṃsarā (round of rebirths). In other words, only when the scaffolding is firm and strong, will it facilitate in the hoisting of a large ‘hti’ of the pagoda. In the same way, it would be possible for the Buddha to save the veneyyas from the Saṃsarā dukkha only when he had attained Perfect Wisdom. That was the reason why the Bodhisatta made an all out effort to attain the Sabbaññutañāṇa. The greater his capacity to perform the task, the more would he be able to do for the loka.

Three Kinds of Conduct Buddha Defines

According to the Ratana Sutta, there are three kinds of conduct for everyone. The first called Lokattacariya is the conduct for the loka. The second called ñātattacariya is the conduct for one's country and one's nation. The third called Attattacariya is the conduct for oneself and one's family, but it is not limited to oneself and one's family, It also concerns the loka as well as one's country and one's nation. If one is powerful, one can do more for the loka, for one's country and nation according to one's capacity. In truth, one can do more for one's country and nation only when one is powerful. If one's country and nation are more powerful more can be done for the loka according to their ability. For this reason, striving to increase one's interests and capacity more and more is to use them for the welfare of the loka.

Only by doing so, man will be worthy of his existence. When man follows these three kinds of conduct, it will amount to allotting the first place to the welfare of the loka, the second place to the welfare of one's country and nation and the last place to one's own welfare in accordance with the goals shown in the Ratana Sutta. This is the allotting of priority according to the measure of enjoyment of the benefits. It is the nature of parents to put themselves in the first place when there is anything to lose

or 'suffer, but when there is anything to gain or benefit to be enjoyed to put their children first. This is taught by the Buddha. If this injunction can be followed by all, what a happy place the loka will be might well be imagined.

Atta Padhāna Conduct

Before the appearance of the Buddha, according to the nature of worldlings, man placed himself in the first place in all affairs — kāma (sensual pleasures), attha (wealth and gain), dhamma (doctrine, morality), mokkha (release, escape). As the practices of those days placed self-welfare first, they were called 'atta padhāna' practices. Only when the Buddha appeared, the atta padhāna practices were reversed by preaching the 'anatta padhāna' practices, placing the welfare of loka first. The Buddha not only preached them but practised them himself. He showed by his teaching that if one really practised the anatta view that the welfare of loka was first, greater benefits would be gained than those gained by the atta padhāna practice. He showed it in practice.

Example from Myanmar History

In this connection, if a close example is to be studied, we should take the conditions prevailing in the period from the Pagan Era to Konbaung Era of Myanmar history. In this period, all classes - kings, nobles and common people - had to put kamma (deeds) first for themselves and phala (results, fruits from deeds) for the country and the nation. When kamma (deeds) were put first, they (kings, nobles and people) had to perform their duties to the best of their ability to raise their standard of living as much as possible and to leave a historical record. When they put phala (results, fruits) first for the country and the nation, the Myanmar of those days (kings, nobles and the common people) utilized things that were only entirely essential out of the fruits and left what remained to be used for religious (sāsanā) purposes, that is for the welfare of the country and nation.

In the building of a country or a nation, the solidarity of the people is of utmost importance. According to the Piṭakas, there are two kinds of solidarity— samāvāya sambandha and samiyoga sambandha. When there is samāvāya sambandha solidarity, all are of 'one blood, one voice and one command,' that is perfect unity. When there is samiyoga sambandha solidarity, all are of not 'one blood, one voice and one command'. There is no

real solidarity. Of these two kinds, the former prevailed in Myanmar. According to history, Myanmar enjoyed such solidarity in the Anawratha, Bayin Naung and Alaungpaya periods and not in other periods. In truth, the remaining periods also had national solidarity to some extent. For this reason, the country of Myanmar has remained among the great countries on the map of the world.

Two Fundamental Factors

There are two basic important requirements in the building of solidarity. One is to have equality of views and the other is to have equality of morality. When there is equality of views and morality among the people, there is solidarity and the system of ‘one blood, one voice and one command’ prevails.

When the Buddha built the order of monks (Saṃgha), he based it on identity of views and equality of morality. The order of the Saṃgha is, therefore, well-knit and solidified and the system of ‘one blood, one voice and one command’ prevails. The order comprised Saṃghas who had belonged to different castes but castes were no more significant. Only the order of the Saṃgha was of significance. The order comprised Saṃghas who had belonged to various racial groups but racial matters were of no more significance. That was the reason why the Order remains flourishing, going strong and prominent in the world though it was established more than 2,500 years ago.

Equality of views and morality is called in Pāli ‘*Diṭṭhi sīla sāmāñña*’. *Diṭṭhi* means view, *Sīla* means conduct or morality and *Sāmāñña* means equality. According to the Buddhist doctrine, one has to perceive ‘craving’ (*taṇhā*) through ‘*diṭṭhi*’ (right view) and to diminish it through ‘*Sīla*’. Craving is *taṇhā*, which is also called *lobha* (greed). According to *Sacca* (truth), *taṇhā* is *Sumudaya Sacca* (truth of origination). If one really wants peace, one must look for *taṇhā* till it is clearly seen. Just seeing it is not enough. After seeing it, one must try to exterminate it. As much as one can exterminate *taṇhā*, one's life will have peace. According to the Buddhist doctrine, *Nibbāna* is incomparable peace and tranquillity. The meaning of *Nibbāna* is ‘*Vanato nikkhantam*’ escape from *taṇhā*, that is to kill *taṇhā*.

Therefore, if one can kill *taṇhā* to some extent, one will realize *Nibbāna* to that extent. If one can completely kill *taṇhā*, one will completely realize *Nibbāna*. If one completely realizes

nibbana, one will gain complete happiness. Therefore, those who can kill taṇhā in the loka gain Nibbāna to the extent they have killed taṇhā. To the extent they gain Nibbāna, to that extent will they gain peace and happiness.

Those who really want to enjoy peace and happiness in their existences should try till they see taṇhā and practise to exterminate it. This is the view and practice according to the Buddhist teaching. If all see and practice in this way in the loka, their unity can be solidified like the order of the Saṃgha.

To try till one sees taṇhā is not at all an easy task. The Buddha himself had to look for the builder of taṇhā for asankheyyas of existences and he found it only when he attained Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) under the Bodhi tree. He disclosed this in his exulting utterance which begins with the words 'Aneka jāti saṃsāram ' on becoming the Buddha. From this, it will be seen how difficult it is to see taṇhā as it really is. If it is not easy to see taṇhā as it really is, it will be by far more difficult to kill it. If taṇhā cannot be killed, it will be very much harder indeed to attain peace and tranquillity in life in the loka. Though it might be difficult to see taṇhā as it really is, one must endeavour to see it and then exterminate it according to the Buddha's directions.

In point of fact, avijja (ignorance) hides taṇhā so that it is not seen as it really is. Avijja makes taṇhā appear as a family doctrine (vāda), a national doctrine (vāda). Avijja at times conceals taṇhā so that its real adhamma nature cannot be seen. It also at times reveals it by making it appear as dhamma. This is called concealing 'Sacca' (truth).

In fact, the hereditary family system had flourished in the loka as a sound system because of Avijja (ignorance) but when it appeared in the guise of hereditary monarchy system and its nature of taṇhā became apparent, it had to die out.

Because of Avijja, nationalism flourished in this loka but when it took the form of Nazi Fascism and its taṇhā nature was revealed, it met its doom.

From this, it will be observed that history can only be deceived when the loka is overwhelmed by avijja. One day when vijja (knowledge, wisdom) returns and avijja vanishes, the deception always comes back to light.

Monarchy system prevailed in Myanmar as it did in most of the other countries at that time. It was prevalent from the Pagan Era up to the Konbaung Era. The monarchy system in Myanmar was rooted in Buddhism and there was a well-knit unity of ‘one blood, one voice and one command’. Such a system became possible in Myanmar because it was based on identity of views and morality. Though the Myanmar system was a monarchy by appearance, it was in essence a Brahmachariya system (practice of the four virtues of metta, karuṇā, mudita and upekkha). In truth, there had been times when the Brahmachariya dhammas did not flourish in Myanmar. The Saṃgha, members of the Buddhist order of monks, knew their responsibility and strove to ensure that the Brahmachariya dhammas prevail in the country.

Venerable Ashin Arahan occupied the top place among those who endeavoured most to bring about solidarity of the people with same views and conduct under the Brahmachariya system in Myanmar. Under his teaching, King Anawratha organised the nobles and the people to have equality of views and conduct. Later kings also did the same.

They built grand palaces, they expanded the kingdom, they tried to enhance their authority, they accumulated more wealth. They did all these things not for their own welfare. They did them for the country and the people. They had no greed (taṇhā) as to claim everything as their own. They had no excessive pride in themselves (māna). They held no wrong view (diṭṭhi) that all they did was correct. They saw taṇhā as it really was and tried to kill it. In fact, those who try to let taṇhā grow are those who worship their bhava (existence). Those who strive to kill taṇhā are the ones who use their lives (bhava) for the good of the loka.

Those who use their lives for loka

It is in the nature of man to strive for improving his life as much as possible. He will not remain contented with his present lot. However, there are two kinds of use his improved condition of life can be put to. One is for his own good and the other is for the loka's good. Of these two kinds, the Myanmar of those days used their lives for the loka's good. For doing it, they had a well defined procedure which they learnt from the teaching of the Buddha, especially from the Jātakas, the 550 birth stories of the Buddha and the Maṅgala Sutta. These stories and teachings firmly established Sīla (morality) in them and it enabled them to perceive

ditṭhi and to exterminate taṇhā so that it became their characteristic and trait. For this reason, the characteristic and trait of the Myanmars of those days was bravery and generosity. By this characteristic and trait, the Myanmars of those days had preserved and maintained the country and the nation. In short, the Myanmars of those days did not work because they wanted to eat but they ate because they wanted to work.

In the loka, if one works solely for self welfare, it is an extreme act. If one works solely for the welfare of others, it also is an extreme act. In doing their work, the Myanmars of those days did for their own welfare as well as for the welfare of others. According to attahita, they worked extremely hard oblivious of heat and cold for the improvement of their lot in life. According to Parahita, they used their improved condition in life for the sake of their country and nation and the loka. For this reason, it should be said that the Myanmars of those days adopted the middle way (avoiding the two extremes) in their work. They loved their families but they kept it in check with their love for the country and the nation and the loka so that it might not become excessive. They also kept their love for the country and the nation in check by their love for humanity as one being for another so that it might not become excessive. The Myanmars of those days neither adopted defeatism nor practised tyranny and oppression. That is the reason why the love of the Myanmars of those days for their families and for their country and nation culminated in their love for humanity as one human being for another.

As such love developed, they perceived taṇhā which cared only for its own welfare and learnt ways to do away with it. As such the question arose as to who was responsible for bringing about the firm establishment of identity of views and morality as the national characteristic and trait of the Myanmars based on love for humanity.

In the loka, all those who are working for their own good cannot succeed in their ventures so long as they have their self welfare in their minds. If they say that they can't do so, it will be just their imagination. Only when the ventures are built aiming at the benefit of the country and the nation and the people of the world, and not to worship one's own existence but to put it to use, then only will it be possible to build a venture for one's benefit. This view and this conduct come from the Piṭakas.

To implant this view and conduct in the minds of the people of Pagan, Venerable Ashin Araham first taught them to King Anawratha and then to the people of Pagan. In fact, the people of Pagan led by King Anawratha had built the first kingdom of Myanmar with this view and conduct. Only by organizing the country based on this view and conduct, could a well-knit unity be achieved. This unity could, therefore, be called unity based on identical view and conduct.

Tales illustrating this view and conduct are seen in the 550 birth stories of the Buddha. In the ten Jātakas, the Bodhisatta himself is shown as building his own well being on the foundation of the welfare of the loka. In truth, all those who build their own welfare can succeed only by basing it on the structure of the loka welfare. This view and conduct took root in the minds of King Anawratha and the people of Pagan because of Venerable Ashin Araham.

That is the reason why the view of the people of Pagan was taintless and clear and their morality was steadfast. Besides, there was a discourse called Maṅgala Sutta of the Buddha which served like a constitution (system of laws, customs and principles according to which a country is administered). Thanks to the teaching of this discourse, the people of Pagan knew how to love their families, the country and the nation and humanity, how to take refuge in the three Ratanās and believe in them, how to support the Sāsanā (the Buddha's teaching).

The people of Pagan became really worthy ‘people’ according to the Buddha's words ‘Manussatta bhavo dullabho’ which means ‘It is very difficult to be born as a human being’, on account of Venerable Shin Araham. If an appraisal were to be made according to the time and conditions, Venerable Ashin Araham and King Anawratha might be compared to Venerable Shin Moggaliputta and King Asoka of Central India.

There is a mental trait King Anawratha had left as legacy for the future generations of Myanmars and that is none other than the spirit of sacrifice. In truth, it was the spirit of hermit Sumedha.

This spirit is seen in the characters of the 550 birth stories and the ten Jatakas. Venerable Ashin Araham imbued King Anawratha with this spirit and it was King Anawratha who built the first great Myanmar kingdom and who handed the spirit down

to succeeding generations of Myanmars. Kings Bayin Naung and Alaungpaya also built the great Second and Third Myanmar kingdoms in that spirit. That up to the present day, Myanmars have always stood by the side of the downtrodden is the historical legacy left by Anawratha. Because of this noble legacy, Myanmars have never become worshippers of bhava (existence) by tyranny throughout history. They have put their lives to use with a spirit of sacrifice.

King Anawratha had already reached inside the Tharapar Gate of Pagan from a tour when he was informed of the wild buffalo playing havoc at the countryside. He did not assign the task of suppressing the beast to any of his subordinates. He himself set out to meet the buffalo and was killed in the encounter.

The Vajīrabuddhi ṭikā, in connection with Venerable Sudain, states this: –

**"Vināse paccupaṭṭhite anayo nayarūpena
buddhimakkamma titthati"**

meaning; "whoever it might be, whenever the time for his ruin comes, he will think wrong as right, adhamma as dhamma".

In connection with King Anawratha's fight with the buffalo, some said that he was wrong to do it himself. They said so, because they did not understand the nature of karuṇā (compassion), or the nature of effort, or the nature of will (chanda).

The Buddha never let his will vary for any reason, but always kept it uniformly. He never let his viriya (diligence) vary, he never let his karuṇā (compassion) vary. The lion, king of beasts, uses the same amount of effort, neither more or less, in catching a small rabbit or a large bull elephant. It is the characteristic of the noble ones.

"Sacrifice" means to give up something valuable for someone's benefit. Some people sacrifice in undertaking some responsibility or in receiving some privilege. Some people always sacrifice. However, there are some who do not hesitate to sacrifice even their lives but who cannot sacrifice in the receiving of privileges. Their spirit of sacrifice is, therefore, not uniform, not consistent. It is not noble and does not deserve to be called pāramī.

King Anawaratha sacrificed himself in the undertaking of responsibilities and that is the reason why he went out himself to suppress the wild buffalo. He knew that his

subordinates were tired at the time. In fact, in the use of his subordinates he trained them to sacrifice for their families, country and nation and humanity. He was cultivating their spirit of sacrifice. He did not take unfair advantage of them for his benefit. For this reason, he was adored by all. The Myanmars have loved him up to the present day. It was because of his *cetaṇā* (volition) and *metta* (loving kindness).

It is true that King Anawaratha lost his life because the wild buffalo gored him. His name, however, did not die. It survived together with his spirit. He was able to leave for the Myanmars the legacy of the spirit of sacrifice, bravery and generosity. This legacy is of inestimable value and is inexhaustible. It is important for the Myanmars to know how to use it profitably. As soon as those who can see it come into being in Myanmar, it will be able to do good not only for its own people but also those in the whole world. When some persons die, their names also die at the same time. And there are those whose names die even before their deaths. Such deaths are not good ones. The death of King Anawratha was a good one. It was such that in the breast of everyone who hears his name, there arises the wish to emulate him.

Anawratha's Guru

When Anawratha's name is remembered, his guru's name also comes to one's mind. In point of fact, Anawratha was just the pupil. The pupil's excellence depends on the qualifications of the guru. Anawratha's guru was Venerable Shin Araham. Had King Anawratha not received the good counsel of Venerable Shin Araham, the history of Myanmar and its culture might have taken an entirely different course from the present. Therefore, Venerable Shin Araham is the true benefactor of the people of Pagan.

Venerable Shin Araham taught the people of Myanmar headed by King Anawratha to cherish the spirit of sacrifice with illustrations from the 550 birth stories and the 10 *jātakas*. He transformed the country of Myanmar into a pleasant haven to live in by teaching and making the people live according to the tenets of the *Maṅgala Sutta*.

Then, the people of Myanmar were able to have a high code of morality by learning the 550 birth stories and the 10 *jātakas* and to have unblemished views on things by learning the

Maṅgala Sutta. Through such morality and views, the country of Myanmar was able to get good leaders and followers and to establish a compact and well-knit society. 'Bravo!'

Throughout the life of Myanmar as a sovereign independent state, the Saṃgha (the order of Buddhist monks) had always taken the leadership in learning (vijja) as well as in the practice of morality (carana). All the people - kings, ministers, generals, peasants, etc, whoever they might be had to be pupils at a young age at monastic schools to receive their basic education. The monks were responsible for the educational and ethical progress of the entire country,

As the result, the monks and the people had uniformity of views and morality. As the solidarity of the country was thus based on unity of views and morality, it was well-knit, compact and firm. This kind of unity is called 'Samavāya sambandha' in Pāli. In truth, if a country is thus united, it will be the pleasantest on this earth.

With regard to the development of Myanmar of those days, though it might be materially and mentally weak, it was of the highest morality standard. The Myanmar people of those days had not bartered their high morality for material or mental development. With the development of higher morality, ducaritas (immoral deeds) declined and sucaritas (moral deeds, right conduct) flourished. Such countries, therefore, are called most pleasant places in the world. In fact the Myanmar of that time was one of the pleasantest countries in the world.

The Myanmar later fell under alien rule. Then the monks could not longer lead in the education of the people and their outlook became apart from their morality. As soon as this happened, the Myanmars exchanged their national traits of morality for material advantages.

Then the qualities of bravery and generosity also vanished. The spirit of sacrifice was not valued any more. Even if they did so, they did it only in respect of their work and responsibilities but would not do so in respect of benefits and privileges which included wealth and property, appointments, high offices, fame and honour. If it is contended that there are those who wish to sacrifice both in respect of their work and responsibilities, and benefits and privileges, their number will be so very small that it may be counted on one's fingers.

Then, the solidarity of the country would decline from the samavāya state to the samyoga state. It would not be compact, well-knit and homogenous any more. The samyoga sambandha way of organization could bring about quantitative union. Only the samavāya sambandha way could achieve qualitative solidarity. Only people with identical views and morality could be organized into samavāya sambandha solidarity.

People who had identical views but had no identical morality or who had neither identical views nor identical morality could not be organized into samavāya sambandha. They could only be organized into samyoga sambandha.

All the Myanmars depend on the country of Myanmar in which they live, according to Upanissaya paccaya of Paṭṭhāna. Therefore, the country of Myanmar is the benefactor of all those living in it. It is, therefore, everyone's duty to pay the debt so that the benefactor might not disappear from the loka. 'Everyone' here includes all the races living in Myanmar. Paying back the debt of gratitude is a fundamental obligation of life and a noble deed.

There is nothing strange about the paying of a debt of gratitude. It is just organizing the various indigenous races according to samavāya sambandha method.

In this, it is important for the indigenous races to have identical views. This, however, is not enough. They must also have identical sense of morality. Having identical views and identical sense of morality means, in common language, having the spirit of sacrifice. One has to sacrifice in the discharge of one's duty, or in the enjoying of one's privileges. If all the people living in Myanmar were, in their relation with one another, to refrain from taking advantage of others but were to sacrifice their rights, the country of Myanmar would certainly be the pleasantest country in the world. According to history, Myanmar has once been such a country.

Of the two kinds of conduct 'taking advantage' and 'sacrifice', 'sacrificing' is more valuable than 'taking advantage' according to the teaching of the Buddha. 'Taking advantage' can be easily practised by any one, but sacrificing can be practised only by the virtuous ones. There had been many virtuous ones in Myanmar from Pagan age up to the end of Konbaung age. There

were also a considerable number of them even under alien rule. At present, they are scarce and Myanmar is in great need of them.

May they appear in a large number, vying with one another, not only to sacrifice themselves for the people of Myanmar but will also denounce the benefits resulting from their sacrifices.

According to the Buddha's teaching, when one really sacrifices not only in his duties and responsibilities but also in the enjoyment of the benefits and privileges arising out of his sacrifices, all kinds of advantages and opportunities will come to him in force. They will come in the form of wealth and luxuries, high offices and posts, fame and honour and so on. He cannot stop them. They will force their way to him. The more he refuses, the more they will come. This is called the first army of Māra, according to the Piṭakas.

All that come to him as opportunities and privileges are to destroy the sacrifices made by the noble ones and are just the offensive action of the Evil Māra. They would come in the guise of sukha (pleasures) or of dukkha (suffering). Some might be able to withstand the dukkha offensive but might succumb to the temptations of sukha. Māra is full of wiles and ruses. When he does not succeed with the weapon of dukkha, he usually would resort to the weapon of sukha.

For this reason, it is important to be able to withstand the sukha offensive of Māra. In fact, only when he can withstand Māra's onslaught by sukha, one really becomes noble. Everybody in the world wishes to be a noble person. To become one, one must have a noble heart, but this is not enough. In practice, one must be able to sacrifice oneself in the discharge of one's duties and responsibilities as well as in the enjoyment of one's privileges and opportunities. Then only can one be called noble.

There really have been noble personages in the history of Myanmar. Some were ministers, some were generals, some were ordinary citizens. They belonged to various strata of society. There is no need to look for them especially. They are present everywhere in our environment.

According to Upādāna Paccayā Bhavo of the Paṭicca-Samuppāda desana, all views and conduct are dependent on Upādāna (craving, grasping). Environment as kāmupādāna is embraced by upādāna. Therefore, good environment produces (or

facilitates) good view and good conduct (of the people). Bad environment produces bad view and conduct. Modern view, as *diṭṭhupādāna*, is included in *Upādāna*.

If the modern view, therefore, is good, the view and morality of the people are good, too. If the modern view is bad, the view and morality of the people are bad. Character and trait as *Sīlabbatupādāna* (clinging to practices of and belief in mere rules and rituals) not leading to the right path are included in *upādāna* (clinging). That is the reason why if a person's character and traits are good, he will have good views and good morality. If his character and traits are bad, he will have bad views and bad morality. The *atta* of 'I' (ego) is also included in *Attavādupādāna* in *Upādāna*. For this reason, if one uses his *atta* rightly for the good of the *loka*, he will have the right view and morality. If one uses his *atta* wrongly for the good of his own person, he will have bad view and morality. This is what the Buddha has taught.

Shin Araham's Efforts

Since the Buddha *Sāsanā* was firmly established in Myanmar on account of the efforts of Venerable Shin Araham, the national characteristic and trait emerged in the people headed by King Anawratha. It was bravery and generosity built on sacrifice, which in turn was built on love of oneself, one's family, one's country and nation and the humanity at large. It also had to be based in turn on the practice of striving to perceive and kill *taṇhā* (craving). Then only bravery and generosity attained as the result will become the right characteristic and trait built on *dhamma*.

In truth, the present day people of Myanmar, too, are brave and generous. There is no doubt about it. But it is necessary to build bravery and generosity systematically according to the Buddha's teaching. Every act of bravery is not associated with *Sacca* (truth). There are also acts of bravery not associated with *Sacca*. Likewise, every act of generosity is not associated with *Sacca*. There are also acts of generosity not associated with *Sacca*. An act of bravery not associated with *Sacca* is called stupidity. An act of generosity not associated with *Sacca* is called corruption.

Upper Structure and Foundation

According to the constitution of the mind, bravery and generosity are like the upper structure of a building. Under the upper structure, there has to be the foundation. If the upper structure and the foundation are in conformity, the building can be of use to the loka. If they are not in conformity, the building will not only be of no use to the loka but will be a danger also. Every act of bravery or generosity, therefore, does not deserve praise.

If bravery and generosity associated with Sacca were to be built up as Myanmar national characteristic or symbol, it is essential for the spirit of sacrifice to be first laid as the foundation.

Making sacrifices, in the Sacca terminology, is getting rid of Samudaya Sacca (the original cause). All the mental factors of the upper structure built on the foundation of sacrifice are Sacca dhammas. Sacrifice here means giving up one's interests which is called Muttacāga. It is translated into Myanmar as 'giving up completely without expecting anything.' The following question is posed in the Piṭakas with regard to such a deed and it is for the reader to give the answer:—

“ A mother had two sons. One fetched water for her expecting to receive some pocket money from her. The other fetched water for her as he considered that it was his duty to do so, not expecting any reward for the deed.”

Here the loka is the mother. The people are the sons and daughters. If that be so, what type of son or daughter is the reader? The reader may answer as he or she likes keeping the expected benefit in view.

The Sole Aim

The sole aim of this book is to lay a firm foundation in the people of Myanmar of the spirit of sacrifice, or if they are unable to cultivate this spirit yet to adore those who have it. In fact, an act of sacrifice is a meritorious deed of Pāramī (perfect exercise of ten principal virtues of the Bodhisatta as a condition of his attainment of Perfect Wisdom). A Pāramī deed will always bear fruit. It is not like an ordinary kāmāvacara kusala deed which may or may not bear fruit. According to the attributes of dhamma (Sandiṭṭhika), it can be put to the test and experienced.

If one will do a deed at a sacrifice as a duty without expecting any gain for oneself, for the family, for the country and nation, for the people of the world and humanity and the sāsana (Buddha’s teaching), such a deed will surely succeed. There is no doubt about it. If one merely proclaims, without making any sacrifice whatsoever that he is working for the nation and the sāsana, or that he is a patriot, it will just be an empty boast. In truth, only if one builds anything on the foundation of sacrifice, can it be successful. According to history, all the nation building projects in Anawratha’s time and Alaungpaya’s time were successful because they were all based on the foundation of sacrifice. It is a historical fact.

The Model

If the great importance of the spirit of sacrifice is to be explained according to the Piṭakas, it is necessary to take the lives of the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha as the model. Throughout the entire period Myanmar remained as an independent sovereign state, the Myanmar cultivated the spirit of sacrifice taking the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha as the model. With this spirit they built up patriotism, love of humanity and other thoughts and ideas.

The solidarity of the Myanmars of that time was wonderfully compact and firm as they were of the same view and the same character. Later when Myanmar fell under alien rule, the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha was no longer regarded as the model. Other heroes took his place in the minds of the people. Then the sacrifices made by Myanmars took the nature of Vāṇijja (commerce). They came to look upon sacrifice as a capital outlay and wanted profit on it. Then the Myanmars had no solidarity any longer.

Under the circumstances, “Father” Thakin Htain Win has been urging the author to write a book on the life of the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha to revive him as the model in the hearts of the Myanmars and to reinfuse into them the spirit of sacrifice. In appreciation of ‘Father’ Thakin Htain Win’s cetanā towards the country and the nation and of his endeavours for their well being, the author has written this book.

Peerless Benefactor

The Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha is the peerless benefactor of the loka. For four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, from the time he was Hermit Sumedha up to the time he

was Prince Siddhattha, with the sole aim of becoming the Buddha and to work for the welfare of the loka, not expecting any advantage for himself, he had with pure compassion on the loka made sacrifices. In fact, the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha was the peerless benefactor who deserves never to be forgotten.

However, there are now those in the loka who have forgotten their indebtedness to him. Not to say of the loka, even in Myanmar there are now people who have forgotten him, who have forgotten their indebtedness to him, who do not even know him. Forgetting what should not be forgotten is 'amaṅgala' (inauspiciousness). That is the reason why it is necessary to remember what we should not forget. Then only will it become auspicious (maṅgala).

The life of Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha will be described in two parts. The first part will deal with his life as Hermit Sumedha and end with his attainment of Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and becoming the Buddha. The second part will be devoted to the events that took place from the time he attained Buddhahood up to the time of the Great Event of His Passing Away (Mahāparinibbāna). Everything he did before and after his attainment of Buddhahood was based on sacrifice.

The result that he wanted to achieve out of the sacrifices was to become one who could sacrifice most for the good of the loka. He did not expect anything else. As the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha had hoped, he ultimately attained Sabbaññutañāṇa and became the one who could sacrifice most in working for the good of the loka. His practice and the results he achieved from it are congruent. The cause is in conformity with the effect. His practice was sacrificing for the sake of the loka and the result he wanted was to be one who could make the most sacrifices for the good of the loka. The results he longed for were achieved.

On attaining Arahatta Maggañāṇa, he was able to exterminate all the kilesas (moral defilements), together with vāsanā (impressions remaining in the mind from past good or evil deeds) and became one who could sacrifice most in the loka. When he attained Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom), he became one who could do most for the good of all beings in the loka. Besides, there were other benefits which he had not longed for, such as becoming king of human beings, devas and brahmas. If one really does for the good of others at one's sacrifice, such benefits as sensual pleasures will come to him by themselves. There is no need for him to expect or long for them. This law of nature was experienced by the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha throughout all his existences. This law of nature practically holds good in the loka. It is only necessary for one to practise.

This Book

The life of the Boddhisatta Prince Siddhattha is dealt in the first part of this book. As it is usual in literature, it is explained with the use of alphabets, words, phrases and sentences. Efforts have to be made to enable the readers to grasp their meaning readily.

The meanings may be classified into three types - saddattha meaning, adhippayattha meaning and bhavatta meaning. When they are taken together with their senses, we have book learning from saddattha, learning about the loka from adhippayattha and knowledge about life from bhavatta. It is also called knowledge about the khandha.

In fact, book learning is attained direct from the sentences (vakya) and learning about the loka and bhava is not directly attainable from sentences (vākya) but from the ‘ back ’ of the sentences (that is by deducing from the meaning of the sentences). They are, therefore, not visible to the naked eye but can only be seen through the eye of wisdom.

Therefore, those well versed in grammar say that every sentence has usually the visible part and the invisible part. The visible part can be read with the naked eye and the invisible part with the wisdom eye.

Every sentence in this book also has two parts, the visible and the invisible parts. From the visible part, the readers will have book learning about the existences of Prince Siddhattha while from the invisible part, they will learn about the loka and the bhava in connection with the existences of Prince Siddhattha, thus:-

Each and every being has two kinds of responsibilities from their birth. And Hermit Sumedha laid down these two responsibilities as to be incomparable in making sacrifices in the loka and to be matchless in serving for the well being of others.

That is the description of the two responsibilities in common language. Incomparability in making sacrifices is the attainment of Arahatta Maggañāṇa which exterminates all moral defilements together with vāsanā (impressions remaining in the mind from past good or evil deeds). Matchless ability to work for the well being of others is the attainment of Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom).

These two responsibilities were the results which hermit Sumedha had wanted to attain. For him, there was no other result besides the two, he wanted to have. Though he had no other wants,

by the power of these two responsibilities, results concerning sensual pleasures had always come to him in full force from the time of his existence as Hermit Sumedha up to his last existence as Prince Siddhattha. Hermit Sumedha was always able to repulse them; Prince Siddhattha also was able always to repulse them. In truth, all those who really work for the well being of others, sacrificing their own welfare, are able to repulse the resultant dhammas concerned with sensual pleasures which appear to surround and engulf them.

All the Buddhists want to attain Nibbāna. If one really wants to attain Nibbāna, he should know after he has read this book that making incomparable sacrifices is the Myanmar name for the Buddha's Arahatta Maggañāṇa and the matchless ability to work for the well being of others is the Myanmar name for the Buddha's Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom).

Such knowing or learning is called bhava learning.

According to the Buddha's teaching, everybody has two responsibilities. One is to make sacrifices and the other is to work for the good of others. The life of a man begins with these two responsibilities and also ends with these two responsibilities. These two responsibilities are, therefore, called the bounds of the human sphere. In truth, man should remain within these two boundaries. If it were said there were men beyond these two boundaries, how would the readers call them? They may call them as they like. The intention of the author is for the readers to have this knowledge after they have read the book. This knowledge is called the knowing of bhava.

At the back of the sentences in this book, there are two kinds of meanings to enable the readers to have these two kinds of knowledge. Though they might not be seen through the naked eye, they might be perceived with the eye of wisdom.

I conclude this book with the short verse on making sacrifices and working for the well being of others, which 'Father' Thakin Htain Win often chants. The meaning is as follows:-

**DARING TO SACRIFICE LITTLE BY LITTLE
WILL ENSURE GOOD FUTURE EXISTENCES.**

**Shwe Aung
2-9-93**

the peerless benefactor of humanity

THE BUDDHA

PEERLESS BENEFACTOR OF HUMANITY

PART I

Conditions in Central India before
The Buddha Appeared

PART II

Fulfilment of Pāramīs

PART III

The Essence of Ten Pāramīs

PART IV

The Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha becomes the Buddha.

PART V

For Future Study

This book undertakes to show the reader the ways to achieve self-benefits to the full by sincerely working for the benefit of the loka or of one's nation and country.

**DARING TO SACRIFICE LITTLE BY LITTLE
WILL ENSURE GOOD FUTURE EXISTENCES.**

PATRON SAYADAWS

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THE BUDDHA

THE PEERLESS BENEFACTOR OF HUMANITY

**Conditions in Majjhimadesa(Central India)
before the Buddha Appeared.**

Man has begun to live on this earth from an indefinite past. And the sole purpose for remaining alive is to keep on striving as hard as he can to find happiness. In this struggle “hope” is the impetus. When he cannot get it one day, he hopes to get it the next day. When he gets it one day, he hopes to get more of it the next day. If hope is gone, the purpose for his remaining alive is also gone. “Hope” is, therefore, the primary impetus in the struggle for the realization of the purpose of living.

Hope and Craving (Taṇhā)

If the purpose for keeping alive is based on hope, then hope should be called craving (taṇhā). Craving motivates the effort to attain an object which one has not yet attained. This craving is called kāmā taṇhā (craving for sensual pleasures). It is said that this craving is associated with attadiṭṭhi (false view of self).

It also motivates the striving to safeguard objects already attained. This craving is called bhava taṇhā (craving for existence). This craving is said to be associated with Sassata diṭṭhi (false view of eternity, that atta is eternal).

According to bhava taṇhā (craving for existence), one does not always remain satisfied with what one has already obtained. At one time or the other, one becomes weary of it and longs for a change. This craving for change is called vibhava

taṇhā (Craving for annihilation, clinging to the view that there is no existence after death). This craving is said to be associated with Uccheda diṭṭhi (belief in annihilation).

As long as there is craving, there will be hope. As long as there is hope, there will be existence (bhava). Therefore, as there will be craving as long as there is existence and if craving is classified into three categories, according to time, we have:-

- Kāma taṇhā which is by nature associated with arising (coming into existence),
- Bhāva taṇhā which is by nature associated with remaining in existence or development (Thiti),
- and vibhava taṇhā which is by nature associated with dissolution or disintegration, that is bhaṅga.

For these reasons, craving (taṇhā) is by nature associated with three divisions of time (past, present and future).

Turning Point in World History

An important turning point took place at one time in the history of the world. This turning point was recorded by historians to have taken place during the sixth century, B.C. People who had lived on this earth before that time were not yet mature in intelligence, that is they had intellectually not grown up, that they were adolescents. According to the historians, people became mature in intelligence only from the sixth century B.C. This is said by the historians.

What the historians meant to say is that during the sixth century, B.C., in the effort to attain happiness in their life, the intelligentsia of the world who held views contrary to those of their ancestors appeared. In point of fact, the turning point in knowledge began about that century.

Courage to do what should be done

When we study the history of the world of about that period, we find that there took place the births of Confucius and La-o-zi in China, of Zoroaster in Persia, of Pythagoras in Greece, of Mahāvīra and the Buddha in India. Though their teachings might differ in depth and profundity from one another from the point of view of religion, these noble personages had actually brought about a turning point in the intelligence of the world, if looked at from the historical point of view. Their teachings are still followed by the countries and peoples concerned. This bears

evidence to the fact that their teachings are really excellent and they deserve to be followed and practised. However, though it is said that their teachings are still followed and practised, due to the spreading of the darkness of ignorance, the peoples concerned do not follow and practise them, as they ought to, in their day to day activities and consequently, they have almost become lifeless remains.

Actually, it is not an easy thing to formulate a new outlook on life which would be a turning point in intelligence because it could only be done after revolting against the existing teachings and beliefs. Being revolutionary in character, it had to contend with much opposition. It was an undertaking beset with great dangers and one might even lose one's life. To launch it successfully, just an ordinary compassion for the world would not do. Mere intelligence was not enough. It was a task only those with exceptional compassion and wide learning could shoulder. To the person endowed with exceptional compassion and wide learning, the courage to refrain from doing what should not be done and doing what should be done would come by itself to reside in him.

Such courage, though not well founded on *Sīla* (morality), *Samādhi* (mental concentration) and *Pañña* (wisdom) which can lead to the attainment of *maggas* (path to *Nibbāna*), can give miraculous powers and extraordinary abilities. *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Pañña*, which lead to the attainment of *maggas*, can uproot different levels of greed (*Samudaya Sacca*). If such courage were well founded on *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Pañña*, the resultant miraculous powers and extraordinary abilities would be very much greater, needless to say.

Because of such miraculous powers and extraordinary abilities, these noble personages have been able to make the peoples of the world practise their teachings to raise their morality and build noble lives.

Great Benefactors

As a matter of fact, these personages have been alive and active in the world not for their own sake, but for the sake of the world in general. They have come to this world not to build their own lives; they have used their lives for the sake of the world. They have worked full time, teaching the peoples of the world to live happy and peaceful lives. For that reason, they have been recorded in history as incomparable noble personages.

The world owes them an immeasurable debt of gratitude.

But only very few people realize it. In reality, only by recognizing the debt of gratitude due to them, will their virtues be appreciated. As people could, at first, practically enjoy happy and peaceful lives by following their teachings to the letter, there could be many who felt grateful to them.

Later on, however, not accepting religion as a guide for leading their current lives, but as the guide for the life hereafter, people misinterpreted the teachings. They showed their gratitude, earnestly and willingly, not on the people, to attain happiness in their current life, but instead, on the noble ones by offering liberal donations and gifts for the welfare in their own future existences. From that time on, religions were no longer able to help build peaceful and happy lives for the peoples of the world, but had become the symbols of oppression and the centres of controversy, enmity and rivalry with one another. The result was the emergence of violent religious wars in world history.

Religious Wars

In fact, the religious wars could be taken as the primary cause for the arising of non-religious sects in the world, It could also be taken as the primary cause for the coming into being of a violent doctrine which advocates that religion is a stumbling block in the path of progress of human society. These events are the offspring of greed (lobha) which arises on account of the domination of ignorance and bewilderment (moha) and which belittles the great compassion (kuruṇā), wisdom (pañña) and cetanā (volition) of the original religious leaders. It amounts to the total disregard of the followers to the highly noble religious leaders. It means the derogation of the religious leaders' dignity and honour.

Give Priority to the Present

The original meaning of religions was to show a practical way of finding happiness and peace in the every day life of the people. In this way, the attainment of happiness in the life hereafter is automatically assured. If the present life is excellent, the life hereafter will also be excellent. If, however, a religion leaves aside the present life and accords greater importance to the welfare of the life hereafter, that religion cannot be called a true religion. The meaning of that religion cannot also be a true meaning. Just as “two” cannot be made without ‘one’ in math-

ematics, the welfare of the life hereafter cannot be correctly built without first promoting the welfare of the present life in religion.

On the seventh stone inscription of King Asoka, the following passage is engraved: –

“Save hi te samyamam ca bhava sudhi icchamti”

This passage is given in Venerable Ashin Adiccavamsa’s book on Asoka Stone inscriptions.

(The meaning is; hi = it is true; save = all; te = those beliefs; samyamam ca = observing the moral precepts; bhava sudhica = the purity and nobility of the present life; icchanti = desired).

The original aims of true religions are to raise and keep up the morality of the people and to make them value the purity and nobility of their life for the building of an everlasting peace and happiness during their life on this earth.

The great personages who have been recognized as noble religious leaders in the history of the world have taught human beings to raise and keep up their morality and to practise for the purity and nobility of their life. Though the teachings differed from one religion to another, with regard to the level of truth (Sacca), they are identical in the aim to build everlasting peaceful and happy lives for the peoples on this earth. Therefore, though the religions differ, according to the level of truth in their teachings on worldly prosperity in this world, with respect to self-restraint (Samyama) for raising and keeping up of morality and purification and nobility of livelihood, they are directed at the same goal and are very desirable. This is what King Asoka said in his inscription.

Insight which sees clearly like the naked Eye

Of the prominent leaders of religions of the world, as it is not the place here to write about them (except about the Buddha), there is nothing more to be said. I, however, have much to write about the Buddha. He has not declared that the thinking based on causal relationship or dependent origination is the Ariya (absolute) truth. The arising of phenomena according to the law of cause and effect (causal relationship) is Paṭiccasamuppāda ānuloma (natural order) process. It is, therefore, ‘Loka’ (mundane, worldly); it is darkness. the breaking in the chain of cause and effect is Paṭiccasamuppāda paṭiloma (reverse order) process. It is,

therefore, ‘lokuttara’ (supramundane, beyond loka); it is light. When it is said that darkness and light are perceived in the Ariya Sacca way, it is like seeing with one’s naked eyes an object very clearly in broad daylight at midday. There leaves no doubt about the nature of the object thus seen. It is clearly perceived, and one who sees it gets the correct idea of the object. Likewise, the four Ariya Truths are perceived by the eye of the mind, so to speak, just as one sees an object very clearly with his naked eyes at midday. Only such a perception is termed as Ariya Sacca dassana. Therefore, the ‘dassana’ in the text of the Piṭakas is not ‘takka’ (thinking, reasoning). It is ‘cakkhu’ (eye, insight, perception). It is not the perception based on reasoning. It is an insight, a penetrating mental vision, which perceives the true nature of an object as if it is clearly seen with the naked eyes.

He teaches veneyyas to see clearly.

When the Buddha taught the dhammas to the veneyyas (those who are about to be converted), he did so after he himself had perceived the dhammas as if he had really seen them clearly with his own naked eyes. The Buddha used this perception which enabled him to see objects clearly as though he had seen them with his own naked eyes. He put to use this perception beginning with the Namarupapariccheda ñāṇa, insight which sees clearly nāma and rūpa (mind and matter), This is the extraordinary characteristic of Buddha dassana. With the help of it, the Buddha made the veneyyas perceive as he himself had perceived the four Ariya Truths. He taught the veneyyas the way to use this perception and made them use it. As a result, the veneyyas saw through maggañāṇa dassana (maggā insight) the four Ariya Truths as if they saw them with their own naked eyes. This is called the ‘realization’ of the four Ariya Truths.

Novel way to find happiness.

The Buddha’s true way to find happiness is also unique. The Buddha discovered and revealed it. In fact, only the Buddhas who have attained Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) can do so. The Paccekabuddhas (who like the Buddhas are self-enlightened but cannot teach others; who appear during the absence of Buddha Sāsana) cannot show others the way they themselves can perceive. Only Buddhas who possess Sabbaññutañāṇa can reveal it to all the veneyyas.

Others seek happiness by looking for new and new sense objects. On the contrary, the Buddha seeks happiness by searching for the old sense object of *taṇhā* (craving) which is lying inside his own body and by striving to uproot it. In truth, looking for new sense objects is looking for *dukkha*; it is not searching for happiness, because getting new sense objects is acquiring existence (*bhava*). As long as there is existence, there will be craving; as long as there is craving, there will be *dukkha*. Therefore, searching for new and new sense objects is looking for *dukkha*, it is said.

For this reason, in the search for true happiness, the Buddha does not look for new sense objects. He only looks for craving (*taṇhā*) which has been dwelling in his body since the beginning of the *Sam̐sarā* (round of births). If craving can be found, the extinction of craving can be found. The happiness derived from the extinction of craving is called *Nibbāna*. The definition of *Nibbāna* ‘*Vāna to nikkhant*’ means liberation from craving. Therefore, if one can get free from craving to some extent, he can find happiness to that extent. If one can get free from craving to a large extent, he can find happiness to a large extent. If one can totally uproot craving, he will find incomparable happiness.

Finding True Happiness

After the Buddha had attained *Sabbaññutañāṇa* and had become the Buddha, he made a solemn joyful utterance which embodied the way to find true happiness. In that utterance which begins with the words ‘*Anekajāti sam̐saram̐*’, the Buddha said:

“As Bodhisatta, I have searched for craving (*taṇhā*) in all my countless existences in the long stretch of the *Sam̐sarā* (round of rebirths), but as I was unable to find it, I have to go through many kinds of existences. Having to go through many kinds of existences is having to suffer from *dukkha* again and again. I have now found out the craving (*taṇhā*) and have destroyed its power. There shall, therefore, be no more existences for me. The cessation of existences is true happiness; true happiness is the extinction of craving. The extinction of craving is the incomparable happiness of *Nibbāna*.”

Therefore, true happiness does not lie in the acquiring of new and new sense objects. It lies only in the cessation of the old

craving. In this way, the method of finding happiness differs from those of other religious leaders in the history of the world.

According to the Buddha's teachings, it is true that true happiness lies in the cessation of existence (bhava), but there are many preliminary stages. Among the main stages, the first is the Brahmacara stage.

How to see Man as Man

If the people living on this earth desire to build a happy and peaceful life, it is necessary for them to learn to look at people in their surroundings to see them as people. There are both living beings and inanimate things in their surroundings, but man is the most important of them. It is, therefore, important to see 'man' as 'man'. In order to see 'man' as 'man', to have the Brahmacara 'eye' is a must.

Without the Brahmacara 'eye', one cannot see 'man' as 'man'. One might see 'man' as Indian or Chinese, as millionaire or pauper, as officer or office-boy, etc. That is seeing with the Papañca (hindrance) 'eye'. Papañca is the name of taṇhā (craving), Māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (false view). Therefore, papañca 'eye' is no other than atta 'eye'. Therefore, as long as man sees man through the atta 'eye', a peaceful and happy life for the peoples living on this earth cannot be built. It is a practical experience.

Samādhiñāṇa 'eye'

Then, we have to see 'man' through the Samādhi 'eye', (that is the view gained by mental concentration). When 'man' is seen through the Samādhi 'eye', 'man' is not seen as man, or individual, or being, or material object. What is really seen is only nāmarūpa (mind and matter) or khandha. Then diṭṭhi (false view) is discarded to a certain extent, Vicikiccha (doubt) is also discarded to a certain extent. When diṭṭhi and vicikiccha are discarded to a certain extent, lobha (greed) and moha (bewilderment) are also discarded to a certain extent. When lobha and moha are discarded to a certain extent, happiness is gained to that extent. Only this happiness is the happiness associated with Sacca (truth). The true nature of happiness, however, cannot be seen through the Papañca 'eye', nor through the Brahmacara 'eye'. It can only be seen through Samādhi 'eye'.

Vipassanā 'eye'

Then, we have to see 'man' through the Vipassanā ñāṇa 'eye'. Then 'man' is no more seen as 'man' or nāmarūpa or khandha, but his khandha is seen as a process of arising and dissolution. As soon as the one who sees, sees the process of arising and dissolution, he also sees the same process in his own body. Lobha (greed) and moha (bewilderment) in him also diminish more than before. The true happiness he experiences is more evident than before. The discourses describe that this happiness surpasses that enjoyed by universal monarchs. In as-much-as lobha (greed) ceases, to that much the true happiness enjoyed becomes more and more noticeable. It is an indisputable personal experience.

Maggañāṇa 'Eye'

Then 'man' is seen through maggañāṇa 'eye' (perception gained by Magga insight). Then 'man' is no longer seen in the world. Nāmarupa or khandha (mind and matter) or the process of arising and dissolution are also not seen. What is seen is only the cessation of the arising and dissolution. This cessation of the arising and dissolution is called Nibbāna. At the same time with the arising of the perception of Nibbāna, craving (Samudaya sacca) ceases. If the higher Magga 'eye' is that of the Arahatta Magga (the final Magga), craving ceases completely. All the kilesas (defilements) also cease completely. The happiness then gained is the highest possible one the Buddhists hope for. To enable him to point the way for the attainment of that happiness to the veneyyas, the Buddha himself has struggled for the duration of four asankheyyas (an incalculable number of years) and a hundred thousand worlds fulfilling the pāramis (perfect exercise of virtues by a Bodhisatta as a preliminary or condition of attaining Buddhahood) to become the Buddha. Therefore, the sense objects (arammanas) that are seen are not yet Nibbāna; they are not the truth that cannot change. They are just truth that is changeable. They are not permanent truth (thāvara sacca) but only temporary (yāyi). If the ñāṇa (wisdom) 'eye' which sees is not maggañāṇa 'eye', it is, in the same way, a changeable, temporary truth; it is not an unchangeable, permanent truth (thāvara sacca).

One who has attained arahattamaggañāṇa is metaphorically called one who has reached the top of a mountain (pabbatṭha), and one who has reached the top of a tall mansion

(pasadattha). One who has reached the top of a mountain can see well all the things at the foot of the mountain. Likewise, one who has reached the top of a tall mansion can see well all the things at the foot the mansion. He can give necessary directions and instructions to those below. For him, there is no need to climb higher up. There is no need for him to look up. It is only necessary for him to look down. In the same manner, one who has attained arahattamagga can see the world (loka) well from above. He has nothing more to do for himself. He has done all that is necessary for himself to do. He has reached the top. So long as he is alive in this world everything he does is not for him but for the world. Therefore he remains alive for the sake of the world. Such a personage is called an Arahāt in the Pīṭakas.

According to the teachings of the Buddha, as long as one is not yet free from craving, there are different kinds of sense objects and different kinds of knowledge for him. Though they are different, they are truths in their respective spheres. Sense objects are truths in their respective spheres and knowledge is also truth in its own sphere. When we look at the sense objects or kinds of knowledge in a context other than their own, they are no longer truths. All are truths in their own spheres.

Knowledge one has in a dream

The sense objects and the kinds of knowledge one has in a dream are truths in the sphere of the dream. It is a practical experience and cannot be refuted. On waking up after the dream, the sense objects and the kinds of knowledge have changed their spheres. The sense objects and the kinds of knowledge of the dream are no longer truths in the awaking sphere. They are all wrong. This is because of the change of spheres. In the same way, the sense objects and kinds of knowledge personally experienced in the puthujjana worldling sphere are no longer truths when one gets into the Ariya sphere. They are all wrong.

In short, sense objects and knowledge experienced in a dream are truths only in their own sphere of the dream. Sense objects and knowledge experienced in an awaking sphere are truths only in the awaking sphere. Sense objects and knowledge experienced in the puthujjana sphere are truths only in the puthujjana sphere and are not truths in the Ariya Sphere.

The Buddha has taught his followers to enable them to understand the different grades of truth. Though the worldlings

(puthujjanas) cannot understand the nature of happiness of the Ariyas, because, the spheres being different, they have not experienced it, the Buddha has invited them 'Ehipassiko' to come and see for themselves so that they too may experience it. By following this instruction and practising it, one can gain the 'eye' one wants.

The 'eyes' needed according to the Buddha's teachings are: (1) Brahmacara eye; (2) Samādhīñāṇa eye; (3) Vipassanāñāṇa eye; and (4) Maggañāṇa eye.

To see through Brahmacara Eye

When the loka (the world) is looked at through the Brahmacara 'eye', one will not see all as of one category. One will see only in accordance with his capacity and strength. When it rains, the rain water fills up large as well as small pots according to their capacity. Likewise, when one looks at the world with Brahmacara 'eye' one has to take into consideration:- (1) kāladhamma; (2) desadhamma (3) kulacāra dhamma; (4) sīla dhamma; (5) samatha dhamma; (6) vipassanā dhamma.

Just as the costs of parts of a machine are not fixed equally but only according to their use and importance, the loka (world) should be seen through the Brahmacara 'eye' in this way.

In doing so, one has to consider with reference to the time and prevailing conditions (kāladhamma), to the particular location or place (desadhamma), to race, nationality, traditions and culture (kulacāradhamma), to morality and conduct (sīladhamma), to serenity and purification of mind (samatha dhamma), and to the anicca (impermanence) dukkha (suffering) and anatta (non-self) nature. Examination and consideration in this manner do not amount to partiality and prejudice. This is done in the nature of 'kataññuta', just an expression of gratitude. Partiality and prejudice have the nature and quality of kilesa (defilement).

If one wants to build a happy and peaceful life on this earth, one should be free from partiality and bias. In order to be free from partiality and bias, one needs to be free from kilesa (defilements). Partiality and prejudice and gratitude appear to mean the same, but they differ very much in essence. Partiality and prejudice are rooted in atta (self) while gratitude is rooted in anatta (non-self); and anatta is Paticcasamuppāda, according to which the dhammas are arising and dissolving (law of cause and

effect). Thus to understand the nature of anatta, one has to take Majjhimapaṭipadā as the base to avoid the two extremes and follow the middle path.

Majjhimapaṭipadā is the conformity of the three sikkhas, (adhisīla, adhicitta and adhipaññā), higher morality, higher thought, higher knowledge, directed at Bodhipakkhiya (constituents of true knowledge). In reality, Majjhimapaṭipadā is the Eightfold Ariya Path (Ariyo Atthangiko Maggo) which is Bodhipakkhiya. For this reason, every time the three Sikkhās arise, they do not have the nature of Majjhimapaṭipadā.

Only when they are directed at Bodhipakkhiya Dhammas, they have the nature of Majjhimapaṭipadā. Only when they carry the nature of Majjhimapaṭipadā does the eye of wisdom which perceives anatta (non-self) arise. When anatta is seen, anicca (impermanence) and dukkha (suffering) are also seen. If one of the three, anicca, dukkha and anatta, is seen, the remaining two are also seen. When anicca is seen, māna (pride) is discarded. When dukkha is seen, taṇhā (craving) is discarded. When anatta is seen, diṭṭhi (false view) is discarded. True happiness can only arise where taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi are absent. It does not lie in the attainment of objects. The discarding of taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi can be done only on the foundation of the noble practice of Majjhimapaṭipadā. Therefore the noble Majjhimapaṭipadā practice is the most fundamental practice according to the Buddha's teaching.

Only efforts directed at Majjhimapaṭipadā are correct

Outside the prevalence of the Buddha Sāsanā (teaching) also, there have been the noble ones who attained jhānas and supernormal knowledge (abhiññās), because they had practised the three Sikkhas, but they were unable to see the world according to the Vipassanā dhamma. As the result, they were unable to perceive the natures of anicca, dukkha and anatta. The reason for this was that their three Sikkhās were not directed at Bodhipakkhiya dhammas. It was because they did not base them on Majjhimapaṭipadā. In truth, all efforts not based on Majjhimapaṭipadā cannot bring about the arising of true happiness. They can merely give temporary happiness in the happy abodes (sukha bhūmis).

Not being pleased and satisfied, therefore, with traditional practices, Prince Siddhattha (the Bodhisatta) fulfilled the pāramīs

(perfections) for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds to attain Sabbaññuta Ñāna (Perfect Wisdom). After realizing the Four Ariya Truths by himself through the noble practice of Majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle way), he preached the dhammas to the veneyyas so that they too might realize them, as he did, through the noble practice of Majjhimapaṭipadā. He went on preaching for the whole of forty-five vassas of his entire life as Buddha till he attained Mahāparinibbāna (great passing away), and made them achieve the true bliss of peace (santi sūkha).

According to modern science, time, place and energy expand and get merged in appropriate proportions into different objects in this world. In like manner, the dhammas spread and get merged in appropriate proportions and appear in the form of human beings. For this reason, when we look at man, we have to take account of the relevant time, place and culture as well as the three Sikkhās (higher morality, higher thought and higher learning). The distinctive features of man come into being according to the proportions of the abovementioned dhammas. In fact, the differences between one man and another is due to the differences in the proportion of the dhammas they are composed of.

According to Buddhist Abhidhamma, all inanimate objects, without exception, are made up of eight material qualities called attha kalapa. In essence there is nothing in them besides these eight kalapas. Basically all objects are the same, but they differ from one another because of their distinctive appearances. Some have the forms of gems, some have the forms of gravel. These differences are caused by the differences in the proportion of time, place and energy (payoga) they are made up of, resulting in the difference in Upadhis (four layers in a being, viz. khandha, kāma, kilesa and kamma). This in turn causes the difference in objects from one another. Some become gems, some become gravel, some become gold, some become silver.

Power of time

Here time (kala) means duration or time taken. In this world much time is taken for vapour to turn into rain drops. Therefore, in the arising and development of an object, time has to play its respective role proportionately. Likewise, place (desa) also has to perform its respective part because without a place as base, objects cannot come into being. Therefore, place, too, has

to participate and play its respective role. Then there is payoga (action). This term also embraces both opposing and compliant action. Action is also called energy. When energy works with the aid of time and place, it takes the nature of density of composition. This is called upadhi. Therefore, an inanimate object is the distinctive form that time, place, action and upadhi take. For this reason, though fundamentally all inanimate objects are equally made up of eight material qualities (kalapas), they differ in form, which is called ‘byatti’. They differ in ‘byatti’ because of their difference in ‘satti’. ‘Byatti’ is a distinctive form; ‘Satti’ has an indistinctive nature. ‘Byatti’ is outstanding and superior, whereas ‘satti’ is ordinary and common.

Most fundamental energy

Man also has this nature. Man has, according to energy power (power), three Sikkhas and one of these three is morality (sīla). Just having morality, however, is not sufficient. It is essential to have samādhi (mental concentration) also. True samādhi has to be built upon noble Sīla (morality). Just having Samādhi is not sufficient. Paññā (wisdom) is essential and Paññā has to be built upon samādhi. When Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā are assembled in the right proportions, energy comes into being. The coming into being of energy itself is the characteristic of Majjhimaṭṭipadā.

Majjhimaṭṭipadā is the most fundamental energy in all worldly (loki) or supramundane (lokuttarā) activities, according to the Buddha’s teaching.

Energy is not confined to man only. It has to depend also on the age of a country.

It has also to depend on geographical situation and traditional culture. Only by depending thus, can it transform a man from his ordinary nature (Sāmañña) to a distinctive nature (visesa).

‘Sāmañña’ nature means the proportionate density of upadhi which is made up of time (kāla), place (desa). national culture and the three Sikkhas, called energy. The distinctive (visesa) appearance means the transformation from the invisible state to a visible state in conformity with the said proportion.

Man should not abandon his responsibility

According to the Buddha's teaching, therefore, when man is looked at or scrutinized through the Brahmachara 'eye', all men are not treated as only of one single grade. Their distinctive features which have been brought about by the proportionate density of energy, composed of time, place and traditional culture and the three Sikkhas are also observed.

Such a scrutiny is not called prejudiced or biased. It is called 'kataññuta maṅgala', expression of a sense of gratitude. For that reason, the primary duty of a man in his life is the observation of Sīla, according to the Buddha's teaching. Observation of Sīla is the endeavour to prevent the 'Adhamma' (wrong, injustice, evil) from getting the better of 'Dhamma' (right, justice, good). In this endeavour, one might lose all his wealth, parts of his body or even his life. Whatever one has lost in this endeavour, one must not give up or shirk his duty. The ability to act thus is called courage 'satti' or doing one's duty.

Chief Enemies of Happiness

The endeavour to prevent 'Adhamma' from getting the better of 'Dhamma' means trying for the widespread prevalence of Sucarita dhammas (right and good conduct) and for the keeping away from Ducarita dhammas (misconduct, evil). It is the duty of each and everybody. Man is born into this human world to discharge this duty well. It is his inborn duty. This duty should start with the courage to refrain from doing what should not be done, and the courage to do what should be done. In deciding which things should be done and which things should not be done, one has to do it on the basis of the degree of 'atta' feeling present in him, whether such feeling is great or small. When the degree of 'atta' feeling is small, one does not give any consideration to his wealth, or to public approbation or fame. The acquiring of wealth is called 'Lobha' the honouring by others is called 'Sakkāra', fame is called 'Siloka'. There are (atta) associated with craving (taṇhā), (atta) associated with pride (māna) and (atta) associated with wrong view (diṭṭhi). These three kinds of atta are actually the chief enemies of true happiness. They are the creators of soka and parideva (grief and lamentation) and the foundation of dukkha (suffering) and domanassa (distress).

Atta Sangaha and Loka Sangaha

When lōbha (wealth), sakkāra (approbation) and siloka (fame) are considered in the interest of self, feeling of concern for oneself, it is called atta-sangaha. It has to be founded on the growth of lobha (greed). If, on the other hand, one sacrifices one's self-interest for the sake of the world (loka sangaha), it is called the discharging of one's duty as 'man'. This also has to be founded on paucity of lobha.

It is called alobha. If everyone sacrifices his self-interest and gives priority to the interest of the world, the human world would become as pleasant an abode as that of the deva world. However, if everyone works for his own good rather than for the good of the world, the human world will be in constant turmoil like Apāya (hell).

Two Views of Brahmacara.

In order, therefore, to build a happy and peaceful life on this earth, man must do his duty to the full. Such a view has come about as the result of the Buddha's teachings after he appeared in this world. According to the Buddha's teaching, this is the 'lowest' view seen through the Brahmacara 'eye', and there are two kinds of this view. One was in vogue before the appearance of the Buddha and the other has been in vogue after the Buddha appeared. The Brahmacara view in vogue before the appearance of Buddha, not being founded on Majjhimaṭṭipadā, was directed at the happiness of one's life. As such it tended to aim at one's own welfare and was, therefore, of attāsaṅgaha nature. The Brahmacara view in vogue after the Buddha appeared being founded on Majjhimaṭṭipadā is aimed at the happiness of liberation from existence. Majjhimaṭṭipadā being the Eightfold Ariya Path, the constituent of supreme knowledge, has the quality of loka sangaha, that is to serve for the welfare of the world. As such, when man is looked at, he is seen as Chinese or Indian, king or courtier, millionaire or pauper, according to his distinctive (visesa) characteristics, and then, he is seen as man according to his common (sāmañña) characteristics. This seeing of man as man will greatly facilitate in the cultivation of thoughts of equanimity (upekkha), which is one of the four factors of Brahmacara dhamma. Then only will the remaining three factors of the Brahmacara dhamma, namely, metta (loving kindness), karuṇā (compassion) and muditā (sympathic joy) appear as forerunners.

Conditions in Central India before the Buddha appeared

Before they could see the world through the Brahmachara 'eye' based on Majjhimaṇḍipadā (the middle path), the people of Central India (Majjhima desa) looked at the world through whatever 'eyes' they could think of and acted accordingly. Before the Buddha appeared, the Central India comprised sixteen kingdoms, namely:

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| (1) Kāsi; | (2) Kosala; | (3) Aṅga; |
| (4) Magadha; | (5) Vajjī | (6) Malla |
| (7) Cetiya; | (8) Vamśa; | (9) Kuru; |
| (10) Pañcāla; | (11) Maccha; | (12) Sūrasena; |
| (13) Asaka; | (14) Avanti; | (15) Gandhāra; and |
| (16) Kambhoja. | | |

The Sakka kingdom which is mentioned in the Piṭakas is included in Kosala and is not shown separately. The names given above are those that are commonly used.

Systems of Government

Some of these sixteen kingdoms were monarchies and some were republics. Some republics were governed by monarchy system. Prominent republics were Vajjī, Malla and Sakka. Among these kingdoms, violent wars very rarely occurred. It appeared that some of the rulers governed the people rather cruelly. This might be assumed from the fact that kings were counted as one of the five chief enemies of man 'rāja to vā' in the Piṭakas. There were also benevolent kings who treated their subjects as their own children. The nature of the administration system of those kings might also be deduced from the prayer mentioned in the Commentaries, which says: "May the kings rule the people as their own children". It might be touching to note from this that the cruelty of some kings of those days was regarded as a bhava dukkha in striving for liberation from existence.

The education system of those days should be considered to be satisfactory taking into consideration the time and the conditions then prevailing. The upper class families sent their children to the renowned teacher of Takkaśīla University in the kingdom of Gandhara to learn. There they were taught eighteen kinds of subjects or arts. Those who were sent to study at that university were the children of royal families (khattiya), brahmins (brahmaṇa), wealthy people (vessa). Those who could not go to that university learnt what they could in their own localities.

Subjects taught

The subjects taught were of three groups. They were called Vijaayatana, Sippayatana and Kammayatana. The vijaayatana group comprised literature, medicine, astrology, palmistry, etc.

In the field of literature, there were poets who could compose poems of a very high standard like the Vedas (sacred books of the Hindus). In medicine, there were skilled surgeons who could perform operations, even upon the head. In the field of astrology, there were fortune tellers who could, by studying the position of the stars, predict accurately what would happen to a country. Physiognomy was also highly developed and they could judge character by hearing the voice of a person or by seeing the features of the face and the body. In the Vijaayatana group also, the scholars were as good as those of the time in other countries.

Sippayatana group comprised subjects which at the present day are called sciences. They included such well known subjects as mathematics, meteorology, navigation, and so on. The mathematics were not so exact and advanced as now-a-days and were, to a large extent, based on suppositions instead of exact calculations. For instance, the “usabho”(bull) was a linear measurement based on the distance the bellowing of a bull travelled. No exact measurement was given. They were also proficient in navigation, judging from accounts of voyages in sailing ships to other countries.

Kammayatana covered such occupations as ploughing, pottery, stone carving, smithery, wood carving and other similar trades and crafts. Craftsmen were so skilful in sculpture that they could even make life-like statues in gold. In short, there was nothing in their educational system to cause hardship and suffering to the life of the people (bhava dukkha) and to arouse feeling of remorse.

Social life

There were four classes of people in those days, namely, Khattiya (the warrior class comprising princes, noble men, etc.) Brahmana (brahmins), Vessa (merchants and traders) and Dalidda (poor people or those who did not belong to the above three categories). They were, however, not clear-cut divisions. The system was called Jātibheda, division by birth but was not as

strong as the division by profession or trade and by morality. The brahmanas tried to impose the system of division by birth as a kind of law of nature in the whole of Central India but in practice people did not observe it as much as they observed the division by professions and trades and morality.

For this reason, although one was born as a Khattiya, he might earn his living as a potter or a farmer if he wished. One born of a brahmin family might become a farmer or an engineer or a trader. One born of a trader family might join any vocation that suited him. It was not the case that everyone born of the Khattiya class should become king, everyone born of the Brahmin class should become scholars, everyone born of the trader class should become wealthy. One must act in conformity with the situation presented to him by life. This is called Kammabheda. It is a law of nature which no one can contradict. Therefore, though one might want to be a king's adviser (purohita), he would have to work as a farmer or an engineer according to the circumstances in his life.

Besides the three upper stratas, there was the poor class who earned their living as bird hunters, dancers, barbers, potters, tanners, weavers, basket-makers, carpenters and so on. These low skilled workers formed the upper echelon of the poor class. Below them, there were the lower class Candalas who worked as sweepers, night soil removers, etc. Still below them, there were house slaves who were not, however, the kind bought and sold under the slavery system which prevailed in those days in other parts of the world. These slaves were kindly treated by their owners.

There were three kinds of regulations concerning the upper echelons of the people. They were regulations based on age and were called "Assama" which meant "hermitage" and which concerned with conduct. Life was divided by age into four parts. The first part was called "brahmachariya", the second "gahattha", the third "vanapattha" and the fourth "saññasa". The first part was the age of learning. The second part was the age for marriage and carrying out household responsibilities. The third part was the age when one had to hand over the household responsibilities to the heir and to devote his time to bhāvanā (religious practices). The fourth part was the age for renouncing all worldly affairs and for devoting entirely to religious practices.

Of these four parts, the “saññasa” and “vanapaṭṭha” were applicable only to the three upper echelons of the people and did not concern the poor class. If the poor devoted their time to religious practices, the kingdom might suffer. The king, therefore, had to see that the poor had no chance to do religious practices.

The regulations at first made no restrictions with reference to age. They concerned only with the people’s vocations and callings. Irrespective of age, each and everybody must do his duty. Therefore, the “Saññasa” which required the giving up of all worldly affairs was not covered by the regulations at first. There were only three restrictions and only afterwards, restrictions were made according to age and “Saññasa” was added as the fourth regulation.

According to the former regulations (Assama), at whatever age, a man’s responsibilities were “Brahmacariya” to learn, “Gahaṭṭha” to carry out all household responsibilities and “Vanapaṭṭha” to delegate some of the household responsibilities to the other members of the family, without keeping them solely under his control. Besides, he had to devote his time to religious practices. The “Saññata” restriction, which required one to give up all worldly duties was not especially imposed.

According to later regulations, it was true that, irrespective of age, one should seek education, should carry out household duties and should do religious practices. However, the regulations were made, classifying the duties as primary and secondary, according to age so that they could be performed effectively. Under these regulations, one primarily had to learn during the first part of his life and secondarily to carry out household duties according to his age. One had to do religious practices, too, in conformity with his age. In the second, third and fourth periods of one’s life also one had to perform primary duties according to his age. The other duties had to be done as secondary ones.

Of the four periods, life was divided into, the third period was to be devoted primarily to religious practices, and secondarily to other responsibilities. Among these responsibilities, learning was of vital importance. Only a small number could go and learn at the Takkaṣīla University, the majority had to learn from teachers (vanapaṭṭhas) who were in the third period of their lives. Among them were some extraordinarily learned ladies, who could

teach even the view points to be taken with regard to religious practices. From this it would be noted that those ladies were able to demonstrate a high standard of learning and intellect. When the Buddha appeared in this world, some of them joined the order of the bhikkhunis (female monks) and, gaining insight into the Four Ariya Truths, became arahats. (theris)

The religious practices in vogue in those days included practices according to the Vedas (sacred books), doctrines of the Brahma sect, Araññaka sect, Upanassisaya doctrine, beliefs of various creeds of diṭṭhis (followers of false views). They also included principles of Saṅkhyā dassana and yogadassana (views). The dassana of those days meant striving to look beyond the world and to attain liberation (mokkha) from the world. There were also the Ājīvaka and the paribbācaka practices (becoming naked mendicants or wandering mendicants).

There was much freedom of education and no cause for arousing emotional awakening. It might, therefore, be concluded that by becoming aware of the dukkha of existence, the dukkha concerning education could no more be of any primary significance.

Economic Sector

Besides the farmers, the industrialists proved to be a strong force though they were included in the class of the farmers. They were systematically organized. Their organizations were known as “Nigama”, “Sangha”, “Seni”, “Puya”, “Nikaya”, etc. The heads of these organizations were known as “Pamukhas” or “jetthakas” or chiefs. The head of the blacksmiths organization was called “Kammarajetthaka”, the head of the flower sellers organization was called “Malakara jetthaka”, the head of the carpenters organization was called “vaddhikijetthaka” in the jātakas. There were also heads of trade organizations called “Satthavāha jetthaka”.

In the Central India of those days, there were three main industries, namely, agricultural industry, manufacturing of goods industry and commerce and trade industry. There is nothing to say about the agricultural industry as it was a traditional one. With regard to commerce and trade, there were two kinds of trade, trade by land and trade by water. In the trade by water, they went beyond the borders of Central India in sailing ships to distant

countries. With regard to trade by land, they used bullock carts to carry goods. Trade either by carts by land, or by sailing ships by sea involved great hazards to life and property. The courage and enterprise of the traders of those days, therefore, deserved admiration.

The goods bought and sold comprised agricultural produce and manufactured goods. The latter included textiles, ivory carvings, goods made of metal, pottery, marble goods, leather goods, dyes and gems. Manufactured goods were produced by factories in Sampa, Rājagaha, Vesāli, Vāranasī, Ayuddhaya, Sāketa, Savatthi, Kosambhi, Mathura, where these industries flourished. The surrounding countryside of these towns also produced these goods. The goods produced were more than sufficient for the consumption of the people in the localities concerned and the surpluses were, therefore, taken to other countries and sold. The heads of the workers organizations at these factories were empowered to settle disputes and problems arising out of their work. Only when no amicable settlement could be reached, were they referred to the king. For this reason, therefore, there was no cause in the economic sector to arouse emotional awakening. (Samvega)

Dreadful Epidemics

There were sometimes fierce outbreaks of epidemics in those days. At such times, deaths occurred so quickly and in such numbers that life seemed to be worthless. Of the three kinds of calamities, those of epidemics and famine greatly oppressed the people. Among the epidemics, the one called ‘Ahivāta’ (plague) was the most dreadful. It was so contagious and so fast in spreading and causing death that whole families were wiped out in no time. The only way to get away without being infected from an infested house was, not through the door but, by breaking down the wall and fleeing through the opening, it was said. The epidemics in Central India of those days were therefore very dreadful.

The calamity of famine was likewise dreadful. Famines occurred due to vagaries of the weather when crops failed and food became scarce. There were also times when the people had to leave their homes, villages and cultivation fields at the outbreak of epidemics. This resulted in shortage of food and famine followed. In those days, however, it was the custom of the rich

to keep alms-sheds for feeding the victims of famines and other calamities. The custom was universal and all the rich person, except a few stingy ones, observed it. All the towns in Central India had not only alms-sheds but also rest houses where famine victims and the poor could lodge free of charge. The calamity of famine was greatly dreaded in Central India of those days and caused the arousing of emotional awakening.

Amanussa Danger

In the Piṭakas, another danger besides famine was also mentioned. It was the menace by Amanussas (beings other than human beings, such as demons etc), According to the Paritta Sutta, it was the danger of ogres. In those days, ogres could take the form of human beings and prey upon the people. There were many harrowing tales of people who came to grief by mistaking ogres who had taken human form to be real human beings and associating with them. At present, there are no genuine ogres at large, but there are many pseudo or counterfeit ones who, though they are human beings, do not behave as human beings should. They pose themselves as scholars of great learning, philanthropists, persons of sterling character and so on. They are so clever in their impersonation that it was difficult to distinguish them from the genuine ones. In truth, the world has no peace and is in turmoil because of these impersonators. This danger can, from our experience today, be called danger from inhuman beings (amanussas).

Dhamma and Adhamma

Impersonation is 'adhamma' and genuineness is 'dhamma'. Adhamma is not associated with Sacca (truth) while dhamma is associated with Sacca. As adhamma is not the associate of Sacca, impersonation amounts to betrayal of the dhamma. Betraying the dhamma is the violation of the dhamma. According to the natural law of counter-action, the dhamma fights back the adhamma which has attacked it. Then the adhamma suffers severely. This is what is called 'pierced by truth (sacca)'. Therefore, all the counterfeits or impersonations shall, by the counter-attack of the dhamma, one day suffer an ignominious downfall. This is quite certain. What is uncertain is only the time of their down-fall. However, the counterfeiters and the impersonators who are the associates of adhamma will go on giving the world much trouble

till the time of their downfall. The effect of the action of the counterfeiters is very serious indeed and the world has to groan under it. This is a bhava (existence) dukkha, suffering of existence. The piṭaka texts have mentioned the Amanussa danger as one that aroused emotional awakening.

Other Dangers

Besides the dangers of Amanussa, there were other dangers which appeared to be not insignificant as they were harassing the people and causing much dukkha to their lives. They were the dangers from thieves and robbers, savage and wicked people, fires, water (flood), ghosts and evil spirits, tree stumps and roots, thorns, position of planets and stars (which had evil influences on people), diseases, misconducts, wrong beliefs, evil men, wild elephants, wild horses, wild beasts, wild bulls, wild dogs, snakes, scorpions, grass snakes, leopards, bears, wild pigs, wild buffaloes, demons and orges. It is noted that the people of Central India made sacrificial offerings to devas to protect them and to keep them away from these dangers.

In spite of these dangers which were really very dreadful in those days, there were people who inevitably had to travel across the deserts where these dangers were present. They were traders, students going to study abroad and travellers. There were many land routes in Central India. Among them the two important ones were the route from Savatthi to Patitthana which passed through Saketa, Kosambhi, Videsa, Ujjeni and the other route was from Savatthi to Rājagaha which passed through Setabya, Kapilavatthu, Kusinarum, Pāvā, Hattigāma, Bhandagāma, Vesali, Pātaliputta , Nālanda .

According to historians, there were only two main racial groups , Aryans and Non-Aryans at that time in Central India .Out of the Aryan group came three classes called Brahmanas, Khattiyas and Vessas. Out of the Non-Aryans came the poor class called Dalidda. Both the Aryans and the Non-Aryans realized the dukkha of existence and wanted to be liberated from it .

Dukkhas known in the past

If the dukkhas experienced by them were briefly grouped into three, the first group would be ‘adhyātamika dukkha’, which is the internal dukkha arising out of the internal constitution of the body (khandha). They knew that all parts of the whole body were

dukkha and that dukkha was the main factor. They wanted to be liberated from that dukkha.

Besides there were both animate and inanimate things in their surroundings and dukkha could come externally from that source too. This dukkha was called 'Adhi-bhotika'. They also knew it and wanted to be liberated from it.

Another dukkha arose in connection with the devas they worshipped. It is called 'Adhidevita'. They knew it and wanted to be liberated from it, too.

There were, therefore, three kinds of dukkha altogether, as shown above, that they had to contend with in their lives. The people of Central India (Majjhimadesa) sought ways to be liberated from them. They found various ways of liberation from these dukkhas but when grouped together, there were only two ways. One way was to rely on external objects and the other to rely on internal objects. Relying on external objects meant putting their trust on the devas they worshipped, while relying on internal objects meant relying on their own morality. They followed the way they liked. In this also, there were two different methods. One was the brahmaṇa method whose followers worshipped the devas. The other was the Samaṇa method whose followers adopted the 'tapa' practice (severely stern and strict practice to discipline by self-inflicted suffering)

Belief for liberation from dukkha

The followers of the brahmaṇa method believed that by worshipping the devas, they would be freed from the three kinds of dukkha and would achieve the happiness they sought. Those who did 'tapa' practices, too, believed that by doing austerities they would be freed from the three kinds of dukkha and would achieve the happiness they sought.

The followers of the brahmaṇa method were divided into two types - the upper and the lower. The upper type worshipped the devas mentioned in the Vedas in accordance with the way prescribed by the brahmaṇas. The devas worshipped by the lower type were not those mentioned in the Vedas but those they traditionally worshipped and the method used was also traditional, not as prescribed by the brahmaṇas. As the people in those days could worship whichever devas they liked and in whatever way they liked, it should be said that there was freedom of worship. There were no records of religious clashes and conflicts.

The devas worshipped according to the brahmaṇa method were those mentioned in the Vedas. There were many of them, such as Indrya, Varuna, etc. They were worshipped by brahmaṇas, Khattiyas and Vessas. In worshipping them, they chanted epic poems composed in praise of these devas paying particular attention to proper enunciation. Then only, they believed, could they achieve the desired result. The poor class worshipped their devas in the traditional way. In truth, it was expensive to worship the devas in the brahmaṇa way. The poor class worshipped their devas in the traditional way, because it was cheaper for them. Worshipping in the traditional way had the nature of relying on external objects. It was, therefore, not included in the Samaṇa way but included in the brahmaṇa way.

The devas the poor class worshipped in those days were not the ones mentioned in the Vedas, but were traditional ones. They were nagas (serpeant like beings gifted with miraculous powers and great strength), yakkhas (demon spirits), gandhabbas (musician devas of the lowest deva realm), rukkhajos (devas who guard trees) and rakkhas (devas who guard fields).

All classes of people of Central India of those days knew the meaning of Saṃsarā (round of rebirths) and of Saṃsarā sukha (happiness), but did not yet know the mokkha sukha (happiness of liberation from Saṃsarā). They worshipped and made offerings to the devas, therefore, to be free from all dangers in their round of rebirths, to have worthy sons and daughters, to be prosperous and wealthy and to be reborn in the deva realms. They did not aim at liberation (mokkha) from the Saṃsarā. Up to that time, they did not know ‘mokkha’ yet. They thought that the dukkhas they were then suffering from were the severest and they worshipped the devas to save them from those dukkhas. The dukkhas they were suffering from were not light in any way. They were severe enough to arouse emotional awakening. That was the reason why they wanted to be liberated from those dukkhas. They were concerned merely with the release from the three dangers——internal dangers, external dangers and the dangers from the devas. To have worthy children, to have wealth and to be reborn in deva realms were the only kinds of happiness they knew. They did not know more than that.

Later on, they came to know mokkha (liberation). As soon as they knew it, they stopped making offerings to the devas. They

renounced household life for the homeless life of the recluses in the forests. The practice they took up was the Samaṇa way. They began to realize that they could not attain liberation by merely making sacrificial offering to the devas and that they could attain it only by practising morality. They called it 'tapa' which might be translated as practices of hermits or ascetics. They called those who did this practice as 'tapasas' (or 'rathays' in Myanmar).

Practice Based on the Internal

The 'tapa' practice of the 'tapasas' was based on Ajjhata (internal) and that was the reason why it was included in the Samaṇa way. They believed that one could attain liberation from the Saṃsarā by 'tapa' practice, and they, therefore gave much importance to this method. If one practised 'tapa', but giving vent to sensual pleasures and desires without effective self-control, it is called the practice of 'Kāmasukhallikanuyoga'. If one practised it with austerity, excessively restraining the mind, it is called 'Attakilamathanuyoga'.

'Kāmasukhallikanuyoga' is the direct effort to achieve mokkha (liberation) one desires. It is like seeking happiness on borrowed money. Running into debt is a dukkha, but the person in debt thinks only of the happiness (sukha) to be gained from the money he has borrowed, instead of thinking of his indebtedness.

'Attakilamatthanuyoga' is the method intended to achieve liberation by undergoing self-afflicted severely harsh mental and physical pains to exhaust defilements (kilesa) in one. It is like paying back the debt and enjoying happiness on the settlement of the debt. It is the method in which one pays back the debt to the creditor with money borrowed from another person. It is not the way to get completely free from debt and is, therefore, not really the way to attain true liberation.

In fact, it was not a time when the Buddha's teaching (sāsanā) was prevalent. It was a time when people could not see 'anatta' but only see 'atta'. As the result, whatever practice 'tapa' they took up with 'atta' view, they could not really attain true mokkha to get them out of the Saṃsarā (round of rebirths). They did not know it. As they did not know it, they practised the 'tapa' way, which was the only way they knew, to attain liberation. This tapa practice which they knew was inevitably included in one way or the other in either Kāmasukhallikanuyoga or the Attakilamat-

thanuyoga practice. Not knowing it, they continued practising the tapa. It might be the demand of the times. They defined the tapa in various ways and practised according to those ways.

Prominent Creeds

In the investigation of atta, loka and mokkha, there were prominent creeds at that time. They were: (1) Vedanta creed, (2) Saṅkhyā creed, (3) Yoga creed, (4) Nyāya creed, (5) Mīmāṃsā Creed, (6) Viśeṣika Creed, (7) Jain creed, and (8) Carvaka creed. Other prominent leaders of diṭṭhi doctrines were:- (1) Pūraṇa Kassapa; (2) Makkhali Gosāla, (3) Ajitakesakambala, (4) Pakudhakassayana, (5) Sañcaya Belaṭṭhaputta, and (6) Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta.

The dassana creeds and the doctrines of diṭṭhi leaders were in existence before the appearance of the Buddha, during the life time of the Buddha and also after the passing away of the Buddha. They are still in existence in the world at the present day.

Among the dassana creeds, the Vedanta dassana creed followed the modified doctrines of Upanissaya books. The creed said with reference to liberation (mokkha) as follows:-

“Ya: svātamamutto nayatena mūghadhi; Sa hyatamahā svam vinihantyasadagya hati”

Yo mūghami = the fool; svātamamutto = for the liberation of his atta from the round of rebirths; nayatena = makes no effort. so = that fool; hi = in truth, atamahā = is called one who kills atta; asadagyaarahat = because of possessing a false dhamma which does not really exist; svam = one's own atta; vinihanti = amounts to killing.

Rumours of the Buddha's coming

There had been rumours of the coming of the Buddha who would discover the Four Ariya Truths by his own intellect and insight in the world a thousand years before the event and according to these rumours, there were many who sought liberation from the Saṃsarā (round of rebirths). These personages thought themselves to be the coming Buddha and founded creeds. This period was called in history as the enlightened age. The enlightenment did not come about by itself. It came about by the power of nature for the dhamma to win over the adhamma. According to their enlightened intellect, they prescribed the

dhamma for liberation from the Saṃsarā. In this, however, the prescriptions differed from creed to creed. In spite of the differences, all creeds accepted the fact that there was the Saṃsarā and that there was the way for liberation from this Saṃsarā. In truth, their intellect extended only that far. The leaders of the creed knew that there were the Saṃsarā and the way to get free from it, but they did not know whether or not there were those who had escaped from the Saṃsarā. Though their knowledge went only that far, they claimed themselves to be the Buddhas.

Those who taught the way of escape

The leaders of the creeds taught their followers about the Saṃsarā and the way to get free from it. They made them practise the way (mokkha). They preached that practising the mokkha was compulsory, a must. They went so far as to say seriously that one who did not practise and attain mokkha was one who killed atta. According to the belief of Vedanta creed, there was ultimately the Sacca (truth). From the point of view of arammana, Sacca is said to be Brahma, but from the point of view of arammanika, it is said to be atta. Atta and brahma are in essence one and the same. All beings have atta. This atta is blocked by kammās and kilesas (defilements) which are forces of life and has become their prisoner. If it can get free from kammās and kilesas, it is called liberation from the Saṃsarā, it is the achievement of mokkha.

If, therefore, one has not striven to get free from kammās and kilesas, it is like imprisoning atta for life. It is like, to say more strongly, passing the death sentence on one's own atta and killing it. Thus the Vedanta creed had directed in connection with the practising for the attainment of mokkha (liberation).

According to the belief of Vedanta Creed, the following four responsibilities were absolutely compulsory:- (1) practising according to (their) dhamma; (2) seeking wealth according to (their) dhamma; (3) enjoying sensual pleasures according to (their dhamma) and (4) striving for liberation from the Saṃsarā. Of these four, the greatest responsibility was to strive for liberation from the Saṃsarā. It was a "must", absolutely compulsory.

These were the compulsory responsibilities concerning life, the Vedanta Creed had prescribed. It would be seen that the creed was able to devise responsibilities for the welfare of the world also.

Saṅkhyā Dassana Creed

Then the creed of Saṅkhyā dassana said differently on the subject of Saṁsarā and the liberation from the Saṁsarā. In truth, the Saṅkhyā dassana creed was an influential one in Central India. Hermits Aḷāra, Kālāma and Udakarāmaputta were said to be members of this creed. It prescribed differently with regard to the Saṁsarā and the liberation from Saṁsarā. The creed did not call liberation from Saṁsarā as ‘mokha’ but called it ‘Kevalya’ which meant the same. It also called it ‘Apavagga’ which also had the same meaning as ‘mokka’ and ‘Kevalya’. They all meant freedom from all dukkha. The creed divided dukkha into three kinds, namely, internal dukkha, external dukkha and the dukkha that arose in connection with the devas. According to this creed, man’s existence is the aggregate or sum-total of all kinds of dukkha.

Liberation According to Saṅkhyā Dassana

It said that all creatures including human beings were made up of two paramattha (reality) dhammas of pakati (original form) and purisa (life giving principle, soul). The combination of these two dhammas became Sattavā (being) which is another name for dukkha. Of the two kinds of Paramattha dhammas, pakati was matter (rūpa) and purisa was mind (nāma). As soon as these two dhammas which were combined were separated, it was the liberation from dukkha. And liberation from dukkha was the liberation from existence. The Saṅkhyā dassana said in connection with liberation as follows:-

‘Evam tatvatryāsā nāsami nasame nāham itryaparisesam;
Avipallāsa visuddham, kevalam uppajjate ñāṇam’

Evam = in this way; tatvatryasa = by analysing the three qualities of tatva, raja and tama; nasami = it is not ‘I’; nasame = it is not mine; na ham = there is no ‘I’; iti = thus; aparisesam = without remainder; avipallāsa = as there are no more Vipallāsa dhammas; suddham = pure; kevalam = the only one remaining as purisa; ñāṇa = knowledge; uppajjate = arises.

As soon as the three qualities, satva, raja and tama, which beings are made up of, are analytically known, there appears the Saccañāṇa. The knowledge that ‘It is not I; it is not mine: there is no ‘I’ arises. It is Saccañāṇa. As it is Saccañāṇa, it is complete in all respects. As it is free from Vipallāsas, it is pure. Being free

from pakati, which is matter, only purisa remains. With regard to liberation, it also states:-

‘Dhammena gamanam uddham gamanam adhova bhavatra dhammena; Ñāṇena ca apavaggo; vipallāsa; voccate bandho’

Dhammena = because of dhamma; uddham = upwards; gamanam = going; hoti = is; adhammena = because of adhamma; bhavati = downwards; gamanam = going; bhavati = is; ñāṇena ca = due to knowledge; apavaggo = liberation from the Saṃsarā; bhavati = is; vipallāsa = due to vipallāsa; bandho = binding to Saṃsarā; bhavati = is; iti = thus; voccati = should be said.

According to Saṅkhyā dāśana, all worldly knowledge aimed at prosperity and success in the world is called āñāṇa or avijjā (ignorance). All worldly knowledge aimed at liberation from ‘loka’ (world) is called ñāṇa (knowledge), or vijjā ñāṇa is knowledge aimed at liberation from loka (world); it is the knowledge that knows all dhammas beginning with lokasa up to kevalya or apavagga.

In this way, it shows the difference between vijjā and avijjā. Besides, Vedānta dāśana said there was only one single ātma. On the other hand, Saṅkhyā dāśana said that there were as many ātmās as there were beings. Therefore, ātma was not one, but many. Thus the two doctrines differed with regard to ātma.

It is also said that there was no difference between Yoga dāśana and Saṅkhyā dāśana. Yoga dāśana laid stress on practice while Saṅkhyā dāśana gave special importance to knowledge. With regard to the distinguishing characteristics between the two doctrines, it is said:—

“Saṅkhyā yogānam madhye iyāni eva bhedo samullasati
yam yogadāśana misvāravadi ca vatta te”

Saṅkhyā yogānam = of Saṅkhyā dāśana and Yoga dāśana; madhye = in between; iyāni ca = only this much; bhedo = difference; samullasati = noticeable; yam yoga dāśanam = that yoga dāśana is; isvāravādi = has isvāravādi; vatta te = is.

(There is only this much difference which is noticeable between Saṅkhyā and yoga dāśana and it is that yogadāśana has the nature of supremacy).

In fact, Yogadāśana is the foundation of all the dāśanas in India. It is not contrary to any another dāśana because it points the way to liberation from Saṃsarā in three paths, namely,

ñāṇamagga, the path of knowledge; kamma magga, the path of diligence; and bhaddi magga, the path of saddha (faith). For this reason, therefore, the yoga dassana is called the foundation of all dassana ‘Yogasabbabhummo dhammo’.

Nyāyadassana was also an atta dassana. It accepted mokkha. According to it, there were two kinds of atta. One was the atta every being had. The other was found everywhere (vibhu), was indestructible (avināsi) and was permanent (nicca). According to this dassana, there were 21 kinds of dukkhas in this world. Only when one was liberated from all of the 21 dukkhas, one was said to have attained mokkha. In truth mokkha had neither dukkha or sukha. Nyāyadassana said there was no sukha (happiness). Vedanta dassana said mokkha was replete with sukha.

According to Nyāyadassana there were 21 kinds of dukkha which were: Khandha 1; Indriya(controlling faculties) 6; Arammana 6; Consciousness 6; Sukha 1 and Dukkha 1. From this it will be found that sukha is included in the list of dukkhas.

With regard to atta and mokkha, Mimamsadassana said thus: Atta was kāraka (doer) as well as vedaka (one who feels). Atta spread all over, was indestructible and existed in all beings.

Just as one being was, therefore, different from another, the atta of one being was different from that of another. There was atta, as jiva (life), being imprisoned in the Saṃsarā, and there was also atta being freed from the Saṃsarā. When it was said atta was being imprisoned in the Saṃsarā, it was imprisoned by Khandha, Indriya (controlling faculties) and Arammanas (sense objects). When it is said that atta was freed from Saṃsarā, it meant that it was freed from these three kinds of entanglements.

According to Mīmāṃsa dassana, Saṃsarā is a really existing paramattha dhamma. Liberation of atta as jīva means the dissolution of the khandha (body), indriya (controlling faculties) and arammanas (sense objects) for jīva. It has nothing to do with Saṃsarā. The Saṃsarā exists as it is. Vedanta dassana says Saṃsarā is like a dream; it does not really exist; it is just the creation of avijja (bewilderment). When avijja ceases, Saṃsarā also ceases, it says.

