



SEEING THROUGH

The Monthly Newsletter of Buddhist Monastery and Meditation Center

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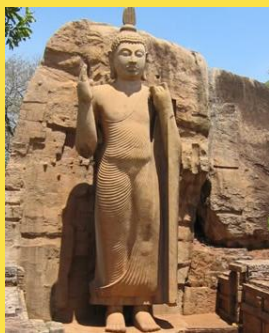
THE LIGHT IN THE DARK



Even in a heap of rubbish dumped on the road, may the lotus grow, with this sublime fragrance delighting the mind.

Even & exactly so, may the Noble Disciple of the Awakened Ones shine forth his wisdom among the blinded mess of simple people

Avukana Buddha statue



This is a standing statue of the Buddha near Kekirawa in North Central Sri Lanka. The statue, which is a height of more than 40 feet (12 m), has been carved out of a large granite rock face during the 5th century.

The Saddhamma; a supreme teacher for all

By Bhante Jinananda

What is the meaning of Saddhamma? The word ‘Dhamma’ means ‘phenomena’, ‘nature’, ‘mental characteristics’. The prefix ‘Sad’ means ‘wholesome, excellent, peaceful and serene’. Therefore, what the Buddha taught during forty five years is referred as ‘Saddhamma’ which means ‘wholesome phenomena, wholesome nature of law, wholesome mental characteristics or limbs of wholesomeness, which explains things related to materiality and mentality. Suttas like Mahasatipattana and Mahanidhana in Digha nikaya explain the word Dhamma as wholesome and unwholesome mentalities. It directs the followers or shows one the way to be free from suffering completely. It is worthwhile and beneficial to explore how the wholesome Dhamma becomes the supreme teacher to one.

What does ‘a supreme teacher’ mean? How does the Dhamma become our teacher? The wholesome Dhamma becomes our supreme teacher by the positive outcomes it brings to us when we apply it to our life. Not only the Dhamma but also the compendium of Vinaya rules is recognized as the teacher. Yet, in this article, our main focus is to show universality of the aggregate of Dhamma and its consistent nature, that it can be applied to one and all. This is why the

Saddhamma is an incomparable teacher to all. The significance of vinaya would be discussed later in another article. From this point on, the word Dhamma will be used instead of the word Saddhamma, for easy reference.

“යො වො, ආනන්ද, මයා ධම්මො ච විනයො ච දෙසිතො පඤ්ඤත්තො, සො වො මමච්චයෙන සත්ථා - Ananda, what I have taught and explained to you as the Dhamma and vinaya will become the teacher for you after my passing away”.

The above statement of the Buddha in Mahaparinibbana sutta was made during the Buddha’s last tour to various villages and cities, accompanied by a large group of bhikkhus. On the tour, the Buddha explained to his fourfold disciples the benefits of Sila (morality), Samadhi (concentration), Panna (wisdom). Meanwhile, the Buddha heard that Ven. Ananda was crying due to grief and lamentation overwhelmed with the confirmation of the Buddha’s passing away. Ven. Ananda was of the opinion that he would be lost in attaining enlightenment without the teacher. It was at this moment; the Buddha helped the distraught Ven. Ananda and made the statement that his teaching should be considered the teacher by all at his passing away.

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You will not be punished for your anger; you will be punished by your anger.



The Buddha himself considered his teaching as his teacher. In many occasions, he points out that he is the incomparable teacher for all living beings, primarily due to the extraordinary qualities developed throughout many lives. Nevertheless, some suttas which elaborate on how the Buddha attained Nibbana illustrate how the Buddha developed and progressed on the noble path to attain Buddhahood. Even after becoming the self-enlightened Buddha, he was looking for someone or something to pay respect during seven weeks of Dhamma reflection. Then he understood that what was left as the teacher was the elements of Dhamma or the noble way of living, which paved the way for him to be the enlightened Buddha. It is believed that the Buddha paid homage to the noble teaching near the Bodhi tree.

