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PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

TO

TI PITAKA



P I Ṭ A K A      T R A N S L A T I O N      S O C I E T Y

PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

TO

THE

P I Ṭ A K A  
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Two letters from Mahanayaka Thera

AGGAMAHA-PANDITA

B. ANANDAMAITREYA. D. Lit.,  
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3.6.80.

I went through the Chapter ten to the Chapter twenty eight of the valuable work dealing with the Thera-vada Buddhism, written by Mr. U Nu (the retired P.M. of Burma) and I felt it was a great fortune of mine that I found an opportunity to peruse this book. Here he has very cleverly dealt with the question about Issara-Nimmana-Vada. Many of the very important incidents occurred during the life of the Lord, from the first Vassa upto the last one have been set forth in a beautiful way. The portion under the Caption " Abhidhamma " is very excellent. By writing these Chapters Mr. U Nu has done a great service to his religion, the Theravada Buddhism.

Sd/- B. Anandamaitreya  
Mahanayaka Thera



AGGAMAHAPANDITA

B. ANANDAMAITREYA. D. Lit.,  
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Path to the end of Dukkha

I went through the whole volume under the three headings: The Discoverer, the Bath and the Disciples and am very glad to say that this is a clear and genuine exposition of the pure Thera-vāda Teachings of Buddhism. By writing this volume Mr. U Nu, the retired Prime Minister of Burma, has made a valuable contribution to the Buddha-Dhamma.

Sd/- B. Anandamaitreya  
Mahanayaka Thera

At the request of the Mahanayaka Thera, Mr. Egerton C. Baptist, a distinguished scholar on Theravāda Buddhism went through "The Path to the end of Dukkha" (now renamed "Introduction to Ti Pitaka" ) The author is grateful to Mr. Egerton C. Baptist, for making (to quote himself), "very minute alterations here and there in red and blue in the manner of "interpolations" on the original manuscript."



## PREFACE

If one were to ask what made the author become genuinely interested in Buddhism, his answer would unhesitatingly be: "The fact that Buddhism can be tested, has made me so."

Then, what can be tested in Buddhism ?

There are many things that can be tested in Buddhism.

1. For instance, the Buddha has said that there are thirty-one abodes, called Bhūmis. Among these thirty-one, there is an abode for each of the four types of nether beings, namely, beings in hell, animals, petas and asurakāyas; there is the abode of human beings; six abodes for devas; sixteen abodes for rūpa brahmās (among which 15 have brahmās with both mind and body and one has brahmās with body only); and, four abodes for arūpa brahmās (brahmās who have only mind and no body).

Beings, on their death, pass on from one abode to another, in accordance with their kamma. What they do, what they say, what they conceive are called kamma. The good deeds, the good words, the good thoughts constitute good kamma. And, the bad deeds, the bad words and the bad thoughts constitute bad kamma. As a result of good kamma, beings are reborn as either men or devas or brahmās. As a result of bad kamma, they are reborn as beings in hell, or as animals or, as petas or as asurakāyas.

How can one test this?

If a person develops the psychic seeing power called Dibbacakkhu Abhinna, he can see all the bhūmis, except the four bhūmis of the arūpa brahmās (brahmās which have only mind and no body).

With this psychic power, he can also see in which bhūmi a being is reborn after his death. (Visuddhimagga - Atthakathā).



This psychic power is not the exclusive power of the Buddha and His disciples. The Buddha has only shown the way to the attainment of this psychic power. Those who wish to achieve this psychic power, should practise meditation in accordance with the instructions given by the Buddha.

2. For instance, the Buddha said that, in the past, innumerable "worlds" had come and gone. If a person wants to know what he was, who his wife was, what good or bad things he had done, who were his friends and enemies, and so on, at a certain period in time in a certain "world, or in this present "world", he can know all that by developing another psychic faculty.

How can one test this?

If a person achieves the power of remembering past births (Pubbenivāsanussati-Abhinna), he can recollect his past lives which may go back to a few extinct worlds. (Visuddhimagga-Atthakathā).

The Buddha has shown the way to the attainment of this psychic power.

3. The Buddha has also said that a person can levitate and travel in space.

How can one test it?

If a person achieves the psychic power of performing wonders called Iddhividha-Abhinna, he can do all that. (Visuddhimagga-Atthakathā).

The Buddha has shown the way to the attainment of this psychic power.

(In the Chapter on Abhinna, the psychic powers and how to achieve them are fully mentioned.)



In fact, there are many more things in Buddhism, which can be tested. The Buddha Himself wanted His teachings to be tested. In enumerating the six attributes of His teachings, the Buddha enumerated "Ehipassika" (come and see) as the fourth attribute. By the attribute the Buddha meant to say that His teachings could be tested and that anybody could be invited to come and test them. (Dhajagga Sutta)

Of all these tests, there is one which has endeared itself to the author for its simplicity and intrinsic value. Let us see what that test is.

### Seven Anusayas

According to the teachings of the Buddha, there are seven anusayas. Anusayas are the seeds of strong kilesās (mental defilements). They are as follows :-

1. Kāmarāgānusaya. It is the seed of the kilesā called Kāmarāga, which means attachment to sensual pleasures.

2. Bhavarāgānusaya. It is the seed of the kilesā called Bhavaraga, which means attachment to superior existences.

3. Patighānusaya. It is the seed of the Kilesā called Patigha, which means anger.

4. Mānānusaya. It is the seed of the kilesā called Māna, which means pride.

5. Diṭṭhānusaya. It is the seed of the Kilesā called Sakkāya-diṭṭhi, which means false perception of body and mind.

6. Vicikicchānusaya. It is the seed of the kilesā, called Vicikicchā, which means doubt.

7. Avijjānusaya. It is the seed of the kilesā called Avijjā, which means the inability to comprehend dukkha (rebirth, old age, death etc.), cause of dukkha, end of dukkha, Path to the end of dukkha. (These are called the Four Ariyā Truths.)



These seven anusayas are firmly embedded in the mind. So long as the mind does not come into contact with six objects, namely, material forms, sounds, odours, tastes, tangible things, ideas, through eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind, these seven anusayas remain dormant. But, when the mind comes into contact with any of these objects, these anusayas become activated and give rise to appropriate kilesās.

What is kilesā ?

Any mental reaction that agonizes, agitates, or defiles the mind, is called a kilesā. There are many kilesās other than the seven mentioned above. However, as they are not as strong as the seven above-mentioned kilesās, the seeds that give rise to them are not classified as Anusayas. These weaker kilesās will be mentioned in due course.

Goal of Buddhism  
and  
How to reach it.

These seven Anusayas can be uprooted. When these strong ones (i.e. "Seeds") are uprooted, every other seed of kilesā will become automatically uprooted. Accordingly, when these seeds, strong as well as weak, are uprooted, the kilesās which they generate whenever the mind comes into contact with any of the six objects, will not arise. The kilesās will disappear. They will, under no circumstances, reappear. This is the Goal of Buddhism. At the end of the preaching of the Anattalekkhana Sutta, the Buddha declared thus :- " Monks! If one becomes immensely abhorrent of this physical body and the four mental attributes, his attachment to them will become absolutely uprooted. When his attachment to them is thus uprooted, he will be liberated from all kilesās. When he is thus liberated from all kilesās, he will become aware of this liberation at once. He will also become aware of the following



facts :

- (a) that rebirth has come to an end;
- (b) that he has no longer any need for subjecting himself to noble disciplines (sīla and samādhi) for achieving superior existences;
- (c) that he has no longer any need for practising vipassanā meditation to acquire magga and phala;
- (d) that there will not be any other mental and physical processes at the end of the present mental and physical processes.

How will these Anusayas be uprooted ?

To uproot the Anusayas, one must have :

- 1) Sīla,
- 2) Samādhi and
- 3) Pannā.

### SĪLA

A person has Sīla, so long as he can keep the vows to refrain from doing and saying what is not right.

### SAMĀDHI

A person has Samādhi, so long as he can fix his mind on an object as long as he wishes.

### PANNA

A person has Pannā, if, as a result of the practice of meditation, called vipassanā meditation, he gets vipassanā insights, which lead him on to maggas.