‘Atta’ has no consciousness at all times. It appears only when the sense-door (dvāra) and sense object (arammana) come into contact. So consciousness is not a permanent (nicca) quality

of consciousness; it is an impermanent (anicca) quality. It is also said thus on the difference between Mīmāṃsā mokkha and Vedānta mokkha:

‘Mīmāṃsāya mokkho ānandasuñño vedāntassa mokkho pana ānandamayo’

Mīmāṃsaya = of Mīmāṃsa dāssana ; mokkho =mokkha (liberation) ; anandasuñño = devoid of delight ; vedāntassa = of vedānta dāssana; mokkho pa na = mokkha is ; ānandamayo = delightful.

Viśeṣika dāssana says in connection with attā, thus:-

Attā is the property of nicca (permanence). It is separate from khandha (body), indriya (controlling faculties) and mana (mind). Then, there are two kinds of attā- jīva and paramattā. Attā is of small (aṇu) size. Regarding quantity of attā , it is said, thus:-

‘Vedāntadāssanaṃ ātāmā ekova iti maññate i nyāya viśeṣika dāssanaṃ ātāmano anekatvaṃ savikurute’

Vedāntadāssanaṃ = Vedāntadāssana; ātāmā = the attā; ekova = only one ; bhavati = is; iti= in this way ; maññate = is considered; nyāyaviśeṣika dāssanaṃ = nyāya dāssana and Viśeṣika dāssana are ; ātāmā = of attā ; anekatvaṃ = many ; savikurute = is accepted.

As regards mokkha, it is explained that the cessation of dukkha just as light ceases when the fuel and wick are finished, is called mokkha.

The Jain dāssana also accepts attā, but according to it, the attā is not so big (vibhu) as to spread to all the parts like the Vedānta dāssana. Nor is it as tiny as an atom (anu) as the Viśeṣika dāssana says. It is of medium size, depending on the size of the body. When the body is big, it is big. When the body is small, it is small. With regard to mokkha, it says thus :- It is true that Jīva, by its original nature, is free but because of deeds (kamma), arising out of its natural bent (vāsanā), that Jīva is imprisoned in the Saṃsārā. Therefore, by practising three dhammas - right view (sammā dāssana), right knowledge (sammāñāṇa) and right conduct (sammā carita), one can gain liberation from Saṃsārā.

According to the three dhammas for liberation from the Saṃsārā, of Jain dāssana, the five great precepts to attain the right conduct were well known. They were :

- (1) Ahimsa (non-harassment or non-cruelty to others);
- (2) Saccabhāṣana (telling only what is true);
- (3) Atheyya (not stealing);
- (4) Brahmācariya (noble practice of refraining from sexual intercourse); and
- (5) Apariggaha (not taking possession for oneself).

“Atta is no other than this khandha (body) and liberation from it is death”(Idam sarīrameva ātamā maraṇa meva mutti) is the motto in connection with atta and mokkha of the Carivaka Creed which once existed in Central India. According to this creed all extraordinary occurrences in this world were not the result of causal relationship, that is the law of cause and effect. They happened according to nature. The cause of sukha (happiness) was dhamma (justice, goodness); the cause of dukkha (suffering, misery) was adhamma (injustice, evil), they said. That statement was not true. In reality, man enjoyed sukha and dukkha according to nature; it was not because of dhamma and adhamma.

Besides, Carvakas had a different view on the happenings in the world. In fact, they were believers only in materialism. They, therefore, presented their belief to the people. Their belief was:

‘Sikhino Citraye kovā, kokile ko pakūjaye;
sabhāva vyatirekena, vijjate nātra kāraṇam’

Kova = who; sikhino = the peacocks; citraye = make (them) beautiful; kova = who; kokile = make cuckoos to coo; atra = in this world; sabhava vyatirekema = by rejecting nature; kāraṇam = another reason; navijjate = there is not.

The Carivakas totally rejected the law of cause and effect. To them nature was the cause and nature was the effect. All the strange things in the world came into being because of nature. There was no other cause whatsoever, they said.

Besides Carivakas, there were other creeds and doctrines in Central India at that time. Sixty-two kinds of creeds were given in the Brahmajala Sutta. But no mention was made about their originators or founders.

Doctrines of Titthis

In those days, there were many who were interested in life, speculated on it and held various views about it. They questioned what would happen to them at the end of their lives; why were there vicissitudes of life they had to contend with. They wanted their lives to be (as good) as they wanted to be and they endeavoured to realize their wishes by doing what they thought to be the best.

First, they put their trust in sacrificial offerings (yajati) (to devas) so as to enable them to build their lives as they wanted. When they became dissatisfied with 'yajati', they turned to 'tapa' practices. Again, when they became dissatisfied with 'tapa' too, they took up 'bhāvanā' (meditation). As the 'bhāvanā' they practised was not 'vipassanā bhāvanā' (meditation directed at the attainment of maggas and phalas), they could not achieve the object they wanted. As 'loka' has two parts, namely atta and bhava, they did not know that bhava (life) could not follow the wishes of atta but bhava happens according to anatta nature (non-self nature). They held these views because of their ignorance. In this way, the learned men of those days got their views and beliefs jumbled up. What they really wanted was the fulfilment of the following four wishes:-

- (1) to practise and live according to the dhamma (dhamma);
- (2) to have wealth and riches (attha);
- (3) to live a happy family life with sons and daughters (kāma);
- (4) to be free from all dukkha (mokkha).

These four wishes were called the hopes of man. The brahmanas and samanās of those days tried hard to achieve these four hopes. It was said that in this effort there were some who could, by their sacrificial offerings, even make the Sakka, king of devas, tremble. Some said that the Sakka could be made to tremble by 'Tapa' practice. Here samatha and bhāvanā practices might be included in the 'tapa' practices. Whether or not they were able to cause the Sakka tremble by sacrificial offering or by 'tapa' practice, was not important. What was important was that they did not know the mokkha (liberation) where there was no old age, no illness, no death. Even though they did not know 'mokkha' they did not realize the fact that they were ignorant. They thought they knew. That was the reason why they could not achieve mokkha

to be liberated from the Saṃsarā.

There were six prominent leaders who believed that they had attained mokkha though they did not. They were called ‘titthis’ and their names were:—

- (1) Pūrana Kassapa;
- (2) Makkhali Gosala;
- (3) Ajita Kesakamballa;
- (4) Pakudha Kaccāyana;
- (5) Sañcaya Belaṭṭhaputta;
- (6) Nigantha Nātaputta;

Popular Austerity Practices

These six titthi leaders strenuously did the tapa practices and were, therefore, well known as leaders of their respective creeds. They had a large following of admirers from the poor classes up to kings. It being the nature of puthujjanas (worldlings) to admire and respect those who did austerity practices, it was not surprising that the titthi leaders who strenuously practised the tapa were admired and respected. Even the Bodhisatta, believing that the more severely one practised the tapa, the nearer would one be to the attainment of mokkha, practised it for six whole years. As soon as the Bodhisatta abandoned the tapa practise, the five monks (Pañcavaggis) who were so well learned as to be fit for the post of purohitas (king’s counsellors and who were serving him as attendants), thought no more highly of him as he was, they believed, not likely to gain mokkha. The austere and harsh tapa practices were so very popular and highly thought of in those days.

There were then very many Tapasas (those who practised Tapa) and paribbājakas (wandering religious mendicants), but as no records of their doctrines and practices remained, it is difficult to learn about them correctly. We can only learn some facts about them through the literature of other creeds and cannot, therefore, take them to be totally correct. It is possible that their literature did not deserve to be preserved for the future.

Pūrana Kassapa

The doctrine of Pūrana Kassapa is called Akiriya ditṭhi (which is the doctrine of action without result). In the affairs of the world, there is no specific prescription regarding one's action as good or evil. The belief that good actions (kusala kammās) bring good results and bad actions (akusala kammās) bring bad results is wrong. If we study the practical results being experienced at present, we can find people engaged in immoral activities who are affluent. We can also find people engaged in morally good activities who are poor. Therefore, what is important for one is to be well-to-do. If a venture would make one rich, it should be taken up. There need be no consideration as to its morality or otherwise of the venture. According to Paramattha Sacca (absolute truth), there is no kusala (meritorious) or akusala (demeritorious) action. They are just man-made limitations.

There were killings of animals and making sacrificial offerings (to devas). They said that the killings of animals and making of offerings thus were kusala acts (deed of merit). Were these really deeds of merit? Again some said all acts of killing others were deeds of demerit and evil. Even eye-witnesses differed in their views from one another. Therefore, kusala and akusala acts were just nomenclatures (Sammuti Sacca). The practical consideration should be whether an undertaking would be of help to one in the accumulation of wealth. In truth, the doctrine of Pūrana Kassapa was the Saṅkhyā dassana which had two basic paramattha dhammas of 'purisa' and 'pakati'. 'Purisa' is paramattha Sacca (actual truth) and 'pakati' is sammutti Sacca (nomenclature).

'Purisa' is atta and 'Pakati' is anatta. A lotus flower blooms in muddy water but the muddy water is not able to soil the lotus. In the same way, atta lies in kusala and akusala which are anatta, but the kusala and the akusala cannot soil atta according to paramattha sacca. For this reason, even though a deed of merit (kusala) is done, it does not affect atta, or even though a deed of demerit (akusala) is done, it does not affect atta. As the result is all the same according to paramattha sacca, one should do deeds which would give him (that is atta) immediate happiness (sukha). Then only would it be meaningful. The deed done might be a meritorious or a demeritorious one. Whatever it might be, it does not matter. It cannot cause any trouble to one, called atta, because atta is like the lotus, and the kusala and akusala are like the muddy water in which the lotus grows. Thus Purana Kassapa taught.

Makkhali Gosāla

Makkhali Gosāla was the founder of Ajivaka creed which had flourished before the Buddha appeared up to the 12th Century A.D. in Central India. His doctrine was called the Ahetuka doctrine which rejected both cause and effect. All things happened in the world not due to (the law of) cause and effect but according to predestination as decreed beforehand. The decreed period was 8,400,000 vast cycles of time (mahākappas). Beings would wander from existence to existence during the period and at the end of it, they would be freed from Saṃsarā. During this period the sukha (happiness) and dukkha (misery) each being would have to experience seemed to have been measured in a measuring basket and allotted. According to this allotment, they would experience sukha and dukkha. When one had experienced dukkha to the full measure, he would enjoy sukha. Therefore, it was important to one to finish the dukkha quota and the Ajivaka titthis, therefore, most arduously practised tapa to exhaust it quickly. The practices of Ajivaka titthis included bathing and warming themselves by the fires.

According to the Ajivaka doctrine, all the things happened in the world not due to (the law of) cause and effect, but according to predestination as decreed beforehand. If a being was decreed to become king, he would be a king. If a being was decreed to become a dog, he would become a dog. All things happened as decreed beforehand. This decree is called ‘niyati’. The term ‘niyati’ embraces ‘Sangati’ (union) and ‘bhava’ (existence). ‘Sangati’ and ‘bhava’ which were embraced by ‘niyati’ were not conspicuous. ‘Niyati’ was the original decree and can be called sāmāñña dhamma. When niyati (sāmāñña dhamma) was associated with time and locality, it became Sangati which means union. Sangati is in essence, payoga which means power or energy. Therefore, in ordinary parlance, it might be said that when Niyati (sāmāñña dhamma) was united with time and locality, it became energy in proportion to the density or strength of the union. This energy was, in Makkali Gosāla’s language, called Sangati. Again, when energy called Sangati was united with time and locality, it became according to the proportion of density (upadhi) bhava which meant objects that came into being one by one.

To recount briefly the process of the arising of things in the world, according to Makkali Gosala doctrine, because the original decree *niyati* was united with time and locality, *payoga* (energy) came into being. Because of *upadhi*, the proportion of the union of *payoga* (energy) and time and locality, objects (*bhava*) which were different from one another came into being.

If we study Makkali Gosala doctrine, we should find that it believed the *Visesika dassana*. With reference to worldly happenings, *Visesika dassana* said *Sāmañña* was a *nicca* (permanent) *dhamma*. Though *sāmañña* was different from substance, every substance concerned contained *sāmañña*. All substances arose out of *sāmañña*, it is said. Makkali Gosala also regarded *niyati* as *sāmañña*. Therefore, Makkali Gosala could be said to believe, to a certain extent, in the *Visesika dassana*. However, according to his *niyati* doctrine, he was not a *Visesika dassana* doctrine believer, but was a *niyati* doctrine believer, it was found.

Ajita Kesakambala

Ajita Kesakambala is a materialist, a believer in the annihilation doctrine and *natthika titthi* doctrine. Being a materialist, as already explained with regard to *Carivaka dassana*, he taught his followers to pay attention only to material prosperity. They were all surrounded by material things. The mind was something they knew by conjecture and was not a thing which they could actually see. They should, therefore, pay greater attention to things they could see. From their own personal experience, they knew that the material world around them was constantly changing. When they had to live in pleasant surroundings, they enjoyed pleasantness. When they had to live in unpleasant surroundings they experienced unpleasantness. There was, therefore, no need to say that their surroundings were creating and influencing their feelings. Efforts should, therefore, be made to cause their surroundings, which were constantly changing, to change in the manner they wanted. To the extent their surroundings changed, they would also change to that extent. Thus he said.

Ajita Kesakambala, being a believer in *uccheda* doctrine (belief in annihilation) taught that a person's life span actually began at birth and ended at death. If someone were to say that there was something after death, it was purely imagination. It was not the truth. If there was something beyond death, who could give practical proof? So, there were actually no people who were said

to be able to see into the past or people who were able to see into the future. It was due to having too high an opinion of these people. These people could not give any practical proof to make others believe them. Therefore, there were no persons with miraculous powers who could tell about the past or the future. There was no Saṃsārā (round of rebirths) or the next existence. For this reason, one should strive to gain happiness in the present life. If he underwent dukkha in the present life hoping for happiness in the future existence, he would be like the person who forsook the stream for the big river (that is abandoning what one already has which is a certain thing, for something better that is an uncertain thing). One should, therefore, direct his efforts only for the happiness in the present life. That was what Ajita Kesakambala taught his followers.

Ajita Kesakambala was also a believer in Nathika ditthi doctrine which rejects effect or result. It said that if one sought to achieve happiness in the future, instead of finding it in the present, it was mere foolishness, for who could know what the future held for him? Really, those who said there was the future of their lives or future existences were not those who were able to furnish any proof for what they said. Of all knowledge only what could be personally really known deserved to be believed. Other kinds of knowledge were very difficult indeed to be supported by concrete proof. Therefore, the uncertain future should not be taken into consideration. The fact that in this world only the sugar which could be tasted actually was sweet and the sugar which was tasted in one's imagination was not sweet was known by all from their own personal experience. There was no need to give any proof. One should, therefore, consider only whether there was happiness or not in what he was doing at present. He should decide giving stress to whether it was of practical benefit in the present to him or not. He should regard the happiness to be enjoyed in the future and the question whether it would be of practical benefit to him or not, like the sugar tasted in one's imagination. He should be interested only in what he was doing at present. Thus Ajita Kesakambala taught. According to his doctrine the cause was the effect. There was no further effect.

According Ajita Kesakambala doctrine, which rejected effect or result, the world (loka) was the play field for human beings where they were to play to win at any cost. They should not play (half-heartedly) hoping to win the next time. According

to the rules of the game, the 'win' or 'lose' must be decided at once in their very presence. The decision should not be postponed to the future. Thus playing to win and winning the game were the same. They should not be taken as two separate things. Playing to win should be called winning the game.

Pakudha Kaccāyana

Pakudha Kaccāyana doctrine was that of the Eternity View (Sassatadiṭṭhi). It said that there were seven things which were external. These seven were: (1) water; (2) earth; (3) air; (4) fire; (5) sukha (happiness); (6) dukkha (suffering, misery); and (7) jīva (life). They were neither causes nor effects. In truth, there were no causes, or effects. Only because of avijja (bewilderment), people thought these seven dhammas were serving as causes and effects. Of these seven dhammas, sukha (happiness) caused them to be united, but dukkha caused them to be separated; jīva (life) caused them to experience sukha and dukkha. If sukha caused the four elements to be united as a pleasurable object, there was happiness (sukha). If it caused the four elements to be united as an unpleasurable object, there was suffering or misery (dukkha). For this reason, jīva (life) had to prevent the arising of sukha and dukkha. In this task if there was no act of uniting or separating of things and if they remained static as they originally were, there would arise 'amata', which was Lokuttara (supramundane, transcending the world). When things united with or separated from one another, it was loka (mundane). In essence 'loka' and 'lokuttara' were not separate entities. When the abovementioned seven dhammas were active, it was 'loka'; when they were static or inactive, it was 'lokuttara'.

Loka and lokuttara differ according to the jiva (being) which looks at them. In truth, loka comprises these seven dhammas and lokuttara also comprises these same seven dhammas. If the loka is looked at from the point of view of the life of the noble ones who are free from avijja (bewilderment), because sukha and dukkha as sensations have ceased in them, only tranquillity (santi), that is the inactivity of the seven dhammas, will be seen. This 'santi' is lokuttara which is the inactivity, inertia and the staying apart from one another of the seven dhammas. If the loka is looked at from the point of view of the life of persons who are not free from avijja (bewilderment), because of the influence and provocation of sukha and dukkha, the restlessness and agitation

of the seven dhammas will be seen. This restlessness and agitation is loka; and inactivity, inertia is lokuttara. For this reason, if one wants to be liberated from Saṃsarā, one must endeavour to keep the seven basic dhammas to be inactive. In doing so, one must strive to prevent sukha and dukkha from becoming active. If sukha becomes active, lobha (greed) and moha (bewilderment) will naturally creep in. If dukkha becomes active, dosa (anger) and moha (bewilderment) will naturally creep in. Then lobha, dosa and moha, which are not basic dhammas, and the seven basic dhammas will get mixed up, and though jiva is a basic dhamma, it will be unable to get free from the snare of avijja (ignorance).

Sañcaya Belatthaputta

Sañcaya Belatthaputta founded the doctrine of doubt. He was also an Aññānavādi and a prominent Amarāvikkhepa vādi (who held false views that make one sit on the fence to be on the safe side). At his time speculative thinking was at its height, but as the knowledge gained from it could not be applied to correct conduct (caraṇa), the desired goal was out of reach. Then, the knowledge gained from speculative thinking could not be implicitly believed to be right. So long as the knowledge gained by speculative thinking and correct conduct were not in agreement, all ideologies would be in the same position. The ideology of one could be nullified by another who was superior to him. So, Sañcaya became doubtful of all doctrines born out of speculative thinking. As he could not correctly decide regarding loka, bhava or mokkha, he founded the creed of sañcaya vāda (doctrine of doubt).

Though Sañcaya founded the Sañcaya Vāda creed according to his belief, he practised ‘tapa’. He was therefore called a member of the Samaṇa. In this creed, there were two sections, the tapasas (who practised tapa) and the paribbasakas (wandering mendicants) and Sañcaya belonged to the group of paribbajakas. Tapasas did not dwell in hermitages or monasteries. As the embryo chief disciples Upatissā (name of Venerable Sariputta) and Kotila (name of Venerable Maha Moggallana) had joined the Sañcaya Creed and practised tapa for some time before they met the Buddha, it should be noted that the Sañcaya Creed was a popular one at that time.

As, however, the Sañcaya Creed had admitted its inability to give a definite decision with regard to loka, bhava and mokkha:

- (1) whether there is -
- (2) whether there is not -
- (3) whether there are some, whether there are not some.
- (4) whether there is nothing -
- (5) whether it is not there is nothing -

it was declared to be of no use in the search for Ariya Sacca (ultimate truth).

Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta

Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta was the leader of one of the creeds. His doctrine was popular to a certain extent in Central India before the Buddha appeared, during the life time of the Buddha and after the passing away of the Buddha up to the present day.

He was well known under the names of Mahāvīra and Jina in dassana literature. His literary works were in Addhamāgavi language. Among the creed leaders the practices he taught were most accepted by the people, Ahimsa (not hurting, not ill-treating others) was the most well known. It was the basic conduct for worldly prosperity just as Nibbāna was the basic aim for lokutta progress.

The Overall Appraisal

One thousand years before the appearance of the Buddha was called the period of widespread circulation of the rumour of the coming of the Buddha. A rough outline of the condition prevailing in Central India at that time has already been given as the background to the appearance of the Buddha. With regard to administrative and educational affairs, there were no dukkhas serious enough to arouse emotional awakening. Besides there were wars between kingdoms and because of the cruelty of the victors to the vanquished, there were, to some extent, dukkhas to the life of the people to arouse emotional awakening. It was, however, difficult to say that these happenings had aroused enough emotional awakening among the people so as to spur them to strive for the realization of Ariya Sacca (Ariya Truths). This is

to point out that there was nothing extraordinary in the thinking or ideologies of the people.

That period, however, was of great significance with regard to Arammanika, that is consciousness or awareness. Indeed, loka, as an object of sense, is, according to ultimate truth (Ariya Sacca), void (suññata) . To perceive this nature of Suññata is the task of consciousness (Arammanika). As consciousness becomes keener, even though the sense objects remain as they originally are, they gradually change by degrees towards the truth.

For example, at the first stage, when ‘man’ is looked at, he is not seen as ‘man’ but as Chinese or Indian, rich man or poor man. This kind of seeing is called seeing through Papañca ‘eye’, that is seeing through taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi.

At the second stage, when ‘man’ is looked at, he is seen as ‘man’. He is no longer seen as Chinese or Indian, rich man or poor man. This kind of seeing called seeing through Brahmācora ‘eye’.

At the third stage, when ‘man’ is looked at, he is seen as mind and matter. He is no longer seen as an individual or a being. This kind of seeing is called seeing through Samādhi ‘eye’ (mental concentration).

At the fourth stage, when ‘man’ is looked at, he is seen only as arising and dissolution of phenomena. He is no longer seen as mind and matter. This kind of seeing is called seeing through the vipassanā eye.

At the fifth stage, when ‘man’ is looked at, he is only seen as Nibbāna. He is no longer seen as the arising and dissolution of phenomena. This seeing is called seeing through magga and phala ‘eye’.

It is true that Nibbāna is ‘Suññata’ (voidness, nothing), ‘Animitta’ (signlessness) and ‘Appaṇihita’ (passionlessness). Therefore, when ‘loka’ is looked at, according to the Pāli ‘suññato avekkhasu’ one must be able to see suññata. Then only, should it be said that the sense object is correct and the perception is also correct. However, to have such a sense object and such a perception, one needs to have pāramī (perfection; fulfilment of practices leading to liberation from round of rebirths).

If one claims that he has such a perception without having fulfilled pāramīs, it would be just an illusion like those of the

titthis (who held false views) who did not really see the yonder shore (liberation from Saṃsarā, Nibbāna).

Really Extraordinary Period

The period of the widespread circulation of the rumour of the coming of the Buddha was really an extraordinary one. According to the demand of the time, it was true that learned men who could really perceive dukkha dukkha and viparināma dukkha appeared. It was also true that after analytically reviewing the prevailing conditions in Central India and being greatly emotionally awakened, they strove to realize Ariya Sacca (the Noble Truths).

To realize Ariya Sacca, mere perception of dukkha dukkha and viparināma dukkha was not adequate. A completely clear conception of saṅkhāra dukkha is also necessary.

But this conception too is not enough. To have compassion (karuṇā) upon the 'loka' world is also another necessity. Only when one has both compassion and wisdom (paññā) can one be a truly worthy leader. The learned persons of those days, having perceived saṅkhāra dukkha, mistakenly believed that they had become Buddhas. They preached their doctrines accordingly.

It is true that those learned persons thought themselves to be the most learned and to be morally the purest. They were no other than the titthis (holders of false views) and other Samaṇas and brahmaṇas.

Law of nature cannot be surpassed

Those personages were ignorant of the law of nature. The seed from which only a banana plant can grow shall produce only a banana plant. It cannot produce a mango tree. In the same way only from the seed of Sammā Sambodhi can a Buddha arise. It is the natural law; it cannot be surpassed.

There are imitations and emulations to everything. In the period before the coming of the Buddha also, there were imitators and emulators of the Buddha.

They were learned to some extent, but they were not satisfied with the status of being imitators and emulators.

They loudly claimed themselves to be the possessors of Sabbaññuta Ñāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and leaders of the three

worlds (human, deva and brahma). They did not understand what was their pāramī or what was their inborn nature.

They did not know whether they were banana plants or mango trees. Due to ignorance, they wanted to be the banana plant and the mango tree at the same time.

They wanted to do everything that was good. They thought they could do so if they wanted to. For this reason, it is said that they were those who went beyond the law of nature.

One cannot do everything one wants to do. There are ‘atta’ and ‘bhava’ in the world and according to ‘atta’ one might do what one wants to do but according to ‘bhava’ things happen as they wish. They do not happen as one wants; they happen according to their relevant causes. This is called happening in accordance with bhava. It means happening according to the nature of anatta (non-self). There are two kinds of causes - upadana kāraṇa and nimitta kāraṇa. Atta has the nature of nimitta kāraṇa and bhava has the nature of upadāna kāraṇa. However skilful a carpenter might be, his work depends on the quantity of timber available; he cannot do more than that.

In the period of the widespread circulation of the rumour of the coming of the Buddha, some of the samaṇas and brahmaṇas who were fairly learned wanted to be the buddha but in accordance with their kamma bīja (deeds done in past existences) they just became diṭṭhis (leaders of false doctrines). Bhava (life) could not follow atta; atta had to follow bhava. In spite of it, giving precedence to atta and following its dictates, they thought themselves to be the buddhas. This was the wrong view called micchā diṭṭhi. All micchā diṭṭhis (holders of false doctrines) have only unhappy destinations.

Those who keep the dhamma from being overwhelmed by adhamma

For the attainment of the Sabbaññuta Ñāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) which can promote congenial relationship between bhava and atta according to nature of anatta so as to enable him to bring peace and happiness (santi sukha) to the world, Prince Siddhattha, who had fulfilled perfections for four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds as the seed, was about to appear in the world.

According to the law of nature, there were those who spoke only according to the dhamma, who had chosen him for the task, who had helped him forward and encouraged him and who were

keeping constant watch over him. Four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds ago, they had chosen him trusting in his ability. They had helped him and encouraged him.

They had kept a constant watch over him and kept him from deviating from the right path of becoming the Buddha.

They were the Lokapāla (guardians of the world) devas and brahmas headed by Suddhavāsa Brahmas who looked after human beings. They were responsible to see that 'Adhamma' did not prosper and turn the world upside down and to ensure that dhamma flourished. They were not able to perform this task by themselves, but were to perform it through a Buddha and a Buddha needed to appear. The Suddhavāsa Brahmas had, therefore, paid their attention from the beginning of the world on the advent of the Buddha.

Being dhammavādīs who spoke only according to the dhamma, they kept a careful watch over the world for the coming of the Buddha who would be able to take steps for the dhamma to get the better of the adhamma according to the law of nature. When the Buddha appeared, he taught the veneyyas (those who are to be converted) to make them realize that each and everyone had a duty to perform and that duty was to be performed in accordance with the dhamma.

From Buddhavamisa

Respectfully listen to the Buddhavamisa, the story of the Buddha, I am going to relate. It will give joy, do away with the thorn of sorrow and will bring all kinds of wealth and luxuries. (80).

Respectfully follow the path to Nibbāna shown in the Buddhavamisa, the story of the Buddha, which can free one from māna (pride) caused by birth, can get rid of sorrow, can save one from the round of rebirths and can exterminate all dukkha (81).

Study the above words of the Buddha and practise them faithfully.

PART TWO

The Bodhissta Fulfils Pāramīs

Pāramīs

Pāramī is a Pāli word which briefly means “deeds of the noble ones.” So to understand it well, it will be necessary to know who the noble ones are. They are those who pay no attention to their own well being but who do for the good of others and for their liberation from the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). They do not use themselves for accumulation of wealth and luxury, for achievement of high offices, fame and honour and for the esteem of others. They do not use the loka for the sake of their lives but use themselves for the sake of the loka. They sacrifice their lives for the loka.

Among these noble ones, Prince Siddhattha, the embryo Buddha Gotama, was the most outstanding model. For this reason, the deeds of the noble ones are called ‘Pāramīs’. The deeds of the noble ones can be of different kinds, but when grouped by their nature, there are only 10 kinds which are shown below:-

- (1) Perfection of Almsgiving (Dāna)
- (2) Perfection of Morality (Sīla)
- (3) Perfection of Renunciation (Nikkhama)
- (4) Perfection of Wisdom (Paññā)
- (5) Perfection of Energy (Viriya)
- (6) Perfection of Forbearance (Khanti)

- (7) Perfection of Truthfulness (Saccā).
- (8) Perfection of Resolution (Adhiṭṭhāna)
- (9) Perfection of Loving-Kindness (Metta)
- (10) Perfection of Equanimity (Upekkha)

How Pāramīs are accomplished

When the majority of the people who are worldlings (puthujjanas) look at objects, they always see them wrongly (Diṭṭhi Vipallasa), they always understand them wrongly (citta vipallasa) and they always perceive them wrongly (saññā vipallasa). For this reason, though there exist no such things as persons or objects in the loka, they see them, understand them and perceive them as though they exist. In seeing, understanding and perceiving thus, though according to Vipallasa they are equally wrong, from the point of view of performance or execution of deeds, they differ, because one kind directs its attention towards the loka and the other kind directs its attention towards themselves.

In reality, according to the ultimate truth Sammuti Sacca, the loka is saṅkhāra (of conditioned and compounded) nature, but they do not see it, understand it and perceive it as such; they see, understand and perceive it wrongly as persons and objects, as places and abodes. In truth, the world (loka) is of saṅkharā nature (of decay and dissolution), but this nature is not seen, understood and perceived.

They see it, understand it and perceive it according to Vipallasa (reverse) nature, as person or beings, or as abodes. Then they call the persons or beings they see, understand and perceive as Satta Loka (world of sentient beings) and as Okasa Loka (world of space). Thus, those who see, understand and perceive do so on the basis of Vipallasa perspective. And the objects seen, understood and perceived are also centred on Vipallasa. Thus human beings are drifting along in the ocean of Vipallasa and it shall be absolutely necessary to strive to get out of it and reach the right place of land.

It is not at all easy for one to strive to escape from the wrong place of the ocean and to get to the right place of land. In spite of this difficulty, there have been those who have attempted in the past as well as in the present and succeeded and there will

also be such persons in the future. This is quite natural. Such persons are called the noble ones. They are also named kalyāṇa puthujjanas (virtuous worldlings), sekhas (who have still to learn and who have not yet attained the final magga), pakati sāvakas (ordinary arahats), mahā sākavas (senior arahats), agga sāvakas (chief disciples), paccekabuddhas (who like the Buddhas are self-enlightened but cannot teach others) and sammāsambuddhas (Buddhas who truly comprehend the dhammas by their own intellect and insight).

Deeds of Pāramī

Among the noble ones who strive to escape from the wrong place of the ocean and to get to the right place of land, the sammāsambuddhas are the leaders. They are called ‘myat-swā-payā’ in Myanmar, meaning the noblest of the noble ones. All their deeds are, therefore, called ‘Pāramīs’. These deeds cover everything they have done from the time they receive the prophesy that they will become the Buddhas up to the time of their passing away into Nibbāna (mahāparinibbāna).

In truth, all the deeds of the noble ones from kalyāṇa puthujjanas up to the paccekabuddhas are embraced by the deeds of the Buddhas, just as the footprints of the elephant can contain the footprints of all other animals. To determine whether a deed amounts to an act of pāramī, the deeds of the Bodhisatta from the time he received the prophesy up to the time of his final passing away should be studied and used it as the yardstick for comparison.

To speak candidly, the really noble ones are all who have extinguished kilesas (defilements) and āsavas (moral intoxicants). However, those who are practising for the extinction of āsavas have also been counted as noble ones to stretch the meaning. Therefore, though it should be said that only the deeds of ariyas (those who have gained at least one magga), beginning with Buddhas who have extinguished kilesas and āsavas are Pāramīs, all the deeds done in their past existences of the Buddhas and other ariyas should also be called Pāramīs, the Pīṭakas say.

Two main Characteristics

To know if a deed is a pāramī or not, there are two distinguishing characteristics to consider. They are: (1) whether its aim is to have compassion on others and to be liberated from

the round of rebirths, and (2) whether deeds done, such as almsgiving, etc. are based on the above aim. Otherwise, they are not Pāramīs.

As according to the first aim, it will be necessary to work for the welfare of others without paying attention to one's own welfare, it will be not easy for a person with ordinary metta (loving-kindness), ordinary karuṇā (compassion) and ordinary cetanā (volition) to perform it. As it is the nature of a worldling (puthujjana) to love himself best (atta samam pemam natthi), unless a person is a noble man, he will think of his own welfare first.

Therefore, not to put one's welfare first, a person must have love for others more than he loves himself, otherwise it will be impossible for him not to think of his welfare and to work for the welfare of the others. It would be just an imagination. It might be so, but those who imagine thus must be those of ordinary intelligence who fail to catch the meaning of the poem of Minister Ananda Thuriya, in the days of Pagan dynasty.

The poem says! ‘The pomp, splendeur, luxuries and pleasures of a king are ephemeral like the bubbles in the ocean which appear just for a moment....’ They cannot be noble persons like Ananda Thuriya. They will be just common people who have normal views, who have normal thoughts and who draw normal conclusions. It is quite natural. In truth, Pāramīs are not for normal persons but are for the noble ones. Therefore, only the noble ones really know the meaning and connotations of pāramī. Normal persons do not know it.

Bhava and Saṃsara

This is because of the difference in views in the understanding of the meaning of life (bhava). Really, bhava having no essence, is annata (non-self). As it is impermanent, it is anicca. As it is really suffering, it is dukkha. However, using bhava which is anicca, dukkha and anatta, as capital, a person can gain supreme bliss (santi sukha).

This is the way the noble ones see. When the life-span of bhava is compared to the length of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths) it is as short as the life of a bubble that appears in the water of the ocean. It can exist just for a very short moment and then perishes. There is no substance in it whatever. Therefore, the

lifetime or life of a person, when compared to the length of the saṃsarā, round of rebirths, is only a very short moment.

Both animate and inanimate things have their life spans. The cakkavala (universe) also has its life span. The world also has it; a country also has it; a Brahma also has it; a deva also has it; a human being also has it. However, within the life span, there is time for arising (upada), time for developing or standing (thiti) and time for dissolving (bhanga). When the time comes for arising, there is arising; when the time comes for developing, there is developing; when the time comes for dissolving, there is dissolving. This law cannot be bypassed. However, ordinary persons, who are not the noble ones, wish to go contrary to this law. When the time for dissolving comes, they forcibly want to be arising or developing. They forcibly want to be developing or arising though the time has come for dissolving because they do not know the length of the life spans.

Although one is a human being, he thinks he will live the life span of a deva or of a brahma. Some even think that the life span of a human being is as long as the life span of the saṃsarā. Then, they also think that human existence is a permanent one. Their views are wrong views. Being persons with wrong views—

- though bhava (existence) is anicca (impermanent) they do not see it as such. They see it as nicca (permanent).
- though it is dukkha, they do not see it as such. They see it as sukha (happiness).
- though it is anatta (non-self), they do not see it as such. They see it as atta (self).
- though it is an asubha (unpleasant object), they do not see it as such. They see it as subha (pleasant object).

Seeing in this way, though the pleasures and luxuries connected with their life (bhava) will last only their limited life spans, they make the utmost effort to preserve them as if they will last the whole of the saṃsarā. They do their best to do it.

In spite of their utmost effort to preserve them, when these pleasures and luxuries are destroyed or lost, they are filled with great distress and despair. As these persons regard their pleasures and luxuries as their own lives, their destruction or loss is death to them. For those who regard life as of two kinds - external and

internal, pleasures and luxuries are external life (material life) and rūpa jivita and nāma jivita are internal life and the destruction and loss of pleasures and luxuries is death to them.

The cessation of rūpa jivita and nama jivita is also death to them. For this reason, ordinary persons, compared with the noble ones, have double chances for death.

Two Directions of the Journey of Life

Man has to work from the time of birth up to the time of death. That is they have to be always doing deeds (kammās). They may be physical, verbal or mental deeds. Man has to be doing one or the other of these deeds (kammās) all the time. He has to be doing them all the time, at every moment. Therefore, the doing of these deeds (kammās) is called walking along the journey of the saṃsarā.

And in walking along the journey of the saṃsarā, there are two directions and he invariably has to take one of the two directions. Just as the real journeyman stops at times, the saṃsarā journeyman stops when he sleeps. At other times, he has to be walking at every moment.

Of the two directions of the journey of life, one is called in Pāli ‘Atta saṅgaha’ and the other ‘Loka sangaha’. ‘Atta saṅgaha’ means favouring or supporting oneself. ‘Loka sangaha’ means favouring or supporting the world (loka).

The one who walks the ‘atta sangaha’ direction or path, does whatever he does for his self welfare, for ‘I’. In this connection, the ‘I’ embraces a single person, or a family, or a group, or a race, or a country. All things both animate and inanimate which one regards as his own are taken to mean ‘I’. In truth, the ‘I’ here does not denote quantity, but denotes ‘quality’.

For this reason, all those who walk along the path of atta saṅgaha should be taken as those who work for the sake of all animate and inanimate things they possess. For this reason, the Piṭakas have defined the ‘I’ as above.

“IDAMEVA SACCAM MOGHAMAÑÑAM”

It means, “ This only is sacca (truth); all other things are useless”.

This is the briefest meaning of ‘I’. According to it, if one takes that ‘I only am right; all others are wrong,’ it amounts to

walking straight in the direction of Atta saṅgaha (attachment to the 'I'). In the same way, the beliefs, 'My family only is right' 'My clan only is right' 'my country only is right' are all attachments to the 'I'. They are all walking straight in the direction of Atta sangaha.

In truth, all attachment to the 'I', restricts, in one way or another, the interests of others. It does not let mudita (compassion) arise. When mudita has no chance to arise, issa (jealousy, ill will) and macchariya (selfishness) come in by themselves. When one has no mudita, one also has no Brahmācāra dhammas (four noble dhammas of metta, etc.). Brahmācāra dhammas have the nature of boundlessness. They are also called Appamaññā or Sīmāsaṃbheda. Appamaññā has the nature of infinitude and Sīmāsaṃbheda has the nature of getting beyond the bounds. In doing deeds for the well being of others, therefore, as soon as one excludes anyone in his mind (so-and-so is not included), his efforts turn straight in the direction of Atta sangaha.

In this loka, kings order criminals to be hanged; teachers whip their pupils; parents curse their children. Such deeds, however, do not amount to following the path directed at atta sangaha because kings have no malice towards the criminals; teachers have no hatred on their pupils; parents bear no enmity against their children. They all have good intentions. Kings, teachers and parents, therefore, are just correcting the wrong doings of their charges in the manner approved by time and locality for the good of the loka. It does not amount to walking straight in the direction of atta sangaha.

In this connection, the way Devedatta (the brother-in-law of the Buddha Gotama who became a monk and who made attempts on Buddha's life and created schism in the order of the monks) received the punishment the Buddha meted out to him should be noted. When he was being swallowed up by the earth for his evil deeds, he told his followers thus:-

“Do not destroy me! I have borne a grudge against the Buddha and have wronged him. The Buddha, however, bears not even a hair's breadth of malice towards me.”

The Commentator has observed in connection with this story, thus:

“Buddha has loving-kindness (metta) in equal measure, no more or no less, on Devadatta (who attempted on his life),

Robber Angulimala (who killed more than a thousand lives for their thumbs), Nālāgiri elephant (who charged at the Buddha to kill) and his only son Rāhula.”

The story shows the nature of the boundless (apammañña) and getting beyond the bounds (Sīmasambheda) of the Brahmācāra dhammas (metta, karuṇā, mudita and upekkhā). This means to say that those who walk in the direction of attā sangaha restrict the others in one way or the other. Therefore, only those deeds which do not restrict the others amount to Pāramīs. The deeds of the noble ones amount to Pāramīs, and they are called those who walk in the direction of loka sangaha. They are the ones who pay no attention to their own welfare. They act mainly for the good of the others and for liberation from the round of rebirths (saṃsarā).

The law of nature does not have a thievish nature. Therefore, the deeds done by the noble ones do not disappear or are not destroyed like an object stolen by a thief. According to the nature of action and re-action, they produce inestimable benefits. In truth, only those who have fulfilled pāramīs can realize the four Ariya Truths. Those who have worked for the good of the loka and have fulfilled enough Pāramīs to become Buddhas become the Buddhas; those who have worked for the good of the loka and have fulfilled enough Pāramīs to become mahā-sāvakas become Mahā-sāvakas (senior disciples); those who have worked for the good of the loka and have fulfilled enough Pāramīs to become pakati sāvakas become pakati sāvakas (ordinary arahats). It is the law of nature. The benefits gained because of the law of nature are those obtained through the working of cause and effect. In connection with practical benefits attained, however, we find thus in the story of Devadatta.

Though Devadatta bore an immeasurable grudge against the Buddha, when he himself experienced the boundless loving-kindness the Buddha had poured out towards him, he was overcome with immense repentance and heart-breaking grief for the wrong he had done to the Buddha. He did obeisance towards the monastery where the Buddha was then residing in homage to the Buddha, in the following heart-rending words:-

“With this body which is now reduced to skin and bones and this life which is at death’s door, I humbly and respectfully pay homage to the Buddha, who is nobler than the noblest, superior to all devas, who tames the devas and human beings

like a charioteer, who knows all there is to know, who is endowed with glory and more than a hundred major and minor physical characteristics..”

At the time Devadatta was being swallowed up by the earth near the bund of the pond in Jetavana monastery. First, he was swallowed up to his ankles, then up to his knees, then up to his waist, then up to his navel, then up to his throat, then up to his jaws. He did homage to the Buddha just before his mouth was being swallowed, uttering the above words which flowed out of his heart.

What the Buddha got (the response he received from Devadatta who had borne great enmity against him) was incomparably great. Who, other than the Buddha, could have got it? At that time (by his act of repentance and his homage to the Buddha) Devadatta had become a virtuous one. He sincerely and volitionally made the offering of his body and life to the Buddha. He was no longer jealous of the Buddha’s nobility and greatness. He was no longer selfish.

Appearance alike, essence different

In truth, at one time Devadatta was one who worshipped himself, who cherished his life, who was fond of his life, who was attached to his life. The former Devadatta and the present Devadatta were entirely different. The former Devadatta had walked in the direction of attasangha. The present Devadatta walked in the direction of lokasangha.

The present Devadatta had converted himself into one to whom the loka was the altar where sacrifices were made, his life was the object for offering, the beings were the ‘deities’ to whom the offerings were made. His goal was liberation from the round of rebirths, saṃsarā. Thus he had changed his thinking and his attitude. Therefore, in the last moment of his life, he made the offering of his life to the Buddha. His offering would not be in vain at all. It would not disappear like an object stolen by thieves. He would gather the fruit of the offering a hundred thousand worlds hence when he would appear as a paccekabuddha by the name of Athissarāpa.

To become a paccekabuddha is indeed an enormous gain. Let alone the gaining of a paccekabuddhahood; even the sukha (happiness) of the achievement of Sotapaññā magga (the first

magga) is far superior to the sum-total of the happiness one has enjoyed in his entire round of rebirths.

Actually, all *samāsārā sukha* always ends in *soka* (distress). The happiness (*sukha*) gained by a *Sotapaññā* is not like it. Even though he may not be able to discard *soka* altogether, he has got rid of the *soka* which can send him to *Apaya* (the four nether abodes). It may well be imagined how great the happiness of a being who is forever free from the four *Apayas* will be. It may also well be imagined how noble and peaceful the physical, verbal and mental deeds of such persons will be. Generally speaking, the thinking and deeds of a *Sotapaññā* (one who has attained the first *magga*) and the thinking and actions of a worldling (who has not attained any *magga*) can be alike in appearance, but they cannot be alike in essence, it is evident.

Atta Sangaha and Loka Sangaha

Those who are ignoble are worried, anxious, envious and selfish lest others might do better than they do. The noble ones, on the other hand, are anxious or are worried lest others might fall from their fortune, power or status. They rejoice when others do better than they do. They are happy. They congratulate them. They feel heartened. This shows the difference in the directions taken by those who are noble and those who are not noble in the journey of life.

In truth, not only human beings but all other beings also are walking in one or the other of the two directions every moment, but they do not actually know in which direction they are walking, and they believe that the direction they take is the right one. Thus the ignoble ones declare that they are taking the direction of *loka sangaha* though they are actually taking the direction of *atta sangaha*.

They are mainly doing deeds in their own self-interest, in the guise of the welfare for all. Yet, they loudly claim that they are working of the common good without rest for twentyfour hours a day round the clock. This claim, it should be said, is made through *Papañca* view (which is conditioned by evil desire, wrong view and pride) or through the four *Agatis* (*chanda*, *dosa*, *moha* and *bhayā*). *Papañca* view is *atta diṭṭhi* view, and the *Piṭaka* text in this regard says:-

“*Anayo nagarūpena buddhimakkamma tiṭṭhati*”

which means that the wrong method tends to get beyond one's knowledge and assumes the appearance of the right method.

In reality, when the atta consciousness of the ignoble ones gets stronger, the wrong is assumed as right, the evil as good, friend as enemy. Such assumption is the sign of their downfall. It is the symbol of their downfall. They tenaciously cling to their views saying: 'I am right.' It is called 'Adhānaggahi' (steadfastly clinging to one's view). Even though one realizes that he is in the wrong, striking the attitude of 'It will make no difference whatever', he refuses to give up his view. Such kind of attitude is called 'Duppatti nissaggi'. It is a characteristic of the ignoble ones. The Piṭakas call them 'Dubbaca' which means a person who is difficult to talk to or to reason with. All such persons are ignoble.

Main Road of Life

The main road of life is the six sense-objects (visible object, sound, smell, taste, touch and thought) which appear at the sense-doors (dvāras - eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind). Men are always walking along this main road of sense-objects. Both the noble ones and the ignoble ones are walking on this road. It is the only road for all beings to walk on.

It is the same road for all. There is no differentiation. In walking on it, everybody has to go through the same motions, that is to lift forward and put down each foot in turn. It is called walking. This may be compared to the performance of deeds of kamma. Just as everyone has to go through the same motions of lifting forward and putting down each foot in turn in actual walking, so also has he to go through similar motions in walking the main road of life. There is no difference.

When man walks along life's main road (the road of sense-objects) with kamma strides, the road is the same for all. There is no difference. The walking on the main road is the same for all, there is no difference. Walking on the main road is responding to the sense-objects which appropriately appear at the sense-doors. This is called kamma (deed).

If the response is made by physical action, it is called 'kāya kamma'; if the response is made by verbal action, it is called 'vacī kamma'; if the response is made by mental action, it is called 'mano kamma'. Therefore, all beings suitably respond to the

sense-objects that appear at their respective sense-doors and thus perform kamma (deeds). So, the walking along the main road of life, which is the doing of kamma (deeds), is the same for all beings. It is said that there is no difference but there is one difference and that is in the direction taken.

The noble and the ignoble

Just as the north and the south are opposite directions of a main road, so are the east and the west. There are always two opposites in doing kamma deeds.

On the basis of these two opposites, the noble ones and the ignoble ones are differentiated. The noble ones are called those who fulfil Pāramīs and the ignoble ones are called those who do not fulfil Pāramīs.

According to the sense-doors at which they arise, kamma are divided into three kinds, namely, kāyakamma (bodily action), vaci-kamma (verbal action) and mano kamma (mental action). Then by nature, kāyakamma are of two kinds, namely, kusala (meritorious) kamma and akusala (demeritorious) kamma. Likewise, vaci-kamma are of two kinds, kusala and akusala, and mano kamma are of two kinds, kusala and akusala kamma.

Then, whether it is kusala (meritorious) or akusala (demeritorious) kamma, every kamma has two directions - attasangaha and loka sangaha, because of the difference in the aims of those who do these kamma.

In doing meritorious deeds, one man builds a monastery and another man also builds a monastery. Both do the same kind of meritorious deed, but their aims are not the same. One aims by this merit at achieving saṃsarā happiness (happiness enjoyed in his round of rebirths) and the other aims by this merit at the bliss of Nibbāna (liberation from the round of rebirths). In doing demeritorious deeds, one man kills the life of another and another man also does the same deed. Both commit the same demeritorious deed, but their aims are different. One kills in his own interest and the other kills it in the interest of the loka. In reference to this nature, the Buddha taught ‘I say that only cetanā (volition, intention) is kamma.

Deeds of Merit not called Pāramī

According to *atta sangaha* direction, not only those who commit *duccaritas* (evil deeds) are said to be practising wrongly, but those who commit *sucaritas* (good deeds) with wrong aims are also said to be practising wrongly. This is mentioned in *Paṭipadā Sutta*, *Nidāna Vagga Saṃpayutta*, *Saṃpayutta Commentary*. According to it, besides the giving of *dāna* (almsgiving) and observation of *Sīla* (practising morality), even in the practices for the achievement of the eight *samāpattis* (sustained deep mental absorption in an object of meditation), and *abhiññās* (supernormal powers attained by arahats), if the aim is wrong, the practice becomes wrong.

Therefore, in doing meritorious deeds, for those who follow *atta sangaha* direction, there is *micchapaṭipadā*, which aims at the achieving happiness in the round of rebirths. It is called *Vaṭṭa Sīla*.

When one aims at *vaṭṭa sukha* (happiness in the round of rebirths), whatever one does, whether he gives alms (*dāna*), or observes the precepts (*Sīla*), or practises *bhāvanā* (practise meditation), one does it for his own good. He does not think of the good of the *loka*. Even if he does so, he puts it in the second place.

Then all deeds of merit he does would chiefly be for the good of himself (*atta*). They are not deeds for the good of the *loka*. As long as they are not deeds for the good of the *loka*, they are not the kind of deeds done by the noble ones. When they are not the kind done by the noble ones, even if they might lead to attainment of *jhānas*, they do not deserve to be called deeds of *pāramī*. In that case, they cannot be treated as practices which conform to *Sammāpaṭipadā*.

Sammadiṭṭhi View

As explained above, all *Pāramīs* should not primarily be for the good of self but for the good of the 'loka'. They should not be directed at the happiness (*sukha*) of the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa*). It should be aimed at *Vivaṭṭasāsa*, the liberation from the round of rebirths (*vaṭṭa*). Only deeds with the double aim - for the good of the *loka* and for liberation from *saṃsarā* (i.e. attainment of *Nibbāna*) - are named *Pāramīs*. If a deed one does is of the nature of *atta padhāna* (*atta* priority) and one claims it to be of the

nature of loka padhāna (loka priority), he becomes guilty of two more deeds of demerit, māyā (deceit) and sātheyya (treachery).

Here māyā means trying to hide one's guilt as if one is innocent. 'Sātheyya' means pretending to have a quality which one does not possess.

In brief, making what is truth appear to be untruth is 'māyā'.

Making untruth appear to be truth is 'Sātheyya

If, however, one honestly cannot distinguish between the truth and untruth and believing what is truth to be untruth, or what is untruth to be truth and acts and speaks accordingly, he commits an additional offence of miccha diṭṭhi (false belief).

Therefore, only when one knows rightly, truly and correctly, it is called yathābhūta knowledge.

If one knows mistakenly, the wrong as right and the right as wrong, such knowledge is called “Viparidassana”, the mistaken or reverse view. Such a view should be included in Micchādiṭṭhi.

The opposite of Micchādiṭṭhi is Sammādiṭṭhi, which is the correct view of all there is to see and know, but it is not easy to see the world through the Sammādiṭṭhi 'eye', but if one makes efforts to that end, one would be able to do it.

The embryos of the noble ones have practised to be able to do it. They include the Bodhisattas, embryos of Paccekabuddhas, aggasāvakas, mahāsāvakas, pakati sāvakas and also embryo ariyas. In truth all those who place the interest of the loka first without thinking of one's own are included in that number.

They are those who walk in the direction of loka sangaha. As such, they will invariably reach their desired goal at the end of the journey. That goal is Nibbāna.

Attachment

Attachment is called Upadhāna in Pāli, but to the Myanmar ears, this Pāli word has a deeper meaning and connotation than the Myanmar word for it. Attachment is of four kinds, viz. attachment to the surroundings, attachment to race or nationality, attachment to culture and attachment by instinct (inborn tendency).

Of these four kinds, attachment to surroundings arises in this way. People inevitably have to see and look at their surroundings. In their surroundings there are people, animals and inanimate things. They are things which can be seen by whoever looks at them and they are therefore called visible objects.

Kāmupādhana

Besides these visible objects in the surroundings, there are also sounds which can be heard, smells which can be smelt, eatable things which can be eaten, objects which can be touched and ideas (mind objects) which can be thought. When these sense-objects are classified, we have six kinds. These sense objects are called the surroundings of the people. In looking at or seeing these surroundings, the awareness of the people is vital. It compels the people to take cognisance of their surroundings. For this reason, the surroundings are called kāmupadham (attachment to sensual objects). The term denotes greed (lobha) which craves for sensual pleasures and sensual objects.

According to sabhāva sacca (truth of nature), the surroundings are not all sensual objects. They include sensual objects. In that case, beings are attached to them through greed (lobha). They also include loathsome objects. In that case, beings loathe them through dosa (anger). They also include objects that cause bewilderment. In that case, beings are bewildered through moha (bewilderment). For this reason, it is said that the surroundings are not all sensual objects. It is true according to the truth of nature (sabhāva sacca). The sabhāva sacca is merely the front part of paramattha sacca (the ultimate truth). The rear part of paramattha sacca is the Ariya Sacca (the Four Noble Truths). According to them, the entire surroundings, as the sense-objects of loka, are all pleasurable and are named 'kāma'.

Āsava Dhammas

Though according to sabhāva sacca, the surroundings include loathsome and bewildering objects but according to the Ariya Sacca, it is said that all the surroundings comprise pleasurable objects, because Āsavas (moral intoxicants) play the important role. The Āsavas sprayed with the water of greed (lobha) all the bhūmis (abodes) up to the highest (bhavagga), and all the saṃsarā dhammas up to Gotrabhu (the stage of insight immediately below the magga). As the result of the spraying with

the water of greed, the bloating carcass of a dog becomes a pleasurable object to some beings. In truth, *taṇhā* (craving) can cause all sense objects appear ‘beautiful’ and ‘attractive’ though they are really not.

Whatever sense-object it may be, only when it appears ‘beautiful’, will it be attractive. In the same way, the *Āsavas* have sprayed on those *bhūmis* and *dhammas* with the water of *diṭṭhi* (false belief) to make them appear stable though they are really not.

They spray with the water of ‘*avijja*’ (ignorance) on *bhūmis* and *dhammas* to make them appear to be truth though they are really not. So ‘*taṇhā*’ is called ‘*Nandirāga saḥagata*’ and ‘*Tatra tatrabhi nandini*’, in the *Dhammacakka Pavattana Sutta*.

‘*Nandirāga Saḥagata*’ means that *taṇhā* itself has an attractive appearance and it can make its sense objects seem to have attractive appearances. ‘*Tatratatrabhi nandipi*’ means that *taṇhā* itself finds pleasure in its sense-objects, viz. all kinds of *lokiya* (worldly) sense-objects.

Therefore, though *Ariya Sacca* says *bhava* (existence) is all suffering (*dukkha*), according to *Bhava sacca*, *taṇhā* has got attached to even this suffering. Therefore, the surroundings are able, as a strong supporting force (*upanissaya*), to exert pressure from behind.

Due to this pressure, in the cognizance of the sense objects that appear at their sense-doors, beings differ from one another according to their surroundings. One who has grown up among the fishermen will think and know in the way of a fishermen in the cognizance of the sense-objects. One who has grown up among traders will think and know in the way of a trader in the cognizance of the sense-objects. For this reason, it is said that the surroundings are, as a strong supporting force, exerting pressure from behind on beings in the cognizance of the objects.

In deciding on or thinking about a sense-object, a man from the surroundings of a fisherman thinks and decides in the way of a fisherman. A man from the surroundings of a trader thinks and decides in the way of a trader. As the result, people in this *loka* should endeavour to change their surroundings so that they will think and decide in the way they want. To achieve this purpose, they endeavour to recondition, to teach, to organise their surroundings.

As one has frequently seen and is well acquainted with the surroundings in which he was born, though those experiences and knowledge of the surroundings might have disappeared and have gone into his subconscious mind, they still influence indirectly on the conscious mind, according to the upanissaya paccaya. In truth, the influence of the surroundings remains attached to the body of a person as upadhāna, according to the teachings of the Buddha. It is like the shadow in the film of a photograph. This mark of upadhāna will always follow a person till the time he becomes an arahat.

Accomplishment of a Pāramī Deed.

When man performs deeds according to the sense-objects that appear at their six sense-doors, though the surroundings are the same, the deeds differ. Even when the deeds are the same, the aims in performing them differ. The noble ones perform deeds primarily for the good of the loka; they pay no attention to their own good. The ignoble ones perform deeds primarily for their own good; they pay no attention to the welfare of the loka.

Though the noble ones pay no attention to their own welfare and perform deeds primarily for the good of the loka, they make no attempt to embrace the world as their own, claiming, 'This is I ; this is my country; this is my nation; this is my world'. That is treating the loka as their own, as belonging to them. When they do so, craving (taṇhā) creeps in, accompanied by pride (māna) and wrong view (diṭṭhi) declaring 'It will not be destroyed'. When they start seeing the loka as their own in relation to themselves, even though they do deeds primarily for the good of the loka they are not actually doing so. They are no more doing for the good of the loka. They are using the loka (as a means to achieve an object) as a stepping stone in their own interest.

This kind of deed is, therefore, not called the deed of the noble ones; it is not called a pāramī.

In the Pāramīs that the noble ones have fulfilled, the 'I' is totally discarded. It is called 'muttacāgi'. In truth, 'I' is the name of taṇhā (craving), māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (wrong view). Therefore, whatever deed is performed, one must scrupulously see to it that such thinking as 'I did it', (that is identifying the performer - karaka) must be avoided so that the deed will amount to a pāramī.

How to keep out the ‘I’

For the liberation from the round of rebirths (saṃsarā), which is the second factor for the accomplishment of pāramī, is to make effort to keep out the ‘I’ (atta) from every deed. The effort to keep out the ‘I’ from every deed is to exterminate craving (taṇhā), which is samudaya sacca, the Noble Truth of the Cause of Dukkha. In every deed, to the extent the ‘I’ is exterminated, to that extent the pāramī is accomplished. If the ‘I’ is exterminated to a small extent, the pāramī is accomplished to that extent; if the ‘I’ is exterminated to a large extent, the pāramī is accomplished to a large extent. If the ‘I’ is exterminated completely, the pāramī is accomplished completely. In truth, Nibbāna is the name for the extermination of craving (taṇhā).

Therefore, in practice, while a person is alive in this world, if he can exterminate craving a little, he achieves Nibbāna, a little. If he can exterminate craving much, he achieves Nibbāna to a great extent, that is he achieves happiness to a great extent. If he can exterminate craving totally, he achieves Nibbāna totally. Therefore, to be liberated from the round of rebirths, one has to exterminate craving (taṇhā). Exterminating craving in every deed is the fulfilment of pāramī, and fulfilment of Pāramīs is the task of the noble ones.

Real Courage

In working for the welfare of the loka, one should have real courage. Here courage means the ability to exterminate craving. If he can exterminate it to a small extent, he has courage to a small extent. If he can exterminate craving to a great extent, he has courage to a great extent. If he can completely exterminate craving, he has immeasurable courage. For this reason, the Buddha teaches:—

‘Kamato jayato soko kamato jayato bhayaṃ’ in the Dhammapada.

Worry’ and ‘fear’ are dhammas which have their source in craving (taṇhā). When one is attached to his existence, to animate and inanimate things which give him pleasure in his life, worry arises in him due to the fear that they might dwindle away or be lost. When worry arises, fear also comes into being. Fear denotes lack of courage.

Fear also has its source in craving, and if craving can be got rid of, courage will appear by itself. For this reason, when one struggles mainly for the welfare of the loka one has to try to exterminate craving so that he may have courage.

To exterminate craving means not to expect and long for benefits and advantages, fame and honour that will arise out of the deed done.

Only when one is free of them, can one really have courage. Only when one really has courage, can one be a noble one. Then only, the deeds he performs can be called Pāramīs.

Only those deeds done solely for the welfare of the loka without any regard to personal gain or interest, or those deeds done for liberation from the round of rebirths can be called Pāramīs. To be liberated from the round of rebirths is like reaching the goal for those walking along in the Loka sangaha direction.

Power for working for loka welfare

In striving for the welfare of the loka, there is immeasurable energy or power. In this connection, the Piṭakas say: –

‘Paññāya na bhavē ṭhānam, dayāya na same thiti’

In striving for the welfare of the world, there is no energy or power as great as karuṇā (compassion); there is no energy or power as great as paññā (knowledge).

In truth, pāramī includes karuṇā (compassion) as well as paññā (knowledge). That is the reason why the noble ones can, exercising karuṇā and paying no attention to self-interest, work for the welfare of the loka. They also can aim at the attainment of Nibbāna which is the liberation from the round of rebirths, by exterminating craving and greed with paññā.

Just as the boatman, who carries passengers in his boat to the shore beyond, also gets across himself to that shore, the noble ones who have both karuṇā and paññā and who have fulfilled Pāramīs accomplish lokuttara deeds (for attainment of maggas and phalas) while working for the good of the loka. Only when one does both for the good of loka and lokuttara is his deed called pāramī. If not, it is not called pāramī. For that reason, however much one does for the material welfare of human beings, if

nothing is done for their mental development and the uplifting of their conduct and morality, such deeds cannot be called Pāramīs.

Material well being and morality

In truth, unless deeds done for the material welfare are based on the uplifting of morality, it would be like reinforcing Mara’s (the Evil one’s) army in this loka. Of the ten divisions of Mara’s army, the first division is well equipped materially.

This is called ‘labha’ in Pāli. which includes ‘sakkāra’ (honour) and ‘siloka’ (fame). They are the material requisites.

When ordinary persons come into material well being, it turns their heads. Such vanity and pride is called a disease (roga), which means in Abhidhamma a being overwhelmed by pride (māna).

That is the reason why it is said that fulfilling the material needs in this loka without first laying the foundation of morality is like reinforcing the Māra’s (the Evil One’s) army.

As such, the acquiring of material needs beyond necessity causes ordinary persons to fall into the hands of Māra’s first division.

In fact, the behaviour of persons who are morally weak is of one kind when they are not materially well off. Their behaviour, however, changes when they become more affluent than they need. This is the result of their inability to control their lives and they fall to Māra’s first division.

Besides, the behaviour of persons who are morally weak is of one kind when they are not much respected and honoured by their surroundings. Their behaviour, however, changes when they are much respected and honoured by their surroundings. This change makes them fall to Māra's first division.

Besides, the behaviour of persons who are morally weak is of one kind when they are moderately famous. Their behaviour, however, changes when they become very famous. This change causes them to fall to the Evil One’s first division.

For this reason, unless the acquiring of over abundant material needs in the loka is accompanied by moral restraint, a person will get to the extremity of māna (pride). If this extremity pride cannot be restrained on the basis of one's morality by

steadfast mindfulness (satisampajjana), one's life would be ruined.

Therefore, if material goods are produced more abundantly than actually needed, for bringing about the happiness and prosperity of the loka, this aim will be defeated and the loka will always be confronted with sorrow.

One extreme of mental well being

Peace and happiness of the loka cannot be brought about by fulfilling only material needs.

In truth, to fulfil merely the material needs is going to one extreme, which is the extremity of pride (māna).

To fulfil merely the mental needs is going to another extreme, which is the extremity of wrong view (diṭṭhi).

Therefore, only by avoiding the two extremes, will there be happiness and peace in the world. The avoiding of the two extremes is keeping to the middle path. To keep to the middle path for bringing about happiness and peace in the loka is the uplifting of moral conduct.

In truth, fulfilling the material needs is going to one extreme and fulfilling the mental needs is going to another extreme. Only the fulfilment of moral conduct can avoid the two extremes and can keep one to the middle path.

One can never do enough to have perfect morality. There can never be too much of it; there can only be deficiency. For this reason, one should endeavour, strive, practise and learn to have perfect morality.

As much as one's morality gets higher, the middle path (majjhima paṭipadā) will also progress. Then, though great efforts are made for the progress of the material sphere, it will not get to the extreme. It will only fall within the bounds of the middle path. When it falls within the middle path, there will be no cause for ruining one's life. Even though great efforts are made for the progress of the mental sphere, it will not get to the extreme. It will fall within the bounds of the middle path. When it falls within the middle path there will be no cause for ruining one's life. When one's life is not ruined, the loka will not also be ruined. Only when one goes to either of the two extremes, will one's life be ruined. When life is ruined, the loka is ruined.

Advancement of knowledge insufficient

Normally, it might be concluded that with material and mental advancement the loka should become a happy and peaceful place. This conclusion is, however, not correct. If one looks at the loka today, he will see countries which are infinitely materially advanced. They are, however, not happy; they only appear to be happy. They are not also peaceful; they only seem to be peaceful. Everyone is aware of this situation. The countries concerned know better. In the same way, there are countries which are infinitely mentally advanced. These countries are not, however, happy or peaceful. They only appear to be happy and peaceful. The reason for this is that their material and mental advancement is not based on intellectual development, but on the progress of knowledge.

Intellectual advancement is related to the khandha (body) and the dhamma (the teaching of the Buddha). Therefore, knowing by intellect is called knowing by the khandha or by the dhamma. Progress of knowledge is related to external things or literature (learning). This is called knowledge gained through learning.

In the Chapter on Verañja of the Pārajika Pāli text, when the Venerable Sariputta requested the Buddha to prescribe laws for the monks, the Buddha replied:

“Wait, Sariputta! In my teaching (sāsana) so long as there are not many learned monks, there will not be impurities. In truth, the growth of learning is the cause for the arising of moral intoxicants (Āsavas).”

For this reason, the growth of learning is the cause for the growth of moral intoxicants. The growth of the intellect is the cause for the diminishing of moral intoxicants.

If the growth of learning cannot be converted into the growth of the intellect, the material and mental progress of the loka cannot make the loka a pleasant and peaceful place in any way.

That is the reason why it is said that making efforts for the material progress is going to one extreme and making efforts for the mental progress is going to another extreme.

In truth, only the ‘knowing’ which can get rid of duccaritas (evil deeds) and kilesas (defilements) is called paññā (wisdom)

If it is real paññā, it can certainly exterminate kilesas and duccaritas.

A really intellectual person would, in whatever work he does, not aim at self-benefit. His chief aim would be for the good of the loka. Not aiming at self-benefit is the symbol of compassion (karuṇā). One who knows how to love the loka and to have compassion upon the loka more than himself is one who understands compassion. Real understanding of compassion is half the strength needed for performing deeds of Pāramīs.

The other half of the strength will be attained by placing the welfare of the loka first. Placing first the welfare of the loka, instead of his own welfare, is to state briefly, the ability to uproot greed (lobha). Only by uprooting greed will he be able to work primarily for the welfare of the world, instead of his own welfare. Uprooting greed is the symbol of wisdom (paññā). In truth, one who conquers greed, conquers the loka. Therefore, Pāramīs can only be fulfilled based on karuṇā (compassion) and paññā (wisdom)

‘Rasa’ of working for Loka Welfare

When one really has compassion (karuṇā), he finds enjoyment (rasa) in performing deeds for the welfare of beings in the loka. When he really has wisdom (paññā), he finds enjoyment (rasa) in performing deeds for the supramundane welfare of beings in the loka. Only when he can work both for the loka (worldly) welfare and lokuttara (supramundane) welfare of beings in the loka, can he become a really noble person.

When we look at our surroundings, we see many beings including many men. This is what normal persons see. When they look at the loka, they will see the same. When they see thus, affection, hatred, bewilderment, etc. will arise in their minds.

Then, when they work for the welfare of beings, they will not be able to have a uniform mind. When they look at the loka to work for its welfare, they should not try to see only the ‘many’ but should look at and see only the ‘one’. They should get beyond the bounds. Getting beyond the bounds and looking at and seeing the boundless is the way the noble ones look and see. In truth, to the noble ones ‘quantity’ is of no importance; only ‘quality’ matters.

Therefore, in looking at the world, it is necessary not to see the ‘many ’ but to see only the ‘one ’.

When the world is looked at for the performance of deeds for the welfare of both the loka and the supramundane world, ordinary people will see beings as Chinese, Indians, Englishmen, Myanmar, and so on according to their nationalities. Such seeing is called ‘Vibhatta’ (distinguishing). There is another stage beyond this where one sees them only as man (not as distinct nationalities). Such seeing is called ‘Avibhatta’ (not distinguishing). The noble ones strive to see beyond the ‘Vibhatta’ stage to the ‘Avibhatta’ stage and perform their deeds. Only by doing so, will the loka become a happy and peaceful place.

In the surroundings there are rich men, poor men, prime ministers, office boys and so on. Normal persons see them discriminately only as such. Seeing in this way is called ‘Visesa’ (discriminately). Beyond this stage, there is the seeing (generally) as of one kind, which is called ‘Samaññā’ (generally). Therefore, the noble ones in working for the welfare of the loka strive to get beyond the stage of seeing discriminately ‘Visesa’ and to see generally as ‘Samaññā’. This is called Pāramī.

Virodhi and Avirodhi

In this loka, there are different beliefs and views among the people according to their instinct and natural inclination. They are called Virodhi, meaning opposition to or inconsistency with their surroundings. They see only unsatisfactoriness, faults, evil, hateful things, things that arouse indignation.

They do not see ‘Avirodhi’ (non-opposition), satisfactoriness, moral virtues, goodness, loveliness, desirability. In truth, every one in the loka has the nature of contentment, congeniality, moral virtues, goodness, loveliness, desirability. Therefore, to work for the welfare of the loka, it is necessary for the noble ones to get beyond ‘Virodhi’ and see ‘Avirodhi’.

Only when they can see Avirodhi, will their deeds become deeds for the fulfilment of Pāramīs. Otherwise, their deeds will be devoid of ‘vital force’. It would be better if it can be an asankhārika (unconditioned) deed.

All are saṃsarā travellers.

There are differences and dissimilarities among human beings in the loka. They are called 'bheda '. According to this nature, though there are an asankheyya (innumerable or uncountable) number of human beings, no two of them are exactly alike; they are different in every way. They differ in their karmas (deeds), in knowledge (ñāṇa), in fortunes, in conduct (carita), in natural inclination. They are, however, alike or the same in some ways.

They are all fellow-travellers of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). They are also victims of the round of rebirths. This likeness or similarity is called 'abheda'. Though there are differences and dissimilarities as well as likeness and similarities, ordinary human beings see and look at only the differences and dissimilarities.

Only the noble ones can see the likeness and similarities. In doing so, it is necessary to perceive them well. Then only will one be able to perform deeds that amount to Pāramīs.

Therefore, if human beings want to work for the welfare of the loka, as noble ones, they should endeavour —

- to get beyond the stage of seeing 'many' to the stage of seeing only 'one';
- to get beyond seeing only the bounded stage to the stage of seeing the boundlessness;
- to get beyond seeing the Vibhatta stage to the stage of seeing 'Avibhatta';
- to get beyond the stage of 'Visesa' to the stage of seeing 'Sāmañña';
- to get beyond seeing; 'Virodhi' stage to the stage of seeing 'Avirodhi' and
- to get beyond the stage of seeing 'Bheda' to the stage of seeing 'Abeda'

Then only, will their deeds bring real benefits to the loka. Only when there are real benefits, will the world be rid of evil practices (duccaritas) and can good practices (sucaritas) and puñṇakiriyas (meritorious deeds) take their place. Then the world will become a pleasant and peaceful place in every way and will become a pleasurable abode for human beings to dwell in.

Arising of ‘knowing’

With reference to the arising of ‘knowing’, all ‘knowing’ in this loka are not really independent (not free from the influence or control by some dhammas). In truth, ‘knowing’ is the name of ‘Javana’ consciousness, which is the same as ‘kamma viññāṇa’. ‘Kamma viññāṇa’ is kamma bhava which arises on account of upādāna (Upādāna paccaya bhavo). Therefore, all worldly ‘knowing’ is controlled and influenced by upādāna (attachment, clinging). It cannot know independently by itself.

Of the four kinds of upādānas, the surroundings also control and influence ‘knowing’. The surrounding are ‘kāmapādāna’. According to the Piṭakas, all the five sense-objects (visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes and touches) are kāmas and the surroundings are these five sense objects. Therefore, kāmapādāna is taken as surroundings.

When those who have been brought up among fishermen have to decide on a sense-object, they decide it in the way of a fisherman. When those who have been brought up among traders have to decide on a sense-object, they decide it in the way of a trader. Likewise, when those who have been brought up in other surroundings have to decide on a sense-object, they decide under the control and influence of the respective surroundings in which they have been brought up. Therefore, although it is the same sense-object, if the surroundings are different, the decisions of those who have been brought up in different surroundings will differ according to their surroundings. For this reason, if a sound decision is called for, efforts should be made to develop good surroundings.

To achieve correct ‘knowing’, not only the surroundings are important but the modern view of the surrounding are also vital, because it is one of the four upādānas called diṭṭhupādāna. Special efforts should, therefore, be made to create this diṭṭhupādāna. It may be defined as attachment or clinging to thinking and views.

It can be divided into two types as the thinking and views of literary surroundings of that age and the thinking and views of non-literary surroundings. Of these two, the thinking and views of literary surroundings are more important. The thinking and views of the non-literary surroundings cannot produce a

homogeneous thinking and view. As they themselves have grown up in the different surroundings, they cannot have uniformity in their thinking and views according to their social classes.

Literary age

The view of literary age is very important and is prescribed as vital. If a reader is attached to the works of writers who hold similar views as himself, the views of those writers will greatly overwhelm the reader. As the result, his decisions on problems confronting him will not be independent. They will be tainted with the thinking and views he has absorbed from the books of those writers. It is the influence of 'kāmapādāna'.

The reason is that the kāmapādāna which is governing his unconscious mind is exerting pressure on his conscious mind.

Though he is solving problems with the backing of the unconscious mind 'ditṭhupādāna', he is under the impression that he is doing it freely on his own, so discreet is the unconscious mind in its disguise. However, all the worldlings bear such a wrong view and we should not blame them for this.

Power of Unconscious Mind

In fact, all the physical, verbal and mental actions of the people at the present day are done depending on their experiences of life. Those experiences are now no more. They have ceased. Though they have ceased, they have not yet disappeared altogether. They are constantly following them like a shadow.

The Dhammapada explains it as 'Sāyāva Anupāyini'. These experiences, therefore, are called 'unconscious minds' and in Pāli they are called 'Upādāna'. In reality, people do not know what upādānas they have in them. Though they are ignorant of them, the upādānas are exerting their influence in their thinking, knowing or deciding. That is the reason why the consciousness (knowing mind) of the people are acting and knowing according to the dictates of the upādānas.

On account of this, according to the Buddha's teaching, we have to extinguish upādānas so that we might know the sense-objects we are presently faced with, rightly, truly and correctly as they really are. Only when we have no upādānas, can we know the sense objects correctly. When we have no upādānas to some

extent, to that extent we know the sense-objects correctly. When we have no upādānas to a great extent, we know the sense-objects to that extent. When we are rid of upādānas totally, we know correctly the sense-objects totally. That is the reason why the people of the loka need have wholesome upādānas to work successfully for the welfare of the loka. Only when we have wholesome upādānas, will we be able to relinquish self-interest as much as we can and work for the welfare of the loka.

Good friends and associates

Out of the four upādāna, special care should be taken of diṭṭhupadana in practice. Upādāna (attachment, clinging) comes to us from our friends and associates and from books we read. For this reason, we should carefully choose our friends and associates. It is necessary that they should be virtuous ones (kalyāṇa mitta). They should be able to give up their self-interests as much as they can, because then only, can we have noble views and do noble deeds. The Buddha told Venerable Ananda that if one could get a really true friend (kalyāṇa mitta), whatever he did would be accomplished because of (the help) of that true friend.

The same must be said about the need for reading really good literature and books. The thinking and the views of the writers overwhelm and influence those of the readers. It is, therefore, essential that the books one reads should be capable of imparting right thinking and views to the reader. Such books are those that show the right and the good old ways, not the short-cuts or by-ways and by-paths, as ‘Esa dhammo sanantano’. It says that only the dhammas which were practised in the past and which will continue to be practised in the future by generations of the noble ones headed by successive Buddhas are the right and the good dhammas. For this reason only the books which direct the reader to the dhammas should be called good books(literature).

To reach the right goal

To acquire the right knowledge, one should follow the old, the simple and the right path paved by the dhamma and kalyāṇa mitta (true friends) and get to the correct goal. The correct goal means the ability to work for the welfare of the loka (bahujana hita) and for the happiness of the loka (bahujana sukha).

If, however, one has followed the path paved by literature and ideologies which ignore the dhamma, one would find oneself

occupied with deeds for one's own welfare (attahita) and happiness (atta sukha). In fact, these personages are, by their original aims and by their original attitude, the ones who have decided at the sacrifice of their lives, to work for the welfare of their nation and their country.

But they fail to realize that they have sacrificed their lives and worked for their own welfare. As the result they are actually sacrificing their nation and their country, and are working for their own welfare.

In the happenings of the world, there are two parts. They are the part of the effort made and the part of what really happens in practice. The first part concerns the group of causes and prescribes personal effort (puggala byāpāra). The second part concerns the group of results and prescribes dhamma.

For example, a marksman can handle the gun in any way he likes. He can also load it and take aim in any way he likes. In this part personal effort is prescribed according to one's fancy. However, when the trigger is pressed and the bullet once goes off, it goes in conformity with the unified actions of the original causes. It does now follow the wish of the marksman. Though the bullet which has left the barrel of the gun may go according to the wish of the marksman, his personal effort (puggala byāpāra) will have no effect whatever on the bullet.

There are a group of causes in the efforts part and a group of causes also in the results part. However, in the efforts part the causes are grouped as a mixture like that of paddy and rice while those in the results part the causes are grouped as a compound. The group of causes in the efforts part is called "Samyoga sambandha" (mixture). It is related to atta. The group of causes in the results part is called Samavāya sambandha (compound). It is related to anatta.

Therefore, the happenings in the loka are dependent on the mixture of causes according to anatta nature. It does not depend on the personal effort (puggala byāpāra) which arises according to the wish of the person concerned.

Therefore, if one wants to attain the result that one hopes for, one should correctly choose the cause that will fulfil his wish; otherwise he will not attain the result which is commensurate with the cause.

Need for correctness and completeness of causes

As each and everybody has the responsibility to work for the welfare of the loka, the people should be able to choose correct and adequate causes so that their efforts will be successful. In choosing them, only literature, especially the Piṭakas taught by the Buddha, can give them the foundation for the attainment of right thinking, right view, right knowledge and right decision. The Piṭakas teach courses of practices to be taken up in the progressive order. They do not provide any short-cuts. Paññā (knowledge) takes the lead in every undertaking. This cannot be disputed.

There being, however, various ways for the attainment of paññā (knowledge), it is disputable.

According to the Piṭakas, right knowledge (paññā) arises out of pure samādhi (mental concentration). This is called Citta Visuddhi, purity of the mind.

Purity of mind arises out of purity of moral conduct, which is called Sīla Visuddhi (purity of morality).

According to this practice, without first practising to attain purity of morality (Sīla Visuddhi), one cannot practise to attain purity of mind. Even if one claims to have attained it, the Samādhi thus attained is not sammā samādhi (true mental concentration); it will only be miccha (evil) Samādhi.. If it is miccha samādhi, how can one have purity of mind?

How can it be possible, therefore, for knowledge built on miccha samādhi to become sammā diṭṭhi?

That is the reason why for the attainment of sammā samādhi (right mental concentration) and sammā diṭṭhi (right view), it is necessary to lay the foundation by striving to have pure moral conduct.

Then only can one who has been born as a human being, which is a most difficult thing to do, discharge his responsibilities as man with dignity and morality. Otherwise, the evil instinct which always wants to have the upper hand in everything will constantly dominate.

Worldly affluence and prosperity and worldly happiness can only be built upon right action (sammākammanta), right speech (sammāvācā) and right livelihood (sammā ajīva). These three practices are called the three constituents dealing with

morality (Sīla) of the eight constituents of the Noble Truth of the Path (Magga) which are included in the Majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle way).

When one practises right action (sammā kammanta), one becomes free from three kāya duccaritas (evil conduct). When one practises right speech (sammā vācā), one is free from four vaci duccaritas (evil speech). When one practises right livelihood (sammā ājīva) one is free from wrong ways of earning livelihood rooted in evil.

Then the loka would be free from evil (duccaritas). When the loka is free from evil, wrong ways of earning livelihood rooted in evil will not arise. When wrong ways of earning livelihood do not arise, there will not be any more exploitation and profiteering. Then, as sucarita dhammas come to take the place of duccarita dhammas how peaceful the loka will become?

The foundation only Buddhist literature has

To attain real peace in the loka, majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle path) principle should be adopted and practised as the foundation for any undertaking. Then only can the undertaking bring about peace and happiness in the loka. The middle path principle is found only in the Buddhist literature. That is the reason why the Buddhist literature is the true friend (kalyāṇa mitta) of all. As the Buddha preached Venerable Ānanda in Upaddha Sutta of Aṅguttara Pāḷi text, it can bear all kinds of good results.

In truth, even the Buddha, in his relations with the loka, did not take an overbearing attitude. He treated himself as the kalyāṇa mitta, the true friend of the loka.

If, therefore, one is a true friend (kalyāṇa mitta), he can give guidance for the welfare of the loka (lokiya) and of the supramundane (lokuttara) world.

That is the reason why in 'Upādāna pacaya bhavo' (Bhava is conditioned by upādāna, clinging), not only a living being can be kalyāṇa mitta by the arising in him of knowledge according to kamma bhava, the literature one reads and studies can, also be one's true friend 'kalyāṇa mitta'. In truth, not only living beings can be kalyāṇa mitta, but the literature we read and study can also be kalyāṇa mitta. If, therefore, the literature one reads really has

the nature the kalyāṇa mitta, one will reap not only lokiya benefits but also lokuttara benefits. There is no doubt about it. It is, therefore, necessary to select and read only good literature for our guidance in life. Then adopting the majjhimapaṭipadā principle as one's ideology, lay the foundation. When this foundation gets firm and stable, it will not matter whatever kind of literature one reads for the building of the upper structure. One must go on reading and studying. All the upper structures should be in conformity with the foundation, otherwise they will just collapse. It does not matter.

Mind not overwhelmed by atta

Viññānakkhandā (the aggregate of consciousness) is one of the five khandhas (aggregates) which constitute the body. Viññānakkhandā is the mind. Ekaṅguttara Pāli text states: ‘Pabhassaramidaṃ bhikkhave cittaṃ āgantukehi upakkilesehi upakkiliṭṭhaṃ’. It means that the mind has a bright colour; it is clean and pure. This is the original nature of the mind.

However, though people should keep their minds pure, as they, by nature, are, they sometimes become treacherous and crooked because they are oppressed by the visitor atta.

If not oppressed by atta, the minds of the people will remain, by nature, pure and noble. The ‘pure and noble’ mind means the desire to sacrifice their lives and work for the welfare of the loka.

As the saying goes in Myanmar, ‘Covered by clouds, the moon shines not’, the original minds of the people want to sacrifice their lives for the good of the loka, have compassion upon the loka as much as upon oneself, and sometimes leaving oneself aside, see only the loka. Such a noble attitude, however, does not last long and is not stable. Atta (self) on which nīvaraṇas (hindrances), such as kāmācchāndhas (sensual desires) and kilesas (defilements), that as lobha, māna, etc., centre, covers up wholesome minds. Then the self and the loka fall apart.

At the time the original nature of the mind dominates, the self and the loka are one. The well being of the loka and the well being of the self are one and the same.

All the three lokas (human world, deva world and the brahma world) are basically suññata (void, empty). There is no difference whatever. Mathematically, ‘suññata’ is ‘nil’, it is nothing, it has no quantity. Qualitatively, it is everything; all

additions and subtractions have to base on 'suñña'. In the same way, the three lokas (worlds) have to centre on 'Suññata'. There is no difference whatsoever. When, however, kilesas (defilements) come in, the 'loka' and 'self' fall apart.

The well being of the 'loka' is separated from that of the 'self'. The 'loka' and the 'self' are seen separately. When the two are seen separately, the deeds done for their well being are also separated.

When deeds done for well being are thus carried out separately, the nature of the original mind and that of the mind associated with defilements (kilesas) vie with one another. As the result, while pretending to work for the general welfare, they concentrate on their own welfare.

As their lips chant dhammas, their hands commit adhamma (evil) deeds. Dhammas and adhammas struggle in their minds for supremacy. In this struggle the dhammas which have upward going nature are slow while adhammas which have downward going nature are swift. To accelerate the dhammas, new energy needs to be added. This can be done by taking refuge in the Three Ratanās (the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha).

The correct aim in doing this should not be to acquire new energy in oneself for one's own good. It should be to acquire new energy in oneself for the good of the loka. The new energy to be added to the dhammas is the practice of metta, karuṇā, mudita and upekkha which are called 'Brahmacora dhammas'. They are the dhammas which can turn human beings, while they are still living, into Brahmas.

If human beings do really practise the Brahmacora dhammas, they can become Brahmās while they are still living.

Firm Foundation is essential

The Brahmacora dhammas belong to the group which has an upward going nature. They have, therefore, to be practised whether one does not want to or not. Lobha (greed), māna (pride) and other kilesa dhammas belong to the adhamma group which has a downward going nature. Therefore, one does not have to practise it if he does not want to and even if he wants to practise, he does not have to do it. So, it is not at all easy to accomplish adhamma deed which one has to do whether one wants to or not. In the same way, it is not easy to restrain one's mind from doing

an adhamma deed which one has not got to do whether one does not want to or whether he wants to. It is not easy also to control oneself after one has already committed a deed mentally so that his action does not get beyond it lest it might become verbal and physical action. One will not be able to achieve it unless one has a firm and stable foundation. For this reason, efforts must be made to lay a firm foundation. If the foundation is not firm and stable, one will waver.

Karuṇā and Paññā

In working for the welfare of the loka, there is no force as powerful as compassion (muditā) and in working for the welfare of the supramundane (lokuttara) world, there is no force as powerful as paññā (wisdom), it is said. According to it, we should strive to have compassion and wisdom to dwell in us.

That is the reason why the Buddha had striven for both compassion and wisdom to dwell in him and he had been able to work for the welfare of both the loka and the lokuttara (supramundane) world.

Two kinds of inclination (vāsanā)

There are two kinds of natural inclination in man. One is called impure inclination and the other is called pure inclination. The dassana books called impure inclination as ‘malina vāsanā’ and pure inclination as ‘suddha vāsanā’.

Efforts should therefore be made to diminish impure inclination and to develop pure inclination. The impure inclination is the desire to work only for one’s own welfare without sacrifice or without sacrifice and looking for gain. Not realizing that one’s welfare is connected with that of the loka is the origin of impure inclination.

The pure inclination is the desire to work for the welfare of the loka at the sacrifice of one’s own welfare. This is called the fulfilling of pāramī. For this reason, hermit Sumedha (the Bodhisatta) let go the bliss of Nibbāna which was within his reach at that time and underwent the dukkha of the round of rebirths (saṃsarā) for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds for the sake of the veneyyas (beings to be converted).

This was the developing of pure inclination. He was able to achieve it because his entire person was imbued with immeas-

urable compassion (karuṇā) which is one of the four Brahmācārya dhammas. When one nourishes karuṇā in his person, he is nourishing the remaining three Brahmācārya dhammas also.

When one nourishes the Brahmācārya dhammas in his person, through he is a human being, he is no more like one. He assumes the character of a Brahma. Through he and the Brahma differ in appearance, they become so much alike in character that they seem to be of one piece. This is called the result of puñña sambhāra (accumulation of merits).

Two basic Causes

The accomplishment of any undertaking needs two basic factors. One is called puñña sambhāra and the other is called ñāṇa sambhāra. (accumulation of knowledge).

Puñña sambhāra is translated as edifice of merits (kusalas) and ñāṇa sambhāra as edifice of knowledge (ñāṇa)

Of these two. puñña sambhāra helps mainly in the purification of moral conduct while ñāṇa sambhāra helps mainly in the development of knowledge.

In the attribute of 'Vijja Carāṇa sampaññā' (the possessing of supreme knowledge and the perfect practice of morality) of the Buddha 'puñña sambhāra' is embraced in Carāṇa and 'ñāṇa sambhāra' is embraced in Vijjā.

Therefore, the apex of 'puñña sambhāra' is 'Bhagavā' (most Exalted) and ñāṇa sambhāra is 'Sammā sambuddha' (who truly comprehends dhammas by his own intellect and insight).

In this world 'man of intelligence and morality' means a man who has both wisdom and moral character. If he is deficient in either of these two qualities, he is not called by that name. A man who has morality is said to have glory, which is another name of puñña sambhāra. Therefore, to acquire glory, one has to fulfil Pāramīs.

In truth, one who is abundantly endowed with glory and intelligence will excel others. The more abundantly he is endowed, the more will he excel others. That is the reason why the Buddha who is endowed with both the sambhāras and has attained the loftiest position is called 'Atula', the peerless in the three worlds.

Unlikeness and Likeness

Just as causes and effects are different according to the law of nature, there are ‘unlikenesses’ and ‘likenesses’ in the world. ‘Unlikeness’ is called ‘bheda’ and likeness is called ‘abheda’. These two characteristics are attained before one has fulfilled Pāramīs. After the attainment of the Pāramīs, one attains a characteristic which surpasses those two. It is called in Pāli ‘bhedābhedātita’ (bheda + abheda + ahita). This characteristic means that it surpasses both ‘unlikeness’ and ‘likeness’.

Three Characteristics

These three characteristics have their base in ‘bhedābhedātita’ which surpasses both ‘unlikeness’ and ‘likeness’. These three characteristics are found both in the animate and inanimate spheres. If one understands the three characteristics of the ultimate truth (paramattha dhammas) in the inanimate sphere, one also understands the three characteristics of the sammuti dhammas (dhammas accepted by general consent). For this reason, the three characteristics of the paramattha dhammas are mentioned here. Each of the Paramattha dhammas possesses its own characteristics.

Pathavī possesses the nature of hardness; phassa possesses the nature of touch or contact. It is the same with the other paramattha dhammas. As regards human beings among animate beings, they each have their individual characteristics, such as Maung Ba and Maung Hla, Ma Mya and Ma Hla, Maung Ba and Ma Hla. Though all are human beings, men and women are different. Though men are all alike as men, one man differs from another; though women are all alike as women, they are different from one another. Likewise, all other animate beings are different from one another. Both in the animate and inanimate spheres, this nature of difference from one another exists. It is called ‘bheda’ and in vipassana language ‘visesa lakkhaṇā’, distinctive characteristic.

There is not only the nature of ‘unlikeness’ in both animates and inanimate spheres, but there is also the nature of ‘likeness’. With regard to ‘people, though Indians, Myanmar, Chinese, etc. are different by nationality, they are all alike as people.

With regard to animals, they are different as dogs, cats, cows, etc. which are not alike, but they are all alike as animals.

Though people and animals are not of the same kind, they are all alike as animate things.

With regard to unanimate things, gold, silver, diamonds, etc. are not alike but they are all alike as matter. This characteristic of 'likeness' is called 'abheda'. In Vipassanā, it is called 'samañña lakkhana' (general characteristic). In truth, a special characteristic has to be built on samañña lakkhaṇās (general characteristics).

Therefore, samañña characteristic has greater significance than visesa lakkhaṇā (distinctive characteristic).

In as much as samañña lakkhaṇā has greater significance than visesa lakkhaṇā, it has a higher value in the sphere of 'likeness'. This will be clearer if it is explained in vipassanā terms. The insight which perceives the visesa lakkhaṇā of the paramattha dhamma is not a vipassanāñāṇa. It is, therefore, of inferior grade.

The insight which perceives the samañña lakkhaṇā only is the vipassanāñāṇa. It is of a higher grade.