In searching for how and why the Buddha gave this prominent place to the Dhamma, a number of aspects should be focused on, analysed and discussed. When the wheel of Dhamma was set in motion, the core of the Buddha's teaching came out in different names such as the four noble truths, Patichsamuppada, seven factors of enlightenment and so forth. They all speak about the problem of suffering and the way to end the source of suffering. Therefore, the whole aggregate of 'Dhamma', plays a teacher's role, showing us the way to reaching the final goal, the end to suffering.

The following statement in the Mahaparinibbana sutta is very helpful in understanding the importance of the place of the Dhamma given as expounded by the Buddha.

“Monks, it is through not understanding, not penetrating the four

Noble truths that I as well as you have for a long time run on and gone round the cycle of birth and death”.

In the same sutta, the Buddha declares that disciples were wandering in indiscernible Sansara due to not knowing morality, concentration, wisdom and final deliverance. Here, the Buddha mentions the four noble truths, as a synonym for the Dhamma. It clearly points out that if one determines to end the Sansaric journey, one also has no other method except by way of understanding the four noble truths completely.

Another significant aspect of 'Dhamma' is that the truths expounded and proclaimed by all Blessed Ones arisen in the world before, are no different from the truths expounded by Gauthama Buddha himself. Therefore, the same four noble truths become the central teaching while dependant co-origination is the theme that explains the existence with arising of suffering and also the release from suffering. All Bodhisattvas practice the same noble eightfold path to attain full enlightenment. What they really do in attaining enlightenment is exploring and realizing the hidden truth, which is covered by a curtain of ignorance and craving. When a Buddha arises in the world, this concealed Dhamma is revealed and many beings are released from Sansaric suffering, but again, with time, the true Dhamma disappears and stays concealed until a Buddha arises in the world. The Buddha explains in Uppada sutta of Anguttara Nikaya that the enlightened Buddha's duty is to understand the Dhamma and reveal the truth to the whole world.

"Monks, whether or not there is the arising of Tathagatas, this property stands — this steadfastness of the Dhamma, this orderliness of the



The ceremonial beginning to the Vassana retreat

Saman and Erangi Jayathilaka and family, on behalf of all friends of Hilda Jayewardenaramaya, invited the resident monks, to observe the Vas retreat at the Monastery, in a special ceremony held last July.

This custom of "Vas Aradhana" is a noble custom followed from the days of the Buddha and it facilitates Buddhist monks who follow the Vinaya or code of conduct to devotedly observe the rains retreat. The rains retreat which is observed every year, was a result of a suggestion brought forth by the Buddha in response to a public concern regarding the inconvenience created by travelling Monks during the rainy season. This rule for higher-ordained monks paves way for a long retreat in one place and strive for spiritual development.

Following this ancient custom followed by the Arahants, four resident monks including two visiting monks accepted the invitation and are observing the Vas retreat providing opportunities for lay devotees as well, to practice meditation, listen to Dhamma talks, participate in Dhamma discussions, chanting Suttas, in addition to offering material items which is done on a regular basis throughout the year.

This is certainly a special period for four-fold disciples of the Buddha to strictly adhere to disciplinary rules with given nature and develop the noble concentration and wisdom. So let's practice the Dhamma and live peacefully.



Our Dhamma School

RESPECT PARENTS IN FIVE WAYS

As good Buddhist children we should not forget the affection and care our parents have lavished on us. In Singalovadha sutta Budu Hamuduruwo said, the children should respect their parents in five ways.

1. I will support them who supported me in many ways.
2. I will perform those duties they have to perform.
3. I will maintain lineage and tradition of my family
4. I will look after my inheritance.
5. I will give alms (perform religious rites) on behalf of them when they are dead.

WHAT IS HAPPENING AT THE VIHARA?

The Hilda

Jayewardanaramaya
Dhamma School will start on
Sunday 09th, September 2012.

A special Bodhi Puja will be held at 5.00pm On the Sunday 2th September to invoke blessing to children for their back to school times and for adults

Buddha Vandana and
Dhamma sermons are held
each Sunday from 5.00pm to
6.00pm

Dhamma: All processes are inconstant. The Tathagata directly awakens to that, breaks through to that. Directly awakening and breaking through to that, he declares it, teaches it, describes it, and sets it forth. He reveals it, explains it and makes it plain: All processes are inconstant”

In addition, the following statement in Paticcanna sutta of numerical discourses brings about another significant aspect of the Dhamma.