A magga generally means a path. It is a path to the end of dukkha. Like other minds, magga citta (magga mind) is only a mental spark, that comes into being and dies as soon as it has conditioned the birth of the next mind. But it is



a special mind which takes place as a result of vipassanā bhāvanā. It is called a special mind because, unlike other minds, it can uproot the anusayas.

Why Sīla, Samādhi, Pannā ?

The following is a brief and simple answer to this question.

A person, who wants to uproot the seven Anusayas, must, first of all, have Sīla, in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha, because it is the foundation and it is impossible to get Samādhi without Sīla.

After having got Sīla, he must have Samādhi, by practising meditation, called Samatha meditation, in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha, because it is impossible to get Pannā without Samādhi.

After having got Samādhi, he must have vipassanā insights, which will lead him on to maggas, by practising vipassanā meditation in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha.

How are Sīla vows taken ?

This question is answered fully in the text. But, for the convenience of readers, a brief summary is given here.

There are three bodily evils, namely, killing, stealing, satisfying one's sensual desires by improper means (committing adultery and taking intoxicants are improper means.)

There are four verbal evils, namely, telling lies, setting one person against another, using harsh and abusive speech, and indulging in unbeneficial talk.

A person, who wants to develop Sīla, will sit respectfully in front of an image of the Buddha or a monk. If an



harbouring these causes of the evil consequences. In this way, they drive the evils away. (Dassaka Nipāta, Āṅguttara Nikāya)

### Dutiya Adhamma Sutta

Wrong and right, unbeneficial and beneficial

"Monks! You should know the wrong and you should know the right. You should also know the unbeneficial and you should also know the beneficial. You should do the right and you should do the beneficial."

After this short discourse, the Buddha left the place. The monks could not comprehend this short discourse. Therefore they went to Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana, a learned arahant, to seek elaboration of the short discourse. The following is the summary of Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana's elaboration.

Monks, what is the wrong? What is the right? What is the unbeneficial? What is the beneficial?

Killing is wrong. Refraining from killing is right. Because of killing, many Akusala Kammās take place. This is the reason, why killing is unbeneficial. Because of refraining from killing, many Kusala Kammās take place. This is the reason, why refraining from killing is beneficial.

For the remaining nine Akusala Kammās, Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana gave the same elaboration.

are  
"Doing, saying, harbouring then/wrong. Refraining from doing, saying, harbouring then are right. Because of doing, saying, harbouring then, many Akusala Kammās take place. These are the reasons, why they are unbeneficial. Because of refraining from doing, saying, harbouring then, many Kusala Kammās take place. These are the reasons why they are beneficial."



of white cloth is prescribed for Pathavī Kasina bhāvanā. A person or the picture, <sup>At the end of that person,</sup> whom one admires <sup>Venerable Mahā Kaccāyana</sup> advised the monks to relate his elaboration <sup>and respect</sup> at the Buddha's order to enable the latter to correct <sup>the three</sup> if there were any mistakes, and also to add, if the elaboration is <sup>found to be</sup> deficient. After hearing the monks, the Buddha said, "It is straight on to Vipassanā bhāvanā for mental concentration. It is well done. It is well done. Monks! Mahā Kaccāyana is practising. Such mental concentration, which one achieves by practising. He is learned. If I am asked to give an elaboration, I would have given the same elaboration as the one which Mahā Kaccāyana has given. ~~How does one practise Vipassanā bhāvanā?~~ ~~Keep it well.~~ (Dassaka Nipāta, Anguttara Nikāya) Vi = clearly, positively + passanā = perceive. Therefore vipassanā bhāvanā means meditation to perceive the true nature of body and mind <sup>Cunda Sutta</sup> positively and clearly. <sup>How to purify oneself</sup>

When a yogi practises Vipassanā meditation, the main thing which he will be required to do is to make a diligent effort to be aware of —. While the Buddha was sojourning in the mango garden of Cunda, who was the son of a goldsmith of Pava, Cunda came to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha questioned him thus :-  
"Cunda! Whose way of purification do you like best ?

- 1) his bodily movements;
- 2) his feelings ;  
Buddha sir, there are brahmins in
- 3) - his mind, (e.g. if he has anger, he must be aware of his anger; if he has greed, he who worship fire and who immerse regularly. They have prescribed a way for purifying desire, he must be aware of his sexual oneself. I like their way.  
desire); and  
Cunda, how do these Brahmins prescribe their way?
- 4) his thoughts.

When he has <sup>Buddhahood</sup> attained the awareness of these four points sufficiently, <sup>1</sup> his mind will be clear. <sup>2</sup> After experiencing these Vipassanā insights, his mind will be purified. <sup>3</sup> After purifying mind, they must touch the earth, such as attachment to sensual pleasures, anger, doubt, and so on.

3. If they do not touch the earth, they must touch/fresh cow dung.

4. If they do not touch/fresh cow dung, they must touch the green grass.



These Vipassanā insights will enable him to perceive that body and mind are in a state of flux. From this perception of the true nature of body and mind, he will realize that body and mind which are in a state of flux are bad, terrible, unreliable, dangerous.

He will also realize that such body and mind cannot be *atta* or *atman* or soul.

And, because of these Vipassanā insights, he will develop a feeling of abhorrence for body and mind. When this feeling of abhorrence reaches its pinnacle, he will all of a sudden achieve either the first of the four *naggas* or some of the four *naggas* or all of them, one after another.

It all depends upon the *yogī's* faith, diligence, *saṇādhī* and last but not least, *Kamma*. The *yogī* who, in some of his previous existences, acquired sufficient good *Kamma* to be able to attain the four *naggas* at a stretch, will usually get them in that way. However, even if his *Kamma* was strong enough, he will not be able to attain three or four *naggas* at a stretch, if his *Samādhī*, during Vipassanā meditation, is not sufficiently strong. He will have to try again to attain the remaining *naggas*.

When he attains the *magga*, his mind will leave behind one of the six objects, namely, forms, sounds, odours, taste, tangible things, idea, to which his mind clung earlier and fall on an entirely new object called *Nibbāna*. The duration of his mind's contact with *Nibbāna* will be about a fraction of a second. However, since it is an extraordinary experience, this impact will thrill him for a sufficiently long period of time.

#### Power of Maggas

1. *Sotāpatti magga*, which is the first *magga*, will uproot two *Anusayas*, called *Diṭṭhānusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya*.



The person, whose *Diṭṭhanusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya* are uprooted, is called a *Sotāpanna*.

A *Sotapanna* will no longer have any belief in *atta* or *atman* or soul. It is not a case of suspension or temporary disappearance of the belief. It is completely eradicated by the *nagga*. It will, under no circumstances, return.

His faith in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha has become confirmed.

He is so completely transformed that he will, under no circumstances, kill, steal, satisfy his sensual desires by improper means, and tell lies.

Since *Diṭṭhanusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya*, which are the causes of endless rebirths, have been uprooted, a *Sotāpanna* will no longer have endless rebirths.

If he continues to practise *Vipassanā*, he has the chance to achieve, during his present lifetime, the three remaining *maggas*, which will uproot the remaining five *Anusayas*. And, if he achieves these remaining three *maggas*, there will be no rebirth, on his death. If however, he discontinues the *Vipassanā* meditation, he will have, at most, seven rebirths. During that period, he will automatically achieve the remaining three *maggas*.

A *Sotāpanna* will, under no circumstances, be reborn either as a being in hell, or as an animal, or as a *peta*, or as an *asurake* (beings of the four nether regions) because *Diṭṭhānusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya* which are the causes of such rebirths, have been eradicated by the first *nagga*.



How are remaining maggas  
automatically achieved?

Out of the seven Anusayas, *Diṭṭhānusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya* are the two chief stumbling blocks that prevent a being from seeing the true nature of body and mind. When these stumbling blocks are obliterated, there is nothing to prevent a *Sotāpanna* from becoming automatically conscious of the true nature of his body and mind frequently. This consciousness will enable him to achieve *Vipassanā* insights. Because of these *Vipassanā* insights, he will achieve one magga after another in course of time, before the expiry of the seventh rebirth. The Buddha said that no Anusayas in a being can linger for more than seven rebirths, even if that being gives up *vipassanā* meditation, after the achievement of the first magga.

