

DHAMMA RATANĀ

VOLUME II



ASHIN KUNDALĀBHIVĀMSA

Saddhammaramsi Meditation Centre

Yangon

2003

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Dhamma Ratana

Vol II

Ashin Kunḍalābhivamisa

Mahāsi Nāyaka,

Agga Mahā Kammatṭhānācariya

Saddhammaramī Sayadaw

Translated by Dr. Kay Mya Yee

Edited by the Editorial Board
Saddhammaramī Meditation Centre

Yangon 2002 Myanmar



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AGGA MAHĀ KAMMAṬṬHANĀCARIYA**

Dhamma Ratana Volume II

Sabbadānam dhammadānam jināti

The Gift of Truth Excels All Gifts

Dhamma Ratanā Volume II has been sponsored

by

Gregory G. Y. Pai Ph.D

Hawaii, U.S.A.

In Loving Memory of

His

Mother and Father

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Preface

The dhamma talks in this book are chosen by the Ven. Saddhammaramisi Sayadaw from his numerous priceless dhamma discourses. There are fourteen dhamma talks altogether in this book. There are more dhamma talks on sīla. In climbing a stairway one has to step on the first rung and so on, in order to reach the top of the stairs. Similarly, the noble individuals wishing to attain the bliss of nibbāna have to practise the three training of sīla, samādhi and paññā.

Samādhi can be developed only by observing sīla firmly. When samādhi is well developed then only one will be endowed with paññā. Therefore, it is significant to know about sīla thoroughly and practise accordingly.

Sīla is beneficial not only for supramundane purposes but also for mundane success and achievements. A person who is endowed with sīla will be successful in social and economic affairs because people trust and rely upon him. On the other hand, people will not trust and associate with a person who is not endowed with sīla. That is why it is necessary to understand sīla and its benefits, and to practise accordingly. Sīla for monks and laities are separately and explicitly explained in this book. After learning how many precepts the monks have to observe the people will come to revere the monks more and more.

The Exalted One had expounded dhamma discourses through out the forty five vasa. All these dhamma are included in

the Dhammacakkappavattana dhamma, which is the first sermon delivered by the Enlightened One to the five ascetics. It is therefore, this noble dhamma which should be learned, comprehended and practised by all Buddhists. This Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta is explained clearly in this book.

Apart from this Sutta many other dhamma discourses which are interesting and beneficial for the readers, are included in this book. Since the readers will have both supramundane and mundane benefits from this book, it is titled "Dhamma Ratanā."

It is the sole responsibility of the translator if there is anything amiss in this book. It is also expected that the readers will study this book forgiving these shortcomings. I sincerely wish the readers will be able to practise ardently the satipaṭṭhāna vipassanā dhamma and attain magga, phala and nibbāna after reading this book.

Mya Yee
November, 2002

Dhamma Ratana Volume II

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Finally, on behalf of the Editorial Board, a word of thanks and Sādhu to the generous donor Mr. Gregory G. Y. Pai, Ph.D.

Mya Yee

November, 2002

1. Four Types of Uposatha Sīla

Most Buddhists fast on the Uposatha (Sabbath) Days. In the Teachings of the Buddha, the days for observation of eight or nine precepts are called Uposatha days. The eighth and fifteenth days of the waxing half of the Lunar month and the eighth and either the fourteenth or the fifteenth days of the waning half of the Lunar month are the fasting days. The number of precepts may be eight or nine, but the ways of observing are different. There are four ways of observing sīla.

Four Ways of observing Sīla

1. Hānabhāgiya Sīla - the unbeneficial observation of sīla. A person observes sīla, nevertheless he is unaware of whether one precept or two are breached. He never associates with those who observe sīla seriously. Moreover he enjoys in thinking of the various sensuous pleasures. This way of observation of sīla is an inferior type.

Motto: *Unaware of breaching sīla or not.
While observing sīla.
It is Hānabhāgiya sīla.*

2. Thitibhāgiya Sīla - mere observation of sīla. A certain person observes sīla, but does not contemplate samatha or vipassanā meditation or perform the austerity practice. He is just careful not to infringe any precept. This is a mediocre type of observing sīla.

Motto: *Not practising samatha or vipassanā meditation
While observing sīla.
It is Thitibhāgiya sīla.*

3. Visesabhāgiya Sīla - Sīla with significance. A certain person observes precepts and also practises samatha meditation. This is a noble type of fasting.

Motto: *Practising samatha meditation .
While observing sīla.
It is Visesabhāgiya sīla.*

4. Nibbedhabhāgiya Sīla - Penetrating sīla. A certain person observes sīla and practises vipassanā meditation. This observation of sīla is the most noble one since it penetrates the kilesa, such as lobha, dosā and moha. The dhamma audience are the observers of the most noble sīla because you practise vipassanā meditation.

Motto: *Practising vipassanā meditation.
While observing sīla.
It is Nibbedhabhāgiya sīla.*

The Samatha Meditation

The samatha meditation is also beneficial, therefore, you should know how to practise it. In a country the rulers have body-guard for their safety, and armed forces to protect the country. So also we should protect ourselves from the external and internal enemies. The physical body, as it is, is useless and unworthy, however it is worthy for the supramundane benefit. It is our body upon which we observe the phenomena of dhamma. If attacked by the external enemies we lose just one existence, however we will be destroyed for many existences by the internal enemies such as lobha, dosa and moha.

The Four Guarding Dhamma

The internal enemies are to be prevented by the four guarding dhamma so as to realize the most aspired nibbāna.

They are -

- (a) To practise Buddhānussati Contemplation that is to reflect upon the attributes and omniscience of Buddha.
- (b) Mettā Contemplation - to radiate loving-kindness.
- (c) Asubha Contemplation - to reflect upon the impurities of the body.
- (d) Maranāsati - to reflect repeatedly upon death.

- (a) When delusion arises reflect upon the attributes of the Buddha. Delusion causes one to view right as wrong and vice versa. It is unbeneficial both in the mundane and the supramundane worlds. How could you expect to prosper in your daily engagements when you perceive things wrongly. So also you will never gain dhamma if you have incorrect views. If there is delusion and no progress in knowledge, reflect upon the attributes and omniscience of the Buddha.
- (b) When anger or hatred develops reflect upon loving-kindness which is an antidote against anger. Anger is fire and loving-kindness is water.
- (c) If greed and attachment develop reflect upon the impurities of your body and the others' too. Thereupon you will perceive that there is nothing to be attached to. They are mere impurities and are loathsome.
- (d) Conceit and pride such as, "I can do better than you", can be dispelled by the reflection of death. The awareness of the certainty of death, which can fall upon you today, tomorrow, or at anytime, will lessen conceit and pride. One day the Exalted One enquired the opinion of the monks who were contemplating maranāsati. Some replied that they would be happy if they live for-
 - (1) a day and a night
 - (2) a day
 - (3) half-a-day
 - (4) duration of a meal
 - (5) duration of half-a-meal
 - (6) duration of four to five intakes of food

- (7) duration of one intake of food
- (8) duration from an inhalation to an exhalation

The Buddha praised those who replied that they would be happy for the duration of an intake of a meal and for the duration from an inhalation to an exhalation.

Loving-kindness radiation is the best to help one to be successful in observation of *sīla*, so it is supplemented to the eight precepts. It is beneficial for both the one who radiates and the one who receives it. The other ways of contemplation is beneficial only for the one who practise them.

Developing Loving-kindness for Perfection of Parami and Kusala

You radiate loving-kindness by wishing that the people you come across or associate with may be happy. That is mental loving-kindness.

You help others in various ways so that they may be happy. The services rendered bodily is physical loving-kindness.

You tell the people pleasant things and say kind and beneficial words such as, “You will gain merit when you note while taking meal”. “This is the way to walk in order to perceive the movement of the foot” and so on. That is verbal loving-kindness.

The Buddha explained the five points required in good speaking. The dhamma audience should practise to say good words which are beneficial for both parties and produce good results.

Motto: *Wait for the right time and speak the truth with gentleness,*

Say the beneficial words with loving-kindness
Five points for good speaking, said the Blessed.

1. To wait for the right time to speak. For example you want to tell a person that he was wrong. However he is receiving some important visitors, so you have to wait for a suitable time. If you point out his mistake in front of

the visitors, it is unbeneficial for both. He will be angry and ashamed and you too receive no gratitude.

2. To speak the truth. When you want to say something, be sure what you are going to say is the truth. It is important especially for the people in higher position, because people will have a low opinion of him. People usually tend to praise a person more than he is worthy of and to humiliate one more than what he deserves. We, therefore, must be careful to be honest in saying good or bad words about a person.
3. Speak gently means to address one according to his or her age and status such as "Brother", "Sister," "Aunt," "Uncle" and so on. Among the meditators it is the best to address each other as 'Yogi'. The term "Yogi" applies to those who are mindful. If necessary to say something say it in a gentle voice, such as "This is the reason why we should not do so."
4. To say beneficial words means not to annoy or disturb others by what you say. It is not profitable for you, because he will be angry with you. Moreover if it is not beneficial for him, you should not say a word to him.
5. Say it with loving-kindness. This also is a way of verbal-mettā.

You should remember these five points in saying good words as taught by the Blessed One.

Developing Loving-kindness for Jhanic Absorption

Motto: *Opposite sex and deceased person.
Enemies and indifferent persons
One you love most
Are the five to whom not to radiate loving-kindness foremost*

You should not radiate loving-kindness foremost to:

- (a) The deceased person As you all know it is unnecessary to radiate loving-kindness to deceased persons, since they could not receive it. Sharing the merits is the best for them.

- (b) It is also not proper to radiate loving-kindness to the opposite sex because if a man radiate loving-kindness to a particular woman, gradually he may develop fondness and love (raga) for her and vice versa.
- (c) When you radiate loving-kindness to the most loved ones, you may develop worries and anxieties as both have dosa as a root. You may ponder “Are they doing well? Do they have harm? Is anything wrong with them?” so on and so forth, instead of radiating loving-kindness. Worries and anxieties are enemies of loving-kindness.
- (d) If you radiate loving-kindness to whom you feel indifferent, it will not enhance the development of loving-kindness.
- (e) Radiation of loving-kindness to your enemies may make you angry upon seeing their faces in your mental vision.

Therefore it is not proper to radiate loving-kindness to these five persons first and foremost.

To whom you should radiate loving-kindness first? Of course, it is you and you yourself, as the Buddha had pointed out that you yourself is the one you love the most. So begin to radiate loving-kindness to yourself first, such as “May I be free from harm. May I be free from mental suffering. May I be free from physical suffering. May I be physically and mentally at ease, and be able to bear the burden of life happily”. By radiating loving-kindness to yourself first in this way, loving-kindness for the others too is developed to a certain extent.

Choose a quiet place, like in meditation practice, close your eyes, take a suitable posture and radiate loving-kindness to yourself first, next comes your loved ones. When you develop jhanic concentration start radiating to the persons you feel indifferent. When loving-kindness is firm and established then only radiate it to the enemies. It is the most valuable happiness in the mundane world, since you have eliminated anger, the enemy of loving-kindness and it is also beneficial for the subsequent existences. Let us radiate to ten directions as we have always done.

“May all beings in the ten directions be free from harm.
 May they be free from mental suffering.
 May they be free from physical suffering.
 May they be physically and mentally at ease and
 May they be able to bear the burden of life”.

In fact we should radiate loving-kindness for each direction starting from the East.

“May all beings in the East direction be free from harm.
 May they be free from mental suffering.
 May they be free from physical suffering.
 May they be physically and mentally at ease and
 May they be able to bear the burden of their life”.

The ten directions should be in the following order, first the East, West, North, South, South-East, North-West, North-East, South-West, Lower and Upper directions. The radiation of loving-kindness in this way will cover all directions.

Radiation of loving-kindness while observing sīla has the same benefit as vipassanā meditation.

The Vipassanā Meditation

I shall deal briefly with the instruction for vipassanā meditation, in accord with the Ven: Mahāsi Sayadaw’s guidance. Seek a secluded place, take a posture suitable for you, close your eyes, straighten your back, hold up your head and fix your mind on the abdomen. Then note, “rising” and “falling” so as not to let the mind wander. Ignore the form of the abdomen, note only the sensation of stiffness when the abdomen rises. Again note the shifting and falling movement when the abdomen falls due to the element of movement. In vipassanā meditation the ultimate reality (paramattha) is to be observed, not the conventional reality (paññatti)

Motto: *Ignore the conventional reality.
 However note the ultimate reality.*

When the yogi perceives that it is the element of motion which causes the stiffness and fullness of the abdomen when it rises, and also the shifting and gradual falling when it falls, then he is noting only the ultimate reality. Thence it can be said his insight progressed.

“Touching” “seeing” are conventional realities. The yogi must observe the sensation of the movement in the body while walking and also the sensation of heat and hardness while sitting. If the mind is still unstable by noting “rising”, “falling” and “touching”, then change to four noting, such as “rising,” “falling”, “sitting”, “touching”. Note the feeling of stiffness in sitting. Concentration will develop with objective and attentive noting. Then follows the development of *vipassanā* wisdom.

It is not so vivid at the beginning. However, with the mature concentration the yogi will apprehend the two different entities in sitting, such as “sitting body” as one entity and the noting mind another. In the same manner in “rising”, “falling” and “touching”, the two separate entities are lucidly perceived. A wisdom predominated yogi will know all these by himself, nevertheless a faith predominated yogi will be aware of them only when the meditation instructor points it out. Thereupon *nāma* and *rūpa* are clearly differentiated. The yogi now knows vividly that there is no such entity as “I”. The usage of “I” is for the sake of convenience, it is not entity. Thence he has eradicated the wrong view of “self” and the attachment to the aggregates. This is the first penetration of the erroneous view (*ditthi kilesa*).

At the *Paccayapariggaha* *nāma* stage, the yogi realizes that he can note because of the appearance of the sense-object. To him “rising” and “falling” are not so distinct, therefore he notes “sitting” and “touching”. He, then comprehends that “sitting” is the cause and the noting is the effect. Thereupon he gains the knowledge of differentiating cause and effect. Now the general detailed noting is easy for him and has no problems to note

the “intention” also. The yogi has progressed in *vipassanā* meditation. The *Āṭhakathā* teachers comment that such a yogi is a *Cula-sotāpanna* (Junior *sotāpanna*). He is no longer effected by other erroneous view, therefore, he is certain of good rebirths. This is the penetration of *kilesa* such as *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha*. The dhamma audience who are observing the *kilesa*-penetrating *sīla*, therefore, have penetrated or eliminated *kilesa*.

After listening to the dhamma talk on ‘Four Types of *Uposatha Sīla*’, may you all be able to practise in accordance with Lord Buddha’s Instruction. With diligent contemplation and practising it with ease, may you all immediately realize your most aspired *Nibbāna*, the cessation of all sufferings.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

2. The Deeds and Their Results (Culakamma Vibhaṅga Sutta) (8.8.95)

The Dhamma talk will be on “The Deeds and Their Results” as expounded in the Culakamma Vibhaṅga Sutta, by the Buddha. Cula = small, unweighty + kamma = deeds, actions + vibhaṅga = evaluation + sutta = explanation. The rendition, therefore, is the explanation of the evaluation upon the unweighty deeds. In other words, in this sutta, the Buddha evaluated and explained the unwholesome and wholesome deeds and their results. At the same time He meant to remind the monks to eliminate the bad deeds and to engage in the good ones.

The Seven Problems

While the Enlightened One was residing at Jetavana Monastery, Savatthi, a young man, named Subha approached Him, paid obeisance and said, “O’, Buddha! in this world, some are poor and some are rich; some are short-lived and some live long even those born of the same parents are different. What are the reasons for these differences?” Then he presented the following seven problems.

1. Some are short-lived and some live long.
2. Some are healthy and some are not.
3. Some are ugly and some have good-looks.
4. Some are without authority but some have authority.
5. Some are poor and some are rich.
6. Some are of low origin and the others are of noble origin.
7. Some have little knowledge and some possess higher knowledge

The Buddha, as an Enlightened One, immediately gave the answer, “All these are the results of one’s own deeds or

kamma". As the answer was so brief, Subha respectfully entreated the Buddha for a full and explicit explanation. Then the Exalted One explained kamma more emphatically.

All beings are owners of their kamma; they are the heirs of their kamma; kamma is the main cause of all happenings; kamma is their relatives; kamma is their refuge. They will be heirs to their kamma, according to the good or bad deeds they have done."

The full Explanation to the Seven Problems

1. A person who takes life will be reborn in apāya in his subsequent life. Although he is fortunate to be a man after suffering in apāya, he will be short-lived. A person who does not kill will be reborn in the Deva World in his next life. When he is reborn as a man thereafter he will live long. Dhamma audience if circumstances force you to take life, restrain from it. As children of good parentage and having grown under the guidance of good teachers, you have learnt about the results of misdeeds and good deeds. Therefore, you certainly will not commit misdeeds but observe sīla firmly. By reflecting upon your faultless sīla, you will feel happy and thus gain merit.

Motto: *Killing results in short life*
Abstaining from it results in longevity

2. If a person is cruel and torments the living beings, he will suffer in apāya in his next life. When he is reborn as a man, he will be afflicted by diseases and suffer pain and miseries, just as he has done to others in the past existences. That is the result of the unwholesome deeds. If you suffer from pain and disease, reflect thus, "I must have caused the others to suffer like this in my past life. That is why I am suffering now". By doing so you become remorseful and will not torment others. Then you will be reborn in the Deva World. Moreover, when you are a man again you will be free from diseases. Even among

the children of the same parents, some are healthy and some are not, according to their past deeds.

Motto: *Torturing results in suffering diseases.
Abstaining from it result in good health.*

If you are healthy and have no sufferings what will you do? Will you take pleasure trips, go to football matches or attend music and dance shows? Of course not, I am certain that you will take the opportunity of your good health and practise *vipassanā* meditation. Health is the second factor for the attainment of the dhamma as mentioned in the following motto.

Motto: *Firm faith, good health, honesty, steadfast effort, contemplation of becoming and dissolution.*

Are the five factors for the achievement in meditation.

3. When a person is angry he is liable to commit both physical and verbal misdeeds such as beating, killing, swearing, abusing. All these produce sufferings in *apāya* in his next life. Even though he is reborn as a man, he will have ugly looks. Even a person possessing good looks will become ugly when he is angry. Everyone likes to have good looks that is why they use make-up, cosmetics and other beautifications. When one is free from anger and develop loving-kindness he will be pretty and good-looking. If you are very busy, you are likely to lose your temper. You should control your anger by developing loving-kindness. Anger is like fire and loving-kindness is like water. They are absolutely opposite to each other.

Motto: *Anger results in ugliness
Abstaining from it results in good looks*

Radiate Loving-kindness for Perfection (paramitta) and Kusala

I am sure the dhamma audience know quite well how to radiate loving-kindness for the perfection of parami and to foster kusala. You wish that the person you know or associate with is free from suffering and is happy; that is mental deed of loving-kindness. You also help others by saying, "This is the right way to take", "This is a suitable place for you to sit" and so on. That is verbal deed of loving-kindness. You clear the sticks, broken bricks and other things on the road where people walk; you prepare the food for the yogi, fan away the flies and lay the table. Such actions are physical deed of loving-kindness. There will be less anger when you develop loving-kindness. By developing jhanic absorption you can dispel anger.

Radiate loving-kindness for Jhanic Absorption

The following are the people to whom you should not radiate loving-kindness first:-

- (a) Deceased persons as they no longer exist.
- (b) The opposite sex because you may develop passion (rāga) and attachment (lobha) while radiating loving-kindness to them.
- (c) The most loved ones because you may worry whether they are free from harm or are healthy and so on instead of radiating loving-kindness to them.
- (d) The persons to whom you have indifferent feeling for the reason that it does not foster loving-kindness.
- (e) The enemies for the reason that when you think of them you will get angry as their faces appear in your mental image.

To whom should you radiate loving-kindness first? Certainly, it is you, yourself, since there is nobody else whom you love most. On radiating loving-kindness to yourself, you develop loving-kindness for others too, for you would like them to be as happy as you are. Just like when you practise vipassanā meditation,

go to a quiet place, take a comfortable posture, close your eyes and radiate loving-kindness to yourself "May I be free from harm. May I be free from mental suffering. May I be free from physical suffering. Physically and mentally at ease may I be able to bear the burden of life"

Secondly radiate loving-kindness to the loved ones such as sons and daughters, parents, sisters and brothers.

Thirdly radiate loving-kindness to the person to whom your feeling is indifferent.

Fourthly radiate loving-kindness to your enemies.

For jhanic absorption you are not to radiate loving-kindness in the order mentioned above. Radiate loving-kindness to the loved ones first, so as to establish concentration which is the foundation for radiating loving-kindness. Then radiate loving-kindness to the enemies when your loving-kindness is strong enough. A monk in a foreign country, well developed in radiating loving-kindness, radiated loving-kindness to himself first. He mentally perceived lights in his body and then only he begins to radiate loving-kindness to others.

We daily radiate loving-kindness to the people living in the ten directions. That is the way of jhanic absorption. In fact, we should radiate loving-kindness for each direction separately. There will be less and less anger when loving-kindness is strong. Dosa is like fire and mettā is like water. By frequent radiation of loving-kindness you will be successful in overcoming anger which produces bad consequences. However, there are some who take pride by saying, "You know I'm an angry person". They should be reminded that they will have ugly looks and that they will suffer in apāya. The ability to control anger means happiness for you and for the others too. Moreover it is in accordance with the Buddha's advice.

4. Some are full of jealousy and envy on seeing the others' success, prosperity, fame and glory. That will send them to apāya in their next life and even when he is reborn

as a man he will have no authority and respect. If one is delightful to see others prosper and succeed and ponders, "They are rich and well-to-do because of their merits in their past life", he will be destined to be reborn in the Brahmā World in his next existence. To take delight in others' prosperity and fame is mudita (altruistic or sympathetic joy), one of the Four Noble dhamma. He will have authority, if he is reborn as a man. It costs you nothing to be joyous on others' success and fame. If you frequently reflect upon this joyous state of mind it will become a habit. Some are full of jealousy that they could not bear to see others prosper and become famous. Some young children tend to throw stones and mud at some prettily dressed persons. They have to be guided for their lack of knowledge and make them to ponder, "We're poor because of our bad deeds in our past existences," instead of being jealous.

Motto: *Jealousy results in lesser authority.*
Non-jealousy results in high authority.

5. Those who fail to give dāna are poor. Even though they are rich, some are so much attached to their wealth that they are stingy and never give dāna. Therefore they will be reborn in the peta world in their subsequent birth. One yogi enquired whether one would be reborn in apāya just because he fails to do dāna. It is not so. Nevertheless, because of raga and lobha due to the over-attachment to his wealth, he may suffer in apāya. For instance, once a monk received a robe of such a good quality that he had never had before. He was so much attached to it that he became a bug on that robe, when he unfortunately passed away soon after receiving it. For this reason we must give dāna whenever it is opportune. Consequently, you will be in the Deva World and if you become a man you will be rich. To give dāna with the honestly earned money or properties,

but not with the unlawfully earned money and properties, is beneficial. Take the advantage of your wealth and success and give dāna, observe sīla and practise vipassanā meditation. In this way you gain merit. The Exalted One also emphasized dāna as one of the primary requirements for the attainment of dhamma.

Motto: *Lesser dāna results in poverty
More dāna results in wealth*

6. Conceit or pride causes one to suffer in apāya and be born of low origin. Some are so conceited that they are reluctant to pay respect to the elders. Some take pride by saying, "I have pride. I am better than others". Conceited people will not be successful in vipassanā meditation. It could not be easily dispelled. It vanishes completely only at the brink of urahatship. If one is of low origin it is inevitable that he will be mostly engaged in unwholesome deeds. For instance, a son of a hunter or a fisherman will hunt or fish as his livelihood. Consequently his existences will become lower and lower. It is, therefore, important to be of noble descent, so that you can give dāna, observe sīla and practise vipassanā meditation. Thus you can always perform wholesome deeds and easily realize nibbāna, the highest dhamma.

Motto: *Conceit results in being born in low origin
Less conceit results in noble heritage.*

Conceit is one of the three (craving, conceit and wrong view) dhammas which prolong the round of existences. "Oh, I can do better than him," such remarks result in nothing but become causes of unwholesome deeds. The dhamma audience are humble, and practise vipassanā meditation, in order to annihilate incorrect views which prolong the cycle of rebirths. Thereupon, they could lessen pride and conceit due to greed or attachment. If a yogi

is still proud and conceited, will he gain dhamma? He should eradicate his pride and practise more diligently. Those who do not query or investigate will have no knowledge and on the other hand those who seek knowledge have high intellect. One must ask the elders and the teachers if there is any doubt about what he has done, for example whether it is wholesome or not. Once in a small town there was a monk who believed that so long as ones' intention is good, whatever he does is right. With this belief, he cut the grass and trees in order to keep the monastery ground clean and tidy. When Sayadaw visited that monastery he respectfully reported his belief and what he has done. For a monk to cut grass and trees is a breach of the vinaya rules. Since he was quite sure that he has done no offence, he did not seek advice from the other monks. Not seeking advice from the elders amounts to encouragement to commit sin, thereby sending him to apāya. The Sayadaw therefore, told him that the belief "whatever is done with good intention is wholesome" is wrong and that what he had been doing is not according to the vinaya rules.