‘Monks, when the Dhamma and discipline explained by the Tathagata is often discussed, it illumines more and more and it is never covered (නලාගතජ් ජවෙදිනො ධම්මවිනයො, ඡික්ඛවෙ, විවටො විරොචති, නො පටිච්ඡන්තො.)

An excellent teacher always teaches good and beneficial things to his students and protects them from dangers. The Dhamma, when it is duly followed, surely teaches very good lessons as well as protects the adherents from unwholesome energies and leads one towards wholesome results.

“Dhammo have rakkhati dhammacarim - One who practices the Dhamma, is protected by the same principles”

To envisage the Dhamma as the best teacher in the world, we have to look at what the great disciples have disclosed. In this sense, all the Arahants like Sariputta, Moggallana, Ananda, Kottita, Rahula and bhikkhunis Prajapati, Khema, Uppalawanna, have uttered in great pleasure about the results rendered by the Dhamma. To minimize the length of the article, our aim here is only to convince the reader that a large percentage of the order of monks and Nuns have expressed their utmost respect and delight in the Dhamma.

On one occasion, Ven.Ananda questioned the Buddha whether there is a divine vehicle in the Dhamma and vinaya. The reason for this clarification is, because people talked about the decorated vehicle of brahmin Janussoni, which travelled through the city. For public, it was a divine vehicle so praised often by many. Having heard the news of the divine like vehicle, Ven.Ananda needed to know whether there is a divine vehicle in the teaching. The Blessed One replied thus;

“Ananda, divine vehicle in the Dhamma is the noble eightfold path and it is also called ‘vehicle of Dhamma and brings unsurpassed victory in battle (ඉමස්සෙව බො එතං, ආනන්ද, අරියස්ස අට්ඨච්ඡිකස්ස මග්ගස්ස අධිච්චනං - ‘බරණ්මයානං’ ඉතිපි, ‘ධම්මයානං’ ඉතිපි, ‘අනුක්තරො සඬි ගාමවිජයො’ ඉතිපි” ති)”

The Dhammapada illustrates that those disciples of the Buddha, who are mindful of the virtues of the Dhamma, day and night, arise with awakened mind and have full control of their faculties.

Ratana sutta (Jewel discourse) of Cula vagga in Suttanipata also speaks of wonderful qualities of the Dhamma in a way the trust and confidence builds in anyone who listens to it meaningfully. The forth stanza of Ratana sutta, brings the message that the Sakyamuni Buddha has realized the cessation, dispassion, and deathlessness through the base of concentration described in the Dhamma, which is not found in other teachings. In the next stanza, the significance of right concentration is described as another aspect of Dhamma. The Sutta pitaka states how

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many individuals, who listened to sermons from the Buddha as well as his disciples, were overcome with joy by the Dhamma. They were able to understand the Dhamma and on many occasions came out with exclamations as to the wonderful nature of the Dhamma. There are many such exclamations made by the Noble ones about the Dhamma found in the Tripitaka;

“The Dhamma, as it was delivered, made clear in many ways, just as the Buddha were turning upright what had been overturned, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyes to see form....(Kukkuravatiya sutta)”

“The Dhamma that so magnificently expounded by the Blessed One is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent in the end with right meaning and phrasing; it reveals a holy life that is entirely perfect and pure (Culahatthipadopama sutta).

There was no need for one to lie about how they felt it and what they gained from the Dhamma. Their pure thoughts of exhilaration burst out from them upon realization of truth, and being released from all ropes they were bound to Sansara.