The illustration which is going to be given now, will make the point clear. In Burma teak trees are not cut down like other trees. They are girdled near the bottom and they die within a specified period. The uprooting of *Diṭṭhānusaya* and *Vicikicchānusaya*, is like girdling the remaining five Anusayas.

2. *Sakadāgami magga*, which is the second magga, does not uproot any of the remaining five Anusayas. But it weakens them.

A person, who has achieved the second magga, is called a *Sakadāgāmin*.

A *Sakadāgāmin* has the chance to achieve, during his present lifetime, the remaining two maggas, which will uproot the remaining five Anusayas. And if he achieves the two remaining maggas, there will be no rebirth on his death. If, however, he discontinues the *Vipassanā* meditation, he will have, at most, two rebirths. During that period, he will automatically achieve the remaining two maggas.



3. Anāgāmi magga, which is the third magga, uproots Kāmarāgānusaya and Paṭighānusaya.

A person who has achieved the third magga is called an Anāgāmin.

An anāgāmin has the chance to achieve, during his present life time, the remaining magga, which will uproot the remaining three Anusayas. And if he achieves the remaining magga, there will be no rebirth on his death. If, however, he discontinues the Vipassanā meditation, he will have one more rebirth in the Suddhāvāsa brahmā realms. ( the 'Pure Abodes' ). There, he will automatically achieve the remaining magga.

4. Arahatta magga, which is the fourth and final magga, uproots Mānānusaya, Bhavarāgānusaya and Avijjānusaya.

A person who has achieved the fourth and final magga is called an Arahant.

Since all the causes of rebirths have been uprooted, there will be no rebirth on the death of the Arahant. And since there is no rebirth, such concomitants as old age, death, tribulation, grief, physical pain, distress, despair, having to live with beings and objects which one despises, having to separate from beings and objects which one loves, unfulfilment of one's desires, cannot take place.

Rebirths and their ten concomitants are called dukkha. Dukkha means anything that causes physical pain and mental affliction. It means anything that is evil, dangerous, terrible, unreliable. Therefore, the end of rebirth is known in Buddhism as liberation from dukkha. It is also known as Nibbāna, which means the extinction of dukkha.



The First Test

Frankly speaking, till the author was a little over forty years of age, he did not know anything about Vipassanā meditation, which a person must practise for the achievement of maggas. After Independence of Burma in 1948, he came into contact with many learned people, who were well versed in the theory as well as the practice of Vipassanā meditation. After some discussions with these learned persons, he became interested in Vipassanā. As a result of this interest, he formed in 1948 a society with Sir U Thwin, a great Burmese philanthropist, as the head, and a meditation centre, for putting Vipassanā to the test. It is named Sāsana-Yeikthā. Venerable Mahāsi Sayādaw of Shwebo was invited to preside over the centre.

Then the author wrote a letter to a friend of his in Wakena, which is his birth place. In the letter the author asked the friend to bring some of his intimate friends as he wanted them to test vipassanā meditation. He emphasized they must be men who would seriously practise vipassanā meditation and tell him honestly, if they did not like it or if they did not achieve anything that was worthy of their earnest effort. The friend brought about ten persons with him. Like the author, none of them knew anything about vipassanā meditation. Very strangely, there was a Muslim, named Cassin, in the group. The leader of the group told the author that Cassin came along because he thought he would get supernatural powers by practising vipassanā meditation. When these men successfully finished their course, Cassin topped the list regarding the speed with which he could enter into Phalassanāpatti and also regarding the duration in maintaining it. Cassin declared that what he achieved as a result of vipassanā meditation was much more valuable than supernatural powers. On his return to Wakena, Cassin dropped his original name and adopted a new one-- U Sin.



He spent most of his time at the meditation centre at Wakema. (Phalasanapatti is a kind of a trance. When a person is in it, he is conscious of Nibbāna only. He is not aware of forms or sounds or odours or tangible things. He is completely devoid of any train of thought. Those, who have got magga, can enter into it. It is fully explained in the text.)

### The Second Test

This time the author sent an old man, by the name of U San Pyo. Unlike those persons, mentioned above, he knew a good deal about vipassanā bhāvanā. He was so interested in it that he left his entire business with his sons and daughters and spent well over seventeen years in visiting meditation centres. U San Pyo admitted to the author that he had not yet achieved magga, in spite of long years of meditation. At those meditation centres, he could get only mental tranquility. But he was not disappointed. He believed that the word of the Buddha could not be wrong. Either the methods, which were taught in those centres, were faulty or he himself must have had shortcomings. So he thought. Therefore, when an opportunity was offered to him to meet a new teacher, he seized it with both hands. After about one and half months, he came to the author. With a face beaming with joy, he greeted the author thus: "I've got the first magga. I've found a very serious fault in our old methods."

In all the centres which he had visited, meditation was based on the four Satipaṭṭhānas, namely, awareness of the bodily movements, awareness of the feelings, awareness of the mind, awareness of the thoughts. This is in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha. But in these centres, meditation was not continuous. It is a very serious mistake.



At about four in the morning the yogīs at those centres started their practice. At six, meditation was suspended. After breakfast, the yogīs (those who practise meditation) would sit together and discuss politics, economics, Abhidhamma and various other subjects. Some more sober yogīs would remain in their rooms and count beads. Some would read newspapers. By the time the second session of vipassanā bhāvanā began at eight a.m., the little mental concentration which they had gathered in the previous session had totally disappeared. At the second session, they had to start their meditation again from the beginning. In this way, the yogīs moved from one session to another, without being able to build up sufficient mental concentration to enable them to perceive the impermanent nature of body and mind.

However, in the meditation centres headed by Mahāsi Sayādaw, the method is different in this respect from some other methods. Yogīs at the Mahāsi centre are not allowed to sit and talk. They are not allowed to read newspapers. They are not allowed even to count beads. Meditation must be carried on ceaselessly. It must not be suspended even while the yogī is answering the call of nature. He must be fully aware of all the bodily movements, all the feelings, all the minds and all the thoughts. Meditation ends only when he falls asleep. And it starts again, as soon as he awakens.

### The Third Test

Some months after the opening of Sāsana-Yeikthā, the author received reports about the transformation of certain bad persons. After these bad persons had acquired magga and phala, the drunkards gave up drinking, the robbers gave up their weapons, the adulterers and the adulteresses gave up their bad habits. All of them changed their ways completely. Therefore, the author sent for one of his friends, who was an



extremely bad man, He killed, robbed, committed adultery, lied, drank heavily. During the Second World War, when the British retreated from Burnā, he was in charge of preservation of peace in a certain area in the delta. He personally beheaded quite a number of bad hats and suspected persons. He was really the terror of that area.

After the War, he married a widow. He bullied her frequently. Sometimes his blows were so violent that her face became swollen beyond recognition. After some time, she had to devise a way to save herself. As soon as the bully growled or gave her a stern look, she had to jump out of the house and run away. The author very much wanted that man to go to the centre to put vipassanā to the test.

When the author met this man, he requested the latter to go to Sāsana-Yeikthā. The man said he would not go, since it was not a suitable place for him. The author told him that, with all his sins, he would certainly go to hell, after his death. He replied he was not afraid of hell. The author kept him in his house for some days. Some common friends supported the author and coaxed that man to go to the centre. However, after one or two days at the centre, he ran away, because, as he told the author later, his feelings to kill a room-mate became irrepressible. The author met him again after a few months. This time the author gave him a special room. The author visited him every day, just to see that he was there till the successful conclusion of vipassanā bhāvanā. After about twenty days, his demeanour changed. The crooked look on his face became conspicuous by its absence. After a little more than a month, he was allowed to attend a special session to hear the presiding monk's discourse on vipassanā insights and to compare his experiences during meditation with these vipassanā insights.



When he left the centre, he came to the author and told the latter that he wanted to bring his wife to the centre. She was allowed to attend the special session after about twenty days.

At present, this man is an exemplary person. In the area, the peace of which had been frequently disturbed by the husband's bullying and the wife's screanings, everything is quiet now.