Motto: *Non enquiring results in low knowledge
Enquiry results in high knowledge*

Another instance is when residing at Medhini Monastery, Sayadaw had to lead the monks on the round for alms-food. People offered many different things including rice. After a week or two, it occurred to me that it was an offence to receive rice. I approached the Chief Sayadaw who said it was not an offence since we could eat rice. However, it is incorrect to receive paddy. By seeking advice from the elders my doubt was cleared. It was at the Mahāsi Sāsana Yeiktha, as a meditation lecturer, I was confused between the two terms - Yonisomanasikāra and Attasammāpanidhi.

The first term was proper attention or attitude; the second one means living honestly and striving for improvement. I discussed with the other monks who advised me to see Mahāsi Sayadaw for the clarity of these terms. I was reluctant thinking it might be a disturbance to the Sayadaw on such a trifling question. Anyhow I finally approached the Sayadaw and respectfully presented my problem. The Most Ven: Sayadaw simply pointed out that Yonisomanasikāra (proper attention or attitude) is the cause and Attasammā-panidhi (living honestly and striving for improvement) is the effect. Now it is vivid to me that proper attitude produces honest living and improvement. If I fail to seek advice or to ask Mahāsi Sayadaw, I shall still be confused, and be lacking in knowledge. If you want to have the right kind of knowledge, you must enquire, investigate and seek for answers to your problems and doubts.

After listening to this dhamma talk on “The Deeds and their Results” and the explanation to the seven problems, may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha’s Instruction. With diligent contemplation and practice with ease, may you all immediately realize your most aspired Nibbāna, the cessation of all sufferings.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

3. Slowly and Speedily, Rightly be the Way

All those who are living in this world have many things to do. While doing so they should differentiate what to do slowly and which cases to be handled quickly. Arahant has nothing to carry out since he has completely achieved the dhamma. Thus with the exception of arahant every one in this world has things to do. Ethics teachers stated two types of things to be done, namely things to be done slowly and things to be handled immediately.

Things to be done slowly

(1) Acquiring knowledge and education should be done slowly. An individual wishing to acquire education in haste, tries to learn the second lesson before he is thorough with the first lesson. Being so he will find the second lesson difficult. He will also find much difficulty in learning the third, the fourth and higher lessons as he is not thorough with the first lesson. That is why he might become discouraged in acquiring education. So it is to acquire knowledge and education slowly.

In the same manner when learning the nine parts of Saṅgaha Pāli, before learning the portion of mind (citta) thoroughly one wishes to learn the portion on mind-concomittants (cetasika); and also to learn pakinnaka, a composite of portions of mind and its concomittants before the first portion is thorough. Thereupon he is unsuccessful in learning and becomes depressed. If one learns the first portion thoroughly and goes on to the next one, his learning will be successful as the first one has been a help to the second and so on. Thus acquiring knowledge and education should be done slowly, however it should not be done in a lazy way.

(2) An individual, in acquiring wealth and property, wishing to be prosperous overnight, tries to expand and set up different kinds of work without having enough investment or basic property or skill. When unsuccessful he gets worried and discouraged.

An individual when acquiring wealth tries to do the work in which he is skilful, slowly and continuously, so that it develops. This person in as much as he puts in effort, he will accumulate wealth. Thus the ethics teachers pointed out that one should acquire wealth slowly.

(3) An individual who is climbing a mountain 30,000 ft or 50,000 ft high runs and climbs rapidly so as to reach the summit quickly. This person will be exhausted before reaching the summit.

An individual while ascending a mountain climbs slowly and mindfully reaches the top in good shape. Some elderly people said that while climbing the mountain they noted “left foot forward”, “right foot forward” and reached the summit with no exhaustion. “Can one reach the top by climbing slowly?” “Yes, Ven. Sir.” That is why, one must climb a mountain slowly.

(4) One should be slow in seeking sensual pleasure especially means in looking for a spouse. Modern youths are in haste in choosing a spouse and rapidly marry one without studying or thinking deeply. Only after the marriage they found out the differences in their attitude and became unhappy. It is, therefore, necessary to take time to study each other in choosing a life-partner and thus married life will be a happy one.

(5) An individual, when encounters with an occasion to lose his temper, will not think of pros and cons and get furious at once. It should not be so. An angry person will say things and behave wrongly. Thus he will torment, destroy and cause problems not only to himself but also to the other. Except

anāgami and arahant, people have anger. However, they should not be furious, must be able to control their anger. The dhamma audience certainly control anger. It is better not to be indignant and if you could not control, let anger arise slowly.

The Most Ven: Mahāsi Sayadaw advised to keep anger in your mind without letting it out by noting, “angry, angry”. Do not show your anger verbally. If it has already been so, do not let it appear in bodily behaviour. By noting at the moment of occurrence, anger could be controlled. Thus satipatthāna meditation is the best to overcome anger. Anāgami and arahant have no anger, however the dhamma audience still have anger. It is not to show anger, if you have to be angry let it come slowly. A person who used to be angry could not be taken as an anāgami.

After entering monkhood at an older age, an elderly monk practised vipassanā meditation. He gained a certain basis of dhamma and thought himself to be an anāgami. Though he resided at a single kuti, he met other student monks. His frequent mentioning of being an anāgami made the young monks to investigate whether he really was one. One day while the elderly monk was on his alms-round, the young monks locked his kuti with another lock. On his return, he was furious to find the second lock as it was about meal time. Then he broke the door open with an axe. “Is he an anāgami?” “Not yet, Ven. Sir”. He was just thinking highly of himself. That is adhi māna extreme pride. An anāgami or an arahant must withstand such investigation. “Should we not consider it?” “Yes, we should, Ven: Sir”

These are the five things to be done slowly.

- (1) acquiring knowledge and education
- (2) acquiring wealth and property
- (3) ascending mountains
- (4) desiring worldly pleasures
- (5) losing temper

Ancient sages added three more things to be done slowly.

- (1) Matrimony- should be done slowly and with great consideration.

- (2) Building pagodas- choose proper place; make appropriate shape of pagoda and images.
- (3) Making tattoo marks on the body- In the old days many used to make tattoo marks on their bodies but not so nowadays. Youths have tattoo marks on their arms, chest, back as an attraction, some for protection against harm and danger. When they grow old, they do not like them anymore. Nevertheless the ugly marks could not be removed at all as the paint had gone deep into the skin; sometimes it even reached the bones.

Once a youth had a tattoo mark of a pig on his thigh as a protection against harm and danger. When someone shot at him, his thigh was superficially hurt. He made a make-believe remark, ‘This pig tried to escape, but did not guard me’. “Did the tattoo save him?” “No, Ven: Sir.” That is the reason why it should be done slowly and with consideration.

Pagodas and images are also difficult to mend and they should not be destroyed or burnt, because as there are many instances of social and economical failures due to destroying pagodas and images. To destroy or damage pagodas and images is considered as a demerit, since it is counted as damaging or hurting the Buddha as pagodas and images are made to be revered on behalf of the Buddha.

If someone ask for your advice on breaking down a pagoda, just say “I would not know. There are sayadaws and you better go and ask them.” Even sayadaws and sanghas would not give any advice as it amounts to ruining the Buddha.

Motto: *Matrimony, building pagodas and tattooing
If done unproperly are difficult in mending*

Modern youths marry again and again. “Is it correct?” “No, Ven: Sir.” This should not be done. They should forbear each other. Pagodas and images should be renovated; images should not be burnt nor float in the water if it is unproperly done. Tattoo should be done slowly. Since these three things are hard to be mended, they should be done slowly and with great consideration.

Things to be done speedily

What are the things to be done speedily? Of course, dāna, sīla, samatha and vipassanā kusala are to be done speedily. The Exalted One had said, “If you have opportunity to do merit today, do it today. It should not be postponed till the next day. Why? Though you are alive today, you may not be, the next day. Why can’t you be alive next day? Because internally you have ninety-six kinds of ailments and outwardly death has many kinds of weapons such as swords, spears, poisons. You cannot possibly request death to let you stay in the human world one or two days, one or two months, one or two years more as you have not achieved dhamma. You cannot make any appointment. It is impossible to befriend with death. You cannot bribe him either. You can neither recruit warriors to fight death.

You may be alive today, may not be so tomorrow, that is why dāna, sīla, samatha and vipassanā merits must be done speedily without any postponement. The dhamma audience are doing so. Dāna is not according to the Buddha’s wish nor sīla and samatha. Vipassanā is the only one inaccordance with the Buddha’s wish, therefore practise vipassanā dhamma.

When there was no time to deliver a dhamma talk, the Exalted One usually admonished “Do not forget, do not forget”. Evidently this advice does not mean not to forget to enjoy the luxuries of human, deva and brahmā realms by offering dāna, observing sīla and practising samatha. The Buddha certainly exhorted the living beings not to forget to practise vipassanā dhamma so as to be liberated from the apāya suffering. Accordingly it is to practise vipassanā dhamma speedily. The Most Ven. Mahāsi Sayadaw has composed a stanza to urge meditators and the coming generation to practise vipassanā meditation.

Motto: *No appointment has been made
Nor bribe can win best
Not enough force to face death
Who knows that we will be still alive
tomorrow
So postpone no more
Practise now and evermore*

After listening to this dhamma talk on “Slowly and Speedily, Rightly be the Way”, may you be able to practise accordingly. With ease and diligent contemplation, may you all speedily attain your most aspired Nibbāna, cessation of all sufferings.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

4. **Saccā Mantra: the Good and the Bad**

The dhamma audience sometimes upon encountering a catastrophe which threatens life and property become frightened and distressed. When there is no one to prevent such harm and danger we have to depend on the power of truth (saccā) by which we can escape from danger. Saying truthful words on good and bad traits prevent harm and danger.

Saccā means saying truthful words. We can make vows on good and bad as well and prevent dangers. The dhamma audience have heard about this, however listen to it again so as to make it clearer.

Saccā Mantra: the Good

Long ago there lived in Sri Lanka, a mother and two sons, named Mahācakkala, the elder brother and Culacakkala, the younger brother, who worked and supported their mother. One day the mother suffered from a severe headache and the physician prescribed fresh rabbit's blood to cure her headache. Thus Mahācakkala sent the young brother into the forest to trap a rabbit.

Culacakkala took traps and went into the forest. A female rabbit, mother of two suckling rabbits, was caught. The mother rabbit was so frightened of death that it shouted and struggled with all her might. The two small rabbits came running to their mother and pitifully ran around as they could not help her.

Culacakkala saw that and reflected 'Even though they are animals they show a pitiful behaviour towards their mother's danger and keep running around.' Then he identified himself with the little rabbits and was filled with pity. He thought to

himself, “These three rabbits are like the three people (members) of my family. To kill the young rabbits’ mother to save my mother is not fair, it is devoid of compassion”. Thinking thus he freed the mother rabbit.

When he arrived home, the elder brother Mahācakkala asked whether he got a rabbit. Cuṭacakkala replied that, though he had caught a mother rabbit, feeling sorry for the three rabbits, mother and two sons which were like themselves, he let the mother rabbit free.

The elder brother was angry because his brother compared their mother to a lowly animal and was about to beat him with a stick. The young brother ran to his mother and embraced her who prevented the elder son from beating the young son.

Cuṭacakkala made a vow loudly, ‘Ever since I could cognize, I have never killed. With loving-kindness toward the three rabbits equally with my own family, I freed the mother rabbit and thus I did not infringe my sīla. Since I have uttered these truthful words, may my mother’s headache be cured”. Wherefore, the mother’s headache was miraculously cured as though it was taken away. “Is it a good or bad saccā mantra” “A good one, Ven: Sir.”

Thus because Cuṭacakkala has spoken the truth about his good traits, the mother was cured of her headache.

Saccā Mantra: the Bad

Once upon a time, Buddha-to-be Kanhadīpāyana hermit lived in a monastery at Bārānasi. One day rich man Mahadabya came to the hermit, together with his wife and son, Yaññadat, with offerings.

While the parents were conversing with the hermit, the young son went to play with a top which fell into a hole where there was a snake. Yaññadat put his hand into the hole to retrieve his top. Whereupon the snake angrily bit his hand and the child fell down fainted.

The parents carried the child to the hermit and asked him to cure their son. The hermit replied that he could not cure the boy. "If you could not cure him with medicine, make a vow with truthful words and cure the snake poison", urged the parents.

The hermit put his hand on Yaññadat's head and said aloud, "Ever since I became a hermit, I was happy only for seven days in the noble practice. After the seven days, till over fifty years, I was unhappy in the noble practice. However, I am still practising it. Because of these truthful words may the snake poison be cured and may the child live".

Because of the hermit's vow the snake's poison from the child's chest upwards lost its effects. Yaññadat opened his eyes, called "father, mother" and fainted again.

The hermit told the rich man, "I have shown my ability by saying these truthful words. You must make a vow for your son to be alive."

The father, Mahadabya uttered a vow, "I do not like giving charity. Neither do I revere those who come to ask for donations. However, I give charity because I do not wish to break the family tradition. Because I have said these truthful words may the snake's poison be cured and my son live". Because of the father's truthful words the snake's poison from Yaññadat's waist upwards lost its effect. "Is it a good or bad saccā mantra?" "It is a bad one, Ven. Sir." Though the poison fell out Yaññadat could only sit but could not stand or walk about. So the rich man told his wife, "I've shown my quality. You make a vow so that our son can stand and walk about."

Yaññadat's mother told her husband, "Dear, rich man, it is inappropriate to make a vow in front of you". The husband urged her to do so for the sake of the son. Then she said, "I hate the snake, that bit my son Yaññadat and I also hate Yaññadat's father equally. Because I have said these words truthfully, may the snake's poison be cured and my son live". "Is it a good or bad saccā mantra?" "A bad one, Ven. Sir."

Because of the mother's truthful words, all the poison in Yaññadat's body fell out. Yaññadat stood up, went about and was able to play.

Thus the hermit, the rich man and his wife found out the bad traits in each other and tried to correct each other's faults.

The vows on bad traits are also effective. When one faces a situation needing to make a vow, it is not to discriminate whether it should be a vow on bad or good traits as both are equally effective.

Motto: *Truthful words on good and bad traits
Immediately achieve benefits.*

From the above mentioned instances it is quite evident that both vows on good and bad traits are effective. Culacakkala's vow on good traits and the vows of the hermit, the father and the mother on each bad traits are successful in their own ways.

There are many instances of truthful vows on good traits. At one time, in Sri Lanka, the mother of Mahāmitta monk was inflicted with a disease somewhat like breast cancer. The mother told her daughter, a bhikkhuni (nun) to go to Mahāmitta monk for some medicine. Mahāmitta monk said to his sister, "I have no medicine, besides I do not know how to cure diseases. My only medicine is Saccā Mantra". Then he uttered the truthful words relating to his conduct. "Since the day I entered monkhood up to this day, I have never looked at any woman (mātugāma) with sensual desire." He, then asked his sister to go back and massage the mother. The bhikkhuni told her mother all about what her brother had said and she massaged her mother. Her mother was immediately cured. (Visuddhimag)

Is it a good or bad saccā mantra? A good one, Ven Sir. We should learn a lesson from it.

The usage "mātugāma" is not liked by women. They prefer to be addressed as 'Dhagāmagyi', since the word "mātugāma" is misinterpreted as a woman who used to destroy monks. In fact

it is a good word as mentioned in Pali “Mātuyagāmo mātugāmo” The meaning is “one who goes like a mother”. To elaborate, it means not only in going but in all actions and behaviour, it is the one like a mother. Monks reflect thus when they see a woman and there arises no attachment and desires. Since this usage “mātugāma” is no longer in use, it is mostly misinterpreted; so women should not get angry on being addressed as “mātugāma”.

Once Ashin Mitta resided at Kassapa Cave and a woman who always offered his alms-food loved him as her own son. One day she said to her daughter, “I have some rice left over from yesterday as my breakfast and for dinner just cook broken rice and watercrest for me. Here is rice, here is milk, molasses and butter and cook them well for your brother monk”. Ashin Mitta standing at the door overheard these words and pondered, “I should not accept alms-food prepared with such a strong saddhā while my mind is not yet purified.” Thus thinking to himself, he went back to his place and practised vipassanā dhamma with a vow. “I shall not leave this cave until and unless dhamma is gained.” In no time he became an arahant in time for his alms-round. He went for the alms and thus great benefit ensued. We should learn a lesson from this instance.

After listening to this dhamma talk on “Good and Bad, Saccā Mantra”, may you be able to practise accordingly and attain immediately your most aspired Nibbāna, end of sufferings of whatever, with ease in practice.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

5. Ten Domains of Meritorious Actions (3.3.96)

The ten immoral deeds, the ten moral deeds and the ten domains of meritorious actions are some of the basic dhamma which every Buddhist should discern and practise accordingly. Since the ten moral deeds and the ten domains of meritorious actions are not understood with clarity, many used to treat them as the same. As a matter of fact, these two dhammas have different functions. The ten moral (kusala) deeds are the benefits of abstention from the ten immoral (akusala) deeds such as the three physical misdeeds, the four verbal misdeeds and the three unwholesome thoughts. The ten meritorious actions are the practice of wholesome deeds. In other words, the meritorious actions (puñña kiriya) are the good deeds which should be done and from which produce prosperity and well being ensue.

Ten Domains of Meritorious Actions

1. Dāna	- Charity
2. Sīla	- Morality
3. Bhāvanā	- Meditation
4. Apacāyana	- giving due respect to the Three Gems, parents and elders
5. Veyyāvacca	- rendering service and assistance
6. Pattidāna	- sharing merits
7. Pattānumodhanā	- rejoicing at and appreciation of merits of others
8. Dhammasāvana	- listening to the dhamma
9. Dhammadesanā	- teaching the dhamma to others
10. Diṭṭhijukamma	- right belief

These meritorious actions should be developed in one's self. If you have already developed the ten meritorious deeds then you should be happy. If you have not yet developed then you

should strive to develop them, because they foster the attainment of magga, phala and nibbāna. There is no one who has not done charity. Most people observe sīla firmly just like fastening the lower garment (paso), at least the five precepts. Many have practised samatha or vipassanā bhāvanā. There may be a few who fail to pay respect to the Three Gems, parents and elders. By virtue of good parentage and guidance of good teachers many carry out duties of the parents and teachers. There indeed, is not a single person who has not shared his merits or rejoiced at the other's merits. Only a few may miss the chance to listen to the dhamma.

Will you say you have never preached? The dhamma audience have certainly taught the young ones, “Buddhami saranam gacchāmi” and also explained its meaning. At the meditation centre the experienced meditators advised the new comers with regard to sitting, standing and walking practices. “When you practise walking, walk with downcast eyes. If you walk with open eyes you should not look further than half a yard or a yard. Do not glance aside. If you look here and there, your contemplation will be distracted. Control your eyes. If you can keep your eyes downcast you will gain concentration”. All these are the guidance given to the new meditators. To preach dhamma does not necessarily mean to preach from a lecturing stand. Giving such advices as mentioned above, are considered as preaching. Moreover inviting others to come to listen to the dhamma is also as good as preaching. Preaching the dhamma is the noblest dāna and at the same time it is also considered as nibbāna dāna namely offering nibbāna. If you desire to give the noblest dāna you should preach dhamma. Explain dhamma as much as you know even explaining a single Pāli word. With the exception of Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas, there is no one who gains dhamma without listening to it. Even Ashin Sariputtara and Ashin Moggallāna had to listen to the dhamma to attain Nibbāna.

While one is young under the guidance of good parents and good teachers you would have developed firm faith in the fact that good deeds results good effects and that the bad

deeds are the cause of ill-effects. That is the right belief. You listen to the dhamma repeatedly not only to discern it but also to be able to preach those who have not yet listened to the dhamma. Sayadaw has the same objective, that is to give the others a chance to learn, so that they may have no doubt about the dhamma. That is the reason why some dhamma discourses are repeated quite often.

Three types of Meritorious Actions

The Ten domains of meritorious actions can be condensed into three types; namely Dāna, Sīla and Bhāvanā. Moreover they can be expanded into forty meritorious actions.

Motto: *Patti and Patta
Should be included in dāna*

Dāna Dāna includes Pattidāna and Pattanumodhanā. Pattidāna means sharing merits. Pattanumodhanā is to rejoice at and appreciate other's merits. Upon hearing the sharing of merits, we say, “Sādhu” “Sādhu” rejoicingly. We share merits whenever we give dāna; when we observe sīla and when we practise meditation we say, “I share the merits of bhāvanā (meditation) kusala. Please say “Sādhu”. The merits may or may not be received everytime we share them.

Motto: *Ten meritorious deeds as the basic factors
Performing personally, exhorting others
Explaining their merits and joyfully appreciate
Forty meritorious deeds will be elaborated.*

When we share the merits of our dāna the others get it as dāna kusala. If we share the merits of our sīla the others get it as dāna kusala but not as sīla kusala. When we share the merits of bhāvanā, the others get it as dāna kusala, but not as bhāvanā kusala.

Suppose an elder member of the family practises bhāvanā and share the bhāvanā merits with the other members of the family, will they get bhāvanā kusala? Not at all. If it could be so, there

is no need for the rest of the members of the family to practise bhāvanā. The bhāvanā kusala is the dhamma which can be experienced only by one's own exertion and practice, but not by other's practice. Grandchildren and great-grandchildren cannot practise bhāvanā on behalf of the grand parents. There are many reasons why old people are unable to meditate: physically they are not strong, they cannot sit long, they cannot walk straight or their hearing or eye-sight are failing. Hence it is beneficial to practise before you get old.

Motto: *Practising the dhamma before you grow old is beneficial*

You will gain the dhamma within a month if you practise it when you are about thirty or forty years of age and still young and strong. Thence you benefit something dependable or a good foundation for the supramundane purpose. At the age between fifty or sixty years, you may not gain the dhamma even within two months, for you are weak both physically and mentally. When you reach the age of seventy or eighty years, you become remorseful and want to meditate. However, it is not feasible as you are both physically and mentally decayed. With the failing memory, it is hard to practise general detailed noting. Not only that, since you are physically weak you cannot sit long, therefore no concentration develops.

Motto: *It is not feasible to meditate at old age.
You are certain to regret.*

By the time you are old and have not practised you will still want to participate in the family and economic discussions. However, your sons and daughters would wish you to meditate and leave alone those domestic affairs. Thereupon you feel being left out and are very much annoyed thinking that they have no more regards for you. You become disheartened, disappointed and gradually suffer senility. Hence, it is most beneficial to practise the dhamma when you are young and

physically and mentally fit. Some old ladies used to tell Sayadaw that they could not come to the meditation centre since there were so much family responsibilities. It was so, because they were the ones who were greatly concerned about the family. When will they be free from such attachment? Yes, only when they die. At the time when you are old, sons and daughters wish you to be at the meditation centre and abstain from carrying out family obligations. If you really wish to achieve dhamma, you can do so. It will all depend upon you. When you share the merits of bhāvanā the result will be only dāna kusala but not bhāvanā kusala. Bhāvanā is to be practised personally and not to be shared with others. Māgga and phala vipassanā dhamma are to be practised and to be experienced personally.

Sīla - It embraces Apacāyana and Veyyāvacca. Apacāyana means to give respect to the Three Gems, parents, teachers and the elders. Veyyāvacca is the Sīla (morality) observed by rendering services and duties for sanghas, parents and yogi.

Motto: *Paca Veyya are the domains of Sīla.*

Bhāvanā It is composed of listening to the dhamma, preaching the dhamma and in having the right belief. The right belief is the faith that good effects are the result of good deeds and bad results are due to bad deeds. This right belief is also conducive to the attainment of dhamma.

Motto: *Listening and preaching dhamma,
Together with right belief
Are considered as Bhāvanā*

The Forty Meritorious Actions

We get forty meritorious actions by multiplying the ten meritorious actions already discussed, by the four factors namely,

1. Actual performance of the ten meritorious actions. To give charity, to observe sīla and to practise bhāvanā. If one is complete with sīla, people think highly of him, have faith in him as a man of honour.

2. Exhorting others to carry out the ten meritorious actions.
3. Explaining the benevolent nature of the ten meritorious actions.
4. Feeling appreciative joy of the ten meritorious actions.

Mere exhorting others will not be so effective unless they realize the benefits of dāna, sīla and bhāvanā. Therefore it is important to understand their benefits.

The Benefits of Dāna

Motto: *Longevity, good looks, wealth, many companions and authority.*
Are the five benefits of dāna.

Those who have offered dāna, enjoy the benefits of longlife, good looks, prosperity, many companions and authority or influence over others in every existence.

In the time of Kassapa Buddha, there were two monks. One was generous and the other was not, though they were good friends. The generous monk went for the alms-round till he got plenty, enough to share with the other monks. The ungenerous monk came back when he had alms food enough for himself. The generous monk advised the other one to get more alms food so that he could offer to the others. The ungenerous monk said that he brought just enough for oneself because that was the advice of the Buddha, besides to get more than enough for oneself was greediness. As they both observed sīla firmly, they were born and reborn as men and devas up to the time of Gotama Buddha. In that existence the generous monk was reborn as the son of King Kosala and the other one as the son of a maid in the palace. At the name giving ceremony, the prince (generous monk) said to the maid's son (ungenerous monk), "Look, I can enjoy the comfort and pleasure of a luxurious bed. As for you, there is only an ordinary bed. This is so because you did not listen to me and offer dāna" The maid's son did

not keep quiet and retorted, “Whether it is luxurious bed or poor bed both are the same, for the reason that they are pathavī (element of earth). Don’t be so conceited.” They used to argue like that with each other in their past monk’s existence too.