This is an adequate proof that the knowledge that knows the 'likeness' is superior to that which knows the 'unlikeness'. With regard to people, knowing them by their general characteristic (samañña) as just 'people' is superior to knowing them by their distinctive characteristic (visesa) as Chinese, Indian, Myanmar, women, men, etc.

That is the reason why those who wish to become noble ones try to gain the knowledge of 'likeness' (abheda) rather than the knowledge of 'unlikeness' (bheda). They will become noble ones in proportion to the effort they make in this regard.

There is still another 'knowing' which is superior to both of the above, the knowing of 'likeness' and of 'unlikeness'. It is, according to vipassana language, the knowing (perception) of Nibbāna.

The natures of 'likeness' and 'unlikeness' do not exist in the sankhata paramattha sphere where objects may be compared. Nibbāna is asankhata paramattha. It is, therefore, said that the knowing (perception) of Nibbāna surpasses the knowing of 'likeness' and 'unlikeness'.

The perception of Nibbāna is called the perception of the characteristics of ‘santi’ (tranquillity, peace). Of the three types of characteristics, ‘Santi’ characteristic is the highest.

The Secret

The Indian dassana books call it Rahassa (secret, private). In this loka, everything has its secret. With regard to hearing, the unheard voice is of greater interest, has a deeper meaning and is more secretive. People talk more with the voice that is not heard than with the voice that is heard. Therefore, if the voice that is not heard can be understood, the speaker’s secret will be known. If his secret is known, everything about him will be known. In truth, by just knowing the voice that is heard, one cannot know everything about the speaker. In the same way, regarding visible things in this loka, things that are invisible are of greater interest, have a deeper meaning and are more secretive than those than are visible.

With regard to animate and inanimate things in this loka, more is spoken and written about invisible things than about visible things. If, therefore, one can see the invisible things, one will know their secrets. When one knows about their secrets, one knows everything about them. In truth, by just seeing the visible things, one cannot know all about them. It is the truth. It is indisputable.

If one hear the voices of animate and inanimate things which are unheard or if one sees the invisible things which are not seen, one will come to know the secret of Saṅkhāra (conditioned and compounded) dhamma. Here, the secret of Saṅkhāra Dhamma is Nibbāna.

Therefore, if only Nibbāna is actually and practically perceived, because Nibbāna is the lokuttara dhamma that surpasses loka (world), then there will be no more secrets about loka. The secrets of loka will be exposed.

Two dhammas to be practised to know the secret

If, therefore, one wishes to know the secret of everything in the loka, one has to practise both the two sambhāra dhammas, pūñña sambhāra and ñāṇa sambhāra - - as much as possible. As much as he has practised them, he will know more and more about the loka.

In truth, according to the nature of vijjā niyāma ‘Andhi bhūto ayam loko’, the loka is like a mass of darkness, like the dark night. Bhava (existence, life) is like a dream. Man is like one asleep.

So the life of a brahma is also like a dream. The life of a deva is also like a dream. Man’s life and an animal’s lives are also like a dream. All happenings in the world are like a dream. They are not real. As they are not real, there is nothing to long for, to mourn for, to be attached to, to be angry with. In spite of it, people long for it, mourn for it, are attached to it, are angry with it. That dream is so powerful.

However, according to ‘Aloko Udapādi’, the loka (world) will continue to remain in darkness like night (Avijja niyāma) until the coming of dawn and light. The people will continue to be asleep and will continue to dream. The dreams of life will go on till it dawns and the time arrives to wake up. In truth, as it usually happens in dreams, they do not think it is a dream though they are dreaming. They think it really happens. Only when they wake up will they know, ‘It’s nothing but a dream.’ Before they wake up they will not know it in any way. Until they know, they endeavour to make things happen as they want (attaniyāma), but bhava (life) takes its own course (anatta niyāma).

In a dream, things happen as they like,. One can fly in the sky or walk on water. In the same way, one can kill one’s father and become king, or one can be a multi-millionaire by doing wicked deeds. Those in authority can order who should do how, what should be the decision in a case, and so on. A truly virtuous person can turn into an evil one before the people. These things happen because the wiles of ignorance (avijjā māya) are mistaken for the truth of wisdom (vijjā sacca). In truth, the real happenings of life are just like a dream to the people. The others are nothing; oneself is also nothing. But they have no such realization. The world of darkness really needs noble ones who can make the loka realize this.

Light of Dawn and Light of Magga

In accordance with ‘Aloko udapādi’, only when the light of dawn called Nibbāna is seen through the eye called Magga insight and one wakes up, will he come to realize that what he knows about life is nothing but a dream. To gain such a realization, one has to wake up from sleep. To do so it is necessary

to strive to attain both puññā sambhāra and ñāṇa sambhāra and such effort is called the fulfilment of pāramī. The fulfilment of pāramī for human beings is the discharging of their obligation to the loka. It is nothing strange. Among those who fulfil Pāramīs, Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, is the most outstanding. As he fulfilled more and more Pāramīs, the Bodhisatta's visesa, samañña and santi lakkaṇās (characteristics) become more and more plain.

Siddhattha of all the world

Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, was the Siddhattha of the Sakyas. He belonged to the Sakyas only. If he worked for the welfare of the Sakyas, his duty was done. For this reason, the Sakyas wanted him to become a universal monarch. If he became a universal monarch, the Sakyas would become immensely famous not only in Central India but also all over the whole universe. This would be the nature and characteristic of visesa.

It would be the least benefit the Bodhisatta would gain by doing his best for the good of the loka without paying attention to his own welfare. But the Bodhisatta prince had not sacrificed himself and had not fulfilled Pāramīs for four asankheyyas and one hundred thousand worlds aiming only that much. He had fulfilled Pāramīs to be the Siddhattha of all human beings of the loka, and then of all beings, devas and brahmas.

For the whole of four asankheyyas and one hundred thousand worlds, he had made sacrifices and renounced his wealth and riches, given away his limbs and life. Here the becoming of the Siddhattha of the peoples of the world is the gaining of santi lakkaṇā.

He gained it from the time he attained Sabbaññutta ñāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) on the Aparājita throne under the Bodhi Tree and became the peerless leader of the three worlds.

In truth, santi lakkaṇā not only embraces visesa lakkaṇā but also surpasses it. So the Buddha can be called a Sakya prince as he has visesa lakkaṇā. As he surpasses visesa lakkaṇā, it can be said that he is not a Sakya prince but 'peerless'. When the Buddha went round Kapilavattu to collect almsfood, he explained to his father King Suddhodana that he did not belong to Mahāsammata Sakyavamsa khattiya clan but to the line of the Buddhas.

Besides, Santi lakkhaṇā embraces not only samañña lakkhaṇā but also surpasses it. Therefore, it might be said that the Buddha is a human being because he has samañña lakkhaṇā and he might also be called peerless because he surpasses samañña lakkhaṇā.

In reality, the Buddha possesses santi lakkhaṇā which surpasses both visesa and samanna lakkhanas.

Therefore, the Buddha is called 'atula'(peerless), the noblest of all beings 'aggapuggala' in the Piṭakas. According to the Hattipadopama Sutta, the footprints of all animals are contained in the footprint of the elephant. In like manner, the lineages of all human beings, devas and brahmas are contained in the Buddha's. This is called in Pāli, 'Bheda-bhedatika'.

Therefore, the Buddha is regarded by the brahmas as lord of their brahma kings, by the devas as lord of their deva kings, by the human beings as lord of their human kings, by the animals as lord of their animal kings. They are all attached to him, they hold him in great reverence.

Because of this attachment and reverence to him, they regard his teachings (dhammas) highly. As they regard his teachings highly, whoever hears them, even the lowest of beings, such as birds and animals gain great benefits. Some gain insights into the four Ariya Truths, some gain merits of pāramī, some gain ordinary kāmavacara merits, according to their Pāramīs, births and moral qualities. This is because of the help they receive from the Buddha's santi lakkhaṇā. As such, who can, other than the Buddha, gain the benefits of santi lakkhaṇā in this world?

In fact, according to the nature of dhamma, the results or benefits attained by striving for them with pure and noble volition, without wishing for them, are immeasurably greater than those attained by striving for them because one wants them.

Nature of Pāramī Merits

According to the law of nature (dhamma niyāma), those who want more get less and those who want less get more even though equal effort is made. The reason is that when one strives to get something, he is motivated by greed 'lobha'. When one strives not for gain, he has no motive (that is he is not motivated by lobha). That is his action is based on alobha (non-greed).

If a deed is based on greed, it is motivated by the desire to gain vaṭṭa sukha (happiness of the round of rebirths). If a deed is based on non-greed (alobha), it is motivated by the desire to gain vivaṭṭa sukha (happiness of the liberation from the round of rebirths). Desire for Vaṭṭa sukha is not pāramī kusala (meritorious deed of pāramī); it is just an ordinary deed of merit. Only desire for Vivaṭṭa sukha is pāramī kusala deed.

In practice, the Myanmars see the Buddha as a Myanmar and revere him as a Myanmar. The Chinese see the Buddha as a Chinese and revere him as a Chinese. The Indians see the Buddha as an Indian and revere him as an Indian. The English, the Tibetans and other nationalities also see the Buddha as one of their nationals and revere him as such. That is the result of the Buddha's santi lakkhaṇā.

Such a result can only be achieved by the merit of pāramī. It cannot be achieved by the merit of rūpāvacara or arūpāvacara deeds of merit. Merits of pāramī are not merits gained by kings of human beings, kings of devas, kings of brahmas, universal monarchs who try to possess the world for their own sake. It is the kind of merit gained by sacrificing oneself for the sake of the world, including the lowest unimportant classes of people. This merit is as great as the results arising out of it are enormous.

Though the results are so enormous, human beings do not perform it because they are influenced by papañca dhammas of taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi which are camouflaged by the wiles of ignorance (avijja) so that they cannot perceive truth as truth.

When taṇhā (craving) arises in one, one becomes attached to everything one sees. When māna arises in one, one becomes arrogant and proud. When diṭṭhi arises in one, one severely oppresses all those one thinks to be one's opponents till they cannot hold up their heads (till they are thoroughly subdued).

Then, one will say, 'Idameva saccam mogha maññaṃ'. It means, 'Only this is the right action; if it is not done so, it will be most wrong'.

Ariya Sacca cannot be realized without going through life

'Life is but a dream.' This is the view of a person who has waken up from the slumber of avijjā (ignorance) and has attained Ariya insight. When looked at from the point of view of a worldling who has not yet waken up from the slumber of avijja,

life is an invaluable treasure. Just as there cannot be a dream without sleeping, there cannot be life (bhava) without avijja (ignorance). We cannot dream of life if there were no life. That is the reason why the ariyas who see life only as a dream are those who have gone through life.

If they have not gained the ariya insight, they would not have waken from the slumber of ignorance. Therefore, it is said that life is an invaluable treasure for those worldlings who have not yet waken up from the slumber of ignorance.

In truth, among existences, that of a human being is a much more invaluable treasure because as the saying 'Manussata bhava dullabho' goes, it is one of the most difficult things to be born as a human being. In spite of this knowledge, human beings regard only their own lives as invaluable treasure and have no regard at all for the lives of the other beings. On account of this, the Buddha has taught that the life of everyone should be regarded as an invaluable treasure in connection with falling into the slumber of ignorance and awakening. He explained it from all points of view.

To all the worldlings who have not yet waken up from the slumber of ignorance, their life is the most lovable and valuable treasure. Therefore, every worldling loves and values his own life, loves and values his own family, loves and values his own race, loves and values his own country because he believes that they are connected with his life.

If, however, he believes his family, his race and his country have nothing to do with his life, he will love only his life, and nobody and nothing else. That is the reason why the Buddha has taught 'Atta samam pemam natti', which means there is nothing else in the world a person can love as much as himself.

Therefore, it is not necessary to mention that the worldlings love themselves best. For those who love themselves excessively, that is as far as they will go. They have no one else to share their love. With regard to those who are not so selfish and self-centred, they also love all those connected with their lives. To say the least, it is evident that everybody loves himself and there is no doubt about it.

However, by nature, human beings want, based on self-love, to be free and independent. Independence is called 'mokkha'. It is really the name of Nibbāna. Therefore, a human being wants

to be independent throughout his round of rebirths till he attains Nibbāna.

Besides, he wants to live for ever. He does not want to die. Death is called ‘amata’, which is the name of Nibbāna. For this reason, he does not want to die but wants to live throughout the saṃsarā till he gains Nibbāna.

Besides, he wants to have a ‘refuge’ or ‘protection’ which is called ‘saraṇa’, which is another name of Nibbāna. That is he wants to have refuge or protection throughout the saṃsarā till he gains Nibbāna. This is the inborn (bija) desire of beings arising out of their attachment to life.

Looking for refuge

Of the three kinds of inborn desires arising out of attachment to life (bhava nikanti), refuge (saraṇa) is very important. It is also called ‘nātha’ (protector). The Buddha, therefore, says ‘attahi attano natho’, which means that the self is one’s own protector or refuge.

The Buddha explains that ‘protector’ means that only the meritorious and supramundane deeds one has done are really one’s protectors. However, in this loka instead of looking for their liberation (mokkha) and their eternal life (amata) within their own selves, human beings look for them outside of themselves. The protectors they look for are nuclear weapons, air forces, navies and armies.

These weapons are for their liberation (mokkha) and their eternal life (amata) which are based on their attachment to life. In fact, they seek protection for ‘mokkha’ and ‘amata’ because of their great love for their lives which they cherish and value too much.

Depending on weapons and army divisions for protection of their lives, instead of on kusala (meritorious) dhammas and lokuttara (supramundane) dhammas is, according to Buddha’s teachings, taking refuge in akusala (demeritorious) dhammas. Depending on akusala dhammas by itself amounts to committing ducaritas (evil deeds). When ducaritas are committed, the akusala results will inevitably follow. These akusala results will invariably include soka (grief), parideva (lamentation), upayasa (despair), dukkha (pain) and domanassa (distress).

As it is said in the Pāli text, 'Jatam saraṇato bhayam', only dangers of all kinds will be experienced, without attaining the refuge of 'mokkha' and 'amata'. Such happenings will be found not only in the teachings of the Buddha but also in the happenings of the present day world. Human beings, however, are still believing that it is right to resort to arms and are well pleased with the use of force to suppress others. They are steeped in moha (bewilderment). Therefore, relying too much on moha, which is an akusala dhamma should be dispensed with.

Relying on Akusala Dhammas

In truth, relying on arms is relying upon akusala dhammas and if this is believed to be really loving themselves, their race or their country, there is no other way but to teach them the Buddha's teachings to convince them thoroughly that they are not, by doing so, really loving themselves, their race and their country. If, in spite of it, they would not change their minds and follow the advice given, it would only be their own fault. When one is smeared with filth and there is a pond near by, and if one will not go and wash the filth off in the pond, the pond is not to be blamed.

To speak generally of the tricks played by destiny on human beings, there are instances of people getting fettered by the fetters they themselves had made, being hit by bullets they themselves had made, being killed by explosion of bombs they themselves had made, having their heads cut off at the guillotines they themselves had made. These cannot be called coincidences, The Buddha says, 'sadisaṃ pākaṃ janeti', which means that deeds produce like results.

Knowledge greatly inferior to Man's

If a man knows that only he is 'man' and others are not, this kind of knowing is called 'bheda'. It is not really the knowing of one who deserves to be called 'man'. It is a knowing greatly inferior to that of a (real) 'man'. It is called in the Piṭakas 'papañca' knowing, that is knowing through the influence of taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi (craving, pride and wrong view). In brief, it is akusala (demeritorious) knowing.

The knowing that one is 'man' and the others are also 'man' is called 'Abheda knowing'. It is the Brahmachara knowing or "kusala (meritorious) knowing." Even such knowing can be wrong (miccha paṭipadā) when looked at from the point of view

of Pāramī, according to Paṭipada Sutta of Nidāna Vagga, Saṃpayutta Commentary. Therefore, there will be no need to point out that the knowing “I alone am man; others are not man” is the wrong knowing (miccha paṭipadā).

Need to understand Pāramī well

In fact, ‘Pāramī’ knowing surpasses the ‘bheda’ knowing as well as ‘abheda’ knowing. For this reason, the Paṭipadā Sutta does not say that every Brahmācārya knowing is the right practice ‘sammā paṭipada’, but points out that there can be the wrong practice of ‘miccha paṭipada’. Pāramī, the practice of the noble ones, is not based on practice but based on the intention of the one who practises.

If judged by deed, it might be a dāna (alms giving) or a sīla (morality) deed, or a bhāvanā (meditation) deed. But even though it is a dāna, or sīla or bhāvanā deed, it cannot be called a pāramī. In short, not every kusala (meritorious) deed is a pāramī.

Therefore, the Commentary says that even abhiññā practices (supernatural faculties) may or may not be pāramī deeds. Therefore, Pāramīs do not depend on deed but on the intention.

Most of the human beings are worldlings and according to their nature, they may do meritorious deeds. Then they will earn merits but their deeds may not amount to Pāramīs. They may have done demeritorious deeds, but these deeds, however, cannot be said not to have amounted to Pāramīs.

The Piṭakas say that there are two kinds of demeritorious deeds, that which should be practised and that which should not be practised. The demeritorious deeds that should be practised are those which lessen akusalas and increase kusalas.

The Piṭakas call such demeritorious deeds as ‘Sevitabba’ which means those that deserve to be practised. If one practises bhāvanā, based on pride, saying, ‘If he could achieve insight, why couldn’t I’, such pride ought to be practised. So said the Venerable Mogok Sayadaw in his book on Paṭicca Samuppāda.

Apart from this, the Piṭakas mention the lives of arahats who attained arahatship by practising diligently prompted by domanassa (distress) that aroused in them and emotional awakening of remorse. To give an example, the akusala deed which ought to be practised is like the scaffolding erected for the hoisting of

a hti (pinnacle) to a pagoda. The scaffolding is to help in the hoisting of the hti. After the hoisting, it has to be pulled down.

Difference between noble and ignoble ones

All deeds done physically are physical deeds, irrespective of the individuals who do them (kāyakamma). There is no difference between the deeds. If the deeds are done verbally, all are verbal deeds (vacī kamma). There is no difference between them. If the deeds are done mentally, all are mental deeds (mano kamma). There is no difference between them. If good deeds are done, all are meritorious (kusala) deeds. If evil deeds are done, all such deeds are demeritorious (akusala) deeds. There is no difference. For this reason, it is not possible to differentiate between noble and ignoble deeds on the nature of the deeds done. Referring to this, the Buddha teaches. ‘Cetana haṃ bhikkhave kammam vadāmi’. According to this teaching, no differentiation can be made between noble and ignoble deeds on the basis of the nature of the deeds done. It should be understood that differentiation is to be made only on the basis of the cetanā (intention, volition) in the doing of the deeds.

Whether it is a physical, or verbal, or mental, or kusala or akusala deed, if it is done at the sacrifice of one’s life for the well being of the people of the loka, it is a noble deed called pāramī.

The nature of pāramī is just having no desire for any self benefit but surrendering all self interest and sacrificing one’s life. Surrendering and sacrificing is exterminating atta (self). Exterminating atta means exterminating craving (taṇhā), pride (māna), and wrong view (diṭṭhi).

Therefore, the benefits gained by exterminating atta are far greater than those attained on account of atta. The benefits attained by exterminating atta are the receiving of homage and respect of the human beings, devas and brahmas. This can only be seen through Vivatṭa eyes, not through Vatṭa eyes.

Two Advantages

If on account of atta, one acquires wealth and luxuries, it is called ‘labha’. If on account of atta, one receives homage and respect of the people, it is called ‘sakkāra’. If on account of atta, one achieves fame and honour, it is called ‘Siloka’.

These benefits are acquired for one's well being because of one's endeavour. They are, however, not always acquired even though one makes every effort. They are acquired only when the conditions are right. When conditions are not right, they cannot be acquired.

It all depends, in truth, on one's own kamma, ñāṇa (knowledge) and vīriya (diligence). In nature, although seeds are sown, it is not always certain whether they will germinate and become plants. Even when they become sprouts and plants, their condition and growth depend on the feeding of fertilizer and the spraying with insecticide to keep out dangers. Therefore, it is said that the results depend upon knowledge and diligence in addition to the deed (kamma).

In the effort to gain for oneself labha, sakkāra and siloka (wealth, homage and fame), some acquire them because they deserve them and some acquire them though they do not deserve them. In actual practice, judging by their effort, there may be cases where those who, we think, will gain do not gain and those who, we think, will not gain, do gain. The one who, we think, deserves to gain is different from the one who gains.

In such a case, if the person who deserves to gain feels, 'I am the one who has made the sacrifice, but he is the one who gains the reward. I only deserve it.' And he tries to get the reward by any means. The culprit in such a case is the atta.

In truth, there is atta attached to the individual, the atta attached to one's own family, atta attached to one's own race and atta attached to one's own country. All 'bheda' views, even though they are declared to be for the welfare of others are 'atta' views.

If at the beginning of an undertaking, one sacrifices 'self' and 'self' interests, such a problem will not arise. Whether it is considered as deserving or undeserving according to the law of nature, if there is any gain, it is a result. If there is a result, there must be its cause.

'Loka' (the world) is the image of avijja (ignorance). All the happenings in the world are only 'māyās' (illusions). So they may be said to be either true or not true. Depending on the development of knowledge, one may be able to tell the true cause of a result.

Even though those with ordinary knowledge may be able to point out that the cause for a result is wrong, those with relevant abhiññas (supernormal faculties) will be able to tell all the correct causes. That is the reason why it is said 'Kamma vipako acinteyyo', which means that when one's kammās are mature, nothing is beyond the reach of reason.

Whatever it may be said, the value of one's ill-gotten gains may run into billions of dollars, one may come to be respected and revered by the whole world, or one's fame may spread all over the world.

However, such wealth, respect or fame are things that can be seen or heard of and we see them or hear of them.

As visible things which are not visible, they are only unsightly objects. As voices which are not heard, they are mere derisions and scorns. This is the way of the world; it is natural.

Therefore, visible objects which are not visible and voices (sounds) which are not heard serve as yardsticks to gauge the difference between the noble and the ignoble ones. Indeed, we can gauge the nobility and the ignobility only when we have a yardstick to gauge it. Only when we can gauge them, can we know their true worth.

Nature of Loka and the Beyond

When those, who can see what can be seen according to the way of the world, see, and those who can hear of what can be heard according to the way of the world, hear of those who have done great deeds of merit, they see or hear of them as those who practise the right majjhimapaṭipadā way (the middle path).

They, however, do not know if what they see or hear is true or not. When those who are able to see what cannot be seen according to the way of the world beyond and those who are able to hear what cannot be heard according to the way of the world beyond see or hear of those who have done great deeds of merit, they might or might not see or hear of them as those who practise the right majjhimapaṭipadā way (the middle path).

This is because they can not only see or hear of deeds which can be seen or heard of but also deeds which cannot be seen or heard of. It is also because they might or might not see or hear of these personages as those who practise the right majjhimapaṭipadā way (the middle path). They might see or hear

of them as those who practise the wrong paṭipadā way.

Two persons, having strong faith in the Three Ratanās, built and donated a monastery each, at a cost of a hundred thousand Kyats. The cost of the donation is the same; their faith is the same; the type of the building donated is the same; the receiver of the donation (the Three Retanās) is the same. But the intention, however, is different and the aim is different.

One donor aims at the gaining of happiness (sukha) in the round of rebirths which is called ‘Vaṭṭasisa’.

The other donor aims at liberation from the dukkha of the round of rebirths, which is Nibbāna. It is called ‘Vivaṭṭasisa’.

Here, the deeds are the same but the aims are different. It may, therefore, be said that their cetanās (volitions) are not the same. It may, therefore, be said that their kammās (deeds) are not the same also.

For this reason the Commentary on Paṭipadā Sutta of Nidāna Sampayutta says that kamma or deed directed at the happiness in the round of rebirths is a wrong practice and a wrong path (micchapaṭipadā) and that the kamma or deed directed at the happiness of liberation from the round of rebirths, Nibbāna, is the right practice and the right path.

In all deeds directed at the happiness in the round of a rebirths, the doer sees the ‘I’ in everything. He sees his shadow even in the Three Ratanās. He also sees it in the ‘loka’. The seeing of his shadow is the seeing whether it will be of any benefit to him. If he thinks that it will not be of any benefit to him, he will choose something else which will be of benefit. He will choose the donees, the world, the gifts, and so on. The purpose is to gain greater benefit. The benefit he gains by such a choice is the benefit he sees through the eye of avijjā (ignorance). It is not one seen through the eye of vijjā (wisdom).

When the rotting carcass is seen through the eye of a vulture, it is a nutriment for its long life, but when it is seen through the eye of a human being, both the rotting carcass and the vulture are only evil.

Those who do deeds directed at the liberation from the round of rebirths see only the world (loka) in everything. They do not see the ‘I’ or the shadow of the ‘I’. When they take refuge in the Three Ratānas or observe the Precepts, or do charitable deeds,

or practise bhāvanā, they do not put their self-interest first. They work primarily for the sake of the loka. In working for the well being of the surrounding world, the effectiveness of the work depends on the ability of the doer.

For augmenting one's ability in the work for the welfare of the loka, they take steps to strengthen themselves by practising Bodhipakkhīya dhammas which are the accessories of supreme knowledge. So they take refuge in the Three Ratanās, give alms, observe the Precepts and practise bhāvanā. They realize that a truly good man shall not do meritorious deeds to become human, deva or brahma kings as the result (for it would be for the welfare of themselves).

When the Bodhisatta hermit Sumedha met Buddha Dipankara, he proclaimed, 'As I am a (really virtuous) man, wouldn't it be an act of selfishness on my part if I alone were to attain Nibbāna?' Thus he took refuge in the Buddha. He gave alms. He observed sīla. He practised bhāvanā. Whatever he looked at, he did not see the 'I' nor 'himself', nor atta, nor attaniya. He only saw the loka, the surroundings, the veneyyas (those who are to be converted).

He was climbing to the top of the hill, but to reach it was not the primary object. What was important to him was to be able to see those below from above and work for their welfare. Therefore, for an ordinary man whatever he looks at, he sees only himself and his own shadow. Whatever he does, he does it for the sake of himself and his own shadow. Whatever the noble ones look at, they see only 'loka' and the shadow of 'loka'. In taking refuge in the Three Ratanās, the aim of the ordinary persons is to accumulate merits in their person.

On the other hand, the noble ones' aim is to promote the surroundings by developing puñña sambhāra and ñāṇa sambhāra. This is the difference between the noble ones and the ordinary persons. As much as the aims in deeds are different, the results arising out of the deeds are also different to that much.

Sacrifices of Bodhisattas

When we study the jātakas, the birth stories of the Buddhas, we discover that while they were fulfilling Pāramīs to accumulate kammās and ñāṇa deeds for use as weapons in their work for the welfare of 'loka', they had to undergo many animal

existences. In truth, animal existences are for those who commit akusala (demeritorious) deeds.

From this it is evident that the Bodhisattas have committed akusala deeds, but they have committed them not for their own good. They have committed them for the good of the loka and of the beings and for preventing the adhamma (wrong deeds) to get the better of dhamma. Because they had committed akusala deeds, they were reborn as animals, but in those existences, they became leaders, such as kings, ministers, etc. When they were born as monkeys, they became monkey kings, when they were born as hinthas (Brahminy ducks), they became king of hinthas. This is the result of pāramī kusala for the sacrifices they made by becoming an animal.

Though they had to commit akusala deeds for unavoidable reasons, if they sacrificed it not for themselves but for the loka and for the dhamma, the kusala deeds would bring kusala results and the akusala deeds would bring akusala results separately. The kusala deeds were not ordinary ones. They are pāramī kusala deeds and the deeds of the noble ones.

With regard to the sphere of sense-objects, human beings do not correctly and really know about them. They know only through their clingings, upādāna. The Paṭiccasamuppāda says, ‘Upādāna paccayā bhavo’ (Clinging conditions the arising of existence). Here clinging is made up of the surroundings, reactions to the views prevalent, traditions and inborn and natural tendencies.

If there is no ‘he’, there can be no ‘I’

In order to know the sense-objects correctly and truly (yathābhūta), clinging must be annihilated and to do so, one must achieve the arahattamagga (the fourth and final magga).

Until this magga is achieved, the worldlings should strive to turn their clingings to good use. Turning the clingings to good use is striving to exterminate them as much as possible. That is not to pay attention to one’s welfare but directing one’s efforts mainly to the welfare of the loka.

This means, the diminishing of the ‘I’ first role which always tries to oust the ‘he’ in everything. In fact, the ‘I’ exists because of the ‘he’; if there is no ‘he’, there can be no ‘I’. Therefore, the ‘he’ greatly deserves our thanks, and efforts should be directed to attain this view. It is, however, not easy to do it but

there have been remarkable personages who had done it. There are such personages at the present time and there will also be such personages in the future.

They are called embryos and those who have accomplished Pāramīs. Among them, the Bodhisattas are the models.

To enable a person to devote entirely to the welfare of the loka without regard to his own interest, he must be able to have real compassion for the loka. It is the inborn belief of the worldlings that there is no animate or inanimate things in the loka as lovable as oneself. As a result they love nobody as much as they love themselves. They have no compassion on others as much as they have it on themselves. They are pleased with no one, as much as they are with themselves. This is their inborn attitude; this is the nature of the worldlings. For this reason, if they are to accord priority to the welfare of the loka and not to their own welfare, they must surpass the nature of the worldlings.

One who surpasses the nature of worldings.

There are, in the loka, those who are able to surpass as well as those who are trying to surpass the nature of the worldings. However, everyone who makes the effort does not meet with success. They are caught in the net of high offices, honour and fame, and luxuries.

Only those who can break through this net are the ones who really try. In fact, it will be needless to say that the places where these personages dwell will be pleasant and peaceful on account of the accumulation of their (kusala) deeds and wisdom.

Besides, their fame and glory will soar up to the brahma abodes. Even though they themselves or others might not have heard of it, it certainly is a fact. This is said to be the cheers given by brahmas, devas and men. Perhaps, they know or vaguely know that they themselves are among those who cheer. They may be indifferent or they may really not know.

However, as supporters of the dhamma, they will certainly give cheers. Though they may be oppressed by issa (jealousy) and macchhariya (stinginess, selfishness) and their consciousness belongs to the adhamma group, it is certain that their sub-conscious mind will side with the dhamma group. The reason is that they are born as human beings because of the kusala dhamma. Therefore,

the patisandhe viññāṇa (birth-consciousness) that arises on account of that kamma is originally pure and noble (mahāvipāka).

Ordinary men and the noble ones

All those who are born as human beings, a very rare thing to achieve, ordinarily take conception in their mothers' wombs with Mahāvipāka citta. It is, therefore, the same for all human beings. They can only differ in respect of dvihetukas and tihetukas (that is consciousness with two roots - alobha and adosa, and consciousness with three roots alobha, adosa and amoha). There is no other difference. They, therefore, have pure and noble minds from the time of their conception in the mother's womb. They are all respectable.

When they grow up according to the influence of upādānas (clinging), some see high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries as 'assada' pleasurable things. These are ordinary persons. Some see the high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries as 'adinava', sinful, unpleasurable things. And these persons direct themselves towards 'nissaraṇa' escaping from the loka of taṇhā (craving) which finds pleasure in unpleasurable things.

These are the noble ones. They are the saviours of the loka. They are the refuge of the loka.

Actually, when the high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries are looked at through 'vaṭṭasisa eyes' which turn towards self, they are seen as pleasurable things (assāda). If they are looked at through 'vivatṭasisa eyes' which turn towards the loka, they are seen as sensual pleasures that entangle beings 'ādinava'. When they are seen as entanglements, it is certain that efforts will be made to escape from them. And that effort is called 'nissaraṇa'. In truth, when the sensual pleasures, such as high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries, are seen as pleasurable, they become entanglements.

If they are, however, seen as things to be utilized as alms, support, etc. for the people of the loka, they are not entanglements; they are 'nissaraṇa' (for escape from saṃsarā). From the point of view of nissaraṇa, the greater the high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries one possesses, the more use can one make of them for the loka.

For this reason, the annals of saṃsarā record those who turn towards 'nissaraṇa' as the noble ones and those who turn their

backs on 'nissaraṇa' as aññatara (nondescript, ordinary persons). The noble ones are, so to speak, deva flowers and the aññataras are hell flowers for the loka. No one makes or creates the deva flowers or hell flowers. They make or create these flowers for themselves.

Hell Flowers and Deva Flowers

The hell flowers look more pretty. They are very attractive. In Mahāvimitta Vindaka (Catudvāra) story of Dasaka Nipāta, Mitta Vindaka, who traded, gained a profit of K 120,000 on his capital of K 1,000. In spite of the entreaties of his mother, who was a Sotapaññā, not to go overseas, he scolded her and sailed away to gain more wealth. He met four supernatural damsels (vemanika petas), who lived in mansions on an island. He was very happy. Then, on another island he met eight damsels. He was more happy. Then, on yet another island he met sixteen damsels. He was more and more happy. Then on yet another island, he met thirty two damsels and he felt that his foresight and the way he put it into effect were right.

In truth, he did not realize that it was the trick of avijja (ignorance) to lift him up to the greatest height so that he might be thrown down into the deepest pitch. He thought himself to be extremely smart.

Then he met a man carrying a machine with sharp razor blades on his head. Blood was flowing down from the man's head as the blades cut it. Mitta Vindaka did not see the machine with razor blades as it really was. He saw blood coming out of the head and took it to be a beautiful deva flower, not as hell flower as it really was. When he found out what it really was, it was too late for him. Then only did he realize that he was actually in Ussāda Hell, the machine with razor blades was a hell flower and not a deva flower.

When sensual pleasures (kamma guṇa) are looked at through Vaṭṭasisa eyes for one's sake, they are seen as deva flowers, but not as hell flowers. The sensual pleasures, such as high offices, fame and honour, and luxuries captivate and charm those who look to see them as such.

When looked at through vivaṭṭasisa eyes, they are seen as deva flowers, not as hell flowers. However, whether the sensual pleasures are seen as hell flowers (āḍinava) or as deva flowers (assāda), they are only suñña (void, empty) according to 'Suññato

lokām avekkhasu’ of the Buddha’s teaching. ‘Suññata’ (zero) has no value as quantity, but it has inestimable value as quality. Because, all additions and subtractions have to be based on it. Without suñña, there can be no additions and subtractions.

As sensual pleasures are rooted in Suñña by nature, they appear as deva flowers (assāda) when looked at through passionate eyes (sarāga) and they appear as hell flowers (āḍīnava) when looked at through vipassanā eyes.

When looked at through Virāga (that is maggaññaṇa) eyes, Nibbāna, which is beyond the deva and the hell flowers, is seen. Thus a single sense-object can have different appearances. This is called the change from nānatta (diversity) to ekattha (a single one); and from a single one surpassing both Ubhayātita (ubhāya + atita) to the beyond. This is the saying of the philosophers.

Appearance and Essence

In the sphere of ‘knowing’, there is yet another cause for the influence of the unconsciousness on the current consciousness of human beings. It is called Sīlabbatupādāna (sīla + vata + upādāna). It means that in the knowing of a sense-object by the human beings, they do not know it correctly and truly, but they know in accordance with their culture and traditions and religious practices. For this reason, in the seeing of a sense-object, the views differ if the culture, traditions and religious practices differ. Though the sense-object is one and the same, the knowings differ because of Sīlabattupādāna. For this reason, if the knowing is to be of an advanced nature, the culture, traditions and religious practices also need to be advanced.

It is important to be able to distinguish between appearance and essence in the observation of the culture, traditions and religious practices.

If appearances and essence cannot be distinguished and the two are taken to be one and the same, such an understanding is an extreme one. In actual practice, just as there are extreme ways, there are also the middle paths. In the understanding of the culture, traditions and religious practices appearances should be understood as they are, for they would not have come into being without reason. The essence also should be understood as it is for it also would not have come into being without cause. The relationship between appearance and essence should also be understood.

Besides, the escape from the appearance and the essence need also be understood. This is called the majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle way) understanding.

When the nature of majjhimapaṭipadā is understood, one will regard appearance with respect and will surpass it; one will also regard essence with respect and will surpass it; In truth, majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle path) embraces both the nature of appearance and of essence as well as the nature beyond both.

The appearance and the essence are not embraced as distinct entities but as one whole.

To cite an example, majjhimapaṭipadā is like a dish of curry which is cooked with several ingredients, such as fish, chilli, onions, etc. Before these things become curry, they have different identities and natures. And their tastes differ from one another. Once they become curry, they have forsaken their original natures and tastes. They come to have only a single taste.

If these ingredients still have their respective tastes, the curry cannot be good. Only when they have forsaken their individual tastes and collectively bear only a single taste, can the curry be good.

In truth, the taste of a good curry is not apart from the individual tastes of the ingredients. It is based on the tastes of the ingredients. It is a new taste born out of the co-operation (samavāya sambandha) of the tastes of different ingredients. The taste of a good curry not only includes the tastes of the ingredients, but also surpasses them. Before becoming a good curry, there is the mixing of appearances of the ingredients, but the essence is not mixed. That is, there is only 'samyoga sambanda'. There is no mixing of essence 'samavāyama sambanda'. When there is the mixing of essence 'samavāyama sambanda', the mixing of appearances (samyoga sambanda) is also accomplished. The nature of the cooking of the curry is called majjhimapaṭipadā.

The dassana books call it 'byañjana rasanyāya' which means recipe for curry. Therefore, majjhimapaṭipadā includes one's natural bent and also surpasses it. Appearance and essence of Sīlabbatupādāna should thus be understood in accordance with majjhimapaṭipadā (middle path).

Attavādupādāna

Then, the most important upādāna (clinging) is attavādupādāna, which means clinging to things that are called atta (self). This upādāna (clinging) is most prominent in the sphere of knowing. In the Buddha's teaching, things called atta are briefly lokiya (worldly) and lokuttara (supramundane) dhammas, according to “attā nāma lokiya lokuttaro dhammo”.

Lokiya (worldly) dhammas comprise kusala (meritorious) and akusala (demeritorious) dhammas. If, therefore, akusala dhammas are pointed out as atta, those to whom they are pointed out will know the sense-objects as such. If kusala dhammas are pointed out as atta, those to whom they are pointed out will know the sense-objects as such. If lokuttara dhammas are pointed out as atta, those to whom they are pointed out will know the sense-objects as such.

Here those who know means the minds (consciousness) which know. It is not individual, a being or jiva. The sense-object pointed out by lokuttara dhammas is Nibbāna. Therefore, if the lokuttara dhamma is called atta, there is nothing to say with reference to the knowing of the sense-object. Everything is clear. There is nothing special about the quality. There is only one kind of Nibbāna.

If the lokiya (worldly) dhammas are taken as atta, there will be confusion in the knowing of the sense-objects. If akusalas are taken as atta, there will be confusion in the knowing. Among the akusalas, there are those which have the natures of ‘āsava’ (moral defilements), of ‘ogha’ (whirlpool), of ‘yoga’ (the yokes), of ‘gandha’ (bonds), of ‘upādāna’ (clinging), of ‘nīvāraṇa’ (hindrances), of ‘anusaya’ (inclination), of ‘samyojana’ (fettors), and of ‘kilesas’ (defilements).

Nature of kamma

Akusalas are of three grades, viz. anusaya, pariyuṭṭhāṇa, and vitakka. The anusaya grade is that which cannot definitely determine whether it is the past, the present or the future. So it is said that kilesas are dormant at this stage. It means that when the right conditions arise, they can at any time reach the stage of upāda (arising), thīti (development) and bhaṅga (dissolution). Therefore, the kilesas (defilements) of anusaya stage can be called ever present (thāvara paccuppana) stage.

The pariyuṭṭhāna stage is the time when upāda, thīti and bhaṅga are arising and active. The kilesa of pariyuṭṭhāna stage is called the present (paccuppana).

The vitakkama stage is when the deed has already been committed. Therefore, the vitakkama kilesa is called nānākkhanika kamma. It is the kamma (deed) that follows one's body like a shadow till one attains Nibbāna, or till it has born result, or till the result born has expired. This is, therefore, called, according to the time, as the past. It is called the past (atiti) in view of saḥajāta kamma (which arises at the same time). There are three kinds of kamma (deeds), viz. saḥajāta kamma, anantara kamma and nānākkhanika kamma. When saḥajāta kamma is in the present, anantara kamma and nānākkhanika kamma are in the past. Only the time of arising is the past. As energy is constantly following the body like a shadow, it has the nature of being ever present (thāvara paccuppana).

Therefore, as far as kamma is concerned the time of the arising of saḥajāta kamma, anantara kamma and nānākkhanika kamma, and the time of the arising of the results by the nature of energy which constantly follows the body like a shadow should be understood separately.

In fact, the anantara kammā, the deed which immediately follows, is the name of the deed concerned with the receiving of the support of asevana (repeated practice).

When the support of asevana is received, the deed becomes forceful. If the support of asevana is not received, the deed is weak. This nature is pointed out here. Only when a deed reaches the nānākkhanika stage, it bears result.

According to that general process, the saḥajāta kamma reaches the stage of anantara kamma, which in turn reaches nānākkhanika stage. Only when the kamma reaches this stage, will it bear result.

In the mental process, mind arises only when there is contact between sense-object and sense-doors (dvāra). As it arises, the āsavas (moral intoxicants) taint the sense-objects (aramannas), as well as the sense-doors (ayatanas). Therefore, the mind (citta) which arises out of the contact between sense-object and sense-doors cannot receive (know) the sense-objects as they really are. It has to receive (know) them as tainted by the āsavas

(moral intoxicants). Here, receiving the sense-objects means the knowing of the sense-objects by the mind.

The āsavas are very powerful. They are able to taint bhumis (abodes), up to Bhavagga (the higher arupa brahma abode of Nevasañña nāsañña yatana), and up to the Gotrabhu stage (in meditation) which is just below the magga stage. As the result, the mind perceives wrongly that itself, the sense-objects and the sense-doors are nicca (permanent) though they are really impermanent (anicca).

It wrongly knows them as sukha (happiness) though they are really dukkha (pain). It wrongly knows them as atta, though they are really anatta. It wrongly knows them as subha (pleasant objects) though they are really asubha (unpleasant objects). The mind (citta) perceives in this way, because the āsavas taint the sense-objects and sense-doors with wrong colours.

As the result, though a rūparammana is seen, it is not known as rūparammana, but it is seen as an individual, a being or an object. Though a thing of an immaterial nature is seen, it is not seen as such but as a thing of material nature. It is the same in seeing other sense-objects. In fact, only when the āsavas are done away with, will the sense-objects be correctly perceived. If the āsavas still remain, they will keep on tainting the sense-objects and sense-doors and they will be wrongly perceived.

The dye, the āsavas taint with, is well seasoned and extremely fast. It can only be removed by the arahatta magga. Therefore, only when one becomes an arahat, will one perceive the sense-objects as they truly are.

Oghas and āsavas

The oghas (whirlpools) enfeeble beings so that they might not be able to swim out of the ocean of the dukkha of the round of rebirths to land on the firm ground of Nibbāna. They cause beings to continue drifting up and down the current of the saṃsarā called the thirtyone bhumis.

The yogas (yokes) hold being in servitude to the three vaṭṭas according to the law of cause and effect. Though the beings have to drift along from one existence to another and though their present existence might indeed be very inferior, they cling to it in accordance with the law of cause and effect as the āsavas have made it appear to be beautiful.

The ganthas (bonds) bind one existence to another as if by chain so that there seems to be continuity. Death (cuti) is immediately followed by conception (paṭisandhe), and conception is followed by death.

Though beings may say that this chain of existences is not delightful, in actual practice, the āsavas have made it appear more desirable than a gold necklace. The upādānas (clinging) record, like very sensitive films, the sense-objects together with the sense-doors so that they might not be lost in the bodily processes.

By nature, the foregoing minds have to disappear along with their sense-objects so that the next minds can arise. Though the former minds and their sense-objects disappear, their impact does not disappear. It remains in the bodily processes like a shadow.

Mind cannot arise by itself. It can arise only when there is a sense-object. Therefore, when the foregoing mind disappears, it does so together with the sense object. Thus the impact of the mind that disappears also includes the nature of the sense-object. The disappeared foregoing minds serve as strong support to the following minds by their closeness to them (pakatupanissaya satthi).

Therefore, the following minds can know the sense-objects of the foregoing minds. It can be done thus because though the past sense-objects have ceased together with their respective minds, their impact remains with the bodily process. The same thing happens to the future sense-objects.

In truth, the processes of life do not go on like a straight line. They go round in a circle. For this reason, there are no sense-objects that have not been experienced in the round of rebirths. This nature is called a round, or a circle, or a vaṭṭa. Therefore, a point in a circular disk can be called 'the former', or 'the latter', or 'directly in front'. It depends on the position from which a thing is looked at. From the point of view of time, it can be the past, or the future, or the present. Though time and position are different in terms, they are indivisible in effect. In truth, the past, the future and the present are just sammuti sacca (which is generally accepted as truth, though not real truth). The future sense-objects can be seen through supernormal powers (abhiññās). This is possible because they appear like shadows of the present in the body process. When it is said that they appear like shadows

on the body process, and according to the Pāli text, ‘Cittena niyate loko’, just as an atom and the universe differ in size, though their constitution by nature are the same, it can be understood that the mind and the loka differ only in size, though their constitutions, by nature, are the same. Therefore, the mind, by its power, can know the whole of the loka.

If the mind is likened to an atom, the loka can be likened to the universe, Just as the atom contains the nature of the universe, the mind contains the nature of the loka. If the mind becomes kamma viññaṇa, it becomes a deed called kamma samaṅgi, which means a kamma (deed) which has potentiality to bear results.

After a deed has become kamma samaṅgi and ceases, its sense-objects and potentiality to bear results also cease together with it. Therefore, when that kamma bears results as pavatti, the relevant sense-objects perceived in the past when the deed was done will appear vividly as if seen in the present. As such appearance can cause the arising of vipāka (resultant) minds, it produces results. Therefore, whether it is the past or the future, those sense-objects cease together with deeds (kamma) and the seeing of them vividly again is said to be the fruits of the resultant kammas.

They are the results of patisandhe, e.g. the child born is sometimes pretty, or ugly; sometimes has scars of wounds; or sometimes is disfigured. It is due to the inclusion in the sense-objects of the potentialities for producing results of one’s kammas which have ceased.

Though these kammas have ceased, they contained the sense-objects one has perceived. That is called ‘Upatṭhāna samaṅgita’ (situated closely). According to the saying ‘Sadisaṃ pakamṃ janeti’, the inclusion of the results which one’s kammas will produce is called ‘vipāka samaṅgita’. According, therefore, to ‘cittena niyate loko’, one’s mind is one’s ability (Sattiloko) loka.

The present world in which one lives is byatti loka. In truth, mind and loka are as different as satti is from byatti, cause is from effect, or foundation is from the building structure. There is no other difference. It is for this reason that the internal sense-objects in one can be revealed to the outside world as aeroplanes, railway trains, etc. If there were no sense-objects, such as airplanes, etc. conceived in one’s mind as ‘upatṭhāna samaṅgi’,

these sense-objects of airplanes, railway trains, etc. cannot come out as ‘vipaka sa mañgitā’.

For this reason, the kamma (deeds) are said to be ‘acinteyya’ (beyond the reach of thought or reason, incomprehensible). This is how upādānas support kammabhava and upāpatti bhavas according to “upādāna paccaya bhavo”(resultant birth process).

Nivāraṇas

Nivāraṇas (hindrances) hinder consciousness (mind) from perceiving correctly and truly the sense-objects that appear at the sense-doors (dvāras).

They hinder the sense-objects, too. It is called Ñeyyāvaraṇa. They also hinder consciousness (knowing). It is called “Ñānāvaraṇa”. Thus the nīvaraṇas hinder.

Anusayas

Anusayas lie dormant in beings as seeds (bija). Because of the anusayas, all the mental, verbal and physical deeds bear the name of ‘kamma’. As the result of these kammas, beings have one existence after another.

If there were no anusayas, there would be no kammas, no conception and births. When there were no conceptions and births, there would be no existences (bhava). When there were no existences, there would be no individuals and beings. Therefore, anusayas are the seed of beings.

Samyojanas

Samyojanas are the fetters that bind the lives of beings to the surroundings which include both animate and inanimate things. The beings, therefore, cannot live by themselves, as they like. Being bound by fetters, they have to live in conformity with the surroundings.

When the surroundings are active, they are also active, being bound together. When the surroundings are inactive, they are also inactive. Likewise when they are active, the surroundings are active; when they are inactive, the surrounding are inactive.

When a person in some part of the world does a detestable act, the dosa fetters binding one with that person tighten. Though one has never seen that person, one hates him. If that person does

a lovable act, the lobha fetters binding one with that person tighten. Though one has never seen that person, one loves him.

This is the case, even though one might think that one has nothing to do with his surroundings. It is just what one thinks; it is not the truth. In truth, because of the binding by fetters (samyojanas), one is connected with one's surroundings, according to the Buddha's teaching. One is connected with the thirtyone bhūmis. This is because one is fettered by samyojanas. Until these fetters can be cut off by maggas, they will always remain in one.

Only when one has attained arahatship by cutting off all the fetters (samyojanas), one will not have to do anything with one's surroundings. Even though others take away one's possessions, one will not be moved at all; one will not long for them. It is because one has cut off the lobha fetters which bind one with his possessions and one is like a puppet without strings. One is not moved at all; one does not long for the stolen property. Though others are moved by the loss of their property, one is not.

In the same manner, when one has cut off dosa fetters, one will not be angry with anyone or will not hate anyone. In truth, hatred, worry, affection, are the natures of fetters that bind one with the surroundings. When they become taut and one moves, others also move. This nature can be seen in actual practice in the happenings of the world. Though it is so, it is misunderstood. They would say, it's none of their business but sheer interference. But it is really not a misunderstanding. It is a true natural happening.

The fetters (samyojanas) are very difficult to see. As long as the fetters cannot be cut off by arahattamagga, beings will remain bound by the surroundings and the samyojanna fetters. Even though one's fetters have been cut off by arahattamagga and one is not moved by the surroundings, those surroundings whose fetters have not been cut off yet will be moved by one's actions. This should be understood and such an understanding is called yathābhūta (true and correct) understanding.

Mental process called Kilesa

‘Kilesas’ defilements are akusala dhammas which soil the mind process. Therefore, though the mind is pure by nature, it becomes soiled or dirtied by kilesas. Then the sense-objects that appear in the mind process become indistinct and unclear like the

shadows on murky water. When kilesas get into the mind process the sense-objects that appear in it are perceived wrongly. Only when the mirror is clear, is the image clear and distinct. Only when the image is clear and distinct, can the perception be correct.

There are the life processes that arise out of demeritorious deeds done by *atta* (*attadipā vihāratā*). As long as people cannot do away with demeritorious deeds (*akusalas*), these life processes will remain as mentioned above.

In fact, they do not happen as they like. They happen because they worship ‘*akusala*’ as ‘*atta*’. According to the saying, ‘*Atta hi attano natho*’ (one is one’s own saviour), when one worships *atta* as one’s saviour, it becomes a danger, ‘*jātaṃ saranato bhayaṃ*’.

Merit not amounting to Pāramī

There is the earning of merit (*kusala*) as *atta*. In this, there are two kinds of merit-(1) merit that amounts to *pāramī* and (2) merit that does not amount to *pāramī*. The merit that does not amount to *pāramī* is based on the three dhammas of *papañca taṇhā*, *māna* and *diṭṭhi*. Then, even though a meritorious deed is done, the dictates of *taṇhā*, *māna* and *diṭṭhi* have to be followed. As regards a *kusala* meritorious deed, there are three kinds - (1) *dāna* (giving alms); (2) *sīla* (morality) and (3) *bhāvanā* (meditation).

Giving alms (*dāna*) based on *Papañca dhammas*, observing *Sīla* to refrain from committing evils (*duccaritas*) and practising *bhāvanā* for the growth of wisdom have been prevalent in the world even before the appearance of the Buddha’s teachings.

In those days the people generally gave alms, observed *Sīla* and practised *bhāvanā* in this way. That was called the way meritorious deeds were done before the advent of the *sāsanā* (the Buddha’s teaching). According to it, alms were given for the sake of prosperity in the present and future existences. *Sīla* was observed to have a long life in the present and future existences and *bhāvanā* was practised for the growth of wisdom in the present and future existences.

It is correct to give alms for prosperity, to observe *Sīla* to have a long life and to practise *bhāvanā* to become wise. In fact, all the beings in the world want to have mental and physical well

being. For that reason, they give alms. This is called the seeking for protection ‘sāraṇa’.

The wealth and property acquired through almsgiving is one’s security or safeguard. Besides, all the beings want to be free from ailments and have a long life. They, therefore, observe Sīla. This is called the seeking for ‘amata’ eternal life. All the beings want to have wisdom to enable them to be free from all kinds of dangers and entanglements. They, therefore, practise bhāvanā. This is called the seeking for ‘mokkha’, liberation.

Only when one is endowed with wisdom can one be able to get free from all kinds of dangers and entanglements.

When, therefore, beings, by their inborn desire, think of ways to achieve the above wishes, they find almsgiving as the way to prosperity and wealth, Sīla as the way to live a long life, and bhāvanā as the way to growth of wisdom. These three ways are confined to life within the saṃsarā (round of rebirths).

However, when these ways are enhanced to become ways to get beyond the saṃsarā, they acquire ‘saraṇa’ (protection) from ‘dāna’ (almsgiving), ‘amata’ (eternal life) from ‘Sīla’ (morality), and ‘mokkha’ (liberation) from ‘bhāvanā’ (meditation).

If dāna, Sīla and bhāvanā deeds are done as kusala deeds not amounting to pāramī (perfection), though they think them to be ways for getting beyond saṃsarā, these deeds are actually confined to life in the saṃsarā. This was the way deeds were done before the appearance of the Buddha’s teachings. The Piṭakas therefore call it Vivatṭasisa way or the miccha paṭipadā way. All deeds done in this way are dominated by self-interest. As such, they will never achieve liberation from the loka. If it is believed that liberation from the loka can be gained, such a belief is wrong. If one does according to this belief, one may achieve jhānas and abhiññas at the most; but no more. Liberation from the ‘loka’ (world), in fact, means liberation from the ‘I’ (atta).

Liberation from the ‘I’ is liberation from the saṃsarā, and liberation from ‘loka’. If it is done not for the liberation from the ‘I’, but putting the ‘I’ in the forefront in everything, how can one gain true liberation from the saṃsarā? It is really impossible.

Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā the Buddha teaches

When the Buddha appeared, the ways of giving alms, of observing Sīla and practising bhāvanā were revised. The Buddha directed that alms giving should not be done as a kusala deed not amounting to pāramī as before, but to be done only as a kusala deed amounting to pāramī under the new way. Observing Sīla should not be done as a kusala deed not amounting to pāramī as before, but to be done only as a kusala deed amounting to pāramī under the new way. Practising bhāvanā should not be done as a kusala deed not amounting to pāramī as before, but to be done only as a kusala amounting to pāramī under the new way.

Of the two ways, the new way has greater force. Under the old way, the mind was directed at *atta thacariya* (self-benefit) while under the new way, it is directed at *'Lokattacariya'* (loka's benefit). The old way was called the way outside the Sāsanā. The new way is called the way within the Sāsanā.

It is also called *Majjhimaṭṭipadā* (the middle path). In fact, whether one gives alms, observes Sīla, practises bhāvanā, or does any other kusala deed, if he does it according to the *Majjhimaṭṭipadā* (middle path) way, it will produce much greater benefits than those achieved by the former outside the Sāsanā way. Really, the benefits gained without wishing for any benefits from the deed are far greater, more forceful and peaceful than those gained by wishing for benefits from the deed.

Wishing for anything is greed (*lobha*) and not wishing for anything is non-greed (*alobha*). '*Lobha*' is *akusala* (demeritorious) and '*alobha*' is *kusala* (meritorious). '*Lobha*' is to possess for oneself and '*alobha*' is to give away for the loka (world) and to sacrifice. Needless to say, '*kusala*' produces greater benefits than '*akusala*'.

The discourse on Majjhimaṭṭipadā way

According to the *Majjhimaṭṭipadā* middle way, the Buddha says that in *dāna* (almsgiving), *Sīla* (observing precepts) and *bhāvanā* (practising meditation), or doing other deeds of merit, only the volition (*cetanā*) that arises in one's mind is called *kamma* (deed) '*cetanā kam bhikkhave kammam vadāmi*'. The Buddha says it in his discourse on the middle path (*majjhimaṭṭipadā*).

As soon as we talk about the middle path, the two extremes come into our minds. Only when the two extremes are surpassed in essence, is it called the middle way . One of the two is the extreme of ‘unlikeness’ (bheda) and the other is the extreme of ‘likeness’ (abheda). Freedom from these two extremes is the middle way called in Pāli ‘Ubhayātīta’ (Ubhaya + ātīta)(surpassing both). ‘Surpassing both extremes’ embraces the nature of the extremes in appearance as well as in essence.

In the performance of a dāna deed, a donor buys gifts to be offered at great cost and personally presents the gifts to the donees. This is the kayākamma, the physical act. He also offers the gifts verbally . That is the vacikamma act. He offers the gifts willingly with volition. That is manokamma act. All the three acts (kammās) are good. Another donor offers similar gifts in a similar manner. The offering of the two donors are physically, verbally and mentally equal. This is excellent from the point of view of dāna. It is possible to attain such excellence in dāna; that is the nature of ‘abheda’(likeness).

Then, in the same act of dāna, the nature of ‘unlikeness’(bheda) will also be observed. In the matter of intention, one donor wishes for the happiness (well being) in the round of rebirths in the way of the donors of the time when the Buddha’s teachings were not prevalent. Another donor wishes for the happiness of getting beyond the round of rebirths in the way of the donors within the time of the prevalence of the Buddha’s teaching. Thus the nature of ‘unlikeness’ is seen here.

With regard to almsgiving, Majjhimapaṭipadā (middle way) can have both the extremes of ‘likeness’ and ‘unlikeness’. In truth, majjhimapaṭipadā way embraces the nature of both the extremes. In the history of religions, the people in the Veda age gave alms wishing for their well being in the round of rebirths. It is called Kamma Kaṇḍa.

The people in the Upanissaya age gave alms wishing for their well being beyond the round of rebirths. This shows that though they equally did dāna deeds, their wishes were not alike. That is they were of ‘abheda’ nature.

However, though they might wish for their well being beyond the saṃsarā, they could not realize it unless the path they followed was right. The right path is the majjhimapaṭipadā (middle) path.

If the path is really majjhimapaṭipadā path, it is directed at Bodhipakkhiya (supreme knowledge). Majjhimapaṭipadā middle path includes the right Sīla (morality), the right Samādhi (mental concentration) and the right Paññā (knowledge). Without these three factors, the well being beyond the Saṃsārā will not be achieved merely by wishing for it. The making of the wish for the well being beyond the Saṃsārā entails the sacrifice of one's welfare for the sake of the loka's welfare. This amounts to the fulfilling of a pāramī and all deeds of pāramī are directed at Bodhipakkhiya dhammas. Only when it involves the pāramī nature, can one take up the majjhimapaṭipadā middle path practice taught by the Buddha. The practice of the majjhimapaṭipadā way, according to the Buddha's teaching, is all kusala (merit).

Kusala acts have to be based on renunciation (alobha). It cannot be based on possession for self (lobha). When 'alobha' is included according to the nature of mental concomitants (cetasikas), 'adosa' also comes in. 'Adosa' has the nature of real love for the loka. The more one really loves 'loka' (world), the greater can one sacrifice for the 'loka' one loves. Therefore, it is important to love the 'loka', really.

Then 'amoha' (sammā diṭṭhi) also is involved. Only when 'amoha' is involved, can one really and truly perceive the sense-objects. For this reason, the majjhimapaṭipadā is ñāṇa sampayutta (concomitant of knowledge) and not ñāṇa vippayutta (the opposite of ñāṇa sampayutta).

To give alms in accordance with the paṭipadā middle way, if it concerns Sīla (morality) a vow should be taken to observe the precepts. When the vow has been taken, it is easier to observe the precepts of abstinence. This is as far as Sīla is concerned.

With regard to Samādhi (mental concentration), the relevant sense-objects must be sought mindfully. Here mindfulness might be compared to a machine that looks for sense-objects. When a sense object is detected, it has to be caught by concentration to prevent it from getting away, Samādhi (concentration) is like the device for catching sense-objects.

The job of looking for sense-objects and catching them is not an easy one. It needs much diligence. Having diligence of the level of sammāpadhana is called sammāvāyama (right exertion).

It is also necessary to examine, in every respect, the sense-object perceived. This is the tasks of sammāsankappa (right view).

Just examining the sense-objects in every respect is not enough. It is also necessary to determine their nature whether they are nicca, anicca and so on. Only when it can be determined really and truly, can it be said that sammā diṭṭhi (right view) has discharged its duty.

Therefore, the examination of the sense-objects in all respects and determining their nature are the tasks and responsibilities of the knowledge sector.

Therefore, if it is a correct majjhimapaṭipadā middle path, it will contain the true nature of the three sectors, viz. Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. Besides, it will, in essence, have to surpass the two extremes of ‘likeness’ and ‘unlikeness’. For this reason, majjhimapaṭipadā embraces the extreme of ‘unlikeness’ (bheda) and also surpasses it; it embraces the extreme of ‘likeness’ (abheda) and also surpasses it. It is the nature of majjhimapaṭipadā.

When alms are given according to the majjhimapaṭipadā middle way, just as the vaṭṭanissita kamma which longs for saṃsarā sukha which brings the fruits of bhava saṃpatti (good existences), bhoga saṃpatti (wealth and riches), the vivaṭṭanissita, kamma will also bear results (bhava saṃpatti and bhoga saṃpatti). This is the result of the extreme of likeness’

That is a reason why when we look at the Piṭakas, we find that all the Bodhisattas and embryos of the noble ones who have fulfilled Pāramīs enjoyed greater and higher patisandhe (births) and pavatti incidental benefits than others.

There is no doubt that the results arising out of vivaṭṭa nissita cetanā kamma (deed done by sacrificing self-interest for the well being of the loka) are far greater and nobler than those arising out of vaṭṭa nissita cetanā kamma are far greater and nobler than those arising out of vaṭṭa nissita cetanā kamma (deed done for one’s self gain).

It is concrete evidence to dispel any doubts about it.

Therefore, when we do a meritorious deed, we should not look for our own benefit but do it with genuine love for the loka. Then only will the deed amount to a pāramī. As such deeds amount to Pāramīs, the world depends on those who perform

them. Because it depends on them, they are chosen as leaders. This is the result of the merits of pāramī called vivatta nissita kusala. The merits which do not amount to Pāramīs are called vatta nissita kusala.

Vivatta nissita kusala is the merit attained by deeds done in the majjhimaṭṭipadā middle way. Therefore, vivatta nissita kusala contains the nature of the extreme of 'likeness' in appearance (abheda). In essence, however, it surpasses abheda. As it also contains results of vatta nissita kusala, just as vatta nissita kusala bears results, vivatta nissita kusala, bears the results of bhava sampatti and bhoga sampatti.

As, in essence, it surpasses the vatta nissita kusala, however great the benefits may be, there is no attachment whatsoever to them. As there is no attachment, there is no sorrow (soka) to arise out of it. This shows the nature of the inclusion of the extreme of 'abheda' and the surpassing of it.

In the vivatta nissita kusala, according to the majjhimaṭṭipadā middle way, the extreme of 'unlikeness' (bheda) is included by appearance. It, however, also surpasses the extreme of 'unlikeness' (bheda) in essence. As it contains the extreme of 'unlikeness' (bheda), it achieves beyond saṃsarā happiness. As it surpasses, in essence, the extreme of 'unlikeness' (bheda), it is not the happiness for oneself alone, but for the entire loka concerned with him. For this reason, even though one has done whatever one has to do for one's own well being, one can ceaselessly go on working for the sake of the loka. If we look at the Buddha, he went on working till the last moment of his life, the Parinibbāna. To say in brief, because of the inclusion of the extreme of 'unlikeness' (bheda). one is happy . Because it surpasses the extreme of 'unlikeness', the loka is happy. Therefore, the Dhammapada says—

Tam bhūmirāma neyyakam.'

It means that where the arahats and the virtuous ones dwell, whether the place be a village, forest, valley or mound, it is the pleasantest of all places, suitable for the practice of dhammas. This is according to the majjhimaṭṭipadā middle way, the nature of the inclusion of 'unlikeness' (bheda) and of the surpassing of it.

Even if one has not yet achieved a magga, on account of kusala (merit), one will get on to the path of magga one day. It

will only be a matter of time. To reach there (magga) is a certainty.

If he is a bodhisatta, he will reach the goal at least in four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. If he is an embryo for a paccekabuddhahood he will reach the goal at least in two asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. If he is an embryo of a chief disciple, he will reach the goal in one asankeyya and a hundred thousand worlds. If he is an embryo for a senior disciple, he will reach the goal in a hundred thousand worlds. If he is an embryo for an ordinary disciple, he will reach the goal in an appropriate time, as there is no time limit for it. Therefore, the benefit attained from a deed done without any wish for it is greater than that done with a wish for it.

One has only to follow

Further, there are cases where lokuttara (supramundane) dhammas are taken as atta. In that case, atta is really a refuge to one; it is really a sanctuary for one. If akusala is taken as atta, or if kusala not amounting to a pāramī is taken as atta, the refuge or sanctuary will become a danger according to the Pāli text, which reads ‘Jatam saraṇato bhayam’. In order that one can be a true refuge or sanctuary for oneself -‘atta hi attano natho’ —only pāramī kusala and lokuttara dhammas should be taken as atta. In fact, only lokuttara dhammas are, as the goal of their life, the true refuge for human beings. Even though they cannot yet have lokuttara dhammas, the worldings should take the pāramī kusalas which are directed at the attainment of lokuttara dhammas as their goal of life, their refuge and their sanctuary.

It is not easy even to realize it. It can only be realized during the prevalence of the Buddha’s teachings. Even then, it is not easy to practise it. It will be possible only when one has the chance to meet with a good teacher who can explain to him the noble Ariya Truths. Even then, he himself should be able to comprehend and practise them.

It is, therefore, essential for those who have not yet attained lokuttara dhammas which are the true refuge and sanctuary to try to regulate their minds so that their kusala deeds amount to Pāramīs. They have now achieved such knowledge as they have been born at the time of the prevalence of the Buddha’s teaching. They do not need to do anything else on their part, but to follow.

Only pāramī kamma is real refuge

In the Pāli text, 'Upādānapaccaya bhavo', 'bhava' means 'kammabhava' (existence caused by kamma). As much as the kammabhava is good, the upapatti bhava (resultant existence) will also be good. As much as the kammabhava is right, the upapatti bhava will also be right. Therefore, the upapatti bhava is more important than kammabhava, which, in truth, is just kamma. Only if it is pāramī kamma, it will really be a refuge in one's life.

In truth, all daily deeds of one are led by knowledge (ñāṇa). Kamma has to follow the leadership of knowledge. For the knowledge to give the right leadership in physical, verbal and mental actions, it is necessary for it to be right.

But knowledge cannot freely come into being by itself. It has to obey the dictates of upādāna (clinging). Among the upādānas, attavadupādāna is very important. Attavādupādāna (clinging to soul theories that there is self, soul, ego, etc.) is clinging to what may be called atta. Those that should be called atta are lokiya (mundane) and lokuttara (supra mundane) dhammas. If they are lokuttara dhammas, they are truly a refuge and are correct for one's life. If, however, they are lokiya dhammas, they may or may not be truly a refuge for one's life. Therefore, it is important that the atta should be the right kamma so that it can be called a true refuge for one's life.

Since the beginning of the untraceable saṃsarā, the kammās which might be called 'atta' have been following us like shadows as upādānas (clinging), together with their relevant sense-objects. They will go on doing so until they are exterminated by maggas. Like shadows, they have clung to all our existences. Besides, they have influenced all our thinking and reasoning. That is the reason why when we try hard to think on our own, we cannot do it independently. We have to think and reason under the gloomy influence and orders of attavādūpādāna. This is called class consciousness, or knowing by instinct. Therefore, the one who dictates needs to be correct. Only when the dictator is correct, can the one who has to carry out his orders be able to do correctly. And only when the orders are executed correctly, will the goal of a happy life be attained.

The final goal of a happy life is to become an ariya (the winner of maggas), and to achieve that goal, it will be essential

winner of maggas), and to achieve that goal, it will be essential to perceive the Ariya Truths. And this cannot be done without fulfilling Pāramīs. Therefore, if only our pāramī kammās were attavādūpādāna which dictated our daily thinking and reasoning for the well being of our life, our journey of life would be directed at the hoped for goal of Ariya Sacca. Otherwise, instead of turning towards Ariya Sacca, we will turn our backs to it.

Remedy and Malady for loka

When we come to understand the nature of pāramī, we find that all the things in the world, whether they are rupa (physical phenomena) or nāma (mental phenomena), kusala (merit) or akusala (demerit), paramattha (ultimate truth) or paññati (conventional truth) and so on, can be put to use in some way or the other. In truth, there is nothing which cannot be put to some use. The only thing is to know how to use it. If the way to use is known, anything can be made use of.

If the way to use paññatti (conventional truth) is known, it can be used to attain jhānas and samapattis. If the way to use paramattha dhammas is known, they can be used for the realization of maggas and phalas. Even catumadhu (a preparation with four ingredients of honey, ghee, jaggery, etc) can be medicinal if rightly used. It will, however, be poison if wrongly used. In like manner, a poisonous plant can be used as medicine if the way to use it is known. If not, it is poison.

Therefore, usefulness and unusefulness depend on the individual (ajjhātika), rather than on the outside (bahiddha). If the use is right, it is ‘remedy’ for the world; if the use is wrong, it is ‘malady’ to the world. In fact, the right use can be attained only through pāramī. As one is a member of the ‘loka’, if a thing is ‘danger’ to the loka, it is also ‘danger’ to one. If it is ‘remedy’ to the world, it is also a remedy to one.

If the sense-objects know the akusala dhammas, as they really are, such knowledge being yathābhūta (real and correct) knowing (that is the right view) is ‘medicine’. If they do not know the akusala dhammas, as they really are, such knowing being wrong knowing (micchā diṭṭhi) is ‘danger’. If, however, the consciousness (arammanika) breeds the akusala dhammas, not as sense-objects, but as arammanika dhammas, it is ‘malady’. If without breeding them they appear in them and they know them, as worldlings generally do, to be akusala dhammas and try to get

rid of them, it is 'remedy'. Being worldlings (puthujjnas), only minds of worldlings can arise in them and in these minds, akusala minds are included. However, knowing them to be akusala minds as they really are and striving to get rid of them, and not knowing them to be akusala minds and striving to breed them is the difference between 'remedy' and 'malady' to the loka.

Samyojannas (fettters) are very important, particularly with reference to the world. They are akusala dhammas which belong to the 'malady' group. If samyojannas, however, can be made use of so that they would belong to the 'remedy' group, they can become 'remedy' to the world. To attain knowledge to make use of samyojanna as 'remedy' for the world, one must develop pāramī as the basis.

How to turn Samyojanas into Pāramīs

As soon as one is born as a human being, he is fettered to his life and surroundings. Therefore, when the surroundings move, he moves too. When he moves, the surroundings also move. If he moves with a good purpose, the surroundings will also move with a good purpose. If he moves with a bad purpose, the surroundings too will move with a bad purpose. Moving with a bad purpose means the moving centred on self-interest under the influence of taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi (papañca dhammas). Moving with a good purpose means the moving filled with compassion centred on the welfare of the world.

It is said, 'Dayāya na have thānam, paññaya na same thiti'. It means that in working for the welfare of the world, there is nothing as powerful as 'karuṇā' (compassion).

When the deed is done with compassion, the fetters turn into Brahmacara dhammas. Then, they can no longer be called fetters; they can only be called the paying of the debt of gratitude.

Because of these Brahmacara dhammas, even though Hermit Sumedha could attain Nibbāna at the time of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, he did not avail himself of the great opportunity, because he wanted to pay his debt of gratitude to the three worlds (the human, the deva and the brahma). Hermit Sumedha wanted to 'move' the thirtyone abodes of the world to which his life was fettered with a good purpose. This 'to move with a good purpose' may be called paying the debt of gratitude to the world together with the devas.

One who has a sense of gratitude

The most important thing in the world is to have a sense of gratitude. In the Paṭṭhana Pāli text as the Buddha has taught that beings depend for their support on the weather, food, other beings and locality (upanissaya paccaya), it is clear that the loka (world) is the benefactor of beings.

Human beings should, therefore, be grateful to their surroundings and the world. Only when one has a sense of gratitude, will one be able to pay the debt of gratitude. In fact, human beings are born of the surroundings and as such they are the children of their surroundings (loka). Therefore, there are life (bhava) and surroundings and the two are fettered by samyojannas.

Among those who have a great sense of gratitude for the surrounding world, the Buddha is the most outstanding. In fact, the gratitude owed to the surrounding world can only be fully appreciated by the Sabbaññuttañāṇa (perfect wisdom). Therefore, to be the one who knows the debt of gratitude owed to the surrounding world more than those who know best, and to be the one who can pay this debt more than those who can pay it best, even though he could achieve Nibbāna, then and there, at the time of Buddha Dipaṅkāra, Hermit Sumedha went on fulfilling the Pāramīs for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. In the immeasurable past also such great virtuous personages as Hermit Sumedha had also done their best to pay their debt of gratitude to the surrounding world. In the immeasurable future also, such great virtuous personages as Hermit Sumedha will also do their best to pay the debt of gratitude to the surrounding world.

Paying the debt of gratitude to the surrounding world is having a magnanimous relationship with it. This is called the fulfilling of a pāramī. The venerable Ledi Sayadaw states that the ‘Visuddhi Magga’ expounds it as ‘kattabba me vidam’ in his ‘Uttamapurisa Dīpanī’. It means that whatever job one might be assigned to do, one should treat it as a worthy job and discharge it with pure volition. This is called pāramī or an act of paying one’s debt of gratitude to the world. As it is the nature of paying debts of gratitude, the more it is done, the more one is filled with joy and satisfaction. Likewise, the more one treats things which ought to be done as his bounden duty and does them, the more will he be filled with joy and satisfaction.

As soon as one is born as a human beings and comes of age, he has to do some kind of work. It may be a physical, verbal or mental job. It is certain to be one of these three. Whatever it may be, it is necessary to perform it in the manner a pāramī is fulfilled.

As pāramī means deeds done by the virtuous ones, if one does any job in the way they have done, he will have, by doing so, fulfilled a pāramī. When one has thus fulfilled as pāramī, he had unconsciously directed himself towards santi sukha (the ultimate happiness).

This means making effort to consolidate the foundation for the attainment of the four Ariya Truths. For this reason, whatever one does in discharging his daily duties, one should regard it as the paying of the debt of gratitude to one's benefactor. This is called in Pāḷi the fulfilment of pāramī.

Ten Basic Tasks

The virtuous personages perform ten kinds of basic tasks in paying their debts of gratitude to the surrounding world. They are also called ten kinds of Pāramīs (perfections).

In every task, some kind of sacrifice is usually called for. Accordingly, if the need for sacrifice in the discharge of a task is accepted and one does that task, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Almsgiving, Dāna Pāramī.

If one does the task with pure volition without regard to one's self-interest, it is the fulfilling of the perfection of Morality, Sīla Pāramī.

If one does the task without any hope or longing whatever for material affluence, high offices or honour, leadership, respect by others, fame or other privileges, or to use the common terminology, bhava sampatti and bhoga sampatti, but does the task accepting it as worthy, it is the fulfilling of the perfection of Renunciation, Nikkhema Pāramī.

If one does the task, not regarding it as the highest advantage for oneself, but regarding it as of the highest advantage to the loka, using his physical and mental capabilities to the utmost, studying its causes and effects, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Wisdom, Pañña Pāramī.

If one does the task with unremitting zeal and energy, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Diligence, Viriya Pāramī.

If one does the task undaunted by the difficulties and obstacles encountered, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Forbearance, Khanti Pāramī.

If one does the task believing it to be deserving and without betraying this belief physically, verbally and mentally, faithfully goes on with the task in accordance with this belief, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Truth, Sacca Pāramī.

If one does the task, though he has to change the manner, in which it is being done to be in keeping with the changing times and conditions, he does not let any deviation from the original aim. It is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Resolution, Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī.

If one does the task with genuine loving-kindness upon the surrounding world, the loving-kindness which can enable one to denounce one's life, wealth and riches for the sake of the world, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Loving-Kindness, Metta Pāramī.

If one does the task, with composure, unperturbed or unmoved by praise or threats but keeping his mind steadfastly on the work in hand, it is the fulfilling of the Perfection of Equanimity, Upekkha Pāramī.

These are the ten kinds of basic tasks performed by the virtuous personages.

We have been born of the world as human beings and as such we are the children of the world. We should, therefore, realize the debt of gratitude we owe to the world. When we realize the debt we owe to the world, we will need to settle that debt.

Though only the Buddha himself has been able to settle this debt to the full, we, the worldlings, should try to pay this debt, as much as we can, which has been accumulating from the untraceable beginning of the saṃsarā.

Proportionate to the amount of the debt we have been able to settle, we will, while going through the round of rebirths, enjoy bhava sampatti and bhoga sampatti, though we have not hoped for, more than ordinary human beings and one day, gaining the successive levels of the maggas, achieve the ultimate peace (santi sukha).

In brief, if we do our daily tasks, bearing in our minds the above ten kinds of tasks, we are paying the debt we owe to the world. If we do thus, we are fulfilling the Pāramīs. Fulfilling the Pāramīs is directing our aim at the attainment of the ultimate peace. Directing our aim at the achievement of santi sukha is the foundation for the realization of the four Ariya Truths.

If, therefore, we want to be free from soka, parideva, dukkha and domanassa (grief, lamentation, pain and distress), which we have to face though we do not want to, we must settle in full the debt we owe to the world. Then only, will we really deserve to be called by the name of 'MAN'.

CHAPTER THREE

ESSENCE OF TEN PARAMIS

(A) DĀNA PARAMI

Vessantarā was the prince born of King Siñci and Queen Phussatī. King Siñci was the son of Sivrāja of the kingdom of Cetuttara. Queen Phussatī was the daughter of Maddarāja of Ceta. As Vessantarā was born on the traders' street while his father, the king, and his mother, the queen, were on a sight-seeing tour of the city, he was named Vessantarā. He was able to speak from the time of his birth.

Even while Vessantarā was in the womb of his mother Queen Phussatī, the queen was, because of his pāramī, seized by a desire to build six pavilions in the city, one each at the four main gates, one on the main street and one at the entrance of the palace to give away one lakh worth of alms from each every day. As the result, Vessantarā became very generous. On account of his past kammās (deeds), a white elephant of Uposattha stock came to his father's palace, as soon as he was born, for use as his royal elephant. It was named Paccaya. By the past Kammās of this royal elephant Paccaya, the kingdom of Cetuttara became more affluent and prosperous and was respected by the neighbouring countries. The climate was favourable and famines were never heard of.

First recognition by the loka

Prince Vessantarā even in his childhood days gave away his necklace worth a hundred thousand each to his nurses nine times. Both his father and mother readily approved of these gifts by

expressing their pleasure. At the age of eight, he resolved to give away even his heart (life) should any one come to ask for it, not to say of any external property. At this resolution, the earth quaked violently. It showed that even though the loka (world) is inanimate it does not remain indifferent where the dhamma is concerned. It always stands on the side of the dhamma. If it is so, what the attitude of the living which can appreciate the virtues of the dhamma will be may well be imagined. In truth, the loka comprises the human world, the deva and brahma realms. If there are living beings who do not appreciate the virtues of the dhamma, it will only be due to moha (bewilderment, ignorance). The quaking of the earth demonstrated the first recognition of the dāna pāramī of Bodhisatta Vessantarā.

Vessantarā came down from Tavatimsa deva realm and took conception in the human world. He, however, did not come down alone. Sixty thousand other devas accompanied him and were born in the homes of the sixty thousand ministers of King Siñci. Vessantarā, therefore, had sixty thousand birth-companions. In truth, Dhamma has its own strength and power, just as adhamma has own strength and power. Dhamma and adhamma are constantly at war in the world, but the dhamma always triumphs over adhamma in the end.

Prince Vessantarā learned the eighteen arts princes and kings had to learn. When he was sixteen years of age, he was married to Princess Maddīdevi, the daughter of King Maddaraja of Ceta. Then his father King Siñci handed over the throne to him. From that time King Vessantarā, together with Queen Maddīdevi ruled the kingdom of Cetuttara in accordance with ten kingly duties, four Saṅgaha dhammas (generosity, affability, wise conduct and impartiality) and six qualities of leaders. Prince Jāli and Princess Kaṇhājin were born to them.

After Vessantarā became king, he had six alms pavilions built, one each at the four gates of the city, one in the centre of the city and one at the palace entrance. He gave away alms worth a hundred thousand at each of them at a total cost of six hundred thousand every day. Under the rule of a benvolent monarch, the kingdom of Cetuttara was peaceful and prosperous.

Lokadhammas and right view

Life, however, was not a straight and smooth road; it went in a circle, so to speak. The life of Bodhissata Vessantarā and

family was no exception to this. Their life had its ups and downs like the flight of a pheasant. It is called the lokadhamma, the vicissitudes of life (changes of fortune). If one truly knows it to be the lokadhamma, such knowing is called yathābhūta (knowing truly). Yathābhūta knowing is the right view (sammā diṭṭhi). There are many kusalas (meritorious) deeds at the back of the right view. There should be no cause for losing heart. Kusala deeds will always bring about good results. For this reason when one encounters changes in fortune, it is important to know that it is a vicissitude of life (lokadhamma). If it is understood that only 'dukkha' and not 'sukha' is lokadhamma, or only 'sukha' and not 'dukkha' is a lokadhamma, or likewise misunderstanding the remaining pairs of lokadhamma, it will amount to micchādiṭṭhi, wrong view. There are lines and lines of akusala (demeritorious deeds) at the back of wrong view (micchā diṭṭhi). Akusalas (demeritorious deeds) will always bring about evil results. No one can surpass this law of nature. If one believes that it can be done, it will be because one does not have the right view (sammā diṭṭhi).

Once there was a drought in the kingdom of Kaliṅga and food became extremely scarce. It was followed by general unrest. Taking the example of the noble ones, the king kept sabbath and made a vow for the falling of rain. He also did whatever the former kings had usually done in such a calamity, but no rain came. The situation did not improve and the king could do nothing more. As the situation stood, there was nothing else the king and the people could do, but to prepare to meet their fate with arms down.

If no rain came by resorting to the dhammas, there was a way to cause rain. That way was to bring the white elephant Paccaya of the Uposattha stock to Kaliṅga. The wise men knew it. Really there would be rain wherever the Uposattha white elephants dwelt. That was the power of the Uposattha elephants. The wise ministers, therefore, urged the king to take necessary steps to send a delegation to King Vessantarā to get the white elephant Paccaya as a gift. Kaliṅga Kingdom had heard of the generosity of King Vessantarā. There was no other way to cause rain for Kaliṅga and it must be adopted.

Nature acknowledges

Then the king of Kaliṅga had the welfare of his kingdom at heart, had no pride and was condescending. Accepting the advice of his wise ministers, he sent a delegation of eight brahmins to King Vessantarā of Cetuttara to ask for the gift of the

white elephant Paccaya. The eight brahmins came to King Vessantarā and explaining the plight of Kaliṅga Kingdom, asked for the gift of the white elephant Paccaya.

On his round of the alms pavilions in the city. King Vessantarā had reached the southern gate pavilion when he met the Kaliṅga delegation of the eight brahmins. The day was auspicious and the object of the gift was extraordinary and unprecedented. When he heard about the terrible plight of the people of Kaliṅga, King Vessantarā was greatly moved. He straight away handed over the white elephant Paccaya after pouring ‘libation’ water on to the earth. (This is the sharing of merit with all beings and calling upon Vesundhare, guardian deva of the earth, to witness the dāna deed).

Then the earth quaked violently for the second time in approval of King Vessantarā’s dāna. The gift included all the paraphernalia of the white elephant worth about two million and four hundred thousand, elephant attendants and buildings. For this reason, the gift was called ‘Sabbasambhāradāna’.

When King Vessantarā’s alms giving is compared with the asseveration made by Prince Rāma in the Rāmāyana Epic, though both belonged to the age of absolute monarchs, the beliefs and the resolutions of the benevolent monarchs become more and more clear.

Prince Rama made the following vow in the Ramayana Epie:-

**“Saveham dayā ca sukhamca yadhi vā jānati mapi;
ārāadhanāya lokasa muñcato natthi me byāthā”**

“In working for the welfare of the world, if it will please and satisfy the people of the country, if they will be satisfied only when I renounce my loving-kindness, my compassion, or my kingship, or even my beloved Sītā devi, I will readily do so. I will not be displeased or dissatisfied to do it.”

Rāma was a bodhissata according to the belief of the brahmaṇas. Likewise King Vessantarā was a Bodhisatta to the Buddhists. In truth, the Bodhisattas view the world with only Kataññuta ‘eye’ (eye filled with gratitude). That is the reason why they can be put on eternal record as the beacons of life for those journeying in the darkness of saṃsarā (round of rebirths).

The people of Cetuttarā were furious at King Vessantarā's presentation of the white elephant Paccaya to the Kaliṅga kingdom at his own decision. In truth, the Cetuttarā people had a very high regard for their country and own people, and had a very low opinion of other countries and other people. To them, other countries and other people did not exist. They were the people who looked at the world through papañca 'eyes'. Their 'eyes' were different. When the 'eyes' differed, the views and beliefs, too, differed. from others.

Demanded at the risk of their lives

Then the people marched in a body to King Siñcī, father of King Vessantara and demanded Vessantara's exile. They also implied the threat that if King Vessantarā was not exiled, there could be much danger for him. From the modern point of view, this demand entailed great risk to lives on the part of the people.

Both King Siñcī and King Vessantarā belonged to the Khattiya lineage. By tradition of those days, the Khattiyas were responsible for the administration of the country and, in this, they were entrusted with absolute power. An excellent lineage was much valued in those days. It was called āgamana suddhi, purity and excellence of lineage. In modern parlance, it will mean a clean historical background.

According to the absolute monarchy system, the king could punish anyone with death. The then existing laws permitted it. King Siñcī could take drastic action against those who demanded Vessantarā's exile. He had the authority to do it. If he took such action, the problem would be solved.

King Siñci, however, solved the problem by ordering Vessantarā's exile to the Wiṅkapā range of the Himalayas as demanded by the people of Cetuttarā. According to the prayer of the commentator, 'Rājā rakkhatu dhammana attano va pajam pajam', Vessantarā was his own son. The people were also his own children. In a dispute between the children, if one was against many, many should win. Therefore, though he loved his son, he ordered his son's exile.

However, when his son Vessantarā requested for the postponement of the exile for one day to enable him to hold a great alms giving function of seven kinds of gifts in seven hundreds, King Siñci approved it. Really Vessantarā's exile was ordered on account of the giving away of the white elephant Paccaya. In spite

of it, he wanted to give away seven kinds of gifts in seven hundreds. King Vessantarā's view and spirit were exceptional.

Vessantarā was the one who looked at the loka through Kataññuta 'eye', not through Papañca 'eye'. When it was looked through Kataññata 'eye', the loka appeared as a truly charming benefactor. Vessantarā had from the time of his existence as hermit Sumedha four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds ago, taken loans of pāramī from the loka. He knew it by the intuitive power of pāramī. He was still taking loans of pāramī. Because he saw the loka as a truly charming benefactor, he could not be indignant with it. How could those who have a sense of gratitude be indignant with their benefactors who are charming and adorable?

The day after he had given away the white elephant Paccaya, Vessantarā with the permission of his father, accompanied by 60,000 birth-companions, went to the six pavilions and gave away 700 elephants, 700 horses, 700 chariots, 700 women, 700 milch cows, 700 male slaves and 700 female slaves.

Nature stood on the side of dhamma

At this, the earth quaked to signify its approval of the dāna. It was the third time the earth quaked to express its approval. It was a demonstration that nature stood on the side of dhamma. Before Vessantarā gave away alms, he proceeded alone to Maddidevi and told her to do dāna deeds, to take greater care of their son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin, to return to her native country and to marry again if she so wished. He added that after he had made the dāna of seven kinds of gifts in seven hundreds, he would on the first waning day leave for the Wiṇkapā range as ordered by his father, the king.

To this, Maddidevi replied that she, together with their son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin, would accompany him. Actually, Maddidevi, son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin, were companions in the fulfilment of Pāramīs of Vessantarā for the attainment of the Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and they had, by nature, the same traits of personal nature as Vessantarā.

Nature Knows everything.

Besides, Maddidevī gave a glowing account of the pleasantness of the Himalayan forest from what she had heard of to the king. In fact, according to the Paṭṭhāna discourse, the surroundings

serve the interests of the persons concerned (Upānissaya paccaya). Whether those persons are conscious or unconscious of the service done to them thus, they are benefitted by it. The Himalaya is a forest and is a place where the virtuous dwell. It is also the haunt of all kinds of animals which are devoid of wiles and false pretences and which freely express their emotions. Therefore, the purity and the innocence of the Himalaya has an influence on its dwellers. It is an influence of purity which is honesty. And honesty is straightforwardness. If one is straight forward, both in body and mind, it is called in Pāli 'Uju'. If one is straight forward in mind, it is called 'Suhuju' according to the Metta Sutta. In truth, nature is honest and pure. It is not only honest and pure, but also knows everything.

Maddidevi's view and Knowledge.

The Buddha practised the dhāmma in the forest and achieved Perfect Wisdom also in the forest. All the virtuous ones of the past enjoyed living in the forests. Invaluable treasures are found in the forests. In fact, the surroundings, as upādāna (clinging) give rise to consciousness of life. The surroundings of the ignoble ones give rise to the consciousness of life for one to become ignoble. The surroundings of the virtuous ones give rise to the consciousness of life for one to become virtuous. The surroundings of the wrong believers (micchā diṭṭhis) give rise to the consciousness of life for one to become a wrong believer.

Maddidevi was not at all an insignificant character. She was the Bodhissata's partner in the fulfilment of Pāramīs. Had not Maddidevi given the necessary support to King Vessantarā (the Bodhissata), he would not be able to achieve Perfect Wisdom (sabbaññuta ñāṇa) and to become the Buddha. Therefore, Maddidevi's view and knowledge were those that sprang from the pāramīs in her subconscious minds, it might be said. Her inborn tendency and intuition began to develop as pāramī four asankheya and a hundred thousand worlds ago. Therefore, her beautiful speech on the glories of the Himalayas was a true description. To those who understand the source from which knowledge and views arise, there is nothing questionable about her speech.

The Inanimate also speaks

According to the orders of king Siñcī and the wish of the people of Cetuttarā, King Vessantarā and family came out of the

capital for the journey to Viñkapā range. At a little distance from the city, he stopped and looked back at the city where he had reigned to bid farewell. At that instant, the earth quaked for the fourth time. Inanimate things too could speak just as animate beings do. However, the words of the animate are generally understood, though they might not be understood completely. But there are very few who understand the words of the inanimate. If they were understood they became ‘niyāma’, precedent or way for the world. This nature is seen in the scientific sphere. King Vessantarā understood the words of the earth. As the result, King Vessantarā would be able to expound the way for the three lokas (worlds). That way or precedent is the ‘Ariya Sacca’ (the Four Noble Ariya Truths).

The Light of pāramī

King Vessantarā and family reached Maddidevi’s native kingdom of Ceta where King Maddarāja ruled. They did not enter the city but lodged at the rest house outside. King Maddarāja had heard the news of King Vessantarā and family. Ceta princes offered the throne of Ceta to King Vessantarā who declined. According to the Pāli text, ‘Andhī bhūto ayam loko’, all the worldlings are travellers in the Saṃsarā groping their way in the dark, but Vessantarā was not one of them. He was travelling by the light of dawn, the light of pāramī.

Those travelling in the dark could not proceed straight ahead as they could not see properly. As King Vessantarā was travelling by the light of dawn, he could see his way and travel straight forward. His destination was not to become king of Maddarāja in Ceta. He was bound for Viñkapā range to comply with the wishes of Cetuttarā people as ordered by his father King Siñcī. This was the attitude of those who were respectful and humble for the sake of loka (world).