#### The Fourth Test

At the time of the setting up of the centre, there was a serious rebellion in the country. So the author could go to the centre to put the Buddha's teachings to the test, only after the rebellion had been substantially subdued in 1950. At the centre he was taught to start with the concentration on the rising of the abdomen as he inhaled, and the falling of the abdomen as he exhaled. Instead of inhaling and exhaling naturally, he made special effort. Because of faulty breathing he could not concentrate. He got tired. When the instructor knew thks, he asked the author to concentrate on his sitting and on the touching of his back with the chair, mentally saying "Sitting, touching; sitting, touching." It helped in getting mental concentration. After he had built up some mental concentration, he switched his concentration from the sitting and touching to the rising and the falling of the abdomen. This time he was successful in concentrating on the rising and the falling of abdomen. (See text for a fuller account of mental concentration.)

As he gained more and more concentration, he went up stage by stage towards the first magga and phala. The stages, which a person has to pass through to reach the first magga and phala, are thirteen in number.



The author does not remember seeing all there was to see at every stage. But he can very clearly and positively remember some landmarks of certain stages. He had never dreamt of seeing these landmarks. They filled him with thrills, exhilaration, abhorrence, etc.

When the instructor thought that the author had reached the eleventh stage, i.e., Saṅkhārupekkha Nāṇa, he told the author to declare a wish before the image of the Buddha that he did not want to go beyond that stage. The author did so. The explanation is this. A Buddhist must choose any one of the following goals.

1. Pakati-Sāvaka (Minor Arahantship)
2. Mahā-Sāvaka (Major Arahantship )
3. Agga-Sāvaka (Exalted Arahantship )
4. Pacceka-Buddha (Minor Buddhahood )
5. Buddha (Buddhahood)

Those who are very much disgusted with dukkha and therefore want to be liberated from it as quickly as possible, make the wish for the first. If they get the fourth and final magga (arahatta magga), there will be no more rebirth for them, after death. If there is no more rebirth, there will no more be dukkha. If they discontinue to meditate to get the fourth and final magga, after they have got the third magga (anāgāmi magga), there will be one more rebirth for them. It means dukkha for one more rebirth. If they discontinue to meditate to get the higher maggas after they have got the second magga (sagadāmi magga), there will be two more rebirths for them. It means dukkha for two more rebirths. If they discontinue to meditate to get higher maggas after they have got the first magga (sotapatti magga), there will be seven more rebirths for them. Under no circumstances, can there be more than seven rebirths for the persons who have got the first magga; more than



two rebirths for the persons who have got the second magga; more than one rebirth for the person who have got the third magga. (Cūlaniddesa Pāḷi)\*

There are also some persons, who are very much disgusted with dukkha. However, they want to do as much as they can for suffering beings. Therefore they choose one of the four remaining wishes. The training period for the fulfilment of the major arahantship will be not less than the duration of one hundred thousand "worlds". The training period for the exalted arahantship will be immeasurably longer than the second. The training period for the Minor Buddhahood will be twice as long as the third. And the training period for the Buddhahood will be, at least, twice as long as the fourth. If the persons, who make one of these four wishes, get the first magga and phala, they will not have any chance of training themselves for one of these four wishes. They will not have any rebirth after seven rebirths, at the most.

Since the instructor knew that the author had chosen one of these four wishes, he advised the author not to go beyond the eleventh stage.

In the first week of January 1968, the author went to the meditation centre again. He found that the second meditation was much more successful than the first.

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\* Explanations are fully given in Cūlaniddesa Aṭṭhakathā and Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā.



A strange meeting

The author remained at the centre as a monk for a little more than six months. One day a lady came to see him. The following is the gist of what the author learnt from her about her husband.

The name of her husband is U Ye Myint. He is a Bachelor of Science of University of Rangoon. While he was an undergraduate, he came very deeply under the influence of a communist lecturer. These influences remained with him long after he was married. The wife is a devout Buddhist. Therefore there were frequent clashes between the husband and the wife. The following are some examples of the clashes.

When she asked him to go to the shrine room to pay homage to the Buddha, he would retort thus: "Don't be silly. It is a sheer waste of time." When she made offerings of food to the Buddha, he would scorn at it thus: "What a sheer waste of money." And when the ceremony was over, he would ask someone to bring the food to him. He and his sons would take all of it. When the children were free during summer holidays, the mother wanted to take them to the meditation centre for about a month. The father would interpose and say thus: "Those, who like to go to the movies, remain with me. Don't go to the meditation centre. It is a sheer waste of time." Sometimes while the mother was enjoining her children to keep steadfastly the five Precepts, namely, to refrain from killing, stealing, committing adultery, telling lies, taking intoxicants if they did not want to be reborn in one of the four nether regions, namely, hell, animal world, peta world and asurakāya world, the father would make fun of the belief in any existence after death. He would sometimes go to the extent of proclaiming that he would give a reward of one thousand kyats to anyone who could prove existence after death, by showing him a ghost.



While these clashes were going on, a day arrived when the youngest son was to be initiated as a novice, the preliminary stage to monkhood, in accordance with the Buddhist tradition. The mother wanted the son to remain at the centre for about two months to practise meditation, after the initiation. The father could not bear the separation from his son for such a long time. So he declared that, under no circumstances, would the boy cross over the threshold of the house, unless he was allowed to remain with the son at the centre. The wife replied that no non-meditators would be permitted to spend the night at the centre. And she suggested that, if he wanted to remain with the son at the centre, he should become a monk and practise meditation there. He abhorred this suggestion with all his heart. But only for the sake of getting a chance to remain with the son at the centre, he accepted the suggestion of the wife.

With the author's permission, the husband was brought to the author. The author was visibly startled for two reasons when he saw U Ye Myint. With red-shot eyes, he looked like an angry man. This was the first reason. The author remembered at once that U Ye Myint was no other than the monk whom he had seen playing with a dog near the Sīnā at the centre, whenever he went to the presiding monk's monastery. At the centre, only visitors were seen moving about. The meditators were engaged with their meditation. Since a monk's playing with a dog, especially at the meditation centre, was an unseemly spectacle, the author remembered it very vividly. Suddenly he concluded that he had made a mistake in giving his consent to the wife to bring the husband.

After about half an hour's discussion, the author put a question to U Ye Myint thus: "Don't you like to put the teachings of the Buddha to the test?"



" Can Buddhism be tested? "

" Of course, it can be tested."

" How ?"

" Didn't your instructor tell you something about it?"

" The instructor told me many things. But I was never listening to him."

" Why didn't you listen? "

" Since I am not practising meditation, I do not think I have any need for listening to the instructor."

" Then how did you answer his questions about your meditation?"

" I told him I was trying and I've not yet got anything."

" Will you sincerely test the teachings of the Buddha, if you know how to do it?"

" Yes, I will. And I will tell you the results of my test. If I get anything, I will sincerely tell you so. If I don't get anything, I will also sincerely tell you so."

The author told him what he knew about the meditation practice. After about a week, he came to report the result of his test.

" I found I had a desire to move, before I moved my hand or leg or head or any part of the body. I never had this kind of experience before.

" When I had a thought, I knew before it went very far. I never had this kind of experience also.



" I felt as if my mind was moving towards the abdomen, whenever it was rising. This is also a very new experience.

" And as I thought what I found were delusions, as a result of sitting for a long time, I got up, I walked and I lay on my bed. Sometimes I got then during these changes of postures. Sometimes they disappeared.

" What I liked best about meditation was peace of mind, which I got as soon as I began to have a sort of control over my mind."

The author knew U Ye Myint was on the right track. What he found were not delusions. He found what he should find when he had mental concentration. Sometimes what he found disappeared because his mental concentration disappeared while trying to find out whether they were delusions or facts. In meditation, the only thing that a person is required to do is to build up a steadfast awareness of his mind and body in accordance with the four techniques of awareness taught by the Buddha. When he has built up that steadfast awareness, he will see what he should see. What he sees will naturally lead him stage by stage, to maggas and phalas, that will uproot Anusayas.

The author explained these points to U Ye Myint and he promised to follow the instructions strictly. After about a month, while meditating in accordance with the four techniques of awareness, he had an experience, which he had never had before. He liked it so much that he shouted at the top of his voice "Wonderful!" two or three times. This strange behaviour of his startled the fellow meditators. He could not continue to meditate. Out of great joy, he ran to his instructor and after touching the latter's feet several times with his forehead, he recounted his wonderful experience.