Princess Suvanna heard their conversation and was afraid that people upon hearing it, might misinterpret the babies’ words. She went to the Buddha and said respectfully, “The Exalted One, in your Sāsanā, there are two persons of the same faith, the same morality and the same wisdom. However one gives dāna and the other doesn’t. Will they enjoy the same life experiences when they are reborn in the Deva World?” The Buddha replied, “No, they will not. One complete with dāna will excel the other; by five benefits he will live long, will have good looks, will prosper, will have many companions and will be influential.”

The Princess asked again whether they would enjoy the same life experiences when they became men. The Buddha explained that the one with dāna kusala will have a better life than the one without dāna kusala. To the Princess’ question whether they would have the same experiences if they joined the order of monks. The Buddha’s answer was, “The one with dāna kusala will have more robes, more alms-food, better shelter, more necessary medicine and respect from the other monks. Nevertheless when they become arahats, they no longer outshine each other”. The Enlightened One praised the benefits of dāna so that people will realize the benefits of dāna and give more charity.

The Benefits of Sīla

In order to exhort the people to observe sīla, it is necessary to explain the benefits of sīla. People have faith in a man complete with sīla and trust him as a man of honour. He is welcomed among the society and also in the business circle. In this way he easily prospers and has no problem in his social dealings. Many talk about his honesty though they have not yet met him and look forward to meeting him. On the other hand, no one wants to meet a man without sīla. As no one trusts

him, he has difficulties in social and economical dealings. The one with sīla will die with no delusion, so his next rebirth will be in the deva world. On the other hand the one with no sīla is certain to be born in the lower abodes.

Motto: *Prosper easily much honoured, not unaccepted
Have no delusion and be reborn as a deva
These are the five benefits of sīla*

The Benefits of Bhāvanā

Many consider meditation, especially vipassanā bhāvanā, as a difficult practice. To foster interest in bhāvanā, both mundane and supra-mundane benefits of bhāvanā should be lucidly explained and discussed. The Buddha had proclaimed the benefits of bhāvanā, before He expounded the Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta; such as

- If you want to eradicate impurities, practise the satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā and then your mind will be purified by every noting.
- Greed, anger, delusion, jealousy, avarice, anxieties, lamentations and so on, which one will certainly encounter in the mundane world will be overcome by practising satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā.
- The practice of satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā will liberate one from both physical and mental sufferings.
- If one desires to gain ariya magga which closes the door to apāya, practise the satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā.
- To attain nibbāna, the extinction of all sufferings, practise the satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā which has no diversion.

Dāna, sīla and samatha can be performed by various methods. However bhāvanā is not to be practised physically or verbally as it is the work of the conscious mind, nāma. Nibbāna could not be realized by dāna, sīla and samatha bhāvanā. Satipaṭṭhāna bhāvanā is one and the only way which leads to Nibbāna. You

will gain merits by explaining and discussing the benefits of dāna, sīla and bhāvanā.

Motto: *To be free from the impurities of mind, practise Satipaṭṭhāna*
To overcome the worries and anxieties, practise Satipaṭṭhāna
To prevent lamentations, practise Satipaṭṭhāna
To be liberated from physical sufferings, practise Satipaṭṭhāna.
To realize ariya magga, practise Satipaṭṭhāna
To attain nibbāna without failure, practise Satipaṭṭhāna

After listening to this dhamma discourse on the “Ten Domains of Meritorious Actions”, may you be able to practise diligently in accordance with the Buddha’s Teachings. May you attain your most aspired goal, nibbāna, the extinction of all sufferings immediately and with practice at ease.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

6. The Abhidhammā Day

The full-moon day of Theedingyut (Assayuja) is an auspicious day, on which many meritorious deeds are done by Buddhists. It is the last day of the rains retreat for monks and also the occasion to celebrate Pavāranā. Pavāranā means to invite, to request. At the end of the rains retreat before setting forth to various places to preach dhamma, the monks residing together in a monastery through out the rains retreat, hold a meeting (pavāranā). At this meeting each one invites the other thus “Please kindly admonish me if you have seen, heard or in doubt with regard to my misbehaviour and faults.”

Motto: *Pavāranā is rightly held
On the full-moon day of Theedingyut.*

An individual having faults will not gain dhamma, that is why it is necessary to know one's faults so that one can correct them.

Motto: *Kindly make it known the faults
That have been seen, heard or in doubt.*

Should the meditators learn a lesson from it? They should request the meditation instructor to make their faults known.

Motto: *Will instantly correct and obey
When any faults are made known*

The full-moon day of Theedingyut is also a special day, on which the Buddha descended to the human world after discoursing the Abhidhammā Desanā in Tāvatinīsā, the second

celestial abode. All the Theravāda countries, therefore, acknowledge the full-moon day of Theedingsut as the “Abhidhammā Day.”

Motto: *Rightly discoursed Abhidhammā Desanā
At the seventh vasa*

At the seventh vasa the Buddha went to Tāvatiṁsā, took a seat on the emerald slab and discoursed the Abhidhammā Desanā in gratitude to His former Mother, Deva Sañtusita. Deva and brahmā from ten thousand universes came to listen to the Abhidhammā Desana.

Motto: *Rightly discoursed Abhidhammā
In Tāvatiṁsā*

Why and when did the Abhidhammā Day come about in the human world though the Abhidhammā Desanā was discoursed in Tavatiṁsā? It is known as the Abhidhammā Day because it is the day when the Buddha returned to the human world after delivering the Abhidhammā Desanā in Tāvatiṁsā.

Motto: *The Buddha descended to the human world
On the full-moon day of Theedingsut*

The Buddha incessantly delivered the dhamma, day and night as swiftly as the mountain torrent. At the time for partaking alms food, the Buddha created a Replica Buddha (Nimmita) having identical corona and appearance. He made a resolution that the Replica Buddha would deliver a specific portion of the Abhidhammā Desanā. Only the powerful deva and brahmā, but not the others with less power, noticed it was Replica Buddha and not the real Buddha who was expounding the dhamma. Meanwhile the Buddha returned to the human world, took a bath at the Anotatta Lake and went to the North Island for alms food. The Buddha came back to the Anotatta Lake, had His meal and took rest in the sandalwood

grove. While Ashin Sāriputta carried out the necessary chores, the Buddha briefly delivered the Abhidhammā Desanā. Being pre-eminent in wisdom Ashin Sāriputta easily learned every aspect of the dhamma and taught it to his five hundred disciples.

During the time of Kassapa Buddha, five hundred bats living in a cave, rejoiced on hearing the voice of two monks reciting the Abhidhammā Desanā. These bats had no idea of merits and demerits but as they rejoiced at the pleasant voice and because of the power of Abhidhammā Desanā, they became deva in their next existence. Due to the strong power of Abhidhammā Desanā, they were repeatedly reborn as deva between the time of the two Buddhas. (Kassapa and Gotama)

They became human beings in Gotama Buddha's time. They joined the Order of Monks and when Ashin Sāriputta taught them the Abhidhammā Desanā, neither briefly nor elaborately they learned it easily since they have heard it as bats in one of their past existences. During three vāssa months the Buddha taught Ashin Sāriputta every day, who in turn taught his five hundred disciple monks. Thus the Abhidhammā Desanā reached the human world through Ashin Sāriputta who taught his five hundred disciple monks.

Abhi = extraordinary + Dhamma = desanā

Abhidhammā Desanā is an extraordinary desanā because it is different from Sutta Desanā. The five aggregates (khanda) the twelve bases (āyatana), the eighteen elements (dhātu), the four noble truths (sacca) and the four foundations of mindfulness are briefly explained in Sutta Desanā. However, in Abhidhammā Desanā, the Buddha expounded them explicitly and elaborately.

Motto: Discourses in Abhidhammā Desanā
Are more elaborate than in Sutta Desanā

Abhidhamma Desanā is the truth, true to nature and the most precise teaching. The teachings in Sutta Desanā are taught according to the level of maturity of the individuals' perfection (parami) and it is easy to comprehend. The level of teaching

is sometimes profound and sometimes not, since the objective of the teachings in *Sutta Desanā* is for the liberation of the individual according to his level of comprehension and perfection. On the contrary the teachings in *Abhidhammā Desanā* are exact, realistic and explicit regardless of the individuals' level of maturity. Judgements and decisions on dhamma are made with reference to *Abhidhammā Desanā*.

The Buddha expounded in the *Vibhaṅga Desanā*, "As the resultant effects of dāna, sīla and samatha people are reborn in the human world, the six celestial realms and Rūpa and Arūpa Brahmā worlds.

One day they may land in the four woeful states such as hell, animal, peta and asurakāya when the power of meritorious deeds such as dāna and sīla are exhausted. The Buddha expounded thus without considering neither those with dāna, sīla merits nor with jhanic absorption through samatha bhāvanā.

Vipassanā dhamma closes the door to apāya if circumstances are favourable and nibbāna is attained. For a sotāpanna the unwholesome deeds leading to apāya become ineffective as sotāpatti magga has dispelled them. Not only consequences of the unwholesome deeds of the past existences but also those of the present life disappear. Then as rebirth in apāya is no longer possible one can undergo the round of samsarā fearlessly and will certainly be in better and nobler existences in future. Though he may have forgotten to practise dhamma while enjoying the existential pleasure, in the seventh existence, he will attain nibbāna by practising vipassanā dhamma. Although the Buddha indirectly mentioned that the satipaṭṭhāna dhamma is the most reliable dhamma, He explicitly commented in *Abhidhammā Desanā* that dāna, sīla and samatha bhāvanā are not dependable for the reason that one may land in apāya hell one day.

The King of Deva created three stairways from Tāvatinisa to the gate of Saṅkassa City, when the Buddha made His wish to return to the human world, at the end of the *Abhidhammā Desanā* on the full moon day of Theedingyut. The middle

stairway was made of rubies, the right one was gold and the left one was silver.

Motto: *Gold on the right
Silver on the left
Rubies in the middle*

The Buddha descended along the ruby stairway, while deva accompanied Him on the golden stairway playing celestial music. Brahmā holding white umbrellas came down from the silver stairway. People gathered in a great mass within the area of thirty-six yojana (two hundred and eighty-eight miles), deva and brahmā became visible to one another owing to Lokavirana Miracle performed by the Buddha. This miracle created a great expanse of space from Bhavagga (the highest abode of Brahmā) above to Avīci (the lowest abode of intense sufferings) below and throughout the ten directions of the unbounded universe. Beholding the Buddha's splendour that day, there was none among the people who did not aspire for Buddhahood.

As women were also present in the great mass of people, they too might have aspired for Buddhahood. That is why no one could say that women cannot aspire for Buddhahood. Referring to this occasion, the Elder monks of the present day decide that women can aspire for Buddhahood. It is a fact that a woman cannot be enlightened as a Buddha although she may have aspired for it. When she is reborn as a man in her next life, then only it is possible for her aspiration to be fulfilled.

Women with the following four conditions will become men in the next existence.

1. Have strong faith in the Three Gems at the expense of one's life.
2. Have firm observation of the five precepts.
3. Strongly abhor womanhood.
4. Great desire for manhood.

Although the number of people aspiring after Buddhahood on seeing and hearing the Buddha's great splendour, it is certain

that some would have flinched if they had known the period of time required for the fulfilment of perfections. To be a Paññādhika Buddha, it takes four asaṅkheyya and a hundred thousand aeons to reach the goal; a Saddhādhika Buddha takes eight asaṅkheyya and a hundred thousand aeons to reach the goal; a Vīriyādhika Buddha takes sixteen asaṅkheyya and a hundred thousand aeons to reach the goal.

Upon learning the lengthy period required for the fulfilment of perfection, some women yogi may not wish to aspire for Buddhahood as they have to strive hard even to be a sotāpanna. Some women yogi with strong will and courage may aspire for Buddhahood.

There was an instance where a woman endowed with the above mentioned four conditions became a man in the second existence. At the Buddha's life time, Gopika, a Sakyan princess had strong faith in the Three Gems, firmly observed the Five Precepts, abhored womanhood and was always desirous of manhood. She invited three monks and offered alms-food every day with an aspiration for manhood. In her next rebirth she became a male deva named Gopaka, son of the King of Deva.

After listening to this discourse on the "Abhidhammā Day" may you be able to practise accordingly with ease. May you all be able to attain swiftly your most aspired noble dhamma, Nibbāna, the cessation of all sufferings.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

7. Four Supporting Dhamma

The dhamma discourse will be about the four supporting dhamma as stated in the Saṅgaha Sutta. The sīla observed by the people are generally of two types: vāritta sīla and cāritta sīla. The Buddha had prescribed the practices such as “I undertake to abstain from killing (pānātipātā veramani sakkhāpadam), to abstain from stealing (adinnādhānā veramani sakkhāpadam)” and so on. These precepts are the vāritta sīla precepts. By observing such precepts one is prohibited from committing killing, stealing and so on.

Motto: *Precepts prohibiting (unwholesome) practice
Is the vāritta sīla*

The Buddha had also prescribed the duties to be carried out and fulfilled such as the duties of parents, the duties of sons and daughters, the duties of teachers, the duties of pupils, the duties of friends and so on. Failing to undertake these duties are no offences according to the mundane point of view.

Motto: *Prescribing to fulfil the duties
Is the cāritta sīla*

Four Ways of Honouring and Supporting Each Other

The Buddha had prescribed the four dhamma for the people who are living together to honour and support one another.

1. Dāna - to offer, support and honour one another
2. Peyyāvajja - when circumstances arise to say something, it is to speak gently, pleasantly and kindly

3. Atthācariya - friends, teachers and pupils, members of a family while living together should support, honour and work for the welfare of one another
4. Samānatthatā - always travelling together, eating together and regarding another as thyself whether one is rich or poor

Motto: *Giving charity, speaking pleasantly, working for the welfare of others and regarding another as thyself*
Are the four ways of supporting

1. Dāna - Giving dāna makes both the recipient and the donor happy and cultures kusala deeds. The recipient is happy on receiving things he needs, so also is the donor to see the other happy. The happy, peaceful mind of the donor abolishes the attachment to the property and there arises no greediness or hatred, at the same time the recipient thinks of the donor loving-kindness and volition upon him and in return he happily radiates loving-kindness towards the donor. Thus the reciprocal wholesome merits develop in both the donor and the recipient. Individuals living together and fulfilling each other's needs with right attitude amounts to supporting and honouring each other.
2. Peyyāvajja - If circumstances arise to say something one should speak gently and compassionately. After offering if one speaks harshly and humiliatingly to the other one lower in status means no supporting.

Motto: *Speak compassionately
 To one who is lower in status*

Pondering compassionately, "He said such things because he is young and has not much knowledge," and speaking gently is

supporting the other. On the other hand, one would humiliate and ill-treat the other (vihimisa) by saying, "You're useless, you know nothing" instead of giving support. One should cultivate sympathetic joy (muditā) towards those who are doing better than oneself in wealth, property, education and so on reflecting, "I am glad to see them prosper and wish them to be more and more prosperous and happy." This is supporting and honouring the others who are better off than oneself. Envy and jealousy might develop if one fails to have sympathetic joy.

Motto: *Speak with sympathetic joy
To others better off than oneself*

Towards individuals with the same status with oneself, loving-kindness should be developed by reflecting, "May they be happy and wealthy like me."

Motto: *Speak with loving-kindness
To others with the same status*

Developing loving-kindness towards those who are of the same status with respect to personality, mentality and such is regarded as supporting and honouring. If one fails to be so, hatred (dosa) would arise out of conceit and competitive disposition. Hence he may not speak gently and lovingly.

3. Atthācariya - Working for the welfare of others is known as supporting and honouring; to help one to acquire education when he desires to learn; to support one in earning a livelihood by giving advice, financial aid and helping personally in his work. When an individual is sick, one takes care of him by consulting a doctor, supplying whatever he needs and so on. These are the support for mundane benefits in accordance with the Buddha's Teaching.

From the supramundane point of view urging and wishing friends, members of the family and others to observe sīla,

to offer charity, to practise samatha and vipassanā meditations are regarded as supporting and honouring each other. It is the practice of treating others as thyself (atthācariya). The dhamma audience are practising according to the Buddha's Teaching in view of gaining merits by urging and encouraging those who give dāna, helping them to observe sīla, to practise samatha and vipassanā meditation by verbal and financial support. Thus one respects and trusts each other. If there is jealousy or untrustworthiness among the yogi, many problems and drawbacks can arise. The Buddha exhorted to help each other by inviting to meditate, by urging others to observe sīla and to offer charity. Of all these wholesome deeds vipassanā meditation is the most beneficial supporting as pointed out by the Exalted One.

One endowed with dāna will be reborn in the human world and the deva realm and has a happy life with no repentance. One without dāna will have to earn his livelihood even at the expense of his life.

One can give charity and dāna if only he has wealth and property, hence one needs to acquire wealth.

One who observes sīla firmly is destined to be reborn in the human and deva realms with longevity and good health. On the other hand one without sīla is always in need ever since he was reborn as a human or a deva.

Seven impulsive moments (javana) occur in a thought moment. The consequences of the first impulsive moment can be enjoyed only in the present existence whereas the seventh impulsive moment is effective in the second existence in view of becoming human, deva or brahmā. However, the middle five impulsive moments are beneficial till the attainment of nibbāna. Therefore, one should not fail to observe sīla and to give dāna.

Due to powerful kusala influence of samatha bhāvanā, one will become a brahmā in the second rebirth. The remaining

jhanic powers (sāmāpatti) are no more effective. When powerful influence of samatha bhāvanā comes to an end, he will be a human being again. He might suffer in apāya, if he commits unwholesome deeds as a human being. Hence samatha bhāvanā is beneficial for two existences only. The resultant effects of dāna and sīla are not the same as that of samatha bhāvanā. The benefits of dāna and sīla are the rebirth in human and deva abodes (kāmāvacara kusala). Rebirth in the brahmā realms (rūpa, a-rūpa kusala) ensues from samatha bhāvanā. The merits of dāna and sīla are powerful enough for the attainment of nibbāna. Nevertheless if his dāna and sīla merits are not strong, the last thought moment of a dying person may not be in good state. Therefore, his next existence can be in apāya. By virtue of powerful jhanic influence, other unwholesome deeds are not effective to a dying man who has accomplished samatha bhāvanā. There are no instances of one endowed with jhanic samādhi suffers in apāya. He will be reborn again in the human abode at the end of his jhanic samādhi (upacāra jhāna). It is, therefore, quite evident that jhanic samādhi is not a reliable one and that the third rebirth as human or devā is not certain as the influence of jhanic samādhi of the middle impulsive moments are no more powerful. Vipassanā wisdom is certainly the most reliable dhamma.

When one achieved Paccaya pariggaha nāma, he can claim to be a junior sotāpanna who will not return to apāya in the next existence. After realizing the Sotāpatti nāma through successive achievements of stages of insight the door to apāya is permanently closed. The unwholesome deeds of the past and those of the present as well are entirely abolished and they are no longer effective. It is compared to a tree, struck by a thunder-bolt, which cannot grow again. As vipassanā wisdom is the most reliable and substantive dhamma, one should urge friends and the others to practise vipassanā meditation. Frequent encouragements and exhortations, therefore, are the most beneficial support for them.

Not to undergo the round of rebirths in hell, in the animal world, peta world and asurakāya world are beyond doubt for a sotāpanna. He will have better and nobler life in the samsarā existences such as better looks, higher mentality, nobler family and luxurious living. Then he can undergo the samsarā existences fearlessly. Ordinary worldlings have to make special effort to acquire better and nobler life, but it is not for sotāpanna. Dhamma will support them to be prosperous, to have noble disposition and firm faith. A sotāpanna's faith in the Three Gems, kamma and its consequences will remain strong and firm at the risk of his life. Because of existential pleasure, he may forget to practise vipassanā meditation for not more than seven existences. In the seventh existence he will become an arahat and attain nibbāna. Thus supporting each other as taught by the Buddha is beneficial for all.

4. Samānathatā - Living, eating, travelling together and regarding another as thyself whether poor or rich means supporting for the welfare of each other. In Myanmar there is no caste discrimination. In some countries caste system is very strong: people of high and low caste cannot eat together: while bathing in a river, people of low caste have to bathe in the down stream. The supportive and honouring dhamma apparently does not exist in such countries. Myanmar regard each other as thyself living, eating together in accordance with the Buddha's exhortation due to the guidance of good parents and teachers.

Members of a family, teachers and pupils, group of friends living together practise these four supportive dhamma which is comparable to a linchpin. A cart with the linchpin can carry valuable properties and people to a desirable place, whereas without a linchpin the cart wheels will come out, causing many problems. People not practising these four supporting dhamma similarly will encounter with many miseries in samsarā existences. They may probably suffer in apāya, when they harbour lobha, dosa and moha in

their mind. If they support and honour each other in the present life the resultant effect certainly will be the attainment of nibbāna.

Motto: *Giving away own properties means dāna
Speaking compassionately and pleasantly means
peyyāvajja
Working for others' welfare means atthācariya
Regarding others thyself in poverty or wealth
means samānatthatā*

Those who practise these four dhamma will be rewarded with mundane and supramundane happiness, will be always in company of noble ones and finally attain nibbāna just as travelling in a cart with a linchpin. All Bodhisattas practised and fulfilled these four dhamma in every existence, not only as human beings but also as animals. In one existence of round of samsarā, the Buddha-to-be was a king parrot in a forest near Rājagaha City. There was a brahmin named Kosiyaguttha, the owner of thousand units (1750 acres) of paddy field in the Sāliddhiya Village. As he could not manage, he assigned five hundred units to a watchman when the paddy ripened. Thousands and thousands of parrots came to eat the ripened paddy. Being unable to keep the parrots away, the watchman reported to the brahmin thus, "Many parrots came to eat the paddy. One big parrot not only eats but also carries away the paddy." The brahmin let him catch the parrot. As the Buddha-to-be king parrot always ate the paddy at the same place, he was easily caught.

Seeing the beautiful king parrot with shining feathers like a peacock, the brahmin loved it as his own son and kept it in his bosom and asked, "Other birds eat in the paddy field, but you eat and also carry the paddy away. Do you have a bigger stomach or a large barn? Are we enemies?" The king parrot said, "None of these are right. I've three reasons: to repay the past debt, to make new investment and to bury gold pots." Being puzzled, the brahmin asked the king parrot to explain. "To repay

the past debt means to feed the aged parent-birds; to make new investment means to feed the young (sons and daughters) ones who could not fly: to bury gold pots means to feed the old and disable birds" replied the Buddha-to-be king parrot. Though a bird, the Buddha-to-be king parrot practised the supporting dhamma. To make new investment means to feed the children. If one is indebted to the other, one must repay the debt. Sons and daughters, therefore, should return kindness to their parents.

The brahmin was very pleased and said, "Though you are a bird you comprehend the supporting dhamma, whereas some human beings do not have any idea of it."

Hearing these words the brahmin respected the king parrot's pārāmi and offered him all thousand units (1750 acres) of paddy field. The king parrot as a Buddha-to-be was considerate and accepted just one unit (1.75 acres).

Motto: *Repay the past debt, make new investments
Bury gold pots*

The dhaimma audience are undoubtedly practising the supporting dhamma. If one does not repay the debt, he may become a slave in the future existences, may land in apāya and submerge in the stream of samsarā. Moreover one blessing (maṅgalā dhamma) is breached. Repaying the debt ensues blessing. Maṅgalā causes all unwholesome effects to disappear and all wholesome effects to take place or appear. Returning kindness to the parents is repaying the past debts. Consequently, one will enjoy physical and mental happiness and prosperity, practise the supporting dhamma and delightfully gain nibbāna.

Supporting and helping sons and daughters by the parents means making new investment. Should the parents tell the children that they should return kindness (debt)? Yes, they should do so, if not, sons and daughters may become slaves in the future existences or land in apāya because they unknowingly do not repay the debts. If the individual fails to return kindness to the

parents what more can be expected for the others. Therefore, parents should let their sons and daughters learn that they should support and honour their parents in return. This is according to the Buddha's Teaching.

According to the guidance of good parents and teachers, people with saddhā and wisdom give charity to the poor and needy ones, offer to sanghā and nuns respectfully. Thus they are burying gold pots. This is the good method of the Buddha. The Buddha-to-be followed this method, became the Enlightened One and finally attained nibbāna. Since the final goal for all Buddhists is the bliss of nibbāna, every one should follow the way of the Buddha-to-be.

Motto: *Repay past debt, make new investment, bury gold pots*

Practise supporting dhamma

Following the Buddha-to-be king parrot's example.

It is rejoicing to learn that the highest bliss, nibbāna can be attained as the result of fulfilling the four supporting dhamma. It is just like as the cart with the lynchpin which can carry valuable properties and people to their desired destination that the four supporting dhamma send one to nibbāna.

Having listened to the discourse on the "Four Supporting Dhamma," may you be able to follow and practise accordingly. May you be able to attain your most aspired bliss of nibbāna, extinction of all sufferings swiftly and with ease in practice.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

8. Present and Future Happiness and Prosperity (Dīghajānu Sutta)

A Koliya Prince, Dīghajānu, addressed the Buddha, "The Exalted One, people waste their time by being engrossed in the worldly pleasures and have no knowledge of happiness and prosperity in the present and future lives. The Enlightened One, please expound on this matter." (Aññ Pāli)

Happiness and Prosperity in the Present Life

The Buddha explained the four conditions to have happiness and prosperity in the present life. They are

1. To be diligent and energetic,
2. To take care of the properties accumulated,
3. To have good friends and
4. To have a well-balanced livelihood.