One who could see ‘Rati’ and ‘Rasa’

King Vessantarā was respectful to his benefactor, the loka. He was also one who respected his own decision. He was truthful and resolute. His truthfulness (sacca) and resolution (adhiṭṭhāna) were firm. He would not deviate even a single hair’s breath from them. He was one who could discern pleasure (rati) in truthfulness. He could also enjoy the delightfulness (rasa) of resolution (adhiṭṭhāna). Everything has its worth and its pleasure and

delightfulness. These could be discerned only when one knew how to discern them. When one discerned them, one felt satisfied that the sacrifice was worthwhile. It became a delight to Vessantarā to renounce the kingdom and to take to the forest. He, therefore, requested the Ceta princes only to help him get to Wiñkapā.

At last 60,000 Ceta princes acceded to his request and walked with him and his family for a distance of 15 yojanas. Then they bade farewell after ordering Ceta hunters to go along with King Vessantarā as guide. The Ceta princes actually did not want to go back. They wanted to accompany the party till they reached Wiñkapā. But they returned as King Vessantarā ordered them to do.

Dhammas he himself had practised

All those who are born to pure lineages (āgamana suddhi) are meek and submissive. They seldom give excuses. They look at the surrounding world as their benefactor, with the 'eye' of gratitude. As such, they have earned the quality of respectfulness. When they do it, they also earn the quality of humility and submissiveness at the same time. These were the qualities King Vessantarā had been practising since the time he was hermit Sumedha. When he became the Buddha, he would preach these practices as Maṅgala dhammas.

In fact, all the dhammas the Buddha preached for fortyfive vassas (residence period of the rains for monks) were his own personal experiences throughout his existences as Bodhisatta up to the time he finally attained Sabbaññuta ñāṇa (perfect wisdom). None of them were fanciful fairy tales. All of them could be practised with profit by everybody. They were all discourses and code of moral conduct for the benefit the whole world.

King Vessantarā and family, under the guidance of Ceta hunters reached the Wiñkapā range. The wish, the spirit, the diligence and knowledge of those with exceptional (kammās) deeds are imbued with great power. They have undergone severe practices to achieve it. Being imbued with great powers, in whatever work they do, either worldly or supramundane, they will all meet with success. Therefore, hermitages for them to dwell in were ready for them in Wiñkapā. King Vessantarā occupied one and Maddidevi and the two children occupied another. They all practised the dhamma of the noble ones. Their minds were pure and they had peace as much as their minds were pure.

Maddidevi went out every day to look for and collect fruits for the king and the two children. Whatever fruits she brought back, they shared among themselves. Then they practised bhāvanā meditation. Their life was so very peaceful. However, the day to break this peace and to cause heart-breaking sorrow arrived for King Vessantarā's family.

That was the day brahmin Jūjakā from the village of Dunniviṭṭha of Kaliṅga kingdom appeared there to ask King Vessantarā to give his son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhajin to serve his wife Amitapum as slaves. On the day Jūjakā arrived, King Vessantarā and family had completed the seventh month of their sojourn in Wiṅkapā as hermits peacefully practising bhāvanā. That was the machination of the forces on the side of the dhamma to enable King Vessantarā to give away his children as dāna (and thus accomplish a pāramī deed).

Cause and Effect

For a result to arise there is no such thing as coincidence (happening by chance) in this world according to the law of nature. There is only the culmination of causes. No result arises by chance unless the causes reach fruition state. When a result arises and the chain of causes responsible for it cannot satisfactorily be found, it is said, by general consent, to be a case of coincidence. Such a statement, according to Paṭṭhāna desana, Paṭiccasamuppāda (law of cause and effect), or paramattha Sacca (ultimate truth) is groundless. In truth, according to the desanās (teachings) successive causes have their own chain. No result can arise by breaking this chain of causes.

Brahmin Jūjakā came to ask Vessantarā for the gift of his two children at the time Maddhidevi was away. When son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhajin found out that the Brahmin Jūjakā came to ask for them as gift, they went down into the pond and hid themselves. But when their father came to the pond and called them, both of them came out of their hiding place. Then King Vessantarā gave away son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhajin to Brahmin Jūjakā after pouring 'libation' water. Then the earth quaked for the fifth time in approval and joy at the dāna.

Law of nature has no short-cut

Parents have immeasurable love for their children. In this, some love for their own sake and some for 'loka' (world). In

loving for the sake of 'loka', it also includes one's own children. King Vessantarā loved his children for the sake of 'loka'. It is the love for their welfare. In truth, King Vessantarā had the volition for his children to be free from saṃsarā (round of rebirths) dukkha. If a large profit is wanted, an enormous outlay of capital has to be put in. It is the law of nature which has no short cut. There is only this age-old way.

The ultimate happiness (santi sukha) is the highest happiness. Therefore, to gain this ultimate happiness, one has to put in the largest outlay of sacrificing his life. So King Vessantarā, in his endeavour to save the loka, used his son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin as a part of the enormous outlay. He had planned for it.

Buddhism came into being because of the inestimable sacrifices of King Vessantarā and his family made for the three lokas (human, deva and brahma). The Buddhists of today are able to distinguish between kusala and akusala (merit and demerit) because of these inestimable sacrifices of King Vessantarā and his family. If King Vessantarā and his family had not made such extreme sacrifices, the Buddha would not have appeared in this world. The Four Ariya Truths would also not have come into existence. People would not be able to differentiate between mind and matter, or kusala and akusala. How adorable and respectable King Vessantarā and family were!

The forces of the dhamma were not negligent of the world. They had the responsibility to see that the true dhammas prevail in the world. They were aware of their responsibility.

When King Vessantarā gave away son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin he set the ransom for each. The release of the two children could be effected only by the payment of that ransom.

When he got the two children, the brahmin Jūjakā set out for his home with them to Dunniviṭṭha village in Kaliṅga, but he lost his way and reached instead Sivi in Cetuttara. This was what King Vessantarā had wanted to happen. 'Ijjhati bhikkhave Sīlavato cetopañidhi visudhattā' the Piṭakas state. The meaning is that if one really has a pure and noble mind as well as wholesome morality, one will always have one's wishes fulfilled.

Therefore, if one wants his enterprises to succeed, one need to have a pure and noble mind as well as wholesome morality. One should not be a hypocrite or a self-seeker. One

should have zeal and basic moral principles. Then one's wishes will become iddhipādas, the basis for power. Then they become iddhipādas, they have power. When they have power, one can have all his wishes come true. The important thing is to have good morality, to be simple and honest, to have diligence and the ability to understand the relationship between cause and effect. Then only will one's wishes become powerful by themselves.

It is said, 'If you really have a strong desire and you really work hard for it, you will achieve it'. But, in practice, though you really work hard, success is not always certain. Only when one has good morality, purity of mind and volition, the ability to understand the relationship between cause and effect and perseverance to go on working till one achieves one's aim, will success be certain to one who really has strong desire and really works hard for it.

In truth, the wish of King Vessantarā fulfilled all these essential requirements. For this reason, Brahmin Jūjakā found that he had inadvertently taken the two royal children, according to Vessantarā's wish, to their grandfather King Siñci. Here also, it was not a coincidence. It was a case of a particular cause and a relevant particular effect arising out of it.

Stupendous Outlay for the Loka

When Maddidevi returned from her search for fruits, she did not see her son and daughter and King Vessantarā also did not speak to her. She was filled with intense worry and could not sleep. She wandered to all the places her children used to go and looked for them the whole night. When it dawned, she returned weeping to King Vessantarā and fell down unconscious at his feet.

When King Vessantarā found that she was still breathing, he sprinkled her head and chest with water and massaged her. She regained consciousness. Then King Vessantarā explained to her that he had given away their son and daughter to Brahmin Jūjakā but he did not break the news as soon as she got back for fear that it might break her heart. She called 'Sādhu' (well done) for the deed.

Besides, she told him to have faith in the gift and wished him to do even greater deeds of dāna in future. It is really astounding! What a stupendous sacrifice for the world!

Knowing that conquers Sorrow.

Sakka, king of devas, came posing as a brahmin to King Vessantarā and requested for the gift of Maddidevi and King Vessantarā readily complied with the request. At this deed also, the earth quaked violently for the sixth time in approval. Then Sakka revealed that he was actually Sakka, the king of devas, and re-entrusted Maddidevi to Vessantarā for attending to his needs. Then he asked Vessantarā to tell him his wishes. King Vessantara made eight wishes beginning with the wish that the people of Cetuttara had no more anger against him and that his father King Siñci would recall him. Saying that all his eight wishes would come true, Sakka returned to the Tāvatisa abode. King Vessantarā and Maddidevi remained in peace in the Wiñkapā range. They had conquered sorrow (soka). The knowing which enabled to conquer sorrow would give rise to the happiness of peace. The outcome of this peace was enjoyed by both Vessantarā and Maddidevi. Only this kind of knowing is called 'Sandiṭṭhika' (personally and experienced) in the Piṭakas.

Work of kamma is beyond understanding

When the climate of Kaliṅga returned to normal and became regular, the King of Kaliṅga returned the white elephant Paccaya to Cetuttara. Then the people of Cetuttara had not only no more anger against King Vessantarā but also wished him to return to the home country as they understood his loving-kindness and volition. Grandfather King Siñci paid the price set for the release of Prince Jāli and Princess Kaṇhājin. Besides, King Siñci presented a seven-storey mansion to Brahmin Jūjakā who was not one that could withstand the onslaught of affluence. He enjoyed the pleasures without any restraint and died of indigestion after taking an enormously rich meal.

Father King Siñci, riding the white elephant Paccaya, accompanied by a large retinue and Queen Phussatī, together with 60,000 birth-companion ministers of Vessantarā, set out for Wiñkapā range. When the six royal persons met at Wiñkapā they were so much overcome by joy and grief, they all fainted and fell unconscious to the ground. Then the earth quaked for the seventh time. When Sakka, king of devas, caused the Pakkharasa rain to fall and they all regained consciousness. Then they returned to the kingdom. Vessantarā and Maddhidevi again ruled Cetutara as king and queen for the rest of their lives. They gave alms more

than ever before. The fruit of true deeds of merit done with genuine volition was unbelievable. ‘Kammaa visayo acinteyyo’ the Piṭakas say. It means that the amazing work of kamma is beyond the comprehension of ordinary persons.

In the Vessantarā jātaṅga, all the six royal characters were puthujjanas (worldlings). As they were not yet completely free from fetters (samyojannas), they still had love for one another. They were tender towards one another. They were attached to one another. However, being those with Pāramīs and wishing for the welfare of one another, they loved, were tender, were attached to one another more than ordinary people. These were the attitudes of the six royal characters.

In spite of the fact that King Vessantarā was a noble man of pāramī, he drew out his dagger from its sheath to kill Brahmin Jūjakā when he saw the brahmin striking his son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin. It demonstrated his emotion regarding his son and daughter. When he saw the pitiable wailing of his son Jāli and his daughter Kaṇhājin, the pain he felt nearly broke his heart and he went into the hermitage and wept. From these evidences, it can be seen how much King Vessantarā loved and was attached to his son and daughter. King Vessantarā also truly loved Maddidevi. They were of one mind in everything though they were two separate individuals according to the Pāli text, ‘Advittam sukka dukkhesu’. They were always of one mind in good fortune or adversity, or when they met with the vicissitudes of life (lokadhammas). Such a love is called ‘advitta metta’. Maddidevi also love King Vessantarā in the same way.

As regards wealth, a king’s riches and luxuries are things to be longed for, to be desirous of. All those who are not free from greed would long for, would want them. Lobha (greed) by its nature will long for wealth and luxuries. Dosa (anger) by its nature will arouse resentment and indignation. It is the characteristic of paramattha (ultimate reality) dhammas. Therefore the Piṭakas say.

“Natthi rāga samo aggi; natthi dosasamo kali”

Which means that there is no fire like passion (rāga); there is no crime like dosa (anger). Therefore, when it came to their relationship with one another or with property and wealth, the six royal persons, being worldlings would have their own personal feelings and considerations.

They, however, had an intuitive consciousness to restrain such feelings and considerations even if they could not do away with them altogether. It was not the kind of consciousness which could be attained in no time. It was the consciousness which had arisen out of Pāramīs that had been accumulated for asankheyya worlds . It was the kind that others did not possess but only they did. By this consciousness King Vessantarā had been able to get rid of akusala thoughts and had been able to quit the throne for the sake of the people and to give away children and wife for the loka (world).

He did these deeds not primarily for the sake of himself, but primarily for the sake of all beings as the Piṭakas say, ‘Kim me ekena tiṇṇena’. If one wanted to liberate all the beings, one must be a real man who has the ability to do it. To be such a real man, therefore, King Vessantarā did this very difficult act of renunciation. He was sacrificing his life. To others, the animate and inanimate things he had renounced were objects they would acquire by any means, not objects to be given away thus for the sake of the world. To King Vessantarā these animate and inanimate objects were those he would acquire by any means to be given away for the sake of the world. Thus the views differed and as much as the views differed, the actions too differed.

Difference in Views

Differences in views do not depend upon the sense-objects experienced. It depends on one’s own ‘eye’ (manner one looks at). One can have different views of even Brahmin Jūjakā alone. When one looked at through the papañca ‘eye’, he was seen as a despicable person. That is seeing with taṇhā (craving), māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (wrong view) ‘eye’. When one looked at him through Kataññuta (gratitude) ‘eye’, he was seen as a benefactor to whom we owed our thanks.

If Jūjakā had not come to King Vessantarā and asked for the gift of his son Jāli and daughter Kaṇhājin, the (Bodhissata’s) plan for the liberation of the veneyyas (those to be converted) might have taken an entirely different course. Just as all curries need salt for their taste, all life dramas could not do without a villain (one who opposes the hero). It is the nature of the straight forward order (anuloma) and the reverse order (patiloma) order of the pairs of dhammas (e.g. Paticca sammuppada), Kataññuta ‘eye’ is the view which sees the surrounding world as benefactor. When

it is looked at through Sampajañña ‘eye’ (intelligent view), Jūjakā is not seen as Jūjakā but is just seen as nāma and rupa (mind and matter). There is no individual or no being. There is only the aggregate of mind and matter. The Sampajañña ‘eye’ in the ‘eye’ of samādhi (mental concentration) ñāṇa (knowledge). It might be called ‘Nāma rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa’. When it is looked at through the vipassanā ‘eye’, it is seen that mind and matter (nāma rūpa) are nothing but anicca, dukkha and anatta dhammas which are always arising and dissolving. There is nothing substantial. When it is looked at through maggañāṇa ‘eye’, even the arising and dissolving of phenomena will not be seen. Only the Nibbāna where they end will only be seen. When it is looked at through Sabbaññuta ‘eye’, it will be seen that Jūjakā is a pitiable creature ‘veneyya’ who should be liberated from the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). Actually, the sense-object is not different. It is only one Jūjakā; only the views on him differ.

Therefore, it should be understood that on the same sense-object (arammana), there are different views according to the points from which it is looked at. With this end in view, it is said, ‘Ekam sati vipyā behudhā vadanti’. It means that the wise have different views on the same existing dhamma. Of these various views, King Vessantarā looked at the loka only through the eye of Kataññuta (gratitude). For this reason, even such a person Jūjakā could be, in the eyes of Vessantarā, a pitiable one who deserved to be thanked. As long as one regards a person to be his benefactor, one will go on loving and being kind to him and wanting to pay back satisfactorily the debt of gratitude. It is the law of nature. Therefore, if one is able to see the surrounding world with an ‘eye’ of gratitude, one has, by this very act, fulfilled a pāramī.

Wonderful Family System

Besides there is one point which is very encouraging and which deserves to be emulated. That is the family system of that age. It was based on ‘advitta metta’, undivided and homogenous loving kindness. For this reason, King Vessantarā’s family was of one mind and of one voice in everything. It might be called in modern parlance ‘comradeship’. When one really has a sense of comradeship, one will never think of taking advantage of one’s comrades. They will never desert one another through woe and weal. They will not hesitate to regard it as an honour to make the

supreme sacrifice to help a comrade to reach his goal. This trait can be seen in King Vessantarā in giving away as gifts his son Jāli, his daughter Kaṇhājin and his queen Maddidevi.

Dāna amounting to Pāramī Kusala

Further, it is also seen that in doing a dāna (alms giving) deed, the morality and character of the receiver, according to Pāramī Kusala (merit) was not primary. Only the morality and volition of the giver were of primary importance. The Uttamapurisa Dipani (of the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw) states that an alms giving deed made in consideration of the merits to be earned, by choosing the status of the receiver, is not a pāramī kusala (deed of merit). According to the jātaka, Brahmin Jūjakā was not a man of morality. Neither were those Kaliṅga brahmins who came to ask for the white elephant. However, when King Vessantarā gave away what they asked for, the earth quaked to demonstrate its approval. This was because the morality and volition of King Vessantarā fulfilled the requirements of pāramī. It is evident that a kusala deed which is named pāramī can only be done by the really virtuous.

The reverberations of our daily physical, verbal and mental actions spread throughout the thirtyone abodes (bhūmis) in area. By time, they spread throughout the saṃsarā, (round of rebirths). It is like the broadcasting of radio waves in modern times, which is the power of matter. If the power of matter can spread so much and so far, the power of kamma (deeds) will be able to spread much more and much farther. The power of the mind is by far much greater than that of matter. Therefore, it is said, 'Kamma visayo acinteyyo'.

For this reason, the devas and brahmas were keeping constant vigilance to help King Vessantarā to enable him to do good deeds. Every time King Vessantarā did a good deed, they approved and cheered. This is the power of kamma (deed).

Dāna is the giving away of some gift but a dāna is accomplished even though no material object is given away. If one sacrifices his life for the well being of the loka, it is a dāna amounting to a pāramī. In truth, only the virtuous ones can do deeds at a sacrifice and there can be no dispute as to their pāramī characteristic. In doing a dāna deed, as dāna is of primary importance, it is called dāna pāramī. In truth, when a dāna deed amounts to a pāramī, the other pāramīs are also involved

If the dāna is done free from evil deeds (duccaritas) Sīla pāramī is also included in the dāna pāramī. If a dāna deed is done without longing for any benefit in the present life or life in the hereafter, but entirely for the good of the loka, the nikkhama (renunciation) pāramī is also included in it. If the deed is intended for the receiver's delight, the paññā (wisdom) pāramī is also involved. If effort is made for the successful accomplishment of the deed, the vīriya (diligence) pāramī is also included. If forbearance is exercised to overcome the difficulties encountered in the dāna deed, the khanti (forbearance) pāramī is also included. Doing the dāna without fail as one has intended is the inclusion of Sacca (Truth) pāramī. Taking steps to ensure that one's decision comes true is the inclusion of Adhiṭṭhāna (Resolution) pāramī. Diffusing loving-kindness on the receiver of the gift is the inclusion of Metta Pāramī. If one is indifferent to the praise or to the ridicule or censure of the receivers of the gift, it is the inclusion of Upekkha (equanimity) pāramī.

Deeds of the Virtuous Ones

Men do physical, verbal and mental deeds every day and it is in their power to perform them as pāramī deeds like those done by the virtuous. The virtuous do their deeds without hoping for any benefit from them, but do them in discharge of their responsibilities as man. They do it with pure volition. Then only are their deeds called deeds of the virtuous.

Only when one does not hope for any benefit out of a deed, does that deed amount to nikkhama (renunciation) nature. Only when a deed has the nature of nikkhama, can it be called a pāramī. The meaning of nikkhama is ‘to get out of’, or ‘to get out of all attachments’. When one has this nature, one is able to be patient with everything. One can calmly endure the bad as well as the good. This is called Khanti pāramī. (Perfection of Forbearance). One can forgive everything, the bad as well as the good. Forgiving is Upekkha pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity). Therefore, whatever deed one might perform, if it is done without hoping to gain any benefit, without being down-hearted by difficulties, with equanimity by not being moved by fear and flattery, it is called a deed done in the manner of the virtuous ones.

In all the deeds done by King Vessantarā in the jātaka, this noble nature of pāramī is always seen. Even when he looked at the world, he did it with kataññuta (gratitude) eyes. When one

looks at someone through Kataññuta eyes, one already has diffused metta (loving-kindness) on that person. When he does so, the natures of Nikkhama, Khanti and Upekkha too come to be involved. Then no response or thankfulness would be expected in return from that person. Not expecting any response is the primary nature of pāramī. The nature of pāramī, in short, is that it is everybody's duty to work for the welfare of the world. Here duty does not mean fighting for position or to be well placed. Only the leader's position is not called duty. A lowest follower's duty also is equally a duty. Doing one's duty to the full is fulfilling a pāramī.

Highlights Karuṇā and Paññā

The life of King Vessantarā is the dramatisation of compassion (karuṇā) and wisdom (paññā) of the Buddha demonstrated in his noble deeds as Bodhissatta for four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds — in renouncing his throne, luxuries and riches, in giving away limbs and even his life with no regard to his own welfare but for the sake of the world. There are many similar jākata stories dealing with the Buddha's dāna pāramī, such as Terasaka nipāta, Akitti jākata. In that story hermit Akitta lived on soup simply boiled with kanpyin leaves. He did without it for three days and offered it to Sakka, deva King, who came to him disguised as a brahmin. When Sakka asked him why he lived such an austere life, he replied that he was not practising austerities for accumulation of wealth and riches, but for becoming a Buddha to save the veneyyas (those to be converted). In fact, the wise Akitta had been a rich man who had renounced his wealth and had become a hermit. He had the ability by his power of dhamma to shake Sakka's mansion. Such is the power of a kusala deed which really amounts to a pāramī.

In the Sankha story of Dassa nipāta, brahmin Sankha offered his umbrella and slippers to a paccekabuddha who came walking on a sandy path as hot as burning charcoal. In the Visayhā story of Catuttha nipāta, the rich man Visayha gave alms every day. When his wealth was finished, he reaped grass and sold it. He and his wife went without food seven days till they fainted because of hunger. With the money earned by selling grass, he gave alms. His deed was so powerful that it shook the mansion of Sakka, the deva king.

In the Sivi story of Visati nipāta, King Sivi gave away his eyes to Sakka, who came to him disguised as a blind man.

Deed of Merit not done in vain

Pāramīs which are the deeds of the virtuous are mainly aimed at the annihilation of craving (taṇhā). The killing of craving is the goal of the virtuous. So long as there is craving, one will crave for all sensual things. As long as there is craving for sensual things, the world will never be peaceful. For this reason, the Buddha has taught that taṇhā (craving) is the main cause for the arising of dukkha.

Therefore, if one really wants the world to be peaceful, one should strive to kill taṇhā in him which craves for everything it sees. To kill taṇhā is not at all an easy job. Though it is not easy, it can be done. All the virtuous ones have done it. It is, however, important that though one is actually doing things which make taṇhā grow, one should not deceive oneself by pretending to be trying to diminish it. The Kamma niyāma (natural law of Kamma) knows the truth. It cannot be deceived.

In fact, a pāramī deed of merit is never done in vain (ahosikam).

Only kusala deeds not amounting to pāramī are done in vain. Therefore, in the killing of craving which is dwelling in one, so that peace might reign the loka (world), whatever one does, one should give up self interest step by step in order that it will amount to a pāramī, according to the saying

"Daring to sacrifice little by little will ensure good future existences"

It is the duty of each and everybody to work for peace in the loka. In this, as far as one can kill craving which is dwelling in him and which put self-interest in the forefront, one discharges his duty that much. In fact, it should be understood that this is the path which is associated with Sacca (Truth) and which cannot go wrong as it has been taken by successive generations of the virtuous ones.

(B) SILA PARAMI

(Perfection of Morality)

The Venerable Janakābhi Vam̐sa cited the story of Prince Alinasattu, a Bodhisatta, with reference to Sīla pāramī (Perfection of Morality) . The stories of Bhuridatta Dragon King and Hsaddanta Elephant King were also prominent in this regard.

The essence of Sīla Pāramī is to refrain from committing evil (duccarita dhammas), to uplift one's moral conduct. Here refraining from duccaritas ordinarily means refraining from three kinds of physical evil deeds and four kinds of verbal evil deeds. One who can refrain from committing them is said to be a person of morality. Not earning one's livelihood by doing evil is sammā ājīva (right livelihood). When one earns one's livelihood in the right way (sammā ājīva), sammā kammanta (right action) and sammā vacā (right speech) are also accomplished. Then a locality free from duccaritas (evils) will come into being. In a locality which is free from duccaritas, sucaritas (wholesome dhammas) will flourish and as much as sucaritas flourish there will be peace.

Here sammā kammanta (right action) means refraining from killing, from taking by force what belongs to others and wrongful sexual conduct called three physical misdeeds. Such refraining is called sammā kammanta. Sammā vācā (right speech) means abstaining from falsehood, back-biting, harsh speech, unbeneficial frivolous speech. Such abstinence is called sammā vācā. Sammā ājīva means abstinence from the above mentioned evils in earning one's livelihood. If physical deeds not concerned with the earning of livelihood are done, it is micchā kammanta (wrong action). It nullifies sammā ājīva. If verbal deeds not concerned with the earning of livelihood are done, it is micchā kammanta (wrong action). It nullifies sammā ājīva.

It should especially be noted that mere observance of morality (Sīla) does not amount to the fulfilment of Sīla Pāramī. Only when one does not long for bhava sampatti (higher existences) and bhoga sampatti (wealth and luxuries) will the Sīla amount to Pāramī Sīla. For this reason, purity and straightforwardness of the mind is greatly needed for the Sīla to be called Pāramī Sīla. Logically, Sīla Pāramī can only be built upon purity and straightforwardness of the mind. When one is pure and straightforward in mind, one is reasonably free from mental evils (mano duccaritas), too.

According to ‘Sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā’ of the Pāli text, all beings in the world are mainly concerned with means of supporting life (that is finding food). They commit evil physical misdeeds (kāya duccaritas) in connection with procuring food. They commit evil verbal deeds. There are, however, some who commit evil physical and verbal deeds unconnected with procuring food. They do so in seeking sensual pleasures for themselves. (kāmasukhalikanuyoga). In fact, seeking sensual pleasures without any restraint is following the kāmasukhalikanuyoga practice. On the other hand, forcible restraint of one’s mind would amount to pursuing the ‘Attakilamathānuyoga’, self-afflicting practices.

How to attain peace

Only when the surroundings are peaceful, one can have peace, because one is a part of the surroundings. For the surroundings to be peaceful, duccaritas should decline and sucaritas (good dhammas) should gain strength. And for the sucaritas to gain strength, people should strive to purify their moral conduct more and more. Purity of moral conduct is called nobleness.

It is true that development is desirable, but there are three kinds of it, viz. material development, mental development and moral development.

As far as material development is concerned, men are so advanced today that they are travelling into space, but the world has found no peace yet. In truth, if there is no peace, how can it be possible to have happiness? Therefore, it should be said that the world’s happiness depends upon world peace. Besides, regarding mental development, there are admirable advances both

in the arts and science spheres. It is unpredictable to what extent they will go on progressing. We wonder whether they will progress up to the point of extinction. As matters stand now, if it were asked whether the world had found peace, the answers would be 'no' in one voice. Who would be able to dispute the correctness of this answer.

Happiness depends on peace but peace does not depend on material progress or on mental progress. The present state of the world bears testimony to this fact. In fact, the material and mental progress not only does not bring peace to the world but is also becoming a threat. Therefore, the Piṭakas called the material progress as 'labhatagga mahatta' and the mental progress as 'bahusaccamahagga'. Both these two kinds of progress are 'asavatthaniya', where demeritorious dhammas of lobha, dosa and moha reside.

Observing Sīla till it becomes a pāramī

The home of peace is merely the progress of morality (sikha) and the progress of morality is the practice for the fulfilment of Sīla pāramī. The more one can fulfil Sīla pāramī, the more one can be free from ducaritas (immoral dhammas). The more one can free oneself from ducaritas, the more one is free from taking sides. When one does not take sides, one is no more affected by praise or threats. Then one has courage. Having courage is observing Sīla till it becomes a pāramī.

In his round of rebirths, the Buddha as Bodhisatta had in one of his existences practised Sīla till it became a pāramī. He had been Prince Alinasattu who conquered fear. In reality, fear is dosa (anger) which is a sinking emotion. The dosa which rouses one to some rash action is a rising emotion. Both by nature are dosa. The story of Prince Alinasattu is given in Jayadisa jātika of Timisa Nipāta.

Alinasattu was the son of King Jayadisa of Uttarapañcāla city of Kapila. When he came of age, his father King Jayadisa made him crown prince. Prince Alinasattu was especially proficient in the arts princes had to learn.

One day Brahmin Nanda of Taxila came to King Jayadisa to preach him four gāthās, verses. As King Jayadisa had already arranged to go out hunting, he could not hear the gāthās. He told the brahmin that he would hear them on his return. Then King

Jayadisa, accompanied by his men, left the city for the hunting ground. His son Princes Alinasattu remained at the royal city.

They sighted the prey in the hunting ground and gave chase, but it escaped through the portion assigned to the king. As he went in pursuit, he was separated from his men. However, he was able to get the prey. Carrying it, he walked back towards the city but before he got out of the forest, he stopped under a large shady banyan tree to rest. The ogre of the tree captured both the king and his prey to eat.

King Jayadisa pleaded with the ogre to let him go back to the city to listen to the gāthās from Brahmin Nanda with whom he had made an appointment, and promised to return later. The ogre had no food for seven days and wanted to eat them at once. However, the unconscious mind called ‘attavādupādāna’ is very powerful. It helps one to come to a decision in difficulties. Actually King Jayadisa and the ogre were brothers. They did not become brothers without reason. There was what was called destiny. This is also called ‘pubbesanivata’ (living together in the past). That might have been the reason which had influenced the ogre’s unconscious mind. The ogre accepted King Jayadisa’s promise and allowed him to return.

King Jayadisa got back to his city and heard the four gāthās from Brahmin Nanda. He rewarded the brahmin with four thousand coins and sent him back to Taxila.

Sacca and Lokatthacariya

Truth (Sacca) always exists (is always alive) in the world. It reveals itself to the world but the mental process of human beings does not take cognizance of it. Truth also speaks but its words do not reverberate in the mental process of human beings. It is because the mental process of the worldlings is darkened by the filth of defilements (kilesas) and is murky. In fact, it is not at all easy to perceive Sacca (Truth) clearly, nor is it easy to hear directly the voice of Sacca. Only when one becomes an ariya, can he perceive Sacca and hear its voice directly.

Our mental process is clear. It is as clear as it is free from defilements. Then though the picture of Sacca does not directly appear in the mental process, its shadow is there, it might be supposed according to anumāna nature. Though the voice of Sacca does not directly appear in the mental process, its echo is

there, it might be supposed. Therefore, only clarity of the mental process is needed. If it is clear, the shadow of the picture of Sacca and the echo of the voice of Sacca will appear. Then, there need not be any doubt about the correctness of one's decisions. They will always be associated with Truth (Sacca). When they are associated with truth, they are correct. When the decisions are correct, the actions will also be correct. When the actions are correct, they will serve the welfare of the loka. This is called 'Loka Cariya' (practising for the good of loka).

King Jayadisa's decision was associated with Sacca and was, therefore, correct. According to his decision, he related his experience to his ministers. He handed over the throne to his son Alinasattu. After King Jayadisa had attended to the affairs of the state he would go to the ogre to be eaten.

From the present day point of view, the king's decision might appear ridiculous. He could give the excuse that there were a lot of things to be attended to for the country. If he did so, it would be accepted as reasonable and sound. No one would take it to be just an excuse. They would understand the explanation given. However, if the King decided 'not to go' though he had promised, it would not be a decision associated with Sacca (Truth). If King Jayadisa's mind were not so pure as to make such a decision, he would not have been able to return to his kingdom (in the first instance). He would have certainly been devoured by the ogre. How could a person with an impure mind possess the ability to convince the ogre (that he would come back to be eaten)?

Inestimable power

'Appeva jivitaṃ jahe' says the Commentator in the section on Sila. It means that one should give up one's life rather than renounce the purity of one's Sila (morality). According to this, King Jayadisa did not put forward any reason for not surrendering his life and his throne and luxuries. He gave no excuse whatever. This is the attitude of the virtuous. This is the decision of the noble ones. Only this attitude and this decision were associated with Sacca. Only when they were associated with Sacca, were they always correct. The correctness or the truth has inestimable potency. Only when an action or a decision is so correct as to have such potency, can it serve for the welfare of the loka.

The king held himself to be a drop in the ocean. The taking away of just one single drop from the waters of the ocean could

not have any effect at all to the ocean. Likewise if he went and let the ogre eat him up, his kingdom would lose him but it could not have any adverse effect to the kingdom. His son Alinasattu was there ready to take his place. If, however, he did not go, breaking his Sīla, his morality would be stained like a pure white cloth on which a drop of black ink had fallen. The black stain could not be erased. The black stain that a king had broken his pledge would remain in the history of Uttarapañcala of Kapila till the end of the world.

The sankhya dassana, which was one of the Brahmana books, states:

**“Dukkha tyrayā bhigātā jjiññasā
tadabhigatake heto”**

It means that there are three kinds of dukkha, (1) dukkha caused by the constitution of the body, (2) caused by the surroundings, and (3) caused by misfortune according to Sankhyadassana books of Brahmanas. To be free from these three kinds of dukkha, the noble ones of the past sought remedy by trying to purify their morality. Only in this way, would they find the right way to free themselves from the three dukkhas.

It is his responsibility though he knows or not

Failure to keep one's morality pure is beckoning misfortune, which would bring dukkha to oneself and to the people of the kingdom. Misfortune would not only bring this kind of dukkha, but would also bring the other two of its companions. One who could beckon the misfortune was oneself. One who could drive away the misfortune was oneself, too. Such being the case, what should he do?

The noble ones of the past had not beckoned misfortune by failing to practise to purify their morality and by breaking their pledges. They had set no such precedents. They had set only the precedent of practising for the purification of their morality and driving away misfortune.

The best weapon to repulse impending dangers and dukkhas to oneself and one's own country was to strive for the purification of one's morality as much as possible. He was the king and was therefore like the leader-bull. According to the saying, 'When the leader-bull walks straight, other bulls following walk straight

also', he must be the model for the people of Uttarapañcala of Kapila kingdom in respect of the purification of morality. Thus he resolved.

He was responsible for not only himself but also for his family, the people of Uttarapañcala, Kapila, and the whole loka. In short, he was responsible for all the thirtyone bhumis. Whether he was aware of this responsibility or not was not primary. He was not concerned with it. Even if he knew, it was his responsibility no less. Even if he did not know, it was his responsibility, too. In truth, responsibility is a law of nature (dhamma niyāma) which can be apart from knowing.

Balance of dhamma and adhamma

The guardian devas of the world are always weighing dhamma and adhamma on the scale of nature. When the adhamma side weighs heavier and the scale tips to that side, the loka is in turmoil. When the dhamma side weighs heavier and the scale tips to that side, the world is peaceful. Therefore, one should stand on the side of dhamma so that the scale will tip to that side. Only when one stands on the side of the dhamma, can there be peace in the world. The guardian devas of the world also will want us to stand on the side of the dhamma.

For this reason, King Jayadisa with his armed forces stood on the side of the dhamma and did not oppose the ogre. He kept his morality unimpaired by making good his promise to the ogre.

Feared to break promise more than death

When his father King Jayadisa handed over the throne of Uttarapañcala, Kapila kingdom, to his son Prince Alinasattu as he had to go to the ogre to be eaten, the prince did not accept it. He requested permission to go to the ogre in place of his father.

In fact, it was not that King Jayadisa was not afraid of death. He was really afraid. It was not that his son Prince Alinasattu was not afraid of death. He was really afraid. All beings, except Anāgāmis and arahats, are afraid of death. Though King Jayadisa and Prince Alinasattu knew that King Jayadisa had to make the promise to the ogre under unavoidable circumstances, they were more afraid of impairing their morality by breaking that promise than death.

In the view of the king and the son, death was dreadful but impairment of their morality was more dreadful. In fact, dying a natural death is dukkha only for one existence but impairment of morality is dukkha in all the existences in the saṃsarā (round of rebirths).

Weapon of Sīla

With his father the king's, permission Prince Alinasattu set out to be eaten by the ogre. He was accomplished in all the princely arts and had armed forces under his command. He did not, however, take any weapons or any armed man with him. He went alone. In the prince's view, materials such as weapons were not reliable weapons in dealing with dukkha. Learning and arts which were weapons of the mind were also not really reliable weapons in dealing with lokadhamma (vicissitudes of life) dukkha. When one has to battle against the lokadhamma dukkha, only the weapons of purity of Sīla (morality) was the really reliable weapon. For this reason, Prince Alinasattu carried in his person only the weapon of the nobleness and purity of his Sīla.

On the day fixed, the ogre climbed up the banyan tree and waited for the coming of King Jayadisa. The ogre thought that kings were deceitful. King Jayadisa might bring his soldiers with him, or might simply come alone. He did not know what kind of a king Jayadisa was. Therefore, to assess the possibilities of the situation, he climbed up the tree and watched. But when he saw Prince Alinasattu coming alone, he felt assured. So he came down from the tree and sat with his back towards the direction the prince was coming.

‘Etesaṃ gandhajātānaṃ Sīla gandho anuttaro’ the Piṭakas say. It means that the scent of the flowers does not float in the air against wind. It floats with the wind. The scent of Sīla, however, not only floats down the wind but also up the wind. Therefore, of all scents, the scent of Sīla is the noblest. Because of the force of Sīla, the ogre had no desire to eat Prince Alinasattu. He, therefore, sat with his back towards the prince.

In coming to the ogre, Prince Alinasattu had no mind at all to play any tricks. His coming was physically, verbally and mentally straightforward. When he got in front of the ogre, he stood before him and said, ‘I am the son of King Jayadisa. I have come to be eaten up by you in place of my father. If you want to eat me only after I have jumped down from the tree and am dead,

I will do it at once. Tell me what you want. If you want to eat me now, go ahead.'

The ogre was much satisfied with the prince. There is no reason to cause such a change of heart on the part of the ogre other than the power of the prince's pure Sīla. Just as the scent of Sīla is the noblest of all scents, the weapon of Sīla is the most powerful of all weapons. All beings adore Sīla. A person might not be able to practise for the development of his own morality according to the dhamma, but he will adore and respect in his mind those who have steadfast morality. For this reason, everybody in the world wants to be thought of as a person who is virtuous and just.

The ogre's strategy

The ogre did not want to eat Prince Alinasattu but he also did not want to tell him, 'I don't want to eat you. So go home.' He, therefore, used a ruse so that the prince would return of his own accord. He told the prince to go and collect firewood. Instead of pretending to go to collect firewood and getting away, the prince returned with firewood he had collected. The ogre then asked the prince to make a fire and the prince obeyed. The prince did not go back to his kingdom. He came to be eaten by the ogre but not to escape from the ogre by a ruse. He had not even thought of it. This was honesty, being upright, straightforward and free from duccharitas. Being free from duccharitas is purity of Sīla.

The purer the Sīla, the more the mansion of sakka is shaken. This is the implicit belief of all those who have faith in Sīla.

Really the power of Sīla is believed and accepted by the noble ones even outside the prevalence of the Buddha's teaching. It is believed and accepted by the noble ones during the prevalence of the Buddha's teaching. The power of Sīla is the power of the purity of the mind and the absolute purity of the mind from kilesas (defilements) can only reside in the Arahats. The power of the mind of the Arahats can only be perceived by the Buddhists. The others can only guess.

At last the ogre openly asked Prince Alinasattu to return to his kingdom. Then the prince came to realize the mind of the ogre. He also found out that the ogre was not a real ogre but a human being. He showed conclusive proof that the ogre was really his father's brother and invited him to come with him to his

kingdom. The ogre declined the invitation. Instead, he went to hermit Dibba Cakkhu dwelling in that forest and became a hermit.

It is seen in this story that the whole family held the same view. To hold the same view thus is not easy because it is possible only when their moral conduct is the same. Their moral conduct and their views were those of the virtuous. Such good moral conduct and views were not qualities that could be built in a short time. They were qualities that had to be built up for many existences. Only moral conduct and views which had been built up for many existence could be good, otherwise they would be merely frauds, which seem to be real or good.

Views are important in worldly affairs as well as in supramundane affairs. If the views are correct, they become sammādiṭṭhi (right views). When they are right views, they are invariably accompanied by alobha (non-greed) and adosa (non-hatred). It is the law of nature. If the view is wrong, it becomes micchādiṭṭhi (wrong view), which is invariably accompanied by taṇhā (craving) and māna (pride). Taṇhā (craving), māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (wrong view) form the group called papañca dhammas, which make ‘atta’ grow larger and larger. In fact, when ‘atta’ is larger, the saṃsarā (round of rebirths) will also be longer.

If either King Jayadisa or Prince Alinasatta were to see Porisāda only as a human flesh eating ogre, it would be (diṭṭhi) wrong view for them. If their view were (diṭṭhi) wrong views, they would appraise the ogre on the basis of those views. Appraising is the task of māna (pride). Under the law of Paṭiccasamuppāda (Cause and Effect), the action of seeing a sense-object does not end with mere seeing, but goes on to appraise if that sense-object is good or bad. If it is decided to be good, then taṇhā (craving) will come in. If it is decided to be bad, then dosa (anger) will come in. When dosa comes in, they would not let the ogre eat them. They might either kill the ogre or try to escape from the ogre by a ruse.

King Jayadisa and Prince Alinasattu did not see the ogre as ogre. They saw him as a benefactor who had spared their lives for one day. That view should be called sammādiṭṭhi (right view). When it is sammādiṭṭhi view, adosa (loving-kindness) and alobha (renunciation) come in. For this reason, though they had sufficient armed forces at their disposal, they did not attempt to kill the ogre. Instead, they decided to go to the ogre to let him eat them. This

view might be different from the modern view. Views differ because the moral conduct differs. According to the 'Upādānapaccaya bhavo' of the Paṭiccasamuppāda Law, only when the views are the same, can the knowing be the same.

As the Piṭakas say 'Akodhena jine kodham' which means that dosa should be overcome by metta (loving-kindness), if a really reliable weapon is wanted in the saṃsarā (round of rebirths), one needed only to practise for purification of one's moral conduct. Only this is an effective and reliable weapon. One can fight any enemy with this good weapon. Therefore, in order that the weapon would be really effective and reliable, it should be entirely free from all defects, even one as tiny as an atom, as the noble ones say 'Anumattesu vajjesu bhayadassāvī'.

It is as the famous Myanmar playwright Sale U Ponnya has written - 'A tiny bit of excreta will completely spoil a full barrel of ambrosia'. The whole of the king's family was of one mind with regard to abstinence from committing duccharitas(evils).

They let him go with grief

No one stopped the prince by saying, 'Don't go. We'll kill the ogre if he comes.' All of them let Prince Alinasattu go, but they did so with intense grief. Even though, he was a man, his father the king wept. His mother the queen fainted and fell to the ground. They loved their son very much, but they loved their moral conduct even more.

They loved their moral conduct more than their son, not for their benefit but for the benefit of loka. If the father of the country, the king, did an immoral set, the evil consequences would fall on all the people of the kingdom.

For this reason, they sacrificed one for the many. Because of such sacrifices, Gotama Buddha could appear in the loka. An inestimable number of beings could be liberated from the saṃsarā. The Buddhists of even the present day could distinguish kusala (merit) and akusala (demerit). If it is looked through the saṃsarā 'eye', the ability to distinguish between kusala and akusala is no mean achievement. For the virtuous, the achievement amounts to liberation from the saṃsarā.

Therefore, though the deeds of the virtuous seem to be for their own good in appearance, they are for the good of many in essence.

For this reason while Prince Siddattha was hermit Sumedha, he proclaimed, ‘I’ll save the loka, together with the devas, from the dukkha of the saṃsarā.’ Then he underwent the kind of dukkha, Prince Alinasattu was then undergoing, for four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds at the sacrifice of his own welfare. For being thus able to denounce self-welfare, he attained Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and became the Buddha.

That is the reason why he became the Buddha, not because he wanted to be the Buddha for his own welfare, but because he wanted to be the Buddha for the welfare of loka. In the same manner, he fulfilled Perfections (Pāramīs) not for his own welfare, but for the common welfare.

However, the resulting benefits from deeds aimed at his own welfare. It is the law of kamma niyāma (law of nature of deeds).

Using force is committing duccharita

King Jayadisa did not own himself. According to the promise, he was owned by Porisada. Likewise, as Prince Alinasattu was deputising his father, he also did not own himself. He was also owned by Porisada. Porisada’s ownership was acknowledged by all.

King Jayadisa did it. The queen mother, his sister princess, the crown princess of Alinasattu and all the armed forces did it. That was the reason why all of them did not stop Alinasattu from going. If they were to stop him, it would amount to stopping a ‘property’ owned by the ogre by force. Using force was committing a duccharita.

Solving a problem in the way as one wanted by resorting to force was not the way the virtuous did. In reality, it would not completely solve the problem. Its root would remain and soka (grief) would eventually arise from it.

Solemn declaration of truth

They all wanted Princes Alinasattu to be freed safely from the hands of Porisada but they wanted him to be free in a fair and just manner. They all, therefore, made a solemn declaration of truth. They here included Prince Alinasattu’s father, the king, the queen mother, the sister princess and the crown princess. The

asseveration was based on the loving-kindness and volition they actually showed to one another. To this they added, 'Anuññato sotti muñjehi', which means 'May the orge Porisada, out of kindness, free the prince'. Freedom gained by wrongful use of force was not really freedom from the saṃsarā. Only freedom attained through dhamma (justice) and metta (loving-kindness) could free the prince, not only from the hands of Porisada but also from the round of rebirths and is called real freedom.

According to historians, man has become civilized more and more day by day. The civilization they refer, however, is not in conformity with the Buddha's saying 'Cittam dantam sukhavaham', which means that a tamed mind produces happiness. All the virtuous ones who had tamed minds and who had practised according to the teachings of the Buddha had realized Nibbāna. If those who were not included in that number and who have slowly developed their own civilization according to their own views call it civilization, it is out of the question to compare it with the teaching of the Buddha.

All cases except kammās can be dealt by sacca

Kamma (deeds) associated with Sacca (Truth) are highly powerful. Leaving aside kamma deeds in this loka, there is no case which cannot be dealt with by Sacca. It is said (on page 82) of Rāja Dhamma Sangaha. According to the saying, 'Dhamma have rakkhati dhammacari', there is no doubt whatever that one who really protects the dhamma, the dhamma will protect him in return. That is the reason why Prince Alinasattu safely got free from the hands of Porisada.

If people can practise like Prince Alinasattu and his family for the purification and nobility of their morality, the happiness (sukha) which can only be built upon real peace will certainly emerge in this loka.

The loka is like a blind man

In doing physical, verbal and mental deeds people are unable to decide correctly and work confidently. They can only carry on hoping for the best. With this fact in view, it is said, 'The loka is like a blind man (andhibhūto ayam loka). It means in Abhidhamma terms that people are working under the guidance of avijjā (ignorance) and taṇhā (craving). That is, working primarily for self-welfare, rather than for the welfare of loka. It

is the symbol of the darkness of avijja. It is, therefore, natural that as long as avijja and tanhā are leading, it would be like one groping in the dark.

If the people work primarily for the welfare of loka, rather than for the welfare of self, the vijja will take the lead. Vijja is the symbol of light. Under the light, everything will be seen clearly and candidly.

Therefore, whatever deed one does, physical, verbal or mental, under the leadership of vijja, because there is light, there will be fewer mistakes and errors. This is possible because of the leadership of vijja. When vijja takes the lead, the alobha, sacrifice of self interest is also involved. The adosa, love for the world, also comes in. For this reason the work appears to be done under brilliant light.

All ten Pāramīs are involved

The story of Alinasattu gives primary stress on the Perfection of Morality (Sīla Pāramī), but the remaining Perfections are also given secondary stress and covered. Giving up one's life is dāna pāramī.

Giving up one's life without expecting any worldly gain but doing it just for the performance of one's duty amounts to the fulfilment of Nekkhamma Pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation). The successful effort to please and satisfy Porisada is the fulfilment of Paññā Pāramī (Perfection of wisdom). Making the effort bravely is the fulfilment of Viriya Pāramī (Perfection of diligence). Carrying on with forbearance till the deed is accomplished is Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of forbearance).

Going without fail to be eaten up as promised to Porisada is the fulfilment of Sacca Pāramī (perfection of truth). Not deviating from his decision to let himself be eaten by the ogre in place of his father is the fulfilment of Adhiṭṭāna Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution). Having loving-kindness towards the ogre is the fulfilment of Metta Pāramī (Perfection of Loving-Kindness).

Receiving with composure the treatment, whether good or bad of the ogre, is the fulfilment of Upekkha Pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity).

Thus, Prince Alinasattu, the Bodhisatta fulfilled the ten Pāramīs with special emphasis on Sīla Pāramī. And it is up to the loka to thank and revere him and emulate his example.

(C) NEKKHAMA PĀRAMI **(Perfection of Renunciation)**

‘Nekkhamma’ is a Pāli word. It means escaping from attachments. It is escaping to work not for one’s own welfare, but to work for the welfare of loka. Only such escaping is called pāramī.

Escaping to work for one’s own welfare is not called pāramī. Even an ordinary person can escape in this way. Such escaping, therefore, might only be called kusala (merit), not amounting to pāramī. A kusala deed not amounting to pāramī can be fruitless (ahosi kamma) but a kusala deed amounting to pāramī can never be fruitless.

The reason is that a kusala deed not amounting to pāramī is directed at the happiness (sukha) of human beings, devas and brahmas while the kusala amounting to pāramī is directed at the bliss of Nibbāna.

In truth, the happiness of human beings, devas and brahmas is just an intermediate happiness, not the ultimate happiness. One who goes for the ultimate happiness is bound to pass through the intermediate happiness. Only when one is not attached and can renounce the intermediate happiness, will one attain the ultimate happiness quickly.

Attachments to escape from

The attachments or attractions from which one should strive to escape are called ‘vatthu kāma’ and ‘kilesa kāma’. ‘Vatthu kāma’ comprises high offices and positions, honours, luxuries, riches, power, public acclamation, etc.

‘Kilesa kāma is attachment to sensual objects. Striving to escape from vatthu kāma and kilesa kāma is called ‘Nekkhamma pāramī’.

In truth, the words ‘escape from’ imply that the ‘vatthu kāma’ has been found because one can only escape from it when it has been found. Likewise, it should be taken that kilesa vatthu also has already been found.

So ‘nekkhamma’ means that though one has found vatthu kāma and kilesa kāma, one does not stop there. One does not let oneself be captivated by them but one gets free of them. But only when one escapes, not for this own welfare but for the welfare of the loka, will it amount to pāramī.

‘Kama’ is Māra’s (The Evil One’s) first army. It comprises sensual objects and craving for sensual objects. The sensual objects also consist of material objects. According to politicians, economic affairs are the root of all worldly affairs. All other worldly affairs do not walk on their own path but on the path paved by economic affairs, under the shade provided by the economic umbrella, it is said. Therefore, the economic affairs are the source of all other worldly affairs.

The Piṭakas say, ‘Sabbe sattā ahāraṭṭhitika’ meaning that beings exist depending on food. Therefore, it can be understood why wealth and property have such a powerful influence on human beings.

In fact, gifts and presents, honours and awards, high offices and positions, etc. can cause ordinary noble persons lose their ‘poise’, they are so powerful.

However, those who have fulfilled nekkhamma pāramī are always able to get themselves free from attachment to wealth and property and other kāma objects, by renouncing their wealth and property, by giving away their limbs, or if necessary, even their lives. In the same way, they are able to give up high offices and positions, honours, etc. and get themselves free.

Kilesa kamma

The above escapes are from external objects. A more difficult escape is from the attachments to sensual objects.

The craving for sensual objects is called ‘kilesa kāma’. Its basic dhamma is lobha (greed), but other kilesas (defilements)

should also be included in kāma. The leader among the kilesas which we should get rid of is lobha (greed). When the leader is involved, the followers also are involved. Therefore, it is taken that all kilesas are included in kāma kilesas.

As kilesa kāma, lobha (greed), dosa (anger) and moha (ignorance, bewilderment) play their respective roles. When lobha arises, it plays its role of longing for (objects); when dosa arises, it plays its role of getting angry; and when moha arises, it plays its role of getting bewildered.

The longing for, the getting angry and getting bewildered are the yielding to the demands of lobha, dosa and moha. In brief, even the noble ones who have attained abhiññas (supernormal powers) can be shaken by the attraction of kilesa kāmas.

To get free from lobha, dosa, moha,etc

The fulfilment of Nekkhamma pāramī means that when lobha arises, one has to strive not to give way and to get free from its influence (clutches). When dosa arises, one has to strive not to give way but to get free from its influence. When moha arises one has to strive not to give way but to get free from its influence. When māyā (deception), sāṭheyya (treachery), issā (jealousy), macchhariya (meanness), etc. arise, one has to strive not to give way but get free from their influences. It is not an easy task but to fulfil nekkhamma pāramī one has to make the required effort and to practise.

Making effort to get free of kāma primarily means that in whatever work one does one should do it faithfully as a duty, not longing for any kind of benefit out of it, but for the sake of loka.

Then, as one does not primarily aim at self welfare, lobha, dosa and moha or other kilesas will not arise. Only when one tries not to let them appear, will one be able to get free from kilesa kāma and the deed will amount to the nekkhamma nature.

In truth, nekkhamma pāramī is the chief among the Pāramīs. Therefore, only deeds which have the nature of nekkhamma are called Pāramīs. The essence of nekkhamma is that as one has not yet attained arahatship, one will naturally come across kilesas (defilements) but one should strive not to yield to them but to repulse them. For this reason, whatever pāramī one fulfills, the nature of nekkhamma has to be practised.

Māra's armies

First army

The Piṭakas liken vatthu kāmas and kilesa kāmas which are to be got rid of in the fulfilment of nekkhamma pāramī to the ten armies of Māra, the Evil One. The first army is the above mentioned vatthu kāma and kilesa kāma.

Second army

The second army is ‘Arati’, which is not finding pleasure, in the fulfilment of nekkhamma pāramī. Generally, beings find pleasure and are interested only in deeds for their own welfare. They do not find pleasure in deeds for the common good. In fact, there is pleasurable ‘rati’ in everything and one should believe that there is. But believing is not enough; there should be the wish to find ‘rati’ pleasurable. Merely wishing to find ‘rati’ will not also do; there should be a firm resolution to find it. The firm resolution is not also enough; there should be zeal and diligence. Having zeal and diligence is also not enough. Knowledge of how to find it is also essential. This is also not enough. The progress or otherwise of the different phases of the deed should be constantly studied to find ‘rati’.

Then, if the five indriyas (moral qualities) are developed into idhipādas (basis for supernormal powers), one will find the interesting ‘rati’. If the deed is for one’s welfare, ‘kāma rati’ will be found. If it is for loka welfare, ‘dhamma rati’ will be found. There is the difference only between ‘kāma’ and ‘dhamma’; the rati is truly there.

People have believed, according to their instinct and moral conduct, that there is the interesting ‘rati’ in the work for one’s welfare and there is no interesting ‘rati’ in the work for the welfare of loka.

According to this belief, they find no ‘rati’ in the work for the common welfare. Then they find ‘arati’ in the work for the common welfare. As soon as they come across ‘arati’ they give various excuses and get away. This is their defeat in the battle against Māra’s second army.

Third army

Even though one has been able to find the interesting ‘rati’ (pleasurable) in one’s deed for the welfare of loka, according

to the nature of nekkhamma one has conquered Māra's second army, one still has to face Māra's third army of hunger and thirst.

Those who disregard their own welfare and work for the common welfare are bound to encounter hunger and thirst. If they could not bear hunger and thirst and aim their work towards their own welfare while pretending to be working for the common welfare, they should be said to have fallen in the battle against Māra's third army.

Directing their work towards their own welfare means striving to be honoured or revered, fighting for position, making effort to become famous or seeking for self benefit by some means.

Fourth army

Though one might be able to conquer hunger and thirst, one would still have to face Māra's fourth army of drowsiness called 'tandī'. According to the nature of the world, those who work primarily for their own welfare are in the majority. Those who work primarily for common welfare are in the minority. Then, when it does not get the support of the majority, the minority has to bear the brunt of the heavy burden and becomes very much wearied. Then they began to want to go easy and to take no pains. The work is very heavy and when no support is forthcoming from the majority, they do not work energetically any more and just go through the motions. This is called 'tandī' drowsiness. When it comes in, it is called defeat in the battle against Māra's fourth army.

Fifth army

Though one might be able to conquer 'tandī', one would still have to face Māra's fifth army, which is 'Htinamiddha' (sloth and torpor). Even Venerable Mahā Moggallana was attacked by 'Htinamiddha' while he was strenuously practising bhāvanā for seven whole days walking up and down the walkway in the forest of Kalavālaputta of Magadha. He sat dozing at one end of the walkway. At the time, the Buddha by his supernatural power caused Venerable Mahā Moggallana to be frightened and instructed him the dhamma. As the result, Venerable Mahā Moggallana was able to resume his practice and was able to achieve Arahatsip. When one is too weary, 'Htinamiddha'

usually butts in. If one does not carry on with one's work and dozes away his time, one will be defeated in the battle against Māra's fifth army of Htinamiddha.

Sixth army

Though one might be able to conquer Htinamiddha (sloth and torpor) one still has to face Māra's sixth army of fear (bhīru). When one's body is exhausted and one has lost sleep, fear regarding his health creeps in. If one cannot go on with his work because of this fear, it is defeat in the battle against Māra's sixth army of fear.

In truth, kusala mind directed at the common welfare is no ordinary mind; it is of tremendous power. Really cittajarupas which arise as the result of the kusala mind are always able to do away with its dangers caused by the akusala mind.

Therefore, there should be no reason to fear about one's health. The ancient authors stated in the preface of their books that when one worked for the common welfare, one should do so with implicit faith in the Three Ratanās (the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha) so that one might be free from all kinds of dangers.

The late Venerable Vebhū Sayadaw had once said, “If you resolved I have died fruitless deaths in my innumerable existences. I have, therefore, been looking for a long time to have a chance to die a fruitful death. Let me die! I won't back away!”, you need have no fear about death.

If one resolves thus with absolute faith in the power of one's volition for the common good one will overcome fear. In fact, there is fear because there is the 'I' (atta). If there were no 'I', fear would not arise and Māra's armies would not come in. This is the reason why the most important thing always to bear in mind in doing any deed is not to let in the 'I'. If, however, it comes in try not to place it in the forefront. Then one will certainly defeat Māra's army.

Seventh army

Though one might be able to defeat Māra's sixth army, one still has to face his seventh army, which is vicikicchā (doubt). In doing any deed, the outcome may not be as one has expected. It may happen as it likes according to anatta (non-self) nature. When the causes are right, the results will be right.

It is natural that the results are related to the causes and vice versa. If the cause is right, the result will be right. To have the right cause depends on the purity of the mind (*citta visuddhi*) which, in turn, depends on the purity of morality (*Sīla*). Purity of the mind depends on ‘*cittapariyodanāpana*’, the ability to exterminate *attatiya* (self interest).

Therefore, to do any deed, one should first have morality (*Sīla*) and next mental concentration (*Samādhi*). When one has *samādhi*, *paññā* (knowledge) will arise by itself. When *paññā* appears, it is called working under the light of *vijja* (knowledge), otherwise it would be working in the darkness of *avijja* (ignorance).

According to the saying, ‘*Andhi bhūto ayam loko*’, the *loka* works only in the darkness according to nature. Working for the common good is working in the light (*Tanukettha vipassati*). There should, therefore, be no doubt about success or failure. Only the aim should be right.

If the aim is right, the goal will certainly be reached. There will only be the question of time. It will be reached one day. For this reason, *pāramī* mentality is essential in doing any deed.

Eighth army

It does not end with the overcoming of *vicikiccha* (doubt). There is still *Māra*’s eighth army which is *makkha* (not acknowledging debt of gratitude) and *thambho* (vanity, egoism). When a person has met some signs of success in his work, he repudiates the debt he owes to his predecessors.

He becomes vain and thinks of himself to be the best and starts on his own. It is called defeat in the battle against *Māra*’s eighth army.

This army is much subtler than others. When one is devoid of *appamāda* (watchfulness), one is liable to be defeated. In Myanmar history, when King *Alaungsithu* uttered inadvertently, ‘My ancestor kings were not as great as I’, he at once lost his sight, it is said. King *Alaungsithu* really had no mind to belittle or insult his ancestors. He was just expressing what came to his mind. *Māra*, however, did not care whether it was an utterance made sincerely or not. He changed his tactic and struck, and the king became blind.

How the Buddha got rid of makka and tham̐ba

The Buddha comprehended the four ariya truths by his own intellect and insight without any teacher. He, however, explained to his father King Suddhādana that the four ariya truths were not new discoveries of his own. He had comprehended them just as the former Buddhas had done. He was just one in the lineage of the Buddhas. In this way, the Buddha got rid of makka and tham̐ba.

Ninth army

Even if one could with nekkhamma defeat Māra’s eighth army, one still has to face the ninth army of “ Taṇhā māna” (craving and having a high opinion of oneself). When a person becomes successful in any line of work, he is surrounded by admirers. Some offer him presents and gifts. Some pay him homage. To some whatever he says is correct. Some prophecy that he will become a future Buddha or a paccekabuddha, etc. Some praise him saying there is no equal to him in the local history. Some honour him as a saviour, All such praises and acclamations are delightful and desirable.

The higher the success, the greater the variety of such admirers. In truth, these persons are not his supporters; they are the supporters of Māra, who are out to kill him. Mistaking them to be his supporters, if he clings to them and listens to their words, he will be defeated by Māra’s ninth army.

An accomplished flatterer

There is the story of an accomplished flatterer in the world of human beings. When he passed away, the wise ministers of Yāma, the king of Niriya (hell) warned their king that the man had died and would definitely be arriving in their kingdom. The king should be wary of that man. The king replied that others might be taken in but not he. At that time, the man arrived and the ministers waited with bated breath what he would say to the king. The man at once addressed the king, “Your Majesty, when I was in the human world, I have been told that King Yāma was very ugly, very cruel and very terrible. When, however, I now set my eyes on Your Majesty, I find what I have heard and what I see now are very much different. Your Majesty is really very handsome, very kind and very lovable.” At this, the ministers whispered to their king, “Your Majesty! Take care, the man is beginning to flatter

you!” But the king retorted, “Be quiet! Let him go on. He is only telling the truth. He is not flattering.”

The ninth army of Māra was so accomplished and clever that even Yāma, lord of Niraya (hell) was taken in. Whoever they might be if they could not ignore ‘atta’ (self) and ‘attaniya’ (their possessions), they would be defeated by Mara’s ninth army. For this reason, whatever one does in accordance with nekkhamma pāramī, one must beware so that one might not be defeated by Māra’s ninth army.

Tenth army — Praising oneself —

There is still Māra’s tenth army called ‘Attukkamsana’. That is praising oneself and “paravambhana” degrading others. This army also is very powerful. The “Lokaniti” (Guide on Worldly Affairs) calls one who praises one’s own qualities as an evil man.

In fact, there is no animate being or inanimate object in the world which is entirely of no use. If the way to use is known, everything can be made use of.

It is only necessary to look through the “eye” of gratitude (kataññuta). All those who are fulfilling Pāramīs look at the loka through kataññuta “eye”. Only when one can look through kataññuta “eye”, one can fulfil Pāramīs.

Sumedha’s nekkhamma pāramī

Of the many existences of Prince Siddhatta who looked at the loka through kataññuta “eye” and fulfilled nekkhamma pāramī, the existence of Hermit Sumedha was the very first as the Bodhisatta. That is the reason why it is necessary to study Hermit Sumedha’s life to enable one to understand the nature of nekkhamma pāramī and the incalculable attributes of the Buddha.

Sumeda belonged to the brahmaṇa clan. Both parents were brahmaṇa. Sumedha was not born in the present Bhadda world. He was born four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds ago. His country was Amaravatī, in which he grew up with his parents till he was of school going age. His parents passed away while he was young, but it was fortunate because he had completed his education. Then, he was the sole heir and at the death of his parents, the treasurer handed over all of his parents’ property to him.

The treasurer made over to him the relevant accounts together with the property, which consisted of the riches earned by his parents in their life time and also those left by their ancestors. Therefore, the property was worth crores and crores of money. It was inexhaustible during the lifetime of Sumedha. If he had wanted to use it for the good of loka, he could have done it.

Sumedha, however, had extraordinary ideas. He was well versed in the arts and sciences of his age and was fit for the highest academic honour(Purohita). He had a very keen inborn intellect. As the result, his ideas and views were different from his contemporaries.

If one wanted to work for the real welfare of loka, neither wealth and riches nor learning could be of great help. These were his ideas and views based on personal experience.

In truth, riches and wealth or learning could not bring peace and happiness. They could give only worry and dukkha. When one acquired wealth, it would not remain by itself. It would beckon māna (pride) and soka (worry). When one acquired learning, it would not remain by itself. It would beckon māna (pride) and dosa (anger). Thus Sumedha knew. With regard to wealth, he was considered to be well off. There were many in Amaravatī who had as much wealth as he had or more than he had. He did not find that their wealth could bring about the welfare of loka.

With regard to learning, he had learnt up to the level of a Purohita.

There were many in Amaravati who were as learned as he was or more learned than he. He did not, however, find that learning could bring about the light of welfare in the loka. He, therefore, knew and saw that in working for the happiness and peace of loka neither wealth nor learning were dependable. He, therefore, wanted something which he could depend upon.

Sumedha really wanted the whole of loka to be peaceful. He really wanted for the peace of the whole loka. Then, what was the thing he could really depend upon in working for the happiness and peace of the whole loka? He put this question to himself and he answered it himself. His answer was morality.

And to build up morality, one has to kill taṇhā lobha. Only when taṇhā lobha is killed, will the loka become happy and

peaceful. Taṇhā lobha gives rise to dukkha and is, therefore, called Samudaya Sacca (The Ariya Truth of the Cause of Dukkha).

When we look for the origin of māna (pride), we find that it is associated with taṇhā lobha. Soka (grief) and Parideva (lamentation) also have their sources in taṇhā lobha. In short, even the existence of loka has its source in taṇhā lobha. Only when the architect or builder, is clearly and vividly perceived, will loka get free from soka. Sumedha wanted to make a gift (dhamma dāna) of this view to the loka; and he strove hard to do it.

Prince Siddhatta began the search for the architect of taṇhā (creaving) from the time he had been Hermit Sumedha and only after a period of four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, could he clearly and without bewilderment (asammoha paṭivedha) perceive it on the throne under the Bodhi Tree. Then only could he proclaim “ Builder of taṇhā! I have found you out, now!” In fact, Sumedha knew that if one really wanted to make the loka a happy and peaceful place, one must not give way to taṇhā, but repulse its demands and get out of its clutches.

One who wants to make the world a happy and peaceful place should be free from duccaritas (evils). To be free from duccaritas, one should uplift his morality.

That is the observation of Sīla. Only when one’s Sīla is well preserved, can samādhi (purity of mind) be built upon it. Only when samādhi is pure and firm, can paññā (wisdom) be built upon it. If, under the impression that only academic accomplishments are of vital importance and one drives oneself hard to realize this aim, what one achieves thus will be just learning and not real wisdom (paññā).

Learning does not get rid of lobha (greed) but invites it. Then lobha does not come alone; it brings in dosa and māna also. Then, when one works with “learning” for the welfare of the beings of the world, because of lobha, dosa and māna one has invited, no expected good results, but only bad results, would arise one after another.

The underlying reason for this is that paññā has been built on the wrong foundation, instead of the foundation of Sāmādhi based on Sīla. The really right way, therefore, to work for the happiness and peace of loka is to strive for the development of morality as much as possible.

This method was first used by Hermit Sumedha four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds ago. He continued to use this method till he became the Buddha. In truth, not only Sumedha but all other Bodhisattas also used it, achieved Sabbaññutañāṇa and became the Buddhas.

Sumedha understood that morality was more important than riches and academic learning for the prevalence of happiness and peace in the loka. He also understood that morality could only be firmly developed by clearly perceiving lobha and keeping it out. For this reason, he practised to fulfil ñekkhamma pāramī as a counter measure against lobha.

Sumedha went to King of Amaravatī and handed over all his possessions. He had resolved to work for the welfare of loka. Those who wanted to work for the welfare of loka should be able to renounce their self-interest.

When one really works for the welfare of loka, by the power of this noble deed, Māra, the leader of the obstructionists, became fidgety. Then Māra sent his forces as mentioned above to destroy the work for the common good of the noble ones.

Those who fall to Māra's first army

Māra has ten armies. The first of them is Kāma army comprising wealth and riches, high offices, honours and titles, fame, commendation and songs of praise, great powers. Which of the noble ones would be able to withstand the onslaught of this army? In the majority of cases, the noble ones working for the welfare of loka would fall to this Kāma army of Māra. Then, the work for the welfare of the loka of these noble ones would be destroyed and they would turn their attention to their own welfare. This is just the first army; there are more armies to come.

To achieve victory in the battle against Māra's armies, Sumedha, in his existences before he became the Buddha, had given away all his wealth as preparatory exercise. In fact, how would one be able to work for the common welfare if one could not defeat the Kāma army, the first of Māra's forces. Thus Sumedha knew.

It is true that Sumedha wished to renounce his possessions and riches but it was necessary to see that he did not do it in vain. His possessions and riches were worth crores and crores of money. They could be put to use, in their own way, for the benefit

of loka. The one who would be able to do it was only the king of Amaravatī. That was the reason he entrusted them to the king to be used for the benefit of loka.

On the other hand, instead of entrusting the possessions and riches to the king, he could by this own hand (sāhatthika dāna) give them away, but it might not be in conformity with the then administrative regulations. The then absolute monarchs could use their administrative powers in any way they liked. Deciding, therefore, that the best thing was to entrust his possessions and riches to the king, he did so. As Sumedha's aim was

- (1) noble,
- (2) sound, and
- (3) correct,

it was likable and the king was pleased with it.

Dukkha known in Sumedha's days

The king, however, did not accept Sumedha's possessions and riches but handed them back to him to enable him to dispose them off as he pleased. So Sumedha distributed them suitably to the people of Amaravatī. Then, he left for the Dhammika hills of the Himalayas, became a hermit and practised bhāvanā. In a short time, he attained jhānas and supernormal powers. He knew the dukkha of loka according to the views current at that time. Birth, old age, disease and death were dukkha. The modern thinkers call them the dukkha of the constitution of the body (khandha).

To have to associate with those one despises or to be separated from those one loves is also dukkha. This is called by modern thinkers "environmental dukkha".

Not getting what one wants is also dukkha, called by modern thinkers as "dukkha of fate". Sumedha knew these three types of dukkha. Not only Sumedha but also the common people knew them. The dassana books of that age also mentioned these three dukkhas as mentioned above. They did not go beyond that because they knew only that much.

Actually, there is a fourth kind of dukkha. That fourth dukkha is the acquiring of bhava khandha, also called "sankhāra dukkha", or 'Upādanakhandha dukkha'. This fourth dukkha can only be discriminatively perceived by Ariya Saccañāṇa (knowledge of the Four Ariya Truths, which it is concerned with).

As Sumedha had not yet attained Ariya Saccañāṇa and could not discriminatively know this fourth dukkha, he knew that he would escape from loka only when he perceived the fourth dukkha and that the very loka was dukkha. That was why he left for the forest and practised bhāvanā to attain Ariya Saccañāṇa to perceive the fourth dukkha. As the result, he attained jhānas and supernormal powers but not Ariya Saccañāṇa.

At the time, Buddha Dipaṅkara had appeared in the loka but Sumedha did not know it. The appearance of a Buddha in the loka was not a quiet or hush-hush affair. It was an extraordinary occurrence and acclamations reverberated in ten thousand universes. In truth, when the Bodhisatta took conception, the ten thousand universes quaked, unusual signs such as meteors, shooting stars, etc. marked the great event. The four great occasions, namely, the last conception of the Bodhisatta, his birth, the time he became the Buddha and the time he preached the first sermon (Dhammacakka) were unique and extraordinary.

But Sumedha, who was totally absorbed in his jhānas and samāpattis (deep mental absorptions) did not notice them. As Buddha Dipaṅkarā appeared during the life-span of a hundred thousand years, Sumedha was quite advanced in years at that time. His jhāna and samādhi powers were so keen and intense that he was completely unaware of the extraordinary occurrences of the quaking of ten thousand universes, etc. The stronger the samādhi, the less one's mind wanders. This is the nature of samādhi.

Hermit Sumedha had come to own such a powerful samādhi. Only when one had such a kind of samādhi would one be able to receive a definite prophecy (that he would become the Buddha in four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds hence). This was quite natural.

Chance to pay homage to Buddha Dipaṅkara

One day, Buddha Dipaṅkara, accompanied by four hundred thousand arahats, arrived at Rammavatī and resided in Suddassana monastery. The people of Rammavatī went to the Buddha and listened to his sermons. They also invited him to collect almsfood in their city the next day. They made preparations for the making of this gift in an unprecedented manner. They erected pavilions and mended roads. They made the necessary preparations for the collecting of almsfood by the Buddha.

At that time, hermit Sumedha came to Ramavatī through the air by his supernormal power. When he saw the people busily engaged, he came down to earth to inquire. When he was told that Buddha Dipaṅkarā and four hundred thousand arahats were coming to collect almsfood there and they were mending the roads for the great occasion, he informed them that he too wanted to join them in the deed.

He requested them to allot him a portion of the road for mending. They assigned him a muddy spot. Sumedha respectfully accepted the assignment and did his best to make his section of the road usable.

However, before he could complete the task, the Buddha and his arahats came. To bridge the gap which still remain to be filled up, Sumedha lay prostrated and begged the Buddha and the arahats to pass treading on his back.

At the same time, he was making up his mind to become a Buddha like Buddha Dipaṅkarā. In actual fact, he had fulfilled sufficient pāramīs to qualify himself to become an arahat and if he so desired, he could become an arahat at the time of Buddha Dipankarā and realize Nibbāna.

Duty of truly good man in Loka

All those who attained Saccañāṇa (perception of the Ariya Truths) and realized Nibbāna had discharged their responsibilities to the full. However, the responsibilities were not the same in magnitude and quantity. They might be compared to the different parts of a machine. Some parts have greater responsibilities and functions while some have smaller ones. The loka is also like a machine. Each human being has the responsibility to escape from dukkha and to work for the peace and happiness of loka. However, though the responsibilities are the same, their natures differ from one another.

Hermit Sumedha did not want to be just a passenger or a member of the crew in the conveyance of veneyyas (worldlings) in the boat of Magganga to Nibbāna. He wanted to be the chief officer (captain) in command of the boat. That was the reason why he made the wish to be a Buddha. Though he had the chance to realize Nibbāna in that existence, he let it go. This act was really a sacrifice and it was the spirit of superior personages.

All truly good men always sacrifice their self-welfare for the good of loka.

According to the saying, ‘Example is better than precept’, (Ditṭhānugati), setting the example is very important in the loka. It is the source of knowledge. For this reason, it is said ‘when the leading bull walks straight, those following him also walk straight’.

Hermit Sumedha was well versed in the physical characteristics of great personages and knew those of the Buddhas and he therefore could fathom the duties and the compassion of a Buddha. When he met Buddha Diṇṅkarā in person, he envied him very much and wanted to follow his example. He, therefore, made the wish not to be just a senior disciple (sāvaka) but to be the supreme Buddha (Sammāsambodhi), because he wanted to be more dutiful than the most dutiful ones in the loka. It is the nature of all superior persons who have absolute faith in their ability.

In truth, only those who sacrifice their own welfare and work for the welfare of loka are superior persons.

At the time, Sumitta was among the gathering. She was a brahmaṇa maiden. She had eight lotus flowers in her hand to offer to Buddha Dipaṅkarā. When she saw Hermit Sumedha, she gave him five of them. She kept three for herself. Both of them were to offer the flowers to Buddha Dapaṅkarā. Both had their respective duties. He had his duty, She had her duty.

Sumedha was to make the wish to become a Buddha and she was to make the wish to be his mate, to share his life while he fulfilled pāramīs. They presented the lotus flowers to Buddha Dipaṅkarā, and made their respective wishes. Buddha Dipaṅkarā saw by his supernormal powers that their wishes would come true and he made the prophecy to that effect.

On hearing the prophecy, the devas and brahmas from the thousand universes assembled there were overjoyed that a peerless leader of the loka was in the making. Besides, they resolved to provide the necessary protection to the Bodhisatta Sumedha till he became the Buddha. Even if they could not gain liberation during the time of Buddha Dipaṅkarā, they hoped to do so at the time Hermit Sumedha appeared as Buddha Gotama. Human beings, devas and brahmas had found the (coming) peerless leader of the loka. When we look at Hermit Sumedha’s life, he still had

to fulfil Pāramīs for a period of four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. Those who wanted to wait for the time he would appear, would have to wait.

Hermit Sumedha wanted to become a Buddha not for his own sake but for the sake of the loka. Only by becoming a Buddha would he be able to fully discharge his responsibility of saving the loka. Viewed from the point of view of his own interest, he could easily have attained arahatship by hearing a short fourline gāthā (verse) from Buddha Dīpaṅkarā even before the Buddha came to the end of the gāthā.

However, Sumedha let go the opportunity to achieve Nibbāna. There was no difference whatsoever between the Nibbāna to be realized then and later on. The Nibbāna was the same for all beings at all times. The Nibbāna realized by the Buddhas and that realized by arahats are the same. There is no difference at all. Therefore, hermit Sumedha postponed it for the sake of loka for four asankkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds for his realization. How venerable and how exemplary Sumedha was! He was a very inspiring model for those superior personages who worked for the common good but were faced by temporary setbacks and were in low spirits.

In fulfilling Pāramīs to become the Buddha, hermit Sumedha would have to renounce his wealth and riches for the loka as long as he had not become a Buddha. He would have to give up high offices and positions when necessary for the loka. He would have to give away members of his family or parts of his body, if necessary, for the loka. He would have to give up even his life, if necessary, for the loka. In respect of welfare work, he would have to accord priority to deeds for the common good first, then to deeds for the good of his relatives and then to deeds for the good of himself. He thus would have to sacrifice very much. Only by sacrificing very much and sacrificing heart and soul, would he become the Buddha in the loka, would he become a genuine leader and would he become worthy of the veneration of the loka in worldly affairs .

In connection with the welfare of the loka, the noble ones had wisely said, 'Aradhānāya lokassa!'. It means that only deeds which satisfy the people and are accepted by the people are called Pāramīs.

Deeds not amounting to Pāramī

In fact, only deeds done correctly and sincerely for the sake of loka, without any regard to both the “I” (atta) and the “mind” (attaniya) are the right deeds for the loka. If one says “I should have to do it”, he is not doing without any regard to the “I”. In truth, all deeds done without disregarding the “I” and the ‘attaniya’ but depending on them, are not Pāramīs.

If a deed does not amount to a pāramī, even though it is aimed at loka welfare, that aim is just a fraud. All frauds never have a good ending.

Karuṇā and Paññā

When we look at Sumedha’s life, we find that Sumitta came in by herself. This is not without reason. It was quite natural. In any deed, the doer needs to have compassion (karuṇā) and knowledge (paññā). A coin of money is usable only when it has figures on both faces - the head and the tail. Likewise, every deed called cetanā (volition) must have compassion and knowledge like the two sides of a coin. Then only would it be usable for the loka. Only when it could be used for the loka, would it be adorable.

In a deed which amounts to a pāramī, the lady is the symbol of karuṇā (compassion) and the man is the symbol of paññā (knowledge). The two symbols should be one and indivisible, like the two sides of a coin.

According to this nature, Sumitta joined in on her own when hermit Sumedha received the prophecy. It was the confluence of karuṇā and paññā, or in other words, the first appearance of the moon and the sun for the loka. If the moon is likened to the lady, the sun is likened to the man.

The life of Hermit Sumedha is the beginning of the great chronicle of Buddha Gotama. It began with the fulfilment of nekkhamma pāramī. According to anuloma Paṭicca-samuppāda (direct order) of the Law of Cause and Effect, bhava (existence) begins with craving (taṇhā) which is greed. According to Paṭiloma Paticca-Samuppāda (reverse order) of law of Cause and Effect, liberation from bhava (existence) begins with nekkhamma (renunciation), that is the extermination of craving (taṇhā). If the arising of bhava (existence) begins with taṇhā (craving), the liberation from bhava begins with nekkhamma (renunciation).

For this reason, all deeds of the noble ones must include the nature of nekkhamma so that they might amount to Pāramīs. Thus, the life of Hermit Sumedha should be said to have a good beginning. All deeds which begin well end well (well begun is half done). Important jāataka stories connected with nekkhamma pāramī are those of Prince Somanassa in Somanassa jāataka, Visati Nipāta, Hattipāla Brahmaṇa in Hattipāla jāataka, Vasatī Nipāta, Prince Ayoghara in Ayoghara jāataka, Vipati Nipata, and Prince Culasuta Soma in Culasutasoma Nipāta.

However, the life of Sumedha given in the Buddhavaṃsa Pāli text being the first existence as the Bodhisatta, it will enable readers to understand the nekkhamma pāramī better. Indeed, the life of Sumedha surpasses the traditions of that age.

Revolt against tradition

According to the traditions of that age, people generally renounced household life for the homeless life of a recluse between the age of fifty and seventyfive. They sought learning up to the age of 25. From the age of 26 to 49 years, they discharged the responsibilities of the householder's life. After the life of a recluse from the age of 50 to 75, they acted as “ gurus” (teachers). Then they lived alone concentrating on meditation work. This is what was prescribed for the four periods of a person's life in the Vedas, the sacred books of ancient India. As Hermit Sumedha could revolt against the Veda tradition at an early age by renouncing the household life, he became a Bodhisatta.

Sumedha was a person of learning of the Veda age. The education of the age was Veda education. He renounced his wealth and home and took up the life of a hermit. Then he gave up the hermitage and dwelt under trees. Then he gave up almsfood collected from village homes and lived on fruits and roots found in the forest. Then he took only fruits fallen by themselves from trees. He was striving to get free from all attachments step by step.

In the Somanassa story, Bodhisatta Somanassa was the son of King Reṇu of Uttarapañcala, Kuru. He did not accept the throne. While he was a prince, he became a recluse. In the Hattipāla jāataka, the Bodhisatta was the eldest of the four sons of Purohita (counsellor) of king Esukari of Vārānaśī. He refused kingship conferred on him by the king and became a recluse. In

the Ayoghara story, Ayoghara was the son of king Brahmadatta of Vārānaśī. He did not accept the throne and became a recluse. In the Sīlasoma story, the Bodhisatta Sīlasoma was the emperor of Sudassana. He had 16,000 queens and maidens headed by Queen Sandādevi. When he saw that his hair was beginning to turn grey, he renounced the throne and became a recluse. There are many other similar stories of prominent personages giving up their hearth and home and becoming recluses.

Involving all the ten Pāramīs.

In fulfilling nekkhamma pāramī, the remaining Pāramīs are also fulfilled at the same time.

- (1) The giving away of wealth and luxuries and other privileges to others is Dāna Pāramī.
- (2) Not being affected in any way by the ups and downs of life and striving to keep up one's morality is Sīla Pāramī.
- (3) Getting out of the attractions by sensual pleasures and cravings is Nekkhamma Pāramī.
- (4) Knowing that by the practice of Pāramīs, one can attain Sabbaññutañāṇa is Paññā Pāramī.
- (5) Practising with diligence is Viriya Pāramī.
- (6) Ability to withstand all the difficulties encountered till they are overcome is Khanti Pāramī.
- (7) Uniformity of physical, verbal and mental actions is Sacca Pāramī.
- (8) Carrying out one's resolutions to become a reality is Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī.
- (9) Really loving the loka from one's inner heart is Metta Pāramī.
- (10) Ability to forgive everyone, whether good or bad on oneself is Upekkha Pāramī.

In the fulfilment of a pāramī, the other Pāramīs are also involved in one way or another. They differ only in emphasis whether primary or secondary. In reality, performing a deed as one's duty with a pure mind, not expecting any benefit out of it, is the essence of Nekkhamma Pāramī.

When a deed involves the nature of Nekkhamma Pāramī, the other Pāramīs are automatically concerned. In order that the nature of Nekkhamma Pāramī is permeated in one's physical, verbal and mental actions, one should try to perform it step by step with the spirit of renunciation and at a sacrifice. How much at peace a society or a locality, where such people are in the majority, will be!

(D) PAÑÑĀ PARAMI **(Perfection of Knowledge)**

Paññā (knowledge) is the opposite of moha which means bewilderment or ignorance. The characteristics of moha include not knowing that one is doing an akusala (demeritorious) deed though one is actually doing it, or not knowing that one is doing a kusala (meritorious) deed though one is actually doing it. So moha may be taken to mean ignorance (appaṭipatti).

The characteristics of moha also include wrongly knowing that one is doing a kusala deed though one is doing an akusala deed, or wrongly knowing that one is doing an akusala deed though one is doing a kusala deed. So moha may be taken to mean knowing wrongly (vipaṭipatti).

There is no definite demarcation between kusala and akusala in the loka. The characteristics of moha include confused knowing that a deed which is successful is a kusala deed and a deed which is unsuccessful is an akusala deed. So moha may be taken to mean confused knowing (miccha paṭipatti).

As moha is the opposite of paññā, when one knows the characteristics of moha, one knows the characteristics of paññā also.

According to the Buddha's teaching, moha causes things which should not be known to be known and things which should be known to be unknown with respect to eight kinds of dhammas, viz. the Four ariya Truths (Ariya Sacca), past, future, and present nāmarupa (mind and matter) and their relationship called Paṭicca Samuppada (Law of Cause and Effect).

Knowledge and Practice; right and wrong

The loka has two parts; one is the knowing part and the other is the practising part. A person does an akusala (demeritorious) deed and he knows it is an akusala deed, but he goes on doing it. Here, the knowing is correct but the practice is wrong. In carrying on a deed, if the aim is not for self-benefit but for the benefit of the loka or of dhamma at the sacrifice of his life, the deed should be called that of the virtuous ones. If he does it for his own benefit, it should not be called that of the virtuous ones.

Besides, though a person does an akusala deed but knows it to be a kusala deed and goes on doing it; the knowing is wrong and the practice is also wrong. A person does a deed but he does not know whether it is an akusala or a kusala deed. He, however, goes on doing it according to his inborn instinct. In this case, the knowing is wrong or is without intelligence. The practice can be right or wrong.

With regard to knowing, if he knows what is happening correctly, it is called yathābhūtañāṇa knowing. If he knows wrongly the akusala as kusala, it should be called micchādiṭṭhiñāṇa (wrong knowledge). Practice is apart from knowing. If he goes on practising because he likes it without knowing whether it was a kusala or an akusala deed, it should be called moha (bewilderment) or ñāṇa vippayutta mind (mind not associated with knowledge). Here also practice is apart from knowing. If the deed is for the benefit of loka or dhamma, it is good. If it is for the benefit of oneself, it is not good. In short, one's joy (Somanassa) mixed with the soka (worries) of others becomes, in turn, the joy of others mixed with one's soka.

Associate dhammas for Paññā Pāramī

If paññā is to be considered as pāramī (perfection), it should be viewed in association with karuṇā (compassion). Paññā without compassion is difficult to be developed into a pāramī. In every deed, the characteristic of knowing is involved; That knowing may be paññā, or diṭṭhi, or moha, or ñāṇavippayutta. If it is paññā, it has to be based in samādhi, and samādhi in turn should be based in Sīla. When Sīla is involved, karuṇā automatically comes in because then only the Sīla will have strength. When karuṇā comes in, it is not difficult for metta (loving kindness), mudita (sympathetic joy) and upekkhā (equanimity) also to arise.

For paññā to be developed into pāramī, strong Sīla and Samādhi are essential. Then only, would it not be difficult at all to have loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and forbearance on the loka. If only one has in him, besides samādhi, Sīla rooted in the Brahmavihāra dhammas, paññā that amounts to pāramī will arise. The paññā that appears will amount to pāramī.

For this reason, one should strive to strengthen one's moral conduct based on Brahmavihāra dhammas as the most important step in the fulfilment of paññāpāramī. According to the Pāli text, 'paññā samā ābhā natti', paññā is likened to the sun, karuṇā (compassion) is likened to the dawn. The sun does not come out without the dawn. Likewise, paññā will not become pāramī without karuṇā.

Two stages for paññā to become pāramī

There are two stages for paññā to become a pāramī. The first stage is related to the goal and the second stage concerns the procedure. To use military terms, the first stage is strategy and the second stage is manoeuvre.

Whatever deed one does, one must not lose sight of the goal. The goal of lokattacariya (for the benefit of loka) must always be there. One must always be working for the benefit of the loka more than one's own. Then only would one be able to extinguish taṇhā (craving). As soon as one's taṇhā is extinguished, there will not be any more regard for one's gain. Every deed one does will be directed at the benefit of the loka. Just as, however, the waves in the sea rush towards the shore but do not vanish on reaching it. They go back to the sea. In the same way, after the results of the deeds directed at the benefit of the loka reach the loka, they come back to oneself.

Therefore, just as all deeds directed for the sake of the loka have brought benefits to the loka, one also enjoys them automatically. Only such deeds are Pāramīs. In fact, the very act of giving no attention at all to one's benefit turns to be for one's own gain.

This is seen in the lives of the leaders of the past and of the present day and will also be seen in the lives of the leaders of the future.

It cannot be disputed according to our own experience of life. The lives of the bodhisattas and world leaders also bear testimony.

With regard to the second stage of *paññā pāramī*, while working for the benefit of the loka, one can change one's plan and tactics to be in keeping with the circumstances in one's life and the prevailing conditions. However, the goal must not be changed. When a person travels to Mandalay, he can go by land, by river or air. Whatever means or route he may choose, his destination is Mandalay.

It means that in the effort to achieve *paññā pāramī*, the goal should be constant and unchangeable but the way or the method may be changed suitably. The Bodhisattas used *paññā* as required according to the circumstances in their lives and the times.

The leaders are seen as human beings and also as animals in the Piṭaka stories. The deeds of the really noble leaders either as man or animal pleased and satisfied their followers. While they were human beings, their followers (or public) were satisfied with their deeds. While they were animals, their followers were satisfied with their deeds. The reason for this was that these leaders had made their lives or their attas to be one with those of their followers.

In truth, the real leaders should be said to have lost their lives or attas because their lives and attas had become the lives and attas of their followers.

Their lives were not apart from those of their followers; their attas were not apart from those of their followers. They are all one and the same. Even when there were bitter and adverse results of their deeds, as all deeds done by the leaders were the deeds of the followers as well, whom could the followers blame for them? This nature is called 'rasa' (essence or likable quality) in literature. Even though the results might be bitter, it became sweet as the name indicates. It is inspiring.

In fact, the democratic principle might be called the offspring of the union between the lives of the leaders and their followers.

Actually, there is only one moon in the sky, but the image of the moon is seen in every pond, lake, river, etc. There will be as many images of the moon as there are ponds, lakes, rivers, etc. The image of the moon is also as clear as the water in which it appears is clear. Though there is only one leader, his life is one with all the lives of all of his many followers.

However, depending on the qualification or ability of the follower, the oneness of the life of the leader and the follower will differ. There are cases which are clear as well as cases which are dim. There are human Bodhisattas and animal Bodhisattas but by inward nature they are all Bodhisattas. They differ only in outward appearance as human being and animal. According to this nature, the life of a leader is reflected in the life of every follower and for this reason, the life of the leader and that of the followers are said to be one.

One who wishes to fulfil paññā pāramī should learn the Piṭakas and seek experiences of life. In this, one should keep to the middle path (Majjhima paṭipadā). With regard to learning, Venerable Dipeyin Sayadaw once reportedly said: 'Books shut out the dhamma'. The writer has come across those who were really well versed in the Piṭakas. Their talks on the dhammas were a wonderful treat to listen to. But when it came to practice, they did not practise as they said. Their practice and their talks were poles apart. This was the case of the shutting out of the dhamma by the books.

It is called 'anta paṭipadā', an extreme. There were also those who neglected to learn the Piṭakas, put aside traditions and said and did what they believed. That is another extreme (anta paṭipadā).