The Dhamma, as the Teacher, is explained in a still different manner as it appears in suttas. It is called ‘Navanga sathusasana’ which means the dispensation with nine factors. The Sasana or dispensation is another synonym for the aggregate of the Dhamma. When a person wishes to become an ideal disciple, he or she has to be master of the nine-fold dispensation. The nine factors are;

1. Sutta (සුත්තං) – well-said discourses
2. Geyya (ගෙය්‍යං) – mixed prose
3. Veyyakarana (වෙය්‍යාකරණං) – explanation of passages of scriptures exegesis
4. Gatha (ගාථං) – Verses
5. Udana (උදානං) – Utterance of Joy
6. Itiuttaka (ඉතිච්ඡිත්තකං) – sayings of the Buddha
7. Jataka (ජාතකං) – previous birth stories of the Buddha
8. Abbhutadhamma (අබ්බුතධම්මං) – extraordinary things
9. Vedalla (වෙදල්ලං) – Analysis

Another classification of the Dhamma as explained by the Buddha in Mahaparinibbana sutta and elsewhere is certainly about the whole teaching delivered during the forty five years. The Buddha, instructed the disciples to learn the Dhamma thoroughly, cultivate, develop, and practice it continuously with the object of gaining direct knowledge and release. He reconfirmed the teaching is for the welfare and happiness of the many. Having enumerated thus, the Buddha explains the teaching using various terms such as:

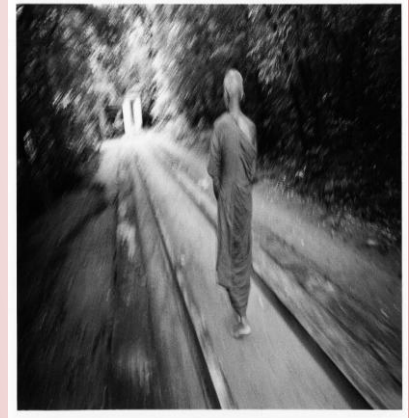
Four frames of reference (satipatthana)

1. Contemplation of the body (kayanupassana)
2. Contemplation of feelings (vedananupassana)
3. Contemplation of mind (Cittanupassana)
4. Contemplation of mental qualities (dhammanupassana)

Four right exertions (sammappadhana)

1. Exertion for the non-arising of unskillful states
2. Exertion for the abandoning of unskillful states
3. Exertion for the arising of skillful states
4. Exertion for the sustaining of skillful states

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The five benefits of walking meditation

One is able to walk on long journeys. Those who walk long distance may live long life
(අද්ධානක්ඛමෝ හොති)

One is able to strive hard. Those who practice walking may deal with pain and endure them better than others
(පධානක්ඛමෝ හොති).

One who walks mindfully will have a resistant power to kill the gems and live healthy
(අප්පාඛාධෝ හොති).

Whatever eats, drink, chew and taste digest properly giving the relaxation (අසිතං පිතං ඛායිතං සායිතං සම්මා පරිණාමං ගච්ඡති).

The concentration develops through walking last a long time
(චන්තමාධිගතෝ සමාධි විරට්ඨිතිකෝ හොති)

(Cankama Sutta – AN 29)



Ven. Pasgoda Piyarathana and Aththanayale Vijitha Piyarathana from Dharmaloka Buddhist Center, Pelawatta, Sri Lanka, observed Vassana retreat at HJBM.



Ven. Ajahn Punnadhammo, from the Arrow River Forest Hermitage in Thunder bay, visited the HJBM during a three day meditation program with Ottawa Buddhist Society (OBS)



The second outdoor meditation Program in the hot season was a new experience.



'A moment of self-awakening'
The first youth program.

Four bases of power (Iddhipada)

1. Will (chanda)
2. Consciousness (citta)
3. Energy (viriya)
4. Discrimination (vimamsa)

Five faculties (indriya)

1. Faith (saddha)
2. Energy (viriya)
3. Mindfulness (sati)
4. Concentration (samadhi)
5. Wisdom (panna)

Five powers (bala)

1. Faith (saddha)
2. Energy (viriya)
3. Mindfulness (sati)
4. Concentration (samadhi)
5. Wisdom (panna)

Seven factors of Enlightenment (bojjhanga)

1. Mindfulness (sati)
2. Investigation (dhamma vicaya)
3. Energy (viriya)
4. Joy (pīti)
5. Tranquility (passaddhi)
6. Concentration (samadhi)
7. Equanimity (upekkha)