The Buddha elaborated as follows:

1. To be diligent and energetic
 - (a) One should have knowledge and skill in his work;
 - (b) One should not be indolent;
 - (c) One should be endowed with the knowledge and ability to enquire about work;
 - (d) One should have the ability to perform the work and
 - (e) One should have the administrative ability
2. To take care of the properties accumulated means to have the skill and ability to prevent the arising danger such as flood, fire, bad administrators, robbers and unworthy inheritors. Those who possess no such ability will not prosper

3. To have good friends one should know the qualities of good friends. Those endowed with saddhā, sīla, cāga and wisdom should be chosen as good friends.
 - (i) To be good friends, they must have faith (saddhā) in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅghā, kamma and the consequences of kamma.
 - (ii) The individual himself and the good friends should observe at least the five precepts. Sīla is the best attire. Those with sīla will win friends and have respect from them. Kusala dhamma will prolong. Ancient sages remarked that the Buddha had provided the best and most noble five dresses i.e. the five precepts. Those wishing to have a happy and prosperous life should observe the five precepts firmly. The individuals who do not observe the five precepts will not be happy though they may probably prosper. Hence sīla should be firmly observed like wearing the lower garment (paso) firmly. People who abstain from killing, stealing and such are like wearing the proper attire. Some crafty people may dress up to have a good pleasing appearance. However, they do not have good appearance to the wise individuals. If they have no proper (sīla) attire in the present life, they will also not have it in the future life. Due to your good parents and teachers you become a firm observer of sīla, therefore you win good friends with firm sīla.
 - (iii) The third quality of a good friend is to be able to give away things unreluctantly and to take delight in giving dāna.
 - (iv) To have wisdom means being able to consider and reflect upon things such as whether it is the right thing to do or not, whether it is suitable to eat or not; whether it is proper to go or not

The individuals endowed with these four qualities should be chosen as good friends. One must also be endowed with these four qualities. The Buddha's Teachings are so complete that it is unnecessary to be added or supplemented.

4. To have a well balanced livelihood means to have the ability to adjust the income and the expenditure. The aṭṭhakathā teachers have stated the four ways of using the money that one has earned. It is by dividing it into four portions

- One portion is for every day expenditure
- Two portions are to be invested in business
- One portion is to be saved for emergency

There is no mention of how to give dāna and such. The aṭṭhakathā teachers probably mean that the money for dāna should be taken from the portion for every day expenditure. Nowadays as the cost of living is so high, people may not readily use the money from the daily expenditure for giving to monks, nuns and the poor people. Those who can manage their income as mentioned above will prosper and be happy as taught by the Buddha.

In the olden days there are frequent dangers of starvation and such due to poor communication.

Prosperity and Happiness in the Future Life

The Buddha expounded that there are four kinds of dhamma for the prosperity and happiness in the future existences

- (a) Saddhā (b) Sīla (c) Cāga and (d) wisdom. If endowed with these four kinds of dhamma, one will have prosperity and happiness in the future existences and may even gain the bliss of nibbāna. It is certain that the dhamma audience especially wish for prosperity and happiness in their future existences
- (a) Saddhā is the best foundation for the happiness and prosperity in the future life and to realize magga, phala and nibbāna, cessation of suffering. Saddhā is certainly in the mind-continuity of the dhamma audience. Saddhā is rendered as "Yone + Kyi" in Myanmar vocabulary. "Yone" is conviction, faith in the Three gems, kamma and its consequences; "Kyi" means "clarity". One's mind becomes clear when one has developed such faith

Clarity of mind ensues from taking refuge in the Buddha, from offering alms-food, flower, water and light to Him, by reciting the dhamma and practising *vipassanā* meditation. It is being so, because one has faith in the Three Gems, *kamma* and its consequences. Beginning from the five precepts to *satipatthāna* *vipassanā*, are the dhamma taught by the Buddha Himself.

The dhamma audience have no doubt that *satipatthāna* *vipassanā* meditation can lead one to *nibbāna*, extinction of suffering. You also believe that it is the dhamma that gives prosperity and happiness in the present as well as in the future life and also freedom from all sufferings.

Confidence in the *vipassanā* meditation and the Buddha's dhamma is, therefore the primary factor in *vipassanā* meditation.

It is also necessary to have well-balanced controlling faculties. When the controlling faculties are well-balanced, dhamma is comprehended experienced and swift progress is made.

The five controlling faculties

Saddhindriya	- strong faith
Vīriyindriya	- strong effort
Satindriya	- strong mindfulness
Samādhindriya	- strong concentration
Paññindriya	- strong wisdom

Of all the controlling faculties, the controlling faculty of faith (saddhindriya) is the basic one. When saddhindriya is well developed, it strengthens the controlling faculty of effort (vīriyindriya); vīriyindriya strengthens the controlling faculty of concentration (samādhindriya), which in turn strengthens the controlling faculty of wisdom (paññindriya). Thus one controlling faculty conditions the other successively.

Upon reaching the required mark in *vipassanā* meditation one may realize *nibbāna* and close the door to *apāya*. When faith in the dhamma becomes stronger, the yogi practises diligently,

notes continuously and his *vīriyindriya* is strengthened. If the yogi is not energetic, his mindfulness slackens, therefore he could not note diligently. Satindriya is strengthened when *vīriyindriya* is well developed. The yogi can keep his mind fixed on the arising objects of noting. That is momentary concentration. Vipassanā wisdom develops with frequent momentary concentration.

The progress of dhamma will be slow if the yogi desiring to experience dhamma quickly, ponders “This is *rūpa*, this is *nāma*” and so on. Instead, he should develop concentration without reflecting and discriminating. When the concentration is strong, the yogi can discern vividly *rūpa* and *nāma*, cause and effect and arising and disappearing. The meditator should strive hard at the initial stage. Concentration will develop by practising sitting and walking concentration. Vipassanā wisdom (*paññindriya*) will be automatically strengthened when concentration is strong. The controlling faculties are sharpened successively with *saddhā* as basis. That is why individuals must be imbued with *saddhā* if they wish to have prosperity and happiness in the future existences and to attain *nibbāna*.

(b) *Sīla* is essential to the development of concentration which in turn supports the development of *vipassanā* wisdom. *Sīla* also is a support for prosperity and happiness in the present and future lives. The knowledge of the benefits of *sīla* makes one observe *sīla* firmly.

Motto: *Easy to prosper, have good reputation
Dying with no delusion
No feeling of inferiority
Reborn in the realm of deva
Are five benefits of sīla*

People trust one who observes *sīla*, so that he could acquire property easily. Though they have not seen him, people want to meet him because of his renowned firm faith in *sīla*. He is always accepted whenever he meets people at a party or any kind of company. Moreover, after passing away without

delusion, he will be reborn in the deva realm. On the contrary, if one does not observe *sīla*, no one trusts him so he will have difficulties in earning riches and property. As his untrustworthiness is well-known, he is unwelcome. Therefore, he is afraid to approach any large assemblage. He will see bad signs when nearing death and will therefore die in a confused state. His subsequent destiny will certainly be *apāya*.

One endowed with *sīla* when reborn in the deva realm, will attain dhamma within a short time if he has practised dhamma before. Without suffering for nine or ten months in the mother's womb, a male deva is reborn as a twenty year old and a female deva as a sixteen year old as if they are suddenly dropped from the sky. In the deva world climate is equable. There are no problems and difficulties to earn their livelihood because things appear automatically according to their wishes. They have long life and realize dhamma as soon as they contemplate, unlike in the human world where it may take two or three months to experience dhamma. They could attain dhamma within a short time as bending or stretching a hand. These are the benefits of *sīla*.

Most of the individuals who have not practised dhamma will forget to practise it when they are reborn as *devā*. That is why you should listen to dhamma and strive to practise to realize knowledge of a *magga* and a *phala* at least. Most of the dhamma audience will be reborn in the *devā* realm as the result of *dāna*, *sīla* and *samatha*. However they may not be reborn in the *Brahmā* world as they have not achieved *jhāna*. If they have an inclination to be a human being, they may be reborn as one. The pleasure and happiness of the human world is just like a dew drop on the tip of a grass blade compared to that of the deva abode which is like the water of the four oceans. As a deva, one may probably forget to practise dhamma if he has not done so before. Hence you should be careful not to forget to practise dhamma.

(c) One will have happiness and prosperity in undergoing the rounds of *saṁsāra* only when he has done *kusala* deeds

like giving dāna Dāna also is a good supporting factor for the attainment of nibbāna. He will give more dāna and charity happily when he learns the five benefits of dāna and charity.

Motto: *Good looks, happiness, longevity
Many companions and authority
Are the five benefits of dāna and charity*

One who has given dāna will be happy, will live long happily, have good looks and have many companions to take care of him. To have authority means that one can quickly carry out whatever he wants to do and not being controlled by others. One without dāna, though the properties are his own, will have to consider others and could not do things according to his desire. To be prosperous, happy and authoritative in the future existences, one should give dāna and charity.

(d) To have knowledge means to have wisdom or knowledge of becoming and dissolution after gaining Udayabbaya ñāṇa in practising vipassanā meditation. The yogi practising satipaṭṭhāna vipassanā meditation achieves such wisdom through personal experience. It is not the knowledge gained by guessing but by progressive accomplishment of stages of insight from Nāmarūpa pariccheda through Paccaya pariggaha and Sammasana to Udayabbaya ñāṇa (the fourth stage of insight). The Udayabbaya ñāṇa could be realized only when the Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa is rightly achieved. By noting rising, falling, sitting, touching, lifting and so on according to the Ven: Mahāsi Sayadaw's guidance, the yogi achieves the Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa when concentration is developed.

With Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa as a right basis the yogi while thus noting comprehends the rising, falling, sitting, touching behaviours and the mind noting these behaviours are not the same. The behaviours such as rising, falling,

sitting, touching are matter, *rūpa*, which are not of the nature of consciousness. The noting mind is of the nature of consciousness, therefore it is mind, *nāma*.

Within three or four days the *Nāmarūpa pariccheda* *nāna* could be achieved by those having moderate knowledge and wisdom. By virtue of continuous notings, concentration is strengthened and the yogi discerns the cause and effect. It is possible to note because of the manifestation of rising, falling, sitting and touching behaviours. If these behaviours do not occur distinctly, there cannot be any noting of them. Thus the behaviour is the cause and the noting is the effect. The knowledge of cause and effect is *Paccaya pariggha* *nāna*.

By successive notings the yogi achieves the *Sammasana* *nāna* which is a distressing stage of insight. Not long before the yogi sits to meditate he experiences pain, ache, itchiness, dizziness, swaying and such. These *vedanā* are more distinct to those who have not practised samatha in the past. Those who have practised samatha before, fairly experience mental suffering. With no practice of samatha, they experience both physical and mental sufferings. By reflecting, they perceive these sufferings as *dukkha*. Moreover, these sufferings are always changing and are never the same, they are impermanent, *annica*. The purpose of practising *vipassanā* meditation is to gain happiness, however, the yogi now experiences *dukkha* which is happening of its own accord. There is no way of controlling or preventing them, therefore it is *anatta*. Thus reflecting, the yogi perceives the three characteristics and strives ardently to comprehend dhamma. By virtue of successive notings the yogi reaches the *Udayabbaya* *nāna*. At the beginning of this stage of insight, becoming and dissolution are not vivid. There is not much suffering and the yogi mostly experiences happiness such as bodily (*kāya*) and mental lightness, bodily (*kāya*) and mental subtlety, bodily (*kāya*) and mental pliability. The yogi can

sit one hour without changing the position though he has to change quite often during the lower stages of insight. He can also sit continuously for two, three, four, five hours, though he can sit only for an hour in the lower stages of insight. He finds himself quite proficient and his noting appears to be automatic. Some yogi report, "It seems to me to just sit and watch." He also experiences both bodily (kāya) and mental serenity and he used to report, "My body is calm and erect like a doll." He enjoys both bodily (kāya) and mental happiness and joy of vipassanā meditation. He is now at the tender stage of Udayabbaya ñāṇa.

The Buddha said, "Leave alone the ordinary worldling even a deva could never have a chance to enjoy such happiness and joy." Some young and intelligent yogi will experience vipassanā joy personally.

A meditator after gaining the Udayabbaya ñāṇa goes to a place of solitude and contemplates the becoming and dissolution of rūpa and nāma. When concentration becomes strong and mature, the three characteristics are perceived distinctly and he realizes the dhamma. He proclaims that to be a human being is a great opportunity. He certainly will attain nibbāna since he delights in dhamma. The dhamma audience should practise diligently to gain Udayabbaya ñāṇa.

After listening to the four dhamma on the happiness and prosperity in the present life and the four dhamma on the happiness and prosperity in the future existences, may you be able to practise with ease accordingly and swiftly attain nibbāna, the cessation of sufferings.

9. The Seven Benefits of Sotāpattimagga

In this present day, there are more Buddhists who practise vipassanā meditation in view of becoming at least a Sotāpanna. The Visuddhimagga Pali stated that individuals gain seven benefits after attaining sotāpattimagga by practising vipassanā dhamma according to their aspiration.

- (1) The penetrative destruction of the kilesa such as lobha, dosa and moha-the cause of apāya suffering.
- (2) Drying the ocean-like beginningless sanisarā suffering.
- (3) Closing all the doors to apāya
- (4) Gaining the seven dhamma or properties of ariyā.
- (5) Elimination of the eight wrong paths (micchāmagga)
- (6) Extinguishing all harm and danger
- (7) To be true sons and daughters of the Buddha.

(Visuddhimag-dhu 442)

(1) Kilesa such as lobha, leading to apāya, is momentarily and penetratively destroyed at each noting before one attains sotāpattimagga, while practising vipassanā meditation. When sotāpattimagga is achieved, the kilesa such as lobha, dosa, moha leading to apāya are entirely eradicated by the sotāpattimagga.

Motto: *Rightly penetrates
The apāya leading kilesa*

(2) The ocean-like beginningless round of sanisarā suffering will dry up when one achieves sotāpattimagga by practising vipassanā dhamma

Motto: *The Ocean-like samsarā
Dries up forever*

After achieving sotāpattimagga, those who are sotāpanna will undergo the round of saṁsarā suffering for seven existences the most. Then they gain the benefit of drying up the ocean-like beginningless round of saṁsarā suffering.

Once the Buddha pointed out, "My good sons, the remaining round of suffering in the (psycho-physical) continuity of the sotāpanna who has achieved sotāpattimagga are comparable to the dust on my nail. The eradicated saṁsarā suffering is comparable to the dust on the earth."

Motto: *Round of suffering for sotāpanna*
Comparable to dust on the nail
Round of suffering already eradicated
Comparable to dust on the earth

Thus the reduction of round of suffering is stated as drying up.

(3) In practising vipassanā dhamma when one attains sotāpattimagga all the doors such as the door to hell, the door to animal world, the door to peta abode, the door to asurakāya are closed (by the sotāpattimagga). This is the benefit attained in having all the doors to apāya closed.

(4) The seven properties of ariyā such as faith (saddhā), moral conduct (sīla), shame (hiri), fear (uttappa), knowledge (suta), charity (cāga) and wisdom (pañña) are firmly developed when sotāpattimagga is achieved by practising vipassanā dhamma. They will never be destroyed not only in the present but also in the subsequent existences. This is the benefit in attaining the seven properties of ariyā

Motto: *Rightly attain the seven properties of ariyā*

(5) The eight wrong paths (micchāmagganga) such as wrong belief (micchādiṭṭhi), wrong thinking (micchāsankappa), wrong speech (micchāvācā), wrong action (micchākammanta), wrong livelihood (micchā ājīva), wrong effort (micchāvāyāma), wrong

mindfulness (micchāsati) and wrong concentration (micchā-samādhi) are eliminated when one attains sotāpattimagga by practising vipassanā dhamma. This is the benefit of eliminating the wrong paths.

Motto: *Eight wrong magganga are eliminated forever*

Sotāpattimagga can eliminate only certain wrong paths leading to apāya though it is said that sotāpattimagga eliminates the eight wrong magganga. Only the higher magga can eliminate some other wrong paths.

The wrong paths eliminated by the sotāpattimagga are: wrong views; wrong speech such as saying false words at the expense of others; wrong actions such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct; wrong livelihood by committing three physical misdeeds and four verbal wrong deeds. These are the only wrong paths which sotāpattimagga can eliminate.

(There are no wrong paths which are completely eliminated by sakadāgāmi-magga.)

The wrong paths eliminated by anāgāmimagga are: -

- thoughts related to enjoyment of five sensual pleasure (kāma vitakka) micchāsaṅkappa magganga
- thoughts of endangering others lives (byāpada vitakka) micchāsaṅkappa magganga.
- thoughts of tormenting others (vihisa vitakka) micchāsaṅkappa magganga
- slanderous speech (pisuna micchāvāsā magganga)
- harsh speech (pharusa micchāvāsā magganga)

The wrong paths eliminated by the arahatta magga are:-

- vain talks (samphappalāpa micchāvāsā magganga)
- wrong effort (micchāvāyama magganga)
- wrong mindfulness (micchāsati magganga)
- wrong concentration (micchā samādhi magganga)

Thus the higher magga can eradicate some of the wrong paths (micchāmagganga)

(Visuddhimag - dhu - 325)

(6) When the sotāpattimagga is attained while practising vipassanā dhamma, impurities (kilesa), the cause of breaching five precepts, are then eliminated by the sotāpattimagga. Thus all harm and danger, due to the infringement of five precepts are extinguished.

Motto: *Results in prevention and extinction of all harm and danger*

(7) When the sotāpattimagga is attained while practising vipassanā dhamma, those practising dhamma will then become true sons and daughters of the Buddha.

Motto: *To be true sons and daughters of the Buddha
Is the benefit of sotāpattimagga*

Those who practise vipassanā dhamma in view of becoming a sotāpanna gain these seven benefits accrue simultaneously with the attainment of the sotāpattimagga.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

10. Ashin Anuruddha Mahāvitakka Sutta (Eight dhamma for the attainment of Nibbāna)

Today's dhamma talk will be on Ashin Anuruddha Mahāvitakka Sutta. Anuruddha = Ashin Anuruddha + vitakka = thought or plan + sutta = explanation. These seven thoughts are regarded as factors for the attainment of dhamma. However, the Buddha preached these eight factors to the monks for the attainment of dhamma.

After completing one vāsa Ashin Anuruddha became endowed with the divine eye which can see a thousand world elements, but he had not rid himself of defilements and had not yet attained dhamma. Thereupon he went to Ashin Sāriputta and addressed him respectfully, "Reverend Sir, I have completed one vāsa and have possessed the divine eye that can see a thousand world elements. I am not indolent but energetic; I am mindful and not forgetful; I am both physically and mentally calm and have no repentance; my mind is serene, there is no wandering of mind. Nevertheless I am not yet free from the defilements, attachments and such moral intoxicants (āsava) and have not attained the noble dhamma. Please, have pity on me and kindly instruct me on vipassanā meditation." Being the possessor of the honour of the highest wisdom (ekadagga), Ashin Sāriuptta exhorted thus, "You are burdened with three unwholesome dhamma. If you could discard them, you will become an arahat and attain nibbāna. The first unwholesome dhamma is that you are conceited (māna) and proud of your ability that you could see a thousand world elements. Secondly, you are always reflecting upon your good qualities of being energetic, mindful, physically and mentally calm and serene and not having restlessness of mind. Thus your mind is unstable and wandering (uddhacca).

Thirdly, you reflect upon the reasons why you could not attain dhamma inspite of your good qualities. Thus you have repentance (kukkucca) " Is it not beneficial to approach a wise and noble person? If the meditators reflect upon their good concentration and notings, their mind will be restless. They have to be careful not to do so. Sometimes, they worry for not being allowed to listen to the dhamma talk on 'The Progress of Insight' and the meditation teachers instruct them to continue noting "rising, falling." They should discard these three unwholesome dhamma so as to attain dhamma.

Motto: *Conceit, restlessness and repentance
Are the three to be discarded*

Receiving instructions on *vipassanā* meditation from the Venerable Sāriputta, Ashin Anuruddha went to a bamboo grove in the Ceti Country to practise dhamma. After fifteen days of strenuous practice, being tired he rested under a shady bamboo thicket and reflected on the seven thoughts. The Buddha knew it and came to him as swiftly as the stretching back of a bent arm. Sitting on a place prepared for Him, the Buddha asked "O! My good son, are you thinking of the seven thoughts?" Ashin Anuruddha admitted that he had. The Buddha said, "These seven thoughts are beneficial for the attainment of *nibbāna*, but one more thought is missing."

The Seven Thoughts

First Thought

A greedy person or a person full of lobha cannot gain the nine supramundane dhamma, namely, four magga, four phala and *nibbāna*.

Motto: *One desiring much and too greedy,
Shall not realize dhamma
One desiring little and contemplates,
Shall realize dhamma*

Second Thought

Four magga, four phala and nibbāna altogether make nine supramundane dhamma are for one who is contented with whatever he gets.

Motto: *Not contented and greedy*
Dhamma is certainly not for him
Contented and practises contemplation
Dhamma is certainly for him

Third Thought

The nine supramundane dhamma, namely four magga, four phala and nibbāna are the dhamma for a person who approaches a secluded place and meditates, but not for the one who is attached to companions and does not meditate.

Motto: *Attached to companions and greedy*
Dhamma is certainly not for him
Approaches a secluded place and meditates
Dhamma is certainly for him

Fourth Thought

The nine supramundane dhamma, namely four magga, four phala and nibbāna can be attained only by those who are not lazy and practise meditation.

Motto: *Lazy and not contemplating*
Dhamma is certainly not for him

Fifth Thought

Four magga, four phala and nibbāna, altogether making nine supramundane dhamma are to be gained by the one who is mindful and not for the forgetful one.

Motto: *Not mindful and careless*
Dhamma is certainly not for him
Mindful and contemplates
Dhamma is certainly for him

Sixth Thought

The nine supramundane dhamma can be attained only by those who have mental calmness and not for those with restless minds.

Motto: *One without concentration
Will have his mind wandering,
Shall not realize dhamma.
One with concentration and contemplates,
Shall realize dhamma*

Seventh Thought

The nine supramundane dhamma are the dhamma that can be attained by him who is wise and not by an unwise one.

Motto: *One who has no wisdom and too ignorant,
Shall not realize dhamma
One who has great wisdom and contemplates,
Shall realize dhamma.*

Eighth Thought

After saying that these seven thoughts are related to dhamma, the Buddha provided Ashin Anuruddha with the missing eighth thought by admonishing, "O!, My good son, four magga, four phala and nibbāna altogether making nine supramundane dhamma are not to be attained by one who delights in the expansion of phenomena. These nine dhamma are for those who have delight in non-diffuseness. In other words, to take delight in nibbāna that is free from craving, conceit and wrong views."

Motto: *Being delighted in elaboration and have craving and pride.
Shall not realize dhamma
Being delighted in no elaboration and contemplates
Shall realize dhamma.*

The Buddha, then continued to preach in detail to Ashin Anuruddha, regarding the actual practice of contemplation. Ashin Anuruddha then put forth great effort in his practice and soon

after attained arahatship, and was thus endowed with the threefold knowledge.

Ashin Anuruddha was the one who took delight in the expansion of phenomena by reflecting upon a thousand world elements. Dhamma progress will be slow for those who contemplate by way of diffusion and not contemplating on the object of noting. Some meditators would like to try to note at the eye or ear, like the other yogi, though their concentration is not strong enough. That causes restlessness of mind. It is to note only what one can observe.

Wants and Contentment

The Aññhakathā teachers elaborated on the nature of wants and contentment as follows.

Pāpicchā = pāpa + icchā. pāpa means bad and icchā means desires or wants. Pāpicchā means bad desires or wants. People with no morality, concentration and vipassanā wisdom pretend to have them and let others think that they have gained dhamma. Such individuals are people with bad desires. They will not gain dhamma. Especially young people come to meditate, not because they want to but because their parents urge them. They wish to gain insight soon after they meditate. That is pāpicchā.

Motto: *Those pretending to have qualities
They do not possess are people
With unwholesome desires.*

Mahicchā = mahā + icchā = great + desire

An individual who observes sīla securely, practises dhamma and gains dhamma but talks about his success to other yogi, deters his progress in dhamma.

Motto: *Talking about one's real success in dhamma
Is known as mahicchā*

He can report his success in dhamma to the dhamma instructors and thus avoid destroying the progress and dhamma for himself and others as well. A yogi should bear this fact in mind.

Apicchā = apa + icchā not + desire

Being quiet about one's real success in dhamma is a quality to gain dhamma. If one talks about his progress in dhamma, there will be queries to answer, thus his notings will be disturbed. If one wishes to gain dhamma he should note closely.

Motto: *Being quiet about the good qualities
Are people of few desires.*

Sanduttatthā = to have contentment. He who is content with whatever he has, is the one to gain dhamma.

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

Even a compassionate mother will no longer love a child who is never content with what he has and always asks for more and more. The one with no contentment will undoubtedly gain no dhamma. Even hall wardens may not like those yogi who are not content and changing rooms every now and then

Motto: *One uncontented and greedy
Dhamma is not for him.
One contented and contemplates
Dhamma is certainly for him.
One uncontented, will not be loved
Instead hated even by own mother*

Three Kinds of Seclusion

- (1) Physical seclusion (kāya viveka)
- (2) Mental seclusion (citta viveka)
- (3) Utter or complete seclusion (upadhi viveka)

(1) Physical seclusion: To stay alone or to go to a secluded place or a meditation centre and practising ardently. Leaving the family and practising *vipassanā* meditation is known as *nekkhama*. Leaving the family to enjoy a picnic or to go on a pleasure trip is not physical seclusion

(2) Mental seclusion: One gains mental seclusion when he has attained the eight *samāpatti*. By noting diligently “rising, falling, sitting, touching,” a meditator develops concentration, lessens *lobha*, *dosa* and *moha* and thus his mind becomes clear and purified (*cittavisuddhi*). That is regarded as mental seclusion.