In the pursuit of knowledge, one should balance book learning with actual practice. Then only would one be following the middle path (majjhima paṭipadā). Only when one follows the middle path, would one be able to build up morality and would the paññā attained be of use for the good of the loka.

In the Piṭakas, it is shown that a disease caused by the taking of a medicine gets worse and worse by continuing to take that medicine more and more. In like manner, the crookedness caused by learning gets worse the more one learns. It is the fault of not seeking paññā in the majjhima paṭipadā way.

Leading part played by Paññā

Intelligence always plays a vital role in any deed whether it amounts to pāramī or not. Intelligence is the name of paññā. Paññā is, therefore, important. Though paññā cannot be changed with regard to the goal, the procedure or the mode for the

achievement of the goal, can be changed from time to time as necessary.

Therefore, in the fulfilment of dāna pāramī, it is important to please and satisfy every donee. The effort to make every donee pleased and satisfied is also important. Therefore, the ability to satisfy every donee should also be called paññā pāramī. Likewise, in the fulfilment of Sīla and other Pāramīs also, only those who have the nature of paññā pāramī in them are able to satisfy those concerned with the deed. In truth, in making effort for the loka, only when it is really for the good of the loka, will the aim be achieved. Only when the aim is achieved, it deserves to be called paññā pāramī. Otherwise, it might only be called just Bahussuta (mere learning).

Factors for fulfilment of Paññā

In the pursuit of paññā in accordance with the nature of pāramī, one must be well-informed, must have a keen perception, and must develop one's morality. One who is not well-informed has no reason to attain knowledge of the truth (Saccañāṇa). The Piṭakas call it the nature of 'Paratoghosa' (the voice of others). For this reason, to be well-informed is much recommended.

Likewise, a keen perception and practising for development of one's morality are essential. The Piṭakas give three factors for fulfilment of paññā, namely, Sutamaya (paññā gained through being well-informed), Cintamaya (knowledge gained through thinking and reasoning) and Bhāvanāmaya (knowledge gained through meditation practice). Therefore, if one practises for the fulfilment of paññā pāramī, it is necessary to attain all these three factors. Then only would one perceive the genuine light of paññā according to the saying, 'Paññāsamā ābhā natti'. (There is no light as bright as paññā). Otherwise, one would remain in the endless round of rebirths as a seeker of self-benefit because of the deception by bogus lights.

Paññā pāramī and Vidhūra Jātaka

Of many jāataka stories about the fulfilment of paññā pāramī, the story of Vidhūra is interesting. It took place during the reign of King Korabya in Indapatthanago of Kuru country. His minister was Vidhūra who was called Vidhūra Sukhamin. Vidhūra was a Bodhisatta and was famous for his learning and wisdom

throughout the countries of Jambudīpa (one of the four great islands).

One day King Korabya kept sabbath and spent his time in his royal garden. On the same day, the king of devas, the king of kaluṇas (legendary bird with supernormal powers and arch enemy of nagās) and the king of nagās (serpent like beings with supernormal powers and arch enemy of kaluṇa) had left their countries and were also present in that garden to keep sabbath. During the day time, they remained in their secluded chosen spots and meditated in order not to soil, break or breach their precepts and to keep their Sīla as pure as possible. When evening came, they came out of seclusion and met at the square pond.

Attitude of worldlings

All of them were puthujjanas (worldlings) and as such, it was natural for them to want to be the better in everything, not excepting in the observance of Sīla. As the result, a dispute arose among them as to whose Sīla was the noblest. They could not, however, arrive at an acceptable decision. The claim each made with its supporting grounds seemed to be right in its own way.

The nagā king claimed that his Sīla was not ordinary. He had kept it in spite of the presence of his arch enemy, the galon king. For this reason he said his Sīla was the noblest of all.

The galon king on his part claimed that his Sīla was not ordinary. He had kept it without availing himself of the chance to eat his enemy, the nagā king. For this reason, he said his Sīla was the noblest of all.

The deva king claimed that his Sīla was not ordinary because he had observed it by forgoing the sensual pleasures and luxuries of the devas. For this reason, he said his Sīla was the noblest of all.

King Korabya, on his part, claimed that his Sīla was not ordinary because he has kept it by renouncing the kingly pleasures for the day. For this reason he said his Sīla was the noblest of all.

In fact, the four kings could not see the Truth (Sacca) from all angles. They were putting forward arguments as they saw from their own point of view. That was the reason why the dispute arose. They were like the six blind men of Hindustan who examined the elephant in the fable.

They finally agreed to go to Vidhūra Sukhamin for decision. Sacca is not truth with regard to quantity but it is truth with regard to quality. Quality has the nature of ‘anta’ (limit, boundary) but quality has the nature of ‘Ananda’ (infinity, boundless, limitless). For this reason, the dispute which was based on quantity would never end. Therefore, Vidhūra Sukhamin gave his decision on the basis of quality on the dispute which was based on quantity by pointing out that their Sīlas were equal in all respects with regard to the getting rid of Vitikkama kilesas momentarily. The four kings were pleased and satisfied with the decision.

They each gave presents to Vidhūra. The deva king presented a garment, the galon king a golden flower necklace, the nāga king a jewel and king Korabya elephants, horses, etc. and they left for their respective homes.

The nagā king got back to his kingdom and when the jewel in his necklace was not seen, the queen Vimaladevi enquired what had happened to it. He explained that as he was filled with great reverence towards Vidhūra Sukhamin on hearing his discourse, he had presented the jewel to him. At this, Vimaladevi was seized by a longing to hear Vidhūra Sukhamin’s discourse. According to the custom of that age, however, she had no privilege as a woman to ask for inviting Vidhūra Sukhamin, a man, to come and deliver her a discourse. She, therefore, resorted to a ruse to enable her to hear Vidhūra Sukhamin’s discourse.

Vimaladevi went into her chamber, lay on her bed and remained without food. She wanted a thing of great value and she had pay a high price for it. She told her attendants that she was unwell. When the nagā king did not see her at his daily audience he inquired after her. Being told that she was ill, he came to her chamber. Vimaladevi informed him that she would only be well if she could get the heart of Vidhūra Sukhamin by fair means. This could only be done if he himself voluntarily gave it or by taking it out of his body after his death.

Irاندhati, Naga king’s daughter

The king was normally a moral person but his morality could not keep a check on his actions and guide him in a crisis.

The morality of the worldlings is not really dependable; it has to be constantly associated with mindfulness. At that time, the

nagā king was devoid of steadfast mindfulness. He thought of ways to get the heart of Vidhūra for his queen in a fair manner. At last, he entrusted the task to his daughter Irandhati. To carry out the task Irandhati spread a bed of flowers at the top of Kalagiri hill in the Himalayas. She sang and danced. The meaning of the song she sang was that she would marry whoever could get for her the heart of Vidhūra Sukhamin.

At that time there was a meeting of ogres at the top of Kalāgiri and Puṇṇaka came riding his horse Manomaya Sindhava to attend it. He was the nephew as well as the military commander of King Vessavana. He heard Irandati's song and understood its meaning. He also saw her dance. She was pretty and charming. She danced well and sang beautifully. Puṇṇaka was captivated by her charms. Then Puṇṇaka decided that he must demonstrate his valour to her. To Puṇṇaka the whole of the universe had become Irandati's. In fact, Puṇṇaka and Irandhati had been very intimate in their past existences. Then Puṇṇaka undertook to get the heart of Vidhūra Sukhamin for her by fair means.

Irاندhati took Puṇṇaka to her father, who, in consultation with her mother, assured Puṇṇaka that if he got by fair means and brought Vidhūra's heart, they would marry him to their daughter Irاندhati.

After asking the nagā king about Vidhūra, Puṇṇaka, set out for Indapattanago. He also took with him the manomaya jewel (of inestimable value) from Vepulla hill. Vidhūra Sukhamin's master king Korabya was addicted to gambling at dice, at which game he always won. Puṇṇaka thought it was the best way to get Vidhūra to play at dice with King Korabya having Vidhūra as stake. It would be winning by fair means. And to put his plan into action, Puṇṇaka took the form of a handsome young man and set out on his Manomaya Sindhava horse to Indapatthanago where Korabya reigned.

On reaching there, he addressed the king-

‘Your majesty! My name is Kaccana and I came here to play at dice with you. I have brought the manomaya jewel and Manomaya Sindhava horse.’

Then he gave a demonstration of the prowess of his horse and the sterling quality of the jewel. The king was much satisfied. He, therefore, agreed to play at dice with Kaccana. The stake from

the side of the king was whatever the young man might choose with the exception of himself, his queen and his throne.

When the game started, Puṇṇaka drove away by his power the guardian goddess of King Korabya who had always helped the king to win at dice. Then by his supernormal power, Puṇṇaka beat the king at dice. Puṇṇaka then asked for Vidhūra Sukhamin as the agreed ‘stake’. The king remonstrated that Vidhūra was not included in the ‘stake’, not being in the service of the king. Finally, they agreed to abide by the decision of Vidhūra himself on the dispute. They put the matter to Vidhūra who decided that he, being the servant of the king, was covered by the ‘stake’. Therefore, King Korabya had to hand over Vidhūra to Puṇṇaka with a heavy heart.

Then the king requested Vidhūra to give a discourse on five points the householders should practise, as his departing discourse before he followed Puṇṇaka. The five points were: (1) how to earn a harmless livelihood; (2) how to lead a life free from worries; (3) how to honour and support those who deserve ; (4) how to speak the truth and (5) how to ensure one’s well being in the hereafter. Vidhūra gave a discourse on the five points which would not be forgotten in their whole lives. Then, the king saw Vidhūra off.

Vidhura and Puṇṇaka

Vindura requested Puṇṇaka to permit him to stay for two or three days at his home to give parting instructions to his family. Puṇṇaka agreed to the request. Vidhūra also invited Puṇṇaka to stay at his house as his guest for that period. To this also Puṇṇaka consented. Vidhūra looked after Puṇṇaka’s needs during his stay as his guest.

Vidhūra had a thousand sons, a thousand daughters, a thousand wives, seven hundred female attendants and many male and female slaves. Vidhūra explained to his family that he had become the property of Puṇṇaka and in four days' time, he would have to go away with Puṇṇaka. Then he lectured them on how to lead their lives and how to conduct themselves as courtiers of the king. Then Vidhūra went to the king to bid farewell and requested him to look after his family.

Then the king said to him, ‘ I will kill Puṇṇaka by a trick. You need not go with him.’ Vidhūra advised the king to keep his promise. At this reply, the king kept silent.

After Vidhūra Sukhamin had done all that was necessary, he proceeded to Puṇṇaka who made him hang on to the tail of his horse. Then he rode his horse at tremendous speed through the air towards the Himalayas. Vidhūra made a vow that his lower garment might remain in place and not be blown off, and hanging to the Manomaya Sindhava horse, he let Puṇṇaka take him wherever he wanted to.

Puṇṇaka then dashed his horse three times through hills, valleys, trees, bushes, shrubs and thickets of the Himalayas. (His purpose was to kill Vidhūra). However, because of the power of loving kindness (metta) and volition (cetanā) of Vidhūra towards Puṇṇaka, Vidhūra did not strike against trees, hills, and other obstacles. Puṇṇaka thought that Vidhūra would not survive the terrible torture and must be dead by that time. When he looked back at Vidhūra and saw that Vidhūra was unscathed and alive, he flew his horse through the upper layers of air. Even then Vidhūra remained alive and Puṇṇaka was furious.

Puṇṇaka rode back to the top of the Kalagiri hill. He tried to scare Vidhūra to death by taking the form of a dreadful ogre, then the form of a fierce lion, then an elephant in must and did all he could to frighten Vidhūra, who, however, was not afraid and did not die. Puṇṇaka was very much disappointed and filled with wrath.

Then he caused strong winds blow but Vidhūra was not blown away. Then he caused Kalāgiri hill to shake violently, but Vidhūra was not moved even a bit. Then he got into the Kalāgiri hill and roared in a frightful thundering voice, but Vidhūra was not frightened by it. Then Puṇṇaka took the form of a fierce ogre and violently pushed Vidhūra to and from but Vidhūra did not die. Then he took Vidhūra by the heels and hurled him to a distance of fifteen yojanas at the first time, then to a distance of thirty yojanas at the second time and then to a distance of sixty yojanas at the third time. Still Vidhūra did not die. Then Puṇṇaka felt very uneasy. He could not cause Vidhura’s death in those ways and he would have to kill him with his own hands, but that would be breaking the promise.

When Vidhūra saw that Puṇṇaka was trying to kill him in one way or another, he asked why Puṇṇaka was so bent on taking his life. At this Puṇṇaka disclosed everything. On hearing it, Vidhūra at once understood that Queen Vimaladevi did not actually want his heart; what she wanted was to hear a talk on the dhamma from him. He then resolved to use his wisdom to save his own life, to enable Queen Vimaladevi to hear a talk on the dhamma from him and to enable Puṇṇaka to marry Irandhati. He, therefore, told Puṇṇaka to listen to a talk on the Sādhunara dhamma from him before he died and then do whatever he had to do. To this Puṇṇaka consented.

Sādhunara dhamma means the dhamma of the righteous man. To become a righteous man in this loka, one must pay back the debt of gratitude one owes. If one cannot do that yet, one should not wrong one's benefactors even mentally. If one does so, it is like drying a wet hand (having no sense of gratitude). If one physically wrongs one's benefactors, it is wronging a good friend. For this reason, one should not wrong even an inanimate thing which has been of help to one in some way. One should not yield to the wishes of women. These four dhammas are known as Sādhunaras, the dhamma of the righteous man. Only one who practises these four dhammas is called righteous man 'sādhunara'.

When Puṇṇaka heard the dhammas of the righteous man he had an emotional awakening of remorse. In fact, he owed a debt of gratitude to Vidhūra Sukhamin. He had stayed three days as a guest at the house of Vidhūra. He had enjoyed the hospitality of Vidhūra, who was not an enemy of his. He had no dealings with Vidhūra before. He had come with Vidhūra only on account of Irandhati. According to the Sādhunara dhammas he had become one who had no sense of gratitude. He had dried a wet hand. He had wronged a benefactor. He had yielded to the wishes of a woman. He was no longer a righteous man in the loka. Reflecting thus, he decided to take Vidhūra back to Indapatthanago of Kuru. When he told Vidhūra his decision, the latter requested him to take him to the kingdom of the nagās. Puṇṇaka complied though he was filled with anxiety lest there might be danger to Vidhūra. Puṇṇaka had become so much respectful to Vidhūra!

Vidhūra gave a discourse in nagā kingdom

When Vidhūra got to the nagā kingdom, he did not preach the benefits of almsgiving as there was no one there to receive alms. So he preached on the merits of forbearance (khanti) and loving-kindness (metta) to the nagā king and queen Vimaladevi.

In fact, metta is the foundation of every deed of merit. When one has metta, it is easy for him to practise forbearance, to give alms and to do other deeds of merit for the good of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). For this reason, he preached mainly on the merits of metta. The nagā king was satisfied. Queen Vimaladevi's wish was fulfilled. Then as they were satisfied with what Puṇṇaka had done for them, they married him to their daughter Irandhati.

When Puṇṇaka won the hand of Irandhati, he was overwhelmed with joy. He thanked Vidhūra and presented him with the manomaya jewel. Under the orders of the nagā king and queen, he took back Vidhūra to Indapatthanago of Kuru. Then he took Irandhati to the Catumahārāja deva realm.

King Korabya was very happy to see again Vidhūra Sukhamin. All the people of the country were also happy. Vidhūra Sukhamin presented the manomaya jewel he had received from Puṇṇaka to King Korabya. Vidhūra continued to serve as minister of King Korabya of Indapatthanago until his death. As the king and the people were devoted to almsgiving under the constant exhortation of Vidhūra, they were all reborn in the deva realms when they passed away.

There are many remarkable points with regard to Paññā Pāramī in this jātaka story. The administration system in which Vidhūra was born was that of absolute monarchy and a man of less wisdom and ability than Vidhūra Sukhamin would in no way be able to serve the king satisfactorily, but Vidhūra could, by his wisdom, serve the king to his satisfaction. Secondly, the character Vidhūra had to meet with was Puṇṇaka who was very powerful, arrogant and aggressive. He was an ogre and a victim of intense passion. How difficult it would be for Vidhūra Sukhamin to tame and civilize such an ogre as Puṇṇaka may well be imagined, but Vidhūra Sukhamin was able, by his wisdom, to accomplish this extremely difficult task. Thirdly, the beings Vidhūra had to deal with were nagās, who were malevolent creatures. They would

strike at the slightest provocation whether there was any justification or not. For this reason, it is said, ‘Nagās’ glance chooses no reason’. In dealing with the Nagās, therefore, there was real danger to Vidhūra. He had to exert his skill to the utmost to satisfy both the nagā king and his queen Vimaladevi. That was the power of Paññā Pāramī.

Four dhammas for overcoming enmity

When the deeds of Vidhūra Sukhamin are studied, though it is seen that Paññā (wisdom) played the leading role, they were all deeds associated with Sacca (truth), Dhamma (righteous), Viriya (diligence) and Cāga (higher moral conduct). All these dhammas are those that overcome enmity and dangers. By his wisdom fortified by these four victorious dhammas, Vidhūra was able to conquer Puṇṇaka, Nagā king Varuṇa and queen Vimaladevi.

Doing with Sacca

With regard to Sacca (Truth), when Puṇṇaka and King Korabya came to Vidhūra for decision on the dispute whether Vidhūra was a servant of the king or not, he could have simply said that he was not a servant of the king. Thus he could have won a victory over Puṇṇaka.

But to him, such a victory was not a Sacca victory. Winning a victory not associated with Truth was not a real victory. It was really a loss and defeat. In fact, such a victory will bring about great losses (defeats) in the saṃsarā. For this reason, in his dealing with Puṇṇaka, Vidhūra sought a victory based on Sacca, a real victory, not a ‘defeat’ victory.

He did everything according to Dhamma

As regards dhamma, Vidhūra Sukhamin thought more for the benefit of the loka (lokattacariya) than for his own benefit (attattacariya) or the benefit of his relatives (ñāttatacariya) in his actions. Thus while his family, his king and the people were wailing with sorrow for his loss, he followed Puṇṇaka. For this reason, Vidhūra was able to overcome all kinds of difficulties till he achieved Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) and ultimately became the Buddha. All those who practise the dhamma (teaching of the Buddha) are truthful and upright (attribute of Uju) in their physical deeds (kāya kamma) and in their verbal deeds (vaci

kamma). They also have to be truthful and upright in their mental deeds (mano kamma) (attribute of suhuja). Then only will they be able to practise in accordance with the dhamma.

He did with Vīriya

In regard to diligence, Vidhūra had striven to cultivate it up to the level of Sammāppadhāna (right exertion). For that reason, his diligence became powerful and he was able to vanquish his enemies.

He did with Cāga

With reference to Cāga (renunciation), Vidhūra had given his life for the loka. He had himself set the task of placing the loka on the path of dhamma. He, therefore, risked his life and confronted Puṇṇaka. He met with danger head on. He faced the Nagās and confronted them. He did not avoid dangers but met with them head on. He thus met with them for the welfare of Puṇṇaka and the nagā king Varuṇa, and also of the loka. Seeing something wrong in some part of the loka but not paying any attention to it on the ground that it does not concern one is the shirking of responsibility. In truth, one is concerned with and attached to (according to Āsāvas) all the happenings in all the bhūmis (realms) up to the highest (Bhavagga) Arupa Brahma bhumi and with respect to insights up to Gotrabhu (the thought moment that immediately precedes the attainment of Sotapatti magga). For this reason, Cāga (self-sacrifice, renunciation) is very important in the attempt to exterminate samyojannas according to Āsava dhammas. That is why Vidhūra Sukhamin became the Gotama Buddha to liberate the loka.

If Vidhūra avoided this responsibility, he could be free. Nobody had given him this responsibility. He had thrust this responsibility on himself. In truth, only when one took the responsibility of loka by himself, would one be able to win a decisive victory over the surroundings, according to Cāga.

Vidhūra was a preacher

Vidhūra Sukhamin was a preacher but he was not like other preachers. He first preached to himself before he set out to preach others. It was good for him because he had thus examined himself whether he was practising what he preached. He preached others only the dhammas which he himself practised. If one

preached others the dhammas without preaching them to himself first, or dhammas which one preached himself first but did not practise, such preaching was not really right.

In his dealings with Puṇṇaka, or Nagā king Varuṇa or King Korabya, or others, Vidhūra Sukhamin always bore in mind the dhammas of the righteous (Sadhunara). He always looked at the surroundings through Kataññuta eye (eye of gratitude). When he did so, he saw the surroundings as benefactor.

When he did so, he did only deeds for paying the debt of gratitude. He did not do any deed of ingratitude or any deed that would wrong the benefactor. He did not let others persuade him to commit such deeds. This is the view, the attitude and the belief of Vidhūra Sukhamin in his dealings with the surroundings.

In his dealings with the surroundings, Vidhūra Sukhamin physically practised the four dhammas which would bring about victory over dangers. He dealt with them honestly and truthfully according to Sacca. He dealt with them in the right and proper way according to the dhamma. He dealt with them with enthusiasm and respect. He never thought of taking advantage of others and wished only for their welfare.

In his dealing with the surroundings, Vidhūra Sukhamin always verbally practised the Right speech (Sammāvācā). His words were always free from untruth and were, therefore, Saccavācā (words of truth). His words were always free from slender (Pisuṇa), were always pleasant (Subhāsita vācā) and were always pleasing (Piyavācā). His words were always free from frivolity (Samphappalāpa) and were words of dhamma (Dhammavācā).

In his physical, verbal and mental dealings with others, as Vidhūra Sukhamin was able to bring about benefits to them, these dealings were called those associated with upayakossalla ñāṇa. It is the knowledge which enable one to choose the best, the right and the most advantageous way for those with whom one deals. It is always accompanied by compassion (karuṇā).

As deeds done by Vidhūra Sukhamin embraced both upayakossalla ñāṇa and compassion, it is said that they are identical with, both in their internal nature and outward appearance, the fulfilling of Paññā Pāramī .

Deeds involving all ten pāramīs

In the Vidhūra story though Paññā Pāramī plays the leading role, other pāramīs are also involved. They include Dānā Pāramī (renunciation of self-interest). In respect of Sīla Pāramī, his morality was so pure and noble as to be certain of a happy destination on death that he could boldly face death at any time.

As regards Nekkhamma Pāramī, it is seen that Vidhūra Sukhamin expected absolutely nothing for himself from his deeds.

In his dealings with King Korabya, he placed the welfare of the king first. Likewise, he placed first the interests of Puṇṇaka, Nagā king Varuṇa and Vimaladevi in his dealings with them. So his deeds amounted to the fulfilment of Nekkhamma Pāramī.

Whatever dangers and difficulties he had to encounter, Vidhūra did not back away but always carried on undaunted and did what he had to do. In connection with Khanti Pāramī, he patiently withstood all kinds of difficulties and dangers till the goal was reached.

With regard to Sacca Pāramī, it is seen that he was very honest and truthful in speech.

Regarding Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī, he put into action his resolve 'I will satisfy all'.

In connection with Metta Pāramī, it is seen that, however much Puṇṇaka persecuted him, he had only loving-kindness on Puṇṇaka as his master. In his dealings with King Korabya and others also, he always had loving-kindness towards them and never entertained any thoughts of contempt or dissatisfaction.

In respect of Upekkha Pāramī, although King Korabya gambled at dice with him as 'stake' and Puṇṇaka tortured him in every way to cause his death he bore with equanimity as if nothing happened to him.

In truth, because of this attitude and the power of these pāramīs, Vidhūra Sukhamin was able, according to his resolve, to please King Korabya, Ogre Puṇṇaka, Nagā Princess Irandhati, Nagā King Varuṇa and Queen Vimaladevi and he was reborn on death in the happy realm of the devas and he eventually achieved Sabbaññuta ñāṇa and became the Buddha, the highest being of the three lokas. Therefore, if one has implicit belief in the power of

Pāramī and practise to fulfil them, one will certainly overcome all kinds of difficulties in the world.

**‘I’ to be nurtured and
‘I’ not to be nurtured**

Fulfilling pāramīs is not really a strange thing. Just having the spirit of willingness (cetanā) for the good of loka is fulfilling a Pāramī. This also is not strange. If one keeps a check on the ‘I’, it is having ‘cetanā’ on the loka. For this reason, such attitudes as “Only ‘I’”, “Only my family”, “Only my group”, “Only my race”, “Only my country”, etc. which keep out or restrict others are not keeping a check on the ‘I’. It is the nourishing of the ‘I’. The Buddhist literature in this connection states that the belief and view that only things concerned with ‘I’ is Sacca (truth) (Ida meva saccam; mogha maññam) is truth (sacca); and things not concerned with ‘I’ are worthless (idam saccam saccabhiniyessa diṭṭhi) is the danger to Pāramī. This view should be restrained.

There is, however, the ‘I’ which is helpful to the fulfilment of Pāramī. The view that I am the ‘I’, who does not restrict others should be nurtured. It is called ‘sevitabba’ meaning helpful. It is the ‘I’ which is of help in the fulfilment of Pāramī.

(E) VIRIYA PĀRAMI

(Perfection of Diligence)

“Vīriya” (energy or effort) is, according to Abhidhamma, a mental concomitant (cetasika) which associates with meritorious minds (kusala cittas) as well as demeritorious minds (akusala cittas). The meaning of vīriya, according to the Nirutti method, is courage. In Myanmar, ‘ye-yint-chin’ (courage) is used in connection with both good deeds and evil deeds. According to the Abhidhamma, however, courage in doing evil deeds is called wickedness and in good deeds is called ‘satti’ (ability, power).

In fact, vīriya in evil deeds is led by moha (bewilderment, ignorance). It is, therefore, called wickedness.

The vīriya in good deeds is led by amoha (discriminative knowledge, absence of bewilderment). For this reason, it is called ability or power.

This gives the two natures of vīriya. Of the two, only courage in doing meritorious deeds (kusala kamma) is counted in the fulfilment of pāramīs.

All deeds have three parts, namely, the commencement, the middle and the ending according to their nature. The commencement part is lively with enthusiasm.

When it comes to the middle part, difficulties and obstacles are encountered. Only when they are overcome, the deed comes to conclusion. If the difficulties and obstacles cannot be overcome, the deed will come to a premature stop in the middle part without reaching a successful end.

On the basis of these three parts, vīriya can also be divided into three, namely Ārambha, Nikkama and parikkama. The vīriya

at the commencement of the deed is called ‘*Ārambha*’ *vīriya*. It is usual at the beginning for one to be filled with excitement, expectations and enthusiasm. Therefore, the beginning of a deed is joyful (*Assādo*) and as the result *ārambha vīriya* arises easily in anyone who begins a deed.

When it comes to the middle part, difficulties and obstacles are encountered. This part is, therefore, called the *ādinava* (suffering) part. The *vīriya* in this part is called *Nikkama* which means passing over. When *Nikkama vīriya* arises, the difficulties and obstacles will be overcome and passed over. If this cannot be done, the *vīriya* is not *nikkama vīriya*. The deed will then come to a stop halfway. If the difficulties and obstacles are overcome and the deed progresses and reaches a successful ending, it is called ‘*nissaraṇa*’ which means getting beyond.

The *vīriya* which concerns with the getting beyond is called ‘*parakkama vīriya*’ which means reaching a successful ending. Therefore, when *parikkama vīriya* arises, the whole deed reaches a successful conclusion.

In the fulfilment of *vīriya Pāramī*, all the three parts—*Ārambha vīriya* at the commencement, *Nikkama vīriya* in the middle part and *parakkama vīriya* in the ending are involved. The commencement *vīriya* has the nature of liveliness and enthusiasm, the middle part *vīriya* has the nature of suffering (*ādinava*) and the ending part has the nature of getting beyond (*nissaraṇa*) from both of the above. Though *Ārambha vīriya* has the nature of joyfulness at the commencement, there is the interference by *kilesas* (defilements) to some extent. These *kilesas* might entice or threaten but they are all impediments by nature. Therefore, all the *kilesas* encountered at the beginning of the deed should all be got rid of. Unless it can be done, the deed will come to a stop at the very outset.

The middle part is the difficult part. This is, therefore, called the suffering part or the faulty part. It is called *Ādinava* part in Pāli. Only when the difficulties and obstacles can be overcome, can progress be made. All difficulties and obstacles are *kilesas* by nature and they, therefore, must be got rid of. Then, even though the ending part has the nature of *nissaraṇa* (escape, getting beyond), the remnants of the *Assada* and *Ādinava* still remain up to the final moment of reaching the goal. As these are the impediments and obstacles, they should be done away with. This is called ‘*ātapa*’, meaning the burning up of *kilesas*.

In truth, in doing any deed, Ārambha vīriya has the ātāpa nature of burning up the impeding kilesas. The middle part nikkama vīriya, too, has the ātāpa nature of burning up the difficulties and obstacles encountered and the ending part Parikkama vīriya also, has the ātāpa nature of burning up the impeding kilesas. Actually, vīriya Pāramī has the ātāpa burning nature in the commencement Ārambha vīriya, in the middle nikkama vīriya and in the end Parikkama vīriya. The commencement vīriya can, by its burning nature, get rid of the difficulties and obstacles encountered at the outset. The middle vīriya can, by its burning nature, get rid of the impediments and obstacles encountered in the middle part. The end vīriya can, by its burning nature, get rid of impediments and obstacles encountered towards the end of the deed. That is the reason why vīriya Pāramī enables the deed to be done successfully.

In performing a deed to a successful conclusion, vīriya is prescribed and is emphasised, but kamma (action, doing) and ñāṇa (knowledge) also play their respective roles. Only when kamma, ñāṇa and vīriya work in unison, can a deed end successfully. The Piṭakas compare kamma with seeds, vīriya with soil and ñāṇa with water. According to this example, in the growth of a tree, seed, soil and water are essential. Even though the seed may not be good, if the soil is good and is watered regularly, a robust tree can grow out of a bad seed.

All beings have been endlessly wandering in the saṃsarā, the beginning of which cannot be traced. In this long stretch of the saṃsarā, they have done many good as well as bad deeds. They, therefore, have in them uncountable good kammās and bad kammās which are ready to grow into 'trees' according to anekkhanika kamma satti, the invisible power. If they can get good soil and water, they will grow into trees. Here, good soil is vīriya and water is ñāṇa.

We have all kinds of seeds in us. We can plant a lobha (greed) tree or an alobha (non-greed) tree. We can plant a dosa (anger) tree or an adosa (non-anger) tree. We can plant a moha (bewilderment) tree or an amoha (non-bewilderment) tree. We can plant a kusala or an akusala or any other tree. We can choose and plant any kind of tree according to our wish. If we choose and plant a poison tree, a poison tree will grow; if we choose and plant a medicinal tree, a medicinal tree will grow.

To give another example, kamma can be likened to building materials, ñāṇa to the architect and vīriya to the builder. The builder has to construct the building according to the plan or blue-print drawn up by the architect. It is the builder's duty to construct the building according to the blue-print. If the architect has drawn up the plan of a prison, it is the builder's duty to construct a prison. If the architect has drawn up the plan of a temple, the builder has to construct a temple. Just as the building materials will take the shape of the building according to the plan of the architect and the work of the builder, in the performance of a deed, whether the result will be for self-benefit or for common benefit will depend on the ñāṇa and vīriya put into the deed. The kamma (deed) may be likened to building materials which are accumulated in large quantities in every being.

Duty and deed

In practice, there are many people on this earth who work hard at their chosen occupations. They can all be those who are fulfilling Vīriya Pāramī, or who are not doing it. Everyone who makes his utmost effort in his work cannot be called one who is fulfilling Vīriya Pāramī. In fact, the fulfilling of Vīriya Pāramī should be preceded by the practice of diffusing compassion (karuṇā) and acquiring knowledge of expedients (upāya kossalam ñāṇa). Only such vīriya deserves to be called Vīriya Pāramī. Only when these two dhammas precede vīriya, it deserves to be called the deed of the noble ones. Unless a deed is preceded by these two dhammas, even though one may do it at the risk of his life in the call of duty, it is not called Pāramī. It is just a deception by moha (bewilderment). In truth, duty deserves to be called duty only when its nature is noble. Otherwise, it is just a deed. This is the differentiation between duty and deed where Pāramī is concerned.

Karuṇā and metta

Karuṇā means compassion but it must be based on metta (loving-kindness). The origin of metta is the mental concomitant of adosa (non-anger). So metta is the opposite of dosa (anger). In fact, one can have compassion only when one knows how to love. Knowing how to love is knowing to love the loka.

Knowing to love the loka involves knowing to love oneself. The Piṭakas say that only self is the most lovable to one

in the loka. In fact 'loving' and 'sinking' (ruining) are mixed up. In reality, if one loves oneself, one must work for the good of oneself. The good of oneself includes one's welfare in the present life as well as the life in the hereafter. Only when both are embraced, it is really called loving oneself. Leaving aside one's welfare in the hereafter and devoting oneself to the welfare and prosperity of the present life is not truly loving oneself but is 'sinking' (ruining) oneself.

Should not have selfishness

If one really loves oneself, one must strive for the welfare of both the loka and one's round of rebirths (saṃsarā). Then only will it mean really loving oneself. Striving for the welfare of both the loka and one's saṃsarā is not nourishing selfishness. It is loving the loka and oneself.

Therefore, if one loves loka, it is easy for karuṇā (compassion) to arise. It will only be necessary for the arising of upāya kosalla ñāṇa (knowledge of expedients). It will not be difficult for it to arise when one already has cultivated compassion. Then the effort will have the nature of Pāramī.

Vaṇṇapatha Story

Among the jāataka stories of the Bodhisatta connected with vīriya Pāramī, the Vaṇṇapatha story and Mahājanaka story are outstanding. The story of Vaṇṇapatha is included in Ekanipāta and the story of Mahājānaka in the mahānipāta.

The Vaṇṇapatha story is as follows:

When King Brahmadata was reigning in Vāranaśī, the Bodhisatta was a merchant who went from place to place leading a caravan of five hundred bullock carts. On one occasion, they lost their way in a desert. As they ran short of water, he made his followers dig a well. Though they dug up to a depth of sixty cubits, they found only a large slab of stone but no water. They could not dig on and the diggers gave up in despair. They could see no other way to get water but to die of thirst. Then the Bodhisatta asked a strong man to try to break the slab by pounding it with a heavy hammer. At last the slab broke and a spring of water as big as a palm tree trunk gushed out. Thus they saved their lives and reached back home.

In this story we see the Bodhisatta's invincible diligence (*vīriya*) which would not yield as long as one is alive. Depending on him, the five hundred merchants remained alive. The diligence of the Bodhisatta was not without wisdom. It was associated with wisdom. He knew by his knowledge the spot where water existed. He had learnt such arts and was, therefore, able to choose the right spot where water could be got.

They dug up to a depth of sixty cubits. They came to the stone slab and could not go on digging any more. The diggers were in despair and did not know what else to do. They had only to face death by thirst. The Bodhisatta was not like others; he knew his qualities. He had faith in his judgement. He was correct in his strategy (plan) but he went wrong in putting it into effect. Thus he understood analytically. It was only important for the strategy to be correct; the way of putting it into effect could be changed as required.

He therefore changed the tactics. He did not ask the diggers to continue digging. He told a young man to pound the slab with a heavy hammer. He himself went down the pit, put his ear to the slab and heard the sound of water. He was, therefore, certain that there was water beneath the slab. So he ordered the pounding of the slab with a heavy iron hammer.

That was the most crucial moment for the Bodhisatta. It was a moment when all his followers were in very low spirits. He knew the moment and the situation. He made all the merchants to have confidence in him. He had taken the leadership and it was his duty to show the followers convincing proof that he was superior to them in every respect. He, therefore, tried hard. He had to show practically that he was the better in knowledge. He could not afford to be indecisive. He also had to show them that he was the better in respect of compassion. He also had to demonstrate that he was superior to them in *vīriya* and sacrifice.

The Bodhisatta was able to win over even those who did not believe in the presence of water under the slab but they co-operated whole-heartedly in the task in consideration of his metta (loving-kindness) and *cetanā* (volition). He was able to do so on account of genuine metta he diffused towards his followers. He did not try to win over them with the object of using them for his own good. He, therefore, succeeded by the power of the dhamma.

Mahājanaka Story

The Mahājanaka story in the Mahānipāta is as follows:-

Long, long ago, King Mahājanaka reigned in Mithilā of Videhagaha. He had two sons. The elder was Ariṭṭhajanaka and the younger was Polajanaka. He appointed Ariṭṭhajanaka as the crown prince and Polajanaka as the chief of armed forces. When king Mahājanaka passed away, Ariṭṭhajanaka became king, and Polajanaka was made crown prince.

A minister of King Polajanaka who bore a grudge against him reported to King Ariṭṭhajanaka that the crown prince was plotting against the king. The king, however, took no action but when the minister repeated the report several times, he ordered the crown prince to be imprisoned.

The younger brother crown prince was loyal to the king. He did not plot against the king as reported by the minister. But the king wrongly took action against the crown prince. It showed lack of kingly qualifications. It is the law of nature that those who accept high offices without having the necessary qualifications would one day be sent by these offices to their doom.

Saccā was his only refuge

The younger brother crown prince looked for some refuge but could not find any. His armed men and followers did not dare to go against the king. So they were no refuge for him. He, therefore, had no refuge other than Saccā (truth). He thought over it and then made the following asseveration of truth:-

“If I am really an enemy of my elder brother, may the iron fetters that bind me to the door post remain fast. If, however, I am not really an enemy of my elder brother, may the iron fetters that bind me to the door post get loose and free me at once.”

By the power of this asseveration of truth, the crown prince got free from the fetters. Then he left for the countryside and collected arms and men. On account of his honesty and abilities, he was able to raise a strong force and he laid seige to the city of Mithilā.

After the crown prince had systematically surrounded the city, he sent the following ultimatum to his brother king Ariṭṭhajanaka:-

“Elder brother King Ariṭṭha! While I was the crown prince, I had not, with any enmity, wronged you physically, verbally or mentally. Though I have no mind to attack you, I am now compelled to do so because you want it. Will you, therefore, surrender your throne to me or meet me in combat?”

King Ariṭṭhajanaka was furious at the ultimatum. He replied at once that he would fight. He then told the queen to look out for the news of the battle and to stay alert. At that time, the Bodhisatta was in the womb of the queen and the pregnancy was in the advanced stage.

In the combat the elder brother Ariṭṭhajanaka was killed. Hearing the news of her husband's death, she took the royal treasures as much as she could carry and disguising as a nondescript lady set out for Kālasampanagaha. The famous teacher of Kālasampanagaha looked after her as his own younger sister. She gave birth to a son who was given the name of Mahājanaka after his grandfather.

Prince Mahājanaka learnt from his mother that he was really a prince. Mithilā was the kingdom his father Ariṭṭhajanaka had ruled but whose younger brother had usurped the throne. Prince Mahājanaka learnt all the arts which a prince should master from the Disāpāmokkha teacher. He resolved to take back the throne of Mithilā which had belonged to his father.

When he told his mother about his resolution, she gave him the royal treasures for use as war expenditure. The prince, however, did not accept them as he was bent on seeking his own fortune and taking back the throne. The prince, therefore, set out, together with seven hundred seamen, by a ship to Suvanabhūmi to trade.

On the seventh day of the voyage, the ship was caught in a violent storm at sea and was wrecked. All the seven hundred seamen were drowned. Prince Mahājanaka, however, swam in the direction of Mithilā. Before he jumped into the sea from the top of the mast, he ate butter and sugar to his fill. He then soaked his garments in oil and girded them on himself fast. Then he climbed to the top of the mast and jumped to get as far away as possible from the sinking ship around which sharks and other dangerous sea creatures had gathered.

For seven whole days the prince swam steadily with perseverance. While thus swimming, he kept the precepts (observed sabbath) by not taking any food in the afternoon. He got rid of thoughts of fear of death. He nursed brave thoughts as he knew that worry was demeritorious and bravery was meritorious. Akusala thoughts bring bad results and kusala thoughts produce good results. If, in the face of danger, one thought only for oneself, fear arose. If one thought for the loka, as there was no self to consider, and the self had nothing to suffer, bravery arose. He thus took care not to entertain thoughts of worry and he nursed bravery. He repeatedly strained himself to be brave.

Then, Goddess Manimekhalā, who guarded the sea, saw prince Mahājanaka swimming in the ocean, and appearing before him, asked:

“The ocean is so vast its shores cannot even be seen. Why are you trying in vain to swim across?”

The prince replied to Goddess Manimekhalā:

“I am swimming indefatigably across the ocean as I am thinking of my duty as a man and the power of perseverance”.

Then a dialogue ensued between the Goddess Mekhalā and the prince thus:

Goddess: Prince! Your sense of duty and perseverance by your attempt to swim across the ocean will result only in your death. There will be no other benefit. Will any effort that will produce only death do you any good?

Prince: Goddess! Deciding that there is no chance to realize one's aim and abandoning it entirely to one's fate is the way of the weak and inferior persons. Making no effort and leaving entirely to one's fate will result in death. Beside death, one will also earn the name of a weak and inferior person. One will, therefore, get two bad results.

There are results that lie beyond and that lie within the boundary of one's wish. Therefore, instead of attaching oneself to the results that lie beyond the boundary of one's wish, one should respect and attach oneself to the cause and results which lie within the boundary of one's wish. The cause which one respectfully strives to bring about will bear its result within itself.

Goddess, Please look! The seven hundred sea men who have no *vīriya* and make no effort to save themselves have all died. I, who have *vīriya* and have made the effort to save myself, am still alive. I have also seen you, the goddess, at close quarters. Are they not the practical results of *vīriya*?

In becoming a being, one is indebted to relatives, to devas and to parents. Making efforts to the best of one's ability is paying back that debt so that one can become 'anaṇa' who is free from debt.

I do not look for results that lie beyond the boundary of one's wish. I strive to accomplish deeds to the best of my ability.

Goddess: I like your attitude. I will, therefore, take you wherever you want to go.

Then Prince Mahājanaka told Goddess Mekhalā to take him to Mithilā. She carried him and put him on the Maṅgala stone slab in the Mango Garden of Mithilā.

It was the seventh day from the day King Polajanaka passed away. He left no son but only a daughter who was named *Sīlavatī*. She was of good moral conduct but as it was not proper to put her on the throne according to the then prevailing convention, the ministers were looking for someone who deserved to marry the princess and take the throne. They decided to send out a phussa carriage to find the right candidate. (This method was used in olden times. The carriage drawn by horses without a driver was sent out. The carriage would wander all over the kingdom and would stop when it found the right candidate, who would be then crowned king). Now the carriage stopped at the stone slab in the Mango Garden where Prince Mahājanaka was fast asleep.

Then the ministers and the king's chamberlain explained to the prince why they had to choose and crown him king. They then conducted him to the palace. The late king had prescribed tests for the person chosen to be king to pass. They were to bend the great bow which could only be done by a thousand warriors; to point out the head of the throne couch and to reveal the places where 31 pots of gold were buried. Mahājanaka passed all these tests without any difficulty. He made *Sīlavatī* his chief queen and ruled Mithilā.

He brought his benefactor the Disāpamokkha teacher and his queen mother to Mithilā and kept them in comfort and luxury. Thus his aim was peacefully fulfilled.

King Mahājanaka had five alms pavilions built in the city and gave alms daily. Just as King Polajanaka had done, He invited Paccekabuddhas to the palace and offered meals every day. He ruled the kingdom with justice.

A son was born to King Mahājanaka and queen Sīlavatī and was named Dighāvu. When the son came of age, King Mahājanaka made him crown prince. King Mahājanaka reigned Mithilā of Videha for 7,000 years. Then he handed over the throne to his son Dighāvu and left for the Himalayas to lead the life of an ascetic. He practised meditation and attained supernormal powers. Thus he lived for three thousand years more. Queen Sīlavatī also became an ascetic and dwelt in the royal garden. She attained the first jhānas and on her death was reborn in the Brahma realm.

Diligence befitting the dhamma

The remarkable point about the story of Mahājanaka is the perseverance and zeal of Prince Mahājanaka. This is called Dhamma vāyama. This is Vīriya (exertion, effort) which is made in the practice of the dhamma. It is built upon nobility and purity of moral conduct. In the shipwreck at sea, the seven hundred seamen who accompanied Prince Janaka died. When the ship sank, they did not make any effort to save their lives, but they simply resigned themselves to their fate. They did so because they had decided that the ocean was so vast that the shores could not be seen. However much they might try to swim, it would be impossible for them to get to the shore. They were sure that they would die whether they tried to swim or not. So why should they tire themselves unnecessarily? They thus reasoned and made the decision. They had no chance at all to escape from death unless the devas came to their help. This was an impossibility and they, therefore, had no chance to be alive. Their fate, therefore, depended entirely on fate, not on human effort. They must have thus concluded. Even if they did make an effort, it would be fruitless and foolish. Thus, the seven hundred seamen must have reasoned and made no effort to save themselves and they all died.

Prince Mahājanaka, on the other hand, did not reason thus. To him, kamma lies beyond one's wish. Only ñāṇa (knowledge)

and *vīriya* (effort, energy) are within one's wish and as such one can use them as one wants. Kamma always lies inconspicuously in one as 'satti' (courage). It is ever present in one since the beginning of one's round of rebirths (*samsarā*), and it will continue to exist till one realizes Nibbāna. According to the Pāli phrase 'Kusala kusalam jāham', until they are discarded by appropriate maggas, a countless number of kusala kamma deeds and akusala kamma deeds will exist in one. One can, however, choose them as one likes according to his knowledge (*ñāṇa*).

That knowledge needs to be based on one's pure moral conduct. Only when the *ñāṇa* is of such nature, can dhamma *vāyama* (which is effort made in conformity with dhamma) arise, and can the effort be in conformity with dhamma. Only when kamma is put into practice by dhamma *vāyama*, kamma will visibly appear as wholesome 'byatti' (courage). Kamma exists inconspicuously as 'satti' (ability) in an uncountable number in one. In the effort to develop 'satti' from an inconspicuous state into the conspicuous state of 'byatti', *vīriya* is the prime factor.

If *vīriya* does it judiciously with right knowledge, it becomes dhamma *vāyama* (effort associated with dhamma). If it is done unjudiciously without right knowledge, it becomes adhamma *vīriya* (effort associated with adhamma *vāyama*). This was the view of Prince Mahājanaka.

If kamma is done by dhamma *vāyama* (effort associated with dhamma) it will produce good results; if it is done by adhamma *vāyama*, it will produce bad results. There are uncountable kammas in one's person to be brought into fruition. This can be done at all times.

There is, therefore, nothing to worry about kammas. What is really necessary is to develop *ñāṇa* (knowledge), *vīriya* (effort) and *Sīla* (morality). There is also nothing to worry about the results from one's deeds. As far as the results from kammas are concerned, they naturally appear simultaneously with the progress of the deeds. They sometimes appear immediately after and sometimes appear later. The arising of results simultaneously is called 'sahajāta'; the arising of results immediately after is called 'Anantara' and the arising of results later is called 'nānākhanika'. Of these three kinds, simultaneous and immediately after results can arise in every kind of deed.

And these results show the increase and the decrease of akusala deeds in oneself. The results of deeds done with dhamma vāyama show the decrease of akusala and of those done with adhamma vayama show the increase of akusalas. However, only a few persons really know that in every deed done the causes are responsible for bringing about simultaneous and immediately after results. It can only be known by persons who have Saṭisampajañña (mindfulness associated with knowledge).

Prince Mahājanaka was such a person. For this reason, he defied death and swam in the ocean with dhammavāyama, but he did not forget to observe Sīla. In truth, only when one had Sīla, could one's wishes come true. The Piṭakas say that all the wishes of a person of Sīla come true as much as his Sīla is pure. For this reason, Prince Mahājanaka took special care to observe Sīla while swimming in the ocean.

As the saying 'Andhi bhūto ayam loko' (all the worldlings are groping in the dark), goes, whatever worldlings do, they are doing it hesitatingly and doubtfully (like a blind man walking). That is the reason why light is necessary in performing any task. Light here means purity of morality (Sīla). When Sīla is pure, Samādhi (mental concentration) is strong. When Samādhi is strong, one can do one's task without hesitation and doubt. He does the task with confidence.

Light enables one to see things clearly and distinctly. Knowing what one does clearly and distinctly is called knowing with yathābhūtañāṇa (right knowledge). Prince Mahājanaka's act of swimming in the ocean was associated with Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. For this reason, he did not die and eventually attained the throne of Mithila. Even if the prince was drowned in the ocean, because of his dhammavāyama, it was certain that he would be reborn in the deva realm. That was the reason why he said that his dhammavāyama could not be fruitless.

Different views on Diligence

There are four views regarding the relationship between causes and results. This is sometimes called the relationship between the course and the goal. Of these four views, one is the view that the result should not be taken into consideration. According to this view, as the result cannot yet be seen, it should be paid no attention. In truth, according to the view of Prince Mahājanaka, the result is contained in the cause and it arises

sometimes with the progress of the deed simultaneously and sometimes immediately after. Here result means the prevalence of dhamma or adhamma. Such results arise in every deed either simultaneously or immediately after with the arising of the cause. Then, as the next stage, later results will arise according to nature. For these reasons, when the relationship between cause and result is not seen, the view of not paying attention to the result comes into being. This is not a correct view. The Pitakas called it Natthika diṭṭhi view.

Another view pays attention only to results and no attention at all to the cause. According to this view, if one is sure of the results one wants, one should even kill one's parents. It also is not a right view which the Piṭakas call 'Akiriya diṭṭhi' (non-causative action or non-kamma).

Another view pays attention neither to the cause nor the result. According to this view, the time and the circumstances are always changing. Therefore, action (deeds) should suit the time and circumstances. There cannot, therefore, be a hard and fast principle. This view is correct according to strategy (plan) but wrong according to manoeuvre (tactics). Therefore, the Piṭakas call it 'Ahetuka diṭṭhi'.

According to the last view, both the cause and results are given attention to. The correctness or otherwise of the cause has to be examined with reference to the result obtained. The correctness or otherwise of the result has to be examined with reference to the cause. The cause and the result have to be compared with each other. The result is sometimes the same and sometimes different in respect of time. However, it might be, the cause and the result, according to dhamma sabhāva, have to be of the same nature. Good cause produces good result and bad cause produces bad result. Goodness on either side, cause or result, is the decrease of akusala (demeritorious deeds). Badness on either side is the increase of akusala. In another way, the goodness or badness has to be measured with Nibbāna. Here Nibbāna means escape from taṇhā (craving). If taṇhā diminishes a little, it is good a little. When taṇhā diminishes much, it is good much. Only this view is the correct one and it is called 'Sammā diṭṭhi' (right view).

Prince Mahājanaka went on the voyage to trade because he wished to get back the throne, it is true. He also swam in the vast ocean, it is true. But his wish was not for himself; it was for the

loka and for the dhamma (righteousness). It was like building a scaffold for the hoisting of the pinnacle (hti) to a pagoda. If the energetic effort of seeking wealth was for the enjoyment of oneself, it was far away from the realization of Nibbāna. If it was for the good of loka, it was near to the realization of Nibbāna. Mahajanaka's pursuit of wealth was near to the realization of Nibbāna. Being far away from or near to the realization of Nibbāna does not depend on the nature of work; it depends on one's view and thinking.

Prince Mahājanaka performed his tasks according to the right view (sammā diṭṭhi). When he considered the relationship between cause and result, he considered them as saha-jāta (arising together simultaneously), as anantara (arising immediately after) and as nānākhanika (arising later). That was the reason why he succeeded in achieving his aim.

In this jātika, the Vīriya Pāramī (perfection of diligence) is seen as the primary Pāramī (padhāna Pāramī) but it should be understood that the other pāramīs are also included as secondary (minor or supplementary) pāramīs.

- sacrificing one's life, not for one's own sake, but for setting an example to human beings as their duty and responsibility is Dāna Pāramī;
- keeping the precepts and controlling one's morality is Sīla Pāramī;
- freedom from attachment (taṇhā) which wishes the body to be free from fatigue is Nekkhamma Pāramī;
- having an all round knowledge of one's business is Paññā Pāramī;
- forbearing all kinds of difficulties is Khanti Pāramī;
- compatibility between one's decisions and one's deeds is Sacca Pāramī;
- striving to fulfil one's decision is Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī;
- constantly having loving-kindness on the loka is Metta Pāramī;
- not being influenced by the happenings in one's
nt and concentrating on one's work, without
or stopping is Upekkha Pāramī.

Though Prince Mahājanaka’s Vīriya Pāramī is primarily high-lighted in this story, other pāramīs are also dealt with as secondary ones. If people encounter setbacks and discouragements in any effort done at the sacrifice of their self interest, they could call to mind Prince Mahājanaka’s swimming in the vast ocean. Then, they might be able to overcome the setbacks and discouragements. What they should always bear in mind, however, is to strive for the purity of their morality. The Buddha has said:

“Ijjhati bhikkhave sīlavato ceto paṇidhi visuddhattā”

which means that the wishes of those who have morality are accomplished by the very purity of their morality. What Buddha has said can no way be wrong. We should, therefore, implicitly believe in it and do our tasks on the foundation of our moral conduct. Even though we work for the common welfare with good intention, if we do not pay enough attention to the purity of our morality, it will be very difficult to achieve our aim for the common welfare. For this reason, therefore, if we really expect our actions to bear the fruit of the common good, we should base them on the purity of our morality. Then only would our actions really bear such fruits.

(E) KHANTI PĀRAMĪ

(Perfection of Forbearance)

‘Khanti’ is a Pāli word meaning forbearance. According to its wider meaning, it includes forbearance or calm endurance against adoration and love against contempt and scorn, etc.

The word is usually used in cases where one is being insulted but one does not retaliate in any way and merely forgives the offender. According to the dhamma, it is just a sum-total of nāma-rūpa (mind and matter) predominated by the mental concomitant of Adosa (absense of anger or hatred). Adosa is loving kindness (metta). According to Abhidhamma, Khanti (forbearance) is maintaining loving-kindness (metta) towards the person who insults. When one maintains loving-kindness on a person, ne sees no faults in that person. That is the reason why metta (loving-kindness) is the basis of khanti (forbearance).

Khanti pāramī is a very important Pāramī (perfection). Of the ten Pāramīs, whatever deed is done, only when no expectation for one's well being (that is the nature of Nekkhamā Pāramī, renunciation) is involved, does it amount to a Pāramī. Even then, the support of Upekkhā (equanimity) and Khanti (forbearance) Pāramīs is needed to make it stable and firm, otherwise it can be ruined and broken.

For this reason, special effort has to be made to fulfil it as an important Pāramī out of the ten pāramīs. In truth, for the annihilation of adhamma (akusala dhamma) in the loka, khanti is the most effective dhamma technique. For this reason, the Piṭakas say that there is no dhamma as effective as khanti.

Just as there are action and counter-action with regard to material things, there are similarly action and counter-action in the mental sphere. It is in the nature of straight-forward direct order (anuloma order). According to it, if another person gives one a blow, one wants to give him back a blow. If another person is tough, one wants to be tough in return. This nature can exist in both good deeds and bad deeds. It should be called a downward tendency, going with the stream. Loka moves in this manner. Everything that moves with the stream is not a pāramī. Only things which move against the stream have the nature of Pāramī. Only things which have the nature of Pāramī can lead towards the supramundane sphere. Therefore, it is said Pāramī has the nature of Paṭiloma (the reverse order).

If one wants to practise Khanti Pāramī according to the nature of Paṭiloma, one has to avoid the extremes and follow the middle path called majjhima patipadā. If another person insults you, you retaliate.

It is a counter-action for putting a stop to such actions recurring in future. However, it is not the right action; it is just an impulsive action called ‘kāmasukkhālikānuyoga’. It belongs to ‘antapaṭipadā’ extreme practice.

If on the other hand, one endures it stoically without doing anything in retaliation it causes a severe mental strain as one has to go against one’s will. Such an effort is called ‘attakilamathānuyoga’. It belongs to the extreme practice of antapaṭipadā’.

If the insult which is adhamma is extinguished by these two methods, it is not extinguishing by the right dhamma method. The insult will not be extinguished but will survive and continue its vicious circle.

Everybody’s Duty

It is everybody’s duty to prevent adhamma from flourishing in the loka. The noble ones are more responsible in this respect than others. According to this responsibility, it is necessary to use the correct method for the annihilation of adhamma. And that correct method is to practice khanti (forbearance) but extreme practices should be avoided. Only the middle path method should be employed. The pivot of the middle path is adosa (loving-

kindness) but it should be adosa associated with wisdom, not adosa unassociated with wisdom.

When khanti is employed as the method of the middle path, it is necessary to know its immediate cause correctly. That is to have yathābhūtañāṇa knowledge. Only when one forbears the insults with adosa (metta) after scrutinizing them with yathābhūta knowledge can the khanti (forbearance) become pāramī. Forbearance amounting to Pāramī is a kusala (meritorious) dhamma. For this reason essence of khanti is just the sum-total of nāmas (cittas) predominated by adosa (metta).

Respecting One's Morality

When the insults are analysed with yathābhūta knowledge, one will come to understand their true facts. One will see the faults that will arise when one retaliates the insults. One will come to see that a person like oneself ought not to retaliate such insults and will come to restrain one's moral conduct. One will come to respect one's morality. When one respects one's morality, one's will be ashamed to retaliate. This is called 'hiri' (being ashamed to do wrong). It is a kusala mental concomitant (cetasika). It will also become necessary to have consideration for the loka, which includes the person who insults one. Only when one is a really noble person, will one be able to do one's best for the loka. In truth, such a down trend attitude as 'If he attacks me, I will attack him back. If he is tough, I will be tough too' is not the attitude of the noble ones. One cannot work for the permanent peace of the loka with such an attitude. Even if one can bring about peace, the peace will not last; it can only be temporary peace.

Such a peace built on enmity and grudge can one day give rise to danger, it is clear from the psychological point of view. Then, one will vividly perceive the danger that will befall one day on the loka, due to one's impulsive retaliation, the surroundings one has taken the responsibility to bring about peace. One, therefore, becomes afraid to act in an impulsive manner. It is called 'Ottapa' (fear to do wrong) which is a kusala citta. Hiri and Ottapa pave the way for the arising of Yathābhūta knowledge, which characterises 'adosa' as khanti (forbearance).

When one thinks of retaliating upon the insults and the need to respect one's morality (hiri) and to consider the interests of the surroundings which may be endangered by one's action

(Ottapa), one will come to perceive correctly, by yathābhūta knowledge, the faults (ādinava) of retaliation. Then perceiving the faults of retaliation, one discards the adhamma method of retaliation and adopts the dhamma method of forbearance (khanti). In truth, in the worldly events, adhamma never can exterminate adhamma. Adhamma can only be exterminated by dhamma. For this reason, generations of the noble ones have extinguished insults by forbearance. This is the correct and the only effective way to attain liberation (nissaraṇa) from insults called adhamma.

Majjhima Paṭipadā Forbearance

When one wants to perform a deed according to the middle way (Majjhima paṭipadā), one should have a correct knowledge (yathābhūtañāṇa) of the deed and Nibbidañāṇa, the knowledge which realizes the faults of impulsiveness. Then Virāgañāṇa (absence of passion) knowledge will arise for discarding the bad impulsive. Only deeds with these three kinds of knowledge can be called those done in the middle way.

With regard to Khanti Pāramī, only forbearance practised in accordance with the middle path method will amount to Pāramī. Otherwise, it will only be forbearance embodied in enmity and grudge (āghāta); it will not be forbearance embodied in adosa (metta).

There is the kind of forbearance characterised by weak dosa (anger) and by adosa. Forbearance characterised by weak dosa is called forbearance through fear, in which āghāta (enmity) is rooted. This rooted āghāta might one day become aggressive dosa. Then retaliation will inevitably arise, and the vicious cycles of insults and retaliations will go on endlessly in human history.

The noble ones, therefore, practise the forbearance with adosa (metta). As this method can extinguish āghāta (enmity), it can shorten the saṃsarā (round) of hatred. It can also make life a priceless treasure because it annihilates the selfish view of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ in everything. In fact, the more one is free from the self-interest view, the more valuable one’s existence becomes. It is natural that the more valuable one’s existence is, the happier one will be.

When it is said that adosa is present in Khanti (forbearance), alobha (non-greed) also comes in automatically, followed by amoha (non-bewilderment), metta (loving-kindness) and karuṇā

(compassion). Only when they are involved, can a deed possess the nature of Pāramī. As metta is involved, when loka is looked at, everything seen becomes lovable. As karuṇā is involved, when loka is looked at, everything seen is pitiable and arouses compassion. When loka is seen as lovable and pitiable, the wish to sacrifice for the loka which one loves and pities, that is alobha padhāna and the knowledge (amoha padhāna) to choose what they would like, will arise by themselves. There will be no need for special effort; they will appear of their own accord 'asaṅkhārika'.

Path to the Goal of Life

The five great advantages in life, viz. longevity, good appearance, strength, knowledge and power are not the main goals of life. They are merely paths to the goal. One has to follow these paths to get to the goal. It is true that people long for these advantages. It is also true that they strive to attain them. However, in longing for them or in striving to attain them, only when the aim is to use them merely as the means in the effort for the well being of the loka, can the aim be called correct. Only if the effort is for the realization of that aim, it is the right effort to reach the goal of life.

There is the (true) goal of life which is paying the debt of gratitude to those who have created life. They include parents and other human beings; forests, rivers, mountains, hills, the earth, the water, animals, etc; dhammas and traditions etc; the Buddha and devas, etc. These five kinds together are called loka. Because of the loka, life arises and exists.

That is why loka is called the benefactor. As such, only paying back the debt of gratitude owed to the benefactors of life is the (true) goal of life. If it is the goal and it is certainly natural for it to be peaceful. It is only necessary to really strive to get to that goal. Life (bhava), however, is also anicca (impermanent). According to this anicca nature, it arises, it develops and remains in existence and then dissolves (uṇāda, thiti and bhaṅga). Arising aids developing and remaining in existence; developing and remaining in existence aids dissolution; and dissolution aids the arising again. These happen according to the nature of cause and effect.

Only when the cause is good, the effect can be good. When the cause is bad, the effect also is bad. For this reason, while life remains in existence, paying back the debt of gratitude to the

benefactor loka is conditioning the cause to be good. Only by this effort, the remaining in existence will be good. When it is good, the dissolution will also be good. When dissolution is good, the arising again will also be good. Dissolution also aids, by cause and effect relationship, the arising again. The period from birth to death is just one stage of the saṃsarā. It is not the end of the journey of saṃsarā (round of rebirths). It is just a mile-stone of bhava, not the goal. The goal is the ability to exterminate the view of ‘only I’ which arises in one and looks for only self-welfare in one’s dealings with the loka. This ability to uproot the self-interest view is called ‘Nibbāna’ in Pāli.

The realization of Nibbāna is the highest achievement in one’s bhava (life). Other achievements are really the goals which the Avijja (ignorance) has found for one’s life. They are not the real goals. Only the goal of life found by Vijja is really the true goal of life. Just as Vijja and Avijja are the direct opposites, Nibbāna and other achievements (sampattis) are also direct opposites. Nibbāna is based on ‘alobha’ (renunciation) while other achievements (sampattis) are rooted in lobha (possessing). For this reason, renouncing one’s self-interest for the good of loka is walking along the path to the goal of life in the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). Therefore, using the loka for the benefit of oneself is taking the path going in the opposite direction of Nibbāna and using oneself for the benefit of loka is taking the path leading to Nibbāna.

Eight Lokadhammas

If all the dhammas in the loka are grouped, there will be eight groups which are called lokadhammas. The fools have to meet with them and experience them. The virtuous ones also have to meet with them and experience them. The Ariyas also have to meet with them and experience them. What they have to meet with and experience are the same eight lokadhammas. There is no difference whatsoever. However, every loka dhamma has two directions. One is the adhamma direction of one’s own benefit and welfare, and the other is the dhamma direction of the loka’s benefit and welfare. If one takes the direction of one’s own benefit and welfare, it amounts to extracting the akusala essence of the lokadhama. If one takes the direction of loka’s benefit and welfare, it amounts to extracting the kusala essence of Lokadhamma. The essence of akusala and the essence of kusala can be extracted from lokadhammas. Both can be extracted from

the lokadhammas. There is only one lokadhama but the essence extracted, however, varies and differs according to the views and feelings of those who extract.

Those who extract the akusala essence from lokadhammas are the ones who yield to the dictates of their minds. When greed arises in their minds, they become greedy. When dosa arises in their minds, they become angry. When moha arises in their minds, they get bewildered. They are called fools and are regarded as the filth of loka.

The noble ones are not like them. When lobha mind arises in them, they do not yield to it; they resist it. When dosa mind arises in them, they do not yield to it; they resist it. When moha mind arises in them, they do not yield to it; they resist it. This very act of not yielding to the dictates of the mind but resisting them is called khanti (forbearance).

By nature the mind finds pleasure in evil; it yields to temptations of the mind. Thus, yielding to the temptations, the mind which delights in evil is reacting to the lokadhammas according to the anuloma (direct order) of the Paṭicca samuppāda. This is called the micchāpaṭipadā way (wrong path). Not yielding to the temptations of the mind is reacting to the lokadhamma according to the Paṭiloma (reverse order) of the Paṭicca samuppāda. It is called sammāpaṭipadā (right path).

Ordinary persons and forbearance

As it is said that not yielding to the wishes of the mind is forbearance (khanti), the scope of the meaning of khanti is very wide indeed. However, it is generally understood that not retaliating to other people's insults is forbearance. Only this type of forbearance is referred to in literature. In truth, the reaction according to the paṭiloma (reverse order), reaction to the attractions of sensual pleasures and defilements is also khanti. For this reason, the Mahābuddhavaṃsa (the Great Chronicle of the Buddha) states 'forbearing adoration, forbearing scorn and contempt is khanti'.

'Khanti' is merely a term which has no specific meaning, it is generally said. This might be correct for ordinary people, but it is seen that those who are not ordinary people, do not mind at all to accept it as a dhamma to be actually put into practice.

Unforgettable noble personages in the history of the world had practised it. This fact cannot be refuted by followers of any religion. All accept it. So, because one forbears, one is noble; and because one is noble, one forbears. Therefore, forbearance and nobility form a natural circle.

Books on philosophy call such a circle as faulty (anantya dosa) because the beginning cannot be traced. According to the Paṭicca sssamuppāda doctrine, in all sankhata (loka) happenings, no beginning can be traced. According to practical consideration, the beginning is not prescribed. It is only prescribed according to the dassana nature only. In practice, only the end is prescribed and it has to be directly in the present. Thinking strictly in the present cannot be done in logical terms (takka vacara). It can only be attained through personal conduct (atakkavacara). Takkavacara is also called philosophical view (dassana). In truth, forbearance (khanti) is, in essence, the sum-total of nāmas (minds) predominated by adosa. When, therefore, it is viewed at from one side, forbearance is seen and viewed from another side nobility is seen. Only the sides from which it is seen differ, but the essence does not differ. For this reason, it is called sarikhata (loka)dhamma, the beginning of which is untraceable.

Those who are nobler than ordinary people shall inevitably have to practise forbearance. Only when they do so, can they become nobler than the common people. If their morality is no better than that of the common people but they have taken the places of the nobler ones, it is called the clash of the two opposites, their internal character and their external appearance. This nature being the worst exhibition of human conduct is also a danger to the loka as well as to oneself.

It is, therefore, necessary to strive as best as one can, while one is being reborn as a human being, to practise forbearance as a good exhibition of human morality for the loka and for preventing it from becoming a personal danger. Then only, will the internal character and the external appearance cease to clash and will it be worthy of becoming a noble human being. It will amount to taking proper advantage of one's privilege.

To cite references from the Pitakas, the practice of forbearance depends to a great extent on one's view according to Puṇṇovāda Suttanta of Majjhima Nikāya. If one will look at the loka through loving, compassionate and grateful eyes, one will

find many things which one can forbear on the loka, which deserve our love, compassion and gratitude upon the loka.

If this can be done, there can be not much difficulty to have forbearance. It can be gradually developed. Without actually practising it, forbearance will not be attained. Actually, physical practice is called paṭipatti or caraṇa and mental practice is called pariyatti or vijjā.

In truth pariyatti without paṭipatti carries the nature of micchātapa (wrong austerity practice). Paṭiyatti without paṭipatti carries the nature of upādāna (clinging). As such, they will become extremes (antapaṭipadā). Only if the two are in the right proportion, it will become majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle) way .

The Buddha called ‘Sādhū’ to the view of Venerable Puṇṇa with regard to forbearance. The dialogue between the Buddha and Venerable Puṇṇa was as follows:-

The Buddha: ‘Son Puṇṇa, the people of Sunāparanta village are ferocious and barbarous. How would you feel if they were to abuse you?’

Ven. Puṇṇa: ‘Venerable Sir! If the people of Sunāparanta were to abuse me, they are all good people; they are all extraordinarily good people. Then I would feel that they had merely abused me and they should be thanked for not pounding me up. Thus, I will control my anger and forbear.’

The Buddha: ‘Son Puṇṇa! How would you feel if the people of Sunāparanta were to pound you up?’

Ven. Puṇṇa: ‘Venerable Sir! If the people of Sunāparanta were to pound me up, they are all good people; they are all extraordinarily good people. Then I would feel that they had merely pounded me up and they should be thanked for not cutting me with knives. Thus, I will control my anger and forbear.’

The Buddha: ‘Son Puṇṇa! How would you feel if the people of Sunāparanta were to cut you with knives?’

Ven. Puṇṇa: ‘Venerable Sir! If the people of Sunāparanta were to cut me with knives, they are all good people; they are extraordinarily good people. Then I would feel that Venerable Channa had to kill himself with

his knife. I do not have to do it myself. Now they had done it for me and they should, therefore, be thanked. Thus, I will control my anger and forbear.’

The Buddha: ‘Sādhu, Son Puṇṇa! Sādhu, Sādhu!’

Venerable Puṇṇa was one who wanted to pay his debt of gratitude to the loka. Paying the debt of gratitude to the loka is the best way of seeking for one’s benefit. Thus Venerable Puṇṇa realized.

From this, it is seen that in his dealings with the surroundings he always looked at them through the eye of gratitude. In truth, if one knows the way to look at the surrounding loka, one will find and see that all are one’s benefactors. Who would be able to survive without the surroundings Loka? This is the record of how a disciple at the time of the Buddha viewed and practised khanti (forbearance).

Among the stories of the past existences of the Buddha as Bodhisatta which concern Khanti Pāramī, that of the Khantivāda hermit of Catukka Nipāta and Mahākapi story of Timsa Nipāta are outstanding.

These two stories are briefly as follows:-

Long ago, the king named Kālābu reigned in Vāranasī. The Bodhisatta was born at that time in a bramana family. His name was Kuṇḍala whose parents had eighty crores worth of property. When Kuṇḍala came of age, his parents sent him to Disāpāmokkha teacher to learn.

Dāna

Kuṇḍala learnt all the arts a man should master from the Disāpāmokkha teacher of Takkasila. Then he returned to his parents. He did not marry. He worked together with his parents for wealth. When his parents passed away, he thought thus:- ‘In the loka, people want to be wealthy, to be healthy, to be learned. Because they want to be wealthy, they work for wealth ceaselessly. They accumulate wealth and they call themselves wealthy people. In truth, they are just the victims of worry and distress. They are, therefore, not happy people but are really wretched people. As such, the way to be really happy is not merely seeking and accumulating wealth but to give away one’s wealth in charity.

If one wants to be really happy, one should give alms.' This was Kuṇḍala's view regarding wealth.

Sila

Then, he thought about health. He thought as people in the loka wished to be healthy, they took medicines and did physical exercises. They had, however, illnesses from the medicines they took and from the physical exercises they did. They were, therefore, not healthy. If they genuinely wished to be healthy, it was not enough just to take medicines and to do physical exercises. They had to observe sīla (morality). In fact, only observing Sila was the right way to have good health. If one wanted, therefore, to be healthy, one must observe Sila. This was Kuṇḍala's view on health.

Bhāvanā

As people in the loka wanted to be learned, they strove to acquire various kinds of knowledge. However, the learnings and knowledge they acquired were not really dependable when it was needed to decide between right and wrong. They had to do it indecisively. If there were no precedents, they hesitatingly gave their decisions reflecting on the causes and effects as best as they could and hoping it to be right. It was not a decision given only after visualizing wisely on the result it would produce. If, therefore, one wanted to do a deed only after visualising with wisdom the likely result, one must practise bhāvanā (meditation) which only could give real knowledge. Therefore, if one wanted to be really learned, simply acquiring knowledge was not enough. One needed to practise bhāvanā. That was the only way to acquire real knowledge. This was Kuṇḍala's view on learning.

For these reasons, Kuṇḍala gave away eighty crores worth of property left by his parents so that he might attain real happiness, health and knowledge. Then, he became a hermit, left for the Himalayas and practised bhāvanā. Thus Kuṇḍala attained happiness for he had done dāna (alms giving), he was healthy for he had observed Sila and he was wise for he had practised bhāvanā.

Then hermit Kuṇḍala came from the Himalayas to Vāranaśī to have salt and put up in the garden of King Kālabu. He was revered and looked after by the King's army commander. One

day, King Kālābu, accompanied by his dancing girls, visited the garden. The king drank. The dancers sang and danced and entertained him to the best of their ability. The king then fell asleep in the arms of a dancer. Leaving the king, the other dancers roamed the garden and came upon the hermit. They paid their respects to the hermit and heard his words of dhamma. Thus, only one dancer was left with the king.

When the king woke up and found himself alone only with one dancer, he was furious. What greater power had the hermit than he had to be surrounded by the dancers, he asked. Being filled with great jealousy, he picked up his short sword and rushed to the hermit. Then he accosted the hermit with the question ‘What is your doctrine?’, The hermit replied that his doctrine was khantivāda. (That is, he practised khanti (forbearance)). King Kālābu said, ‘Let’s see if you can truly forbear or not.’ And he called his executioners and ordered them to thrash the Bodhisatta hermit with spiked whips. When he found that the hermit was not angry, he ordered the executioners to cut off the hermit's legs, hands, ears and nose. When he found that the hermit was still free from anger, he kicked the hermit and left.

At his departure, the army commander came and nursed the hermit and requested the hermit that if he was at all angry, not to be angry with the people but with the king. At this request, the hermit replied that he was not angry with anybody or with the king, and even prayed for the king’s long life. Then he passed away.

King Kālābu was swallowed up by the earth in the garden and the people of Vāranasī cremated the remains of the hermit with scented wood.

Out of the ten pāramīs, as the Bodhisatta hermit especially practised Khanti Pāramī, he was called ‘Khantivādi’ (practitioner of khanti). He was not angry when he was thrashed with spiked whips; he endured it. When his hands, legs, ears and nose were cut off, he was not angry, he endured it. His mental power was keen being infused with bhāvanā (meditation). Being infused with bhāvanā, the sense objects and consciousness became one. Such a state is called ‘niruddhavattha.’

In this state of mind, one does not know any object except the object of bhāvanā. If he is burnt with fire, he is unaware of it. If he is cut with a knife, he is unaware of it. The hermit had

reached that state in his bhāvanā practice. That was the reason why he was able to endure torture.

Because he was able to endure, his mind had great power and as it had great power, King Kālabu was swallowed up by the earth and taken to avici (niriya).

Power of the hermit

The power of the hermit was the efficiency of his Sīla, his Samādhi and his Paññā and none else. In conformity with the name 'Khantivādī', he needed to have mental strength to endure. Without it, he would not be able to forbear. For this reason, Khantivādī hermit had cultivated the strength of his mind by Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā. To do it, one existence alone was not sufficient. It had to be cultivated for many, many existences.

Khantivādī hermit had cultivated it for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds beginning with the life of Hermit Sumedhā. As he had done so, he became in this Badda Kappa lord of the three lokas, the Buddha.

As regards the fruit (that is Nibbāna) attained by Khantivādī hermit, can there be a greater or an equivalent benefit in the loka than becoming a Buddha?.

One should, therefore, make great effort, by trying to see really the many existences beyond death and to develop the strength of one's mind. It is not to use the loka for one's benefit, but to use oneself for the benefit of the loka. Using oneself thus might, in appearance, seem to be painful but in essence, it is adorable to all. This nature is observed in this story.

Mahākapi Story

The Mahākapi story is briefly as follows:- Long ago, King Brahmadata was reigning in the kingdom of Vāranaśī. A brahmin farmer was ploughing his field at the foot of the Himalayas. After he had finished ploughing, he let loose the bullocks to graze. Then he worked in the field with his hoe. At that time the bullocks strayed into the Himalayan forest and the farmer forgot about them. When he remembered them and looked for them, they were no where to be seen. He, therefore, went into the forest to find them but he did not.

As the farmer went on searching for the bullocks, he lost his way. And for seven days, he had no food or water and was very tired. On the seventh day, he found a fig tree. He first ate the figs fallen on the ground. When those figs were finished, he climbed up the tree to get some more. At that time, the branch on which he stood broke and he fell down into a gorge. He had to remain in it without food and water for ten days.

The monkey king who was the Bodhisatta came to the gorge and saw the farmer. He went down the gorge and carried up the farmer on his back. Being tired out, he put his head on the farmer's lap and took a nap. The monkey king was dead tired; the farmer was dead hungry.

The farmer was so hungry that a wicked plan came to his mind. It was to kill the monkey who saved his life and to take the carcass as his home journey ration. So he picked up a rock and hit the sleeping monkey to kill it. Being weak with starvation, he could not hit the monkey hard enough. The monkey did not die but quickly jumped up into the tree in fright. With tears in his eyes, he looked down at the farmer and told him that he would show him the way home. The farmer was to follow the trail of blood dripping from the wound in his head as he jumped from tree to tree.

They proceeded in this way, the monkey jumping from tree to tree and the farmer walking on the ground. When they reached the path used by people, the monkey told the farmer to continue his journey and went back to the Himalayas.

When the farmer saw a pool of water, he went down to it to have a drink. Sores at once appeared on the parts of the farmer's body which came in contact with water. They were not ordinary sores but of leprosy. He suffered from the disease for seven years. Then as he wandered from place to place, he was eventually swallowed by the earth into avici (hell).

In this story, the Bodhisatta was a monkey. In the Khantivādī story, he was a brahmin youth. The birth as a monkey is the resultant of akusala deeds and the birth as a Brahmin youth is the resultant of kusala deed. According to the story of Mahākavi, the Bodhisatta was born as a monkey, an animal, because of demeritorious deeds done in his former existences.

However, he had loving-kindness (metta) in him to the full. His metta took the nature of Khanti (forbearance). For this reason, he was able to endure the wickedness of the brahmin farmer. The demeritorious deeds he had done in his former existences were not done for his own sake. He had done them for the sake of loka. For this reason, even though he was a monkey, as the result of his past demeritorious deeds, he had a mind nobler than a human being because of his past deeds of Pāramī.

In fact, all deeds of Pāramī have to be built on sacrifice. Therefore, though great kusala deeds might be done, if they did not have the nature of sacrifice, they do not amount to pāramīs. They will just remain ordinary kusala deeds. Sacrifice means giving up one's self interest for the sake of all. It is the sacrifice of one's life.

Acts of sacrifice have great power. Because of it, though by appearance, it is not likable, it is, in essence, adorable as 'model' for the loka.

According to nature of deeds (kamma niyāma), a demeritorious deed brings a demeritorious result; a meritorious deed brings a meritorious result. The Bodhisatta became a monkey because of the akusala deeds he had done. He was able to practise pāramīs, because of the kusala deeds he had done. Mind (citta) is very, very swift. It can arise and dissolve a hundred thousand crores of times in a short moment. As such, in an akusala deed there can be kusala nature and in a kusala deed there can be akusala nature. And akusala deeds bring bad results and kusala deeds bring good results. Each deed goes together with its relevant result.

There are those who sacrifice for the common good in the loka. Some even sacrifice their very lives. However, all such sacrifices do not amount to pāramīs. Every deed of sacrifice of life is not a Pāramī. There are sacrifices made with a grudge (dosa āghāta) or made out of pride and arrogance (māna). Such sacrifices are not pāramīs. Sacrifices for the common good by appearance are all adorable but they may not be adorable in essence.

Sacrifices made through dosa āghāta (anger and grudge), māna (pride and arrogance) or made for being recognized as a hero are all based on atta (self) and they are, in

essence, akusala deeds and are not, therefore, adorable. Sacrifices which, in essence, are adorable are those aimed at protecting the loka and the dhamma, not rooted in atta, but made through pure metta called adosa. Only when such a sacrifice can be made, it is imbued with the nature of Pāramī.

Patriotism can also make one to sacrifice his life. In the history of the world, Hitler's patriotism was amazing but it was built on atta. That was the reason why his patriotism did not inspire world esteem. In fact, patriotism built on atta can give rise to daring and sacrifice of life.

Such daring and sacrifice, however, does not amount to pāramī. Daring and sacrifice called pāramī is not rooted in atta, but in adosa (metta). Daring and sacrifice which is really of this nature can even melt stony hearted persons into tears.

This is seen in the emotions of Devadatta (who made several attempts on Buddha's life and to wreck the Buddha's Sāsana) in his last moments. He, then, came to understand fully the Buddha's metta and his eyes were pitiably wet with tears (of remorse). That was the victory of Pāramī, the great power of Pāramī!

In the Mahākavi story, tears welled up in the foolish brahmin's eyes when he came to realise the monkey king's metta. In fact, who can or how can anyone defy the power of metta! The power of metta is so great!

In the Khantivādī story, the hermit could calmly practise forbearance because his inborn mind had been invigorated by bhāvanā.

In the Mahākavi story, the ability of the monkey king to forbear was not the result of his bhāvanā practice but it was the inborn nature of his mind which he had strained to be able to withstand (the wickedness of the brahmin). He was shaken but he strained himself to be able to forbear. As he jumped up into the tree and looked down at the brahmin (who had viciously attacked him), he shed tears (of sorrow at the ingratitude and wickedness of the brahmin). How much did he feel in his heart could well be imagined. The internal fierce conflict between the two forces of dosa (anger) and adose (metta) in his person might be guessed. At last adosa triumphed over dosa.

This victory of adosa over dosa is called khanti (forbearance). What a difficult thing it is to practise khanti Pāramī. Though difficult, it can be accomplished is seen in the Mahākavi story.

Though the story of Khantivādī mainly deals with the khanti Pāramī of hermit Khantivādī, the other pāramīs are also involved. All the ten pāramīs can, therefore, be seen playing their respective roles in the story. Of the ten pāramīs, sacrificing one's life is Dāna Pāramī. Not speaking rudely to King Kālabu is Sīla Pāramī. Being entirely absorbed in forbearance and being not interested in other benefits is Nekkhamma Pāramī.

Knowing correctly that anger is a demeritorious deed and not being angry is a meritorious deed, and knowing thus, practising bhāvanā to be able to bear the cutting with knives is Paññā Pāramī.

Striving to be able to endure the cutting with knives is Viriya Pāramī.

Doing as one says, that is agreement between speech and action, is Sacca Pāramī.

Practising as one has resolved to forbear is Adhṭṭhāna Pāramī.

Not being angry in any way with King Kālabu and having metta on him, is Metta Pāramī. Having no wavering of the mind that 'I have to suffer' (directing at oneself), or that, how could he do it to me' (directing at King Kālabu) is Upekkha (equanimity) Pāramī.

Thus, the fulfilling of the Khanti Pāramī also involves the fulfilment of the remaining pāramīs, as required.

It is the same in Mahākavi story. While Khanti Pāramī plays the primary role in it, the other pāramīs play the supporting roles. The monkey king's going down the gorge without any regard to the danger to his life is Dāna Pāramī.

Though the brahmin struck him with a big rock, he did not hit back. He did not also, in anger, leave the brahmin to his fate. That is Sīla Pāramī,

In rescuing the brahmin, he did not expect any reward but did it as his duty. That is Nekkharma Pāramī.

Knowing the way how to rescue the brahmin is Pañña Pāramī.

Making the effort to rescue the brahmin is Viriya Pāramī. He said he would rescue the brahmin and he did as he said. His action agreed with his word. That is Sacca Pāramī. He resolved to rescue the brahmin and he did it, not to break his resolution. It is Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī.

His thought, ‘If I abandon him, he will be dead among the wild beasts,’ is Metta Pāramī. He ought to be extremely sore against the brahmin with such a thought as ‘I have taken great risk and trouble to save his life, but he did such an ungrateful thing to me!’ but he was not offended. It is the Upakkha Pāramī. In this way, the other pāramīs were fulfilled at the same time.

In the fulfilment of pāramīs, Khanti and Upekkhā Pāramīs are very important. Among the pāramīs, Khanti Pāramī is like the mother while Upekkhā Pāramī is like the father, said Venerable Ledi Sayadaw in his ‘Uttama Purisa Dīpanī!’. For example, when one walks along a road, one will reach the destination in time only if he does so without gazing and admiring at the surrounding scenery. In this example, not gazing and admiring at the surrounding scenery is like Khanti Pāramī and walking straight along the road without being distracted is Upekkha Pāramī.

In the performance of a deed, one will come across pleasurable objects which attract one by their charms. Without being able to resist their charms, if one succumbs to them, it is stopping at these pleasures and the deed is foiled. For this reason, one should train oneself not to be swallowed by but to be able to resist such pleasures. The ability to resist the attractions of the pleasures even when they are encountered is Khanti Pāramī.

Concentrating on the deed one has to perform, leaving aside other things is Upekkha Pāramī.

Another thing that one might encounter is the unpleasurable objects which also have their own attractions. If one responds to them, it amounts to stopping at them. Then the deed is foiled. For this reason, one should train oneself not to respond to the unpleasurable objects with anger. This is called Khanti Pāramī.

Carrying on one’s deed without tolerating interferences and obstacles is Upekkha Pāramī. One is sure to meet with, in any work, the lokadhammas (the vicissitudes or ups and downs of

life). One will have to meet with them in doing dāna (alms giving), in observing Sīla, or in any kind of deed. The lokadhammas consist of pleasurable as well unpleasurable nature. Both kinds attract as well as obstruct in their own way. Therefore, if one wants one's deed to end successfully whether one comes across pleasurable or unpleasurable things, one needs to be unperturbed in any way. Such unperturbability is the Khanti Pāramī. Not stopping at being unperturbed but getting on with what one has to do is Upekkha Pāramī.

Just as the traveller who goes forward looking directly ahead, ignoring the surroundings, gets to his destination quickly, the noble ones should not, in doing their deeds, pay attention to the attractions of the surroundings but concentrate on the accomplishment of their deeds, according to their resolutions so that the nature of Pāramī may become involved.

(G) SACCA PĀRAMĪ

(Perfection of Truth)

In connection with Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth), Venerable Sayadaw Janakābhivamsa states in his book on 'Questions and Answers on Buddha's Chronicle', thus: 'Telling lies and not doing according to one's word is deceiving others. Therefore, not telling lies in order to deceive one or many, not boasting but saying only what one really can do and doing as one says,' is called Sacca Pāramī.(Perfection of Truth).

Then, dealing with the importance of Sacca Pāramī, the Sayadaw observes, 'Though the 'Bodhisatta might have committed such demeritorious deeds as killing (pānātipātā), etc. while his pāramīs were not yet mature, he had never told lies to the detriment of the interest of others in the same book.

From this, it is seen that the Bodhisatta had regarded the fulfilment of Sacca Pāramī as being very important for the welfare of the loka.

People communicate with one another by word of mouth in the loka and the trust placed in each other depends on the spoken word. There is nothing else as reliable as words to depend upon. Though it is said, 'One word written is more reliable than a hundred words spoken', writing also belongs to the family of words. Of the three kamma deeds (physical, verbal and mental), verbal deeds (spoken words) associated with Sacca (Truth) protect the loka. If they are not associated with Sacca, they would cause disaster to the loka. For this reason, it might be said that the well being or otherwise of the loka rests on the verbal deeds (vacikamma) which, in other words, are spoken words.

Sacca is translated in Myanmar as (Phyaung-hman chin) (meaning straight and correct). It embraces both the nature of uprightness and correctness. Therefore, Sacca is taken to mean truth, and there are two kinds of truth. One kind is the agreement between the spoken word and the physical deed. This is called ‘Uju’ in Pāli, meaning uprightness. According to kamma, it is the uniformity between kāya kamma (physical deed) and vaci kamma (verbal deed), or being in a straight line. The other kind is the uniformity of the three kammās (kāya, vaci and mano kammās). This is called Suhuju, in Pāli, meaning very straight or upright. If Uju is called upright Suhuja should be called very upright.

In truth, falling in a straight line or the agreement between kāyakamma (physical act) and vacikamma (verbal act) is Sacca (Truth). The Piṭakas say that it is doing as one says and saying as one does. If all the three kammās (physical, verbal and mental acts) are in congruity or conformity, needless to say, it is Sacca.

However, for the three kammās to be in congruity or conformity is not an easy matter for the worldlings to practise. To be a deed of Sacca, it is quite enough if vaci (verbal) deed and kāya (physical) deed are in congruity and conformity. It can be of use in the loka.

By nature, words originate in mental acts (manokamma). A word is called ‘voice’ (sound) or ‘Nirutti’. As soon as a word comes into being originating in manokamma, it has grammar and meaning. The grammar and meaning of a word might be compared to the figures and designs printed on the face and the back of a currency note. Just as only currency notes which have figures and designs printed on both sides are valid currency and are usable, only words with grammar and meaning can be used. Here grammar means name. When only the name is known and the meaning is not known, one has to ask ‘What is it?’. When only the meaning is known and the name is not known, one has to ask, ‘What is it called?’.

For this reason, only when both the name and the meaning are known, a word is of use. A word originates in manokamma (mental act) which is cetanā (volition) that arises in the mind. Cetanā is called deed. Whether one does a kāyakamma deed, vacikamma deed, or manokamma deed, one has to begin it in the mind. Thus, a word begins in the mind.

After it begins in the mind, it appropriately becomes a verbal or physical deed. For this reason, there needs to be conformity of the mental and verbal deeds and conformity of verbal and physical deeds. They should be congruent and uniform.

It is called uprightness, truthfulness or honesty; otherwise it is untruthful (having no Sacca nature). Only truthfulness should be counted in Sacca Pāramī.

With the exception of the realization of (gaining insight into) Nibbāna, all knowing cannot arise without the use of words. Therefore, the substance of knowing is said to be the word. Whether a word can be pronounced or not is not important. What is important for a word is to have name and meaning just as a currency note must have figures and designs printed on its face and the back side. When a word has name and meaning, it gets the name of 'vohāra' (term).

Then, one can know what it means . Only when the meaning is associated with truth (Sacca), the meaning is correct and should be believed. The Piṭakas say that only the meanings which should be believed are those of the words of the Ariyas.

In fact, the words of the Ariyas are in conformity with their physical, verbal and mental deeds and, therefore, they are upright and associated with Sacca. However, the words of the noble ones, like those of the Ariyas, can also be in conformity with their physical, verbal and mental deeds. For this reason, the words of the noble ones are called Sacca Pāramī in the Piṭakas.

In doing deeds, the knowing takes the lead and in the knowing the word is the leader. In practice, when an act of knowing arises, it completes only when the name of the object known has been pronounced silently in one's mind. When the knowing of a dog arises in one's consciousness, one says 'It is a dog' in mind but does not make any sound. One does the same in knowing a cow, but one makes no sound. If the knowing of an object arises in one's mind and one cannot pronounce its name in mind the knowing is not a valid one.

For this reason, the valid knowing may be called the vocalization of the word in mind. However, vocalizing thus in silence is heard by the one who does it and by those who have attained supernormal powers. Ordinary people do not.

Therefore, it is said that one cannot deceive oneself or those who have attained supernormal powers. Really whatever one thinks or plans to do, one has to think or plan in words. That is the reason why it is said that words are the substance of knowing. If the word is the substance of knowing, the word has voice (sound), but it makes no sound and it can only be heard and understood by oneself and those with supernormal powers. Ordinary persons do not hear and understand.

When one makes effort to reveal the words in his mind to others, through his mouth, there can be discrepancies between the words in the mind and spoken through the mouth. There may be instances where one does not act according to the words spoken through the mouth. Such discrepancies between thoughts and words, words and action, action and thoughts are called absence of truth, untruthfulness.