Noble Eightfold Path (Ariyo atthaṅgiko maggo)

1. Right View (samma ditthi)
2. Right Intention (samma sankappa)
3. Right Speech (samma vacca)
4. Right Action (samma kammanta)
5. Right Livelihood (samma ajiva)
6. Right Energy (samma vayama)
7. Right Mindfulness (samma sati)
8. Right Concentration (samma samadhi)

In Anapanasathi sutta, forty four factors are mentioned in terms of explaining the limbs of Dhamma. Other than the above additional seven factors are mentioned in the sutta as follows;

1. Meditation on Metta (Mettabhavana)
2. Meditation on Compassion (Karunabhavana)

3. Meditation on appreciative Joy (Mudithabhavana)
4. Meditation on Equanimity (UpekkhaBhavana)
5. Meditation on foulness (Asubhabhana)
6. Meditation on impermanence (Aniccabhavana)
7. Meditation on breathing (Anapanasati)

Mahacattarisaka sutta is an important Sutta in which the Buddha explains forty factors in achieving noble right concentration. Noble Right Concentration which culminates in all other steps is explained in details with the necessary requisites. In the sutta, the mundane and supra-mundane eightfold paths are explained. The forty factors consist of twenty wholesome factors and twenty unwholesome factors.

According to common understanding, it is essential to discern that the four noble truths are the central teaching or the main discovery of the Buddha. Also the dependent co-origination stands as the basis of the noble truths as well as the backbone of the whole teaching. In addition, the theory of kamma plays a valuable role in placing the teaching in a place of reverence in the world today.

The above factual information is very important in understanding why the Buddha designated the Dhamma as the Teacher when he was no more. However, the Dhamma never lives in us if we are unable to apply it in actual situations. When you practice the teaching, you yourself become the Dhamma. This is why the Buddha said 'when one sees the Dhamma, he sees me'.

To be continued

Three things cannot be long hidden: the sun, the moon, and the truth.



Spirituality

The sole aim of the Buddhism is the complete spiritual development of the individual to the utmost and or the eventual realization of Nibbana.

In the face of scientific and technological developments in today's civilization, the absolute necessity of spiritual development has become extremely evident. The Buddha preached thus in the *Salla Sutta*, " Bhikkhus, when the uninstructed worldling is being contacted by a painful feeling, he sorrows, grieves, and laments; he weeps beating his breast and becomes distraught. He feels two feelings – a bodily one and mental one". In the face of the eight worldly conditions (අටලෝ දහම), if an individual is to live with balanced mind, he has to be one who has the strength of spirituality. If one wishes to attain this state of mind which is unshakable and unwavering, one should step on the right path that leads one towards this goal.

Here we have to be wise to understand what factors lead to spiritual development and what factors cause the degeneration of the mind. *Ajjattikawagga*, which is an integral part of Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha has indicated a number of factors in achieving positive moral as well as factors that hinder such development. They can be classified as below

Factors leading to downfall of one's spirituality	Factors leading to positive spiritual development
පමාදො - Negligence	අප්පමාදො - Diligence
කොසප්පං - Indolence	වීරියාරම්භො - Energetic effort
මභිච්ඡතා - Wanting much	අප්පිච්ඡතා - Wanting little
අසන්තුට්ඨිතා - Discontent	සන්තුට්ඨිතා - Contentment
අයොනිසොමනසිකාරො - Unwise attention	යොනිසොමනසිකාරො - Wise attention
අසම්පජ්ඣං - Discomposure	සම්පජ්ඣං - Full awareness
පාපමිත්තතා - Association with unwholesome friends	කල්‍යාණමිත්තතා - Association with wholesome friends
අනුයොගො අකුසලානං ධම්මානං, අනනුයොගො කුසලානං ධම්මානං. -	අනුයොගො කුසලානං ධම්මානං, අනනුයොගො අකුසලානං ධම්මානං -
Devotion to things evil and non-devotion to good things	Devotion to things good and non-devotion to bad things

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Significance of Nikini Full Moon Poya day



The Monks who were unable to observe Vassana retreat on Esala Poya day due to not finding a suitable place to observe the rains retreat or due to other reasons, have the option to observe the Vas sila on this full moon day. The first Sangha Council was held on this poya day. Led by Arahant Maha Kassapa,, monks gathered at Sattaparni Cave in Rajagaha and convened the first Dhamma conference on this blessed day.