(3) Utter or complete seclusion: The realization of *nibbāna* through *arahatta magga* and *phala* is regarded as utter or complete seclusion.

Those practising yogi who have established physical and mental seclusion and are striving for the attainment of complete seclusion, meditate energetically and incessantly. This dhamma is not for those who are attached to companions.

Motto: *One attached to companions and too greedy
Dhamma is certainly not for him.*

*One approaches a secluded place and
contemplates
Dhamma is certainly for him.*

Two Types of Companion

(a) External companions are friends, relatives, parents and families. Dhamma such as *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* will not be gained if one is attached to these external companions and enjoys life's pleasures. Attachments and life's pleasures have *lobha* as their roots, therefore, *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna* are not within one's reach.

Motto: *One attached to companions and too greedy
Dhamma is certainly not for him*

(b) Internal companions are defilements (*kilesa*). If one finds pleasure in *kilesa*, he certainly too will not gain dhamma.

An eighty year old female devotee once respectfully told Sayadaw that she was never lonely although she stayed alone. She enjoyed herself by recollecting the happy experiences of her younger days and by thinking about attending the coming social functions and parties together with sons, daughters and grandchildren. Sayadaw had to remind her to be mindful and practise meditation. The nine lokuttarā dhamma namely the four magga, the four phala and the blissful nibbāna will not be attained if one is lazy to practise and enjoys the existential pleasures. These nine dhamma are only for those who practise diligently.

Motto: *One not practising but idling
Dhamma certainly is not for him
One practises and contemplates
Dhamma is certainly for him*

Will a lazy and slothful one gain magga and phala by lying down on the bed? Not at all. For this reason, to gain dhamma one should put forth effort and practise diligently.

The Three Kinds of Exertion

(1) Āranibha dhātu	- the initial exertion
(2) Nikkama dhātu	- the exertion for the liberation from weariness
(3) Parakkama dhātu	- the continuous exertion to attain magga, phala and nibbāna through stages of insight

As soon as a yogi decides to join a meditation centre, he or she has to arrange for the domestic and other obligations. The yogi also has to make preparations for the necessary things that has to be taken to the meditation centre. Thereupon, the yogi already gains merits by the initial exertion.

At the meditation centre, first the yogi listens to the instruction on vipassanā meditation and practises accordingly with diligence,

noting “rising, falling, sitting, touching.” At the initial stage there is nothing much to comprehend. However, after two or three days while noting “rising,” “falling”, “sitting,” “touching” the yogi comprehends that the noting mind is different from the rising, falling, sitting, touching behaviour. The wisdom predominated meditators comprehend thus distinctly and quickly, whereas the saddhā predominated meditators comprehend only when the meditation instructor points out.

Rising, falling, sitting, touching behaviour are matter (rūpa) as they are not of the nature of consciousness; the noting mind is nāma as it is of the nature of consciousness. Thus the yogi realizes that in his body there are only rūpa and nāma and no such entity as “I”. The term “I” is the conventional term used for the convenience of communication. Thereupon the wrong belief of self (atta diṭṭhi) and personality belief (sakkāya diṭṭhi) are discarded and the apāya door is closed. The yogi has established a firm foundation as he has gained the knowledge discerning rūpa (rising, falling and such behaviour) and nāma (the noting mind). This is the first stage of insight, Nāmarūpapariccheda ñāṇa achieved by the ārambha dhātu, the initial exertion.

Nāma = mind

Rūpa - body, matter

Pariccheda = discern, differentiate

Ñāṇa = insight, knowledge

Due to continuous noting, concentration becomes strong, wisdom predominated meditators comprehend themselves that the rising, falling and such behaviour are the cause; and the mind that follows and notes them is the effect. At this stage “rising” and “falling” happen not only at the abdomen, but they shift to the sides, sometimes to the arms or to the top of the head. The noting mind also follows to those places and notes. Thus the rising, falling and such behaviour are the causes and the noting mind is the effect. Thus the meditator gains the knowledge differentiating between the cause and effect, namely the Paccayapariggaha ñāṇa. This is the initial exertion. Within one

week, the meditator can differentiate between cause and effect. The wisdom predominated meditators distinctly differentiate cause and effect through their own experience. The saddhā predominated meditators do so only when the meditation instructor explains to them.

A hen hatches the eggs but some chicks are not strong enough to break the egg shell, therefore she has to pick and break the egg shell for them. The strong chicks come out by breaking the egg shell by themselves. In the same manner the wisdom predominated meditators can differentiate between cause and effect by themselves. Whereas the faith (saddhā) predominated meditators need to be explained by the sayadaws and meditation teachers. In the same way as dhamma is gained by the Buddha's help, the faith predominated sotāpanna can gain dhamma only in this way.

At the Paccayapariggaha ñāna stage, the meditators can note closely when the meditation teachers urge them to note the intentional mind first in noting the general detailed activities. At the Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāna stage, in order to experience dhamma swiftly the meditation teachers usually urge the meditators to note the intentional mind first. However, most meditators report that they are not yet able to note the intentional mind, because their concentration is not strong enough.

At the initial stage of the Paccayapariggaha ñāna, the intentional mind is not distinct yet. The meditator faithfully reports, "I am noting the intentional mind just by guessing as it could not be experienced distinctly." In that case the meditation teacher has to tell him to note attentively. After successive practice of noting attentively and respectfully the meditator can note the intentional mind without guessing.

When the yogi is going to get up at the end of the dhamma discourse, he is to note the intentional mind first. If one has no intention to get up, will he be able to get up? Then the yogi notes "intending to get up", "intending to get up." Due to the intention to stand, the air inside the body pushes up the body and the yogi put forth effort and notes "making effort,

making effort.” The yogi notes “leaning on the hands, leaning on the hands” when he leans on his hands to get up. Then he notes the gradual upward movement of his body. This upward bodily movement is termed as standing. Then the yogi notes “standing, standing.” He must not be attentive to the forms of head, body, legs and arms, that are paññatti and not the objects for noting. The nature of the gradual upward movement, paramattha should be carefully noted. It is better if the eyes are closed. If the yogi opens his eyes and looks here and there, the nature of the gradual upward movement may not be distinct.

The two stages of insight are attained by noting the intentional mind. The intentional mind is consciousness, nāma and the standing behaviour is matter, rūpa. Thus the yogi realizes that it is not “I” that is standing. The intention to stand is the cause for standing behaviour to take place; the standing behaviour is the effect or result.

Motto: *The intention to stand is nāma
The standing behaviour is rūpa
It is neither “I” nor “you” who stands
Merely nāma and rūpa that stand
If the pair is clearly conceived
Then the purpose of standing is achieved*

The two wrong views namely the belief of “atta or self” and that of the five aggregates are discarded when the yogi achieves the knowledge of differentiating between cause and effect. According to the Aṭṭhakathā teachers, he is cognised as a Culasotāpanna (junior sotāpanna). One who has attained Paccaya pariggaha nāma has a firm foundation in the Buddha’s sāsanā. Hence, he is much relieved and not influenced by wrong views such as creator or causeless belief (ahetuka ditṭhi) and incongruent belief (visamahetu ditṭhi). If he is influenced by these wrong views and becomes doubtful about the belief of cause and effect, he may be indecisive as to what is right and wrong. However, through his own experience, he now firmly believes

that the resultant good present life is derived from the past good kamma deeds and that the bad kamma deeds in the past life are the causes for the present bad life. The facts that those with good deeds in the past have good resultant effects in the present life, those with mediocre deeds have mediocre effects and those with no good deeds are not well off in the present life are now quite clear to them.

According to the causeless belief sentient beings are created and there is no cause or effect for their becoming. The creators like Brahmā, Vishnu and God with compassion, certainly create living beings to be equally healthy, wealthy and so on. However, there are differences in their health, wealth, appearance, intelligence and mentality. Thus in creation there is no explanation of being rich or poor, healthy or sick and such like because there is no idea of cause and effect.

Nowadays there are converts from one religion to another. Will a sotāpanna with a strong foundation in the Buddha's sāsanā change over to the other religion? One who has attained Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa will never change to any other religion. Bad companions is one of the reasons that causes conversion to other religions. Moreover dhamma will not be attained if the meditator does not practise the right way or if the meditation teacher cannot guide well. Young people, therefore, should strive at least for the attainment of Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa, so that they will arrive at a good destination (sugati), becoming human beings, deva and brahmā in their next rebirth instead of landing in apāya. One with few wholesome deeds and more unwholesome deeds are destined to be reborn in apāya. For these reasons one should urgently strive to attain Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa. This exertion is known as ārambhā dhātu, the initial exertion.

By virtue of repetitive notings the yogi attains the knowledge of three characteristics by reflection Sammasana ñāṇa, that is regarded as a distressful stage. The yogi not having practised samatha in the past and having weak concentration will experience all kinds of suffering such as giddiness, nausea, swaying, aches, numbness, pushing and pulling, itchiness and so on.

Thereupon, he realizes that his body is merely a mass of suffering i.e. dukkha. These sufferings are changing, painful at times, aching at another time. Thus they are not permanent i.e. annica. He also realizes that though he does not wish for unpleasant sensations, they arise on their own accord and go on whether he likes it or not. There is no way of preventing them. It is uncontrollable, i.e. anatta. The three characteristics are clearly comprehended through reflection and he becomes weary of meditation. As he is suffering both bodily and mentally and because he has come to meditate as his parents have urged him, he wishes to go home. However, if he diligently meditates to overcome these vedanā, he will be liberated from them. This exertion for liberation is regarded as nikkama dhātu.

To overcome vedanā is especially important in vipassanā meditation. Hence, the practising yogi is striving for the liberation from vedanā.

Three Ways of Contemplation to overcome Vedanā

- (1) Contemplation with the aim to make it disappear
- (2) Contemplation by developing a gross mind to wipe it out in one sitting or in one day.
- (3) Contemplation to comprehend its nature

(1) Contemplating with the aim to make it disappear is, in fact, nothing but the desire for comfort fostering greed (lobha). Vipassanā meditation is practised to be free from greed. However, as the defilement, greed arises in between each and every noting, experiencing of dhamma and progress in dhamma are not achieved. Thus this way of contemplation is not to be adopted.

(2) Contemplating by developing a gross mind with the aim to wipe it out is fostering anger (dosa) and grief (domanassa). Vipassanā meditation is practised to be free from anger and grief. However, as the defilements such as anger and grief arise in between each and every noting, experiencing of dhamma and progress in dhamma may not be achieved for sometime. Hence, this way of contemplation is also not to be followed and practised.

(3) The motto, “Only when nature is known, *udaya + vaya* will be comprehended”, is significant in contemplation in order to comprehend the nature of *vedanā*. The becoming and dissolution can be experienced only when the nature of *vedanā* is comprehended. Thus it must be contemplated and observed whether the *vedanā* is only skin deep or inside the flesh or in the veins or bones or right in the marrow. On noting attentively for about four or five times, more pain may be experienced. That pain in one way or the other may subside after reaching its peak. However, noting should not be slackened. The pain may also shift to other parts of the body. The awareness of these increasing and decreasing of pain and shifting to another place is the comprehension of the nature or intensity of *vedanā*.

Becoming more interested in dhamma, noting becomes stronger and concentration is strengthened due to successive notings. He experiences that the *vedanā* increases at every noting and after reaching its peak, it decreases and also shifts to another place. Thus the nature of *vedanā* is more vivid to the yogi. With continuous noting, his concentration becomes more mature and the becoming and dissolution are distinct to him. The noting mind has gained an upper hand over *vedanā* because the yogi has to be more attentive to becoming and dissolution than the *vedanā*.

By dint of continual noting, the yogi attains *Bhaṅga nāṇa*, where the dissolution is more vivid. At each noting the yogi comprehends the fleeting dissolution and as there is no more pain, *vedanā* has been overcome by the noting mind. This is contemplation by way of *nikkama dhātu*. Some yogi remarked that they could note better when there arises *vedanā*. Their minds wander and noting is sporadic if there is no *vedanā*. Material forms such as head, body, legs and arms (*paññatti*) are no longer noticeable, they disappear fleetingly when *vipassanā* wisdom is strengthened. *Paññatti* and *vipassanā* wisdom are diametrically

opposite to each other. When one is apparent, the other disappears. This is contemplation by way of nikkama dhātu.

At the mature Bhaṅga ñāṇa stage, the yogi follows and note the fleeting dissolution of vedanā. The yogi notices the disappearance of both vedanā and the noting mind and then realizes that vedanā as well as the noting mind are not permanent, annica. To keep pace with the fleeting disappearance of vedanā also becomes difficult and it appears to him as suffering as nobody can prevent it, anatta. Thus the yogi is free from vedanā when he comprehends the three characteristics by himself and attains the noble dhamma by way of nikkama dhātu.

After Sammasana ñāṇa stage, the yogi attains Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage. Udaya means becoming, arising; vaya means dissolution, disappearing. At the beginning, the arising or becoming is not very vivid but pleasantness is clearly experienced both in the sitting and walking contemplation. There is not much suffering and the yogi experiences pleasantness such as bodily and mental lightness; bodily and mental subtlety; bodily and mental pliability. He can sit one hour without changing the position though he has to change quite often during the lower stages of insight. He can also sit for three, four, five hours though he can sit only for an hour in the lower stages of insight. He finds himself quite proficient and it seems to him the object of noting arises and the noting mind follows and notes automatically.

Some yogi report, "It appears to me, just like sitting and watching". He also experiences both bodily and mental serenity and he used to report, "My body is calm and erect like a doll." He enjoys both bodily and mental happiness, the joy of vipassanā meditation. He is now at the tender stage of Udayabbaya ñāṇa.

The Buddha said, 'A meditator at the Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage, approaches a secluded place, contemplates on becoming and dissolution of the phenomena and enjoys vipassanā pīti. Let alone an ordinary worldling, even a deva could never have a chance to enjoy such happiness and joy.' Some young and intelligent yogi will experience vipassanā joy personally. If the yogi enjoys

and becomes attached to the happiness (sukha vedanā) there will be stagnation in dhamma.

Motto: *Attachment to the pleasant feelings
While noting means internal stagnation*

It is essential to note the sukha vedanā as “pleasant, pleasant,” if not dhamma will not progress. The yogi should continue to contemplate ardently by way of parakkama dhātu in order to gain insight stage by stage. He should note sukha vedanā as he has done at the early stage of Udayabbayañāna. He may experience bodily or mental happiness, and should note whichever is distinct. At the mature Udayabbayañāna stage, intelligent meditators will comprehend the sensation of pleasantness arises and disappears, when it is noted, “pleasant, pleasant.” Arising is becoming and disappearing is dissolution. The yogi perceives this process of fleeting becoming and dissolution as suffering.

The Exalted One exhorted, “One should note sukha until it is comprehended as dukkha”. There will be no attachment to sukha vedanā when it is comprehended as dukha vedanā. So as to overcome the attachment to pleasant feelings and to successively progress stage by stage of insight, the yogi has to practise by way of parakkama dhātu. At the Udayabbayañāna, the yogi contemplates to overcome the pleasantness by way of parakkama dhātu. Consequently magga, phala and nibbāna are attained.

Motto: *When there arises sukha
Rightly note it as dukkha*

After listening to the dhamma discourse on the Eight Dhamma as expounded in the Anuruddha Mahāvitakka Sutta, may you all be able to practise accordingly, make swift progress in insight knowledge and attain nibbāna, the cessation of all sufferings with ease in practice.

11. Indriyasamvara Sutta

This dhamma discourse will deal with the explanation on restraint of the controlling faculties. ‘Indriya’ means controlling faculties; ‘samvara’ means restraint and ‘sutta’ means explanation.

As mentioned in the Aṅguttara Pāli, the Buddha exhorted “O! good sons, the Pātimokkhasamvara sīla will not develop in one who does not observe Indriyasamvara sīla.” It means that, if one does not restrain the six sense-faculties, namely eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, the Indriyasamvara sīla will be breached. If the six sense-faculties are not well restrained, (Indriyasamvara Sīla), the observation of five, eight or ten precepts for the laities, and two hundred and twenty seven Disciplinary Rules for the sanghā, will be breached. Then concentration cannot be developed due to lack of sīla. When there is no concentration, it is impossible to have wisdom to discern the truth of all formations of existence (Yathābhūta-ñāna-dassana). Thereupon, the Nibbida ñāna, the knowledge of weariness will not develop. The detachment (virāga) and the reflection upon the liberation (vimutta) i.e. magga and phala will not be realized.

On the contrary, it can be said that if endowed with Indriyasamvara sīla, one will observe the Pātimokkhasamvara sīla, by restraint of the six sense-faculties. It is the primary condition for the fulfilment of the five, eight or nine precepts, and the two hundred and twenty seven Disciplinary Rules. Concentration will develop when these sīla are satisfactorily observed. Yathābhūta ñāna will develop when concentration is

strong. Then arises the Nibbida *ñāṇa*, the knowledge of weariness, and detachment (*virāga*), which in turn leads to the Vimuttiñāṇadassana (phala). In succession Vimuttiñāṇa cultivates the development of Paccavakkhana *ñāṇa*. In fact, the Aṭṭhakathā teachers commented that it is the condition for the liberation from the *saṁsāra* or for attaining arahatship. Thus the Indriyasamivara *sīla* is of utmost significance in the realization of noble dhamma.

Vipassanā meditators wishing to be endowed with *sīla* and concentration to experience dhamma and to progress swiftly should restrain their six sense-faculties. Then only lobha, dosa and moha will not arise. With no restraint of the six sense-faculties, lobha will arise when pleasant sense objects come into contact with the six senses; if the sense objects are unpleasant, then dosa arises; if it is not a gross one, a mild dosa can even arise, such as "Oh, it is not good." Thus the mind becomes restless and the Indriyasamivara *sīla* is breached. Thereupon the Pātimokkhasamivara *sīla* is affected also.

It is more evident at the eye and ear; upon seeing dancing and hearing music, one watches dancing and listens to the music. The precept on abstention from dancing, listening to music and so on is then transgressed. When there is no restraint of six sense-faculties, the Pātimokkhasamivara *sīla* also is breached. Neither concentration develops nor wisdom arises and so on. Thus one successively distract the other, when the Indriyasamivara *sīla* is not well observed. That is the reason why the Indriyasamivara *sīla* is important. Vipassanā meditators must specially restrain the six sense-faculties, so as to be able to note as mere seeing, mere hearing, mere touching, mere thinking and so on. Hence the dhamma will progress. When the Indriyasamivara *sīla* is firmly observed the Pātimokkhasamivara *sīla* will also be well observed and concentration develops. The concentration fosters Yathābhūta *ñāṇa*. Then arises the Nibbidā *ñāṇa*, the knowledge of weariness and detachment (*virāga*) causing the development of Vimutta (phala) and Vimuttiñāṇadassana and also Paccavekkhana *ñāṇa*. Thus one successively cultivates the other

so that dhamma will be experienced, comprehended and attained.

Motto: *Indriya (sanivara sīla) nurtures Pātimok
Pātimok cultures concentration
Concentration causes the development of yathā
(bhuta)
Yathā leads to the development of nib-virā
Nib-virā fosters vimū*

When one is imbued with the Indriyasamivara sīla, the five stages (as mentioned above) develop successively and nibbāna is certainly attained. In ancient days, yogi had to cover their heads with towels to restrain the eye-faculty. However, nowadays, it is unnecessary to do so, since the yogi have learned the right way. While practising for the attainment of magga, phala and nibbāna, the eye has to be especially restrained. Ashin Kaccāyana had instructed to practise like a blind person. It is a very beneficial instruction as concentration can develop in a short time. Indriyasamivara sīla is predominated by mindfulness (sati). If mindfulness is well developed, eye-faculty could be securely restrained. Good mindfulness fosters concentration. In sitting practice, with the eyes closed, concentration is easily developed. When a yogi gets up and looks here and there, his concentration will be disturbed. That is the reason why it is necessary to restrain especially the eye-faculty.

While practising vipassanā meditation, it is beneficial to practise like a deaf person. If a yogi listens to the sound, wondering “Is it a human, a bird or a hammering noise,” his mind wanders and results in no concentration. Therefore no development of vipassanā wisdom. Ashin Kaccāyana’s instructions are in accord with the Buddha’s advice. If a yogi wishes to experience dhamma, swiftly he should restrain especially the eye-faculty and the ear-faculty. He should establish mere seeing on seeing, mere hearing on hearing. It may not be easy for an ordinary person without vipassanā dhamma foundation, but it is easy for one with the concentration.

In walking practice, the yogi notes mindfully ‘lifting, pushing, dropping and lightness in lifting and heaviness in dropping down the foot. When someone passes by him, he is aware of it but does not know whether it is a man or a woman, short or tall, dark or fair, as he could maintain mere seeing on seeing. The attainment of the noble dhamma is not far away if one can establish mere seeing. There are many instances illustrating the benefit that ensues from the restraint of the eye-faculty.

Bikkhu Cittagutta

Once there was an elderly bikkhu named Elder Cittagutta, who dwelled in a cave called “The Great Cave” at Kurandaka. On the walls of the cave, it seems, there were lovely paintings depicting the Renunciation of the seven Buddhas (Vipassi Buddha and six others). At the entrance of the cave there was a big iron-wood (gan-gaw in Myanmar) tree. He was eighty years old and had lived for sixty years in that cave. The Elder, though he had lived there for so long, had never raised his eyes to look up at the paintings or at the tree. He realized the tree was in bloom, when he saw its petals on the ground each year. He realized about the existence of the paintings only when some guest monks who were amazed at the beauty of the paintings brought it to his attention. He had been fulfilling the requirement of the restraint of the eye-faculty and practised the dhamma diligently.

The King heard about the Elder’s great virtues and wishing to pay homage to the Elder, he requested the Elder on three occasions to visit his palace. The Elder refused, as he probably did not want his meditation practice to be disturbed. Moreover, he might have thought that the invitation was not related to any religious matter, so it would not be of any spiritual benefit to anyone.

The King thought of an idea to make the Elder come to him. He sent for all mothers who were still breast-feeding their babies from the nearby village called Mahāgāma and had the breasts of those women bound, so that they could not feed their babies.

He then issued an order that the infants must not be fed until the Elder came to the palace. After a few days the Elder heard the news and out of great compassion for the infants, went to the Mahāgāma village. The King was overjoyed and invited the Elder into his palace. He paid homage to the Elder and requested him to return to the palace for daily alms-food.

The Elder came to the palace together with other monks from the village. Everyday after the meal, the Elder gave a sermon. The King and Queen saw them off after paying homage. Whether it was the King and his retinue or the Queen and her retinue who paid homage, the Elder gave blessings to them saying, "May the King be happy and healthy." Back at the village monastery, the monks respectfully asked the Elder, "Why it is, Venerable Sir, that whether it is the King who pay homage or the Queen, you say "May the King be happy and healthy? The Elder replied, "O, Really! I didn't know who came, whether it was the King or the Queen. As it was the King who invited me to the palace, I gave blessings to him."

The Elder, having cultivated the practice of restraining the eye-faculty, noticed that people came to pay respect to him, but he did not notice who they were, whether it was the King and his retinue or the Queen and her retinue. He noted just mere seeing. After a few days, the King found out that it was strenuous for the Elder to stay at the village and to come to the palace for the alms-food daily. Moreover, he was informed that the Elder was not happy to stay there. Therefore, on the seventh day the King sent back the Elder to his cave.

Having arrived back at his cave, the Elder meditated throughout the whole night. To his surprise his concentration was stronger than before he left the cave. Then the different levels of insight knowledge arose in him with distinct clarity and in the last watch of the night he attained arahatship.

You might wonder, "Why didn't he become an arahat earlier during those years of striving before he visited the palace?" or "Why did he attain arahatship only when he came back?" The answer to this could be the Elder's most careful diligent and

strenuous practice of the restraint of the eye-faculty. The palace was full of extraordinarily sensual sights and pleasures. So the Elder had to be more mindful not to be distracted by the worldly sights and pleasures of the new environment whenever he visited the palace. Hence, his concentration was greatly strengthened. After returning to the cave and immediately on taking up intensive practice, his noting mind settled quickly upon the object of contemplation. That was probably the result of his concentrated and pure mind. He, therefore, experienced the dhamma easily and on the full maturity of his *vipassanā* wisdom, he attained arahatship. All these were because of his firm restraint of the eye-faculty.

This story of Bhikkhu Citagutta was accepted by all the six Buddhist Councils. It is possible to become a *sotāpanna*, according to one's fulfilment of perfection.

Concentration leads to the development of wisdom to discern the reality, the truth of all formations of existence (*yathābhūtañāṇa-dassana*). *Yathābhūta* fosters *vipassanā* wisdom.

According to *Samyutta Aṅgakathā* teachers the *Yathābhūta* *ñāṇa* is equivalent to the weak and tender *vipassanā* wisdom. *Yathābhūta* *ñāṇa* embraces the four stages of insight. The first stage of insight is the knowledge discerning all formations of existence (*saṅkhāra*). *Saṅkhāra* *pariccheda* *ñāṇa* *Saṅkhāra* means *rūpa* and *nāma*. Today this stage of insight is known as *Nāmarūpa* *pariccheda* *ñāṇa*.