Thus, the nature of Sacca (truth) might be elaborated but only words spoken through the mouth according to the general usage are taken into account when Sacca Pāramī is considered. According to Sacca Pāramī, words which conform with deeds are Pāramī.

For this reason the Buddha is praised and revered because of the pāramīs he has fulfilled as ‘yathāvādi tathākāri’ (one whose words conform to his deeds) or conversely ‘yathākāri tathāvādi’ (one whose deeds conform to his words).

For this reason, doing as one says and saying as one does is called the fulfilling of Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth). If the saying is apart from doing or doing is apart from saying (words and deeds are apart), they do not have the nature of Pāramī. Only when the saying and the doing are in unison, it carries the nature of Pāramī.

Even though a person does not himself speak truthfully, he esteems those who does it. However, according to human nature, he will esteem only when those truthful words do not disparage his integrity and character.

The Piṭakas enumerate six kinds of speech and say that out of them, only the speech that is true as well as beneficial should be spoken whether the person to whom it is spoken likes it or not.

From this, it will be seen that whether the hearer likes the speech or not is not important. It should only be true and beneficial. If the hearer likes the speech, it is all the better. But

sacca Pāramī admits no such personal considerations. The primary consideration should be the dhamma (truth).

When the number of persons who spoke truthfully diminished, in the loka, the signing of bonds and agreements came into vogue according to the saying 'a written word is worth a hundred spoken words'. These bonds and agreements are also words in kind which can last longer than the spoken words. They are not different or apart from speech or words.

According to the Piṭakas, words are truly powerful when they are really associated with Sacca (truth). This nature is demonstrated by the practice of asseveration of truth. The efficacy of it is accepted not only in the Buddhist but also in the Brahmana literature. According to the Brahmana literature, sound exists everywhere. For example, if one knocks a post, there is sound. The sound comes out of the post because sound exists in it. The existence and the arising of sound are different in meaning. The existence of sound has the nature of nicca (permanence); it has nothing to do with cause. The arising of sound having the nature of anicca (impermanence) is concerned with cause. Having nothing to do with cause and being in existence by itself is called brahmā. Thus, the nicca dhamma (to be in existence, to be in being) and anicca dhama (to be impermanent) differ. Nicca is brahmā and anicca in loka.

Therefore, the sound which is nicca is called brahmā which has infinite power. According to this nature, sound exists in animate beings as well as inanimate objects. It exists in the sky, on the earth, etc. It is therefore said that sound exists in all places. As it exists everywhere it is brahma. As it is brahmā, it has infinite power. Therefore, sound has infinite power.

View of Buddhist and Brahmana Literature

The Buddhist literature believes that sound has infinite power. Brahmana literature does the same. The Buddhist literature says sound has power in association with cetanā (volition) but Brahmana literature says sound has power by itself without association with cetanā.

According to Buddhist literature, sound associated with Sacca (truth), can produce good results and sound associates with lying (musā) can produce evil results.

According to Brahmaṇa literature telling lies is an insult to sound which is brahmā and consequently can produce evil results. Telling the truth (Sacca) is paying homage to sound which is brahmā and it can produce good results.

Though the Buddhist and the Brahmaṇa literatures have different views on the advantages and disadvantages of the power of sound, it is found that both have the same view with regard to the acceptance of its advantages and disadvantages. The fact that all the people of the world adore truth and detest untruth might be due to the power of the word (sound).

Among the pāramīs, if renunciation (Nekkhamma Pāramī), that is not considering self-gain, is likened to the foundation, basic structure of a building, truth (Sacca), can be likened to the spire.

In any Pāramī, therefore, it will look fine only when it has the basic structure and the spire. When we look at the pāramīs fulfilled by the Bodhisatta, though he had committed, while he was not yet nature, demeritorious deeds, such as taking of life, he had never done them for his own welfare. He had done them at a sacrifice to himself for the common welfare. This is the nature of nekkhamma and sacca pāramīs.

As the consequence of committing such demeritorious deeds as killing etc. the Bodhisatta was born in the duggati bhumis (miserable realms), but he was not reborn as a smaller animal than a quail. He could possibly be reborn as other animals. Though he was reborn as animals, because of his nekkhamma and sacca pāramīs, he was always reborn in the higher stratum.

In regard to kammas (deeds), it was evident from this that the Bodhisatta had always observed the precept of not telling untruth out of the five Precepts. Had he not been able to observe this precept of not telling untruth, he would not have become a Buddha.

Sacca Pāramī is of such immense worth and is, therefore, so adorable. That is also the reason why people in the loka so much adore it. In human relations, only those who speak the truth according to Sacca are worthy of trust. When one has to deal hesitatingly with a person who cannot be trusted, how can any good be done for the loka?

Sacca Pāramī is, therefore, a very important Pāramī in human relations for the good of the people of the loka.

For this reason, the Bodhisatta, since he had received the prophecy to become the Buddha, always spoke the truth and observed the precept of not speaking falsehood for the fulfilment of Sacca for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. By nature, if people first take the Precept of Musāvāda to refrain from telling lies and then speak the truth, by the power of this deed even tree leaves and grass will become medicinal.

Betrayal of Dhamma Saccā

Sacca has great value. People, therefore, want to wear the cloak of Sacca (truth) in worldly as well as dhamma affairs. They want to put on the appearance of Sacca. They , however, pretend not to know that according to the nature of Sacca, their deeds and words need to be in conformity, to be in harmony.

Those well versed in the dhamma recited and quoted the dhammas fluently. They pose as great preachers. In fact, they take only the outward appearance; they do not take the essence.

Then, the appearance and the essence come into conflict. Their mouths talk dhamma words but their hands do adhamma deeds. Their mouths and hands do not harmonize. Disharmony between their mouths and deeds is the betrayal of the dhamma. When they betray the dhamma, they will have to go the way of the betrayers some days.

Their associates will also have to follow the same way. As their group betray the dhamma, they should be called dhamma betrayers.

Those who are proficient in the affairs of the loka also have their say . They talk as if they have to be looking after the entire loka, as if they have been feeding the whole loka. In practice, however, on the pretext of working for the good of the loka, they devote themselves to their own good. They pose themselves as loka lovers but in essence they are really atta lovers. Thus, their appearance and essence are in conflict. It is betraying the loka.

When they betray the loka, they and their associates will have to go the way of the betrayers some day. As their group betray the loka, they should be called loka betrayers.

Sacca is truthful and decisive. If it is honoured, it honours in return. If it is deceived, it strikes back . It is nature; it cannot be avoided.

Among the many existences in which the Bodhisatta fulfilled Sacca Pāramī, that of King Mahā Sutasoma deserves great veneration. His life story is related in Mahā Sutasoma jātika of Asītinipātā. It is briefly as follows:-

King Mahā Sutasoma

King Korabya was reigning in Indapattanagara of Kuru. His son was named Sutasoma. When he grew up, he learnt all that was taught under the then education system from Disāpāmokkha teacher of Taxila. His school mates were the sons of a hundred and one kings. Prince Sutasoma was the leader among them and also the assistant of the teacher. When their learning was completed and the princes were about to return to their kingdoms, Prince Sutasoma gave them a talk on civil administration. When they became kings, the princes governed their kingdoms according to that talk.

King Bramadatta reigned in Vāranasī. He was a school mate and also a pupil of King Sutasoma. He was addicted to eating meat and he could not eat his meals without meat curry. His cook was Yasaka who had to prepare his meals with meat daily. As Yasaka could not get any meat one day, he prepared a dish with human flesh for the king. From then on, King Brahmadatta could not do without a dish of human flesh and Yasaka had to serve it daily. Yasaka had to procure human flesh needed for the king's meals in secret so that the people might not suspect anything.

At the beginning, he had to kill the convicts in prison. When there were no more of them, he placed bags of money in the paths, and those who picked them up were accused of theft and executed to get the flesh for the king. When no one picked up the money bags any more, Yasaka had to lie in wait for wanderers at night and kill them for their flesh. As king Brahmadatta did not take his meals without a dish of human flesh, he was called Porisāda, human flesh eater.

When there were too many killings of their kith and kin, the people gathered at the front of the palace and complained to the king. As the king took no action, they went to the commander of the army, who posted sentries in the city to catch the assassin. Yasaka was caught red-handed. The commander took him to the king who confessed everything. The commander begged the king to give up eating human flesh, quoting stories of the past where

clans came to ruin by killing their own members . The king replied that he could not give up eating human flesh. At this the people became furious and banished the king who left for the forest taking Yasaka with him.

They lived under a large banyan tree. The king searched for the flesh and Yasaka cooked it and served it to him. When the king could not get human flesh one day, he killed Yasaka and ate his flesh. From then on, the king lived alone under the banyan tree. One day, he seized a brahmin merchant from a caravan of five hundred carts. Being pursued by the guards, he ran carrying the captive on his shoulders. As he jumped over a fence, one of his feet fell on a protruding cutchwood spike and was pierced through.

He let go the captive and lay in his place under the banyan tree in great pain. Then he made a request to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree to heal his wound promising that if he became all right in seven days, he would give a sacrificial offering with the blood of a hundred and one kings. The wound healed by itself though the banyan tree spirit did nothing about it. Porisāda, however, thought that the banyan tree spirit did it. He ate some food to regain his strength and set out to capture the hundred and one kings to fulfil his promise.

By chance, he met with an ogre friend of his past existence who taught him a manta (incantation, magic formula) which gave him strength, agility, power and ability to make frightful voices. By this manta, he was able to capture a hundred kings in seven days. He made holes in their palms and hung them to the branches of the banyan tree. He, however, still had some human consideration for King Sutasoma who was his former teacher and did not catch him. Then he made a big fire for the sacrifice and sharpened stakes.

Not knowing how to stop the offering, the banyan tree spirit approached Sakka, king of devas, for advice. Sakka instructed the spirit that there was no one in the loka except King Sutasoma to bring Porisāda to reason and, therefore, he should tell Porisada that King Sutasoma should not be left out. He , too, must be captured. The banyan tree spirit appeared before Porisāda and told him to get King Sutasoma also. Porisāda at once set out for Indapatthagara and hid himself under the lotus leaves in the Maṅgala pond of Migājina garden to catch Sutasoma when he

came to bathe in the pond. Porisāda knew that King Sutasoma would definitely come to the Maṅgala pond because he was an adept in astrology and his calculations of the position of stars told him so.

As King Sutasoma came to bathe in the Maṅgala pond of Migājina Garden, he met Brahmin Nanda at the eastern gate. The brahmin had come from Taxila to preach King Sutasoma the four ‘Satāraha’ verses taught by Buddha Kassapa. ‘Satāraha’ means a verse worth a hundred pieces of money. King Sutasoma explained to the brahmin that as he was going for a bath he could not hear the verses that day and made an appointment for the next day. He requested the brahmin to wait and arranged for his board and lodging. Just as King Sutasoma had taken his bath and changed into dry clothes, Porisāda rushed out from under the lotus leaves and shouting ‘I am Porisada!’ carried away Sutasoma on his shoulders. Because of the power of his manta nobody dared pursue him.

On the way, King Sutasoma requested Porisāda to release him to keep the appointment with the brahmin for hearing the four Satāraha verses and promised to come back the next day. As Porisāda did not trust him, he would not let Sutasoma go. When Sutasoma solemnly swore to the effect that if he did not come back, might he not become a king in all his future existences in his round of rebirths. Porisāda reflected that King Sutasoma had sworn in the way no ordinary king would have done. He would, therefore, release him whether he would come back or not. He also was a king. If Sutasoma did not turn up, he would take the blood from his arm and make the sacrifice in his place to the banyan tree spirit. And he let King Sutasoma go.

King Sutasoma returned to his palace and heard the Satāraha verses from Brahmin Nanda. He offered a thousand pieces of money for each verse to the brahmin. Then he entrusted the throne to his parents, made obeisance to them in farewell and came back to Porisāda. Porisāda was greatly astonished to see Sutasoma back. He thought Sutasoma had come back with no fear of death on account of the power of Satāraha verses he had heard. He, too, wanted to have no fear of death and so he asked Sutasoma to relate to him those verses. Sutasoma complied with the request.

After hearing the verses, Porisāda granted Sutasoma four boons, one for each verse. At this Sutasoka replied, ‘Though you

grant me the four boons'. I will get them only if you really give them to me. There is nobody here to make you do it. I don't, therefore, want the boons.' Porisada assured Sutasoma, 'Don't worry! Just say what you want. I will give them to you even at the cost of my life.'

Then King Sutasoma asked for the following four boons:-

- (1) May Porisāda live up to the age of a hundred years;
- (2) May he not eat the captured kings;
- (3) May he send them back to their respective kingdoms; and
- (4) May he never eat human flesh again.

Porisāda acceded to the first three boons readily, but he did not easily agree to the fourth.

At this King Sutasoma said, 'What! You said you would give the boons even if it cost your life! Now you do not want to grant the fourth boon. You go back on your word!' And he went on exhorting Porisāda on the importance of keeping one's word. He said that when one had to choose between one's body and wealth, one had to give up the wealth for the sake of the body. When one had to choose between one's body and one's life, one had to give up the body for the sake of the life. When one had to choose between one's life and one's word, one has to give up one's life for the sake of one's word. Then only did Porisāda gave the fourth boon of never to eat human flesh again and he always observed the Five Precepts from that time.

King Sutasoma and Porisāda went together and released the captured kings, and nursed them back to health. When they had recovered their health, King Sutasoma went with them to Vāranaśī and re-instated Porisada as king and then returned to their respective kingdoms. Sutasoma returned to Indapathanagaha and continued to reign. Because of his great qualities, he came to be called King Mahā Sutasoma.

As that time all the one hundred and one kings in the Jambudipa (Indian continent) followed the advice of King Mahā Sutasoma and ruled their kingdoms in accordance with the ten kingly duties.

In the loka, one's dearest is oneself and as such one has to do the best for oneself. And doing the best for oneself means to work for one's own well being. That is what some

say. Here ‘one’s own well being’ does not include the well being of others. It, therefore, has a conflicting nature. Then, there are others who say that doing one’s best for one’s dearest means doing for the well being of the loka. According to this, the well being of loka includes one’s well being. It, therefore, has no conflicting nature.

Of the above two groups, Porisāda belonged to the first group and King Sutasoma to the second group. According to Porisāda’s view, he was the one who loved himself and he must, therefore, fulfil his wishes. He liked to eat human flesh. He, therefore, did not need to consider whether it was right or wrong. What was important was to get human flesh to eat. He said that he would never give up eating human fresh.

King Mahā Sutasoma held a different view. According to it, doing the best for oneself whom one loved most, was to work for the well being of the loka. In working for the well being of the loka, one had to observe Sacca (Truth). According to his view, different parts of the body were much more lovable than wealth. One’s life was much more lovable than different parts of the body. Sacca dhamma was much more lovable than one’s life.

For this reason, the best thing one should do for oneself whom one loved most was to act according to Sacca. If one placed Sacca first in whatever deed one did, the deed would appear more lovable and adorable. If it were built on Nekkhamma (renunciation) as foundation with Sacca as its spire, the deed would amount to a Pāramī.

In preparing a curry, only when all the ingredients are properly and thoroughly blended into one, can the taste and flavour appear. The taste of the curry is the new strength of the new dhamma. Merely putting the ingredients together will not produce a new dhamma. If it does not become a new dhamma, there will not arise the taste of the curry. Only when oxygen and hydrogen are mixed properly in the right proportion, can water be produced. Water is the new strength of the new dhamma. In music also, only when the notes are played in harmony, can new dhamma come into being. Only when it becomes a new dhamma, can new strength arise. In like manner, only when verbal and physical deeds become harmonious, will it become Sacca. Sacca is the new strength from the new dhamma. By just combining verbal and physical deeds, instead of blending them into a harmonious

whole, they cannot become Sacca. This nature is called 'Niravayava' which means blending completely. From the points of view of art, it is called 'rasa' (taste, essence).

From the point of view of morality, it is called 'Sacca'.

In reality, Niravayara, rasa and sacca differ only in appearance but in essence, they are one and the same. This is the reason why they have great strength as new dhamma.

In his dealing with Porisāda, King Mahā Sutasoma chiefly used his power of Sacca. Because of it, Porisada who was a savage, changed into a civilized person.

Though Porisāda was able to renounce even his kingdom, he was ultimately unable to renounce the truth (Sacca).

That was the reason why he was able to attain complete liberation (Nibbāna) as Venerable Angulimāla at the time of Gotama Buddha.

If, therefore, anybody in the loka would steadfastly abide by the truth (Sacca) in the performance of his deeds, however difficult they might be, he will accomplish them like King Sutasoma. If he cannot yet do so, it will only be due to the deficiency of his Sacca, not because it has no strength. If his Sacca has the required strength, the deed will certainly be accomplished.

The Indian leader Mahattama Gandhi had always used the power of Sacca in the performance of deeds throughout his life. His method of doing deeds is called in Sanskrit 'Satyagraha', which means holding steadfastly to Sacca dhamma. It was used to describe non-violent resistance to authority. It is called 'Saccaggaha' in Pāli.

It was the method used by the virtuous ones of the past. The really virtuous ones always hold fast to Sacca dhamma in doing all their deeds.

Although it is true that King Sutasoma primarily employed Sacca in taming Porisāda, he also made use of other pāramīs in support. When the support of the other pāramīs was readily obtained, Saccā Pāramī would give him its power to the full.

The support given to Sacca Pāramī by the other pāramīs are:-

King Mahā Sutasoma's return to Porisāda to risk his life after hearing the four Satāraha verses from Brahmin Nanda was the support of Dāna Pāramī (Perfection of Almsgiving).

King Sutasoma's not using the adhamma method to save his life is the support given by the Sīla Pāramī (Perfection of Morality).

Not expecting anything for himself but taking it as just a duty is the support given by Nekkhamma Pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation).

Knowing Porisāda's disposition is the support given by Paññā (Perfection of Knowledge)

Considering only the welfare of Porisāda and trying hard to tame him is the support given by Vīriya Pāramī (Perfection of Diligence)

Forbearing all the difficulties and obstacles encountered is the support given by Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forbearance).

Standing firmly by his resolution without yielding to anything is the support given by Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution).

Thanking Porisāda for releasing him and diffusing more and more metta on Porisāda is the support given by Metta Pāramī (Perfection of Loving Kindness).

Not paying attention to the good and bad results arising out of his deeds but maintaining an attitude of equanimity is the support given by Upekkha Pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity).

In whatever deed one does, according to the nature of Pāramī, one Pāramī will take the leadership and the rest will give their support. Then only will the deed be successful. The success, however, will depend on the required measure of fulfilment of the pāramīs. In fact, it is true that pāramīs have great power but it is essential to take into account the time and the locality. In the Mahā Sutasoma story, Sacca Pāramī took the lead and other pāramīs played the secondary roles by contributing their respective shares. For this reason, King Mahā Sutasoma was able to tame Porisāda.

(H)ADHITTHANA PĀRAMĪ

(Perfection of Resolution)

‘Adhiṭṭhan is a Myanmar word derived from the Pāli word ‘Adhiṭṭhāna’. Venerable Ashin Janakabhivamsa has defined it in his ‘Questions and Answers on Buddha’s Chronicle’ as ‘resolving to fulfil dāna (alms-giving) and other pāramīs (perfections) steadfastly and enthusiastically and performing them according to that resolution is called Adhiṭṭhana’.

Venerable Ledi Sayadaw defines it briefly in his ‘Uttama Purisa Dīpanī’, as ‘Not deviating from one’s resolution is Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī’ and elaborates ‘Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī has the characteristic of steadfastly adhering to deeds of dāna (alms-giving), sila (morality), nekkhamma (renunciation), paññā (knowledge), etc. which are the basic constituents for the attainment of Sabbaññutabodhi (perfect wisdom for Buddhahood), paccakabodhi (paccekabuddhahood), and sāvakabodhi (discipleship). Its function is to suppress and remove the opposites. It is conspicuous by its firmness and steadfastness. The dāna, sila, nekkhama, Paññā, etc. are its immediate causes’.

The Myanmar word ‘Adhiṭṭhan’ Pāramī means that when one does good deeds so that they may become pāramīs, one makes a firm resolution and works according to that resolution. That is, the Adhiṭṭhana Pāramī is one which helps in the accomplishment of the other pāramīs by getting rid of or suppressing the opposing forces.

That is the reason why the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī does not come into being on its own. As Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is a firm resolution, the other pāramīs cannot also arise or be accomplished without its help. That is the reason why Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is

taken as the driving force or impetus of all other pāramīs. In truth, the other pāramīs, such as dāna, sīla, etc. gradually develop and reach maturity because of the driving force of Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī.

For instance, in doing a dāna deed only when it is done under the driving force of a firm resolution, will it be successfully accomplished or will it have the nature of Pāramī. People do dāna deeds with or without material gifts.

Dāna deed done with material gifts is called ‘Āmisa dāna’. Dāna deed done with one’s physical or mental strength is called ‘dhamma dāna’. In truth, the primary characteristic of a dāna deed is ‘renunciation’ or ‘sacrifice’.

It is natural for worldings when they often have to renounce (possessions, etc) or sacrifice (life, etc.) or when they often see lapses in conduct which they cannot approve of in those who are to receive the gifts, to feel reluctant to perform their dāna deed. Their cetanā (volition, willingness) diminishes. That is the slackening of the driving force called Adhiṭṭhāna. As much as the driving force slackens, the dāna nature is also impaired. Then it can no longer be called Pāramī. It will merely be an ordinary dāna deed.

When, therefore, one really has set oneself to do a dāna deed which amounts to Pāramī, one has to strive to overlook many things which one will encounter and which will blemish one’s mind. They are the enemies of Dāna Pāramī. It is necessary to overcome them, to get rid of them. The very ability to overcome them, to get rid of them is Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī. Only when the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī has removed the obstacles to dāna pāramī and has made the path clear and smooth, will the Dāna Pāramī be able to get along its course to reach its goal. Only when it reaches its goal, can it be called Dāna Pāramī. Thus, for a deed to become a Dāna Pāramī, the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī has to clear the way, so to speak.

Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forbearance) has to repulse all the surrounding attractions. Upekkhā Pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity) has to see to it that the Dāna Pāramī goes straight along its path. Nekkhamma Pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation) has to ensure that one, as the donor, takes no interest in the results arising out of dāna deed but takes interest only in renunciation and sacrifice. In this way, the deed comes to have dāna pāramī

characteristics. Then only can the dāna deed become a deed of the noble ones, otherwise it will be just a deed of any ordinary individual.

In the observance of sīla, the Adhiṭṭhāna strongly suppresses the evil deeds one might do and evil ways of livelihood one might indulge in so that the sīla might become a Pāramī. Khanti (forbearance) resists the attractions. Upekkha (equanimity) takes care that the sīla follows its own straight path. Then the sīla practises the right conduct and livelihood and attains the nature of Pāramī.

In truth, only when the resolution is firm, can the noble ones overcome all difficulties and obstacles they encounter and follow straight the path of Pāramī. Their resolution can be firm because of Adhiṭṭhana Pāramī. They can follow their path straight because of Upekkha (equanimity) Pāramī. They can carry on their work without expecting any self-benefit because of Nekkhamma Pāramī.

In the loka, everybody, both the good and the bad, wants to act in conformity with the dhamma. Nobody wants to be called 'unjust'; everybody wants to be called 'just'. It is the inborn nature of man, which is the result of one's kamma. However, in doing good deeds, when one has not yet come across anything desirable according to his status in life, one can sacrifice to a reasonable extent. When, however, one comes across objects one desires, one will then strive to gain them by any means.

It is due to the fickleness of the mind. When the mind is not stable, the decisions cannot be stable. The instability of the decisions is the ruining of Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī. When Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is ruined, one cannot repulse the attractions of the results attained. Then one will not be able to gain the set goal and will stray away from it. Then one will strive to gain the desired result by any means. When one has to stamp out the rivals to get to that goal, one will not hesitate to do so. When one has to flatter or curry the favour of one's superiors to gain the goal, one will do it in every way. Then the original aim that the accomplishment of the deed (nekkhamma) is of primary importance would come to nothing. For this, the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is responsible. As such, it depends very greatly on the Adhiṭṭhaana Pāramī for the fulfilment of Nekkhamma Pāramī. In fact, in performing any good deed, only when the Adhiṭṭhana Pāramī of firm resolution

is not impaired, can Nekkahama Pāramī, which carries out the deed with pure volition without expecting any self benefit, can arise.

In the same way, the fulfilment of Paññā Pāramī (Perfection of Knowledge), or Vīriya Pāramī (Perfection of Diligence), or Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forbearance), or Saccā Pāramī (Perfection of Truth), depends on firm resolution, which is Adhaṭṭhāna Pāramī. Therefore, when the resolution is not firm in doing any deed, it can fail in meeting with opposing forces.

It is also natural in the loka, to meet with opposing forces in doing any deed. When the Bodhisatta was about to become the Buddha, Māra, the Evil One, appeared to obstruct him. In many existences of the Bodhisatta, the embryo Devadatta had opposed him. These are clear evidences concerning animate beings. With reference to dhammas, kusala dhammas are opposed by akusala dhammas. It is, therefore, natural in the loka or beings to meet with opposition. Only having no opposition is the nature of Lokuttara (four maggas, four phalas and Nibbāna are Lokuttara dhammas).

Therefore, to have no opposition according to the nature of Lokuttara, akusala dhammas as well as kusala dhamma have to be got rid of. Both kusala and akusala dhammas belong to the Loka nature. They, therefore, have opposition. Only when they have no opposition, will they be lokuttara dhammas. In truth, the fulfilling of pāramīs is the effort directed at (the attainment of) Lokuttara dhamma.

We have often come across the lives of the noble ones who have sacrificed their lives for their nation. Sacrificing one's life has the characteristic of Dāna Pāramī and it brings noble and great benefits.

The outstanding benefits among them are lābha (material gains), sakāya (great honour and respect), and siloka (fame).

If one really works for his nation at the sacrifice of his life, the great benefits mentioned above, will inevitably come to him. These benefits, however, by appearance or in essence are not wholesome. They are, in fact, the comrades of, Māra, the Evil One, and the enemies of Pāramī.

Testing whether one is Man of Pāramī

It is the duty of Māra to put a person to the test to find out whether or not he is really working for common good at the

sacrifice of his own welfare and is a man of Pāramī, if the person is not really a man of Pāramī, Māra will not bother him at all. If, however, Māra finds that he is a man of Pāramī, it is his duty to stop him, to put a stop to all his deeds directed at Lokuttara welfare (attainment of maggas, phalas and Nibbāna).

For this purpose, Māra uses the weapons of sensual pleasures. Among them, lābha, sakkāra and siloka are prominent. The Piṭakas call them the first army of Māra, which consists of not only sensual pleasures but also fearful things.

When the noble ones encounter the first army of Māra, the most important thing for them to do is to repulse it so that they may not be vanquished. In this, it is necessary to ensure that their firm resolution does not give way so that their deeds for the common welfare are not foiled. Only when their resolution remains firm, will khanti (forbearance) which can repulse sensual pleasure arise. Only when Khanti arises upekkha (equanimity) which will enable one to proceed straight along the path towards one's original goal can arise. Then only nekkhamma (renunciation) that is non-attachment to sensual pleasures can arise. When nekkhamma comes in, even though one might be attracted by sensual pleasures one meets with, one will not stop at them but will go on till one reaches the goal.

When one meets with fearful things, too, though he may be frightened, he will not let them stop him. As his resolution is firm, he will have no time to entertain fear but will go on in spite of fear till he accomplishes the deed. Only when one is able to carry on in this manner, will one become a really noble person who can successfully pass Māra's test and who does not betray the national cause.

In the assignment of tasks in the loka, it is natural to have qualifying tests. Only those who pass these tests are deservedly given the assignments. Māra usually tests those who do tasks for national welfare at the sacrifice of their lives. The test set by Māra is the test with sensual pleasures. Only those who can develop their resolutions so firmly as to make them pāramīs can pass that test. In truth, for those who can develop their resolutions to make them pāramīs, the other pāramīs will develop in them by themselves.

For this reason, the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is important as the foundation of deeds for the common welfare. When Adhiṭṭhana

Pāramī in one has full strength, one can achieve whatever one wishes. Adhiṭṭhāna (resolution) is as powerful as Sacca (Truth).

History cannot be cheated forever

Few persons can resist the gaining of material wealth (labha). Those who have vowed to work resolutely for the common welfare need to be well-guarded against lābha (material gains). It will appear in all kinds of guises and with all kinds of reasons and excuses. One should always beware that labha is Māra's army; otherwise one is certain to fall a victim to it.

Besides, when one receives the respect and honour of the people, one takes pleasure in it, one is attracted by it and one becomes attached to it. In fact, the status of a leader who is respected by the people is desirable. With the exception of the truly noble ones, all cherish people's respect. When they do so, they fall a victim to Māra's army.

Then, very few people can withstand fame, which is also Māra's army. Only when one can well withstand fame, will one be able to do deeds correctly for common welfare according to one's original aim. To do deeds correctly here means not to lose sight of one's work. One should not pay any attention to lābha whether it comes or not. If one, however, has to take notice of it, one should do so only to use it as a means to get to his goal and not as his goal. Only the accomplishment of one's task should be taken as one's goal.

In the same way, gaining the respect and honour or fame should be treated as a means for the attainment of one's goal, not as desirable goals.

Then only, will one be able to accomplish his work successfully. Otherwise, it will come to grief in the middle. Then, though one wants to be a person who is able to work for common welfare, one will not become one. Then one will be recorded by history not as a noble person but as an ignoble person, a betrayer of bhava (existence). In fact, history cannot be cheated for ever; it can only be done when avijja (ignorance) dominates. History also has vijja (wisdom). The day vijja can exterminate avijja, the deception will come to light.

Eight lokadhammas and Māra

The ten armies of Māra are summarised as the eight lokadhammas in the Maṅgala Sutta. Therefore, they are composed of both pleasurable and fearful things. As it is inevitable for a human being to meet with these eight lokadhammas, he can take advantage of them by using them as his capital in working either for the good or for the detriment of humanity. The eight lokadhammas do not change their nature. Only those who make use of them change their nature. In this, the inborn nature (mūlabīja) of all human beings is the same. It is kusala vipāka (resultants of deeds of merit). There is not much difference. There might, however, be the difference between dvihetuka (connection with two roots-alobha and adosa) and tihetuda (connection with three roots-alobha, adosa and amoha).

But in practice, there is a great deal of difference when lokadhammas are used as capital. In fact, by inborn nature, everybody wants to work for the common welfare at a sacrifice, but in practice, it usually happens that when the choice between common welfare and self welfare has to be made, priority is generally given to self-welfare.

This happens because of the fickleness of one's resolution. Therefore, when the resolution is not firm, what one wants to do and what one actually does differ. If, however, one does what one wants to do by his inborn nature, such a deed becomes Pāramī. In the Piṭakas which deal with Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī, the Temiya Jātaka of Mahānipāta is outstanding.

Temiya Jātaka

The story of Prince Temiya is related in the Temiya Jātaka thus: King Kāsi was reigning in Vārāṇasī. His queen was Sanda devi. Both the king and the queen lived according to the dhamma, but they did not have any children and the danger or disruption of the dynasty loomed over the kingdom of Vārāṇasī. According to the cultural tradition of that time, the king was responsible for having no heir. The people, therefore, assembled in front of the palace and urged the king to take steps to get an heir. According to the wish of the people, the king ordered the queen to do what was necessary. The queen observed the eight precepts and made an asseveration of truth so that a son might be born to her.

On account of the queen's asseveration of truth, the king of devas of Tāvatisa realm had to see to it that she had an offspring. At that time, the Bodhisatta who was a deva in that realm was about to pass away from that realm. The deva king urged him to take conception in the womb of Queen Sandādevi on his passing away. He also asked the Bodhisatta's attendant devas who, too, were about to pass away to be reborn in the families of the ministers of King Kāsi. They all complied with the deva king's request. On the day the Bodhisatta and his attendant devas were reborn in Vārāṇasi, a heavy shower of rain fell and there was great rejoicing of the king and the people. As the Bodhisatta was born on the occasion of the welcome shower, the king himself named his son 'Temiya' which means 'being showered'.

At the tender age of one month, Prince Temiya witnessed vividly an event which caused a great emotional awakening in him with regard to the administrative duties of a king. At that time, baby prince Temiya was on the lap of the king who was seated on the throne passing sentences, under the then prevailing law, on four thieves brought before him. On one of them, the king passed the death sentence in accordance with the seriousness of the crime committed. It filled the young prince Temiya with a great emotional awakening of remorse.

Kingship is like hti of a pagoda

Prince Temiya was the possessor of jātisarañāṇa (ability to recall former existences). He recalled that he was a deva in his previous existence and before that he was king of Vārāṇasi. On passing away from that existence, he was reborn in hell. According to that bitter experience in a near former existence, he did not want to be a king again. It appeared to him that the life of a king was just like the hoisting of a spire (hti) to a pagoda with the use of a scaffolding. The spire was hoisted with the help of the scaffolding, but the two were quite apart. The spire was magnificent but the scaffolding was not. The life of a king was the same. It was the king's duty to suppress wicked persons in order that the people might live in peace. The duty to suppress the wicked was like the scaffolding, not at all magnificent. It was a demeritorious thing to do. The duty to see that the people live in peace was magnificent like the spire. It was a meritorious deed, Pāramī.

Though a king might be able to perform a deed of Pāramī based on an akusala act, prince Temiya did not want to perform a deed of Pāramī mixed with an akusala deed. He wanted only a Pāramī arising out of a kusala deed. He wanted kusala Pāramī unmixed with akusala. For this reason, he, then and there, resolved not to be the king of Vārāṇasi.

Then, though he had resolved not to be the king of Vārāṇasi, he could not yet think of the way to achieve his resolution. According to the law of that time, the son of the king must invariably be a king. He could not refuse it. He thought of all sorts of ways not to be a king. That was a matter for the Paññā Pāramī (wisdom). Being just a month old, his intellect was not yet developed. In truth, the existence of Prince Temiya was just for the development of Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī to the highest level. He was to practise for the development of Paññā Pāramī only as an aid. That was the reason why he could not think of a way to achieve his resolution.

Then the guardian goddess of the royal umbrella who had been his mother in a previous existence appeared and advised him :‘If you do not want to become king, do not show your abilities. Take the trouble of pretending to be mute though you are not, to be deaf though you are not, to be dumb though you are not.’ Prince Temiya very much liked the suggestion and decided to adopt it.

Result of Kamma and Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī

The ability of the one-month old baby prince Temiya and the goddess of the royal umbrella to talk to one another in this manner was the result of the meritorious deeds they had done in past existences. It is a matter beyond the reach of thought or reason (acinteyyo). Only by understanding the acinteyyo nature of kammās, will one be able to understand why the baby prince Temiya and the goddess were able to talk to each other. By appearance, Prince Temiya was just a month old baby but, in essence, his khandha was the sum-total of an uncountable number of Pāramī deeds of merit. For this reason, by the nature of acinteyyo, prince Temiya was able to talk with the goddess.

Prince Temiya followed the suggestion of the goddess. He behaved as if he was mute, deaf and dumb. Though he was hungry, he did not cry. He took milk only when the nurses fed him. He did not change his bodily posture; he remained in the posture

he was placed; he did not make any bodily movements. The nurses reported it to the queen.

The king and the queen were greatly worried. Their hopes (of getting an heir to the throne) seemed to be frustrated. The people of the country were down-hearted. All their hopes seemed to be lost. Not knowing what to do, the king consulted his counsellors. They put the prince to the test when he was one year old by not giving him any milk. The prince did not cry though he was hungry; his resolution was so very firm. It was not in keeping with his age, but it was in keeping with the power of his Pāramī.

When the Prince Temiya was two years old, he was kept with the sons of five hundred ministers. All kinds of sweetmeats were placed within the reach of the boys. The ministers' sons scrambled for the sweetmeats but Prince Temiya did not move. He ate only when the food was put into his mouth, otherwise he remained without food. He did not cry, he did not laugh, he made no movement. He concentrated on strengthening of his resolution. When the resolution Pāramī become firm, the other pāramīs also appeared by themselves.

They tested him with fruits at the age of three, with toys at the age of four, with food at the age of five but Prince Temiya remained as motionless as before.

At the age of six, they built a games shed with branches and twigs and put Prince Temiya in it. Five hundred sons of the ministers were also put there to play with him. While the children were playing they set fire to the shed. All the children, except Prince Temiya, ran away in fright. The prince was unperturbed and remained without moving where he was placed. The test with fire thus failed, too.

They tested in vain with an elephant at the age of seven and with a snake at the age of eight. The king and the ministers were at their wits' end. By appearance, it seemed impossible for the prince to be mute, dumb or deaf. He could only be king of Kāsi. In spite of it, he was mute, deaf and dumb. It looked as though the counsellors should begin to doubt their own knowledge and the books on human characteristics they had studied. It would not, however, do to doubt their knowledge and their books. And they came to have doubts on Prince Temiya and they suggested to the king another method of test. At that time the prince was nine years old.

They tested the prince by using dancing girls but with no result. At the age of ten, they tested him by threatening to strike him with a short sword. At the age of eleven, they tested him by making sudden alarming noises, such as the blowing of trumpets. At the age of twelve, they tested him by sudden beating of drums. At the age of thirteen they put him in a pitch dark room and then lighting it up all of sudden. Nothing happened.

At the age of fourteen, they tested him by smearing his whole body with molasses and putting flies on them. At the age of fifteen they let him wallow in his own excreta and urine without cleaning him up. At the age of sixteen, they put him on a couch and made a fire beneath it. But the prince remained unperturbed.

At the age of seventeen, they let dancing damsels seduce him with sensual pleasures but the prince was unmoved and was able to resist them successfully.

Though they used seventeen methods of tests in seventeen years on Prince Temiya, they failed to make him frightened or do any physical movements, to utter any sound, to talk or to lose his composure.

Then King Kāsi felt greatly grieved at the condition of his son. He was not an ordinary son; he got him only by an appeal to the deva king. He let him grow up at his breast. Now the son was mute, and dumb unable to utter a sound and deaf unable to hear any sound. He loved his son very much but he would have to follow the traditional custom of Vārāṇsī. He, therefore, asked his counsellors what he should properly do about his son.

The counsellors said; 'Your Majesty! This prince is unbecoming and if he is kept alive in the palace, there is danger to both the king and queen. There might be revolts by thieves and robbers in the kingdom. Prince Temiya should, therefore, be taken out of the palace and buried in the cemetery'. To this proposal the king had to consent.

As soon as Queen Sandādevi heard about it, she sought an audience with the king. At the time of the birth of the prince, the king had granted her a boon. She would ask for that boon now. She asked the king to hand over the throne to the prince. The king wanted very much to grant her wish but he could not. A righteous king had to treat his subjects and his own son equally 'attanova pajam pajam'

On one side was his only son Temiya and on the other side was a large number of his subjects who were also his own children. In truth, the mother is the symbol of compassion and the father is the symbol of knowledge.

For this reason, King Kāsi had to sacrifice his son for the sake of his subjects. He, however, agreed to transfer the throne to his son Temiya for seven days in the fulfilment of the boon he had granted to the queen. Prince Temiya did actually become king for seven days, as it was his destiny.

King Kāsi and Queen Sandā Devi had Temiya surrounded by five hundred ministers who were his birth-companions, and crowned him king. The queen had Temiya put on a couch and went on, without sleeping a wink, for six whole nights talking to him in various ways hoping to get some response from him. When she could not get any, she continued to talk in tears, but he made no response.

Prince Temiya wanted to reply to his mother Sanda Devi but he could not break his resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) which he had kept up for seventeen years. How much he had suffered within him for his inability to talk in reply to his mother, though he wanted to very much, would be known only Prince Temiya himself.

The seven days passed. King Kāsi summoned his charioteer Sunanda and ordered him to carry away Prince Temiya to the cemetery and bury him. All this time, the queen continued to talk to Prince Temiya still hoping to get a response, but he remained unmoved. He was filled with satisfaction knowing in his mind that his wish was about to be realized. He, however, took care that this feeling of satisfaction was not revealed in any way in his face. It was most amazing!

The charioteer put Prince Temiya, who was still in kingly attire, on the chariot and drove towards the grove three yojanas away in the east of the city. On reaching there, he stripped Prince Temiya of his kingly attire and then dug a pit to bury the prince.

Prince Temiya speaks

The prince was filled with great joy having achieved his wish at last. He was able to move about, as personages of Pāramī were accustomed to. He got down from the chariot, went to the charioteer Sunanda and spoke to him. He explained to the

charioteer that he had for the whole of seventeen years pretended to be mute, deaf and dumb though he was really not, because he did not want to be king. He would become an ascetic and stay at that place. Then he told the charioteer to relate everything to his father, the king, and his mother, the queen.

The charioteer returned to the city and informed King Kāsi and Queen Sanda Devi what the prince had told him. Soon after the charioteer went away, Prince Temiya became an ascetic by putting on the robes which appeared by themselves because of his past kammās. Learning all the news about his son, the king accompanied by his courtiers, came to his son and requested him to return to the city and become king. Prince Temiya preached to the king on the evils of sensual pleasures and the benefits of the ascetic life.

As the result, the king and his courtiers and also kings of the neighbouring seven kingdoms became ascetics, too. Prince Temiya's resolution was so very firm and the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī was so very powerful!

Nature of Pāramī

The main purpose of this jātaka is to show the climax in the fulfilment of the Adhaṭṭhāna Pāramī by Bodhisatta Prince Temiya. When the Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī is firm, the other pāramīs come in line and play their respective supporting roles. That is the reason why if one wishes to work for the well being of the loka, one only needs to strive to make one's resolution strong and firm. Otherwise, on the pretext of working for the well being of the loka, one heads towards self well being. In fact, the nature of Pāramī is that the less one wants, the more one gets.

It is, however, not well got. It is for the destruction of the Pāramī by any means. If one is delighted with such gains, the Pāramī is destroyed. Only when one takes no delight in such gains, can Pāramī become more and more mature. In as-much-as the Pāramī becomes more and more mature, the attempts to destroy it will increase more and more. It is the nature of Pāramī.

Sense pleasures cannot be avoided

According to the Paṭiccasamuppāda doctrine, when there are six sense-doors, there will arise six sense objects, which are related to five kinds of sense pleasures. Therefore, sense pleasures cannot be avoided. If one has eyes, one will see visible objects.

If one has ears, one will hear sounds. It is the same with respect to other sense objects. In truth, one cannot avoid knowing sense objects. It is not necessary to try not to know them. What is necessary is not to become attached to them but only to repulse their attraction. The ability to repulse the attractions of the various sense objects is Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forbearance)

The Middle Path

In repulsing the attractions of the sense objects, if a visible object is not seen as a visible object but as a sense pleasure, it will be difficult to do. If one tries to repulse it forcibly, it will become an attakilamathānuyoga (self mortification practice) and one will not, therefore, succeed. If one wants to repulse it successfully, one should practise according to Majjhimapaṭipadā middle path method. That is, when one sees a visible object, one should strive to note that it is merely a visible object. Likewise, when one hears a sound, one should strive to note that it is merely a sound. When one smells an odour one should strive to note that it is merely an odour and so on with regard to the other sense objects. It is only necessary to perceive that much. It is not essential to try to perceive them as sensual pleasures.

In truth, all things to be perceived in the sense sphere are, from the points of view of truth in the ultimate sense (paramattha), just nāmarūpa (mind and matter and conditioned things subject to decay and disintegration). They are not sensual pleasures, individuals or things. For this reason, whatever sense object is perceived, if it is perceived only as nāmarūpa and saṅkhāra, the right knowledge (yathābhūta ñāṇa) will arise. No lobha (greed), dosa (anger, hatred), moha (ignorance, bewilderment), taṇhā (craving), māna (pride), diṭṭhi (wrong view), or akusala (demerit) will arise. If one can practise to perceive in this manner, the characteristic of Pāramī will automatically materialize. This is according to Paramattha Sacca (ultimate truth).

The lotus and mud

From the point of view of Sammuti sacca (conventional Truth), Podummā lotus flower cannot grow without mud but it is never smeared with mud. Likewise, man cannot do without sensual pleasures but he should strive not be smeared with them. Such an effort is the fulfilment of the pāramīs concerned.

In truth, the muddier the soil the Padumma lotus grows in, the prettier its flowers are. Likewise the more numerous the

sensual pleasures there are to contend with, the better it is for one to practise for the fulfilment of pāramīs.

That is the reason why the life of kings (which is filled with sensual pleasures) is the more effective field for Pāramī practice. Therefore, in the story of Temiya, Prince Temiya's not wanting to become king is renunciation of kingship, which was replete with many coveted sensual pleasures and luxuries. It was a deed for the fulfilment of Pāramī.

Only such kind of Pāramī is really powerful. If one has just a little, one can renounce that little. If one has much, one can renounce that much, but renouncing much is more powerful than renouncing a little. It is more admirable, more deserving of respect and of more benefit to the loka.

For this reason, one should seek more to enable to renounce more. To seek more is to become affluent or to become king. It is not wrong to seek more to enable one to renounce more as one then has more chances to do deeds of merit of Pāramī. It is wrong only if one seeks more for one's enjoyment because there are more chances to do evil.

For this reason, even though one has to live amidst sensual pleasures, one can make profitable use of them, just as poison can be used as medicine. If one cannot make the right use of sensual pleasures, it can be very dangerous just as poison is put to use as only poison.

Medicine and poison

In fact, in the loka, the usefulness or the otherwise of medicine or poison does not depend on it but chiefly depends on the way it can be put to use by people. In the same way, the usefulness or otherwise of sensual pleasures does not depend on them but chiefly on the way they are made use of by people who come into being in their midst.

Even poison can be used as medicine if the way to use it as medicine is known. If the way to use poison as medicine is not known, poison will only be poison. Likewise, a sensual pleasure can be used as a deed of Pāramī for the good of loka if the way to use it as such is known. If it cannot be used as such, the sensual pleasure will be poison to one.

According to the Temiya jāataka story, the Bodhisatta Prince Temiya shows how kingly pleasures (kammaguṇas) can be used either as medicine or poison. Using as medicine is using for

the benefit of loka. Using as poison is using for the benefit of oneself.

Prince Temiya used the sensual pleasures of kingship of Vārāṇsī as medicine. He renounced a thing which was very hard to renounce for the sake of loka. Though he renounced it for the sake of loka, he gained great benefit for himself as well; it was quite natural. Prince Temiya revealed this nature in the story.

Though the jātaka chiefly deals with Perfection of Resolution (Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī), other Perfections (pāramīs) are also involved.

In fulfilling Dāna Pāramī (Perfection of almsgiving) Prince Temiya renounced everything. He renounced kingly pleasures and even his life.

In fulfilling Sīla Pāramī (Perfection of Morality), he refrained from all demeritorious acts.

In fulfilling Nekkhamma Pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation) he did everything that should be done without expecting or longing for bhavasampatti (successful existence) or bhagasampatti (wealth and riches).

In fulfilling Paññā Pāramī (Perfection of Knowledge) he used the trick of pretending to be mute, deaf and dumb.

In fullfilling Vīriya Pārimī (Perfection of Diligence) he pretended to be really mute, deaf and dumb.

In fulfilling Khanti Pāramī (Pāramī of Forbearance) he bore with patience all dukkhas (sufferings) he had to contend with.

In fullfilling Metta Pāramī (Perfection of Loving-Kindness) he diffused loving-kindness on the people of the kingdom together with his father and mother.

In fullfiling Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth) he made sure that his decisions and action were in full agreement.

In fulfilling Upekkha Pāramī, (Perfection of Equanimity), he was indifferent to both pleasure and pain but went straight ahead towards his goal.

Thus, the Bodhisatta as Prince Temiya, bearing great hardships and trouble, fulfilled Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution) and the associating Perfections. The compassion of the Buddha on the loka was so admirable! It is the customary deed of really good and noble personages. Only when one can, at great personal sacrifice, perform such deeds, can one be a really good and noble man.

(I) METTA PARAMI

(Perfection of loving-kindness)

“Metta” is translated as ‘loving-kindness’. It is compared with ‘adhesive’ or gum’ which is used when things are joined together or stuck together. They stick or stay together without breaking apart. In like manner, the loka is prevented from breaking up as if it is held together by metta (loving-kindness).

When in fact loka is held together by metta, it becomes compact. Though it is not one unit, it seems to be one. The essence of metta is adosa (absence of anger or hatred) and when loka is held together by adosa, it becomes compact. If it is held together by dosa (anger, hatred), it is disorderly. Metta is, therefore, necessary to prevent the loka from being disorderly. Compactness of loka means peacefulness of loka. Loka being disorderly means loka in turmoil.

To bring about the reign of peace in loka, beings should cultivate loving-kindness (metta) towards one another. The more metta is cultivated, the more the loka will be peaceful. The more beings love one another, the more the loka will be pleasant. The more the loka is pleasant, the more benefits one will gain by being born as a human being, which according to dullabha dhamma is a very rare and difficult thing to attain.

Three kinds of metta

In practice, there are three kinds of metta in the loka. There are the metta of lovers on each other, the metta of the members of a family on one another and the metta of the noble ones on the loka.

Of these three kinds, when lovers are attached to each other by metta, the bond between them is stable. Though they are two by appearance, they are like one in essence. When metta is, however, lost between them and is replaced by dosa (hatred, anger), the unity is broken, the essence is destroyed and the life of the lovers falls apart. This falling apart of the lovers might bring about the breaking up of the family.

When a family is held together by ties of metta, there is solidarity. Though by appearance, they are many; in essence, they are like one. When love goes away and dosa comes into the family, there will be no more unity in the family. The essence will be gone. Then solidarity will break down. The collapse of solidarity in the family might often bring about the breaking up of the national life of a country. Therefore, metta among the members of a family can bring about peace in the national life.

Pāramī Metta

The love of the noble ones on the loka should be called Pāramī metta. One who loves the loka with Pāramī metta is said to be a human being living the life of a Brahma.

Rebirth as a human being in a country where those who love the loka with Pāramī metta live is a very rare achievement (dullabha), because the national life of such a country can naturally be peaceful. Pāramī metta has the power to reorganise a country which has broken up into a unified state in essence.

Only those who can love the loka with the metta of a Brahma can keep up family metta and lovers' metta by their Pāramī metta. The guardian devas of loka, therefore, always long for and hope for those who love the loka with pāramī metta. Human beings and devas also long and hope for such persons.

In truth, to love loka with Pāramī metta is difficult, but it is not an impossible thing to do. It can be done. There have been such persons in the uncountable worlds that have past, and there will be such persons also in the future. We can have them at present also. Only the desire to become one is necessary. In fact, our births are not at all inferior. We are born in the human world which is a very rare achievement (dullabha). It is the resultant of meritorious deeds in the past. It, therefore, truly has power. It only needs the ability to make good use of it.

Metta makas loka happy and peaceful

All persons have experienced metta of one kind or another in their lives and have enjoyed its benefits. If one really loves, one should have experienced the benefits arising out of one's sacrifices made for the sake of the loved ones. The fact that metta can create the happiness and peace of the loka, therefore, calls for no proof. It is truth. It is the truth in its own way with respect to metta between lovers, among the members of a family and for the loka. All metta is truth in its respective way, but there are differences from case to case.

Metta between lovers

Metta between lovers is confined to the loved one. It is not directed at anyone else. It is, therefore, limited. Lovers do not care about others, whether they die or live. It embraces only the loved one. It gives protection and is ready to give its life only for the loved one. There are innumerable beings besides the loved one, but the metta is not directed at any of them. It is directed only at the loved one. As the result, there arises a conflict between the loved one and the others.

When conflict arises, there can be no peace in that locality. For this reason, metta between lovers is called *taṇhā pema*. It is based on craving (lust) which can be found even in the animal world. Therefore, metta of the *taṇhā pema* kind cannot produce happiness and peace in the loka.

Family metta

Family metta is confined to only the members of each family. It does not go beyond it. In truth, out of the bounds of one's family, there are innumerable families, but it does not concern them. As family metta is thus limited, it has the nature of conflict. As long as it has the nature of conflict, there can never be peace. Therefore, family metta is called *gahassita pema* which means love depending on family.

It is based on *lobha* (greed) which is *akusala* (demeritorious). Happiness and peace of the loka cannot be brought about by metta based on *akusala*.

Loka Metta and Pāramī Metta

Only metta for the loka is limitless. It embraces all. That is the reason why it is called *Pāramī metta*. Only the noble ones

can love the loka with this kind of metta. Because they can love the loka with such kind of metta, they become the noble ones. Limitless metta and nobility of nature have no cause and effect relationship with each other. They are related only in features, points of view and quality.

When Pāramī metta is looked from the loka point of view, its limitless nature is observed. ‘He is loved; I am loved; all are loved.’ No one is left out. Everybody is included. It is, therefore, called limitless.

When looked at from the point of view of morality, the nature of nobility is seen.

Therefore, limitlessness and nobility of nature are two view points, features or qualities of Pāramī metta. They are not two separate things like cause and effect.

Pāramī metta can embrace both the lovers' metta and the family metta. In fact, according to the nature of worldlings, everybody has metta. He has the lovers' metta, the family metta and metta for the loka, but his metta for the loka is the weakest. It is just a seed (bīja).

But in fact, if there is seed, it can be nursed to grow into a tree. It is, therefore, said that it is possible for everybody to love the loka with Pāramī metta.

Essence and appearance

There is a section of worldlings who call their khandha (body) as ‘I’. This is called ‘atta vāda’ which means the dhamma which calls the khandha as ‘I’. It is, in essence, taṇhā (craving), māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (wrong view).

It is called Papañca (which obstructs or prolongs). The loka can be divided into essence and appearance. The essence of loka is taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi. When the meaning is stretched, these become the 31 bhūmis (realms).

Therefore, if the loka is looked at from the point of view of essence, it is called taṇhā, māna, and diṭṭhi, or three papañca dhammas or ‘I’, and from the point of appearance, it is called 31 bhūmis.

Human beings are the inhabitants of the loka and as such the nature of loka is inherent, in essence and appearance, in them. It is natural, therefore, the loka nature is involved in all their physical, verbal and mental deeds.

For this reason, when one does a physical, verbal or mental deed, one says “It is I” (who does it) in the way of the loka. This is quite natural. “I” is involved in the lovers’ metta, family metta and in loka metta. It is sometimes involved in the anuloma way (natural order) and sometimes in the patiloma way (reverse order). When “I” is involved in the anuloma way, it is called the downstream way and it grows more and more, and when it is involved in the patiloma way, it is called the upstream way. Then it gets less and less.

Three kinds of metta and Pāramī metta

When the “I” is most involved in the metta, it becomes the lovers’ metta. When it is least involved, it is the metta of loka. In the family metta, the “I” occupies the middle position; it can either lean towards the growth or the deminishing of the “I”.

The family metta can, therefore, be shown as good or bad. If it is a danger to the loka, it is bad. If it is medicine (of benefit) to the loka, it is good.

Of the three kinds of metta, that of the lovers’ is an extreme metta. As it involves only the well being of one’s lover, it is an extreme case of ‘lobha’. As it excludes others, it becomes an extreme case of ‘dosa’ also. Likewise, if one wishes only for the well being of one’s family, the family metta becomes an extreme case of lobha (greed). If there is no consideration for other families, it becomes an extreme case of dosa also. All kinds of extreme metta are dangerous to the loka. To prevent them, therefore, from becoming dangerous to the loka, extreme mettās should be restrained by loka metta, which diminishes the “I” more and more. That is the reason why loka metta is called Pāramī metta.

In-as-much as the “I” diminishes more and more, the lovers’ metta will become Pāramī metta. Likewise the family metta will become Pāramī metta. That is why, Pāramī metta includes lovers’ metta and family metta. Actually, metta is divided into three kinds according to the growth and the decline of the ‘I’. As much as the ‘I’, declines, the lovers’ metta and family gains the status of Pāramī metta.

However, as powerful support (upanissaya paccaya), lovers’ metta is more powerful than family metta, which in its turn is more powerful than loka metta.

That is the reason why the Bodhisatta treated the ones he loved and his family as comrades in his various existences in his effort to raise the level of lovers' and family metta to that of loka metta and to fulfil the pāramīs concerned.

One only needs to love the loka truly. If one truly loves the loka, there will be no trouble to sacrifice for the loka one loves. The ability to sacrifice is the nature of Dāna Pāramī. As one loves the loka without expecting anything from it in return, one is content with the privilege to serve it. It will be no trouble at all. Doing a deed without expecting anything out of it has the nature of Nekkhamma Pāramī (renunciation).

When this pāramī is fulfilled, the other pāramīs will also play their respective roles by themselves. Therefore, when one resolves to perform deeds for the good of the loka, it will be necessary to have real love for the loka so that one's resolution may not be broken. Only when one really loves, the resolution to work for the good of the loved one can be firm. When the resolution is firm, there will be no difficulty to fulfil other pāramīs.

It might be thought that sacrificing without expecting any gain is foolishness. Indeed such thinking is extremely wrong.

Doing a deed at a sacrifice, employing to the utmost one's physical, mental and economic strength without expecting anything whatever in return, is called the achievement of a benefit of very great magnitude with very keen intellect. The attainment of that benefit means the gaining of the ability to kill lobha (greed).

There is no greater benefit. The Buddha's fulfilment of pāramīs for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds was to enable himself to kill lobha and to teach the Veneyyas (those to be converted) how to kill lobha. He had no other aim.

That is the reason why it is said that the ability to kill lobha is the attainment of a very great benefit. The ability to have such a view in all one's deeds is not possessed by those with ordinary knowledge (samañña ñāṇa). Only those who have achieved Arahattamagga Sabbaññutañāṇa) can have such a view.

If it is said that this view can be attained by other ñāṇa (knowledge), and it could only be just a conjecture. It cannot be a really direct view. Even if it were a conjectural view, the knowledge which enables one to make such a conjecture can only

be a very keen one and nothing else. That is why it is said that it is not foolishness and madness but is real knowledge.

In truth, the ability to kill lobha is, according to the dhamma, the attainment of Nibbāna, which is Santi sukha (tranquillity and peace). There is no happiness as tranquil and peaceful as Santi sukha. For this reason, it is clear that those who attain Santi sukha cannot in any way be inferior persons.

According to the Buddhist teaching, they are all ariyas (winners of maggas and phalas) who deserve the homage of men and devas. In truth, even though one might not be able to totally get rid of lobha, if one can strive to diminish lobha by and by, one deserves the homage of men and devas.

With regard to the Bodhisattas who were striving to get rid of lobha by and by, not to say of their khandhas (bodies), but even the garments they put on were enshrined in the Dussa pagoda of the Akaniṭṭha Brahma abode and paid homage. The hair of the Bodhisatta (or Buddha Gotama) was enshrined by Sakka, king of devas, in the Cuḷāmani pagoda in the Tāvātimsa deva realm. If the inanimate objects of the Bodhisattas were paid so much special homage by devas and brahmas, it might be guessed how much the animate khandhas (of the Bodhisattas and the Buddhas) deserve special homage of men, devas and brahmas.

In truth, these benefits are those that are attained only when they are not longed for. In fact, no one can deny the truth of the saying ‘The more one wants, the less one gets’. ‘The less one wants, the more one gets’. If one is not attached to what one gets, one gets the more. The more one gets the less one is attached to what one gets.

Examples of metta power

Only when one can really love, can one expect nothing out of one's deed. That is the reason why the more one's metta rises to the level of Pāramī, the more powerful it becomes. It cannot be attained by merely wishing from the mouth. It can only be achieved by actual practice. The metta will not be strong at the beginning of the practice. When one keeps on practising, it will become stronger and stronger. Examples of the power of metta are shown in the Piṭakas. Among them, Seyyajataka of Tika Nipāta, Ekarāja jātika of Catukka Nipāta and Suvanṇasāma Jātaka of Mahā Nipāta are well known. Of them, Seyyajātaka is briefly as follows:-

Seyyajāta

King Brahmadata was reigning in Vārānasī. One day he exiled a minister for a crime committed. The minister went and served King Kosala (a neighbour king) and advised that king that if he raided Vārānasī, he would conquer it easily. According to his advice, King Kosala invaded Vārānasī and captured and imprisoned King Brahmadata and his ministers. King Brahmadata concentrated his mind on King Kosala and diffused loving-kindness. As his metta had reached jhāna level, it was very powerful.

As the result, King Kosala suffered from a burning sensation and became restless. Only when he asked for the pardon of King Brahmadata and returned the throne to him, was he freed from the malady.

It is a story that highlights the power of metta. It shows that metta is more powerful and effective than all the weapons.

The Ekarāja story is briefly as follows:-

Ekarāja story

King Brahmadata was reigning in Vārānasī. One day, he exiled a minister for committing a crime. The minister went and served the neighbouring King Dubbhisena of Kosala and advised that king that if he attacked Vārānasī, he would conquer it easily. According to the minister's advice, King Dubbhisena invaded Vārānasī and annexed it. He had Vārānasī King hung upside down at the palace gate. The Vārānasī King directed his mind on King Dubbhisena and diffused metta. As his metta had attained jhāna level, it was very powerful. He was at once freed from the ropes tied to him and he remained cross-legged in mid air.

At that time, King Dubbhisena suffered from a sensation of intense heat and had to be rolling himself on the ground. Only when he went to Vārānasī King and asked for pardon and returned the throne to him, did the malady leave him. This also is a story which highlights the power of metta.

From these stories, it will be seen that when metta is developed up to the jhāna level (deep mental absorption), it can transform even the most insidious and spiteful persons into gentle ones. Because of the power of metta of King Brahmadata in both stories, the enemy King Kosala and the enemy King Dubbhisena had to ask for his pardon.

Suvaṇṇasāma jātaka

Another story which demonstrates the great power of metta is the Suvaṇṇasāma Jātaka which is briefly as follows:-

Not very far from Vārānasī, there were two big villages of fishermen, one on each bank of the river. The son of the head of one village was Dukula and the daughter of the head of the other village was Pārika. Their parents married the two. So they became husband and wife in the villages of fishermen. Though they both were born of fisher parents, they did not do any fishing. They took leave of their parents and left for the Himalayas. There they became ascetics near Migāsammata river and lived in one hermitage each.

Both of them had past karmas (deeds) which would cause them go blind one day. The King of devas knew it. They, therefore, needed a son to look after them when they lost their eye-sight. According to the advice of the deva king, Dukula touched with his hand the navel of Pārika after her menstruation period. At that time the Bodhisatta deva passed away from the Tavatimsa realm and took conception in the womb of Pārika. When he was born, he was named Suvaṇṇasāma.

Suvaṇṇasāma grew up amidst the animals of the forest. Among his companions were lions, tigers, leopards, bears and animals that feared man, such as deer and kinnaris (mythological creatures which looked like beautiful damsels). Suvaṇṇasāma loved all these animals which also loved him in return.

When he was young and was left alone at the hermitage at the time his parents went out to collect fruits, the kinnaris came down from their abode of Gandhamādana hill and bathed him. They loved him so much. The power of Suvaṇṇasāma's metta might be gauged by his ability to tame these wild animals.

One day his parents were returning after collecting fruits when there was a heavy down pour of rain. They, therefore, had to take shelter under a tree on a mound at some distance from their hermitage. Rain water mixed with the sweat from their bodies dripped down into the hole in the mound and got into the nostrils of the cobra living in it. When the cobra violently sneezed out the smelly water, the eyes of the two parents were blinded by snake poison. Finding themselves blind, they wept. They did not weep out of pity for themselves, but they wept for they were worried about their son Suvaṇṇasāma.

When the parents did not get back in time, Suvāṇṇasāma came out to look for them. Hearing the sound of their weeping, he found them under the tree. He took them back to the hermitage. He had ropes strung all over the hermitage to help them move about by themselves to stretch their limbs, to answer the call of nature, etc. He looked after them in every way. He was born to them to take care of them in this way (when they met the misfortune).

When Suvāṇṇasāma went into the forest to collect fruits, the kinnaries went with him and plucked fruits for him. When he went to the river to fetch water, the deer helped him by carrying the pots on their backs. When one day, he went with the deer to fetch water, King Pīliyakka of Vārāṇasī, who was hunting in the forest, was astonished to see him amidst the deer. He was not sure whether Suvāṇṇasāma was a deva or a human being. He decided to shoot Suvāṇṇasāma first with a poisoned arrow and then ask who he was. When the arrow hit Suvāṇṇasāma, he fell down. The deer fled in fright. Then Suvāṇṇasāma wept. He did not weep for his own sake. He did so because he was worried about his blind parents when he was no more. He was not angry with the man who shot at him. He had no time to think about the man who shot at him. Only his parents first came to his mind. He went on wailing only for his parents. Then King Pīliyakka realized that Suvāṇṇasāma was a virtuous man who was looking after his two blind parents.

The king begged Suvāṇṇasāma to pardon him and undertook to take care of his parents in his place. Then Bahusundari, the guardian goddess of Gandhamādana Hill told King Pīliyakka to look after Suvāṇṇasāma's blind parents in his stead. Then King Pīliyakka shouldered a water pot and left for the hermitage where the parents dwelt following the directions given by Suvāṇṇasāma. When he got to Dukūla, he told him that he was King of Vārāṇasī and that he had killed Suvāṇṇasāma. Pārika overheard what the king had said to Dukūla and she came out to them. Dukūla informed her what had happened and asked her not to be angry with the king. Then Dukūla and Pārika wailed extolling the good qualities of their son Suvāṇṇasāma. In truth, the lives of Suvāṇṇasāma and of his parents were separate quantitatively but qualitatively, they were one, not apart. For this reason, when they thought of anything, they did not think for themselves but thought only for their son. On the part of Suvāṇṇasāma, too, when he

thought of anything, he did not thing for himself but for his parents. Therefore, though their lives were three in number, they were only one in essence. This is the amalgamation through metta.

Then Dukūla and Pārika asked King Pīliyakka to take them to Suvāṇṇasāma. The king was amazed to meet Suvāṇṇasāma's parents. He had shot their son Suvāṇṇasāma with an arrow and killed him, but neither Suvāṇṇasāma himself nor his parents were angry with him. They were not only not angry, but they received him with hospitality. He wondered if the family even had any dosa (anger, hatred) in them. He was filled with great compassion for the family. He, therefore, resolved then and there to renounce his throne and look after the family. He took Suvāṇṇasāma's parents to the bank of Migasammata river where Suvāṇṇasāma was.

On getting there, Dukūla placed Suvāṇṇasāma's head on his lap and Pārika placed Suvāṇṇasāma's feet on her lap and tried to nurse him back to life. They wailed extolling the good things their son had done for them. When they found out that Suvāṇṇasāma was still alive, they solemnly made asseverations of truth. As the result, Suvāṇṇasāma gained semi-consciousness. Then goddess Bahusundari arrived and she, too, made an asseveration of truth.

As the result, Suvāṇṇasāma gained full consciousness. The two blind parents regained their eye-sight. In this way, the four, Suvāṇṇasāma, King Pīliyakka and Suvāṇṇasāma's two parents met at the hermitage. King Pīliyakka went back to Vārāṇasī and again ruled his kingdom righteously. Suvāṇṇasāma and his parents continued to live at the hermitage and practised meditation and gained jhānas. On passing away, King Pīliyakka was reborn in the deva realm and the three members of Suvāṇṇasāma's family were reborn in the Brahma realms on account of their jhāna practice.

According to this jātaka story, Suvāṇṇasāma's metta was very powerful even when he was young though it had not reached jhāna state. It was so powerful as to cause the kinnaries to come and take care of him while his parents were away. It became very powerful when he came of age. When he attained jhānas at last, it was more powerful. There is nothing as powerful as metta in bringing together wild animals which live apart. On account of Suvāṇṇasāma's metta, even fierce tigers and lions were tamed. Even the timid kinnaries became bold. Therefore, there could not

be any doubt about the power of metta to tame even extremely ferocious human beings. There have actually been benevolent metta practitioners in world history who were able to tame brutal persons and who were able to bring about unity among nationalities which had been split into opposing or warring groups.

Two ways to live in peace

In this loka, everybody wants to live in peace. Human beings, therefore, use peaceful ways to live by. There are two kinds of ways. One is to live peacefully for ever and the other is to live in temporary peace. To live peacefully for ever way is to have metta on one another.

It is, however, not a short-cut way and it takes time. When people cannot wait for long, they follow the short-cut way which is using dosa (anger) and which entails cruelty to crush the opposing groups, once for all, so that they cannot rear their heads again. In the effort to gain peace in the loka, Asūra King Vepacitta used the short-cut method while the Deva King adopted the old method. The short-cut method is the dosa method and the old method is the adosa (metta) method.

Those who want to attain peace in the loka in a short time resort to the dosa method of obtaining temporary peace. It is true that the dosa method can attain peace in a short time. However, the mathematical method they use for calculating the time is the anuloma (direct order) method of Paṭiccasamuppāda doctrine, which is called micchā paṭipadā (wrong conduct). Anuloma calculation method takes cognizance of only the time span (kāla) between the cradle (birth) and the coffin (death).

They do not know that there is time beyond the coffin (death). In truth, if the time between the cradle and the coffin is compared to the time span of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths), it will seem to be less than a second. It is so very short. The peace attained for that period will also be very, very short. Such peace is, therefore, called barren or unfruitful peace.

Those who use the adosa way to calculate the time of peace according to the paṭiloma (reverse order) mathematical method of the Paṭiccasamuppāda doctrine called sammāpaṭipadā (right conduct) take cognizance of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths) as the time span. The time, therefore, is not short and the peace attained can last for a long time. For this reason, such peace is called ‘uprooted’ peace.

Sooner or later, it is certain that disturbances will arise from barren peace, but no disturbance will arise from uprooted peace at any time. There will be everlasting peace. Therefore, in the story Suvāṇṇasāma the time was calculated according to the Paṭiloma method and sought by adosa (method) way. Accordingly, the peace he attained lasted till the end of saṃsārā.

In his love for the surroundings, Suvāṇṇasāma did not look for his own good but only for the good of the surroundings. In whatever he thought of, he did not place himself first; he thought primarily of his surroundings. When he did not primarily think of himself, the surroundings did it. It was natural.

Though in his love of the surroundings he regarded everybody equally, there was a difference according to the debt of gratitude he owed. In truth, he was duty bound to pay back those debts as much as he could. He accepted that duty with pleasure. The greatest debt he owed was, of course, to his parents. He, therefore, looked after the two blind parents to pay that debt. For this reason, he was called one who had more sense of gratitude than those who possessed that sense. In truth, the greater the sense of gratitude he had, the stronger his metta became. This dhamma nature can be verified from our own personal experiences.

Suvāṇṇasāma's love for the surroundings was that of Pāramī metta nature. The other pāramīs collaborated to make it so. In thus collaborating, Suvāṇṇasāma put aside consideration for himself in whatever he did, whatever he said and whatever he thought but primarily put the surroundings first. It was Dāna Pāramī (Perfection of Almsgiving). He did not do any evil to, he did not speak any evil of and he did not think any evil about the surroundings. He did not even swear at King Piliyakkha who shot at him with an arrow. This was Sīla Pārāimī (Perfection of Morality). He did not expect anything in return from the surroundings but worked for their welfare with loving kindness. It was Nekkhamma Pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation). He was able to satisfy his surroundings. It was Paññā Pāramī (Perfection of Knowledge).

He strove to maintain his metta on the surroundings. It was Viriya Pāramī (Perfection of Diligence). In keeping up his metta, he did not let it be disrupted by opposing forces, especially; when King Piliyakkha shot at him with an arrow. He had no anger but went on diffusing metta towards him. It was Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forebearance).

His ability to regularly diffuse metta on all beings was Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth).

Not letting his metta to be disrupted and keeping it firm according to his aim was Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution).

His ability to have metta without discrimination on all beings, good or bad, including King Piliyakkha was Upekkha Pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity).

At that time the valley of Migasammai River in the Himalayas was the home of wild animals such as lions, tigers, deer, etc, where they lived in amity. That was because of Suvāṇṇasāma's metta which was so potent and effective that even the hunter Pīliyakkha renounced his beloved sport and went back to rule his kingdom in justice. This was possible because Suvāṇṇasāma's metta Pāramī was supplemented by the other pāramīs.

It was natural for the other pāramīs to co-operate with the leading Pāramī. Really, the fulfilment of pāramīs is the diligent and conscientious practice of the moral principles of a man, which is the duty of every man. Only when he does it, does he deserve to be called man. Though one is born as man, he may not really be one. That is the reason why when one is born as man, one has to practise the moral principles of man to earn the name of man. This practice is called the fulfilling of Pāramī (perfection).

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UPEKKHA PARAMI**(Perfection of Equanimity)**

‘Upekkha’ is a Pāli word meaning indifference, having no interest, not being moved in any way, It is not an easy thing to be indifferent to the other beings or to their actions in dealing with them. It is a thing that only the noble ones are able to do and for that reason, it is called pāramī.

In truth, the origin of upekkha dhamma is Tatramajjhata mental concomitant (cetasika), which means the middle point like the pointer in a balance. In essence, it means that when the noble ones do deeds for the good of the loka, they pay no attention to the attractions of both the good and the bad surroundings (environment) but concentrate on their work till it is complete. Only if one keeps one’s mind solely on the one single object of the success of his work without taking cognizance of any other subject, whether good or bad, can the work be of Tatramajjhata nature.

In any deed one does, one is bound to encounter obstacles to prevent it from being successful or to cause delays even though it may become successful. When these obstacles are classified according to the ups and downs of life, there are eight kinds. They are called lokadhammas.

These dhammas, in their own ways, obstruct the deeds of the noble ones for the good of the loka. When they are paid attention to and some counter action is taken, or a response is made, the primary object is lost sight of and a new object will come in. Then the work might be foiled or delayed.

In fact, retaliating the attacks of the lokadhammas on one's work amounts to consideration of one's welfare to the detriment of the loka's welfare. Ignoring the loka's welfare and considering only one's welfare, or even though one does not ignore the loka's welfare, giving more consideration to self welfare than the loka's welfare, is not the deed of the noble ones. In essence, being shaken by the attacks of lokadhammas and hitting back at them amounts to giving greater consideration to one's welfare than to the loka's welfare. If it be so, how can such a deed be called pāramī ?

Hitting back at the loka dhammas that arise in deeds done for one's welfare amounts to consideration of one's own welfare, and thus, the aim, and the actual deed, or programme and goal, are in conformity. Hitting back at the loka dhammas that arise in deeds done for the welfare of the loka, however, amounts to revelation of one's resentment against the pain caused by one's atta, and there would be no conformity between the aim and the practical deed or the programme and the goal.

Then one would not be a noble person and one's deed would not earn the name of pāramī. For this reason, in working for the good of the loka, the noble ones should forbear the attacks of the lokadhammas for the sake of the loka, and should take care not to lose sight of their deed. They should, to use the common saying. “Eat with this mind, go with this mind, sleep with this mind” (Bear one's work in mind at all times). Then only, would one be fulfilling the upekkha pāramī.

In truth, upekkha pāramī means not paying attention or not minding the re-actions of the surroundings, whether good or bad, but to carry on with one's work without delay for the good of the loka. In other words, one should not turn one's attention to anything else but for the sake of the loka to concentrate only on one's work. Not paying attention to anything else is equanimity. It does not, however, end only with not paying attention to other things. One should not be flattered or pleased when one is praised; one should not tremble when threatened. One should also clear the way for the other pāramī to enable them to contribute their share.

Only when Upekkha pāramī does it, the other pāramīs would be able to follow its lead and play their part. Upekkha pāramī is the guide for other pāramīs which are to follow the way it directs. Therefore, Upekkha Pāramī is very important for the noble ones working for the good of the loka.

Explanation by Ledi Sayadaw

Venerable Ledi Sayadaw has, in his book 'Uttamapurisa Dīpanī' compared Khanti Pāramī with mother, Upekkha Pāramī with father and Nekkhamma Pāramī with physician. Just as sons and daughters, who are looked after by mother, father and physician, can grow up into healthy and robust young men and women, all meritorious (kusala) deeds protected by Khanti, Upekkha and Nakkhamma Pāramīs can reach the pāramī status, otherwise they will just remain mere kusala (meritorious) deeds like those done outside the Buddha sāsanā (the prevalence of the Buddha's teaching), which would prolong the saṃsarā.

In doing deeds, it is inevitable to meet with the eight lokadhammas. It is, therefore, necessary to see that when they are met with, one is not led astray from the original goal. The eight lokadhammas consist of four pleasant ones and four unpleasant ones. Both of these two kinds can, in their own way, cause one to deviate from one's goal. If one finds pleasure in a pleasant object, it is lobha (greed). If one finds no pleasure in a unpleasant object, it is dosa (anger). Lobha and dosa are both dangers. Therefore, it is important to be indifferent, not to be moved in any way, not to be shaken, in meeting with lokadhammas. When one is honoured deservingly and is pleased with it, it is a danger to one's work. When one is denounced and finds no pleasure in it, it is also a danger to one's work. When there is danger, the work is bound to be ruined. To avoid the danger, it is necessary to pay no attention, not to be moved in any way, by the lokadhammas when they are encountered.

Not to pay any attention, or not to be moved in any way, does not mean to keep one's mouth shut. If one finds a thing to be wrong, one should explain why it is wrong. If one finds a thing to be right, one should explain why it is right. The Buddha has taught how to act in such a situation as an example in para 5 of the Brahmajāla Sutta.

It is, however, important in explaining not to feel disappointed or to feel pleased. In truth, explaining or admitting involves the nature of truth (Yathābhūta). It, therefore, is not a danger but is an aid in one's work. The real dangers are lobha (greed) and dosa (anger). When lobha and dosa arise, moha (bewilderment) also comes in. As it is evident that lobha, dosa and moha are really dangers, no explanation is called for.

When it rains, it rains to the full extent on all things uniformly. This is called Samabhāva dassana, the nature of equality. However, the quantity of rain water received varies. A hundred viss vessel and a ten viss vessel will receive the rain water according to their respective capacities though the rainfall is uniform. There is no differentiation on the part of the rain. There is, however, inequality in the quantity of water received as it depends on the capacity to receive. Therefore, some get more and some get less. It depends on the capacity to receive, not on the rain, which does not make any discrimination.

In like manner, the Upekkha Pāramī makes no discrimination between the loved ones and the not-loved ones in its welfare work. It metes out equal treatment to all but the benefits attained may not be equal or the same, depending on the kamma of those who receive. Those whose kammas are great may benefit much and those whose kammas are small may benefit little. It is, therefore, said “Sabbe sattā kammakā” which means that all sentient beings have only kamma as their property and nothing else. In truth, upekkha is being indifferent to the attainment of benefits by paying no attention to it. It leaves it to the kamma (kammakā). However, in working for the good of beings, upekkha like the heavy rain makes the utmost effort. It is not negligent; it does not leave it to kamma (Kammakā).

In truth, the efforts made by the other pāramīs are crowned with success because of upekkha which paves the path and keeps them on it. Without upekkha’s aid, dānā pāramī or sīlā pāramī or other pāramīs cannot reach their goals. It should be clearly understood that Upekkha pāramī has two parts, the part which plays the role of indifference and the part which pays attention and takes action.

Of these two parts, the part of indifference is called the result part which is related to Anatta (non-self).

The action part is called the cause part, which is related to Atta (self). By the ‘atta’ nature of upekkha pāramī, when one does deeds for the good of beings, including both who praise or censure him, one strives to turn his chanda (wish), citta (mind), vīriya (diligence) and vimamsa (investigative knowledge) into a supernatural power. One would not slacken his effort in any way. That is exertion to ensure that one’s wish become true.

According to the nature of upekkha pāramī, however, though one might strive very hard for beings, they would not get as much benefit as one would like them to get. They would get it only according to their kamma by anatta nature.

Therefore, the result part is the part where benefits are attained according to kammas. Even though one loves someone and wishes him to benefit more, it cannot be done. Even though one hates someone and wishes him to benefit less, it cannot be done. If one continues one's effort up to the result stage, one will become partial and will no longer be called a person of pāramī. For this reason, upekkha pāramī pays no attention to the result part and leaves it to kamma.

In truth, the nature of anatta is more conspicuous in the result part. Nothing happens in this part according to one's wish. Things happen by themselves and take their own courses. In the cause part, however, puggala byāpāda (personal effort) can be made use of as much as one desires. It has the nature of atta. In the result part, one cannot use puggala byāpāda (personal effort) as one likes. The results do not depend on puggala byāpāda but on dhamma byāpāda and they happen as they like. It has the nature of anatta.

In cooking a dish of curry, one can put as much salt, as much cooking oil and other ingredients as one likes. The curry, however, might not turn out to be as one wishes it to be. It will turn out to be as it likes. Even though one might want the curry to be most delicious, its taste will be in conformity with the proportion of the ingredients it is made up of. Its taste might be good or bad. It will not depend on puggala byāpāda (personal effort), but on dhamma byāpāda. Therefore, it should be noted that Upekkha Pāramī does not disregard the cause part, but only disregards the result part. Thus, the two functions of Upekkha Pāramī should be understood.

Of the four Brahmācariya dhammas, metta (loving kindness), Karuṇā (compassion) and muditā (sympathetic joy) are of one nature, and upekkha (equanimity) is of a different nature. Metta, karuṇā and muditā primarily have the nature of discrimination (visesa), while upekkha primarily has the nature of being discriminated (visesaya). Visesa is quality and visesaya is the substance or wealth. According to metta, one sees all beings, whether friends or foes, as lovable.

According to karunā, one sees all beings with compassion and according to muditā one sees all beings with sympathetic joy. According to upekkha, however, it sees differently. It sees all beings only as beings, not as those to be loved, not as those to be pitied and helped, not as those whose good fortune one should be joyful about. In truth, the first three concern outward appearance. Seeing beings as merely beings concerns the inward nature. Thus, Upekkha is different from the first three Brahmācariya dhammas. The first three centres their attention on outward appearance and Upekkha centres its attention on the inward nature.

Because of the Brahmācariya Upekkha, the attāvadīs (believers in atta theory) attain jhānas and samāpattis. Brahmācariya Upekkha pāramī is not primarily for the good of the loka (lokattacariya).

Only Upekkha pāramī is primarily for the good of loka. Pāramī in the three cariya (conduct) directs primarily at the good of the loka. Then only will it deserve to be called by the name of pāramī deed of the noble ones.

Though the nature of lokattacariya is contained in Brahmācariya upekkha, it does not play a vital role in it; it plays only a minor part. According to the Exposition by Venerable Ledi Sayadaw, in his book ‘Uttama Purisa Dīpanī’, Brahmācariya upekkha rejects concern for the welfare of beings, whereas upekkha pāramī makes no discrimination between those who praise or censure one but concentrates only on the accomplishment of their deeds. In essence, it means that upekkha pāramī takes great pains in working for the good of beings according to lokattacariya.

Mahā Lomahamisa Story

The Buddha had fulfilled upekkha pāramī in several existences as Bodhisatta. Among these existences, the story of Mahā Lomahamisa which is included in the Cariya Piṭakas, is note-worthy. It took place in a past world. According to it, the Bodhisatta’s name was Mahā Lomahamisa, which in truth was not his real name. It means the one who made hair-raising goose-flesh causing efforts to fulfil upekkha pāramī. The Bodhisatta was known by that name.

He was born in a very wealthy family. His parents looked after him well. When the time came for his education, he was sent to learn, according to the custom of that age, under the great Disāpamokkha teacher. After completion of his learning, he returned to his parents and joined their work but he was not very interested in it. His mind was bent on the fulfilment of upekkha pāramī. As his parents were still living, he inevitably had to attend to their business. His parents urged him to marry but he gave various excuses not to marry and lived together with them.

Lomahamisa perceived the nature of Anicca (impermanence) and had an emotional awakening of remorse. When the impermanent nature of existence (bhava) was seen, the dukkha nature (suffering and unsatisfactoriness) of existence was also realized. Birth (jāti), ageing (jarā), ill-health (byādhi), death (maraṇa) were all dukkha. These were called the dukkha of existence. To associate with people whom one disliked or to be separated from those one loved or liked was also dukkha which concerned with environment. Not obtaining what one desired was also dukkha called kamma dukkha. Lomahamisa knew these three kinds of dukkha.

He did not, however, know discriminatively the saṅkhāra dukkha. In fact, discriminative knowledge of saṅkhāra dukkha can only be attained by maggañāṇa (magga insight). For this reason, Lomahamisa knew only the first three out of four kinds of dukkha. The first three are mentioned in Sankhyā dassana (mathematics). Saṅkhāra dukkha could be disclosed only when a Buddha appeared. So long as Saṅkhāra dukkha is not perceived, one cannot escape from existence. Lomahamisa wanted to escape from existence and to tell others the way of escape. In fact, to know the way of escape from existence, one should first know saṅkhāra dukkha and to know it, one must fulfil upekkha pāramī. That was the reason why Lomahamisa wanted to fulfil upekkha pāramī.

Lomahamisa had to wait till the passing away of his parents for the fulfilment of upekkha pāramī. When his parents died, he began to make preparations. Then his relatives advised and asked him to carry on his parents' business but he did not listen to them. He was a man of pāramī (destined to reach the highest state) and prompted by this inborn nature, he wanted to practise upekkha pāramī. All beings have the greatest regard for and worship their own selves "Attahi attanonātho". In this, there is the right and the

wrong way. Both these ways are related to the knowledge of bhava (existence). In this connection, the Buddha has taught in the Paṭicca-samuppāda doctrine “Upādānapaccaya bhavo”, which means upādāna (clinging) is the cause of bhava (existence). In truth, bhava is caused by upādāna. Here, bhava includes both kamma bhava (existence dominated by sensual pleasures) and upapatti bhava (rebirth process in three states of existence, kamma, rūpa and arūpa bhavas).

Again, Kamma bhava is Kusala (meritorious) and akusala (demeritorious) deeds which include consciousness. Both kusala consciousness and akusala consciousness are, therefore, caused by upādāna (clinging). Thus, bhava consciousness is caused by upādāna. It should, therefore, be said that the right and wrong regard and admiration for oneself depends on upādāna.

Then, there are four kinds of upādānas. Of these four, attavādupādāna (clinging to soul theories) concerns existences in the round of rebirths. ‘Attavādu’ here means what should be called atta (self). Under the Buddhist teaching, there are two things that should be called ‘atta’. In essence, they are kusala and akusala as in the case of kammabhava. It can also be divided into Papañca dhammas and Bodhipakkhiya dhammas (dhammas concerning enlightenment). Both of them are always clung to by beings and are called upādāna (clinging). Of these two kinds of dhamma, according to consciousness of existence based on Papañca one wrongly worships oneself. According to consciousness based on Bodhipakkhiya, one rightly worships oneself.

Lomahamisa was the one who worshipped himself rightly according to consciousness of existence based on Bodhipakkhiya. He could do this because his attavāda (soul theory) was Bodhipakkhiya. As such, whatever he thought of, his thoughts were directed at Bodhi (supreme knowledge). His thoughts, therefore, were not for his sake, or for the growth of wealth left by his parents, but to practise upekkha pāramī for Bodhi (supreme knowledge). To practise upekkha pāramī for supreme knowledge does not mean that he exercised upekkha pāramī because he wanted to attain Nibbāna. It means that he exercised upekkha pāramī because he wanted to liberate the loka from dukkhā.

Lomahamisa thought of renouncing his wealth and property and becoming an ascetic but the life of an ascetic would attract

public attention and popularity. He did not want fame. He, therefore, left the home life in his ordinary clothes. He did not wear the usual bark-dyed robes of an ascetic. In his renunciation of household life, there was this difference in appearance. He did not wear the usual bark-dyed robes of an ascetic. In respect of mental attitude, however, there was no difference between him and other ascetics. It showed that Lomahamisa valued essence more than outward appearance.

Lomahamisa wandered from village to village and he came to villages, towns and capital cities. He did not worry about food or clothes. He ate whatever he could get and wore whatever he had. Those he met with treated him as they pleased.

He did, however, not stay long at places where he was treated with respect. He stayed long at places where he was treated with disrespect. In truth, he seemed to be lifeless. He did not shed tears when he saw sorrowful sights or had sorrowful experiences. He did not laugh when he saw funny scenes or heard funny stories. He strove to be above the lokadhammas, not to be effected by them and to have equanimity. His equanimity was amazing. As he had practised in this way, he could ultimately have Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) reside in him. Lomahamisa had to strive hard in order that the place (his khandha) where the Perfect Wisdom was to dwell should become worthy and in agreement with it.

As the result, his mental power developed and gained strength for the fulfilment of the upekkha pāramī.

Lomahamisa got to a village where there were children who were fond of poking fun at others. His attire and appearance looked peculiar and amazing to these children and they took him to be an object to poke fun at. On Lomahamisa's part he took the meeting with the children as an opportunity for the exercise of upekkha pāramī and was greatly heartened. So the tug of war began between the mischief and fun makers and the one who strove to maintain his equanimity. The children jeered at him and made fun of him in every way. The more Lomahamisa was jeered at and made fun of, the more he was pleased and satisfied.

Though it was not his custom to stay long at any village, he decided to stay long there. To entice them to come after him, he proceeded to the village cemetery and lay there using a skeleton as his pillow.

As Lomahamisa was an object of mischief and fun making, the children jeered and mocked at him, but he was not angry with them. Some intelligent people, however, took him to be a noble person and respected and honoured him but he had no liking for them. He had equal regard for both, those who made fun of him and those who revered and honoured him. In fact, the Bodhisatta exercised upekkha pāramī in all his existences, but in his existence as Lomahamisa, however, he fulfilled this pāramī to the fullest extent.

In fact, when beings strive to realize their aims in life, it is necessary for them not to lose sight of their goals. And this is the essence of upekkha pāramī and it is called indifference or equanimity.

Not being angry when maligned, not being pleased when praised and keeping the mind balanced in the centre, leaning towards neither side, is called the nature of Tatramajjhataṭṭā in Pāli. Khanti (forbearance) is not being swayed by lokadhammas (vicissitudes of life). It is called forbearance.

Man, by his inborn nature, is angry when he experiences something that arouses his anger. He is happy when he experiences something that pleases him. That, in really, means that the mind is being influenced by the sense objects. Khanti (forbearance), however, acts counter to the inborn nature by not yielding to the attractions of sense objects and by being indifferent.

Khanti (forbearance) and upekkha (equanimity) are, as it were, a pair like two parents of the remaining pāramīs. Only when there is khanti, there arises upekkha. Khanti defends one against the dangers of lokadhammas while upekkha points out the path and sees to it that one keeps straight on the path. Thus, the two take care of the remaining pāramīs.

In the Lomahamisa story, Lomahamisa's not being angry with the children and fun makers and not being attached to those who paid him homage shows the nature of khanti. Keeping one at his work to enable him to carry it on is upekkha pāramī. In other words, khanti gives protection; upekkha directs at the goal and keeps one on the right path. The remaining pāramīs help one to go on. This is how the pāramīs are fulfilled.

In the fulfilment of pāramīs by the Bodhisatta, upekkha pāramī was always involved. However, it was not so prominent

as in the Lomahamisa story where upekkha pāramī was at its zenith. As the story vividly portrays the hair raising and goose flesh causing efforts of the Bodhisatta in the fulfillment of this pāramī. The word 'mahā' meaning great or supreme is added to the name and is called 'Mahā Lomahamisa'.

Similar in Appearance, Different in Essence

The practice called 'atonement for vaṭṭa dukkha' was popular in ancient times. It was the practice for expiating (making amends) for akusala kammās (sins) committed, if any, in the successive past existences. When the akusala kammās were thus made to exhaust, the benefits of Kusala kammās would be enjoyed. With this belief, people practised 'atonement of vaṭṭa dukkha'. In truth, it was a kind of Attakilamathanuyoga (self-mortification practice). It was not a majjhimapatipada middle path practice.

What Lomahamisa practised in the story was Majjhimapatipadā practice, in which the one who practised knew its nature, its cause, its results and its power. In the Attakilamathanuyoga, the one who practised it did not know thus. Therefore, the practice of equanimity is in outward appearance similar to both Attakilamathanuyoga and Majjhimapatipadā practices, but it is not the same in essence. In essence, equanimity which has a similar nature as attakilamathanuyoga practice is moha (bewilderment) which prescribes ditthi (wrong view), while equanimity which has the nature of majjhimapatipadā is Tatramajjhataṭṭā (equilibrium).