When meditators get a very high state of mental concentration, they get ecstasy. This ecstasy is very similar to the mental state just after the achievement of *nagga* and *phala*. Sometimes, on hearing such a report of the meditator, an instructor can get confounded. Therefore, in order to enable the instructor to distinguish ecstasy from *nagga* and *phala*, he is given a secret test by the presiding monk. He makes use of this test, when the progressive report of the meditator shows that he is coming near *nagga* and *phala*.

U Ye Myint was given that test for several days. He passed the test. The wife was so overjoyed that she invited the author to her house and gave him a great feast.

Many interesting questions:

The author has met many persons who asked him many interesting questions. Some of them are mentioned below.

A Selfish faith?

One young man asked the author to tell him how Buddhism helps people. The author answered that he would not tell how Buddhism would help in the hereafter because the questioner was a type of person who would not accept such kind of answers. Therefore the author told the young man that he would confine his answers only to how Buddhism would help people in the present life. The young man appeared to be pleased. Then the author asked him how he regarded greed, anger and ignorance.

The young man : I regard them as the enemies of mankind.

The author : Buddhism is the only religion that teaches mankind how to uproot these enemies of mankind. That is how Buddhism helps people.



The young man : Do you say that greed, anger and ignorance can be annihilated during one's present life-time and not in the hereafter ?

The author : Yes, I do. The Buddha has set the goal of His teachings in the present life-time and not in the hereafter. If the goal is set in the hereafter, I do not think that I will be interested in Buddhism.

The young man : Do you mean to say that all the *kilesās* can be uprooted in one's present life-time?

The author : Yes, provided that one has the necessary amount of diligence. One must go through four stages to reach the goal. Many of the people I have seen did not have the necessary diligence even for reaching the first stage.

The young man : Have you seen persons who have reached either the first stage or the second stage or the third stage or the fourth and final stage ? Can you show me these persons ?

The author : Yes, I have seen them. And I can show you these persons, if you like to see them. But since there is no barometer to gauge the mind, you will not know whether the persons whom I show you are truly persons who have reached one or the other of the four stages. So the best method for testing Buddhism is to test it on yourself. If you reach even the first stage,

- 1) You will find for yourself that your faith in soul or *atta* has been uprooted ;

- 2) You will find for yourself that your doubts about Buddhism have been uprooted ;



- 3) You will find for yourself that you can, under no circumstances, accept any path other than the path of Sīla, Saṁādhi, Paññā;
- 4) You will find for yourself that you can, under no circumstances, kill, steal, commit adultery, tell lies, take intoxicants, since all the Anusayas, which are the causes of such evils have been uprooted;
- 5) You will find for yourself that jealousy becomes conspicuous by its total absence, because it has been uprooted by the first magga ;
- 6) You will find for yourself that malice also becomes conspicuous by its total absence, because it has also been uprooted by the first magga;
- 7) At this stage, you will find for yourself whether or not it is possible to uproot all of the kilesās in one's present life-time.

You will see that there is moral corruption everywhere — among rulers, administrators, political leaders, businessmen, workers, peasants, monks, old man, young men, old women, young women. Out of this moral corruption, wars, civil wars, revolutions, chaos, lawlessness, destruction, loss of human dignity and so on, arise.

On the day, when a large number of leaders in all walks of life can be replaced with those who have achieved, at



least, the first magga, nine-tenths of the problems that plague mankind, will disappear.

Buddhism can help mankind in this way.

I very much wish you to try to get, at least, the first magga. Will you try?

The young man : I will think of it.

The author : If you can even think of it, it is something.  
Thank you very much.

The above question reminds the author of a similar question, which was put to the Buddha by a brahmin, named Saṅgārava.

One day, Saṅgārava came to the Buddha and said, "Venerable Gotama, we brahmins personally make sacrificial offerings. And we exhort others to do likewise. Venerable Gotama, by making sacrificial offerings personally and by exhorting others to do likewise, the brahmins are following a selfless path for the good of others. Venerable Gotama, if a person, from this or that clan or caste, joins the order of monks and meditates for his personal liberation from dukkha, that monk is following a selfish path."

The Buddha : Brahmin, your way of thinking is not correct. I will put a question to you. Answer as you please. After the Buddha had discovered the way to the end of dukkha, He told others thus : " Come ! I will show you the way to Nibbāna, which I have discovered by means of maggas. If you practise meditation as I have instructed, you will discover Nibbāna by means of maggas. Practise meditation as I have instructed."



In this way the Buddha Himself had practised for the achievement of naggas and exhorted others to do likewise. Accepting my admonition, many joined the order of monks and practised meditation. After having achieved naggas, these monks went to the people and exhorted them to practise meditation for liberating themselves from dukkha. Thus the process of meditating to achieve naggas and after having achieved it, exhorting others to do likewise, goes on and on. The number of monks and laymen, who have achieved naggas in this way, has exceeded hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands.

Brahmin! What do you think of my statement ? If the process is taking place, as I have stated, is the act of becoming a monk a selfish act? Or is it an act for the welfare of others ?

Saṅgārava: Venerable Gotama! If the process is taking place as you have stated, the act of becoming a monk is an unselfish act. It is an act for the welfare of others.

Venerable Ānandā : Brahmin! Out of the two practices —that of exhorting others to make sacrificial offerings, after one has personally made them and that of exhorting others to meditate, after one has himself meditated, which do you prefer? Which requires less preparation? Which consumes less effort ? Which yields more benefits? Which can liberate one from dukkha ?



Saṅgārava : I pay my homage to persons like Venerable  
Gotama and Venerable Ānandā.

Venerable Ānandā repeated his question twice and  
Saṅgārava repeatedly replied as he had done above, without  
answering Venerable Ānandā's Question. (Aṅguttara - Volume I.  
Saṅgārava Sutta.)



An Agnostic

An agnostic once asked the author why a person should come to the end of rebirth, when he has reached the finest stage of his existence, after he has uprooted all his kilesās.

A Catholic Friend

A Roman Catholic friend once made an interesting offer to the author. According to his offer, there were two tables. A charming lady was placed on the first table. There was nothing on the second table. The Catholic friend would like to know which table the author would choose. And before the author could answer, the Catholic friend said that a person who chose the table with nothing on it would be like the person who had chosen Nibbāna, the goal of Buddhism.

No ice-cream and movies

In Burma, the author frequently met young Buddhists who frankly told him that they did not want Nibbāna because they would not have ice-cream and movies in Nibbāna.

A leader from the west

A very interesting incident should also be mentioned here. Before the Second World War, a famous Buddhist leader from the west visited Burma. He met some of the famous Buddhist



monks in Rangoon. U Thein Maung, who, after Burnese Indopendence, became a Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was also present at the meeting. According to the distinguished Buddhist leader from the west, Nibbāna was just like Heaven where there were eternal life and eternal bliss. When, on behalf of the Burnese Buddhist monks, U Thein Maung told him that his conception of Nibbāna was not consistent with the teachings of the Buddha, he replied that the conception of the end of rebirth as the / goal of a Buddhist, would never be popularly accepted in the west.

The desire to live, to enjoy, to have eternal life and eternal bliss is so deeply engrained in one's nature that it is not easy for human beings, devas and brahmās, whether they are agnostics or Roman Catholics or Buddhists, to accept a doctrine the goal of which is the end of rebirth.

To the agnostic and the Roman Catholic friends, to some of the Buddhists in Burma who do not want Nibbāna because there are no movies and ice-cream there, and last but not least, to the distinguished Buddhist leader from the west, the author wants to answer respectfully by means of the following parable.

#### A Parable

There was once an inn in the heart of a deep forest. A high way passed through that area in which the inn was situated. The owner of the inn was a rascal, named Nānarūpa (mind and body). He had five charming daughters, named Rupārammaṇa (good form), Saddārammaṇa (good voice), Gandhārammaṇa (good odour), Rasārammaṇa (good taste), Phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa (good touch). The daughters with their beguiling smiles, tastefully painted faces, dainty bodies and perfumed dresses would welcome the weary travellers with enticing voices and would offer them refreshing drinks in each of which the father had put some drops of liquid



with cholera germs. The travellers, who could not get better of their Kāmarāga --- attachment to good sight, good sound, good smell, good taste and good touch,--- succumbed, after undergoing severe pain, without having any chance of enjoying the meals and the ladies. After their death, the rascal and the daughters grabbed whatever they could find in the possessions of the travellers.