The second stage of insight is the knowledge that overcomes doubt and skepticism. Nowadays it is known as the *Paccaya* *pariggaha* *ñāṇa*, that is the knowledge of cause and effect. When one realizes that there is just cause and effect, he has no more doubt on the dhamma. The third stage of insight is the knowledge that comprehends impermanence, suffering and uncontrollability. It is the *Sammasana* *ñāṇa*.

The fourth stage of insight is the *Maggā* *magga* *ñāṇa*, that discerns the right and wrong path. Today it is known as *Udayabbaya* *ñāṇa*.

In the *vipassanā* domain, it is often mentioned that the meditators should strive to attain *Yathābhūta nāṇa*. If some people, especially foreigners, want to know what is “*Yathābhūta*,” you must be able to give a right explanation, if not it is shameful for you and at the same time demerit ensues for the other party.

When these stages of insight are gained while practising *vipassanā* meditation, the yogi is convinced that he is on the right path and *saddhā* develops in him. It is the good foundation to realize *dhamma* if he continues the meditation practice. In the motto, “*Saddhā, health, right attitude, diligence, perception of becoming and dissolution are the five factors for the attainment of dhamma.*” *Saddhā* is the first and foremost factor to attain *dhamma*. To have the right attitude is not lie or be crafty. Diligence means to practise without considering life and limb.

Motto: *Be inconsiderate and unsympathetic
Towards life and limb*

If a yogi is sympathetic and have considerations for his life and limb, he may not become a *sotāpanna*. In this very life, a yogi may probably become a *sotāpanna* in accord with the maturity of his perfection, therefore, he should be daring to practise with no consideration for his life and limb.

In *vipassanā* meditation *saddhā* is significant. In as much as the stages of insight progress, *saddhā* will be strengthened. In accord with one's perfection the noble *dhamma* will be attained by successive meditation.

Under the guidance of the Benefactor *Mahāsi Sayadaw*, a yogi contemplates, rising, falling, sitting, touching and so on. During the initial stage, he may not be able to comprehend anything special in his noting as concentration is not yet developed. When the concentration becomes stronger he is aware of the fact that actions such as rising, falling, sitting, touching are separate entities from the mind that is noting them. He can now differentiate between the “rising, falling and so on”, the matter, *rūpa* which is not of the nature of consciousness and the noting mind, *nāma*.

which is of the nature of consciousness. Moreover he realizes that there is just rūpa and nāma and nothing else in one's aggregates. The usage "I" is just for the convenience of conversation. This awareness of rūpa and nāma as separate entities is the knowledge of insight discerning rūpa and nāma, Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa.

Two Types of People

There is a difference in experiencing and comprehending dhamma among the yogi who are practising to be sotāpanna.

- (1) Wisdom predominated yogi experience and comprehend through personal experience the actions such as rising, falling and the noting mind are two separate entities.
- (2) Saddhā predominated yogi does not clearly experience the two separate entities while contemplating, though his noting may be good. He comes to realize that the actions such as rising, falling are separate entities from the noting mind only when the meditation teachers point out. Thus he gains Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa. The Aṭṭhakathā teachers remarked Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa as a weak or tender ñāṇa (Yathābhūta ñāṇa)

With successive noting, concentration becomes stronger and the yogi realizes that, it is possible to note due to the manifestation of 'rising, falling'. Thus he comprehends the cause (rising, falling) and the effect (noting mind). This is Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa. The wisdom predominated yogi knows that if there is no cause, the effect will not occur. At this stage of insight the rising and falling sometimes may not be distinct, then note "sitting, touching". The Dhamma teachers named it as Kaikkhavitarana ñāṇa. At the initial stage of contemplation the meditation teachers advise the yogi to note the general detailed actions so that dhamma will be experienced, comprehended and swiftly gained. However they could not do so. When they gain the Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa, it is easy to note since they have comprehended the cause and effect. They can note the intentional mind to sit, when they are about to sit and note

“sitting,” “sitting” only when the actual sitting behaviour occurs. Since they can note the intentional mind (cause), it is not difficult to note the behaviour (effect). Thereupon noting is uninterrupted. At the Sammasana *ñāṇa* stage, especially for those who have not yet practised samatha meditation before, they experience pain, ache, numbness, itchiness, giddiness, nausea, swaying and so on. This is a distressful stage of insight. Thus they first comprehend them as suffering, dukkha; then as impermanence anicca; since the aches, pains and so on are in flux and not permanent, and then as uncontrollable, anatta, as no one can prevent their occurrence. The yogi come to meditate to gain happiness and not to suffer. However, the pain, aches and such like are happening of their own accord. Thus they are endowed with the knowledge of the three characteristics through their own personal reflection.

At the Udayabbaya *ñāṇa* stage, it is fairly distressful. The yogi experiences physical and mental buoyancy unlike the experience of heaviness at the Sammasana *ñāṇa* stage. He is swaying and his body is as light as a leaf but makes no progress in dhamma, as his mind is inclined towards the swaying. The meditation teachers advise him to note “swaying, swaying” and overcome it by not directing his mind towards the swaying, so that dhamma will progress. His body and mind are harsh at the Sammasana *ñāṇa*, but now they are subtle. The harshness of his mind is lucid when he reports to the meditation teacher at the Sammasana *ñāṇa* stage. The yogi experiences both physical and mental workability; he could contemplate continuously for two or three hours without changing his posture unlike at the lower stages of insight. In other words, though he had to change position before, he could now sit for two, three, four, five hours at a stretch.

As he is both mentally and physically proficient his noting mind comfortably and spontaneously settles on the object of noting with no exertion. The yogi reported, ‘It seems to me, I just sit and watch the noting mind working automatically.’ He is certainly at the tender stage of Udayabbaya *ñāṇa*. He also

experiences both physical and mental serenity and happiness. He is happy and satisfied with the dhamma. The Exalted One said, "A yogi, perceiving the harm and danger of existence, seeks a place of solitude, contemplates the phenomena of rūpa and nāma mindfully and enjoys vipassanā pīti, happiness which cannot be enjoyed even by the deva leave alone the ordinary laity." In this way at the tender stage of Udayabbaya nāna, the yogi may be engrossed in the vipassanā pīti and make no progress in the dhamma. The yogi should take care not to be so at the tender stage of Udayabbaya nāna.

Motto: *Attachment to the pleasant feelings
Arising while noting means internal stagnation
Give up the pleasure resulting from noting
Instead note every arising
Then there will be no internal stagnation
But only improvement*

If one can keep pace with the arising objects of noting, progress will be made. These four stages of insight are the tender vipassanā nāna, the discernment of the truth of all formations of existence (Yathābhūta nāna).

Ultra-strong Vipassanā Nāna

Ultra-strong (bhalava) vipassanā nāna constitutes Bhaṅga nāna, Bhaya nāna, Ādīnava nāna, Nibbida nāna, Muñcitukamyatā nāna, Patisaṅkha nāna and Saṅkhā rupekkhā nāna. However, the Aṭṭhakathā teachers consider only the four stages of insight namely Bhaya nāna, Ādīnava nāna, Muñcitukamyatā nāna and Patisaṅkha nāna as they embrace the remaining three stages of insight. At the mature Udayabbaya nāna stage the becoming and dissolution (of rūpa and nāma) are very lucid at the beginning and the end; the beginning of "rising," the end of "rising" are very prominent, so also with the noting of "falling." The beginning is becoming and the end is dissolution. The stage by stage dissolution of rising and falling becomes distinct from the beginning to the end at the mature stage of Udayabbaya nāna.

At the Bhaṅga ñāṇa stage, the becoming is not distinct at all, only the dissolution is apparently perceived. In other words the beginning of “rising”, “falling” are not distinct but the end of “rising”, “falling” are clearly perceived. If the yogi tries to look for what is not distinct, the progress of dhamma will be slow, therefore do not note what is not distinct. You should know the stages of insight. Due to the fleeting dissolution, the form of the body such as the abdomen is no more distinct. While noting “rising” the tautness fleetingly disappears and in noting “falling” the looseness and shaking fleetingly disappear. The vipassanā wisdom becomes stronger (bhalavant) and according to the stages of insight the material form changes.

Bhaya ñāṇa is the knowledge of fear. As the material form, rūpa fleetingly disappears the yogi is frightened. At the same time he finds fault with the rūpa and becomes disgusted. That is Ādīnava ñāṇa. Thence the yogi is weary of the body. Nibbida ñāṇa and wishes for deliverance, Muñcitukamyata ñāṇa. Yathābhūta ñāṇa fosters the development of Nibbida ñāṇa. He, then realizes that he should note again in order to be liberated from the existential suffering, Patisaṅkha ñāṇa. This stage of insight is also a distressful one.

Next is the Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa where the yogi frequently realizes the Vimuttiñāṇadassana. The Buddha preached that Nibbida ñāṇa, the knowledge of weariness leads to Virāga. Virāga means detachment from various sensual objects and the aggregates where one finds nothing pleasant to be attached to. It enhances the realization of ariya magga. After the realization of ariya magga, the yogi gains the Vimuttiñāṇadassana (phala) i.e. sotāpatti phala, sakadāgāmi phala, anāgāmi phala and arahatta phala. Then follows the Paccavakkhana ñāṇa, the knowledge of retrospection.

After listening to the six dhamma as expounded in the “Indriyasanivara Sutta”, may you all be able to practise accordingly with ease and swiftly attain your most aspired noble dhamma, Nibbāna, the cessation of all sufferings.

12. The Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta (The Wheel of Dhamma) (19.7.97)

“Dhamma” here connotes the two wisdoms, + “Cakka” means wheel + “Pavattana” means turning or preaching. The two kinds of wisdom are-

- (1) The sublime wisdom penetrating the Four Noble Truths, achieved through the Enlightenment, under the Sacred Bodhi Tree.
- (2) The sublime wisdom by which the Four Noble Truths were explicitly expounded to the group of five ascetics in The Deer Park (Migadavana) Baranasi.

By these two kinds of sublime wisdom the “Wheel of Dhamma”, the “Dhamma Cakyar” in Myanmar was set into motion.

Motto: *“Dhamma Cakyar” is rendered
As setting the Wheel of Dhamma into motion
By the two sublime wisdoms.*

The Two extreme Ways of Practice

The sermon “Dhamma Cakka” was opened with these Pali words,

“Dve me Bhikkhave antā pabbajitena na sevitabbā ...”

“O, Monks!, there are two extremes which bikkhu are not to practise ...”

A bikkhu is a person or a monk who is aware of the suffering

and strives for the emancipation from it.

The two extremes:

1. A life given to the sensuous pleasure.
2. A life given to self-mortification.

(1) A life given to the sensuous pleasure which is

1.1 Hino - It is low, because while enjoying the sensuous pleasure, there arises greed, as more and more sensuous pleasures are wanted. Anger arises when the wishes are not fulfilled. If one's mind is possessed with greed and anger, he will certainly be blind to what is right or wrong, that is ignorance. Greed, anger and ignorance are the causes for the rebirths in the lower abodes. It is low in comparing with the jhanic bliss. Even the animal can enjoy the sensuous pleasure, therefore it can be said that it is the **practice** of the animal.

That is the reason why this practice is low and not for those who have gained dhamma.

1.2 Gāmo	- it is the way of low and ignorant people.
1.3 Potujjaniko	- it is the practice of ordinary people obsessed with kilesa (defilements)
1.4 Anariyo	- it is ignoble or not the way of noble people.
1.5 Anatta sanhito	- it is not pertaining to the attainment of magga, phala and nibbāna, therefore it is unbeneficial

The properties of those who endeavour for the attainment of nibbāna, are moral conduct, concentration and wisdom. The indulgence in the sensuous pleasure slackens the moral conduct, endangers concentration and develops no wisdom. Only when one dispels the sensuous pleasure, will magga, phala and nibbāna be realized. It is impossible to avoid the sensuous pleasure totally, he should lessen it. As the saying goes, "Trying to catch two fish at the same time will get neither," you want to enjoy the sensuous pleasure such as pleasant sight and sound, agreeable smells, delicious taste and pleasant sensation of the body and at the same time you want to attain nibbāna. There

upon nothing will be achieved. So it is necessary to diminish the enjoyment of sensuous pleasure as much as possible, if you sincerely desire to attain magga, phala and nibbāna. The Most Ven. Mahāsi Sayadaw had advised as follow:-

Motto: *Sensuous pleasure
Its enjoyment
shall be abandoned.*

The life given to the enjoyment of sensuous pleasure is predominated by greed. Hence it is not the correct practice to be followed by the noble ones. Besides it can take one to the peta world.

- (2) A life given to self-mortification is also not to be performed by the noble people, because
 - 2.1 Dukkho - it is the practice resulting in sufferings while performing it and also leads to apāya subsequently
 - 2.2 Anariyo - it is ignoble or not pertaining to the noble ones
 - 2.3 Anatta sanhito - It is unbeneficial or not pertaining to the moral conduct, concentration and wisdom for the attainment of magga, phala and nibbāna.

Motto: *Avoid the practice of self-mortification*

There are numerous ways of self-mortification, such as staying away from food for one or two days, even for fifteen days. The practice of sitting in the middle of four great fire, sitting under the heat of the midday sun was quite popular in India. It is supposed to burn down kilesa and free one from greed. Whether greed is burnt or not, there arises anger upon thinking, "I must endure the heat. It is a great suffering. It is very trying".

Motto: *Life given to self-mortification practice
Dominated by anger
Will send one to hell.*

During one of his earlier existences, the Buddha-would-be saw the apprehension of hell on his death bed. Then he knew that the self-mortification-practice was incorrect and changed to a correct one. Another self-mortification practice is to submerge in icy-cold water in winter believing that greed would be extinguished. Instead there develops anger with the thought, “I must bear it. Will it be successful?” and so on. Some spend many hours by hanging themselves upside-down from a tree. This is also meant to dispel greed, however it just fosters anger. All the above mentioned self-mortification-practices are ignoble and not pertaining to the achievement of moral conduct, concentration and wisdom. Hence the self-mortification practice is to be rejected by those striving for the attainment of magga, phala and nibbāna.

Some meditation teachers, misinterpreting the two extremes, regard the contemplation of pleasant feeling (sukha vedanā) as enjoying sensuous pleasure and that of pain and suffering (dukkha vedanā) as self-mortification practice. To them the observation of sukha and dukkha is incorrect, therefore it is to observe only indifference (upekkhā) feeling in the vipassanā meditation. Since the dhamma audience and the meditating yogi have learned the correct method, they observe dukkha as well as sukha when they arise. “Is it self-torture practice to note dukkha?” “Indeed it is not, in fact it is developing forbearance in contemplating dukkha vedanā which arises according to the progress in the stages of insight.”

However it is self-mortification when one purposely creates conditions to suffer and to be painful. “Forbear and note the arising vedanā such as heat, cold, hunger, aches” exhorted the Buddha. Forbearance is in compliance with the vipassanā meditation. “How long do we have to forbear dukkha vedanā?” The Buddha’s advice is “to forbear it till you die”. There are many instances of how forbearance saved one from suffering.

Once a monk practised vipassanā meditation the whole night, caught cold and suffered from the fatal colic. He lay down but it got worse. He started rolling from side to side. He could

not care for his robes. An experienced elderly monk came and advised him, "A monk must be patient". Whereupon the sick monk said "Sādhu" only once and calmed down. He contemplated the vedanā and kept pace with it and overcame the pain. He died as an anagāmī because of his patience. If he was intolerant and kept on rolling without contemplating the vedanā he would not gain concentration, and would not develop wisdom to attain magga, phala and nibbāna.

A man with a strong concentration, while suffering a serious disease, may be aware of his death just an hour, a day, a week or a month ahead. Then he should be courageous enough to disregard his body and life and to contemplate vedanā diligently with patience. To contemplate dukkha vedanā which arises naturally, therefore is not self-mortification-practice. In fact it is a practice for the development of forbearance. A monk, named Jivitasamasisi, contemplated the afflicted disease when he was about to die till he attained arahatship and passed away. Will you change your posture when painful? You should not.

Motto: *Ignore the body and life, but must be cruel to them*

The Middle Ways of Practice

The Enlightened One preached, "Avoid these two extremes. There is the Middle Way which enables one to develop vision and knowledge which leads to tranquility, to higher knowledge, to enlightenment and nibbāna". Then what is the Middle Way? Certainly it is the Eightfold Noble Path.

1. Right View
2. Right Thought
3. Right Speech
4. Right Action
5. Right Livelihood
6. Right Endeavour
7. Right Mindfulness
8. Right Concentration

Motto: *Avoid the incorrect two extremes
Follow the right Middle Way*

The Middle Way is predominated by wisdom. The Blessed One Himself had developed and practised it. Some thought that “Dhamma Cakka” is to recite but not to practise. However, when the Buddha explicitly expounded this Eightfold Noble Path to the group of five monks He meant to say, “This Middle Way has been discovered, developed and practised by me. You should walk on this Middle Way to nibbāna,” although it was not said so. That is the reason why we should follow His instruction and develop and practise the Eightfold Noble Path. Eighteen billions of deva and brahmā were liberated at the end of the discourse on the “Dhammacakkappavattana”. It is, therefore, not only to recite, but also essential to practise according to the method explained in it. It is also the Path trodden by the group of five ascetics.

By practising under the Ven. Mahāsi Sayadaw’s guidance, one can develop vipassanā vision. At the beginning, as the concentration has not yet developed, one may think that “It is I who is noting; it is my abdomen which is rising”, “The noting mind is “I” the falling abdomen is “mine” and so on. It is so for the reason that the vision of knowledge has not yet developed. When the concentration gains strength, the noting mind and the rising abdomen are seen as two different entities. Likewise, while noting “sitting”, “touching”, “walking”, “standing” and such, the noting mind and the object of noting are perceived separately. The yogi now lucidly comprehends that there is no identity such as “I”. “I” is the conventional term used for convenience sake in conversation. While noting “sitting”, the yogi is fully aware that the sitting body is the unconscious matter, rūpa and the noting mind is the conscious mind, nāma. In the same manner the physical touching is rūpa and the noting mind is nāma. Thereupon the yogi has eliminated the wrong views such as there is “self” (attadiṭṭhi) and that of the five aggregates as “I”, “you”, “they” (sakkāya diṭṭhi).

Thus the knowledge discerning rūpa and nāma is achieved. It is the vision of knowledge which subsequently fosters the higher knowledge; then follows the tranquility due to the mature concentration.

A lady was about to go out of mind, being unable to control her worries and anxieties. Her friends sent her to a meditation centre. After a month practice, she gained the dhamma. It is inevitable that one has to confront worries and anxieties, but if she has practised and developed the Eightfold Noble Path, she will have tranquility and gain the knowledge penetrating the Four Noble Truths. "If you wish to realize nibbāna, practise and develop the Middle Way", said the Buddha who had achieved the penetrating knowledge of the Four Noble Truths. The Exalted One expounded the Noble Dhamma that He had discovered and practised.

The Four Noble Truths-

- (a) Dukkha Saccā - the truth of suffering
- (b) Samudaya Saccā - the truth of the cause of suffering
- (c) Niroda Saccā - the truth of the cessation of suffering
- (d) Magga Saccā - the truth of the Path leading to the cessation of suffering

In the Buddha's Teaching, the eighty four thousand scriptures (Dhammakkhanda) and the Three Tipitakas, no Dhamma is excluded from the Four Noble Truths. Every Buddhist should understand the Four Noble Truths, if not they are not propagating the Buddha's Sāsanā. Moreover people will have low opinion of them. There are three ways of learning the Four Noble Truths.

- (i) Sutamaya ñāṇa - The knowledge through studying and listening to the Dhamma
- (ii) Cindāmaya ñāṇa - The knowledge through reflection and thinking of the dhamma studied.
- (iii) Bhāvanāmaya ñāṇa - The knowledge gained through vipassanā meditation.

We all superficially know that there are sufferings, that there are causes of suffering, that there is the cessation of suffering and that there is the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This superficial knowledge is gained by reading and listening to the dhamma. Then what really is suffering?

Our whole body is the truth of suffering. Greed or craving is the cause of suffering. Nibbāna is the cessation of suffering and the Eightfold Noble Path is the way to the cessation of suffering.

Motto: *The five aggregates, excluding greed, is the truth of suffering.*

Greed or craving is the cause of suffering. Nibbāna, the annihilation of greed or craving is the truth of cessation of suffering.

The Eightfold Noble Path is the truth of the way of annihilating suffering.

The Four Noble Truths are also grouped into (a) mundane truth and (b) supramundane truth. The two mundane truths are the suffering and the cause of suffering, whereas the truth of the cessation of suffering and the way to the cessation of suffering are the two supramundane truths. The two mundane truths are to be observed or noted but not the two supramundane truths. As a matter of fact, the five aggregates are the suffering and greed or cravings are the causes of suffering. Therefore when greed, desire or attachment arises note the most apparent one.

Since you have not yet eradicated the defilements and attained nibbāna, you cannot contemplate the truth of the cessation of suffering i.e. nibbāna. In the same manner as you have not yet developed the Eightfold Noble Path, it is impossible to observe them. It is quite evident that you cannot note what you have not, so vipassanā meditation is impossible. To observe the Eightfold Noble Path at the moment of the realization of magga also is not possible. Your knowledge about the two mundane truths and the two supramundane truths are through studying and listening to the dhamma but not by vipassanā meditation. It is essential that you could differentiate the mundane truths which are to be observed and the supramundane truths which are not to be observed.

The Four Noble Truths can be again classified into:-

(a) The Resultant Truth - They are the suffering and the cessation of suffering.

(b) The Causal Truth - They are the causes of suffering and the Eightfold Noble Path. Due to greed or craving (the Causal Truth) there are suffering (the Resultant Truth); because of the Eightfold Noble Path (the Causal Truth) nibbāna is attained (the Resultant Truth). Only when the Eightfold Noble Path is developed, will there be the cessation of suffering. This also is learned through studying and listening to the dhamma but not by way of vipassanā meditation.

Having the knowledge of the Four Noble Truths through studying and listening to the dhamma, reflection occurs such as “Oh! this aggregate is a mass of suffering when there is aggregate or body greed arises, causing suffering. If suffering exists there must be happiness or the end of suffering i.e. nibbāna. Thence there also must be a way leading to this happiness”. Thus the correct cause and the correct resultants are distinctly comprehended. This is the knowledge achieved by reflection. Neither the knowledge gained through studying and listening to the dhamma nor that achieved by reflection will lead to the cessation of suffering. However, they form the foundation for the attainment of nibbāna. Only by virtue of vipassanā meditation or practising the four foundations of mindfulness, can the Four Noble Truths be discerned.

The Eightfold Noble Path and Vipassanā Meditation

The Four Noble Truths are comprehended while noting such as, “rising”, “falling”, “lifting”, “moving”, “dropping” and so on. Furthermore in each and every objective noting of “rising” “falling” “bending” “stretching”, “sitting”, “touching” and as such there develops the Eightfold Noble Path, which embraces the Eight Maggaṅga or Paths.

Motto: *If contemplated precisely at the moment of occurrence
To develop, to know, to dispel and to attain
The Four Noble Truths are comprehended*

The Eightfold Noble Path can be categorised as follow:-

- (a) The *Sīla Maggaṅga* - the way of ethical conduct comprising right speech, right action and right livelihood.
- (b) *Samādhi Maggaṅga* - the way of mental discipline which constitutes right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.
- (c) *Paññā Maggaṅga* - the way of wisdom which embraces right view and right thought.

The Eightfold Noble Path developed while practising *vipassanā* meditation. After receiving eight or nine precepts, the meditating yogi no longer thinks of carrying out misdeeds, leave alone the unwholesome verbal and physical deeds. While contemplating “rising”, “falling”, “standing”, “walking” and so on, a yogi abstains from the four verbal misdeeds-lying, abusing, vain talk and back biting. In other words, he has practised the right speech. He also refrains from the three physical misdeeds-killing, stealing and committing sexual misconduct. Certainly a meditating yogi maintains a right livelihood by abstaining from the four wrong speeches and the three wrong actions. Thus the three ways of ethical conduct are fulfilled.

Furthermore, while contemplating a yogi endeavours to note precisely when the object of noting arises, for example as soon as the abdomen rises he notes “rising” “rising” right away. That is the right effort; he is mindful so that his mind fixes on the sense object; if he is inattentive or forgetful he will miss the arising sense object. That is the right mindfulness. His mind dwells upon the sense object from the beginning to the end of its occurrence, without wandering away. That is the right concentration. Thus the three ways of mental discipline are achieved simultaneously in practising the *vipassanā* meditation.

At every moment of noting, the mind sets on the movement or action, for instance, in noting the rising movement of the abdomen as “rising” the noting mind rests on the movements of “rising”. Similarly in noting “falling” “sitting” “touching” the mind fixes on the act of “falling”, “sitting” “touching”. This occurrence is known as the right thought. “Thought” here

does not necessarily connote “to think or imagine”. It is the nature of the noting mind to advance towards the sensation. With mature concentration the yogi apprehends that the rising abdomen is the unconscious matter, rūpa and the noting mind is the conscious mind, nāma. This is the right view of rūpa and nāma. Likewise in noting “sitting”, “touching”, “lifting”, “moving”, “dropping” the actions and the noting mind will be vividly perceived as separate entities. Thus develops the right view and achieved the two ways of wisdom, namely, the right view and the right thought. This is how the Eightfold Noble Path is developed by practising the vipassanā meditation. The Middle Way need not be practised separately from the vipassanā meditation.