In the evaluation of a deed, therefore, the appearance and the essence should be differentiated to get the actual worth. Though according to the nature of relationship between appearance and essence, the paths might be the same, their worth might not be the same. Though two donors built a pagoda and a monastery each, their cost might not be the same.

As pāramī means deeds of the noble persons, in all pāramī deeds, priority is always accorded to common welfare rather than self welfare. Then only, do they deserve to be called pāramī. If priority is given to one's welfare, whatever deed may be done, whether it is the construction of a pagoda, or a monastery, or a road or giving a lavish feast, or carrying out a monumental project, it is not a pāramī. In fact, a pāramī deed depends on quality, not on quantity.

Lomahamsa fulfilled upekkha pāramī for becoming a Buddha. He practised to become a Buddha, not because he wanted to be one for his own sake, but for the loka's sake. From the time he was hermit Sumedha, he had accorded priority to the loka's welfare rather than his own. All the sacrifices he had made were, therefore, for the loka. Therefore, the debt of gratitude the loka owed to him was immeasurable, but there were only a few in the loka who actually realized it.

Lomahamsa did not confine his practice to upekkha pāramī. he practised the other pāramīs also. Upekkha pāramī being so prominent in his practice, “Lomahamsacariya” (his conduct) has been shown in the Piṭakas as the story of the fulfilment of upekkha pāramī. All the Buddhists believe that Lomahamsa had actually lived on this earth.

But his practice was so exceptional, extraordinary and severe that it appeared to be legendary.

In the fulfilment of upekkha pāramī by giving away his wealth and making sacrifices, Lomahamsa also exercised dāna pāramī.

By refraining from committing akusala and duccharitas, he practised Sīla pāramī.

By not expecting anything except the discovering of the builder of craving (taṇhā) he practised nekkhamma pāramī. By the solemn utterance of joy the Buddha made on his attainment of the Buddhahood beginning with the words “Aneka jāti saṃsaram — ”, it is evident that everything he did, every word he said, every thought he conceived was aimed at finding the builder of craving (taṇhā).

He, therefore, knew his goal and he walked on the path of upekkha pāramī to get to that goal. In fact, the fulfilment of nekkhamma pāramī was the effort to exterminate taṇhā. The extermination of taṇhā (craving), the realization of Arahatta Magga (the final magga) and the attainment of Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) are, in their nature, not different from one another.

Lomahamsa knew about the cause of equanimity, the result, the path, the goal, the strategy and the manoeuvre (action) of equanimity he was practising to attain. Such knowledge amounted to the fulfilment of paññā pāramī (Perfection of Knowledge).

Steadfast diligence in the exercise of upekkha pāramī was the fulfilment of Viriya Pāramī (Perfection of Diligence).

His exercise of Khanti Pāramī was most extraordinary. He was able to forbear without any anger the ill-treatment and tortures of the children and the drunkards. He could also forbear the homage paid to him by the noble ones without being joyful and pleased.

With regard to the practice of Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth), Lomahamsa was very honest. There was no disparity between his facial expression and what he was thinking in his mind. The two were identical. When the facial expression showed equanimity, his mind also had the same feeling. This was Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth).

Not only his physical deeds and mental deeds were in conformity, they also conformed to his verbal deeds. Such conformity amounted to the fulfilment of Sacca Pāramī .

With regard to Adhiṭṭhana Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution), there was no place in the story where Lomahamsa's resolutions did not hold firm; they were all very firm. This is called the fulfilment of Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī .

Regarding his metta towards all beings, everything in the loka was lovable to him. He was never partial. In fact, all pāramī deeds have to be supported by compassion (karuṇā) and paññā (wisdom). Then only can they be called pāramīs.

In saving beings from saṃsāra dukkha (dukkha of undergoing the endless round of rebirths) for fortyfive vassas, the Buddha had mainly used karuṇā and paññā.

Only metta and karuṇā kept up by upekkha can bring about great benefits and can be very effective, according to Pakiṇḍaka Cariyāya Piṭakathākathā. Only because Lomahamsa could keep up incomparable metta and karuṇā on beings, was he able to pay no heed to the lokadhammas arising out of them or to them (beings).

If parents could even be impartial between their good and bad children, why could not the Bodhisatta, who was the embodiment of metta, kāruṇā and paññā, impartially stand in the centre among the beings?

In the fulfilment of pāramīs by the Bodhisattas, metta, karuṇā, paññā and upekkha played their respective roles. There

was no clash whatever among them. Just as the ingredients in a curry blend without opposing one another, the pāramīs congenially conform to one another in the efforts of the Bodhisatta for the attainment of Bodhiñāṇa (supreme knowledge).

When one is born as man, one inevitably has to discharge one's responsibilities as man. Those who had done it can be seen to this day in human history. They are recorded as great personages. Every country and every nation has such personages in its history, Their names are thus recorded in history not because they wished to be recorded thus, but because of the instigation of attavādupādāna (clinging to soul theories). This is called the dictates of history. No event takes place because one wishes it. Events can happen only when there are relevant causes. If one believes that one can cause an event to arise as one wishes, one is called an attavādi.

In the loka when one is born as man, whoever he may be, he loves his nation, his country and his religion. Accordingly, he does all he can for his nation, country and religion. However, his deeds sometimes do more harm than good because the method used is wrong.

Wrong method of Practice

There are two fundamental principles in working for the advancement of one's nation, country and religion. One has 'self' as the central point, which is called the 'anuloma principle' and which is based on 'atta'. The other has 'loka' as the central point which is called 'paṭiloma principle' and is based on 'anatta'. When it is based on 'atta', one leaves aside the well being of others and centres all one's actions on self, saying 'I must do well; my nation must do well; my country must do well, my religion must do well'. When one centres one's actions on 'self', he drifts down with the stream according to the anuloma principle. It is the belief, according to the original (bija) nature of the mind, such as, 'If there is anything to love, I'll love it; if there is anything to hate, I'll hate it'. It is called micchāpaṭipadā, the wrong method of practice.

The right method of practice

Under the paṭiloma principle, though it is based on anatta, one has to strive for the good of one's nation, country and religion. However, one does not disregard others; one has consideration for

them also. One, however, feels that he is more indebted to his nation, country and religion and strives more to pay back this debt.

In fact, when it is based on anatta, more stress is given to the adequacy of the cause for the arising of a result. Some call this nature as 'the boiling point', some call it 'suddenly'. In truth, in all happenings both 'gradually' and 'suddenly' are involved, but though in 'gradually' 'atta can dominate puggala vyāpāra (individual effort), in 'suddenly' annata can dominate dhamma vyāparā. Therefore, it does not centre on the 'I' but centres on the loka. It does not centre on a part but centres on the whole.

In reality, one alone cannot do well unless the surroundings are also doing well. According to this nature, the principle based on the reverse order (paṭiḷoma) is called sammāpaṭipadā, the right way of practice. When it is put into practice, it does not follow the original nature of the mind (mūla bīja). It does not love even though it comes across lovable things. It is not partial to those one loves. It does not hate even though it comes across hateful things. It is not prejudiced against those who one hates. It remains at the centre. It aims at the common welfare.

But in paying back the debt of gratitude, there is a difference. Whether all enjoy the benefits of his deeds or not is not his concern. It is the concern of human beings. His concern is to strive, without bias, for the uniform well being of all.

There is no doubt that everybody loves himself. There is no doubt also that everybody loves his nation and country. There is, however, doubt as to whether their deeds amount to real love or otherwise. Though some people love themselves but cannot do deeds that amount to love, they meet with all kinds of suffering (dukkha). Though some people love their nation and country, as they cannot do deeds that amount to love, they are hated by their own nationals. This happens because of the wrong way of love.

There is a method of loving the loka which does not go wrong. This method is called pāramī. Prince Siddhattha had loved by this method the loka, his parents, wife, son, relatives and the people of his country. He had loved even his greatest enemy, Devadatta. It was not at all easy to love really in the correct way. Prince Siddhatta had to strive to enable him to do so for four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. In point of fact, to enable one to love the loka in the right way, one has to make sacrifices of his life to the utmost.

Loudly proclaiming at the top of one's voice that one loves one's nation and country without being able to sacrifice one's life is just a joke to those who can know. In this loka, those who can know can be found everywhere.

The Buddha's metta is described in the Dhammapada Devadatta story thus : -

“The Buddha equally loves Devadatta, Aṅgulimāla, Elephant Nālāgīri and Son Rāhulā.”

If one really loves the loka in the right way the Buddha has taught, one should sacrifice oneself for the loka one loves. This is the essence of Dāna Pāramī (Perfection of Almsgiving).

There should not be any evil and wicked thoughts on the loka one loves. One should always maintain a wholesome mind and volition. This is the essence of Sīla Pāramī (Perfection of Morality).

Whatever one does for the loka one loves, one should do it with pure volition without expecting anything in return. It is the nature of acinteyya (beyond thought or reason). The more one does not expect any benefit, the more the benefits will expect one. The more one discards benefits, the more the benefits will cling to one. It is acinteyya. Doing deeds with pure volition without hoping for anything in return is the essence of nekkhamma pāramī (Perfection of Renunciation).

The ability to work for the loka to enable it to attain the best results is the essence of Paññā Pāramī (Perfection of Knowledge).

To work with unremitting perseverance is the essence of Viriya Pāramī (Perfection of Diligence)

Not being discouraged in encountering any difficulties is the essence of Khanti Pāramī (Perfection of Forbearance).

Working honestly and sincerely without any pretence whatever is the essence of Sacca Pāramī (Perfection of Truth).

Keeping at work till the deed is done according to one's resolution is the essence of Adhiṭṭhāna Pāramī (Perfection of Resolution).

Truly loving the loka is the essence of Metta Pāramī (Perfection of Loving-Kindness).

Being impartial to the loka one loves and carrying on till the deed is done is the essence of Upekkha Pāramī (Perfection of Equanimity).

Essence and Appearance

The Buddha had, beginning from his existence as Hermit Sumedha, four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds ago, worked for the good of the loka at the sacrifice of his own good. His deeds can be classified according to their nature into ten kinds called pāramīs or perfections. Though they are ten kinds in essence, they can be of many different kinds in appearance. For example, Daña Pāramī can, by its appearance, be called giving up of life, wealth and property, or renunciation of privileges and so on. Therefore, if the essence is understood, the appearances can also be understood. Besides, refraining from profiteering, exploitation, etc. are the characteristics or marks of Sīla Pāramī.

In brief, sacrificing oneself by metta, karuṇā, paññā and working for the common good is the essence of pāramī. Therefore, all deeds aimed at self-welfare, without metta and karuṇā for the loka, however wonderful they might be by appearance, are not Pāramīs. In truth, Pāramī deeds are not counted on quantity; they are counted on quality.

Anyone might claim that he loves his own self, his family, his nation, his country and his culture, but only if he loves them and works for their good in the way the noble ones, who have fulfilled the ten pāramīs, have done, can his love be called true love. The Buddha in his many existences as the Bodhisatta worked for the good of the loka for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. Up to the time he realized Parinibbhāna (passing away) he had loved his self, his family, his relatives, the Loka, all human beings, devas and brahmas. Because he had loved them in this way he had worked for the good of the loka.

Therefore, if anyone claims that he loves his own self, his family, his nation, his country and the loka, may he take as much as possible the example set by the Buddha in his countless existences beginning with that of Hermit Sumedha and ending with that of Prince Siddhattha, lasting four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds!

Chapter (4)

Prince Siddhattha, The Bodhisatta

Innumerable kammās

Existence (bhava) is where innumerable kammās (deeds) which oppose one another dwell. It is impossible to say when these kammās had come into being to build existences. It is equally impossible to say how many of these kammās there are. It is, therefore, quite impossible to trace the origin of kammās dwelling in existences by time or by number.

Among these innumerable kammās, some are destined for births as universal monarchs; some as beggars; some as devas; some as inmates of hell (nivaya) and so on. There are conflicts among the kammās as to their destinations of rebirths.

In these conflicts, there are factions, groups, followers, leaders, etc. The leaders are called 'janakas', the followers are called 'upatthambhakas'.

Leaders of opposing factions are called 'upaghātakas'; followers of opposing factions are called 'upapilākas', and so on. They have their own forces and they vie with one another.

Whether in good things or bad things, the stronger side wins but the weaker side refuses to yield. It goes on opposing as much as it can. In truth, bhava (existence) roughly has three divisions according to time, viz. khaṇika bhava, santati bhava and addhā bhava.

What is happening momentarily at present is Khaṇika bhava. What is happening inside a khandha according to time is santati bhava. What happens in the life span from birth to death is addhā bhava.

They take place in existences (bhavas) first at a gradual steady pace and then the tempo abruptly accelerates and the change takes place. This is natural. No one has the power to change this nature. It happens according to its own nature. It is anatta!

Unless efforts can be made to change the innumerable karmas which bhava is built of from a state of opposition to one another (virodhi) to a state of congeniality (anurodhi) one's existence would be in disarray. It is, therefore, necessary to change the virodhi (opposing) forces of bhava into anurodhi (congenial) forces to prevent the bhava from falling into disorder.

Prince Siddhattha had to strive to turn the innumerable virodhi karmas which were opposing one another in his person into anurodhi karmas which were congenial to one another. These karmas had been dwelling in him from the start of the saṃsarā (round of rebirths), the beginning of which is untraceable. He had to take much time to turn them into congenial ones. He began the effort from the time he was Hermit Sumedha. It took him four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds.

The effort he made was as follows: - First, he made the wish to become the Buddha before Buddha Dipaṅkarā and then made the following resolution to fulfil the ten Pāramīs:-

“ I am a man of valour. As such I should not selfishly strive to escape from the saṃsarā dukkha by myself alone. I must strive to attain Perfect Wisdom (Sabbaññutañāṇa) and become the Buddha. Then I shall liberate the loka together with the devas from the saṃsarā dukkha”.

Then, he diligently fulfilled all the ten Pāramīs. There were existences when he specially fulfilled particular pāramīs, such as Dāna Pāramī, Sīla Pāramī, etc. and these existences are shown in the Piṭakas under the name of the particular pāramī concerned. Though they were named and shown thus, the other paramis were always invariably involved and fulfilled at the same time.

Sabba Sambhārā Bhāvanā

For this reason, the fulfilment of pāramīs in the various existences of the Bodhisatta is called Sabba Sambharā Bhāvanā which means effort to fulfil completely the structure of all

pāramīs. Actually, all the pāramīs are related and connected with one another like the ingredients in a powerful drug. Pāramī might be likened to the name of the drug.

Dāna, Sīla, etc. are like the names of the ingredients of the drugs. In a drug, no ingredient can be left out, otherwise its efficacy would be weakened. Therefore, it is said that no ingredient can be left out. Only the ratio of or the proportions of the ingredients might be increased or decreased. In like manner, all the ten pāramīs were involved in appropriate proportions in the Bodhisatta's fulfilment of the pāramīs in his various existences. For this reason, the fulfilment of pāramīs is called Sabba Sambhāra Bhāvana.

Nirantara Bhāvanā

The Bodhisatta had to fulfil the pāramīs in every one of his existences for four assaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. There could not be any existence in which the pāramīs were not fulfilled.

From the existence of Hermit Sumedhā right up to the existence of Prince Siddhattha, he fulfilled pāramīs in every existence with the exception of none. Only by constantly doing so, would the pāramīs merge and solidify into one whole. Merging has to go beyond the state of mixing. According to Dassana (philosophy) vocabulary, mixing is called 'Samyogā Sambandha' and the merging is called 'Samavāya Sambandha'.

In the preparation of a curry, the mixing of the ingredients before it is cooked is in the nature of 'Samyoga Sambandha.' When it is cooked and it becomes curry, the merging of the ingredients is the nature of Samavāya Sambandha. In fact, only when things are merged, a new dhamma or a new strength is produced. No new dhamma is produced by just mixing; the ingredients remain as before. When they remain as before, no new dhamma is produced.

When no new dhamma is produced, how will pāramīs be able to cause the arising of Arahattañāna and Sabaññutañāṇa. In truth, only because of Nirantara bhāvanā which can produce strength, the pāramīs are able to cause the emergence of arahattamaggañāṇa and Sabbaññutañāṇa.

Ciramāla Bhāvanā

Time is essential for the fulfilment of pāramīs which can cause the arising of arahattamaggañāṇa and sabbaññutañāṇa. The time needed for becoming a Buddha is four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. Only when the pāramīs are fulfilled for four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds can the strength (power) to work for a period of 45 vassas (residence period for monks during the rainy season) be attained.

The time that has to be put in (invested) as capital is four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. The profit of time gained out of that capital is 45 vassas (three months). From the point of view of mathematics, the disparity between the capital and profit is so stupendous! In truth, the period of 45 vassas is the core (essence) of the four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds.

On account of it, the Buddha was deservingly able to save a countless number of beings from the dukkha of saṃsarā (round of rebirths).

The Buddha was also able to leave behind the teachings (dhammas) and Vinaya (Code of Conduct for Monks). To enable him to carry out these tasks, the Bodhisatta had taken a sufficient period of four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds to fulfil the pāramīs completely. He had to make full use of this period without letting any part of it pass away fruitlessly.

This effort is called Ciramāla Bhāvanā, which means effort made for a very long time. According to nature, to get the flowers and the fruits wanted, enough time has to be taken. It is the law of nature (Niyāma).

Sakkacca Bhāvanā

In the fulfilment of pāramīs, it is true that all of them have to be practised. It is also true that they have to be practised in every existence. It is also true that they have to be practised as long as necessary, however long it may be. In practising them, just going through the motions is not enough. One must make an earnest effort, putting heart and soul into it. Then only would one attain the desired result. In fact, the Bodhisatta had, beginning with the existence of Hermit Sumedha up to that of Prince Siddhattha, fulfilled the pāramīs respectfully. It is natural that the

more one respects one's work, the greater benefit one gets out of it.

That was the reason why the Buddha in his many existences as Bodhisatta had fulfilled pāramīs respectfully. It is called Sakkacca Bhāvanā. In truth, if one wants deserving benefit, one should do any deed according to the four bhāvanā methods.

Working for the good of Loka

In the fulfilment of pāramīs, the Bodhisatta had, from his existence as Hermit Sumedha up to that of Prince Siddhattha, done everything necessary according to Sabbasambhāra Bhāvanā. He made constant and continuous effort without any break in between according to Nirantara Bhāvanā. He fulfilled the pāramīs in the prescribed time according to Ciramkāla Bhāvanā. He also fulfilled them working respectfully according to Sakkacca Bhāvanā. These were the four Bhāvanā ways in which the Bodhisatta had fulfilled the pāramīs from his existence as Hermit Sumedha up to that of Prince Siddhattha.

He had always followed these ways in the fulfilment of the pāramīs. Any deed done, with the welfare of the loka as priority, is of pāramī nature.

However, even though the Bodhisatta did all deeds of pāramī nature, he was not always reborn in the happy abodes (sugati bhūmis). There were times when he was reborn in the miserable abodes (duggati bhūmis). It was evident from this that the Bodhisatta had (sometimes) committed duccharitas (evil deeds). Even though the Bodhisatta had sometimes committed evil deeds, they were, according to pāramī nature, committed, not for his own sake but for the sake of the common welfare. He had, therefore, sacrificed himself for the common good.

In fulfilling pāramīs, the Bodhisatta would have wanted to be reborn in only happy abodes and to practise the pāramīs there. By the nature of anatta, things do not happen as one wishes; they happen as they like.

Though the Bodhisatta might have wanted to be reborn only in the happy abodes to practise the pāramīs, he was sometimes reborn in miserable abodes according to kamma niyāma (results of deeds done).

Nature of Kamma and Pāramīs

Results arise based only on the proportion of two involving causes. They do not happen as one wishes. Of the two causes, the first is called upādāna kāraṇa and the second is called nimitta kāraṇa. Upādāna kāraṇa is the external (bahiddha) material cause which concerns with time and situation. Kamma is upādāna kāraṇa. It is like wood.

Nimitta kāraṇa is the cause concerning capability. Knowledge (ñāna) and diligence (vīriya) are nimitta kāraṇa. It is like the carpenter. Just as wood can be turned into various kinds of shapes depending on the capability of the carpenter, the results of kamma can take any form depending on one's knowledge and diligence.

Upādāna kāraṇa can also be called sampadā (attainment) and Nimitta kāraṇa can be called paṇidhi (aspiration). One cannot always get what one aspires. It depends upon the time and situation, and the presence of favourable circumstances. For this reason, though the Bodhisatta did deeds for the common good according to paṇidhi (aspiration), in practice it happens according to kamma sampadā (presence of favourable circumstances). When he had done kusala deeds, he was reborn in happy abodes. When he had done akusala deeds, he was reborn in miserable abodes. Whether he did kusala or akusala deeds according to Sampadā, as it carried the nature of pāramī according to Panidhi, in whatever abodes he might be reborn, he was reborn only in the upper intelligentia class.

Thus the Bodhisatta had, for the whole of four asankkheyyas and 100,000 worlds, been reborn in happy or miserable abodes and had fulfilled pāramīs for the good of the loka. In his last existence, he was reborn in the Sakyan line of princes of Kapilavatta kingdom of Sakka. His mother was Mahā Māyādevi. His name was Siddhattha.

Prince Siddhattha passed away from the Tusitā deva realm, at the request of brahmas and devas to become the Buddha. For four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, the devas and brahmas headed by Suddhāvāsa brahmas had been taking care of the Bodhisatta to see that he become the Buddha. They had been constantly looking after him since he received the prophecy of Buddha Dipankaṛa. It had been a very long time and the end of their task was now close at hand. The justness of the principle of

choosing 'the right man to the right place' by election method is evident in 'Dhamma bhūmi'.

Dhamma and Adhamma Groups

From the time Prince Siddhattha took conception in the womb of Mahā Māyādevi, thirty-two extraordinary signs had plainly appeared. Nature is never negligent of its duty. It is constantly at work. The Buddha rumour or uproar came into widespread circulation a thousand years before a Buddha's appearance. When the Bodhisatta took conception, omens (pubba nimittas) were also created. In truth, the dhamma group is always at hand to come to the aid of the noble ones fulfilling pāramīs to enable them to suppress the adhamma group to prevent it from flourishing in the loka. When extraordinary happenings are going to take place, strange events also come into being as the forerunner or warning signs. If one knows how to see them, one will see them. If one does not see them, it is only because one does not know how to see them.

Not in one's Interest.

The Bodhisatta was the reincarnation of deva Setaketu from the Tusitā deva realm as Prince Siddhattha. Deva Setaketu did not take the name of the Bodhisatta. He accepted the name only as one who was chosen (selected) by the devas and brahmas . He did so not for his own sake but because the devas and brahmas urged him to.

They pleaded:-

“ Kindly become the true Buddha of the three worlds and save the loka together with the devas from Saṃsarā (round of rebirths) by teaching the Noble Dhamma which leads to deathless Nibbāna.”

He accepted the name of 'Bodhisatta' in consideration of the loka and its well being. Accepting the responsibility only at the general request was the symbol of the civil administration system of those days.

The Bodhisatta deva then pondered over his becoming the Buddha in five ways. He thought over the suitability of the time, the place, the clan into which he was to be born, the age of the mother and the life span of the mother, because they were powerful factors in the moulding of the conduct of a person.

Only when he had thought over the five points and was satisfied with them, did he give his consent.

“ Devas and brahmas! Now is the time for me to become the Buddha as requested by you. You may now depart. I will go down to the human world and become the Buddha.”

The Bodhisatta deva had himself practised and fulfilled the pāramīs for becoming the Buddha for four asaṅkheyyas and one hundred thousand worlds.

He knew his own condition more than others, but in performing worthy deeds, there are two parts -one’s own part and the part of others. It is the traditional custom from the beginning of the world to perform tasks only when one is chosen and entrusted with the task by the majority .

Though the custom originated in administrative affairs, it was reflected in the appearance of the Buddha.

That was the reason why the devas and brahmas entreated the Bodhisatta Setaketu deva to go down to the human world and become the Buddha.

Setaketu deva did not verbally admit that he was the Bodhisatta. He disclosed it by deed. That was how the devas and brahmas knew him to be the Bodhisatta. Setaketu deva’s deeds spoke loud and clear enough for the devas and brahmas to know.

It was a natural happening and Bodhisatta Setaketu deva accepted to follow it.

He took conception in the womb of Chief Queen Mahā Māyādevi of King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu, Sakka. Seven days after giving birth to Prince Siddhattha, she passed away, as it was usual for the mother of a Buddha.

Availing himself the power of forests

The place where Prince Siddhattha was born was Lumbini Grove and the place where he became the Buddha was Uruvela forest in which the Mahābodhi tree grew. The place where the Buddha realised Parinibbāna (passing away) was Kusināra Sal Grove. How important forests were for the Buddha, the noblest of the three lokas! How much did forests help the Buddha by their closeness (Upanissaya Satti) to him. The forests were obedient to nature. That was the reason why Buddha sought their strength.

Birth of Prince Siddhattha

The day on which Prince Siddhattha was born was the full moon day of Kason (May) of the year 68 Mahā Era. The place was Lombini Grove lying between Kapilavatthu and Devadaha Kingdoms. He was born there as Mahāmāyadevi was passing through it on her way to visit her native kingdom of Devadaha.

After Prince Siddhattha was born, Mahāmāyadevi did not proceed to Devadaha. She returned to Kapilavatthu. On the fifth day of Prince Siddhatta's birth, King Suddhodana invited, according to the custom of that time, 108 brahmaṇas to the palace and gave them a feast of milk rice. He had the hair of the baby prince washed in ceremony. He also held the naming ceremony and asked the brahmaṇas to observe the marks and characteristics of the baby prince's body and read his fortune.

At the ceremony, the baby prince was named Siddhattha. Out of the eight leaders of 108 brahmaṇas present, seven predicted that the prince would become a universal monarch if he remained a lay man or if he became a recluse, he would become a Buddha, lord of the three worlds. The eighth leader named Koṇḍanna predicted that the baby prince would definitely become a Buddha.

Attractive power of Sensual Pleasures

King Suddhodana was, by tradition, a believer of brahmaṇa vāda (doctrine). According to this doctrine, he knew Brahmā as well as atta, but he did not know 'God' or 'Buddha'. As such, he could not appreciate and did not know the worth of Sabbaññutañāṇa or the Four Ariya Truths. The noble person he revered and respected was Hermit Kāladevila, who was powerful, who had attained five abhiññās (supernormal powers) and samāpattis (deep mental absorptions). Even though his mentor Hermit Kāladevila himself and Purohita Koṇḍañña predicted that prince Siddhattha would definitely become the Buddha, King Suddhodana was not only displeased but was worried that his son might really become a Buddha.

In truth, from the point of administration, Kapilavatthu was just a small kingdom. There were vast countries in Central India. Compared with them, Kapilavatthu was just an insignificantly small one. The administrative system was ruling in rotation by the Sakyan princes, not an absolute monarchy. Looked at from the point of view of administrative power, its kingship was

not at all grand and magnificent as that of Magadha and Kosala (neighbouring kingdoms). A universal monarch (cakkavati king) rules righteously over all the four great continents bounded by the four great oceans. From the point of view of loka, he is greatly enviable. For this reason, King Suddhodana did not want his son Prince Siddhattha to become the Buddha but wanted him only to become a universal monarch. If Prince Siddhattha were to become a universal monarch who reigned over the four continents, the Sakyan princes of Kapilavatthu would gain much honour and respect. King Suddhodana might have thus thought and hoped for.

The attractions of sensual pleasures were amazing. In fact, King Suddhodana was really a man of pāramī. He had, as father by closeness of association, given much help to the Bodhisatta's building up of his mental structure.

However, when he met with the attractions of sensual pleasures so strong, even though he was a man of pāramī, he could not bring himself to agree to Prince Siddhattha's becoming the Buddha, Lord of the three worlds. He was induced to want the prince become a universal monarch.

How powerful are the attractions of sensual pleasures! It would even make King Suddhodana, a man of pāramī, follow the wrong path! That is why it is necessary for those who are engaged in the noble deed of fulfilling pāramīs and working for the well being of the loka to be constantly vigilant so that they might not go astray from their original aims by the attractions of sensual pleasures.

Nature of Pāramīs

As the brahmanas predicted at the name-giving of ceremony of Prince Siddhattha on the fifth day of his birth that the prince would renounce household life for the homeless of a recluse, after seeing the four sights the aged, the sick, the dead and the monk, King Suddhodana took elaborate precautions from that day to prevent the prince from seeing those sights. The eighty thousand clansmen, after consulting among themselves, provided a son from each family to serve as companions to Prince Siddhattha whether he became a universal monarch or the Buddha.

They did not know, whether or not, prince Siddhattha was a peerless virtuous one who had fulfilled pāramīs for four

asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. They, however, did know that he was an extraordinary man. There appeared thirtytwo amazing foretelling signs at the time he was conceived in his mother's womb. There also appeared similar prognostic signs at his birth, counted thirty in number in the Mahā Buddhavaṃsa, besides other miraculous signs not counted. Prince Siddhattha's person also bore thirtytwo major and eighty minor marks and characteristics. Therefore, leaving aside the predictions of Hermit Kāladevila and the royal astrologers that the prince would become the Buddha or a universal monarch, all the Sakyan clan believed that the prince was truly an exalted person of intellect and power.

At the same time with Prince Siddhattha were born (1) Yasodharā devi; (2) Prince Ananda; (3) Minister Sanna, (4) Minister Kāludayi and (5) Kaṇḍaka horse and there appeared (6) the Mahā Bodhi Tree and (7) four gold vessels.

On the seventh day of Prince Siddhattha's birth, his mother Mahāmāyā Devi passed away and was reborn in Tusita deva realm. In payment of the debt of the gratitude he owed to his mother, the Buddha preached the Abhidhamma desanā to his former mother in the Tāvātimsa deva realm during his seventh vassa (residential period of rains for monks). After hearing this discourse, eight crores of being gained liberation from the saṃsarā dukkha.

In fact, the Buddha was incomparable in everything. He was, therefore, matchless in recognition of gratitude he owed to others.

When his mother Mahāmāyā Devi passed away, her younger sister Mahā Pajāpati Gotami nursed him as her own son. In fact, she cared for him more than her own son Prince Nanda. This also was a characteristic of Pāramī.

Power of Jhāna

According to the custom of that time, King Suddhodana usually held a ploughing ceremony every year. In that year, the ceremony was held in Kapilavatthu, the capital city. As it was the age of agriculture, cultivation of crops was not only an economic activity but also a religious and cultural one. For this reason, King Suddhodana, together with ministers and courtiers held the ploughing ceremony. He also took his son Prince Siddhattha to the ceremony. During the ceremony, the nurses kept the sleeping baby prince in the shade of an euginia tree. Though the shade of

the nearby trees shifted according to the position of the sun in the sky, it was found that the shade of the tree under which the prince was kept did not shift. It remained at the same place because of the power of the baby prince, who was absorbed in the first jhana (deep mental absorption) at that time.

When King Suddhodana was informed of this strange happening, he came to see it and did obeisance to his son for the second time since the baby's birth. The first time was when the baby prince was brought to do obeisance to Hermit Kaladevila. At that time, the prince not only did not do obeisance to the hermit but floated up into the air and planted himself on the head of the hermit. That was the first occasion King Suddhodana did obeisance to his son. Therefore, the obeisance he did under the eugenia tree was the second time he did to his son.

Had King Suddhodana been present at the time of Prince Siddhadatta's birth, he would have done obeisance to him then also. At that time, as soon as the prince was born, he took seven steps towards the north and proclaimed -

- (1) I am the noblest in the loka;
- (2) I am the greatest in the loka;
- (3) I am most worthy of praise in the loka;
- (4) This is my last existence; and
- (5) Now there is no more rebirth for me.

Had the king been present when the prince made the above proclamations, he would certainly have also done obeisance to his son.

Cinteyya and Acinteyya

The arisings and the dissolutions (cessations) take place in the loka by themselves according to nature. The arisings may be said to take place according to the regular order process (anuloma) of the Paṭicca samuppāda doctrine. The dissolutions may be said to take place according to the reverse order process (paṭiloma) of the Paṭicca samuppāda doctrine. It is the relationship between cause and effect.

Therefore, in the cause and effect process, because nothing can happen without the last link in the relationship between cause and effect, all are 'necessities'. However, only when one has the knowledge to see hetu phala sambandha, the last link in the relationship between cause and effect, one knows all are 'necessities'.

Every time the happenings called strange take place in the loka, they are called acinteyya (incomprehensible) or cinteyya (comprehensible).

For sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) all happenings are cinteyya. There is no case of acinteyya. For other kinds of knowledge, there are acinteyyas as well as cinteyyas.

There are happenings which should be acinteyya. When ordinary persons are unable to see the cause and effect link, they call it legendary (imaginary). The learned, however, call it acinteyya.

There might be persons who call the happenings to Prince Siddhattha as legends or acinteyyas. In truth, no happenings can take place without cause and the happenings to Prince Siddhattha could not, therefore, come about without cause.

These causes, however, had been fulfilled for four asankheyyas and one hundred thousand worlds. Whether human beings, devas and brahmas know those causes or not is of no account. These causes took their course and bore amazing results.

Nature and Its Strange Happenings

In fact, only nature knows the completion of the causes and it permits the arising of miraculous happenings. Only with the approval of nature, such extraordinary events as the taking of seven strides forward of the newly born prince Siddhattha, the fact of the baby prince's planting himself on the head of Hermit Kāladevila, the baby prince's absorption in the first jhāna could take place.

Those who did not understand them called them legendary and to those who understood them, who have gained sabbaññutañāṇa, it was acinteyya. In truth, to those who had attained Perfect Wisdom (Sabbaññutañāṇa) and who understood the power of nature, it was all cinteyya, not acinteyya. But when those who are unable to understand the power of pāramīs according to sabhavanīyāma (law of nature), say all the strange happenings are legendary, there is nothing to comment from the point of view of the Buddha's teachings. However, if on the part of those who have guessed the power of paramis, which have arisen by the permission of nature, were not contented with taking acinteyya as acinteyya but to strive to think of it as cinteyya, it can only cause them fatigue, vexation and insanity.

Strange events can, if they can get the approval of nature, really happen. They are not fancy or legendary. If the causes and

circumstances were complete and ripe, nature always let extraordinary events take place.

Protection of Brahmas

It is the duty of the Brahmas of the Akaṇiṭṭha Brahma realm to look for future Buddhas, to provide them necessary protection and take measures for their appearance as Buddhas. They start discharging that responsibility asankkeyyas before Hermit Sumedha received the prophecy from Buddha Dīpaṅkarā. They had looked for him and had kept a close watch over him. After he had received the prophecy, too, they did not lose sight of him. It was their inborn duty given them by nature. Thus, the Akaṇiṭṭha brahmas had done their duty, which was not for their benefit, but for that of this loka.

The four Ariya Truths always exist in the loka, but in spite of their existence, beings by themselves are not able to perceive the loka through the light of Sacca (Truth). Only when a Buddha who has gained penetrative insight and who can disclose the Four Ariya Truths to the Venneyyas (beings ripe for conversion), can they see the loka by the light of sacca under his direction. Buddhas do not always appear in the loka. Only when the Akaṇiṭṭha brahmas have urged and prompted suitable beings to resolve and become Buddhas, only when they have received the prophecy of a Buddha that they would become Buddhas, only when they have practised and fulfilled pāramīs and have finally become the Buddhas, can they realize the Four Ariya Truths and teach them to the beings.

Akaṇiṭṭha Brahmas' Responsibility

In reality, it is the greatest responsibility of Akaṇiṭṭha brahmas to find extraordinary persons who will resolve to become Buddhas and to work for the well being of the loka.

It is also their duty after these personages have resolved to become Buddhas to protect them constantly to enable them to practise for the realization of their resolution.

Only when they have discharged these responsibilities and a Buddha has appeared, and preached beings the Four Ariya Truths and as the result there come into being persons who practise the dhammas and can look at loka and see it clearly as it really is (paramattha nature), is their responsibility discharged.

Otherwise, the light of Sacca (Truth) will disappear from the three lokas and those who practise adhamma will gain supremacy. In fact, there are both those who practise dhamma and those who practise adhamma in the loka. They are always striving to outdo each other. It is the responsibility of lokapāla devas (guardian devas of the loka) to look for persons who want to be Buddhas and who will be able to prevent those who practise adhamma from gaining supremacy in the loka to save it from becoming lopsided. This responsibility is taken over and is being carried out by devas and brahmas.

In fact, 'being responsible' means 'not being negligent' and being conscious of their responsibility. Where dhamma is concerned, 'having responsibility' and 'being conscious of responsibility' are not two separate things. It is the two faces of the same coin. When the two coincide, they inevitably become adorable.

Hope regarding Prince Siddhattha and Its success

King Suddhodha had regarded his son Prince Siddhattha as the would-be universal monarch (cakkavati). He believed that his son Prince Siddhattha would raise the status of himself, king of a small state, and his Sakyan clan to the status of the father and relatives of a universal monarch.

For this reason, he saw to it that all the needs of his son were fulfilled. He would not permit any lapses in service. From the time of his birth, he saw to it that the prince was well nursed and looked after by the nurses and attendants. Not only did the king take great care of his son but the step-mother Mahāpajāpati Gotami paid greater attention to the prince than she did to her own son Prince Nanda. Other Sakyan princes and princesses, too, regarded Prince Siddhattha as the would-be universal monarch and treated him with special regard.

That was because of the prince's immediate accompaniment of fame, honour and wisdom. For this reason, whatever he wished to do were easily and speedily accomplished. It was impossible not to be otherwise, because in the background of all his deeds were the combined strength of man, devas and brahmas. Therefore, the happenings had the nature of acinteyya (beyond the reach of thought or reason).

Mind influenced by devas and brahmas

Because of acinteyya nature, when the king ordered a pond to be dug up for his son, a magnificent and wonderful pond came into being. When mansions for the use of the prince in each season were ordered to be constructed, they were miraculously built. In fact, whatever was done for Prince Siddhattha, it seemed as if it was being done in bright light, not in darkness. Thoughts became realities; thoughts became true; there was no uncertainty. Everything was clear and distinct. This was said to be performance with a mind influenced (possessed) by devas and brahmas. In ordinary parlance, it might be said to be good fortune or coincidence. In fact, it was just performing with a mind influenced by devas and brahmas. Whatever was done or thought of, therefore, met with success. Prince Siddhattha's fame, honour and wisdom were not mere trifles; he had to practise four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds to achieve them.

Kapilavatthu was just a small kingdom in Central India. Though it was small in size, in respect of importance (quality), it was the greatest in the three lokas. Because of, the Buddha uproar (rumours of the coming of the Buddha), and because of the fame, honour and wisdom of Prince Siddhattha, human beings, devas and brahmas had been looking for it for a thousand years.

In truth, quality is of more value than quantity. For this reason, kingdoms far greater in quantity (size) than Kapilavatthu are still prominent in the present day on account of the great quality of the tiny kingdom of Kapilavatthu. Not only the Majjhimadesa but the Indian continent would not have received so much attention of scholars of religion and philosophy, had the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha not born in it.

Unique and Matchless Strength

Though in nature, the strength of many is important, it is essential to have one single strength to consolidate and harness the strength of many. That one single strength is the pivot. When there is the pivot, the strength of others will rally round it. The one single strength in the loka is the Buddha, who is the pivot. Therefore, all human beings, devas and brahmas in the three lokas have to come to the Buddha to reinforce that strength. For this reason, the Buddha is accorded the attribute of ‘Sattadevā manussānam’, the teacher of human beings, devas and brahmas.

By the power of his fame, deeds and honour, from the time of his birth, the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha had brought his father, mother and his relatives and his country into the limelight of the loka. It was only the beginning. When later he attained Perfect Wisdom (Sabbaññutañāṇa) and became the Buddha, human beings, devas and brahmas would respect and honour the Majjhimadesa of India, where the four cardinal places which should never be abandoned are situated, in homage to the Buddha, as long as the Buddha's teachings last. When they pay homage to the Buddha, they will remember his father and mother, the Sakyan clan, his birth-place Lumbini and Kapilavatthu, and will thank them.

Man, the most powerful

In truth, the most powerful being in the loka is man. It is not deva, or brahma, or any other being. In fact, only man has the right to possess the incomparable ability to lead the loka. No other being should have that right. It is true that only man, by his aspiration (adhikāra) has the right to receive the definite assurance (niyata) of becoming a Buddha.

Man should, therefore, cultivate his ability to work for the prevalence of peace in the loka. He has the ability and the responsibility to do so. Here, the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha was the perfect model in revealing the capability of man.

He did the practices and set the example.

He was also the model who discharged the responsibilities of man.

In this way, Prince Siddhattha not only worked for the well being of the Sakyan clan but also of all human beings.

Prince Siddhattha furnished practical proof that only man had greater power than devas and brahmas. Only eyes that can see are needed to see what he had practically shown.

It is true that only man can show the highest ability and power, but it does not come to him by itself. It has to be nursed and cultivated. That means man has to do deeds at the sacrifice of his welfare for the sake of the loka. For this reason, the wise have exhorted, with regard to the cultivation of strength, thus:-

“If one dares to sacrifice little by little, the good of his future existences is assured”

Certainly, one's ability cannot be nursed and cultivated into a powerful one, all of a sudden. Prince Siddhattha had to sacrifice his own welfare by gradual steps for the welfare of the loka for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds.

As the result, he gained incomparable strength of the loka.

In the same way, a man can attain, by gradual steps, the strength of a paccekabuddha, of a chief disciple, of a senior disciple and of an ordinary disciple. The most correct way to strive for gaining strength is the sacrificing of one's welfare and working for the welfare of the loka.

There really were personages who had done so on this earth. This fact is accepted by historians. These personages were the Buddhas and their disciples. In truth, all those who founded religions were really men of compassion and wisdom. They sacrificed their own welfare for the welfare of the loka. In fact, the more one can sacrifice one's own welfare, the greater will one's ability be.

Father King Suddhodana loved his son Prince Siddhattha. He also had great expectations of him as he would be universal monarch. He honoured his son in every possible way. The time came, according to tradition, for Prince Siddhattha to learn, but he did not learn because he was already highly accomplished, without learning them, in all the princely arts which were said to be eighteen in number.

Accomplishment in arts by Paramis' power without learning

There are some people at the present day who believe that some can correctly remember their past existences. This extraordinary feat is called jātissarañāṇa. Prince Siddhattha had fulfilled pāramīs for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. The existence as Prince Siddhattha was his last. How keen and powerful his jātissarañāṇa, therefore, must be, may well be imagined.

He was able to recollect all the arts he had learnt during the whole of four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. All he had learnt in his successive former existences came back to him without having to learn anew from teachers and instructors. For this reason, Prince Siddhāttha can be said to have become accomplished in all the eighteen arts without a teacher. It seemed

to be acinteyya, but according to the experience of the loka, it is cinteyya.

However, who would believe it, if it was said that Prince Siddhātha became accomplished in the arts without learning from a teacher? There were very few who believed it at that time. Even most of the Sakyans did not believe it. All, with the exception of his father, King Suddhodana, and a few others, did not believe it. Then, Prince Siddhattha had to show his archery skill, one of the most difficult abilities. At that time he was sixteen years old.

Astrologers had predicted at the time of his birth that Prince Siddhattha would be a universal monarch. The Sakyans had, therefore, great hopes of him, respected him and served him in every way. When, however, they began to think that he was not learning as he should be at that age and wasting his time in pleasures, their esteem and great hopes of him diminished. In fact, it showed the limitedness of their thinking and the narrowness of their outlook. Even through the present day perspective, it might be seen that the strange events of the last existence of Prince Siddhattha were within the scope of possibility.

Power of Kammās

The constitution of the khandha (body) depends on kammās (deeds). The kammās which were the causes of the existence and the khandha of Prince Siddhattha were not ordinary at all. They were kammās supported by pāramīs which took four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds to fulfil.

How powerful those kammās might well be imagined. As much as those kammās were powerful, the khandha caused by them would also be powerful. It is natural that when the cause is powerful, the result will also be powerful.

That was the reason why Prince Siddhattha demonstrated his archery skill to his relatives by expertly handling a bow which took a thousand warriors to operate. (i.e. to bend and set the cord in place, etc.) From this, his physical powers might be guessed.

If his physical prowess could be seen under their very eyes (paccakkha siddha), his mental strength and ability might be inferred from it (anumāna siddhi). As, however, the Sakyan princes could not fathom Prince Siddhattha's pāramīs, they did not know his capabilities. His father King Suddhodana, however,

being a comrade in the fulfilment of paramis, believed in his son's ability and also had the parami to enable him to do so.

King Suddhodana believed in the ability of his son and caused the archery show to be held. He also invited the Sakyan princes to come and witness the archery skill of his son. The show was to be held on the seventh day. The relatives turned up to witness the show. The archery show of Prince Siddhattha who had never learnt archery art was unbelievable, and there were some Sakyans who were doubtful as well as some who had no doubts about it. Among them were those who usually did not believe what they were told, those whose pāramīs were not mature and had doubts and those whose pāramīs were mature and had no doubts. It is natural that the thinking of those with matured pāramīs was profound and with no matured paramis was not profound.

Kammas which enable one to be accomplished without learning.

The archery show began. The spectators comprised all classes of people. There were present skilled archers, members of the Sakyan clan, and so on. King Suddhadana presided over the function. Prince Siddhattha skilfully handled the bow which needed a thousand warriors to operate. He bent the bow by himself, put the cord in place and struck it. Then only could his Sakyan relatives heave a sigh of relief. They were all happy and King Suddhodana was the happiest of all.

Though it was the duty of the parents to educate their children, King Suddhodana had neglected this duty. He was constantly gnawed by a guilty feeling on this account. Now he would no more be assailed by such guilt. He watched his son with eyes of satisfaction and respect, the son who had, by jātissaranāṇa become accomplished in learning, without having to be taught, by the power of pāramī.

The Sakyan relatives now really believed that Prince Siddhattha was the would-be universal monarch. They, however, still had one thing to worry about. That was the second prediction of the astrologers that the prince would renounce the princely life, retire to the forest and become the Buddha. It was, therefore, important for this prediction to go wrong. And to make the prediction wrong, they must not let the prince renounce the princely life and they took necessary precautions, in which King Suddhodana played the chief role.

In the archery show, Prince Siddhattha demonstrated archery skills which they had never before heard of or seen. He showed four major tricks and twelve minor tricks of archery which the Sakyan princes had never seen or heard of. The prince grew up before their very eyes and they knew he never had any education or training. Yet he could show them the arts of archery which they had never seen and heard of. They were so astounded, pleased and proud of him. Among them all, the father king was most astounded, pleased and proud. They now had only to take steps to prevent the prince from becoming a recluse and retiring to the forest.

Fettering him with responsibilities

Prince Siddhattha had come of age. He was well accomplished in the arts. So the Sakyan princes made arrangements to enthrone him king. In fact, Kapilavatthu was a state ruled by princes in rotation with an advisory council. It was not an absolute monarchy. The king was elected by the princes. Therefore, the Sakyan princes in consultation with King Suddhodana chose Prince Siddhattha as their king and put him on the throne. In truth, they did it to prevent the prince from becoming a recluse and retiring to the forest. The Sakyan princes had, since the archery show, turned their attention to prevent prince Siddhattha from becoming the Buddha according to the second prediction of the astrologers, and making him king was one of the steps to do so.

In other words, putting the prince on the throne was to place the responsibility of administering the country on his shoulders.

Its aim was not only to make him enjoy sensual pleasures but more to bind him with responsibilities than with sensual pleasures.

Had the prince not been given this responsibility, it would be easier for him to retire to the forest, and all hopes of the Sakyan princes would be dashed. They could not afford to let that happen. To them, for the prince to become a universal monarch was more desirable and valuable than his becoming the Buddha.

When prince Suddhattha was made king, the Sakyan princes gave their daughters to him. They numbered forty thousand and Princess Yasodhara was his chief queen. She had been his constant companion throughout his fulfilment of paramis.

She, therefore, became his chief queen. All things happen according to the law of cause and effect; nothing happens by chance or by the hand of the creator.

Had to do his duty

Prince Siddhattha became king and as king he had to discharge the duties of a king. The qualities he needed to carry out his duties as king were compassion (karuṇā), and wisdom (paññā). Only when he had compassion he would have the wish to serve the loka. Compassion alone, however, was not sufficient. He also needed wisdom. Then only would he be able to decide what was right or wrong for the loka.

In connection with compassion and wisdom, books on philosophy say:-

“Paññeya na bhavethāṇain dayāya na
some ṭhiti.”

Bhave = in life; paññā = wisdom; ṭhānain = dwelling place;
na = there is no; ṭhame - in Nibbāna; dayāya = of compassion;
ṭhiti = dwelling place; na = there is no.

In truth, compassion is prescribed in doing deeds for the good of the loka, and wisdom is prescribed in doing deeds for the good of the lokuttara (suprannudane, beyond the three bhūmis - human, deva and brahma). That is the reason why both compassion and wisdom are needed in doing deeds for the good of both the loka and the lokuttara. As such, for performing deeds for the good of Kapilavatthu and the loka, it was necessary for Prince Siddhattha to have compassion and wisdom to reside harmoniously in him.

To have compassion and wisdom in harmony, one should cultivate loving-kindness (metta) as the foundation. That is the reason why there are objects to be loved in the loka.

They include both animate beings and inanimate things. The animate beings he had to love included mother, father, wife, children as well as relatives.

Prince Siddhattha had father and he could, therefore, have fatherly love on the loka.

He had mother and he could, therefore, have motherly love on the loka.

He had queen and he could, therefore, have 'advitta metta' (individual loving-kindness) on the loka.

He had a son and he could, therefore, have metta which would enable him to make sacrifices for the loka.

He had relatives and friends and he could, therefore, have metta that would enable him to love the loka as his relatives.

Besides he had subjects and he could, therefore, have metta that would enable him to love the helpless and needy ones.

Prince Siddhattha now had all types of animate beings that should be loved.

The inanimate things he had to love included the kingdom, forests, mountains, seas, rivers, etc. Palaces and mansions, the crown, the sceptre and other emblems of royalty. These were the inanimate things to be loved.

Prince Siddhattha now had both animate beings and inanimate things there were in the loka. All these animate beings and inanimate things which were to be loved are powerful depending causes (upanissaya) of compassion and wisdom in him.

In fact, only when one knows how to love, one can have compassion. Only when one knows how to love, one can think of ways to do good for the loved ones.

Here, love, in its origin, means adosa (non-anger). It is also called metta (loving-kindness).

According to Abhidhamma, adosa (non-anger) can also associate with karuṇā (compassion) as well as paññā (wisdom). Therefore, metta is said to be a powerful depending cause (upanissaya) of karuna and paññā.

In other words, the availability to Prince Siddhattha of beings and things to be loved was the cause which brought about complete harmony between karuṇā and paññā in him.

Then Prince Siddhattha, as king, had to discharge his duties to the full. To have peace in the kingdom was his responsibility. He also had to see to it that the material conditions of his subjects - their economic welfare and health - were improved.

He had to see to it that his subjects were happy and in good spirits at all times. That concerned the vedanā sector.

He also had to see to it that they were educated and well-informed. That concerned the Sañña sector.

He also had to encourage and help to develop their inventive ability. That concerned Sankhāra sector.

He also had to educate them to enable them to choose the right beliefs and faiths. That concerned the Viññāṇa sector.

The duties and responsibilities of a king who ruled righteously were indeed heavy.

The Wishes of Men

Man is a being made up of five khandhas. Corresponding to these khandhas, man has five kinds of wishes.

According to the wishes of rupakkhandha (aggregate of physical phenomena), man wants to eat well, to dress well, to live well and to have good health. These are the wishes caused by rupakkhandha.

According to the wishes of Vedanakkhandha (aggregate of sensation or feeling), man wants to be always happy, to learn dancing, singing, playing musical instruments, etc. These are the wishes caused by Vedanakkhandha.

According to the wishes of Saññakkhandha (aggregate of perception), man wants to be master of arts and sciences and to study them. These are the wishes of Saññakkhandha.

According to the wishes of Sankhārakkhandha (aggregate of volitional activities) man is not satisfied with the prevailing conditions. He always wants to be inventing something. These are the wishes of Sankhārakkhandha.

According to the wishes of Viññanakkhandha (aggregate of consciousness) man wants to gain insight into the Truth (Sacca); he wants to take the right refuge; to preach the Truth to the loka. These are the wishes caused by Viññanakkhandha.

It was the task of Prince Siddhattha as king to fulfil these wishes of man as best as he could.

Prince Siddhattha had fulfilled pāramīs for four asaṅkheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. As the result of the power of these pāramīs, he had a very strong desire to work

for the welfare of the loka.

He was not the one who put his own good first. He did not with greed long for sensual pleasures. He did not wish to have the honour (sakkāra) of being an emperor. He did not want to be a disāpāmokkha, a great teacher.

He had, however, gained kingship according to circumstances, not because he wanted it. He had to accept it because it was thrust on him by the majority. He would, therefore, use the kingly luxuries and pleasures not for himself but for the loka.

He had become king according to circumstances, not because he wanted it. He became king because the majority of the people elected him. He did not, therefore, think of using the kingly powers for his own good but for the good of the loka.

Prince Siddhattha was accomplished in the eighteen arts without having to learn them because of the pāramīs he had fulfilled.

He would, therefore, not use these arts for his own good. He would use them for the good of the loka. None of the deeds Prince Siddhattha had done as a good man in the past four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds was for his own well being. They were all for the good of the loka.

To enable him to do so, he had to undergo strenuous practices for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds and such a long duration of time could not come about in no time. He had to start it from one. And all the noble ones had to begin their deeds from one. If one does noble deeds beginning from number one today, he can be a noble one on this very first day.

Who can see the end

In reality, a deed done without involving 'I' has a beginning, which is 'one'. The 'end' might be four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, or two asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, or one asankheyya and a hundred thousand worlds. If the deeds end in four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, it is the deed of a Buddha; if the deeds end in two asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, it is the deed of a Paccekabuddha; if the deeds end in one asankheyya and a hundred thousand worlds, it is the deed of a chief disciple; if the deeds end in a hundred thousand worlds, it is the deed of a senior

disciple; if the deeds end in an appropriate period, it is the deed of an ordinary disciple.

It is, therefore, said that those who begin from one reach the end; those who do not begin from one cannot reach the end.

Deed which cannot find the end

Deeds that do not begin from one and that cannot find the end means either meritorious or demeritorious deeds involving the ‘I’. In fact, deeds not involving the ‘I’ have both the beginning and the end in the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). Deeds involving the ‘I’ have no beginning and no end in the saṃsarā, just going round and round in a vicious circle. Those who do deeds which have a beginning and an end are the noble ones, men of pāramīs. Those who do deeds with no beginning and no end are not the noble ones. If they are not noble ones, they are ignoble ones.

It is natural that a kingdom ruled by a noble monarch is peaceful and ruled by an ignoble monarch is not peaceful. At that time, the kingdom of Kapilavatthu was ruled by a noble king and was, therefore, peaceful. Here ‘peaceful’ does not mean material or mental progress. It means only moral progress.

Without moral progress, though there might be material progress or mental progress, or both material and mental progress, such progress is not a good sign in the loka. As there lacks wholesome morality and conduct and there is tendency to resort to force and suppression, it is a bad sign in the loka. It only causes the growth of duccaritas (evil dhammas).

It should, therefore, be understood that only when there is moral progress, it is correct to say that a country is peaceful.

Deeds not involving the ‘I’

When Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha ruled Kapilavatthu as king, he did so only by doing deeds which did not involve the ‘I’. Kapilavatthu was, therefore, peaceful and prosperous at that time. He endeavoured to fulfil the five wishes of the people, which were caused by the constitution of the khandhas of the people. The progress achieved by his deeds were, from the point of view of the loka, highly satisfactory.

There is no mention of any plight in Kapilavatthu in world history of that time and there is, therefore, no doubt about its peacefulness. Besides, the Bodhisatta as deva Selaketu (before he

took conception in the womb of Mahāmāyā Devi) had scanned it and its inhabitants. In fact, the kingdom and the people living in it were materially, mentally and morally of a status fit for the birth of the Bodhisatta, who was born in it. This happening is called ‘Paṭicca Samuppāda’ (law of Cause and Effect).

If king is good, country is good

The arisings and the dissolutions in the loka take place in a sort of circular chain action, according to Paṭicca Samuppada Doctrine. Kingdoms ruled by righteous kings are peaceful; and peaceful countries produce righteous kings. It is a good circular chain of events. In brief, when the king is good, the country is good. When the country is good, the king is good. In the same way, when the king is bad, the country is bad. When the country is bad, the king is bad. It is a vicious circle.

It is natural that the king is the parent of his kingdom. Parents have to maintain pure metta on their children. Then the children become respectful to their parents. Being thus respectful is a meritorious deed, which has the characteristic of innocence and produces good results. Therefore, according to the nature of karmas, when the king is good, the country is good. When the country is good, the king is good. Thus, the wholesome circle goes on.

In like manner, when the king is evil, it is natural for the subjects to become disrespectful, insolent and disobedient to him. Disrespectfulness, insolence and disobedience are akusala (demeritorious deeds) which have the characteristic of guilt and produce evil results. Therefore, when the king is evil, the kingdom is evil. When the kingdom is evil, the king is evil and the vicious circle goes on.

In this way, according to the results of their accumulated kusala and akusala karmas, the kingdom and the king will have to go round and round the wholesome or vicious circle. For King Siddhattha and his kingdom of Kapilavatthu, it was the round of wholesome circle, not the vicious circle. In fact, no one can bypass the nature of karmas, not even the Buddha. All happenings in the loka, whether good or bad, take place in accordance with the nature of karmas, not according to the wish of anybody.

Not True Happiness

Prince Siddhattha ruled Kapilavatthu as a benevolent monarch and according to the nature of kammās and the doctrine of Paṭicca-Samupadda, the wholesome circle goes on. As the result, Kapilavatthu kingdom enjoyed peace and prosperity. In the view of Prince Siddhattha, he did not regard himself as one who had fulfilled his duty to the loka and to his kingdom. He was not satisfied with himself yet.

Actually, Prince Siddhattha, as king, wanted to do the best for the people of his kingdom and for the loka, and he did it.

All beings - man, deva, brahma or animal - want to enjoy happiness in the loka. They go on struggling to attain it. Prince Siddhattha was aware of it. He, therefore, did as much as he could for the loka to attain happiness. He was able to get for it as much as he had striven, but he was not satisfied. He later found out that the happiness he had attained for the loka was not true happiness.

In truth, he was able to get only vedayita sukha (enjoyment of senses) for the loka. Though it is called ‘sukha’, it is not genuine happiness. It is dukkha (suffering) in the guise of sukha.

Prince Siddhattha ruled Kapilavatthu as king and he had fulfilled, as much as possible, the five wishes (of the khandhas) of the people.

He was, however, not satisfied with what he had been able to do. He wished he could do more than that but it was all he could do as a king. He had done his best for the people to enjoy the utmost happiness in the loka.

In fact, the life of a human being is from the Ariya Sacca point of view, wandering to and fro between two woes, weeping aloud and weeping in silence. For this reason, King Siddhattha was unable as king to free the life of human beings from the two woes.

Protection by Arahāt Brahmas

While Prince Siddhattha was ruling as king, Arahāt Brahmas of Suddhavāsa Brahma realm were constantly watching over him. They had made Prince Siddhattha resolve to become a Buddha and to make him fulfil the pāramīs.

In his last existence, they made him take conception in the womb of Mahāmāyā Devī.

They would also make him become the Buddha. That was their duty.

Prince Siddhattha had ruled as king for thirteen long years. During that period, he had given worldly happiness to his subjects. That naturally was the discharging of his responsibility for a sufficient period. Now the time had come for him to seek the highest Santi sukha (the bliss of Nibbāna).

The Brahmas, therefore, had to see to it that Prince Siddhattha renounce kingship for the homeless life of a recluse. It was these Arahāt Brahmas who were influencing his mind.

Strange ideas and thoughts did not appear by themselves in the mind of Prince Siddhattha. They appeared at the instigation of the Arahāt Brahmas.

In fact, those Arahāt Brahmas had been influencing the mind of the Bodhisatta from the time they were looking for those who would be qualified for Buddhahood up to the time the Bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha became the Buddha. Now the time had come for showing the Bodhisatta the four signs.

Time for assuming the duties of Buddha

One day Prince Siddhattha set out for the royal Maṅgala Garden. It was time for the Bodhisatta prince to retire to the forest to seek Ariya Sacca (Noble Truth). He had fulfilled his duty as king to the loka. It was time for him to assume the duties of the Buddha. While he was discharging kingly duties, he had been able to give the loka vedayita sukha (sense pleasures). When he assumed the duties of the Buddha, he would be able to give Santi sukha (the bliss of Nibbāna). The Arahāt Brahmas had separated the two periods of bringing about Vedayita sukha and Santi sukha. The period for Santi sukha was to commence with the revealing of the sign of the aged man.

When Prince Siddhattha set out for the royal Maṅgala Garden and saw an aged man, he had the emotional awakening of remorse (saṁvega) for the first time. He had been doing deeds under the impression that he was the most dutiful person in the loka but on seeing the aged man, he realized that he had not yet fully discharged his duty. The vedayita sukha he had given to the loka was of not much significance. He realized, therefore, that he needed to endeavour to give Santi Sukha (the bliss of Nibbāna)

to the loka. This was the prodding of the Brahmas. In truth, the sign of the aged man was shown by them.

In ruling Kapilavatthu as king, Prince Siddhattha was very weary as he had to give too much attention to its development and progress. Being surrounded by high caste Sakyan damsels, he looked like a deva youth in the midst of a bevy of deva maidens. In truth, he was not interested in sensual pleasures and behaved like a therā (senior monk). In fact, he was interested only in the development and progress of his kingdom. As he had to use his physical and mental energies entirely for the kingdom, he was very tired. So he was on his way to the royal Maṅgala Garden for recreation when he saw the aged man.

He had seen aged persons before but had never met one like the one he then saw. It was not an ordinary aged man, but the one shown by the Brahmas. That was the reason why the aged man he saw then was different from those he had seen. He now had to think over what was right and what was wrong. He had in the past thought of doing his best, as king, without any consideration of his own well being to fulfil the five physical (khandha) needs of the people. He did as he had thought right and the kingdom developed and progressed accordingly.

He had seen the development of Kapilavatthu with his own eyes. He had also seen the progress of the lives of the people of Kapilavatthu with his own eyes, too. He knew that his abilities were greatly involved in that development and progress. He was weary in the past but he felt it worthwhile. As Prince Siddhattha appraised the progress he had made regarding the life of the people according to the age-old method, he came to this view. In deciding whether it was right or wrong according to the age-old method, the decision was given by the individual, not by the dhamma. Dhamma decision is the decision by the use of Ariya Sacca (Noble Truth) ñāṇa (Knowledge). In making his decision whether it was right or wrong regarding the progress in life, as he had not yet achieved Ariya Saccañāṇa, Prince Siddhattha could only arrive at individual decision, not at dhamma decision. For this reason, in deciding whether it was right or wrong regarding the progress in life, it is said that Prince Siddhattha could do it only according to the age-old method.

Deciding right or wrong according to the individual

In deciding right or wrong under the traditional method, firstly, it is decided from the view point of the 'I', and secondly, from the view point of 'he'. This is called deciding from the individual points of view. Looked at from general point of view (Sammuti Saccā), deciding from the point of view of 'he' is more correct than from that of 'I'. In performing a deed, one looks at it with his own eyes and decides by oneself whether it is right or wrong. It is deciding by the 'I'. 'I' is the one that is seen as well as the one that sees. In the decision by 'he', another person sees with his eyes and decides by himself. Then, 'I' is the one that is seen, but the one who sees is 'he'. Therefore, the one that sees and the one that is seen are not the same. They are different persons.

According to scope, the scope when the decision is made by the 'I' is narrow while the scope when the decision is made by 'he' is wide. Therefore, the decision made by 'he' is more correct than that made by the 'I'. For this reason, in deciding right or wrong on the deed, that made by another person is more correct than the decision made by oneself.

This is correct only according to Sammuti Sacca (general view), but not correct according to Paramattha Sacca (ultimate truth), because the 'I' is the symbol of taṇhā (craving), māna (pride) and diṭṭhi (wrong view) and 'he' too, is the same. So long as the right or wrong of a deed is decided by taṇhā, māna and diṭṭhi, the decision can never be correct. It will only be wrong. For this reason, both the decision by the 'I' and by the 'he' are called decision by individuals.

Prince Siddhattha, in ruling his kingdom as king, had given only decisions by the individual on questions relating to development and progress in life. In truth, he had not yet sought Ariya Sacca and he could not, therefore, give decisions by the dhamma.

Now Prince Siddhattha had seen the aged man. He had not thought before that he, too, would become aged. Now he knew he, too, would have to be old. All his happiness was gone. He thought on the basis of what he had seen. All beings could be happy in all kinds of ways because they had not seen the truth just as he had seen the aged man.

Had they seen the truth just as he had seen the old man, there was no doubt that all their joys and pleasures would be destroyed and gone.

Therefore, he realized that all decisions on individual basis were not, after all, the truth. Actually, so long as the face of the aged man could be seen (so long as there was old man), no one would dare deny that all happiness and pleasures they now had were not true happiness and pleasures. Thus Prince Siddhattha decided.

Decision of Dhamma

It appeared to Prince Siddhattha's mind that only decisions without the 'I' or the 'he', based entirely on dhamma, could never go wrong.

In truth, 'I' was 'atta' and 'he' also was 'atta'. Therefore, if it was 'I' who decided, it amounted to decision by atta. If it was 'he' who decided, it also amounted to decision by atta. For this reason, only decisions which are not made by 'I' or 'he' can never go wrong. Such decisions are those that are made by the dhamma, which is anatta.

When the decisions are made by dhamma, there is no atta. When one sees visible objects without involving atta, it is not the 'I' that sees. It is seen by the dhamma which is purely eye-consciousness. In like manner, when one hears or when one knows, it is heard or known by dhamma which is purely ear-consciousness or mind-consciousness.

Resolving to strive to see the loka only through the eyes of dhamma, Prince Siddhattha returned to the palace. After seeing the old man, he did not go farther. He changed his mind. He now had something (new) to contemplate. In fact, it was a turning point in his life which is called Paccabhiññā, which is a sense object that causes one to recall one's goal of life, as it really is. Prince Siddhattha had, since he was hermit Sumedhā, set his goal of life as the achieving of Sabbaññutañāṇa and becoming Sammāsambuddha. He had, however, temporarily lost that goal. Now on seeing the sign of the old man, he recalled that goal of life he had set himself.

Paccabhiññā causes in one the arising of a new powerful perspective. As a matter of fact, the sign of the old man was the

first Paccabhiññā for Prince Siddhattha to become Sammāsambuddha (one who truthfully comprehends the dhamma by his own intellect and insight).

The news that Prince Siddhattha had turned back on seeing an aged man when he went for an outing to the royal Maṅgala garden rapidly spread among the Sakyans. The Sakyan princes headed by King Suddhodana, therefore, took more strict precautions to prevent the prince from seeing further signs. They provided more sensual pleasures for the prince in the palace. They thought that they would be able to enchain Prince Siddhattha with sensual pleasures. They were right to some extent but not absolutely.

Happiness beyond country of the old

Prince Siddhattha was born for the loka, not for his own sake. As such, he had done the best for the loka. As king, he had done his utmost at the sacrifice of his own welfare for the kingdom. He had done for the greatest happiness of the people. He was, however, only able to get for them the kind of happiness (sukha) which could be found inside the kingdom. Only when he saw the aged man, he realized that he had been unable to give the people the happiness to be found beyond the country of 'old age'.

Every being, however much he might be replete with all kinds of sensual pleasures, has to dwell under the rule of king of old age. He cannot disobey. As long as he keeps seeing the face of king of old age from moment to moment, the happiness he enjoys is not true happiness. Prince Siddhattha had been able to guess the disadvantages (ādinava) of enjoyable pleasures (vedayita sukha) with the help of the Arahāt Brahmas. As a good man, he came to be filled with the desire to get the Santi sukha (happiness beyond the kingdom of old age) for the loka. He, however, did not know how to find that happiness.

In truth, one cannot call himself a real man by getting for his country only the happiness which can be found within the kingdom of old age, if he cannot get the happiness beyond the kingdom of old age. If he were a real man, he should be able to get the happiness beyond the kingdom of old age. Thus Prince Siddhattha pondered. Because he pondered thus, he could not be satisfied with the life of a universal monarch. It was true that a universal monarch reigned over the four great islands but the

happiness he would be able to give the people would only be the happiness confined to the kingdom of the old. It was not the happiness beyond the kingdom of the old. Therefore, the universal monarch was not a peerless man. What Prince Siddhattha very much wanted was to be a peerless man. The brahmas and devas had not yet shown him the way to be one by Paccabhiññā-realization of a strong new perspective, because the time for it had not yet arrived.

Lotus flower in the mud

Prince Siddhattha was like the lotus which grows in the mud. Though it is true that the lotus grows in the mud, the muddier the soil becomes, the less it is able to smear the lotus which becomes much cleaner, fresher and prettier. Likewise, the more the sensual pleasures of the Kapilavatthu palace were captivating, the stronger Prince Siddhattha's desire to find an escape from them became.

Prince Siddhattha stayed on four more months at the Kapilavatthu palace, but he was not immersed in its sensual pleasures. He did as much as he could for the good of the kingdom. He sought better ways to do it. In the meantime, he used the age-old tested ways. His king father and the Sakyan princes were under the impression that he was enjoying the pleasures provided. Actually, he was not. He was seeking ways for providing the loka the ultimate peace and happiness (Santi sukha).

All animate beings and inanimate things in the loka have their own enjoyments (assādas). It is only necessary to find them. They actually exist.

However, the enjoyment (assādā) is not complete enjoyment. It carries within it a disadvantage (ādinava).

Besides the disadvantage (ādinava), there is also an escape (nissarāna).

Prince Siddhattha knew this nature. He would, therefore, one day find 'ādinava' (disadvantage) in sensual pleasures and would seek 'nissāraṇa' (the escape). This is natural.

Adorable Strength of Dhamma

All the beings in the three lokas (worlds), whether man, deva, brahma or animal, have in them the adorable nature of dhamma to a certain relevant extent.

If it, however, were possible to add together this adorable nature of dhamma of all beings, man, deva, brahma, etc. it will be found that their sum-total lies only in one, that is only in Prince Siddhattha.

Prince Siddhattha had not only this sum-total in him but even more. Therefore, when one day, if the three lokas were compared with Prince Siddhattha, it would be found that he surpassed the three lokas. This fact has been accepted by all.

Who would, therefore, be able to shut up Prince Siddhattha, whose strength of adorable dhamma was so powerful, with sensual pleasures in Kapilavatthu palace? Even if there be such a person, he would be able to do so only for a short time.

Now the four months had passed. During this period, Prince Siddhattha had encountered many things about life to be considered seriously. When he first set out for the first time to the Maṅgala Garden, he saw the aged man which changed his outlook on life.

According to the general belief of that time, everybody had two kinds of life. One life was for oneself and the other was for the loka. The Piṭakas call man 'dvija' which means 'becoming twice'. One becomes man firstly to work for freedom from dukkha for the present. He becomes man secondly to work to be free from niraya (hell) for the saṃsarā (round of rebirths). In working for the present life one primarily aims, as householder (gahattha), at self-welfare. In working for the saṃsarā, one primarily aims as forest dweller (vanapaṭṭha) at loka welfare. (Gahattha means marrying; vanapaṭṭha means renouncing household life)

For Prince Siddhattha, he perceived the glimpses of the second life from the time he saw the aged man. When he achieved Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom), his second life became a reality. Of the two lives of Prince Siddhattha, the conclusion of the first was approaching. After the passing away of four months from the time he saw the aged man, he again set out, with his charioteer, to the Maṅgala Garden. That was his second outing and his intention was to refresh his mind and body as well as to see, out of curiosity, what other signs he might see like the sign of the aged man.

The devas and brahmas who had undertaken to show signs to Prince Siddhattha to make him renounce princely life and become a recluse made him see a sick man this time.

The sick man he saw was not like any sick man the prince had seen before. It was one which would arouse in him an emotional awakening of remorse. This seeing of the sick man brought him closer to the second life.

On seeing the sick man, Prince Siddhattha did not proceed to the Maṅgala Garden but turned back. It is true that he had seen sick men before but the one he now saw was not like those he had seen. It was the sign created by devas and brahmas to cause him an emotional awakening of remorse.

That was the reason why he experienced an extraordinary sensation, which was the arising in him of a desire to strive for getting beyond the kingdom of the sick. In truth, the mind of Prince Siddhattha was Padesita mind which was constantly being prompted by arahat brahmas so that he would achieve Buddhahood.

Sakyan Princes anxiety and the chief sign

The news that Prince Siddhattha had turned back on seeing a sick man when he set out for the Miṅgala Garden rapidly spread again in Kapilavatthu palace circles. King Suddhodana and the Sakyan princes became worried. All knew that the purohitas (astrologers) had predicted that Prince Siddhattha would retire to the forest and become the Buddha after seeing the four signs, viz, the aged, the sick, the dead and the monk. In truth, that was not the news the Sakyans wanted to be in circulation. The news they wanted to circulate was that Prince Siddhattha was dwelling happily in the Kapilavatthu palace. In practice, however, what they wanted to happen was apart from what was actually happening.

If the loka is looked through the anuloma (direct order) eyes, the universal monarchship was most desirable for the Prince Siddhattha.

If the loka is looked through the paṭiloma (reverse order) eyes, the Buddhahood was most desirable for Prince Siddhattha.

King Suddhodana and the Sakyan princes were those who looked at the loka through anuloma eyes.

For this reason, therefore, they did not want Prince Siddhattha to see the four Saṁvega signs so that he might not renounce kingship and retire to the forest as predicted by the

purohitas. The four Samivega signs were the aged, the sick, the dead and the monk.

When the prince saw the four samivega signs, he would inevitably see the chief sign which was the sign of the monk and which would cause the prince to renounce kingship and retire to the forest.

According to the art of astrology of that age, the king and all others believed that the predictions of the purohitas could be right. According to that belief, Prince Siddhattha was sure to become the Buddha. The Sakyans, however, blindly strove to make the purohitas' prediction go wrong.

The domination of atta on beings was so very great! They attempted to prevent the natural happenings from taking place according to anatta nature. That was the reason why they took measures in order to prevent Prince Siddhattha from seeing the third sign of the dead. They posted more guards than ever before. At that time, however, Prince Siddhattha was the king and he was, therefore, the most powerful.

No one could, therefore, have the power to stop him. He could decide as he wanted. That was the privilege of the sovereignty or the supreme power of the ancient kings. In fact, the Sakyan princes did not want to allow Prince Siddhattha to go to the Maṅgala Garden. They, however, had to let him go because they could not help it. They let him go only after they had made sure that he would see no such signs.

The signs, however, were not those shown by human beings. They were those shown by the devas. The chance to show the signs was the earning of a stupendous meritorious deed for the devas because it was a contribution for the appearance of the Buddha in the loka.

Such a chance could only be had only once in four asankkeyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. It was, therefore, a greatly coveted kusala deed of the devas on the side of the dhamma. Prince Siddhattha would inevitably have, at the instigation of the devas and brahmas, to go again to the Maṅgala Garden. The devas, on their part, would inevitably show the signs. These might be called the adequacy of causes or the need of the loka.

The last samvega sign

After remaining for four months in the palace, Prince Siddhattha again set out for the Maṅgala Garden. It was not a coincidence but a necessity because he could not help doing it.

On this outing, Prince Siddhattha saw a dead man, the last sign to rouse up his emotions of remorse (samvega). When the prince saw this sign, he realized that the happiness he had striven to attain for his kingdom and people was a happiness that had to be enjoyed with the faces of old age, sickness and death in the background.

He did not want any more to seek such a happiness but to search for a happiness which would be free from old age, sickness and death.

He turned back towards the place filled with the desire to seek a happiness which would be free from old age, sickness and death.

The news made the Sakyans utterly helpless. They had tried in every way to prevent Prince Siddhattha from seeing the four signs, but in spite of their efforts, the prince had already seen three signs. It was impossible to stop the prince from going to the Maṅgala Garden.

In truth, at the time Prince Siddhattha was king, who held supreme power. How difficult it would be for the Sakyan princes who had no sovereign power to make King Siddhattha, who had supreme power, to live as they wanted him.

They would not, however, give up though they were weary. The most important thing for them was for their kingdom to become a universal monarchy. They would go on trying till their last breath to stop Prince Siddhattha from retiring to the forest (and becoming a recluse).

Prince Siddhattha turned back to the palace after seeing the dead man on his way to the Maṅgala Garden. According to the prediction of astrologers, he would definitely leave for the forest when he saw a monk the next time he made an outing. He had already seen the three signs, the aged, the sick and the dead. Up to then, the prediction of the astrologers had been correct. It was certain that he would also see the sign of the monk. Then he would certainly retire to the forest.

The Sakyan princes, therefore, made their utmost effort so that Prince Siddhattha would not see the last sign of monk. They posted many guards all over the palace, especially along the way to the Maṅgala Garden. They had not taken kamma (result of past deeds) into consideration. They believed that they could accomplish anything if they had knowledge (ñāṇa) and diligence (vīriya). That was the reason why they saw to it that no monk or any sign of a monk was seen on the palace grounds of Kapilavatthu but they did not succeed. In fact, they were trying to do an impossible thing against kamma niyāma (natural way of things).

Power of Pāramī

Four months after he had seen the dead man, Prince Siddhattha again set out for the Maṅgala Garden. By the power of pāramīs, which he had fulfilled for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds, everything had been decided for him.

These decisions might be called those of kamma (past deeds). Accordingly, Prince Siddhattha set out for the Maṅgala Garden and he saw a monk on the way. If one had the power to recall the past and to see into the future, one would find that everything took place according to one's kamma.

Of two kinds of causes, kamma is the material cause (upādāna kāraṇa) and knowledge (paññā) and diligence (vīriya) are causes which carry into effect (nimitta kāraṇa). In fact, however, skilful a potter might be, he cannot make a pot unless he has the necessary clay. In the same way, if there is no kamma (deed), even though one has knowledge and diligence, nothing can be accomplished. Now Prince Siddhattha had, in full, kamma as well as ñāṇa and vīriya. For this reason, it is said that everything had been decided for him.

Seeing the monk, Prince Siddhattha asked the charioteer the meaning of becoming a monk. The charioteer answered that a monk was one who took up the noble practice to work for the welfare of the loka.

Prince Siddhattha had never seen a monk. When he was young he had met hermit Devila, but a hermit was different from a monk. A hermit followed the brahmaṇa practice according to Veda books. A monk practised Tapa (austerities) of the Tittihiyas' way. As such a hermit practised primarily for his own good. The monk practised primarily for the good of the loka.

When Prince Siddhattha saw the monk, he went to him and asked him about the aim in becoming a monk. The monk explained as the charioteer had done that a monk practised to gain kusalas (merits) to enable him to work for the good of the loka.

Realization of Need for gaining Santi Sukha

Prince Siddhattha then realized that if he was to seek for Santi sukha (supreme happiness or Nibbāna) to get free from old age, sickness and death, he should do so as a monk. He, therefore, decided to become a monk.

The invisible forces of devas and brahmas had aided him to arrive at that decision. These invisible forces exist in the environment of human beings. They are the devas and brahmas.

Among these devas and brahmas, some take the side of the dhamma while others take the side of adhamma. Those on the dhamma side assist beings to incline towards the dhamma while those on the adhamma side make beings to incline towards the adhamma. When the assistance given by the devas and brahmas in our environment is not known, human beings think that they act on their own in making decisions on the correctness or otherwise of any matter.

In truth, they make these decisions with the help of devas and brahmas in their environment.

After deciding to become a monk, Prince Siddhittha proceeded to the Maṅgala Park and spent the whole day there. He thought over his life. He had now made up his mind to be a monk. For this reason, he was reviewing his whole life.

Incomparable love needs bring incomparable benefits

He had his father whom he adored with incomparable love; he had his mother whom he adored with incomparable love; he had his queen whom he adored with incomparable love; he had his relatives whom he adored with incomparable love; he had his subjects and other beings whom he adored with incomparable love.

Then, a courtier arrived to inform him, by the order of his father King Suddhodana, that his queen Yasodharā had given birth to a son. How much did Prince Siddhattha love his son? Like the

darkening of the light of the moon when there was an eclipse, the news of the birth of his son overwhelmed all his thoughts.

He blurted out 'Like Rāhu! (Rāhu was the legendary monster who caused the eclipse of the moon by swallowing it in his mouth and then vomiting out.)

In fact, his love for his son caused his love for others to become faint. Grandfather King Suddhodana named his grandson 'Rāhulā!' It showed how much Prince Siddhattha loved his son.

By the power of the pāramīs he had fulfilled, Prince Siddhattha was incomparable in everything. He was incomparable in his love for his father, for his mother, for his queen, for his son, for his relatives and for the loka. Prince Siddhattha knew his love.

His love was incomparable but his accomplishments were not extraordinary up to that time. What had he especially been able to do for his father, mother, queen, son and relatives whom he adored with incomparable love? He knew that he had not been able to do anything extraordinary for them.

As his love was incomparable, the deeds he did for those he loved ought to be incomparable, but they were not. Then, what were incomparable deeds? Thus, he reflected but his reflections did not produce any satisfactory answer.

Kisā Gotami and the bliss of Nibbāna

In time, Prince Siddhattha returned from the Maṅgala Garden to Kapilavatthu palace. On arrival at the palace, he heard the gāthā of praise of Kisā Gotami. The gatha was as follows:-

“Nibbutā nuna sā mātā;

Nibbuto nuna so pitā;

Nibbutā nuna sā nāri;

Yassāyam idiso patī"

(It means;) How blissful would be, the mother who gave birth to such a son; How blissful would be the father who gave birth to such a son; How blissful would be the wife who married such a man!

The gāthā was the emotional utterance which expressed the feelings of Kisā Gotami on seeing Prince Siddhattha. The intended meaning of the gāthā was different from that Prince Siddhattha interpreted. What Kisā Gotamī meant was the bliss of loka and what Prince Siddhattha interpreted was the bliss of Lokuttara.

He wondered if his mother and father who had given birth to such a son were really blissful; if Yasodharā Devi who was married to him was really blissful.

He also wondered if his son, his relatives, the people in his kingdom and the three lokas were really blissful because he was born in the human world. Thus, he went on pondering. In fact, he knew the loka was not really blissful because of him. He understood from the meaning of Kisa Gotami's gāthā that only if he could give, by his efforts, the real bliss of Nibbāna to his father and mother together with the three lokas, would his love be true love.

He, therefore, clearly realized that the bliss he must seek for the loka was the bliss of Nibbāna. As an expression of his gratitude to Kisā Gotami, he took out the pearl necklace worth one lakh of money he was wearing and sent it to her as a gift. On receiving the gift, Kisā Gotami interpreted the meaning of the gesture as she liked and was filled with happiness.

The bliss to be found for the Loka

Prince Siddhattha now found out from the meaning of Kisā Gotami's gāthā that the bliss he must seek for the loka was Nibbāna. The bliss of Nibbāna was the extinction of all kilesas (defilements) and he must find it for the loka. What he was at present trying to attain for the loka was not real bliss. Besides, if he was to search for the bliss of Nibbāna, he knew that he must do so as a monk. He, therefore, decided to retire to the forest that very night. He now had nothing else in his mind except to find the bliss of Nibbāna.

His mind was all the time set on seeking the bliss of Nibbāna. Besides, he had complete confidence in his ability. He believed that he would surely find the bliss of Nibbāna in any way. For this reason, he decided to renounce kingly pleasures to retire to the forest as a monk, and to seek the bliss of Nibbāna. His resolution being of great importance should be prefixed with the word 'adhipati' (superior to all others or supreme).

If he really loved the loka, he should sacrifice himself for the loka he loved. He must sacrifice his life for the loka.

In fact, the devas and brahmas knew that Prince Siddhattha was the one and only person who would be able to find the bliss of Nibbāna in the loka.

The devas and brahmas, therefore, depended greatly on Prince Siddhattha for the emergence of the noble Four Ariya Truths in the loka. They kept a constant watch over him and gave him every support. For the accomplishment of an undertaking, it needs only one good man, not many. If that one is really good, the whole undertaking will automatically do well under his leadership.

The devas and brahmas were, therefore, rendering all kinds of help to Prince Siddhattha to make him the Buddha. Naturally, the appearance of only a Buddha was necessary. When a Buddha appeared, an innumerable number of arahats would subsequently appear. For this reason, it is said that only one good man is needed for the success of any enterprise.

Renunciation and Triumph of Dhamma

The time was the fullmoon day of Waso (about July) in 97 Mahā Era. At midnight, Prince Siddhattha would depart for the forest. When he set out for the Maṅgala Garden on the fullmoon day of Waso, 96 Mahā Era, he saw the sign of the aged man. The devas and brahmas showed each of the four signs to Prince Siddhattha at an interval of four months in between. They took one whole year to do it. If they did it in a hurry without taking reasonable time, it would amount to Uccheda nature (belief in annihilation), it is said.

If they took more time than necessary, it would amount to Sassata diṭṭhi (false view of eternity), it is said.

Only if the exact time, not less or more than it is necessary, is taken, it is said to be of the Majjhimapatipadā nature.

It is not at all easy to take the exact time but there are ways to do it. It should, therefore be said that Prince Siddhattha took the exact time according to Majjhima patipadā method to set out for the forest to seek the bliss of Nibbana for the loka.

The silence of the night is the best time for the virtuous ones to seek Sacca dhamma (truth). At that hour, Prince Siddhattha set out from Kapilavatthu on his horse Kaṇḍaka, accompanied by his birth companion minister Chanda. At dawn they reached the yonder bank of the Anoma River.

According to the nature of the loka, kusala and akusala, dhamma and adhamma are always in opposition to each other. In

the end, however, kusala always triumphs over akusala, and dhamma triumphs over adhamma.

If akusala triumphs over kusala, or adhamma triumphs over dhamma, it will not last. It will just be a temporary triumph.

There was no reason for Prince Siddhattha to consider whether it was wrong for him to retire to the forest as instigated by Māra, the Evil One, because he had done it after much contemplation. Such thoughts occurred due to the instigation of akusala and the influence of adhamma.

For the virtuous ones of pāramī, thoughts concerning loka welfare are submerged by the thoughts concerning lokuttara welfare by the power of pāramī kusalas (meritorious deeds of pāramī) and of the dhammas.

For this reason, Prince Siddhattha was able to reject at once Māra's persuasion not to set out for the forest.

Prince Siddhattha got rid of his hair to don monk's robes on the sandbank of the Anoma River. Then making the vow: If I am really going to be the Buddha, may the knot of my hair remain in the sky. If I am not going to be the Buddha, may the knot of my hair fall to the ground!, he threw up the knot of hair into the air. Then the knot of hair, together with his headgear, remained in the sky.

Nature knows Everything

Nature knew everything. It knew that Prince Siddhattha was sure to become the Buddha. For this reason, it made the prince's hair and headgear stand in the sky. It was usual for nature to reveal its secrets to those with pure and peaceful minds. Then Sakka, the deva king, carried away the hair and headgear and enshrined them in the Sulamani pagoda of the Tāvātimsa realm.

Prince Siddhattha accepted the robes and paraphernalia of monks offered by Brahma Ghātikāra and became a monk. The Brahma took away the royal raiment the prince discarded and enshrined it in Dusa Pagodā of Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm.

Prince Siddhattha sent back minister Chanda and horse Kaṇḍika to Kapilavatthu. On his way back, horse Kaṇḍila died. Minister Chanda alone got back to Kapilavatthu and reported all that happened to King Suddhodana.

King Suddhodana and the people of Kapilavatthu could do nothing more except to wish for the good health of Prince Siddhattha and for his speedily becoming the Buddha which he very much wanted to be.

From that day Queen Yasodarā donned only bark-dyed robes just as he did in honour of her lord. Prince Siddhattha had closed the first chapter of his life in which he worked for the good of the loka and now he began the second chapter for the attainment of supramundane (lokuttara) happiness.

As soon as he began the second chapter of life, everything changed very much. He began it by discarding his hair and becoming a monk. In his second chapter of life, his khandha (body) became so noble, had attained so exalted a moral excellence that the hair and the raiment he had discarded became worthy of reverence and homage by devas and brahmas. The hair became the Sulāmani pagoda in Tāvātimsa deva realm and the discarded raiment became Dussa Pagoda in Akanitṭha Brahma realm. If even his hair and discarded raiment became so much worthy of reverence and homage, how greatly exceptional his khandha would be.

At that time, he had not yet attained Buddhahood. He had merely made up his mind to become one. The power of pāramīs is acinteyya (unfathomable, beyond thought or reason). The power of his body, the composite of five khandhas built up with pāramīs is, therefore, more acinteyya (beyond thought or reason).

Then only Prince Siddhattha was entirely free to commune with nature, to talk with nature. Nature understood his words and he understood the words of nature. When one is really endowed with compassion and wisdom and is powerful, one is able to commune with nature in this manner.

Prince Siddhattha tossed up his hair and addressed nature: 'If I am really going to be the Buddha, may this hair remain in the sky!' By making the hair remain in the air, nature replied that he would really become the Buddha.

This nature is, in the language of the loka, called 'making a vow' or 'an asseveration'. In truth, nature had advance knowledge of everything. If, therefore, one wants to know anything in advance, one might ask nature by making a vow or an asseveration of truth.

It will, however, be necessary on one's part to be honest with nature so that it might want to comply with. It will also be necessary to have a tranquil (santa) and pure (visuddha) mind.

Samaṇa Practice

Buddhisatta Siddhattha stayed in Anupiya Mango Grove for seven days. He was laying down a work programme for attainment of Subbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom for becoming the Buddha).

At that time, there were two types of practices in vogue. One of them was the Brahmaṇa practice and the other was Samaṇa practice. The Brahmaṇa practice laid emphasis on sacrificial offerings while the samaṇa practice laid emphasis on severe tapa religious austerities. The Samaṇa practice was more popular than the Brahmaṇa practice at that time. Though both the two practices were popular, they were not the right ones.

The Brahmaṇa practice was included in Kāmasukkhalikanuyoga and the Samaṇa practice was included in Attakilamathānuyoga (self mortification practice). The practice included in the Majjhima paṭipada way was not known in those days. The Bodhisatta Siddhattha arranged to practise the Samaṇa way in Anupiya Mango Grove for seven days.

Bodhisatta Siddhattha left Anupiya Mango Grove for Rājagaha which was thirty yojanas distant. In fact, the Bodhisatta was looking for a guru (teacher) to show him the way to practise the dhamma.

On arrival at Rājagaha, he went round the city to collect almsfood. He had his meal on Paṇḍava hill in the east of the city. The day he arrived at Rājagaha was the last of the seven day festival in the city and King Bimbisara was attending to the administrative affairs of the city. It was at that time that the Bodhisatta entered the city to collect almsfood. King Bimbisara saw the Bodhisatta going round and collecting almsfood. He sent courtiers to follow the Bodhisatta and enquire who he was. The courtiers reported that the Bodhisatta was having his meal at the Pandava hill.

Bimbisāra and the Bodhisatta

King Bimbisāra was a person of intelligence, unlike King Kosala. He was also a person of pāramī. When he met the Buddha later on, therefore, he attained Sotapanna (the first magga). He had heard about Bodhisatta Siddhattha and he thought the one he saw would most probably be that Prince Siddhattha. As he wanted to

make sure indirectly whether it was Prince Siddhattha or not, he proceeded to Pandava hill and talked with the Bodhisatta. He asked him to stay in Rājagaha and share the kingdom with him.

The Bodhisatta replied that he was the son of King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu. He had renounced the throne and retired to the forest as he wanted to be the Buddha in the three lokas. King Bimbisāra was glad that his surmise was correct. He made the Bodhisatta promise to come first to Rajagaha when he became the Buddha and the Bodhisatta assented.

After having a friendly conversation with the Bodhisatta and receiving his consent to visit Rājagaha first on becoming the Buddha, King Bimbisāra went back to Rājagaha.

The Bodhisatta resumed his journey to seek the bliss of Nibbāna called Santivara. As King Bimbisāra was destined to achieve Sotapatti Magga in his present existence, he was very much interested in Santivara, the bliss of Nibbāna. He also believed that the Bodhisatta would attain Sabbaññutañāṇa and become the Buddha.