One day five travellers came to the inn. As usual, the charming daughters served them with refreshments. All were very much tired after a long and strenuous journey. Therefore all of them found the drinks very tempting. However, the fifth traveller happened to be a public health inspector. Through sheer force of habit, he quickly took out a drop from his glass of refreshment, put it properly on a slide and examined it through his microscope. The fellow travellers were watching him with incredulous eyes. To his great amazement, he saw cholera germs. Therefore, he immediately warned his fellow travellers not to touch their glasses.

First traveller --- Why not? After such an arduous journey, is it not a well-earned drink ?

Second traveller --- Your microscope be blowed. I will take the drink. I have even decided to spend a few nights with these charming girls.

Third traveller --- To take or not to take. This is the question at issue. But I see lumps of ice-cream floating in the drink.

Fourth traveller --- None of us will heed your warning.



Fifth traveller --- It is a life and death  
matter. I respectfully beg  
each of you to take a peep  
through that microscope.

Second traveller--- Damn your microscope. The  
ladies are too charming to  
do a dirty trick.

( Chorus : - The ladies are too charming  
to do a dirty trick.)

Thus, Brahmās, devas and men, who cannot uproot their  
attachment to themselves, to good sight, sound, smell, taste  
and touch, to the conception of eternal life and bliss, will  
go through endless rebirths, meeting one death after another,  
without ever getting a chance of enjoying eternal life and  
eternal bliss.

In Buddhism, mental concentration is a microscope. It  
will enable one to see the impermanent nature of mind and body.  
Because of this perception, he will have intellectual realiza-  
tions that this impermanent mind and body are like festering  
sores; that they are dangerous, that they are unreliable. He  
will also have intellectual realizations that mind and body,  
which no one can command to be permanent even for a second,  
cannot be atta, and that they cannot possess anything that is  
substantial and valuable. When a person clearly and positively  
has such perceptions and realizations, his unfavourable attitude  
towards the conception of the end of rebirth as his goal, will  
definitely undergo a complete change.

#### A humble request

With <sup>the</sup> great advance of science, there is born in the  
minds of an overwhelming number of persons in this world, a  
healthy attitude. This may be called the "Seeing is believing"



attitude. Because of this attitude, these persons no longer take anything around them, or above them or below them, for granted. They will not accept a certain theory or idea simply because it is taken from a big book or because it/said<sup>has been</sup> by a great man. They must study it and put it to the test. They accept the theory or the idea as true, only if they have found it, after experimentation, to be true.

To these persons, the author wants to make a humble request to put the following theory to the test.

"The seven Anusayas can be annihilated by means of three disciplines, namely, Sīla, Samādhī and Paññā.

What did the Buddha say about Sīla?

The Buddha said that these who observe Sīla and refrain from killing, stealing (or robbing), committing adultery, telling lies, taking intoxicants, will have the following five benefits. (Mahāparinibbāna Sutta, Dīgha Nikāya)

- 1) Since they do not need to waste their time and money on sinful things, they can earn well and save well.
- 2) They will very soon acquire a very good reputation.
- 3) The knowledge that they are free from vices will give them moral courage. Whether they are meeting people or attending functions, they can do so without being disturbed by a guilty conscience or an inferiority complex.
- 4) On the verge of death, persons generally remember some of the things which they have done throughout their life. Some of the bad things which the people without Sīla remember,



will disturb them. As a result of this, they will not have peace of mind. The people with Sīla will remember the good things they had done. Therefore they will have peace of mind. The thought that, by virtue of their Sīla, they will achieve, on their death, good rebirths, gives them much consolation.

- 5) On their death, they will be reborn either as human beings or as devas.

Also in Kimatthiya Sutta, Aṅguttara, the Buddha has mentioned seven benefits accruing to those who strictly observe Sīla.

While the Buddha was sojourning at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthi, Venerable Ānandā asked the Buddha the following questions :

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of unbroken, clean Sīla? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Sīla has the faculty to enable one to have Avippatisāra (freedom from bad conscience, remorse, regret, repentance.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Avippatisāra? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Avippatisāra has the faculty to enable one to have Pāmojja (joy and gladness.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Pāmojja? How can it help one?



Buddha --- Pāmojja has the faculty to enable one to have Pīti ( a feeling of great satisfaction.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Pīti? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Pīti has the faculty to enable one to have Passaddhi (calmness and serenity.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Passaddhi? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Passadhi has the faculty to enable one to have Sukha (freedom from mental defilements, such as greed, anger, rambling thoughts.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Sukha ? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Sukha has the faculty to enable one to have Sanādhī (mental concentration.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Sanādhī ? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Sanādhī has the faculty to enable one to have Yathābhūta-Ñāṇa-dassana (insight by means of which one can see the true nature of mind and body.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What is the faculty of Yathābhūta-Ñāṇa-dassana? How can it help one ?

Buddha --- Yathābhūta-Ñāṇa-dassana has the faculty to enable one to have Nibbidā and Virāga (Nibbidā means abhorrence of one's own mind and



body. Virāga means extinction of attachment, passions.)

Venerable Ānandā --- Buddha sir! What are the faculties of Nibbidā and Virāga? How can they help one ?

Buddha --- Nibbidā and Virāga have the faculties to enable one to have Vinutti and Vinutti-Ñāṇa-dassana. (Vinutti means liberation from dukkha [rebirth, old age, death, separation from dear ones etc.] Vinutti-Ñāṇa-dassana means insight by means of which one can realize the fact of one's own liberation from dukkha.) Ānandā! As I have stated, an unbroken, clean Sīla has the faculty to enable one to have benefits ranging from Avippatisāra to Arahatta phala (fourth and final magga and phala.)

What did the Buddha say about Sanādhī?

In Sanādhī Sutta, Saṃyutta Nikāya, the Buddha enumerated the benefits which one will get from Sanādhī as follows.

Monks! Make a diligent effort to achieve Sanādhī. A monk who has Sanādhī will perceive the truth. What kind of truth will he perceive ? He will perceive that his body and four mental attributes are in a flux.

The perception of this truth will make him abhor his mind and body. Because of this abhorrence, his attachment will be cut off from his mind and body. As a result of this severance, he will be liberated from kilesas. As soon as this liberation



takes place, he will have the following spontaneous realizations, one after another in quick succession ---

- a) that he has been liberated from kilesās;
- b) that jāti which is a synonym for rebirth has come to an end;
- c) that he has come to the end of the road which requires him never to stop practising Sīla and Samādhi in order to save himself from rebirths in the four nether abodes and to help himself to gain good rebirths in either human or deva or brahmā abodes ;
- d) that he has no longer any need for taking up meditation to achieve maggas and phalas; and
- e) that there will not be anymore rebirths when the present life comes to an end.

What did the Buddha say about Pannā?

As the introduction and again as the conclusion to the Satipaṭṭhana Sutta, which is the discourse for achieving Paññā, the Buddha said as follows :-

" Monks! There are four techniques of Satipaṭṭhāna for building up steadfast awareness of mind and body.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the only path, which all beings starting from Bodhisattas, Pacceka Bodhisattas and embryo arahants, must go through in order to uproot the Anusayas. ( A Bodhisatta is a person who had got an affirmation from a Buddha that he would become a Buddha one day.)



Satipaṭṭhāna is the only path, which all beings must go through in order to liberate themselves from such mental afflictions as tribulations and griefs.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the only path, which all beings must go through in order to put an end to bodily pain and distress.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the only path, which all beings must go through in order to achieve four ariyā maggas and phalas.

Satipaṭṭhāna is the only path, which all beings must go through in order to perceive Nibbāna by means of maggas and phalas."

#### Another humble request

In dealing with some serious and important points, the author adheres to a technique. In accordance with that technique, these points are not mentioned abruptly in the Chapters earmarked for them. Some cursory remarks about them are given in the few earlier chapters. Then they are brought up again in greater detail in some later chapters. And in the chapters, which are earmarked for them, they are dealt with as fully as possible. This technique is used in order to save the readers the shock which they may receive if they are confronted abruptly with an unusual and serious subject. Moreover, the author hopes that this technique will enable the readers to have a good grasp of these serious points. If, by using this technique, the author is found to be guilty of being redundant, he begs the readers' pardon.