“Rising” “falling” are the physical suffering truth and the noting mind is the mental suffering truth. While noting “rising” and “falling” greed or craving are rejected, therefore the cause of suffering is readily expelled. With the cessation of greed, there arises no attachment; no attachment means no coming into being, no old age, no sickness, no death, no worries and anxieties, no lamentation. This is known as momentary (tadinga) cessation of suffering. One noting causes one cessation of suffering. Where there is no noting then there is becoming which results in birth, decay, sickness and death; there goes the endless rounds of existence.

The spontaneous noting at the moment of the occurrence of sensation is known as the way of wisdom. In other words, the knowledge is conceived through wisdom and it is the truth of cessation of suffering. This is how the vipassanā meditation amounts to the practice of the Four Noble Truths, such as to develop, to know analytically, to dispel and to attain.

Motto: *If contemplated precisely at the moment of occurrence*

*To develop, to know, to dispel and to attain
The Four Noble Truths are comprehended*

By listening to “The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Noble Path” as expounded in the “Wheel of Dhamma”, may you all be able to practise in accordance with the Buddha’s Instruction. With diligent contemplation and practising in ease, may you all swiftly realize your most aspired nibbāna, the end of all sufferings.

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu

13. Simile of Breaking an Egg Shell

The dhamma talk will be on *vipassanā* as compared to the breaking of an egg shell by a little chick in the egg. It is with reference to “*Mulapaññāsa Pali Cetokhila Sutta*”. The Buddha expounded to the monks by giving the following comparison. When a hen hatches a full-time egg, the little chick inside the egg is strong and mature. It breaks through the egg shell and comes out to the light. In the same manner *saṅgha* and *yogi* by practising *vipassanā* meditation become arahant, cessation of all impurities after breaking through the massive darkness of *avijjā* (likened to egg shell). At that time they have completely achieved the stages of insight. The *Āñṭhakathā* teachers compared *vipassanā* meditation with the breaking of the egg shell so that dhamma audience and the next generation will explicitly understand *vipassanā* meditation.

There are three things: the egg shell, the sticky substance and the little chick in the egg.

The egg shell is likened to ignorance (*avijjā*) which envelops living beings and prevent them to escape from the thirty-one planes just like the egg shell prevents the little chick to come out of the egg.

Motto: *Avijjā is rightly likened to the egg shell*

Avijjā makes people to know wrongs as rights and rights as wrongs, thus it prevents them to come out of the massive darkness that is the *samsarā* sufferings. *Rūpa* and *nāma* are mistaken as “I”, “you”, “man”, “woman” and so on.

This misunderstanding is the darkness or incorrect knowledge. Thereupon attachment to paññatti occurs due to tanhā. Tanhā is likened to the sticky substance in eggs. Due to tanhā living beings could not escape from the saṃsāra sufferings as if they are glued to the three existences; human, deva and brahmā. The attachment to the sensual pleasures of these three planes of existences are likened to the sticky substance in the egg.

Motto: *Bhava tanhā (attachment to existences) are likened to the sticky substance*

The sticky substance in the egg prevents the little chick to move about in the egg. So also sticky-substance like tanhā keeps living beings in the trap-like round of saṃsāra. The little chick in the egg is likened to vipassanā wisdom. As the hen hatches and provides heat, after twenty-eight days, the little chick becomes mature, its beak and claws are strong, then it breaks through the egg shell and comes out to the light. Similarly when the vipassanā wisdom is mature and strengthened, the higher insight knowledge is achieved and the massive darkness of avijja is penetrated by sotāpattimagga. Then follows the attainment of nibbāna.

Motto: *Vipassanā is rightly likened to a little chick*

The little chick cannot move about in the sticky substance as it is not strong enough. Similarly, dhamma audience and other living beings cannot escape from saṃsāra sufferings, - being born in human, deva and brahma realms due to the sticky substance that is attachment (tahnā). Furthermore they are covered with the massive darkness of avijjā. When the little chick is strong and mature, it breaks through the egg shell and comes out into the light. Likewise when vipassanā wisdom is developed, the gross lobha (tanhā) likened to the sticky substance dries up and the apāya-door is closed and nibbāna is attained at the most in seven existences. The example of the little chick breaking

through the egg shell is likened to *vipassanā* wisdom penetrating the massive darkness of *avijjā*. It is very distinct and appropriate. If the hen does not hatch the eggs, they will get rotten. So also if *vipassanā* meditation is not practised in this life, one will lose the benefits of *kusala* perfection (*parimitta*) accrued all along during the past existences. The dhamma audience certainly are practising *vipassanā* meditation. The meditator is likened to a hen.

Motto: *The *vipassanā* meditator is rightly likened to a hen*

When the hen hatches the egg for one day, it is not known how thin the shell becomes, how much the sticky substance in the egg dries up and how strong and mature the little chick has become. It can be measured by some scientific technique but not by the natural eyes. In reality, the egg shell gets thinner, the sticky substance dries up a little and the little chick also becomes stronger. In the same way when *vipassanā* meditation is practised by noting rising, falling, sitting, touching, standing, walking, bending, stretching and so on, at every noting the *avijjā* becomes thinner, the attachment dries up and *vipassanā* wisdom becomes mature. However, the effect of *vipassanā* meditation is not distinct at the initial stage of practice.

Do the dhamma audience believe that the *avijjā* gets thinner, the attachment is lessened, so also *vipassanā* wisdom becomes mature by each noting? “Yes, Ven: Sir.” It is right to believe so. The little chick becomes stronger, the sticky substance in the egg dries up and the shell gets thinner as the hen hatches day after day. After hatching for twenty-eight days, the little chick matures, its claws and beak become sharp, the sticky substance dries up and the egg shell is thin enough to see outside light. The little chick struggles, breaks the egg shell and comes out into the light.

The benefit of *vipassanā* meditation is not evident at the beginning. At each noting the *avijjā* gets thinner, the attachment is lessened and *vipassanā* wisdom becomes more mature. With

repeated notings *vipassanā* wisdom is strengthened, the *sotāpattimagga* penetrates the *avijjā* darkness, the cause of being born in *apāya* *samsarā*; the attachment which is likened to the sticky substance leading to *apāya* sufferings also dries up. Thus the *Atthakathā* teachers expounded that with the maturity of *vipassanā* wisdom the *sotāpattimagga* completely dries up the sticky substance *tanhā* and *nibbāna* is attained.

After the achievement of higher insight knowledge, the benefit of *vipassanā* meditation becomes more distinct. By each and every noting the *avijjā*, likened to the egg shell becomes thinner, the attachment likened to the sticky substance dries up and *vipassanā* wisdom likened to the chick becomes stronger. That is why whether the object of noting is good or bad, whether noting is pleasant or unpleasant the yogi must keep on noting. Good or bad contemplation should be done in order to make the massive darkness of *avijjā* to become thinner and thinner and to dry up the sticky substance, the attachment, so as to establish a strong *vipassanā* wisdom. If the object of noting is unpleasant or the noting is not good, the yogi may stop noting. “Is it right to do so?”

In the initial stage of meditation, while noting according to the Most Ven. Mahāsi Sayadaw’s instruction, dhamma is not clearly perceived. In sitting contemplation, the yogi notes “rising”, “falling”, “sitting”, “touching”. As *vipassanā* wisdom has not yet developed, he thinks that rising, falling sitting, touching are himself and also the noting is done by himself. The behaviour and the mind are taken as “I”. This wrong knowing or perception is due to incorrect knowledge, ignorance (*avijjā*). Just like the little chick cannot come out due to the egg shell (*avijjā*). The massive darkness of *avajjā* envelops the dhamma audience and also the others and makes them develop the wrong perception. The successive notings strengthen the concentration and rising, falling, sitting, touching (behaviour) are comprehended separately from the noting mind. The behaviour is the unconscious matter, *rūpa* and the noting mind is the consciousness, *nāma*. Thus one realizes that there is no entity as “I”, but only *rūpa* and *nāma*. The

vipassanā insight has penetrated the massive darkness of avijjā; even the lowest vipassanā insight begins to penetrate avijjā momentarily.

Though it is easy to explain the dhamma to Myanmar yogi it is not so with the foreign yogi as they have no knowledge of rūpa and nāma. However, when they sincerely and ardently contemplate, they also achieve vipassanā wisdom. As they cannot speak Myanmar language and also are not familiar with the religion, they report as follows: “At the beginning of meditation practice, there is only one person, now I see two. Rising, falling, sitting, touching is one person and noting is another. The meditation instructor knows certainly that the yogi has achieved the Nāma-rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa. By practising under the right guidance the massive darkness avijjā is penetrated when the rūpa-nāma phenomenon is correctly comprehended.

By virtue of repetitive notings, concentration is strengthened and an intelligent yogi realizes that noting is possible because of the manifestation of “rising” and “falling” behaviour. If “rising” and “falling” do not occur there will be nothing to note. Therefore “rising” and ‘falling’ are the cause and noting mind is the effect. This is the Paccaya-pariggaha ñāṇa, the knowledge of discerning cause and effect. Rising and falling may manifest on the side, on the back, on the chest or on top of the head. A yogi said, “Ven. Sayadaw, rising, falling do not always occur at the abdomen, they shift to top of the head also How do I note? Sayadaw had to tell her to note rising and falling wherever they appear. Thus one discerned the cause (rising, falling and such) and the effect (noting-mind). At this stage of insight, if rising and falling are not distinct, do not note by guessing since vipassanā dhamma cannot be gained by guess-work. Without becoming disheartened, if one keeps on noting “arising”, “disappearing” dhamma will be gained very slowly. If the yogi tries to search for the object of noting, his notings will be sporadic.

In sitting practise when noting “sitting”, “touching”, disregard shape of the head, body and arms as much as possible. Note

attentively the nature of tautness due to the push by the air from inside the body. Also disregard the floor touched by the body, as it is paññatti. However, the nature of hardness and heat due to touching the seat or floor must be noted carefully. The comprehension of the nature of hardness is the awareness of the element of extension or earth (pathavī) and that of heat is the awareness of the element of heat (tejo).

An intelligent yogi will comprehend “rising”, “falling” as the cause and noting as the effect. If the yogi does not comprehend thus, it is due to avijjā. He may think it is “I” who is knowing, it is “I” who is doing and so on. Now he is quite aware of the cause and effect because vipassanā wisdom has penetrated the massive darkness of avijjā. He is able to make uninterrupted notings.

When you are about to stand up from sitting, about to sit down from standing, about to walk from standing and so on, if you are careful in noting, the intentional mind will be distinct to you at the Paccayapariggaha ñāna. The dhamma audience, after listening to the dhamma, in sitting contemplation, are about to stand up, you will be aware of the intention to stand vividly. Then you note “intending to stand, intending to stand”. Due to the pushing of the air caused by the intention to stand, the standing action occurs. Then note “making effort, making effort” when you make the effort to stand up. When resting on the hand to stand up note “resting, resting”; “standing, standing” when the body gradually and slowly moves upward. This body-movement is “standing”. Standing is just a word and a paññatti. It is not the object of noting.

The nature of the gradual upward movement is to be carefully noted. It will be more distinct if you close your eyes. If you open your eyes and look around, the nature of dhamma will not be clearly comprehended. If you note with your eyes closed, the gradual upward movement will be very conspicuous when you note carefully. Dissociate your mind from the shape of head, body, legs and arms as much as possible and note attentively

the gradual upward movement as much as you can. It is also necessary to keep pace with the process of the gradual upward movement.

When you can attentively note the gradual upward movement as “standing, standing”, you will also comprehend the lightness in the upward movement. The experienced yogi have found it out personally. This comprehension of lightness is the awareness of the element of *tejo*, the element of vapour and steam and the element of *vāyo*, the element of motion. You find these two elements in your continuity distinctly. The other elements are also present although they are not so apparent. It is important to comprehend dhamma. The awareness of these two elements is the beginning of the experience of dhamma. You then realize that the body-movement is not “I”, it is just the element of motion which is moving, which is standing. This is the right knowledge of the elements. Is the knowledge of “I” who stand, “I” who move is correct? “It is not correct, Ven. Sir.” You are having the wrong knowledge due to *avijjā* which covers up the right ones.

The awareness of the elements means the knowledge of cause and effect. The massive darkness of *avijjā* is penetrated momentarily by *vipassanā* wisdom, *Paccayapariggahañā*.

Motto: *In “Te” and “Vā” the two elements
Lightness is evident
“Te” is *tejo*, the element of vapour and steam,
the element of lightness.
“Vā” is *vāyo*, the element of motion, light-
ness.*

In walking contemplation, if you are especially mindful, you will be initially aware of the intention to walk, then note “intending to walk, intending to walk”. As the air due to the intention to walk, push the body forward, the walking movement occurs. Then note “left foot forward, right foot forward, lifting, dropping” and so on. When a yogi is about to stand after walking, at

the Paccayapariggaha *ñāṇa* stage, he will be initially aware of the intention to stand two or three steps before the place where he is going to stand. Then he notes, “intending to stand, intending to stand”. When the actual behaviour to stand occurs then only note “standing, standing”. Dissociate your mind from the shape of head, body, legs and arms as much as possible, and attentively note the nature of the stiffness of the body because of the air due to the intention to stand.

To meditate dhamma in partaking food if you are going to sit, do not sit down quickly. A yogi who has attained the Paccayapariggaha *ñāṇa* will be well aware of the intention to sit if he is mindful and he notes, “intending to sit, intending to sit”. Note “sitting, sitting” only when the sitting behaviour occurs. Disregard the shape of head, body, legs and arms as much as possible and attentively note the nature of the gradual downward movements of the body. Is it better to close your eyes? If you cannot close them, you should keep your eyes down cast. If you close your eyes and note the gradual heavily downward movements of the body will be more apparent.

The comprehension of heaviness in the downward movement is the awareness of the elements of earth, hardness (*pathavī*) and that of water (*āpo*). Is the element of *pathavī* heavy or light? “It is heavy, Ven. Sir.” Is the element of *āpo* heavy or light? “It is heavy, Ven. Sir.”

Motto: *In “Pa” and “Ā” the two elements
Heaviness is evident*

The yogi now realizes that it is not “I” who sit or touch, but the four elements that are sitting and touching. The perception of “I” sit, “I” touch are wrong concepts. The right concept develops as the massive darkness of *avijjā* is penetrated

The Aṭṭhakathā teachers recognised the yogi who has attained Paccayapariggaha *ñāṇa*, as a *cuṭasotāpanna*, a lesser *sotāpanna*. A firm footing in the Buddha’s *sāsanā* is established and he is

at peace after achieving the knowledge of discernment of cause and effect. He will never have any wrong belief such as a-hetuka ditṭhi which professes no-cause or causeless faith for the welfare of living beings. In other words people are happy or unhappy without any cause. Due to his personal experience of the good results from good cause and bad results from bad cause, he cannot be swayed by any eloquent speakers to have any wrong belief. He perfectly understands that good mental thoughts and physical behaviour are the benefits of good cause and the bad mental thoughts and physical behaviour are the results of bad cause. That is why he is at peace. He may not be so if he is doubtful about the cause and effect.

He can never be shakened by the visama-hetu ditṭhi belief, the creation belief. According to this belief, living beings are created by Brahmā, Vishnu and God. The creators with compassion and loving-kindness certainly will create living beings to be equal in every aspect. Nevertheless, some are rich, some are mediocre and some are poor, some have good appearance, some have not and also there are intelligent people, mediocre and dense ones. Thus the creation (to be rich, intelligent and so on) which is the cause, and the result (people not being equal in their lives) are not congruent.

Visama means incongruent or not equal.

Sama means congruent or equal.

People with wholesome deeds in the past existences are well-off in the present life; those with a certain amount of meritorious deeds in their past lives, have mediocre benefits in this life; so also those with few good deeds are poor, unhealthy, have low intelligence and so on. Do the dhamma audience believe that? "Yes, Ven. Sir." That is the right belief. Will you change over to the wrong beliefs? Since you are well convinced of the dhamma you surely will not switch over. If you do so, it is not right for you. It cannot amount to the attainment of Paccaya-pariggaha ñāṇa.

It is a certainty that a cūlasotāpanna is destined to happy rebirths (sugati). In other words he will be reborn in human, deva and

brahmā worlds and never to be in the lower abodes such as hell, animal, peta and asurakāya (duggati) in next life. Vipassanā wisdom has penetrated avijjā, hence the light is perceived, that is he will be in the human and deva worlds after understanding right from wrong. Just like the little chick becomes stronger when it can see the light through the thin egg shell, so also when vipassanā wisdom is strengthened, the yogi comprehends what is right which is likened to the light.

A cūlasotāpanna will never be reborn in apāya in the following existence. The achiever of the Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa will know the state of his mind. When he has a wholesome mind, he will continue to maintain it. He will dispel his unwholesome thoughts and will perform more and more meritorious deeds, hence the door to apāya is closed for him. It is therefore proper to recognise him as a cūlasotāpanna. The saṅgha and the scriptures will never be able to decide one as a cūlasotāpanna if he has not yet practised vipassanā meditation. Whereas it is easy to decide for a vipassanā meditator. One can judge oneself when Paccaya-pariggaha ñāṇa is attained since he is well convinced of his dhamma. When one is reluctant to say that he is a cūlasotāpanna then he is not certain of his dhamma. The dhamma audience certainly have reached a stage to be recognised as cūlasotāpanna.

After attaining the Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa one is convinced that wholesome causes lead to wholesome benefits, unwholesome deeds give unwholesome results, thus he has a right belief. The massive darkness of avijjā is penetrated and one will be liberated.

With continuous practice, concentration is strengthened and the third stage of insight, Sammasana ñāṇa is achieved. This is the knowledge of reflecting upon anicca, dukkha and anatta. It is a distressful stage of insight if the yogi has not practised samatha previously, he will more or less experience pain, numbness, aches, nausea, itchiness, exhaustion and so on, soon after he sits to contemplate vipassanā. Thereafter he realizes the characteristic of dukkha and by reflecting that “this body is a mass of sufferings, there is no happiness”. Moreover he also realizes

the characteristics of anicca and anatta by reflecting them. “These pain, aches, numbness and such are not permanent. There is pleasantness when they disappear, however they reappear again. They are changing all the time. So it is impermanent, anicca. I come to meditate to experience dhamma quickly and to have swift progress but I realize that things are uncontrollable and are happening according to their own nature. So this is uncontrollable, anatta”.

The three characteristics are comprehended by reflection at the Sammasana-ñāṇa stage. This knowledge of anicca, dukkha and anatta is the right view. In order to be liberated the massive darkness of avijjā must be penetrated. Thereupon a strong and firm footing in the Buddha’s sāsanā is established.

With successive notings, the concentration becomes stronger and mature and the fourth stage of insight, Udayabbaya ñāṇa is achieved. Udaya is becoming; vaya is dissolution. This is the knowledge of becoming and dissolution. At the beginning of Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage, the becoming and dissolution are not so distinct, but one experiences more pleasantness and mental and physical buoyancy. At Sammasana ñāṇa stage, one experiences mental and physical heaviness and the mind is almost always aggressive. A yogi reported “Ven. Sayadaw, I do not know what is happening to me for I am always angry”. Is that at Sammāsana ñāṇa stage? This stage of insight is also known as “A distressful stage of insight.”

At the beginning of Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage both mind and body are subtle and the yogi can report correctly. The meditation instructor knows that the yogi has achieved Udayabbaya ñāṇa. The yogi can relate her childhood experiences without mistakes since she has mental and physical well-being but she has not comprehended ‘becoming’ and ‘dissolution’ yet. The yogi, therefore, is certainly at the beginning stage of Udayabbaya ñāṇa. Due to her mental and physical adaptability, she can sit without changing her posture though she had to change three or four times in one hour sitting in the lower stages of insight such as

Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāna and Paccayapariggaha ñāna. She can now sit for four or five hours comfortably at a stretch although she could sit only an hour in the previous practices.

Since the yogi has developed both mental and physical proficiency while meditating the noting mind notes automatically, rising, falling, sitting, touching behaviours which appear on their own accord and the conscious mind also occurs without any deliberation. A yogi reported, “Ven. Sayadaw, while contemplating, it seems to me the noting mind and the objects of noting appear according to their nature and I have to just sit and observe them”. “At what stage of insight is she? At the beginning of Udayabbaya-ñāna stage, Ven. Sir.” Just to keep your attention and as it is also the Buddha’s way of preaching, questions are asked. She is certainly at the beginning of Udayabbaya ñāna stage.

As the yogi experiences both mental and physical tranquility she said, “I have never experienced such tranquility before. My body is erect and calm like a doll”. What stage of insight is it? “The beginning of Udayabbaya ñāna, Ven. Sir.” Furthermore her body and mind are peaceful, thus she is enjoying the vipassanā pīti, which cannot be enjoyed by ordinary deva let alone a common person. The mindful yogi at the beginning of Udayabbaya ñāna stage experiences joy and serenity, in accordance with the Buddha’s preaching. “A mindful yogi approaches a quiet and secluded place and observes the phenomena of the becoming and dissolution of rūpa and ñāma with a serene mind. While doing so she enjoys vipassanā pīti sukha and happiness which, leave alone a common person even an ordinary deva cannot enjoy such happiness and joy”.

The dhamma audience personally have enjoyed such joy and happiness. There usually arises attachment, thereupon the yogi must be extraordinarily careful, if not she might stop noting thinking that joy and happiness at the Udayabbaya ñāna as the noble dhamma. The yogi said, “Ven. Sir, I’ve attained the noble dhamma. I saw light and colours”. Has she really attained the

noble dhamma? “Not yet, Ven. Sir.” Thus the attachment to the joy can deter the progress of dhamma.

Motto: *Attachment due to pleasant contemplation
Causes internal stagnation*

Noting must be successive, attentive and respectful, otherwise the pleasantness in noting can be a waste of time. Meditation instructors exhorted the yogi to note the beginning and the end of rising attentively and not to be inattentive. For a day or two, the yogi could not note the beginning and the end of rising, falling behaviour. However, the next day, the yogi said, “Ven. Sir, I can note the beginning and the end of rising and falling. Beginning of rising and falling is the becoming, and end of rising and falling is the dissolution”. This clear comprehension of becoming and dissolution means progress in dhamma. Hence there is no attachment the yogi personally comprehends that the phenomenon dissolves after becoming. Things are taken as permanent due to *avijjā*. When *avijjā* is penetrated by *vipassanā* wisdom one perceives the truth that is the vivid comprehension of becoming and dissolution.

By dint of continuous noting the yogi personally comprehend the stage after stage dissolution of rising and falling. Hence they develop the knowledge of impermanence, *anicca*. In other words, the yogi come to learn that the rising and falling behaviour are impermanent and so also is the noting mind. The knowledge of impermanence has penetrated *avijjā*. With successive notings, the concentration becomes stronger and mature. While noting rising and falling, the beginnings of rising and falling are not very distinct, however the ends are evident. The yogi notice the fleeting dissolution while noting “rising” and “falling”. This is the evidence of progress in insight. Now they are at the *Bhaṅgā nāma* stage, the knowledge of dissolution. The yogi now comprehend *anicca* personally: that is to be aware of the impermanence of the rising, falling behaviour, *rūpa*; the noting mind and the conscious mind, *nāma*, are also impermanent. It is wrong if the *rūpa* and *nāma*

are taken as permanent. This knowledge of anicca has penetrated and dispelled the massive darkness of avijjā.

By virtue of successive notings, the yogi come to see the swift dissolution of rising and falling and also whatever they note rising and falling quickly disappear. This ever-fleeting dissolution of everything when noted, frightens them. Now they have achieved the Bhaya-ñāna stage, awareness of dread or fear. They perceive their bodies as repulsive and foul and also that there is nothing to be attached to since they are all the time dissolving. This is the Ādīnava ñāna, knowledge of disgust. Thereupon they become weary and find no pleasantness in their bodies. This is the Nibbhida ñāna, the knowledge of contemplation of weariness. Out of Bhaya ñāna, Ādīnava ñāna and Nibbhida ñāna sometimes only one of them is distinct, as they are not achieved successively one after another. At times they are comprehended separately.

Next is the Muñcitukamyata ñāna, knowledge of desire to renounce. At this stage of insight, the yogi wishes to discard his body which is no longer pleasant and desirable for him. Moreover, he does not want to continue noting; nevertheless he desires to be liberated from samsarā. He no longer aspires to be a human, a deva or a brahmā. He experiences thus because the sticky substance-like tanhā has dried up. The tanhā that desires to be reborn in human, deva and brahma realms is likened to the glue. The sticky substance in the egg prevents the little chick from moving about. Likewise, the attachment to the life of a human being, deva or brahmā deters one to escape from the round of existences. The yogi with mature insight expresses frequently that they wish to be liberated in this very life and not to be reborn again. It is very evident that the sticky substance-like tanhā has dried up. One will definitely confront suffering such as old age, sickness and death if one still desires new existences. Even a brahmā may have to return to the animal world as a pig. “Shining, shining as a brahmā. Grunting, grunting in a pig-sty”.

Wishing to be liberated, one realizes the need for further effort by noting so that one may be able to renounce. This is the Patisaṅkhā-ñāṇa, the knowledge of reobservation and it is also a distressful stage of insight, similar to that of the Sammasana-ñāṇa stage in suffering pains, aches, tingling and such. The yogi experiences both physical and mental suffering. However, to some yogi mental suffering is more distinct. A yogi said, “Ven. Sir, my mind is not like before. I do not revere the Three Gems as before. My respect for parents and teachers has lessened”. At what stage of insight is she? (The Patisaṅkhā-ñāṇa stage Ven. Sir.) Yes, it is the tenth stage of insight which is also recognised as the “Home returning ñāṇa”.