THE BENEFITS OF OBSERVING PRECEPTS

- ✚ **Morality causes a good rebirth (Silena sugatim yanti)**
- ✚ **Wealth is gained as a result of morality (Silena bhoga sampada)**
- ✚ **Perfect peace is attained with morality (Silena nibbutim yanti)**

Morality brings purification (Tasmā silam visodhaye) The Buddha



The role of the Dhamma in the Spiritual Development of the individual will always remain constant. In *Agganna sutta* the Buddha says to the Brahmin Vasetta “the norm’s the best among this folk, both in this life and in the next” (ධම්මො හී, වාසෙට්ඨ, සෙට්ඨො ජනෙනස්මිං, දිට්ඨෙ වෙව ධම්මෙ අභිසම්පරායඤ්ච). As the Buddha explained to Anathapindika, one of the main devotees of the Buddha, there are four ways of achieving happiness for a lay person. The first of these is to possess wealth earned in keeping with morally accepted standards. The second is to be able to use this wealth for himself, his family, his relations, his friends and others. The third is the fact that he is not indebted and the fourth is not to act physically, verbally or mentally in a manner which gives pain of mind or other suffering to any other being. Three of these happy situations are involved with wealth but the Buddha further explains that these mentioned above have not one-sixteenth of the bliss one gains from blamelessness.

The teaching of the Buddha also explains the positive and proper conduct of family life of a human being and it always encourages one to aim at the highest level of achievement of the positive aspects the Buddha talks about. The Dhamma directs the development and enhancement of spirituality not only among the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, but also among Upasaka, Upassika i.e. The lay people.

It is important to note that this happiness and liberation one achieves through the Dhamma is not restricted

only to the Sangha (the order of monks and Nuns) but can be experienced by anyone who strives for it. Not all beings can renunciate mundane life and become a monk or a nun. Some believe one has to renunciate lay life and become a part of the Sangha to practice the Dhamma. This is not true. This is a position held by those who are not fully knowledgeable of the Buddha's teachings. There are many instances in the Tripitaka, the Pali Cannon where there are references to lay men and women, who have treaded the path and achieved supra mundane states praised by the Buddha. Once Vaccagotta Paribrajaka questioned, “Apart from Master Gotama and the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, is there any lay followers (men and women), Master Gotama’s disciples, clothed in white enjoying sensual pleasures, who carries out his instruction, responds to his advice, have gone beyond doubt, become free from perplexity, gained intrepidity, and become independent of others in the Teacher’s Dispensation?” In reply the Buddha said, “There are not only one hundred, Vaccha, or two or three or four or five hundred, but far more lay followers, my disciples, clothed in white enjoying sensual pleasures, who carries out my instruction, responds to my advice, have gone beyond doubt, become free from perplexity, gained intrepidity, and become independent of others in the Teacher’s Dispensation”

When considering the above facts, Spiritual Development is an essential and integral part of everyone’s life that should be cultivated by all who wish to live a meaningful life in happiness.

By Bhante Vijitha

The Buddha spent seven days under Muccalinda tree soon after the self – awakening. On that occasion, a heavy rain started with storm and wind. Then Muccalinda, the Naga king encircled the body of the Buddha seven times with his coils thinking to protect the Buddha from cold. After seven days of rain, Muccalinda unraveled the coils and appeared as a young man in front of the Buddha, at this moment, the following exclamation

came out;

“Blissful is solitude for one, who is content, who has heard the Dhamma and seen it. Blissful is non-suffering with related to world and restraint for living beings”

“Blissful is dispassion with regard for the world.

Overcoming the sensual desire and subduing of the conceit is the highest bliss”

(Udana 2:1)