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## Reference Books

(1) Ti Piṭakas. Translated into Burmese and published by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

### A Short History

Ti means three. Piṭakas means baskets. Three baskets are used metaphorically for the three main divisions of the Buddha's teachings, namely, Suttas, Vinaya and Abhidhammā.

Suttas are discourses on Dāna (Charity), Sīla (Refraining from doing and saying what is not right by controlling one's body and mouth), Bhāvanā [A diligent effort to achieve either Jhānas (mental concentrations) or Maggas (Insights that can uproot greed, anger, ignorance of four Ariyā Truths)].

Vinaya Rules are Rules, laid down by the Buddha, to be observed by the monks.

Abhidhammā is a long and comprehensive exposition on four ultimate realities, namely, Citta (Mind), Cetasika (Mental Concomitants), Rūpa (Matter), Nibbāna (Extinction of Mind and Matter).

For the sake of convenience, these three main divisions are classified into five Nikāyas (groups). They are as follows:-

- 1) Dīgha Nikāya.
- 2) Majjhima Nikāya.
- 3) Saṃyutta Nikaya.
- 4) Aṅguttara Nikāya.
- 5) Khuddaka Nikāya.

Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 are purely Sutta Nikāyas. In Number 5 are placed Vinaya, Abhidhammā and some Suttas. Out of these five Nikāyas, the four Sutta Nikāyas, Vinaya and Suttas in the Khuddaka Nikāya have been completely translated into Burmese by the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.



(ii)

Abhidhammā is a collection of seven long discourses, namely, Dhammasaṅgaṇī, Vibhaṅga, Dhātukathā, Puggalapannatti, Kathāvatthu, Yamaka, Paṭṭhāna. The number of printed Pāli volumes for these seven discourses is twelve and the number of pages is about five thousand.

Besides being very long, the subject matter of these discourses is not easy to translate. So far, the Union Buddha Sāsana Council has been able to translate only four discourses, namely, Dhammasaṅgaṇī, Vibhaṅga, Puggalapannatti, Kathāvatthu ( 2 Volumes ).

In the following, the number of translated volumes will be shown against each Nikāya.

1. Dīgha Nikāya	----	3 Volumes.
2. Majjhima Nikāya	----	3 Volumes.
3. Saṃyutta Nikāya	----	3 Volumes.
4. Aṅguttara Nikāya	----	3 Volumes.
5. Khuddaka Nikāya	----	
	a) Vinaya	- 5 Volumes.
	b) Abhidhamma	- 5 Volumes.
	c) Suttas	- 7 Volumes.

(2). (a) Paramattha Saṅkhitta Tīkā - By Ledi Paṇḍita  
Ācariya . U Maung Gyi.

(b) I Ah - Chay - Pyu - Thinjo.

II Thinjo - Bur - Thar - Tīkā.

III Ko - Kyint - Abhidhammā - By the Venerable  
Janakābhivamsa.

#### A Short History

In about the fifteenth century of the Buddhist Era, one very eminent Sinhalese monk, by the name of Venerable Anuruddhā, condensed the seven discourses of Abhidhammā into a small volume. Since then it has become the handbook for Therāvāda Buddhists, who want to have a short cut to Abhidhammā. This book is known as "Abhidhammattha - Saṅgaha ".



About 1890 A.D. the famous Venerable Ledi Sayadaw wrote a book called "Paramattha Dīpanī" (Commentary on "Abhidhammattha-Saṅgaha"). It is in Pāli. About 1906, one of his eminent pupils, by the name of Ledi Paṇḍita Ācāriya U Maung Gyi, translated it into Burmese. The book is named "Paramattha Saṅkhitta Tīkā".

Some years ago, an eminent Burmese monk, by the name of Venerable Janakābhivamsa wrote a fully annotated edition of "Abhidhammattha - Saṅgaha", primarily for the students of Abhidhammā. The book is named "Ah-Chay-Pyu-Thinjo" (Foundation for Abhidhammattha-Saṅgaha). Again, the same eminent monk wrote a sub-commentary on "Abhidhammattha - Saṅgaha". It is named "Thinjo-Bur-Thar-Tīkā". He also wrote "Ko-Kyint-Abhidhammā" (abhidhammā for building character ).

(3). Jātakatṭhakathā (5 Volumes). Translated by the  
Venerable Pathama Nyaungkan  
Sayadaw.

#### A Short History

The Buddha had a psychic power, called Fubbenivāsānussati Ñāṇa, which enabled Him to recall the past. By means of that psychic power, the Buddha recalled many incidents which had taken place during some of His previous existences, while He was, as a Bodhisatta (Embryo Buddha), undergoing training for Buddhahood. In these incidents the Bodhisatta and many persons who were connected with him in one way or other, are mentioned.

When, for instance, a monk, who had given up meditation because of his infatuation for a woman, was brought to the Buddha, the Buddha related the story of Ummānantī. In that story, the Bodhisatta was King Sivi. Because of his infatuation for Ummānantī, the charming wife of his commander-in-chief, he became an object of ridicule to his courtiers.



When the commander-in-chief came to know about this, he offered his wife to the King. The King realized the error of his infatuation and successfully fought against the temptation.

At the end of the story, the monk achieved Sotāpatti magga and recovered from his infatuation for the woman. (Sotāpatti magga is fully explained in the text.)

The Buddha identified Venerable Uppalavannā, the second chief female disciple with Ummānantī, Venerable Sāriputtara, the chief disciple, with the husband of Ummānantī, Venerable Ānandā, the Buddha's attendant, with the royal charioteer.

Jātakatṭhakathā is a collection of such incidents. There are a little more than five hundred such stories in five volumes. It was translated from Pāli into Burmese, during the reign of King Sin-Phyu-Shin, by Venerable Pathama Nyaungkan Sayadaw.

(4). Mahā Buddhavaṃsa (6 volumes) By Venerable Vicittasārābhivāsa.

#### A Short History

Buddhavaṃsa means the Life of the Buddha. Before the Independence of Burma, there had appeared some short Buddhavaṃsa in Burma. Therefore, at the request of the then Prime Minister to compile a Buddhavaṃsa which should be as complete as possible Venerable Vicittasārābhivāsa wrote the present Buddhavaṃsa. It runs into six volumes. Therefore it is named Mahā Buddhavaṃsa.

Something about this remarkable author should be briefly mentioned here. He is the first recipient of the degree of "Tipiṭaka-dhara". This is the degree conferred on those who pass the Tipiṭaka-dhara examination, held by the Government of Burma. It consists of oral and written examinations. For the oral examination, the Tipiṭaka — Sutta, Vinaya, Abhidhammā, — divided into four Sections. A candidate has to learn the whole



Tipiṭaka by heart and recite each Section at the annual examination which is held in the months of December and January. Each day the candidates are required to recite for about five hours, with an interval of fifteen minutes at the end of every hour. The oral examination lasts about ninety days. The recitation is followed by the written examination. Only after the candidate has passed both the oral and written examinations of the first Section, can he go up for the second Section. He can likewise go up for the third and fourth Sections. Those who fail in any of the examinations can make the next attempt only at the next annual examination.

These examinations were inaugurated in 1949. Up to the time of writing, with the exception of one and only one, no candidate has ever passed the four sections without a hitch. The candidates would fail either in the oral or in the written test or in both. Even when they passed the oral, they could do so only with the prompting of the examiners, who were empowered by the regulations of the examination to extend such help to the candidates in certain circumstances. Most of these candidates obtained just pass marks in the written examination. There were also many candidates who could not obtain a pass even in the first Section.

That exceptional monk who passed all four Sections without any hitch was Venerable Vicittasārābhivamsa. In the oral, no examiner had a single occasion to prompt him. In the written, the average marks he scored were above ninety. The then Prime Minister was so impressed by the achievements of the monk, that he made a special request to him to compile a comprehensive "Buddhavamsa".

(5).The Buddha's Law By Venerable Janakābhivamsa.

The teachings of the Buddha are classified into



three Categories, namely,

- 1) Pariyatti Sāsanā.
- 2) Paṭipatti Sāsanā.
- 3) Paṭivedha Sāsanā.

Pariyatti Sāsanā means theory, e.g. a study of the Tipitaka.

Paṭipatti Sāsanā means practice, e.g. the practice of Samatha and Vipassanā bhāvanā for the achievement of Jhānas, Maggas and Phalas.