A practising yogi experienced dissatisfaction after meditating over a month, though the contemplation was good at the beginning. While noting, she wanted to shift or change every now and then, she felt itchiness here and there in the body and wanted to get up and walk although her noting was good. As experienced yogi have undergone such state of mind they can now guide and encourage the new yogi at this stage of insight.

A yogi, about fifty years old, came to practise meditation. She highly thought of herself, though she had not practised meditation at a younger age. The dhamma progressed in the lower stages of insight, however at the Patisaṅkhā-ñāṇa stage the dhamma did not improve much. Sayadaw encouraged her saying “It is always like that at this stage of insight. You'll get over it, if you've forbearance”. She said, “I cannot try anymore. It is just that I think highly of myself” and went home. After ten days she came back to the meditation centre, rendering services and then practised dhamma again. She achieved the progress of dhamma. Some yogi went back two or three times, though the meditation instructors urged them not to do so. “When you attain the Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa stage, you'll enjoy dhamma and may not want to go home anymore”. Some yogi without informing the meditation instructors, went home on their own. However, after a week they came back again as they could not adapt to the life at home.

A yogi reported, "Ven. Sir, I'm afraid that I'm going to be out of mind. How shall I note?" Sayadaw had to tell her, "Just note, 'going to be out of mind, going to be out of mind'". She noted as instructed and reported the next day that she was no longer suffering from mental disturbances. Physical suffering such as pains, aches, tinglings are not very apparent, but the mental suffering is quite distinct. Vipassanā meditation means to note what is distinct, not to note what is not apparent. It is to note what arises and if one tries to note what does not arise, dhamma will not progress.

With successive notings, one attains the Saïkhārupekkhāñāna stage which is peaceful and pleasant. The Most Ven. Mahāsi Sayadaw had composed the following motto so that the dhamma audience and the next generation may clearly comprehend and practise dhamma.

Motto: *Free from fear or affection*
Equal view of suffering and happiness
Contemplation without difficulty
Saïkhāru's three characteristics of Equanimity

At this stage of insight, one is not afraid of unfavourable condition whether mundane or supramundane; one is not elated when one encounters mundane or supramundane pleasures. One can withstand both pleasantness or unpleasantness and can view happiness and unhappiness with equanimity. That is the reason why noting is easy. "Rising" "falling" arise easily, so also is the noting of them. As they occur automatically, noting is easy just sit and simply note. Thus one gains happiness. At one meditation centre, a yogi had practised for three years. When asked about her experience in connection with the benefits of vipassanā meditation she replied, "Before practising vipassana meditation I was afraid to sleep alone. Now it is no more a problem." Thus benefit of vipassanā meditation is clear and evident as one can withstand the vicissitudes of life.

The following motto is about the significant characteristics of the Saṅkhārupekkhā ñāṇa.

Motto: *Prolonged contemplation without changing
There is no mind wandering
More and more subtle is the dhamma
The three significant characteristics of
Saṅkhārupekkhā*

Noting goes on continuously whether it is in sitting, lying or other postures. The noting is so subtle that it is inexpressible. The body is very light as if one is sitting on vapour or steam. The noting is glued to the objects of noting. The yogi try to direct their minds to other objects of noting, both good and bad, however the noting dwells upon the objects of noting such as rising and falling. One can never withstand the vicissitudes of life he has not comprehended the truth, that means he is overwhelmed with avijjā. He comes to know right as right, wrong as wrong when the massive darkness of avijjā is penetrated.

The continuous notings lead to the mature Saṅkārupekkhā ñāṇa and sharpens the insight. The next stage of insight is the Anuloma ñāṇa which is conducive to Magga ñāṇa and Phala ñāṇa.

The Gotrabhu ñāṇa, severing of worlding lineage follows soon. Then arises sotāpattimagga ñāṇa which penetrates the apāya-leading massive darkness of avijjā, which can be likened to the egg shell. The sticky substance, tanhā also dries up and one can realize nibbāna in seven existences the most. The sotāpattiphala ñāṇa follows immediately without a thought moment in between. The avijjā likened to the egg shell is completely penetrated, the sticky substance utterly dries up and nibbāna is realized in seven existences the most.

After listening to this dhamma talk “Simile of Breaking an Egg Shell”, may you all be able to practice in accordance with the Buddha’s instruction. With diligent contemplation and ease in practice, may you all speedily realize your most aspired nibbāna, cessation of all sufferings.

14. The Sīla Sutta (25.2.94)

“Sīla” means “physical and mental abstention” and “Sutta” means “explanation.” This sutta is composed of the explanation of how to observe the moral conduct (precept) and how to practise accordingly. While residing with the monks, one day Ashin Sāriputta expounded this sutta by addressing them, “O, monks! The infringement of sīla results in the destruction of concentration. Then it is impossible to develop wisdom to discern the reality, the truth of all formations of existence (Yathābhūta ñāṇa-dassana). Without wisdom there arises no contemplation of weariness (Nibbida ñāṇa). If one is not weary of all formations of existence (Saṅkhāra) the Magga ñāṇa namely the detachment of lust (Virāga) will not develop. Hence Phala ñāṇa namely deliverance through wisdom (Vimutta) will not be established. Thereupon the Retrospective Contemplation, Vimutti ñāṇa dassana could not be expected. In conclusion there is no gain of dhamma when sīla is breached.”

Ashin Sāriputta was the holder of the highest honour in wisdom. His method of preaching was to present the statement first, in the reverse order. It is as if placing the white colour against the black background and thus making it very outstanding. He continued explaining in the right order, “When one is endowed with sīla, there develops concentration which in turn enhances the establishment of wisdom. Through this wisdom, the truth of all formations in existence are discerned. Hence, the contemplation of weariness occurs. Then follows the detachment from lust. Thereupon, magga dhamma (Virāga) is attained, leading to Phala ñāṇa, deliverance through wisdom (Vimutta). Finally, the

Retrospective Contemplation (Paccavekkhana ñāṇa) is established. In this way, the observation of sīla fosters successive development of wisdom, one stage after another.” This is how the Dhamma Admiral Ashin Sāriputta preached in the Sīla Sutta and it is similar to what the Buddha had instructed.

The Retrospective Contemplation is the resultant, therefore it cannot foster any further development of wisdom. Sīla is the foundation dhamma for the attainment of magga, phala and Paccavekkhana ñāṇa. The listeners of dhamma talk, have certainly observed the five precepts since their childhood, due to the guidance of good parents and good teachers. There are four kinds of Sīla which should be observed by those who aspire for the attainment of magga, phala, and Paccavekkhana ñāṇa. The Pātimokkhasamvara Sīla is the foundation sīla.

Four Kinds of Sīla

1. Pātimokkhasamvara Sīla. Restraint with regard to the Disciplinary Rules. For the monks there are two hundred and twenty-seven rules, whereas for the layman, it is enough to invest themselves in five, eight, nine and ten precepts.
2. Indriyasamvara Sīla. Restraint of the six senses. This sīla is easily and mostly infringed, however it is most beneficial when one observes it rightly. It is to restrain your eyes when you see a person or sight; your ear on hearing a sound; your nose on getting an odour; your tongue on tasting; your body on touching; and your mind on thinking. Strive to ward off these senses through which evil and unwholesome things such as greed and sorrow could arise if left unguarded. This sīla is predominated by mindfulness. One has to be mindful to restrain the senses especially from greed and anger. How is one to guard them?

Lobha arises when one comes into contact with a good and pleasant sight, and dosa arises if it is unpleasant. When the eyes are unguarded it is difficult to restrain the

sense of sight. On seeing things, it is to note them just as mere seeing. If it is impossible, then avoid looking entirely. However this also is not practicable.

Ashin Kaccāyana advised the meditating monks to act as blind persons though they are not. On hearing a sound, strive to note it as a mere sound instead of reflecting it as. "This is a man's voice", "This is a bird's song." It is to act as a deaf person. Ashin Kaccāyana was honoured with the highest title in elaborating the Buddha's brief dhamma. Should we not follow his advice? By doing so we gain merit. Note as mere smell on getting an odour, as mere eating on taste, as mere impression on touch. In this way, one will gain magga and phala. Restraint of the senses is the most significant factor in the vipassanā meditation. Concentration will not develop if the senses are left unrestrained. In other words, if the Indriyasamvara Sīla is not rightly observed, there will be no establishment of concentration.

3. Ājīvapārisuddha Sīla. Purification of Livelihood. According to this sīla, the monks are not to acquire a livelihood in a way unfitting to a monk. Monks are allowed to use the four requisites received by instructing dhamma, preaching dhamma and from the alms-rounds. A layman leads a purified livelihood by abstaining from the three physical unwholesome deeds (killing, stealing and sexual misconduct) and the four verbal unwholesome deeds (telling lies, using abusive words, backbiting and vain talk)
4. Paccaya-sannissita Sīla. Morality with regard to the four requisites. It concerns the right mental attitude of the monk while making use of the four requisites namely robes, alms-food, dwelling place and medicine. A monk should make use of his robes by reflecting that it is merely for the protection of his body from cold and heat; in taking alms-food it is not for the enjoyment of the sensual pleasure like a young man nor to acquire strength and stamina as a boxer, nor to become supple and pretty as a dancer, but merely as a prop to support his body enabling him to practise dhamma. Wisely reflect-

ing, he makes use of his dwelling place as merely as a shelter from exposure to the weather and to have perfect solitude. He makes use of the necessary medicine merely to suppress feelings of sickness that arises and to reach perfect freedom from sufferings.

The practising yogi may not be able to reflect in all the above aspects. Nevertheless, they should reflect wisely for the sake of *vipassanā* meditation. Mere reciting, “We take this variety of food to enable us to practise the two Buddha’s *Sāsanā* with physical and mental happiness” without wise and sincere reflection, cannot be considered as observation of the morality with regard to food. “One who has observed the four basic *sīla* will gain concentration if he practised diligently”, said Ashin Sāriputta. This saying is sincere and scientific. The fulfilment of these four *sīla* forms a basic foundation for the attainment of dhamma.

The Restraint with regard to the Disciplinary Rules is predominated by faith. In the mundane world, to sing or to listen to a song, to play music, to take food in the afternoon are never considered as offence. No layman is blamed for such behaviour. However, the Buddha admonished the yogi that such behaviour is prohibited. You observe this *sīla* because you believe that it is beneficial to obey the Buddha’s instruction. That shows you have faith in the observation of this *sīla*.

Motto: *Pātimokkha Sila is rightly predominated by faith. (saddhā)*

The Indriyasamivara *Sīla* is predominated by mindfulness. To note as mere seeing, mere hearing, mere smelling, mere touching and such are possible only when one is mindful.

Motto: *Indriya Sila is rightly predominated by mindfulness (Sati)*

The Ājīvaparisuddha *Sīla* is predominated by exertion. The purity of this *sīla* depends upon the livelihood earned by one’s

own energy but not by other unwholesome and unlawful means.

Motto: *Ājīva Sīla is rightly predominated by exertion. (vīriya)*

The Paccaya-sannissita Sīla is predominated by wisdom. The observation of this sīla is characterised by wise reflection not by mere recitation.

Motto: *Paccaya sannissita Sīla is rightly predominated by wisdom (paññā)*

Two Kinds of Concentration

Concentration is strengthened when one has observed the Indriyasamvara Sīla. There are two kinds of concentration.

- (1) Samatha concentration
- (2) Khanika vipassanā concentration

The samatha or jhanic concentration is developed through samatha meditation. Nowadays it is not so popular since it takes longer time to establish the jhanic concentration.

The khanika vipassanā concentration or momentary concentration is the short concentration which lasts from the beginning to the end of “rising” or “falling” movement. The mind dwells upon the sitting behaviour momentarily and the same for the touching sensation. In order to prevent the mind from wandering, one has to put in much effort. In walking practice the momentary concentration develops by successive noting of the lifting action from the beginning to the end; the forward moving action from the beginning to the end; the dropping action from the beginning to the end. The momentary concentration gained as such, is as good as the samatha concentration. The concentration becomes strong when the noting is continuous. The Most Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw compared the initial stage of Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage to the second jhanic absorption; the mature Udayabbaya ñāṇa stage with the third jhanic absorption; the Saikhārupekkhā ñāṇa stage with the fourth jhanic absorption. That is the reason

why it is advised to practise for the accomplishment of the momentary concentration.

Without building concentration, a yogi might think of gaining *vipassanā* wisdom. This will hinder the progress in dhamma. He cannot gain concentration by reflecting, “This is the *rūpa* that I’m noting,” “This is *nāma* which is noting” and so on, while meditating. Ashin Sāriputta had pointed out that the *vipassanā* wisdom will develop only when there is concentration. The ancient sayadaws also gave the same instruction. The Knowledge of the truth of all formations of existence is accomplished only when the concentration becomes strong. When you stand up without guarding your eyes from the sitting practice the concentration gained during the sitting practice would be destroyed. The restraint of senses, therefore is very essential in establishing concentration. In the ancient days the meditation teachers made the yogi cover his head so that he could not see. Since the dhamma audience have learned how to practice the development of concentration, there is no need to cover your heads.

Taruna Vipassanā Nāṇa

Yathābhūta *nāṇa* *dassana*, the knowledge of the truth is the Taruna *vipassanā* *nāṇa*, the weak stage of insight. This *nāṇa* comprises of

- (1) *Nāmarūpa paraccheda* *nāṇa*, the knowledge discerning mind and matter. On the other hand, the *Āṭhakathā* Teachers stated it as the knowledge differentiating *Saṅkhāra* (*rūpa* and *nāma*)
- (2) *Paccaya pariggaha* *nāṇa*, the knowledge of cause and effect, which dispels doubts with regard to the belief that there is just *nāma* and *rūpa* in this body but nothing else.
- (3) *Sammasana* *nāṇa*, the knowledge of impermanence, suffering and non-self by reflection.
- (4) *Udayabbaya* *nāṇa*, the knowledge of becoming and dissolution.

The yogi should practise to attain Yathābūhta ñāṇa dassana, in other words, to discern the truth of all formations of existence by developing the knowledge of nāma and rūpa, the knowledge of cause and effect, the knowledge of impermanence, sufferings and non-self, the knowledge of becoming and dissolution and the knowledge of which is the right path and which is not. These stages of insight are known as the weak vipassanā wisdom for the reason that during these stages the yogi has to exert himself all the time.

After practising two or three days, under Mahāsi Sayadaw's guidance the momentary concentration is established and the Nāma-rūpa ñāṇa stage is attained. At the initial stage, the dhamma is not yet apparent to the yogi, he thinks that it is his abdomen which is rising and falling; and also that it is himself who notes "rising" and "falling". He sees nāma and rūpa as a whole entity. When concentration develops and the vipassanā wisdom achieved, he begins to discern that rising, falling, sitting, touching behaviour are separate entities from the noting mind. In other words, the "rising" behaviour is one entity, the noting mind is another one. In this way, he is aware of nāma, the conscious mind and rūpa, matter which is not of the nature of consciousness. Thereupon, one with sharp intelligence attains the Nāma-rūpa pariccheda ñāṇa stage after practising four or five days.

A foreign yogi once remarked, "First there was just one person who sits, however, I find that there is another one who notes." What he is trying to say is that the person who sits does not seem the same person as the one who notes. In a way, it seems true he has attained Nāmarūpa pariccheda ñāṇa stage and has overcome the doubt i.e. Kaiikhā Vitarana Visuddhi (Purity or freedom from doubt). Due to the "rising", "falling", "sitting" and "touching" behaviour, it is feasible to note "rising", "falling", "sitting" and "touching". Therefore, the "rising", "falling", "sitting", "touching" are the causes and the noting mind is the effect. One with sharp intelligence is clearly aware of the cause and effect; i.e. Paccaya pariggaha ñāṇa.

Gradually the “rising” and “falling” become so subtle that they could not be noted, hence there occurs no noting mind. Moreover the “rising” or “falling” does not manifest in the same position; sometimes they manifest on the side, at the back, in the arm or the top of the head. The yogi, upon finding it no more on the abdomen, is puzzled what and how to note. He should note them wherever they manifest. Thence the cause and effect are so apparent to the yogi that he is now much convinced that there is nothing else, besides *nāma* and *rūpa*. He also realizes that there is no creation, that means he is free from the Causeless Belief (Ahetuka *Ditṭhi*) and the Incongruous Creation Belief (Visama *Ditṭhi*). The incorrect belief that there is no cause in becoming is discarded. Moreover, the Incongruous Creation Belief no longer holds good for him. The creators have good intention in creating all creatures to be the same. However, there are people with excellent qualities such as good personality, wealth, good health etc., some have mediocre qualities, whereas others are born inferior, poor, miserable, ugly and so on.

It is quite obvious that the cause (creation) and the effect (different qualities) are incongruous. Upon seeing these differences the yogi realizes that cause and effect are not in accord (Visama Belief) and he no longer is influenced by such wrong beliefs. The belief in the cause and effect is known as *Sammā Ditṭhi*.

At the Sammasana *ñāṇa* stage, the yogi experiences various kinds of suffering such as pains, aches, numbness, swaying, giddiness, pressing, and such. He may also suffer suffocation, difficult breathing, tightness in the chest. Therefore, through reflection he perceives his body as a mass of sufferings. Moreover, he finds that the sufferings are changing now and then, they are in a flux: it is swaying now, it is painful the next moment. He thereupon, realizes it is impermanent (anicca), these changes appear to him to be tormenting him, thence it is suffering (dukkha). He comes and practises meditation to gain dhamma but not to suffer. However what he experiences now is not according to his desire; they occur of their own accord. So

it is uncontrollable (anatta). He comprehends the three characteristics by reflection and gains the knowledge of anicca, dukkha and anatta.

Udayabbaya *ñāṇa* stage, the knowledge of becoming and dissolution. At the initial part of this stage, the becoming and dissolution are not very apparent, however, there is less pain and suffering. The yogi experiences both physical and mental serenity, lightness and subtlety. At the Sammasana *ñāṇa* stage he finds fault with others, but he is unaware of his own. He is easily in a temper and becomes rude. He spares not even the meditation master and says, "Before I was not so short-tempered." The meditation master replied patiently, "It is so, because you are more aware of your anger when you meditate." At the Udayabbaya *ñāṇa* stage, the yogi becomes both physically and mentally workable and practicable. He can sit two or three hours continuously unlike before. In other words, though he could not sit one hour without changing during the lower stages of insight, now he can sit continuously for two, three, four, five hours. Though he has to exert himself in the lower stages, now his noting mind comfortably and spontaneously settles on the object of noting. In this way the knowledge of truth is established.

Balavant Vipassanā *Ñāṇa*

Next comes the contemplation of weariness, Nibbida *ñāṇa*. Ashin Sāriputta explained the contemplation of weariness and that of virāga, extinction of lust, together with Nibbida *ñāṇa* is Balavant vipassanā *ñāṇa*. Balavant vipassanā *ñāṇa* consists of Bhaya *ñāṇa*, Ādīnava *ñāṇa*, Muñcitu-kamyatā *ñāṇa* and Sañkhārupekkhā *ñāṇa*. The rest of the stages of insight are not mentioned as they have similar nature. In fact Balavant vipassanā *ñāṇa* is composed of Bhaṅga, Bhaya, Ādīnava, Nibbida, Muñcitu-kamyatā, Patisaṅkhā and Sañkhārupekkhā *ñāṇa*. Only the most distinct four stages are treated as Balavant vipassanā *ñāṇa*. Nibbida *ñāṇa* therefore consists of Bhaya *ñāṇa*, Ādīnava *ñāṇa*, Muñcitu-kamyatā *ñāṇa* and Sañkhārupekkhā *ñāṇa*. One, who

sincerely and diligently practises *vipassanā* meditation to attain *magga*, *phala* and *nibbāna*, should discern these stages of insight.

Bhaṅga Nāna Due to *Bhaṅga nāna*, the contemplation of dissolution there develops *Bhaya nāna*, the contemplation of fear. At the latter stage of this *nāna* the becoming is not so apparent but only the fleeting dissolution. The body also is not distinct to the yogi. At the *Udayabbaya nāna* stage, the beginning (i.e. becoming) and the end of rising and falling (i.e. dissolution) are quite apparent but not the middle. However in the later part of the *Udayabbaya nāna* stage one realizes the continuous successive processes of becoming and dissolution. In other words, one comes to realize distinctly and with rapidity, that the occurrence in continuous succession are newly arising and vanishing moment by moment.

At the *Bhaṅga nāna* stage, the body or form is not distinct, only the end of rising and that of falling could be observed. In fact, it is the noting of the nature of *nāma* and *rūpa*. On noting "sitting", the object of noting, that is the sitting behaviour disappears instantly; on noting "touching" the object of noting, that is the sensation of touch disappears immediately. This is, therefore, considered as *balavant* *vipassanā nāna*, ultra strong *vipassanā* wisdom. As it is strong, there need be no exertion in contemplation. In the lower four stages of *nāna*, the observation is on the body or form, however in these *balavant* *vipassanā nāna* stages, it is no longer on the body. Therefore, the yogi finds it quite difficult or unnatural to note. The noting becomes not so good. They are not cohesive but rather scattered. He might take it as a slack in the dhamma.

Bhaya Nāna As the *vipassanā* wisdom improves, the yogi becomes aware of the simultaneous and instant dissolution of rising and the noting mind; similarly he finds the object of noting and the noting mind disappear in noting sitting, touching and such. The constant and rapid dissolution of all phenomena causes the fear of the body namely *Bhaya nāna*. *Bhaṅga* and *Bhaya nāna* are treated together.

Ādīnava Nāṇa In this way it is realized that all the psycho-physical phenomena, so rapidly dissolving, are undesirable dhairma of an inferior and evil nature. Sometimes, the yogi perceives the functioning of the internal organs and their disgusting, loathesome forms and feels miserable and unhappy.

Nibbida Nāṇa The yogi does not want to note any more. He is weary of the body-mind complex. This is the Nibbida nāṇa, the knowledge of the contemplation of weariness.

Muñcitukamyatā Nāṇa With the strengthening of the Nibbida nāṇa, a desire arises to renounce this body-mind complex namely Muñcitukamyatā nāṇa, knowledge of desire for deliverence.

Patisaṅkhā Nāṇa With the arising of this desire, one realizes the need for further effort by noting so that one may be able to renounce the world. This is Patisaṅkhā nāṇa, knowledge of re-observation.

The weak and strong Patisaṅkhā nāṇa are embraced by the Muñci-tu-kamyatā nāṇa, therefore they are considered together. Saṅkhārupekkhā nāṇa is a strong nāṇa and the yogi could note with no difficulty.

Virāga The stages from Nibbida to Saṅkhārupekkhā are considered as Nibbida. Nibbida enhances virāga. If one is weary of his body-mind complex, he no longer has attachment to them namely Virāga, in other words, he has discarded lust. Aṭṭhakathā teachers regard it as magga.

Vimutta or Phala Nāṇa This could be enjoyed only when one has attained Magga nāṇa.

Paccavekkhana Nāṇa Phala nāṇa or Vimutta is followed by the Paccavekkhana nāṇa, the knowledge of the retrospective contemplation.

All these stages of *ñāṇa* lead to the realization of nibbāna. Ashin Sāriputta summarised his preaching thus, “*Sīla* is the basis for the establishment of concentration which in turn results in *Yathābhūta* *ñāṇa*, the knowledge of the truth of all formations of existence. Thereafter Nibbida *ñāṇa* develops, followed by *virāga*, freedom from lust (*Magga* *ñāṇa*).

The attainment of *Magga* *ñāṇa* causes the establishment of *Phala* *ñāṇa*. Then comes the final stage-*Pacavekkhana* *ñāṇa*. One stage of *ñāṇa* step by step, leads to the successive stages of *ñāṇa* and the realization of nibbāna.”

Motto: *Sīla* rightly enhances the development of concentration
Concentration rightly enhances the attainment of *Yathābhūta*
Yathābhūta rightly enhances the establishment of *Nibbida*.
Nibbida rightly enhances the accomplishment of *Virāga*.
Virāga rightly enhances the realization of *Vimutta*
Vimutta rightly enhances the benefit of *Paccavekkhana*

After listening to this dhamma discourse on “*Sīla Sutta*”, the explanation of the successive stages for the attainment of dhamma, may you all be able to practise accordingly. With diligent contemplation and practising at ease, may you all immediately realize your most aspired nibbana, the extinction of all sufferings.

Sādhu

POINTS TO NOTE

1. One desiring much and too greedy,
Shall not realize dhamma
One desiring little and contemplates
Shall realize dhamma.
2. Not contented and greedy,
Dhamma is certainly not for him.
Contented and practises contemplation
Dhamma is certainly for him.
3. Attached to companions and greedy
Dhamma certainly is not for him.
Approaches a secluded place and meditates
Dhamma is certainly for him.
4. Lazy and not contemplating
Dhamma is certainly not for him.
5. Not mindful and careless
Dhamma is certainly not for him
Mindful and contemplates
Dhamma is certainly for him.
6. One without concentration and mind wandering,
Shall not realize dhamma.
One with concentration and contemplates
Shall realize dhamma.
7. One who has no wisdom and too ignorant,
Shall not realize dhamma.
One who has great wisdom and contemplates
Shall realize dhamma.
8. Being delighted in elaboration and have craving and pride
Shall not realize dhamma.
Being not delighted in elaboration, and contemplates,
Shall realize dhamma.