King Bimbisāra, therefore, envisaged the first visit of the Bodhisatta after becoming the Buddha to Rājagaha in his mind and revered him and he was satisfied with his life. He was, in fact, a noble man who carried on ruling his kingdom even after attaining Sotapatti magga.

Bodhisatta's Search for instructor

The Bodhisatta came to hermits Ālara and Udaka in his search for teachers to instruct him in the noble practice. At that time there were many who had been practising to become the Buddha themselves since the uproar of the coming appearance of the Buddha one thousand years before. There were Purāṇa Kassapa and other titthiyas (heretical teachers). Among them, only Ālāra and Udaka would best serve the purpose of the Bodhisatta. He, therefore, went to them to receive their instruction.

The Bodhisatta received instruction from Hermit Ālāra on the seven lokiya (worldly) samāpattis (sustained deep mental absorption). When he practised them, he attained all the seven. Not being satisfied with that much achievement, he went over to Hermit Udaka, from whom he learnt the method of practising

eight lokiya samapattis. When he practised them, he attained all the eight.

In fact, when the Bodhisatta met Hermit Udaka, the hermit had not yet attained the last Nevasaññā nāsaññāyatana jhāna (the eighth samāpatti). But he instructed the Bodhisatta according to the method of his father.

When both hermit Udaka and the Bodhisatta practised it, the Bodhisatta attained it first. Hermit Udaka attained it only afterwards.

It was said that both Ālāra and Udaka belonged to Sankhya dassana sect, which was founded by those who were not satisfied with the Veda sect. For this reason, their practice was included in the Samaṇa practice, not in the Brahmana practice. For this reason also the Bodhisatta went to Ālāra and Udaka for instruction. However, when the Bodhisatta personally learnt the last benefit to be attained from lokiya samapattis, he discarded them.

What the Bodhisatta really wanted was not the lokiya samāpattis, but the four Ariya Truths;

Tō attain the Four Ariya Truths, one should perceive craving (taṇhā), the architect of the khandha;

Only when one perceives craving, the architect of the khandha, will one be able to kill craving, the architect of the khandha;

Only when one can kill craving, the architect of the khandha, will one be able to achieve the bliss of Nibbāna; called Santivara;

Only when the Bodhisatta can gain insight into the Four Ariya Truths by Arahattamaggañāna (attainment of Arahathship) will he achieve Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom).

Only When the Bodhisatta attained Sabbaññutañāṇa will he really become the Buddha, Lord of the three lokas.

As the Bodhisatta would be able to attain only the worldly (lokiya) jhānas, at the most under the instructions of hermits Ālāra and Udaka, he left them. Then he tried to attain the Four Ariya Truths by Tapa (severe austerities).

Dealing with how the Bodhisatta practised severe austerities in his supreme effort to attain the Four Ariya Truths, the

Myanmar translation of Bodhirājakumara Sutta from Majjhimapanāsa, states thus:-

Search for Four Ariya Truths

“ Prince! In my wanderings through the country of Magadha seeking what was the best thing (dhamma) and what was the incomparable sublime peace of Nibbāna, I arrived at the village of Sena in Uruvela forest. There I saw a delightful stretch of land, with a pleasant grove, a flowing river and a charming and clean landing place, and a nearby village where almsfood might be collected.

“Prince! Then a thought came to me. ‘This is a good place for one who wants to practise meditation’. Prince, then I decided that the place was suitable for me to practise meditation and I resided there.

“Prince, the thought occurred to me. It would be good if I were to suppress, squeeze and torment my mind. (That is to drive away unwholesome thoughts by nursing wholesome thoughts). Prince! I suppressed, squeezed and tormented my mind, by grinding my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth.

“Prince! When I suppressed, squeezed and tormented my mind by grinding my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, sweat poured out of my armpits.

“Prince! Just as a strong man took hold of a weak man by the head or shoulders and suppressed, squeezed and tormented the weak man, when I suppressed, squeezed and tormented my mind by grinding my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, sweat poured out of my armpits.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt a burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Then it occurred to me, ‘It would be good if I were to practise controlling my breath (non-breathing)’. Then I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose and the mouth.

“Prince! When I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose and the mouth, the noise of wind rushing out through the ear holes became exceedingly loud.

“Prince! Just as the noise caused by the wind which a blacksmith’s bellows blew out was exceedingly loud, so also the noise caused by winds escaping from the ear holes was very loud as I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose and the mouth.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt a burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Then a thought occurred to me, ‘It would be good if I were to practise non-breathing’. Prince, then I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose and the mouth and the ears.

“Prince! When I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose, the mouth, and the ears violent winds tormented the inside of the top of my head.

“Prince! Just as a strong man pressed my head or my shoulders with a sharp-pointed instrument, so also violent winds rushed at and tormented the inside of the top of my head as I stopped breathing.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt a burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Then it occurred to me, ‘It would be good if I were to practise non-breathing’. Prince, then I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling both through the nose, the mouth and the the ears, I suffered extremely violent headaches.

“Prince! Just as a strong man had tightened a stout leather thong round my head, so also I suffered extremely from the violent headaches as I stopped breathing.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt a burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Then, it occurred to me, ‘It would be good if I were to practise non-breathing’. Prince, then I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling through the nose, through the mouth and through the ears and I suffered as if violent winds pierced my stomach through and through.

“Prince! Just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice pierced the stomach through and through with a sharp knife, so also

violent winds pierced my stomach through and through as I stopped breathing.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt a burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Then, it occurred to me, “It would be good if I were to practise non-breathing’. Prince, then I stopped and controlled inhaling and exhaling through the nose, through the mouth and through the ears and there arose an excessive burning sensation all over the body.

“Prince! Just as two strong men taking hold of a weak man by the arms might grill and roast over a pit of live coals, so also there was excessive burning sensation all over my body, as I stopped breathing.

“Prince! I put forth unstinted effort and I was ceaselessly mindful. On account of the exertion, I felt an excessive burning sensation all over my body. I had no peace.

“Prince! Having seen me, the devas said, ‘Samaṇa Gotama has passed away.’ Some devas said, “Samaṇa Gotama has not yet passed away, but is about to pass away.’ Some devas said, Samaṇa Gotama has not passed away. He is not also about to pass away. Samaṇa Gotama is becoming an arahat. It is the way of an arahat to live like this.’

‘Prince! Then it occurred to me, ‘It would be good if I were to practise total abstinence from food.’ Then the devas came to me and said, ‘Samana! Please don’t practise total abstinence from food. If you do, we will inject into your body deva nutriment through the pores. You will be sustained by that nutriment.’

‘Prince ! Then I thought , ‘If I confess that I will totally abstain from food, they will inject into my body deva nutriment through the pores and I will be sustained by that nutriment. If I confess it will mean falsehood.’

‘Prince! So I forbade the devas to inject deva nutriment into my body, saying, “It will be improper’.

“Prince! Then, a thought again occurred to me, “It would be good if I were to take only a small quantity of such food as kidney bean soup, horse gram soup, chicken pea soup or pea soup.’

‘Prince! As I took only a small quantity of food, my body become terribly thin for lack of nutriment. So little did I eat that the large and small limbs of the body looked like the joints of a vine or a climbing creeper. My buttocks looked like a camel’s hoof; my spine looked like strung beads. My gaunt ribs were sunk like the tumbled down rafters of a dilapidated rest house. The pupils of my eyes appeared to be sunk deep in the sockets so that they looked like the gleam of water at the bottom of a deep well. My scalp looked like a little bitter gourd which had been plucked when green and had shrivalled and shrunk by heat and wind.

‘Prince! When I touched the skin of my stomach, it was the backbone that I felt. When I touched my backbone, it was the skin of the stomach that I felt.

‘Prince! So little did I eat that the skin of my stomach appeared stuck fast to my backbone.

‘Prince! When I rose to defecate or urinate, I fell on my face then and there.

‘Prince! I rubbed my limbs with my hands to soothe my body. As I did so, the hairs, rotted at the roots, fell off from the body.

‘Prince! Men seeing me said, ‘Samaṇa Gotama is not black.’ Others said, ‘Samaṇa Gotama is brownish yellow.’ Still others said, ‘Samaṇa Gotama is neither black nor brownish yellow, but has the colour of the back of a bug.’

Prince! So little did I eat, my complexion so clear and bright was ruined to such a large extent.

‘Prince! It again occurred to me, ‘All samanas and brahmanas of the past, who underwent such austere practices, could have experienced painful, severe and acutely sharp sensations only up to this extent (that is, as much as I have) and not to a greater extent.

‘Though I practised these severe and acutely painful austerties which were extremely difficult to practise, I did not gain any insight that will enable me to surpass kammaṇṇa dhamma (course of action) of human beings, and become an ariya. Could there be another way to realize the Four Ariya Truths?

“Prince ! Then I recalled that while the ploughing ceremony was being held by my father, I was sitting in the cool

shade of the eugenia tree. Then I became detached from sensual pleasures and demeritorious factors, and achieved and remained in the first jhāna which is accompanied by vitakka (initial application of the mind), vicāra (sustained application of the mind), pīti (delightful satisfaction), sukha (bliss) born of detachment from hindrances (Nīvaraṇas). I thought that might be the way to enlightenment.

“Prince! Then, the thought came to me that that was the way to the realization of enlightenment of the Four Ariya Truths. Prince, then I asked myself why should I be afraid of the bliss of the first jhāna which is born of detachment from sensual pleasures and demeritorious factors. Prince! Then, I thought ‘I am not afraid of the bliss of the first jhāna!’”.

Desertion by group of five monks

“Prince! Then it occurred to me, ‘It is not easy with my emaciated body to strive for the attainment of the bliss of the first jhāna. It would be better if I were to take solid food, such as boiled rice and barley cakes.

‘Prince! At that time, I had with me five samanās attending on me hoping that I would tell them the dhamma that I achieved.

‘Prince! When I ate solid food, such as boiled rice and barley cakes, those five samaṇas were disenchanted with me, thinking, Samana Gotama has taken up the practice to gain material abundance. He has discarded meditation practice’ and they left me.

Recollecting Past Existences

“Prince! After I had taken solid food and regained strength I achieved and remained in the first jhāna, then in the second jhāna, then in the third jhāna and then in the fourth jhāna.

“When my settled mind has thus become perfectly pure, cleansed, unsullied (by moral defilements), uncontaminated, malleable, ready for application, firm and imperturbable, I directed it towards the attainment of power that could recollect past existences. Then I could recollect my many and varied past existences together with relevant particulars, such as names, clans, etc.

‘Prince! In the first part of the night, I gained the first insight (of recollecting past existences) and ignorance disappeared.

Gaining Divine Insight

‘Prince! When my settled mind had thus become perfectly pure, cleansed, unsullied, uncontaminated, malleable, ready for application, firm and imperturbable, I directed it towards the attainment of the power that could know the passing away of beings and their rebirth in new existences. With dibbacakkhu ñāṇa, the psychic power of divine sight which is extremely clear, surpassing the sight of man, I could see beings in the process of passing away and also of coming into existence, inferior or superior beings, beautiful or ugly beings, beings with good or bad destinations. I could know about beings arising in accordance with their own kamma actions.

“Prince ! Thus, I gained the second insight in the middle part of the night (midnight). Thus, vijja, the psychic power of divine sight arose and avijja disappeared.

Realization that there was nothing more to be done

“Prince! When my settled mind had thus become perfectly pure, cleansed, unsullied, uncontaminated, malleable, ready for application, firm and imperturbable, I directed it towards the attainment of Āsavakkhayañāṇa, the insight which uproots Āsavas (moral intoxicants or taints).

“Then I knew, ‘This is dukkha, as it really is;

“This is the cause of dukkha, as it really is; This is Nibbāna, where dukkha is extinct, as it really is;

“These are the Āsavas, as they really are;

“This is the cause of Āsavas, as it really is;

“This is the Nibbāna , where Āsavas are extinct, as it really is;

“This is the practice leading to the extinction of Āsavas, as it really is’.

“Knowing thus and seeing thus, my mind was freed from Kāmāsava (the taint of sensual desires); Bhavāsava (the taint of hankering after better existences); Diṭṭhāsava (the taint of false belief); and Avijjāsava (the taint of ignorance of Four Ariya Truths).

“Having been freed, I came to realize that I had been freed, there was no more rebirth for me; I had done the noble practice; what was needed to be done had been done and there was nothing else to be done for me.

“Prince! In the last part of the night, I gained this third insight (ñāṇa). I have gained vijjā (insight); avijjā (ignorance) has disappeared in me”.

Primary Reason for wishing to become the Buddha

That is the discourse dealing with how the Bodhisatta practised austerities and how he finally achieved Sabbaññutta ñāṇa (Perfect Wisdom). From this discourse, it will be seen that the greatness of the Buddha's compassion on the loka and his wisdom is beyond estimation.

In truth, the Buddha was not one, who practised to become the Buddha because he wanted to be. He practised to become the Buddha to free the three lokas from Saṃsarā dukkha (dukkha of the round of rebirths).

The Bodhisatta concentrated his mind primarily on the effort to liberate beings from Saṃsarā dukkha for the whole of four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds.

Every deed has its attractiveness

In every deed there is the quality of attractiveness (rasa). It is really there though it may not be detected because the way to do it is not known. The Bodhisatta was never discouraged and disheartened in striving to fulfil the pāramīs or in practising austerities because he was able to find their attractiveness.

When the attractiveness (rasa) is known, the determination (paṇidhi) to get it by all means must follow. The attractiveness of a deed will not be found by just wishing to find it. To have morality (Sīla) also is essential. According to the Piṭakas, ‘only the wishes of moral people come true’. In truth, the Bodhisatta was a person of morality.

For this reason, therefore, all his wishes were fulfilled. Then, he was able to find the attractiveness in every deed.

When the attractiveness was found, there would no longer be any discouragement in the performance of every deed.

The Bodhisatta wanted to free all beings from Saṃsara dukkha. To do this, it was necessary for him to become the Buddha. To become the Buddha, he had to do austerity practices which were of the kind no other being in the three lokas, the human, the deva and the brahma, could practise.

One should be able to sacrifice for love

If it were asked why others could not practise thus, it should be answered that they could not do it because they could not love the loka, could not sympathize with the loka, and could not know that the loka was dukkha.

The others believed that only they themselves were the most lovable ones in the loka.

For this reason, the Bodhisatta sacrificed himself for the sake of the loka which he loved, which he sympathised with and which he knew was dukkha. He was also able to find pleasure in doing it.

In truth, when one sacrifices for one's loved one, one finds pleasure in such a sacrifice. He does not find it as a displeasure. He finds it pleasant, not unpleasant.

If one does a deed and does not see it as a pleasure but sees it as a displeasure, or sees it as unpleasant, it is only because he sees that the deed is not of benefit to one's loved one.

The Bodhisatta really loved the loka, sympathised with the loka and knew that the loka was actually suffering in the saṃsarā. That was why he sympathized with the loka he loved. Then, he was not contented with merely having sympathy for the loka, but planned to save it .

In truth, if one personally sees a person one loves in the dukkha of saṃsarā under one's very eyes, it will be natural for one to strive to save him from suffering. If one does not do so, it will only be due to having no love for that person. There can be no other reason.

The Bodhisatta was one who really loved the loka. He personally saw clearly under his very eyes the loka suffering from the saṃsasā dukkha. Then, what should the Bodhisatta do? There was nothing else for him to do except to do relief work to save the loka from suffering.

The Bodhisatta, therefore, engaged himself in the relief work of the loka, which was to strive to become the Buddha which involved fulfilment of pāramīs and practising severe austerities (dukkara cariyā). In truth, it was making sacrifices for the loka one loved. It is natural that the more one could sacrifice, the more obvious one's love would become.

The Bodhisatta fulfilled pāramīs and practised severe austerities as sacrifices to demonstrate the profundity of his metta and cetanā (volition) on the loka.

To what extent must the Bodhisatta fulfil the pāramīs? He must fulfil the pāramīs without complaint and grumbling because of the profundity of metta and karuṇa.

To what extent must the Bodhisatta exercise severe austerities? He must exercise the severe austerities without any complaint and grumbling because of the profundity of metta and karuṇa.

Love which is impartial

The metta and karuṇā of the Bodhisatta was amazing. It was absolutely impartial and unbiased. He loved and sympathised with brahmas, devas, human beings and animals, as they really were. He loved them all and sympathised with them all.

He did not differentiate them as friend and foe. That is the basic mental structure of those who really practise metta and karuṇā. That was the reason why the Bodhisatta was able to practise severe austerities (dukkaracariya) for six whole years without complaint and grumbling.

In truth, the practising of severe austerities for six whole years demonstrated the Bodhisatta's metta and karuṇā on the loka.

One might guess the great magnitude and extent of the Bodhisatta's metta and cetanā (volition) on men, devas and brahmas and all other beings including oneself, by the pāramīs he had fulfilled and the amazing severe austerities he had practised.

Thus, who would remain ungrateful to him who have loved one so much and who had greatly sacrificed and worked for one's welfare?

Who then should not revere him? Leaving aside such great personages, like the Bodhisatta who had really worked for the common welfare at the sacrifice of their own, people are always longing for those leaders who had done deeds for the common welfare to some extent at some sacrifice to themselves.

In truth, there are still some people in the loka who have a sense of gratitude, who do not forget the debt of gratitude they owe.

Not forgetting the debt of gratitude one owes is the lokapāla dhamma (eternal principle) of human beings. They would endeavour as much as they could to pay back the debt of gratitude they owe.

Paying back the debt of gratitude is putting into practice the words of our benefactors as much as possible. If one has no sense of gratitude, or forgets the debt of gratitude one owes, it amounts to violation of the lokapāla dhamma (eternal principles). When the lokapāla dhammas are violated, the loka is bound to be ruined.

Let us pay the debt we owe to the loka

Though from the historical point of view, Bodhisatta Siddhattha had really loved the loka and had really made supreme sacrifices for the loka over 2,500 years ago, from the view of Buddha dassana, the Bodhisatta Siddhattha is an ever living being.

We are included in the list of those the Bodhisatta loves. We must, therefore, pay the debt of gratitude we owe to Bodhisatta Siddhattha. To pay the debt means to practise making sacrifices for the loka just as Bodhisatta Siddhattha had done. Then, the more the number of those who sacrifice for the Loka there are, the more the loka will become really peaceful.

In fact, all those who love the loka sacrifice for the loka. Among them, Bodhisatta Siddhattha is the most outstanding. Being included in the list of those who the Bodhisatta loves, it is our duty, by following the practice of our benefactor Bodhisatta Siddhattha, not to take the side of those who take advantage of the loka but to take the side of those who sacrifice for the loka and work for its peace and prosperity. Fulfilment of this duty will amount to paying the debt of gratitude to the Bodhisatta Siddhattha and practising the lokapāla dhammas (eternal principles).

Metta Cetanā will never be fruitless

True metta and cetanā will never be fruitless. To say the least, it will greatly support the cause (upanissaya) for the realization of one's aim.

The fundamental reason for practising severe austerities by the Bodhisattha was because of his metta and karuṇā for the loka. That practice of severe austerities directed him to the noble practice of Majjhimapaṭipadā (the middle path).

Knowing the wrong as wrong and knowing the right as right is called yathābhūtañāṇa (right knowledge).

In the past, the Bodhisatta had not known what was wrong as wrong; he thought it as right. He had thought dukkaracariya as Majjhima paṭipadā (the middle way). He (wrongly) followed dukkaracariya practice (hoping) to attain subbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom).

Now he knew the wrong as wrong. He had attained Yathābhūta ñāṇa (right knowledge). The time (day) was the first waxing day of Kason (July), 103 Mahā Era. The Bodhisatta had abandoned Dukkharacariya practice to take up the noble practice of Majjhima paṭipadā. He entered Sena village for collecting almsfood for taking food again.

Then the group of five samaṇas who had attended him every way for six whole years were disappointed with him when took food again. They thought he would never become the Buddha by taking food again and they left him for the Migadāvon forest. The Bodhisatta stayed on in the Uruvela Forest and practised ānāpāna (inhalation and exhalation of breath) meditation. Then at dawn on the 14th waxing day of Kason, he had five great dreams, by which he knew that he would become the Buddha on the night of the full moon day (the 15th).

At daybreak on the fullmoon day, the Bodhisatta entered Sena village for collecting almsfood. He accepted the milk rice, together with the golden bowl container, offered by Sujāta, a rich man's daughter. Taking a bath at the Supati landing place, he had his meal sitting in the cool shade of a tree. He took fortyfive mouthfuls altogether. Then holding in his hand the golden bowl in which the milk rice had been put, he solemnly took the following oath:-

“If I, will be able to become the Buddha this day, may this golden bowl float upstream; if I will be unable to become the Buddha, may it float down stream.

And he put the bowl in the Neṇanjarā River. And the bowl floated upstream.

Ever since the Bodhisatta left the household life and did away with his hair, he had talked with nature which was as truthful as himself.

Nature understood the Bodhisatta's words.

As it understood the Bodhisatta's words, nature had also disclosed its secrets to him.

In truth, anyone who is as truthful as nature can talk to it and ask it to disclose its secrets to him.

Power of Eight bunches of Grass

The Bodhisatta spent the day in the Sal Grove by the bank of the River Nerañjarā. When he meditated and was absorbed in ānāpanā (inhalation and exhalation of breath), he attained eight samāpattis (sustained deep mental absorptions) and five abhiññās (supernormal powers) and dwelt in them. At twilight, he went down to the River Nerañjarā and bathed. Then he went towards the Bodhi Tree. On the way, he met the brahmin grass cutter named Sottiya who presented him with eight bunches of grass.

Accepting the eight bunches of grass, he proceeded to the Bodhi tree. These bunches of grass were to become the Aparājita throne at the foot of the Bodhi Tree (on which the Bodhisatta sat and became the Buddha).

On reaching the Bodhi Tree, he approached it from the southern side and the ground where the tree stood appeared to be lop-sided. Then he turned right and approached the tree from the western side, but here also the ground where the tree stood appeared to be lop-sided. Then he went to the northern side and when he looked at the tree, here also the ground where it stood seemed to be lop-sided. Then he proceeded to the eastern side. When he looked at the tree, he found the ground on which it stood was level and steady. This was the spot where the Aparājita (unconquered) throne was to appear.

Whether it be an animate or inanimate thing, everything has its own power. That was the reason why every place under the Bodhi Tree could not be the spot where the Aparājita throne was to appear. Only the eastern side was the place where the aparājita throne was to appear. So the Bodhisatta spread the grass at that spot.

The grass changed into the Aparājita (unconquerable) throne. It was the very spot where the Apārajita thrones of the successive Buddhas had appeared. Places have their own demarcations; nature has its own rules. Things do not happen casually. It is said, 'Loka viseso acinteyyo', which means that the loka is mysterious. But only the virtuous ones know the mysteries of the loka and the law of nature.

Two ways of change

The Bodhisatta sat facing east with his back to the Bodhi Tree. This was an extraordinary posture, because in this posture the Bodhisatta who had been a worldling (putthujana) achieved the sabbaññutañāṇa and became the Buddha.

In one sitting, one life ended and another life began. In one sitting, from the state of gradual change the pace accelerated into a sudden rapid change.

The gradual change is the change of quantity; the sudden change is the change of quality.

The Bodhisatta firmly resolved -

- (1) let only my skin remain;
- (2) let only my sinews remain;
- (3) let only my bones remain;
- (4) let all my blood and flesh dry up,

I will not stir from this place, unless I become the Buddha.

Then he sat crosslegged on the Aparājita throne and whole-heartedly meditated the dhammas.

Then, Māra, the Evil One, appeared leading his army which extended 12 yojanas to his right, 12 yojanas to his left, 9 yojanas above him and as far as the confines of the universe at his back.

Māra fought to oust the Buddha from the throne underneath the Bodhi Tree, but Māra's army was routed and he had to withdraw in disarray.

The Bodhisatta conquered Māra, not by the strength of an ordinary army, but by the power of pāramīs (Perfections) he had fulfilled for four asankheyyas and a hundred thousand worlds. It is, therefore, said 'Kamma visayo acinteyyo', which means the

power of kamma is strange and mysterious beyond thought or reason. In truth, only kamma is one's refuge.

The time the Bodhisatta defeated Māra was before sunset on the fullmoon day of Kason, 103 Mahā Era. The Bodhisatta attained Pubbenivāsa nussati abhiññā (power of recollecting former existences) in the first part of the night and dibbacakkhu abhiññā (divine power of sight) in the middle part of the night and exercised them.

Pubbenivāsa nussati abhiññā is the knowledge of the khandhas of past existences.

Dibbacakkhu abhiññā is the knowledge of the present khandhas of various beings. Pubbenivāsa nussati abhiññā is also called the first vijjāñāṇa and Dibbacakkhu abhiññā is also called the second vijjāñāṇa. In truth, the Bodhisatta had already attained the eight samāpattis and the five abhiññās at the time he was living with recluses Āḷāra and Udaka, but the samāpattis and abhiññās then attained were not those based on insight meditation (vipassanā) practice. They merely culminated in purely samatha (mental concentration) practice.

Only the samapattis and abhiññās the Bodhisatta attained on the fullmoon day of Waso, 103 Maha Era, were the basis of insight meditation (vipassana).

The Bodhisatta had then known paramattha dhammas (truth in the highest sense or absolute or real truth). He had perceived that loka, individuals and beings, animate beings and inanimate objects, were nothing but paramattha dhammas.

When he contemplated the group of paramattha dhammas, in the light of vipassanañāṇa, regarding individuals and beings, he perceived the nature of Paṭicca samuppada which is the process of the khandha of all beings, taking place from moment to moment.

In it -

- avijja (ignorance) and sankhāra (mental formations) are included as past causes:
- viññāṇa (consciousness), nāmarupa (mind and body), saḷāyatana (six sense bases), phassa (contact) and vedanā (sensation) are included as present results;
- taṇhā (craving), upadāna (clinging) and kamma bhava (kamma causal process) are included as present causes;

- jāti (birth), jarā (ageing) and maraṇa (death) are included as future results.

Mahā Vajira Ñāṇa

When the Bodhisatta contemplated by vipassana insight, the fundamental paramattha dhammas (truth in the ultimate sense), of all beings-human, deva, brahmas, etc - in a hundred thousand universes, he perceived that there were actually only 12 causes and results, e.g. avijja, sankhara, etc. (which are paramattha dhammas). There were really no such things as individuals, beings, etc. They were only misconceptions.

In fact, there is nothing else besides those twelve. There is no individual, no being, no loka. These twelve are called from their respective points of view, satta loka (world of sentient beings), okāsaloka (world of space) and sankhāraloka (world of organic and inorganic matter).

Whatever the three lokas might be called, in essence, there is only nāmarūpa (mind and matter). According to the Paṭicca Samuppada doctrine of causal relationship, there are only four kinds past causes, present results, present causes and future results.

That was the reason why the Bodhisatta found only 12 Paṭicca Samuppāda dhammas - avijja, sankhāra, etc. in each being, not as individual or being, when he contemplated all beings - human, deva, brahma, etc. in the hundred thousand crores of universes by vipassana insight.

When he contemplated each of them a hundred thousand times, he had contemplated them altogether twelve million crores of times. When he contemplated by the three characteristics of anicca, dukkha, and anatta of each of the twelve Paṭicca samuppāda dhammas, he had contemplated 3,600,000 crores of times of vipassanā ñāṇas. These vipassanā ñāṇas are called Māhavajira (great penetrative) ñāṇa insights.

When the Bodhisatta contemplated the Paṭicca samuppāda dhammas as nāmarūpa (mind and body), he did so after building up the fourth jhāna concentration by ānāpāna (inhalation and exhalation) practice. In truth the ānāpāna fourth jhāna concentration was like the light of the sun at midday. When one looked at objects in the light of midday sun, they could be seen clearly and vividly. There could not be any misconception or doubt. In the

same way, when *nāmarūpa* and *khandha* were viewed with *vipassāna* eye by the light of *ānāpāna* fourth *jhāna* concentration, they were seen clearly and vividly. There could be no misconception and doubt. Everything was seen accurately.

After that, the arisings and dissolutions of *nāmarūpa* and *khandha* were seen. When they were seen, their *anicca* (impermanent) nature was clearly and vividly seen, their *dukkha* (suffering) nature was clearly and vividly seen, their *anatta* (soulless) nature was clearly and vividly seen.

Then he saw the end of the arisings and the dissolutions. That was *Nibbāna*.

Perceiving *Nibbāna*

In the last part of the night of the fullmoon day of Kason, 103 *Mahā Era*, the *Bodhisatta* clearly and vividly perceived, by *Arahattañāṇa*, the four *Ariya Truths*. Then only *Āsavas* (mental intoxicants or taints) became totally extinct. In truth, *Arahatta Maggañāṇa* is called *Āsavakkhayañāṇa* because it extinguishes all the *Āsavas*. The Pāli word ‘*Āsavakkhaya*’ means ‘extinction of *Āsavas*’. The extinction of *Āsavas* and the realization of *Nibbāna* take place simultaneously.

The *Piṭakas* compare *Āsava* with fermented water or liquor. When one is intoxicated, one thinks wrong as right, right as wrong. Intoxication conceals the wrong so that it is not known as wrong. It makes wrong appear as right.

In the same way, it conceals the right, so that it is not known as right. It makes right appear as wrong.

That is the characteristic of *avijjā* (ignorance). Among the four kinds of *Āsavas* (taints), *avijjā* is the leader. Besides, *avijjā* has two kinds of ability, according to the *Piṭakas*. One is the ability to conceal real appearance called *Āvaraṇa satti*. The other is the ability to cause unreal appearance called *vikkhepa satti*.

Avijjā (ignorance) conceals truth so that it cannot be known as truth and also conceals untruth so that it cannot be known as untruth according to *āvaraṇa satti*. It also causes truth to appear as untruth and untruth to appear as truth according to *vikkhepa satti*.

Thus, the *āsavas* which are led by *Avijjā* causes confusion and disorder in consciousness and knowing.

As the result, only when consciousness and knowing are free from Āsavas, can such consciousness and knowing be correct. If one is not yet free from āsavas, his consciousness and knowing cannot in any way be correct.

That is the reason why it is necessary to get free from asavas and this will only be possible when one attains arahatta magga.

Āsavas are prevalent, according to realms, up to Bhavagga, the highest of the thirtyone abodes and, according to dhammas, up to the attainment of Gotrabhu ñāṇa (thought moment immediately before magga insight). As such, Āsavas are scattered all over the sense-doors by anusaya satti (lying dormant). In truth, all sense objects with the exception of some dhammas, are all paramattha dhammas. When they show up in the dvāras (sense doors), they do so as paramattha dhammas. However, when sense objects show up in the dvāras, they do so through the dvāras which are scattered with āsavas. Then, though the sense objects and the consciousness are originally paramatthas, as soon as they pass through the dvāras scattered with āsavas, they all are in confusion and disorder.

The paramattha sense-objects become pannatti (name, designation) sense-objects. Though they are not individuals, beings or things, consciousness knows them as individuals, beings or things.

Just as those who are sprayed with water from the deva pond are transformed into sixteen-year old youths, all paramattha sense-objects are turned into paññatti sense objects when they get into contact with the fermented water of Āsavas. Though they are not individuals, beings or things, they become individuals, beings or things. It is, therefore, said that whoever one may be, so long as he is not free from Āsavas, his consciousness cannot be completely correct in any way.

Now the Bodhisatta had been able to extinguish the Āsavas together with vāsanā (former impressions). His consciousness had, therefore, not only become true consciousness but also a consciousness that knew everything there was to know, that is the sabbaññuta consciousness. As soon as his consciousness became Sabbaññūta consciousness, the Bodhisatta had become Sabbaññuta Buddha, the Lord of the Three Lokas.

As the Buddha had been able to extinguish all kilesās (moral defilements) together with vāsanā (former impressions), his consciousness became Sabbaññuta consciousness, not like that of others. In fact, as his consciousness was the Sabbannuta consciousness, he became the Buddha.

‘Sabbaññūta’ means knowing all there are to know. Here ‘all’ is of two kinds, ‘all’ in respect of quantity and ‘all’ in respect of quality. Knowing all in respect of quantity is knowing all the things there are to know without exception. Knowing all in respect of quality is knowing everything about a particular thing.

Therefore, Sabbaññūta means knowing all the things there are to know and knowing each of the things completely from the beginning to the end.

Therefore, according to Pāli grammar, the ‘sabba’ in the word ‘sabbaññūta’ is not ordinary ‘sabba’. It is two ‘sabba’s’ combined into one. One ‘sabba’ means all there is to know, while the other one means knowing each thing, out of all the things there are to know, completely from the beginning to the end.

Therefore, when it is said that the Buddha knows by Sabbaññutañāṇa, he knows all the things there are to know and knows each of the things completely from the beginning to the end. This is how the Buddha knows by Sabbaññutañāṇa.

The Buddha’s knowing of the Four Ariya Truths, by Arahatta maggañāṇa is knowing without any limit (appaṭihata). The knowing of the Four Ariya Truths by others by Arahattamaggañāṇa is limited (paṭihata). Therefore, the Buddha’s Arahattamaggañāṇa brings about the accomplishment of Sabbaññutañāṇa.

In truth, the Buddha attained the Sabbaññutañāṇa simultaneously with the achievement of Arahattamaggañāṇa.

That is the reason why the Buddha became lord of the three lokas. The following two gāthās given in Jinālaṅkāra Tika relating to the Buddha’s becoming of the Lord of three lokas are worthy of note:-

1. Evam ananta puññehi; siddham dehamimam pa na;
 Yathābhūtam ajānanto; manusso ti hi maññati.
2. Nāham manusso nāmanusso; na brahmā na ca
 devatā; Jarāmarañam lokassa; dassotum paṇi dhāga
 to”

1. *Evam* = thus; *ananta puññehi* = because of the limitlessness of *pāramī* deeds; *siddam* = that arises; *imam deham* = this *khandha* (body) ; *yathābhutam* = correctly, as it really is; *ajānanto pa na* = does not know; *Buddho* = Buddha; *manussotiha* = just a human being ; *maññati* = to be of opinion.

2. *Pa na* = in truth; *aham* = I, the Buddha; *na manusso* = not a human being; *na amanusso* = not any other being, such as an ogre; *na Brahma* = not a brahma; *na ca devatā* = not a deva; *lokassa* = to the loka; *jarāmaranam* = old age and death; *dassetum* = to show; *idha* = to the womb of a human mother; *āgato* = I have come.

“As the Buddha was born of a human mother, it might ordinarily be said that he was a human being. However, his *khandha* being an incomparable one which came into being as the result of limitless *pāramīs* fulfilled for four *asankheyyas* and a hundred thousand worlds, as soon as he had achieved *Arahattamaggañāṇa* and *Sabbaññutañāṇa* and become the Buddha, though he was born of a human mother, he was no longer an ordinary human being, but a peerless virtuous one.”

That is the reason why he is the supreme being in the three *lokas*. As such, if he is called a human being, he is man of men, the supreme among human beings;

If he is called a *deva*, he is the *deva* of *devas* and the supreme among the *devas*.

If he is called a *brahma*, he is the *brahma* of *brahmas*, the supreme among the *brahmas*.

Besides, if the Buddha is called any other living being, it is also correct. If he is called any other living being, he is the supreme among those living beings.

In truth, the Buddha belongs to human, *deva*, *brahma* and all other beings, because of the limitlessness of deeds of *pāramī* he had fulfilled.

The Buddha had, while fulfilling *pāramīs* as the *Bodhisatta*, been an animal in some existences. For this reason, he had experienced the nature of animals. He had been a human being and as such, had experienced the nature of human beings. He had also been a *deva* and as such had experienced the nature of *devas*. He had also been a *brahma* and as such, had experienced the nature of *brahmas*.

they set their eyes on him. It is , therefore, evident that the Buddha was matchless in appearance.

Unrivalled in Fame

Those who tried to gain fame in the loka and became famous as the result, received the respect and reverence of unintelligent persons who came to him, but if such fame and honour was undeserving, they were denounced by intelligent persons. The fame and honour of the Buddha was truly earned and those who came to him became more respectful and reverent than before.

The multi-millionaire Anathapindika heard about the Buddha after dark while he was on a trading trip from Sāvatti to Rājagaha. He was so eager to go to the Buddha that he could not sleep the whole night. When he got to the Buddha, he attained Sotapatti Magga (first level of enlightenment) on hearing the first sermon. He came to have implicit faith in the Buddha and became the donor of a magnificent monastery.

King Mahākappina, on hearing about the glories of the Buddha from the merchants who arrived from Sāvatti, set out at once on horse back with a thousand courtiers to see the Buddha. Hearing the Buddha’s discourse and finding that the Buddha was more worthy of respect and reverence than he had heard about, he was very joyful and became a monk together with his followers.

On hearing the attributes of the Three Ratanās (the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṃgha) from King Bimbisāra, King Pukkusāsi donned himself with bark-dyed robes and retired to the forest despite the tearful entreaties of the people not to leave them. When he came to the Buddha and heard the discourse, he attained Anāgāmi Magga (third level of enlightenment).

The attributes of Buddha’s dhamma have the power to win over the hearts of beings. Therefore, it is evident that the fame and glory of the Buddha is unrivalled.

His Frugality Inspires Veneration

Though he had lived a princely life in great pomp, splendeur and luxury in three palaces, wearing the best clothes and eating most sumptuous and delicious food amidst a large number of attendants, courtiers and maidens, he practised frugality in food, clothing, etc. to an extent in no way comparable to what he had enjoyed before since he had retired to the forest.

He had lived in close vicinity of forest trees when he practised severe austerities to become the Buddha, when he became the Buddha, when he delivered the first sermon of Dhammacakkapavattana and when he attained mahāparinibbāna (great passing away.)

For the greater part of his life, he went round and collected almsfood and ate it frugally. Thus the Buddha practised so frugally that he could touch the hearts of those who revered frugality.

Winning unprecedented homage of the intelligentsia

According to an estimate the number of persons who revere men of dhamma is one to a hundred thousand of the population, and such persons are only those who are highly intelligent.

These persons do not consider personal appearance, fame and glory as of primary importance. Even if one is said to be frugal, they want to scrutinize the truth of that statement. Therefore, when Pāmokkha Brahmayu of Mithilā, who was 120 years old and most wealthy, heard about the attributes of the Buddha, he was sceptical. He considered that such a prominent man as himself ought not go and see the Buddha at once. So he sent his pupil Uttara to investigate.

When Uttara got to the Buddha, he studied the characteristic physical marks of the Buddha to see whether they all were those of great personages (mahā purisa). When he found that they were, he watched the way the Buddha walked, sat, ate and did other physical movements. He also studied the way the Buddha talked to his man and woman disciples. He took seven months to accomplish his mission. When he got back to his teacher, he related to him everything he saw and heard, not leaving out the pleasantness of the voice. He concluded his report with, 'The attributes of Buddha Gotama far exceeded what I have now related to you.'

At this, Pāmokkha Brahmayu raised his two palms together to his forehead in homage to the Buddha, chanting three times:

“Namotassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa”

(Veneration to the Exalted One, the Homage-Worthy, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened.)

Then he said: 'It will be good to go and see him. It will be good to ask and discuss dhamma with him.' Thus, the Buddha was endowed with Sīla and other attributes which could captivate the hearts of the upper level of the intelligentsia who could revere only those that abided by the dhamma.

Not only venerable but also gratifying

The glory of the Buddha which could win the respect and veneration of the four types of people was not only admirable but also gratifying. Devadatta made an attempt on the life of the Buddha by rolling down a huge rock from the top of the Gijjhakutta Hill. As the falling rock struck another rock, a small splinter flying from the collision hit the tip of the Buddha's foot, causing him severe pain. Then at midnight when the Buddha was staying in Maddakucchi Garden, many devas came to pay homage, but they did not see any sign of unbearable pain in the Buddha. They found him lying on the couch like a golden statue with a serene face. They, therefore, expressed their pleasure and congratulated the Buddha, thus:-

“Ajāneyyo vata bho samano Gotamo”

meaning, ‘the Buddha is, indeed, a perfect man. Because he is a perfect man, he can endure such severe pain without losing his composure (so calmly)’.

Devoid of Kilesas

The mental process of beings is serene to some extent while they are in a good mood but as it is permeated by the impurities of kilesas (defilements), such as rāga (passion), dosa (anger), moha (bewilderment), etc. it is usually not clear and serene.

The mental process of the Buddha, on the other hand, is always free from impurities and is serene. As regards the arahats, though they become free from kilesas and have attained Arahatsip, traces of kilesas and past impressions (vāsanā) still remain with them. As for the Buddha, no traces of kilesas and past impressions remain with him. He is completely free of them.

On account of such purity, the Buddha is accorded the attribute of Araham (worthy of special veneration).

Sabbaññutañāṇa

Just as the image on a clear surface of a mirror is clear and bright, the intellect of a clear mind is also clear and bright. Clear and correct thoughts and ideas will arise out of such a mind. Therefore, extremely pure Sīla, Samādhi and Sabbaññutañāṇa could arise in the extraordinarily clear mental process of the Buddha. By the power of Sabbaññutañāṇa, the Buddha is able to

comprehend the dhammas. On account of it, the Buddha is accorded the attribute of Sammāsambuddha (who truly comprehends all the dhammas by his own intellect and insight).

As the intellect of the Buddha is capable of comprehending all the dhammas, it is called Sabbaññutañāṇa. This intellect has three extraordinary capabilities:

- (1) the capability to comprehend all there is to comprehend without any exception;
- (2) the capability to decide upon the manner to preach each dhamma;
- (3) the capability to know the wish of those who are going to hear the discourse.

Because the Buddha is endowed with these three capabilities, when he sees any being who deserves to be preached, he determines the state of maturity of the beings Sīla, knowledge (paññā) and extent of kilesas, such as rāga, dosa, moha, and prepares the discourse that would suit the occasion. Then he delivers the discourse.

As the result, some became Buddhists, some became bhikkhus and some attained Sotapanna or higher maggas as they deserved.

The Buddha did not attain such great intellect by practising only in a single existence.

Just as a person has to prevent a thing from going in the direction he does not want it to go and make it go in the direction he wants it to go, when the Bodhisatta was fulfilling pāramīs, such as dāna, sīla, etc. he had to see that he did not go after honour and fame and luxuries but went only after paññā.

Just as a thing which has got to where one wants it to be has to unite with the thing which is already there, the dāna, sīla, etc. which have got to the side of paññā which is already there, have to be united with paññā.

There have been asankheyyas of worlds where such uniting has been going on.

In this way, when the Buddha fulfilled dāna pāramī, it was for the growth of paññā; when he fulfilled sīla pāramī, it was for the growth of paññā; when he fulfilled nekhamma pāramī, it was

for the growth of paññā. All the results arising out of the ten pāramīs had been solely for the growth of paññā.

Because of his extreme compassion, the Bodhisatta had great desire for the growth of his paññā to preach the right dhammas to the beings. As the result, he became the most noble and extraordinary person of the greatest compassion and of the greatest paññā in his ultimate existence (as the Buddha).

Aveṇika Attribute

The attributes which only the Buddhas can have (the distinguishing marks of the Buddha) and what the other virtuous ones cannot have are called Aveṇika guṇas which are of eighteen kinds.

Among them, the never diminishing ardent desire to do whatever is good for beings; the evergrowing diligence (viriya); preaching (desanā); concentration (samādhi), knowledge (paññā) are the distinguishing attributes of the Buddha. When other virtuous ones grow old, their diligence, preaching and concentration decline and they suffer from dullness of intellect.

Besides, the Buddha never does any physical, verbal and mental acts for the sake of fun, or unmindfully, or unintelligently, or hastily, or in vain or negligently. He does only beneficial deeds and he does them - physical, verbal and mental deeds - with great concentration.

When the Buddha walks, he always takes the first stride with his right foot and at a suitable distance puts it down flat on the ground. He walks neither quickly or slowly. His strides are as smooth as those of an elephant king and as graceful as those of a lion king.

Strength of Forbearance

The Buddha has physical strength, intellectual strength and the strength of followers and attendants but he never depends on them or uses them. He always depends only upon his strength of forbearance (khanti) .

Queen Māgandi, one of the three queens of King Utena of Kosambi bore a grudge against the Buddha. She instructed some hooligans of wrong faith to follow the Buddha on his almsfood round in Kosambi and hurl abuses and insults at him.

As the hooligans followed the Buddha and hurled abuses and insults, Venerable Ananda advised the Buddha to leave for another town. The Buddha replied, 'Ananda! If they follow me to the other town, where shall I go? Like the bull elephant which is engaged in battle and has only to go forward bearing the pain from the arrows that hit it, I, the Buddha, will forbear all the abuses and go my own way'.

Metta Power

When one is filled with scorching and burning dhammas, such as dosa (anger), māna (pride), etc. against one or many persons, his mind becomes devoid of moisture and is dry. On the other hand, metta dhamma which has the nature of affection between a mother and her offspring, which is devoid of scorching and burning nature, (e.g. dosa, māna, etc.) is moist. It has the nature of bright and pleasing appearance and of wishing the well being and happiness of others.

The Buddha has, from the moment he made the wish to become the Buddha, resolved 'Buddho bodheyyam', (when I myself know the dhammas, I will make the beings also know them). Accordingly, from the time he became the Buddha, his mettā, that is his desire for the beings to know the dhammas and to be happily free from dukkha, has become very great.

That is the reason why he scans the loka through his ñāṇa twice a day, once early in the morning and once in the day to find beings whom he should preach that day for their liberation. When he finds a deserving one he will go to that one even if he has to go far.

The Buddha's mettā extends even to the paribbājakas who are heretics. He, therefore, sometimes visits their monasteries and is always welcomed.

Once the Buddha set out early for Sāvatti for collecting almsfood and came near the monastery of Paribbājaka Poṭṭhapāda. At that time, Poṭṭhapāda's followers were talking loudly and vociferously on unprofitable topics, such as kings and princes, military commanders and armies, rebels and robbers.

Seeing the coming of the Buddha, Poṭṭhapāda called his followers to be silent, saying, 'Here comes Samaṇa Gotama. Remain quiet! Samana Gotama likes silence. When he sees a quiet place, he might come in'.

The Buddha came in and answered all the questions Poṭṭhapāda put to him.

As the Buddha was so friendly and accommodating, the paribbājakas respected him and some of them joined the Buddhist order.

Being the receptacle where the metta element that wishes the welfare of all beings resides, whenever the Buddha sees suffering beings, great compassion (mahā karuṇā) arises by itself in him.

Attending the sick monk

At one time, when the Buddha, accompanied by Venerable Ānanda, went on an inspection round of the monasteries, he saw a monk who was suffering from bowel disorders and was unable to clean himself of his own excretions. There was no one to nurse him as he had not volunteered to serve others in such a plight. The Buddha asked Venerable Ānanda to fetch water and washed the sick monk. Then gently lifting the monk with the help of Venerable Ānanda placed him on the couch.

Then, addressing the nearby monks who did not nurse the sick monk, the Buddha said, ‘Monks! You do not have your parents here to nurse you. If you do not nurse one another, who will come to nurse you? Therefore, all monks, upajjhayas (teachers) as well as pupils, should nurse one another in case of illness. If you do not do so, you will be deemed to be guilty of dukkatta āpatti (offence)’. He also explained about gīlānas (patients) who could be easily nursed and who could not be easily nursed.

The Buddha’s great compassion arose not only in seeing a person in dukkha but it also arose when he saw persons enjoying pleasures and luxuries forgetting to do kusala meritorious deeds for the good of their future existences.

He saw that because of their negligence, they would be in dukkha in their successive future existences. He pitied them very much as they were following the wrong path of sensual pleasures.

The Buddha felt great compassion on the pursuers of pleasures and luxuries because they did not see that they were day by day being pushed gradually by ageing (jarā) towards death (maraṇa); they did not see that there was no refuge for them against the dangers of ageing, illness and death; though they thought that their wealth was their permanent possession, when

death came they could not take with them even a small coin (pya); they had become slaves of craving (taṇhā) and had to find wealth and to do all its biddings during the short span of life before death.

The Buddha was all the time busily working for the good of beings because of his great compassion for them. Early in the day before dawn, he entered upon mahā karuṇā samāpatti to find out whom he must preach that day. When he saw a deserving one, he would preach to that one on his almsfood round.

At one time, on his almsfood round, the Buddha saw some children beating a snake. He admonished the children saying. 'Every being wants to be happy. Don't ill-treat others for the sake of one's pleasure. One who ill-treats others cannot have happiness in his next existence'. Thus, he admonished the children in a manner suitable to their age and understanding.

On return from the almsfood round, he sat on the foot washing stand. While washing his feet, he always admonished the monks to be always mindful and reminded them to remember always that it was an extremely rare thing to be reborn as a human being.

Then after assigning vipassanā meditation subjects to the monks, he stayed alone in seclusion for a while.

Then, he would mentally scan the world to see whom he should preach the dhamma that evening.

When those who came to hear the dhamma left, he bathed and rested.

At sunset, he received the monks who came to see him. He gave instructions in vipassanā meditation, he answered questions and he gave discourses. In this way, the first period of the night was spent.

The last part of the night of the Buddha fell into three parts. Firstly, he would stretch his limbs by pacing up and down. In the second part, he slept. In the third part, he rose and surveyed the world to discover whom he should preach that day.

In this way, the Buddha worked daily as if the welfare of all beings was solely his own responsibility. And he was able to discharge it fully, because he was physically strong and healthy, his loving-kindness and compassion on beings were far reaching and his wisdom was very great.

The Buddha thus worked day and night, with no respite, not for a few months or years, but for the whole of his fortyfive vassas up to the time he was about to pass away (his mahāparinibbana).

While he was staying at Vesāli, he intimated that he would realize parinibbāna (he would pass away) in three months’ time.

On the night of the day the Buddha was to pass away, he saw that a paribājjaka named Subbadda would achieve enlightenment after hearing his preaching. He, therefore, went on foot from Pāvā to Kusinara, a distance of about six miles, though he was suffering from bowel disorders discharging blood, and preached the dhamma to Subbadda.

When it was nearly dawn, he told the assembled monks to ask him if they had any doubts regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Practice.

Then, when the monks had no questions to ask as they had not any doubts and remained silent in expectation of the Buddha’s last words, he exhorted:

“Vaya dhammā saṅkhāra appamādena sampādetha’

It means “ All conditioned and compounded things (saṅkhāra) have the nature of decay and disintegration. With mindfulness endeavour diligently (to complete the task)”

Thus, the Buddha did his best without any respite even in his last moments and without minding his personal pain and fatigue for the well being of the loka.

There really has lived in this loka, the noblest and peerless one called the Buddha

- to expel the darkness of ignorance by the light of the dhamma;
- to expel what is really dukkha (suffering) which seems to be sukha (happiness) by real happiness (the bliss of Nibbāna);
- to expel the turmoil which overwhelms the loka by real peace;

As the benefits of his teaching, therefore, human being can

- when they are dominated by the darkness of ignorance remember the Buddha and by following the path he had shown, gain light;
- when they are dominated by the burning false (pseudo) sukha (happiness), human beings can remember the Buddha and by following the path he had shown, gain real happiness (sukha);
- when they are dominated by turmoil, human beings can remember the Buddha and by following the path he had shown, gain real peace (Nibbāna).

Though darkness is highly powerful, it has to vanish when light comes. There is no need to drive it away. Though dukkha (suffering) is highly powerful, it has to beat a hasty retreat when sukka comes. There is no need to drive it away. Though turmoil is highly powerful, it has to make itself scarce when peace arrives. There is no need to drive it away.

According to the path shown by the Buddha, the darkness, the dukkha and the turmoil are the attributes of atta dhamma (egoism, high self-esteem). Therefore, if one can get rid of atta by remembering the Buddha and following the path he has shown, the light, the real sukha and peace will come to one by themselves. The darkness, the dukkha and the turmoil will beat a hasty retreat by themselves.

Loka is beautiful because of the Buddha

From the point of view of essence (rasa), the loka is beautiful because of the appearance of the Buddha. Therefore, wherever the Buddha is, there is beauty. If it is said 'beauty' is the name of the abodes where light, sukha and peace dwell, who will say it is wrong?

CHAPTER V

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The second part of this book will deal with what the Buddha has done for the loka for the entire period forty-five years since he attained the Sabbaññutañāṇa (Perfect Wisdom) up to the time of his Mahāparinibbāna (great passing away). Salient points from various Nikāyas will be featured in five chapters as follows:-

I

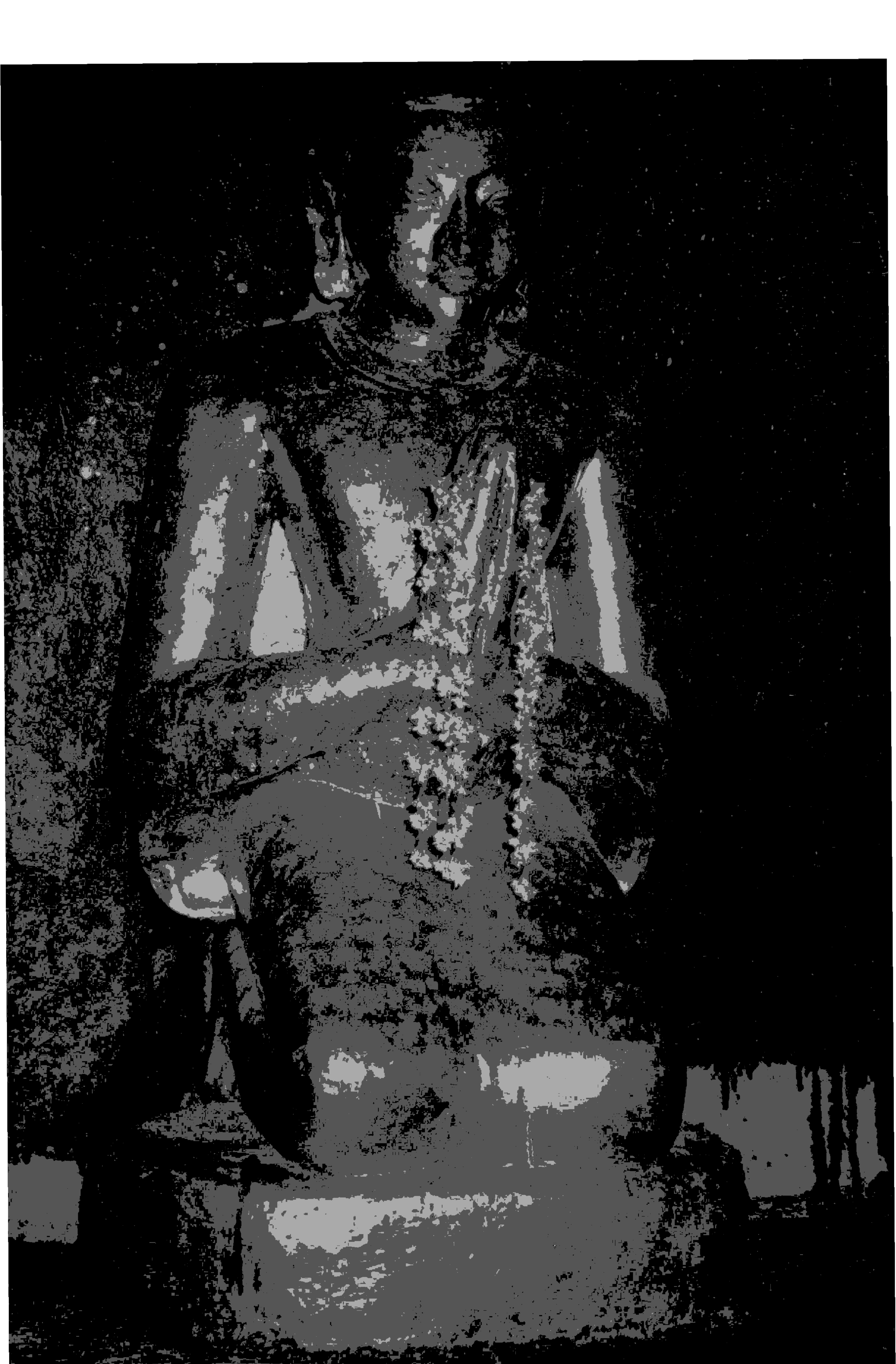
Rupakkhandha

By the demands of the aggregate of matter (Rupakkhandha) man naturally wants to eat well, to clothe himself well, to live well, and to be healthy. This chapter will show the way to eat well, to clothe oneself well, to live well and to be healthy according to the teachings of the Buddha.

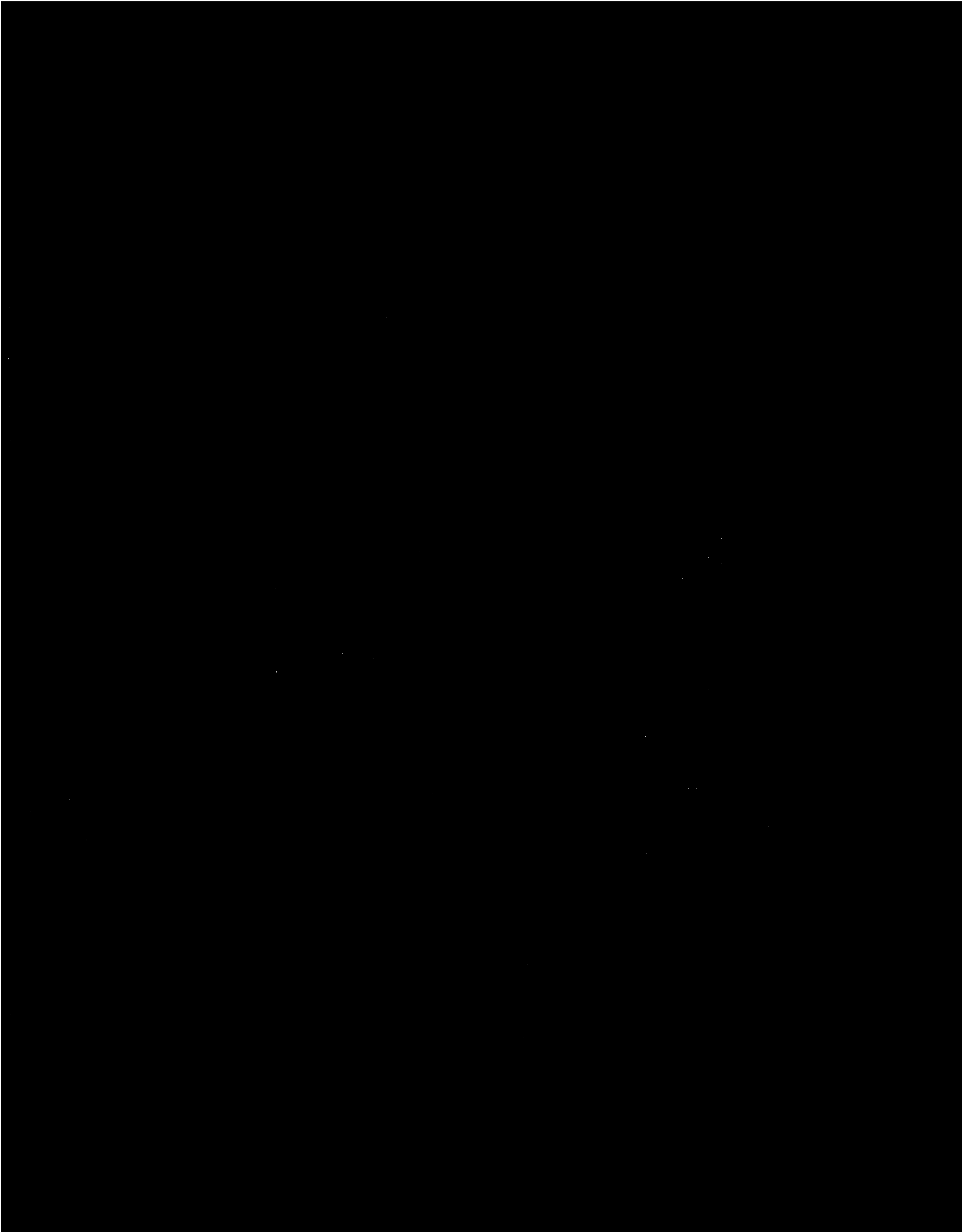
II

Vedanakkhandha

By the demands of the aggregate of feeling (Vedanakkhandha) man is not satisfied merely with the fulfilment of his material needs. He wants to live happily and contentedly throughout his life. This chapter will show the way to live happily and contentedly according to the teaching of the Buddha.



The Image of Shin Arahm, The Peerless Benefactor of Myanmars



Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda in which the relics of Shin Araham,
peerless benefactor of Myanmars are enshrined.
It is near Taungpa village at the foot of Tuywin Hill, Bagan.



HTEE-TA-HSAUNG PAGODA

IN WHICH THE RELICS OF THERA SHIN ARAHAM,
THE PEERLESS BENEFACTOR OF MYANMAR
ARE ENSHRINED

TAUNG-PA-YWA

ONE OF THE 19 VILLAGES OF PAGAN
WHEN IT WAS FIRST FOUNDED

THE NOBLE THERA SHIN ARAHAM ARRIVED IN PAGAN
BEFORE 1601, SĀSANA ERA(419 MYANMAR ERA) WHEN KING
ANAWRATHA BROUGHT THE PITAKAS FROM THATON TO PAGAN.

HE LIVED IN PAGAN DURING THE REIGNS OF
FOUR KINGS, NAMELY, ANAWRATHA, SAW LU, KYANSITTHA
AND ALAUNGSITHU(FIRST TWO YEARS OF HIS REIGN) AND
PASSED AWAY AT THE AGE OF 81.

THE PEOPLE OF PAGAN ENJOYED THE BENEFIT OF SHIN
ARAHAM'S TEACHINGS AND LEADERSHIP FOR MORE THAN 80
YEARS, NEARLY 80 YEARS.

ALL THE TEMPLES, PAGODAS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS
EDIFICES OF PAGAN WHICH THE PRESENT DAY MYANMARS PAY
HOMAGE AND THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD ADMIRE CAME INTO
BEING ONLY AFTER THERA SHIN ARAHAM ARRIVED IN PAGAN.

IT WAS AT THE FOOT OF TUYIN HILL THAT SHIN ARAHAM
FIRST SET HIS FOOT ON ARRIVAL IN PAGAN AND IT WAS ALSO
AT THE FOOT OF TUYIN HILL IN THIS HTEE-TA-HSAUNG
PAGODA THAT THE RELICS OF SHIN ARAHAM ARE ENSHRINED
FOR ALL TO REVERE IN HIS MEMORY.

ARIMADDANA PAGAN MANOMAYIDDI DHAMMAYON
HYAUNG-U.

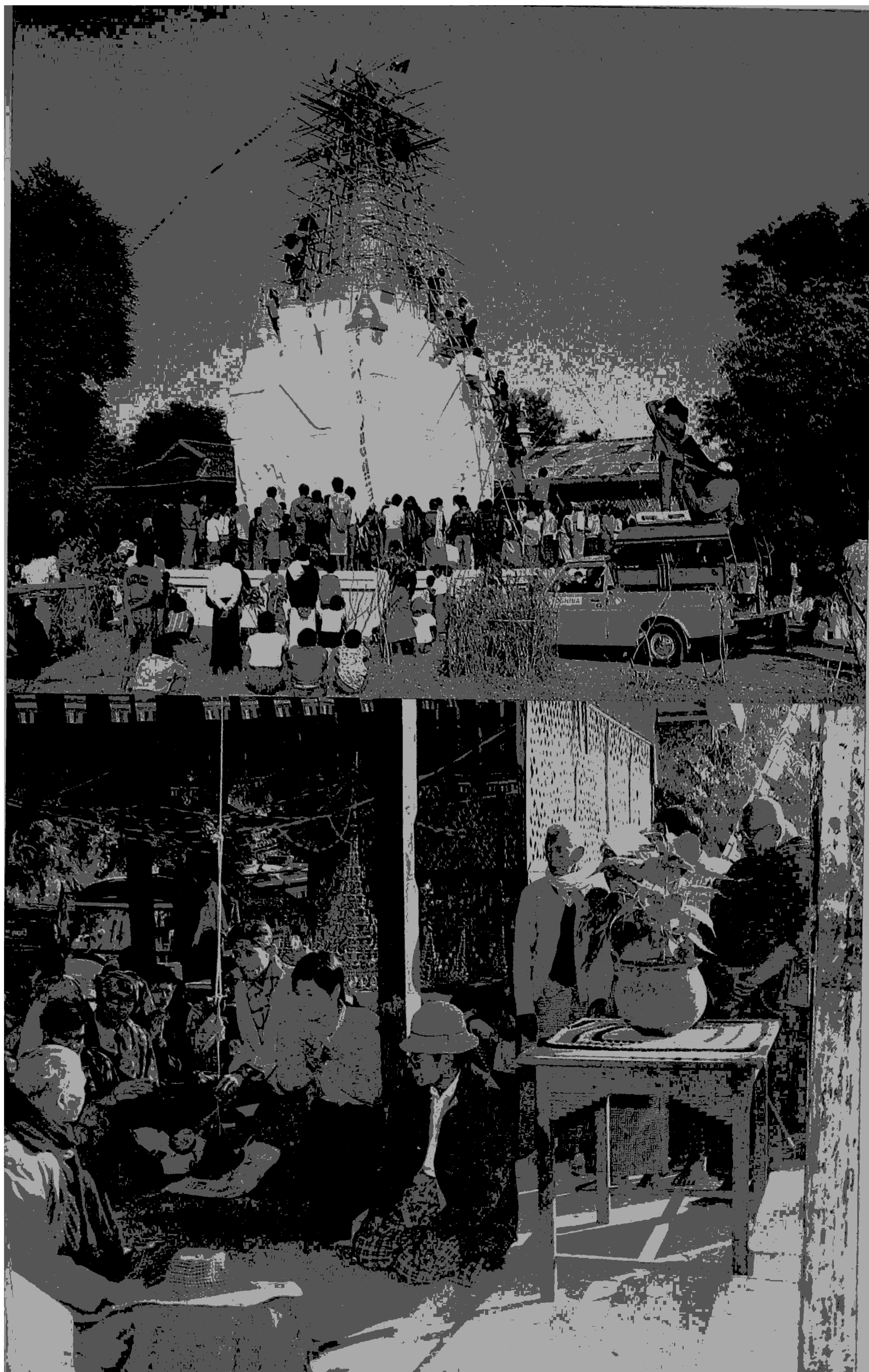
(STONE INSCRIPTION AT HTEE-TA-HSAUNG PAGODA)

(18-1-1984)

(a) Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda before
renovation. Arrival of U Htain Win
and party to renovate the pagoda.

(b) The pagoda seen after
renovation

(c) The stone inscription in English
inside the pagoda.



Hoisting of the new Htee (finial) of Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda on 11-1-92



Devotees solemnly declaring the purity of their morality
at the Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda under the counsel of Bagan Sayadaws
on the 8th waxing day of the Myanmar month of Varso (July) every year.

SHIN ARAHAM

Paying homage to the worthy

To

Shin Araham, the peerless benefactor of Myanmar, in great reverence, appreciation and memory, by offering nine golden finials (htees) at the Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda in which his relics are enshrined,

and

the people of Bagan who are also our benefactors,
as pāramī deed of merit.

Among the historically great leaders of Myanmar, King Anawrahta is the most distinguished. Besides building Myanmar into a unified and strong kingdom, he incomparably worked for the benefit and welfare of its people;

King Kyansitha, the next great king of Bagan, carried on the good work of Anawrahta for the stability of the welfare, prosperity and greatness of the kingdom and its people;

King Alaungsithu, another great king of Anawrahta's line, in his turn, maintained the work of his ancestors for the continued benefit and welfare of Bagan and its people.

These three benevolent Myanmar leaders, it must not be forgotten, received the inspiration, the leadership ability, the knowledge and the right belief from the teachings of the Samgha (Buddhist monks) headed by Shin Araham so that the fruits of their work are still being enjoyed by the present day Myanmar.

For this reason, only the Samgha headed by Shin Araham were the original and chief benefactors of the Myanmar.

In recognition and appreciation of the work of the Samgha headed by Shin Arahāṃ, and the people of Bagan who did everything they could for the benefit and welfare of the Sāsana and the kingdom, we offer nine ornamented golden finials (htees) and an image of Shin Arahāṃ to the Htee-ta-hsaung Pagoda in which the sacred relics of Shin Arahāṃ are enshrined, as a parami deed of merit.

The Venerable Shin Arahāṃ arrived in Bagan at the young age of 20 years in 1601 Sāsana Era, 419 Myanmar Era and at the ripe age of 81 years in 1658 Sāsana Era, 476 Myanmar Era and in the second year of Alaungsithu's reign attained parinibbāna (passed away). He resided nearly 60 years in Bagan and taught and guided the kings and people.

(The above is from the stone inscription at the Htee-ta-hsaung pagoda.)

SHIN ARAHAM

**The peerless benefactor of
the people of Myanmar**

Shin Araham and Anawrahta

The scholars asserted that the year Shin Araham attained parinibbāna (passing away) was 476 Myanmar Era, 1658 Sāsana Era, the second year of King Alaungsithu's reign. At that time Shin Araham was 81 years old.

They also asserted that the year King Anawrahta ascended the throne was 406 Myanmar Era, 1588 Sāsana Era, 1044 A.D. It is to be taken, therefore, that he was born in 376 Myanmar Era and he ascended the throne at the age of 30 years and that Shin Araham arrived in Bagan and met Anawrahta in the ninth year of his reign, 415 Myanmar Era, 1567 Sāsana Era. At that time, Anawrahta was 39 years old.

If Shin Araham's age of 81 years at the time of his passing away is deducted from 476 Myanmar Era, he must have been born in 376 Myanmar Era, 1577 Sāsana Era, and at the time he met Anawrahta he was just about 20 years old, it should be deduced.

Whether the years quoted above are correct or otherwise, it is absolutely certain that Shin Araham had arrived in Bagan before the piṭakas reached there in 419 Myanmar Era 1601, Sāsana Era. (The dates were based primarily on the Myazeti Inscription and Bagan History).

Time before piṭakas reached Thaton

Up to more than 900 Sāsana Era, the piṭakas had not yet been recorded in writing on palm leaves in the Jambudipa (Indian Sub-continent).

Only after about 950 Sāsana Era, the piṭakas written on palm leaves reached Thuvunnabhumi (Thaton). It was a great occasion of rejoicing and festivities for the royalty and the people. They welcomed the piṭakas with veneration and honour and unprecedented festivals as if the Buddha himself was arriving there in person. They built a magnificent pavilion at the head of the palace and kept them there.

Thaton Pariyatti Sāsana

At that time the chief elder of the Buddhist monks in Thaton was Ashin Anomadassi, who belonged to a long lineage of prominent monks. Two monks who had participated in the third Buddhist Council, namely Ashin Sona and Uttara, came to Thaton on missionary work. Ashin Sona had ten disciples who resided with him and the chief of whom was Ashin Mahasobhita, whose pupil was Ashin Mahāsomadatta, whose pupil was Ashin Thumanatissa, whose pupil was Ashin Mahāsobhāge whose pupil was Ashin Somadatta and whose pupil was Ashin Anomadassī.

While Ashin Anomadassi was doing missionary work in Thaton, the Samghas residing in Myanmar, Mon, Rakkhine, Shan, Yun, Linzin and Sokkate came to him one by one. They learnt the Pitakas, both the texts and the commentaries by heart and returned to their respective localities to propagate the teachings. As the result, the Buddha Sāsana is flourishing in those places up to the present day.

This is from the account given in the Glass Palace
Chronicle (Hmannan Yazawundawgyi)

Thus the palm leaf writings of the Pitakas reached Thaton (Thuvannabhumi) after 950 Sāsana Era, and from there they proceeded to Bagan in 1601 Sāsana Era.

Shin Araham and the Samgha including arahatas (those who had attained arahatship, that is, attained all the four maggas), propagated the Buddha Sāsana in Bagan and it is heartening to note that it is still flourishing up to the present day.

Food for Thought

The emergence of such an outstanding monk of pāramī as Shin Araham from the environment over which successive members of the samgha including the arahatas had continuously closely watched, might be attributed to the extraordinary insight and knowledge to work for the welfare of beings. It should be noted that it is in conformity with the four acinteyyas which are beyond thought or reason and are inconceivable.

The four acinteyyas are : -

1. Buddha Visayyo acinteyyo = the wisdom and powers of the Buddha are inconceivable ;

2. Jhana visayyo acinteyyo = the powers of jhāna are inconceivable;
3. Kammavipako acinteyyo = the results of kamma are inconceivable;
4. Lokasantahano acinteyyo = the idea of loka is inconceivable.

Bearing in mind that these four dhammas which the Buddha himself has said to be inconceivable (acinteyyo), we should all strive to the best of our ability for the benefit and welfare of ourselves and of all the beings in the world in the Buddha Sāsana in which the tree Ratanas (the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Samgha) reside and which can bestow all kinds of benefits to all beings, human, deva and brahma.

The Buddha appeared for the benefit and welfare of the loka. Having appeared, the Buddha worked himself in his life time and also let his disciples work, during and after his life time, for the benefit and welfare of all beings.

Though the Buddha has passed away at the age of 80 years and the completion of 45 vassa (lents), he has comprehensively preached all the dhammas that should be preached for the benefit and welfare of the beings in the world. All these dhammas are within everybody's reach just as they were in his life time.

We should not forget the gratitude we owe to the samgha (monks) who have abided in and practised the dhammas for the benefit and welfare of themselves and the loka. They have been doing it from the time the Buddha appeared more than 2500 years ago up to now. We should always bear this fact in mind till it becomes habitual. We should verify these facts and strive to practise the dhammas faithfully.

Benefactors of Bagan Era

To enable the readers to see quickly who the greatest benefactors of the Myanmars are, we must point our finger at Shin Arahama and the Ariya Samghas (monks who had attained maggas) and worldings of good moral conduct of Bagan. They are our chief and greatest benefactors.

Shin Araham and Bagan

It is an established fact that Shin Araham arrived in Bagan in 419 Myanmar Era, 1601 Sāsana Era, before the coming of the Pīṭakas there.

It was stated in Vam̄sa Dipani written by Maihtee Sayadaw that Shin Araham came to Bagan at the age of 25 years in the ninth year of Anawrahta's reign. The year Anawrahta ascended the throne was given as 406 Myanmar Era, 1588 Sāsana Era, in the Myazeti and Dhammazeti inscriptions and Jātarpone history. These dates have been accepted by the scholars. If it is true that he arrived in the ninth year of Anawrahta's reign, it was 415 Myanmar Era. The statement that the Pīṭakas arrived in Bagan from Thaton in 419 Myanmar Era 1601, Sāsana Era, is therefore, quite reasonable.

It is also fairly near enough to the statement of Vam̄sa Dipani that Shin Araham arrived accompanied by four monks in Bagan at the age of 25 years, and during the reigns of four kings, namely Anawrahta, Sawlu, Kyansitha and Alaungsithu, he established the Buddha Sāsana and gave guidance to the kings and the people to work for their progress and prosperity.

It is, therefore, definitely established that Shin Araham lived in Bagan from 419 Myanmar Era, 1601 Sāsana Era, up to the second year of Alaungsithu's reign, 476 Myanmar Era, 1658 Sāsana Era, for a total of 57 years and passed away at the age of 81 years. The fact that Anawrahta and the Bagan people received his guidance and leadership during his life time is borne by the great benefits the Myanmars have all along enjoyed up to the present day.

A study of the Myanmar history will reveal that no other period in Myanmar history can be compared with that of Bagan in greatness and prosperity.

Need to know completely

The Bagan history says that Shin Araham, Kyansitha, Alaungsithu, Minmahāgiri (Popa nat) and Thetton King had prayed together in one of their existences. At that time Shin Araham was an upaska (a devout layman) and Kyansitha was a puppy. Shin Araham showed Alaungsithu the bones of his previous existence.

When King Anawrahta was choosing the site for the construction of a pagoda on Tankyi hill he let the white elephant

roam the place to spot the site. When the white elephant lay down at a delapidated pagoda, he asked Shin Arahām about it. As Shin Arahām saw the sacred relics enshrined in the pagoda he told the king that it was one of the 84,000 pagodas built by King Siridhammasoka of India. The six kinds of rays emanating from the Buddha's person (yawunchis) resided in that pagoda.

Shin Arahām said ; ‘ Oh King ! You have been commander-in-chief of King Siridhammasoka and have supervised the erection of this pagoda. In that reign, you were born again and became commander-in-chief named Dhammanugaha and you supervised the maintenance of that pagoda.

‘Oh king! it will be more beneficial to have the Sacred Tooth enshrined in a pagoda built at the top of Tankyi Hill than keeping it in the palace.’

And King Anawrahta rebuilt the pagoda on Tankyi Hill.

The above words are spoken by Shin Arahām. To those who possess the knowledge to appreciate Shin Arahām's qualities of an arahat (who had gained all the four maggas) and who believe in the four acinteyyas, no explanation is called for.

To those who are devoid of faith and knowledge in the qualities of the Samgha (monks) and have not abided and practised the dhammas taught by the Buddha, it may be quite a different matter. (Think of the reason why Shin Arahām disclosed the fact that they had prayed together in a past existence and related the lives of Kyansitha and Alaungsithu. The chief reason is because Shin Arahām wanted them not to be proud of their present existences).

The inscription on Kyansitha's ascendance to the throne reads :

“After our Mahāthera Shin Arahām has administered the precepts to the audience, 4108 monks who have taken their seats both inside and outside the hall headed by Mahāthera Shin Arahām chanted the paritta”

This passage is found in the publication “ Stone inscription of King Kyansitha of Bagan (gatyī), compilation of Mon stone inscriptions” edited by U Chit Thein. The great ancient teaching monasteries for monks in the Bagan period (referred to in the above passage) deserve no feeling of awe but the taking of immense pride in.

The great extent nationalism and patriotism had developed in the people of Bagan as the result of the teachings and the leadership of Shin Arahām and the samgha was evident. During the dying moments of Kyansitha, Shin Arahām was at bed side. In the construction of the Ananda Pagoda, arahats (monks who have gained all the four maggas) came to help but Kyansitha was himself unable to distinguish them. He knew them to be arahats only because Shin Arahām was there to tell him.

Offering of Gratitude

Persons who have a sense of gratitude and recognize it and who pay it back as much as they can are to be found only in a civilized nation in the world. The manner in which such debts of gratitude should be paid back is well covered in the admonitions of the Buddha. One needs only to understand and put them into practice. This has been practically shown as an example to be emulated by the Myazeti Inscription of Prince Rājakumāra (son of Kyansitha). The Buddha very much praised those who had a sense of gratitude.

This present article

May I inform the readers that I have tried hard to write and publish a book under the title of “Our Benefactors, the People of Bagan” for some years. I have approached and discussed the scheme with some scholars and writers but my efforts have not yet materialised so far.

As I have been thus trying, I come to realize by and by that it is absolutely essential for the people first of all to know the great qualities of Shin Arahām, who is the chief benefactor of Bagan, and his work. Feeling that something about it ought to be done as soon as practically possible so that the people will know that after Shin Arahām passed away, the Htee-ta-hsaung pagoda was built and his sacred relics have been enshrined in it.

To put this plan into effect, we renovated the Htee-ta-hsaung pagoda and offered nine golden ornamental finials (htees) and an image of Shin Arahām as token of our gratitude.

Without waiting for the completion of the book ‘Our Benefactors, the People of Bagan’, various papers concerning with the topic are incorporated in this article.

Faith and its effect

More than 2500 years ago, a Buddha appeared in this world. It is my implicit belief that there are up to the present day samghas (monks), including arahats (who have attained all the four maggas) and ordinary monks of good conduct who are faithfully and diligently preserving and practising the dhammas taught by the Buddha. I, therefore, believe in and accept, without qualification, the teachings and directions of the Pitakas.

On account of this belief, I have striven successfully to offer ornamental finials (htees) to the pagoda, in which the sacred relics of Shin Arahām are enshrined, as a pāramī deed of merit.

I and my comrades in doing this meritorious deed for the propagation of the Sāsana do not aim at or long for merely Kāmavacara merits, such as pleasures and luxuries of human beings, devas and brahmas. We do not hope for the well being of our own selves. We only want to become good and gifted persons who have a sense of gratitude and are incorrupt and are not ungrateful.

Peerless Benefactor of Myanmars

All the attributes and greatness of Bagan are chiefly those earned by the Bagan people who received and followed the teachings of Shin Arahām who was their main influence.

No Myanmar historian can contradict the fact that Shin Arahām arrived in Bagan and Anawrahta, together with Kyansitha, Alaungsithu and the Bagan people received his teachings. All agree in this.

The renovations carried out to the Kyaik-tai-mahadat pagoda and Kyaikhtalin pagoda in Bilin Range and Thuvannabhumi (Thaton) by Kyansitha in the 14th year of his reign could not have been done without the advice and approval of Shin Arahām. These pagodas might have been built in the life time of the Buddha to enshrine the Buddha's hairs. (Hsakesa dhātu wun)

There, however, could have been differences according to the localities, capabilities and knowledge.

For example : - Anawrahta, Saw Lu, Kyansitha and Alaungsithu met Shin Arahām and received the teachings, but only Anawrahta offered even his life and placed himself under the care and guidance of Shin Arahām.

Anawrahta was not only the pioneer who worked for the benefit and welfare of the Myanmars but also the leader who carried on this work till his last breath.

Shin Araham came and met King Anawratha not just through ordinary insight but through an insight which foresaw the future and by the power of the pāramīs he had fulfilled and by the instigation of his gurus.

Ordinary historians would in no way be able to understand it ; ordinary minds would not be able to comprehend it fully. Only those who know kamma and its powers (out of the four ancinteyyas, inconceivables) will be able to accept it.

Shin Mahinda's visit to Ceylon

When Arahantta Shin Mahinda, son of King Siridhammā Soka, planned to visit Ceylon for the propagation of the Buddha's teaching, he waited for a propitious time. Likewise, only after Shin Araham and his guru arahats had learned about the state of the kammās of King Anawrahta and the Bagan people, they came to Bagan at a favourable time to meet the persons of pāramī.

The meetings of King Asoka and Nigiyodha Samanera; King Devanampuja Tissa and Asandhimitta; Shin Mahinda and Samghamitta Theri for the purpose of propagating the Buddha Sāsana were not the results of ordinary kammās. They met each other as the result of their past extraordinary kammās.

Shin Araham and Anawrahta

Likewise, the meeting of Shin Araham and Anawrahta, Kyansitha, Alaungsithu, Rājakumāra and others was the result of their past kammās which worked in co-ordination and in support of one another.

Such happening are explained in the verse introducing Parajika Atthakatha and Dhammapada Atthakatha as follows:-

“Pubbeva sannivāsena; paccupanna hitena vā; Evam tam jāyate pemam; uppalamiva yathodake.”

Uppalamiva = three kinds of brown, white and red lotus flowers grow in water ; annamivā = and besides other kinds of lotus flowers thrive in water ; udake = in the cool and clear water free from heat ; jāyamānam = they bloom forth beautifully ; tathā = exactly in like manner ; tam pemam = the flower of love and affection of parents and relatives: pubbena sanni vā sena = because they have lived amiably together in the not too distant past; paccuppanna hitennava = (and) because of great beneficial and welfare deeds done in the present existence; evam = (Imehi haraneti) because of deeds done both in the past existences and the present existence; jāyate = affection for one another goes on growing and they became inseparable; [Paṛajikam Basā tikā (First Vol. p.227, Asoka and Nigor Somane]

Who do meritorious deeds today

Though those who do meritorious deeds and work for good of the Sāsana today cannot accurately visualize their past exist-

ences, they can do so only because of the admonitions and exhortations of good teachers, friends and parents. The Amarapura Mahā Gandhayon Sayadaw Ashin Janakābhi Vamisa exhorted that to come across a perfect teacher is a very difficult and rare thing. He himself was able to work for the Sāsānā as much as he wished on account of the instruction given to him by Sagaing Mahā Gandhayon Sayadaw, Abhayaṛma Sayadaw, Pakokku Mahā Visutārāma Sayadaw, and Maungmya Sayadaw. There were many Sayadaws, he said, who were as much as or more learned than he, but as they had no chance to meet with perfect teachers, they could not do for the Sāsānā as much as they ought to have done.

Those of us who are doing meritorious deeds at the present day are able to do so because of the help and the support of their past karmas and of the present good teachers and friends. If we want to do deeds merely for the earning of ordinary merit, we can do them at any place at any time.

We are now doing deeds of merit particularly for the Shin Araham Dhātu Ceti so that it may become more and more prominent and well-known because we have learnt from "The new history of the Shwezigon Pagoda" written by Agga Mahā Pandita Sayadaw U Nandavamisa of Pakokku Mahāsutārāmā Central Monastery about the cremation of Shin Araham's remains when he attained parinibbana and enshrining the relics in a pagoda which is still standing now built by King Alaungsithu and the people. (Please read Sayadaw U Nandavamisa's letter in that book.)

Shin Araham's Dhātu Ceti

If we have a sense of gratitude, and the needed capacity and favourable conditions and circumstances are present, it is my belief that we should venerate and honour Shin Araham's Dhātu Ceti with Saddha (faith) and Paññā (wisdom) in no way less than or inferior to those of the Bagan people in the building and veneration of the Shwezigon Pagoda, the Ananda Pagoda, the Sabbaññu Pagoda and other pagodas.

Shin Araham had mastered the four branches of astrology at a young age and learnt the whole of the Pitakas as a novice before his ordination to monkhood, it is said. Like Shin Mahāmoggaliputta Tissa Thera, and Shin Nāgasena Thera, Shin Araham was endowed with the required qualities to work for the benefit and welfare of Sāsānā. One with ordinary knowledge will not be able to fathom the pāramī knowledge of those great Theras (sayadaws) like Shin Araham. Only the regional conditions and environments and the techniques differed, but their nature is the same. (Refer to the Introduction to 'Tabhava Sāsānā')

Our weakness

The Pakokku Sayadawgyi had for more than sixty years, begining 1929, looked for the place, where Shin Araham attained

parinibbāna, and found it. It is the site of the Htee - ta - saung pagoda (now known as htee - Saung Pagoda) at Taungpya village. The Sayadawgyi deserves our great gratitude. Realizing that he owed an immense debt of gratitude to Shin Araham, he had tried hard to locate the spot. We learnt about it only in 1985 and I believe that this was due to the deficiency of our learning and the inferiority of our kammās.

The urge to the Readers

May I sincerely urge the readers to realize the great debt of gratitude we owe to the benefactors who from the time they could reason did not permit makkha dhammas (which conceal one's vices) rise in their hearts and do their utmost for the benefit and welfare of themselves and the people at large and to honour and venerate them accordingly.

Asservation of Truth for Benefactors of Bagan

Namotassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa

1. It is true that more than 2,500 years ago, Sabbaññu Buddha who knew all the dhammas without any exception appeared in this world for the benefit and welfare of the beings in this world. (This asseveration is the truth).

2. It is true that every worlding who abides in and practises the dhammas taught by Sabbaññu Buddha duly enjoys to the full, in the present existence and beyond, the benefit of physical and mental happiness and well being and is freed from all kinds of dukkha. (This asseveration is the truth).

3. It is true that the last admonition of the Buddha was: "Ānanda! It may occur to you all that the words of dhammas are now being separated from the Teacher, the teacher being no more. Ānanda! Do not think thus."

"Ānanda! The dhammas I have taught and the Vinaya Rules I have prescribed are your teacher (Buddha) when I am no more."

The Buddha had truly said it. (See p.147 of Myanmar Translation of Pali of Mahānibbāna Sutta).

It is, therefore, really true that the Saṃgha (monks) and laymen who respect and honour the Vinaya (code of conduct for monks) in accordance with the Piṭakas as if the Buddha himself were alive and was instructing them in person, and without longing for gifts, honour and fame, being noble persons of good conduct like those in the life time of the Buddha, can realize Nibbāna.

It is really true that after the passing away of the Sabbaññu Buddha, there have been mahāthera disciples who were endowed with insight into the future, such as Ashin Mahākassapa, Ashin Anuruddha, Ashin Ānanda, Ashin Upāli, etc., who were the participants in the First Buddhist Council, -

There have also been Arahatta theras, such as Ashin Yasa, Ashin Sabbakami, Ashin Yevata and so on -

There also have been Ashin Moggaliputtassa and arahatta theras led by him, and laymen who were not ariyas but who had implicit faith in the Three Ratanas like Asoka Mahārajā who supported the Sāsana.

There truly also have been noble theras, who braved through all kinds of dangers, calamities and disasters, such as rebellions, famine, pestilences, etc., defying death, and recorded the Piṭakas in writing on palm leaves, instead of committing them to memory.

The fruits of the labours of ariyas monks (who have attained maggas) and non - ariya monks (who have not yet attained maggas) who have striven hard for the benefit and welfare of the worldlings are still being enjoyed up to now. The great debt of gratitude we thus owe to those monks is still evident today. (This asseveration is the truth).

4. It is true that the chief benefactors who had introduced, taught, learned, kept clean, propagated and maintained the Piṭikas were Arahatta Shin Araham and monks of good conduct (lajji samgha) and King Anawrahta who put unquestioning and unreserved faith in the Three Ratanas and entrusted even his life in the cause of the Sāsana and his guru Shin Araham. (This asseveration is the truth)

5. My present effort to make a large number of people known about the Bagan people, who are our benefactors, is to pay back the debt of gratitude we owe to them. I am not doing it expecting any gain - riches, fame and honour for myself. (This asseveration is the truth)

6. My purpose in writing and presenting this article on 'Our benefactors the people of Bagan' is no other than to exhort the public to cultivate a genuine sense of gratitude towards the samgha for the perpetuation of the Three Ratanas and the incorruption, stability and propagation of the Sāsana. (This asseveration is the truth)

7. I have humbly dedicated my life (the five khandhas, nāma and rūpa) to the Three Ratanas and the Sāsana where the Three Ratanas reside and renouncing my life and possessions, have taken refuge in them. (This asseveration is the truth)

8. May these asseverations of the truth of mine be heard by the Sabbaññu Buddha, and by all the human, deva, brahma, vijjadhara and samgha ariyas as well as devas, vijjās, brahmas, samghas who are powerful and who are protecting the Sāsana.

9. As the result of these asseverations of truth, may I and all men, women, boys and girls of all ages, who are my companions in working for the cause of the Sāsana, without

exception, gain both worldly and supramundane benefits as much as they desire.

10. For presenting the attributes and qualities of Shin Arahant and the ariya and the puthujjana monks of good conduct who are the peerless benefactors of the Myanmar and as the result of the asseverations of the truth, may all my deeds, physical, verbal and mental, are free from mistakes and in conformity with the teachings of the Buddha in this very existence of mine and may the Myanmars be able to settle the debt they owe, and thus the efficacy and effectiveness of my asseverations of truth, of the Powers of the Three Ratanas, of the Sāsana of the ariya and the puthujjana samgha will become evident.

My Efforts

My efforts to publish the book "Our Benefactors, the People of Bagan" and the article "The Attributes of the Samgha" and the offering of nine golden "htees" ornamented finials and an image of Shin Arahant and the construction of walls of the compound, ponds and monasteries for the Htee - ta - Saung pagoda, etc., have not been done out of my admiration of the wonderful pagodas of Bagan and other edifices or to emulate or vie with the work of the ancient kings.

I am not striving hard to earn any material gain, honour and fame or for the sake of human, deva and brahmas luxuries. I have done these deeds just to pay back the debt of gratitude we owe to Anawrahta, Kyansitha, Alaungsithu and others and the people of Bagan who had sincerely worked for the benefit and welfare of the Myanmars.

I have tried hard because of my wish to see that the present day Myanmars, who are reaping the benefits of the work of the People of Bagan, recognize and become aware of the debt they owe and demonstrate their indebtedness to these benefactors. If they do so I will feel that my efforts have been more than repaid.

"One good turn deserves another"

If someone has helped you, you should help him in return in one way or other. The help you receive should not be ignored or forgotten. The recognition of the help received is called 'kataññuta' (gratitude, deep thankfulness) and if one speaks of it and pays it back in acknowledgement, he is called a noble person 'katavedi'. (From Maghadeva)

**BUDDHA SASANAM CIRAM TITTHATU.
ANAGATE SASANA LAJJI RAKKHISSATI.**

Htein Win

Sponsor for paying back
the debt of gratitude owed to
benefactors of Bagan and the Samgha.

(14 . 8 . 91)

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