Paṭivedha Sāsanā means achievement, e.g. achievement of Jhānas, Maggas and Phalas.

These three Categories of the Buddha's Sāsanā can not be preserved, unless there are good and disciplined monks.

Good and disciplined monks can not exist unless there are the vinaya rules.

Therefore, the Venerable Monks who participated in the first Saṅgāyanā. (the Assembly of learned monks for the codification of the teachings of the Buddha) appealed to the President of the Assembly to give first priority to the Vinaya, since it is the life of the Sāsanā.

Venerable Janakābhivamsa, the author of "The Buddha's Law", is the presiding monk of a monastery in Amarapura, an old capital of Burma. He is a very strict disciplinarian. Even in the compound of his monastery, no monks can be seen loitering about. They come out of their monastery 1) when they have to go into the town for collecting food; 2) when they have to go to the refectory for taking their meal; and 3) when they are summoned by the presiding monk. Life in the compound of the monastery is quiet, peaceful and disciplined.



"The Buddha's Law" is nothing but the Vinaya Rules in plain, easy Burmese, which can be understood by any one who reads Burmese. The author is of the opinion that Venerable Janakābhivamsa had a dual purpose in writing it. The first purpose was to enable monks, who do not know Pāli, to understand the Vinaya Rules by reading the book. The second, as far as the author is concerned, is more far reaching than the first. It is to enable laymen to understand the Vinaya Rules. The layman's knowledge of the Vinaya Rules can serve as a deterrent on recalcitrant monks. For example, before he knew anything about the Vinaya Rules, the author would offer a monetary donation to a monk who asked him for it. Now he would not do so. Because by coming to him, without being invited, the monk had violated a Vinaya Rule. And also because, by asking for money, he had violated a far more serious Vinaya Rule. If such knowledge of the Vinaya Rules becomes widespread among Buddhists, the sight of such monks will become less frequent, even if it does not disappear entirely.

Moreover, laymen can take really effective action, if monks go too far in violating the Vinaya Rules. There was a classic example during the time of the Buddha.

In Kosambī, the monks disobeyed the Buddha. Only when the people passed a resolution to boycott the monks, and put it into effect, did the latter quickly abandon their disobedience and ask for forgiveness from the Buddha. Therefore, Venerable Janakābhivamsa might have considered it quite essential for laymen to have a sound knowledge of the Vinaya Rules in order to deter the monks from violating the Vinaya Rules.

- |      |                              |                            |
|------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (6). | a) Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī      | By Venerable Ledī Sayadaw. |
|      | b) Paticca-Samuppāda Dīpanī  |                            |
|      | c) Dhammacakkappavattana and |                            |
|      | Anattalakkhana Nissaya       |                            |



"Known to scholars of many countries, the Venerable Ledi Sayadaw Aggamahāpandita, D. Litt., was the eminent Buddhist figure of this age. He has written in Pali and in Burmese more than 70 manuals of Buddhist (Dīpanīs), being the lucid expositions of the Buddha Dhamma, and the true presentations of the main tenets of Therāvāda Buddhism." — ("Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names " by Dr. Malala Sekera).

"The Venerable Sayadaw was a prolific writer. His works numbered over a hundred."

By means of Dīpanīs, Venerable Ledi Sayadaw had brought such difficult subjects as Bodhipakkhiya and Paṭicca-Samuppāda, within easy reach of the common man.

Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī is a manual on the 37 Constituents of Enlightenment that are essential for the achievement of Maggas. There are four Maggas. They are insights that can annihilate kilesās (mental defilements) such as, greed, anger, ignorance of the four Ariyā Truths.

Paṭicca-Samuppāda Dīpanī is a manual on the Law of Cause and Effect.

A Nissaya is not entirely a translation. It is a combination of Pāli words and their meanings in Burmese. It is not as easy as an exposition. Only a person with some background of the subject can understand it.

Dhammacakkappavattana and Anattalakkhaṇa Suttas are extremely important Suttas. By means of these two Suttas, which were given to the first disciples, called Pañcavaggiyas (a group of five monks), the Buddha proclaimed the essence of His teachings.



- (7).       a) Vipassanā-Shu-Nee-Kyan  
              (How to practise Vipassanā Meditation) (2 Volumes)  
              b) Paṭicca-Samuppāda (2 Volumes)

By

Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw

When he was a young monk, Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw studied Ti Piṭakas, Commentaries and Sub-Commentaries. After he had got a good grasp of the teachings of the Buddha, he went to a famous meditation centre in Thaton, Burma. He remained at the centre, till he was satisfied with the results of his meditation.

In Vipassanā-Shu-Nee-Kyan, there are certain Chapters, in which Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw gives detailed instructions to be followed by a yogī ( a meditator ) for the achievement of Maggas. In these Chapters, he describes in detail the experiences which the yogī will pass through in his march towards Maggas. The steps in the instructions are the ones which he had used at the meditation centre. And the experiences are generally the ones which he had gone through.

In Burma many books have been written on Vipassanā meditation by many authors. But, as far as the author knows, none has run into several editions as Vipassanā-Shu Nee-Kyan by Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw. Vipassanā-She-Nee-Kyan is thus very popular, because it has brought Vipassanā meditation within easy reach of the common man.

It is unfortunate that such a monk as Venerable Mahāsī Sayadaw does not know English, so that he may make brilliant expositions of his favourite subject of Vipassanā meditation to non-Burmese speaking peoples of the world.



"Paṭicca-Samuppāda" is a collection of six talks on the Law of Cause and Effect, given by Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw to some of his pupils. The talks are simple and lucid.

(8).

Visuddhi Magga

By

Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa

It is a famous *Atṭhakathā* (Commentary). It is, in fact, a brilliant elaboration of one of the Buddha's *Gāthās* ( short verses containing four half lines).

One day a deva requested the Buddha to tell him briefly how to uproot *kilesās*. The Buddha chanted a *Gāthā*, containing the answer. The answer showed that *kilesās* could be uprooted by means of *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā*.

*Sīla* means refraining from doing and saying what is not right by controlling one's body and mouth.

*Samādhi* means mental concentration which is acquired by means of the proper control of one's mind.

*Paññā* means *Maggas* and *Vipassanā* insights that will lead one to *Maggas*.

Using this *Gāthā* as a base, Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa brought all the salient facts about *Sīla*, *Samādhi* and *Paññā* in the *Ti Piṭakas*, into his commentary. To these facts he added instructive explanations and interpretations. He also made important judgements wherever necessary. It is accepted as a very important guide for the achievement of *Maggas*.

The book is translated from Pāli into Burmese by Venerable Nanda Mālā. The translation runs into three volumes. Recently Venerable Mahāsi Sayadaw translated it into lucid and straight-forward Burmese.

" Buddhaghosa Thera is the greatest of Commentators on the *Ti Piṭaka*."



" Visuddhimagga is an encyclopaedia of the Buddha's teaching, written by Buddhaghosa at the request of Saṅghapāla Thera." Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names.

(9).

Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā

By

Venerable Mahā Buddhaghosa

Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā is a collection of some of the Buddha's Gāthās and the stories connected with them.

For example, during the time of the Buddha, there was a monk, who became an arahant. But at about the same time as he got the final magga, he lost his eyesight. The monks, who came to know about this, began to ask such questions — Why should a monk go blind when he had done a great meritorious deed ?

The Buddha recounted that the monk, in one of his previous existences, was an eye-physician. Out of spite, he had caused a woman to become blind. Because of this Akusala Kamma (bad deed), he was, on his death, reborn in hell. After the major portion of his Akusala Kamma had manifested itself, he was reborn as a human being several times. In many of his rebirths as a human being, the residue of his Akusala Kamma caused him to be blind. Then the Buddha chanted a Gāthā. It briefly meant as follows:-

" If one speaks or acts with an evil mind,  
suffering follows him as the wheel of the cart,  
the hoof of the draught ox."

Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā was translated from Pāli into Burmese by Venerable Myaunglebin Tawya Sayadaw. The translation runs into four volumes.

(10).

Zat-Kyee-Sai-Bwei (Ten Great Jātakas)

By

Venerable Aw Bar Tha.

Venerable Aw Bar Tha was famed for his inimitable style of writing. He took ten Jātakas from Jatakatṭṭhakathā and rewrote them in a kind of poetic prose.



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