



SEEING THROUGH

The Monthly Newsletter of Buddhist Monastery and Meditation Center

Hilda Jayewardenaramaya, 1481, Heron Rd, Ottawa. K1V6A6

www.buddhisttempleottawa.net – Email: bcc.ottawa@rogers.com – Call: 613-321-5677

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The Dhamma to be seen only through reflection by the wise

By Bhante Jinananda...

“Paccattam veditabbo vinnunhi - To be personally known by the wise” are words familiar to many people, even to some young children. In fact, this phrase describing the Dhamma comes to our mind everyday when we venerate the Triple Gem. The above phrase in the Pali language expresses a significant quality both of the Dhamma and the people who practice it. It also illustrates the versatility of the Pali language which describes the significance and the rare qualities of the Buddha's teaching, and it uses few words and provides a profound and deep understanding of the word "Dhamma".

Let's examine the three words in the phrase. They essentially emphasize the important features or the nature of the Dhamma. The simple message specified in it is that it is for the wise, who will understand the profound teaching. The word 'Paccattam' means the act of wise reflection of any minor or major karmic actions done by an individual. When the wise reflect the Dhamma and understand it thoroughly (veditabbo) with that reflection, he becomes the one, who reaches maturity; technically he is identified as 'vinnu' or 'the Ariyan' in the Dhamma. In Anuruddha sutta of Sanyutta nikaya, Ven. Anuruddha identifies this significant quality of the Dhamma in the same way; "pannavanthassayam Dhammo nayam Dhammo Duppannassa – this Dhamma is only for the wise not for the foolish".

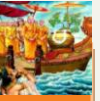
As we know, this person reaches to this level not accidentally but with hard work. It is said that he becomes aware of the teaching and

understands it exactly as it is, either in front of the Buddha or a disciple, while listening to a talk or later on with gradual training. Eventually, with his understanding, he concludes that the teaching is well-proclaimed by the Buddha without any residue. Not only does he understand the importance of the teaching as the driving force in his life, but also he surely accepts the Buddha nature through penetrative wisdom. Further, he experiences its direct results through his own practice. This sequential order of understanding manifests due to wise reflection, which starts from the very beginning of the individual's investigation of the Dhamma. Therefore, 'Paccattam veditabbo' or wisdom through wise reflection plays a vital role in reaching the final goal.

At this point it is important to find out the necessary requirements or the conditions that are relevant to be a wise person according to this definition. In many discourses, the Buddha brings about the message that an ordinary human does not identify the truth as it is. He does not have initial respect towards the Buddha or his disciples, who have realized the truth. The reason being, that he doesn't have the knowledge or understanding to see the value of the teaching that brings solace to many lives. Such a person will lead an ordinary life with mundane perceptions and is not included in the 'Vinnu category' at all.

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"If you find no one to support you on the spiritual path, walk alone. There is no companionship with the immature."



However, some individuals who are wiser see and accept the greatness of the Buddha by careful examination of the Buddha's life, his teaching and the lives of his disciples. The important fact here is wise reflection and their conscience. Choosing the right teacher and the right teaching is the decisive factor. One who experiences enlightenment like Gauthama Siddhartha (the birth name of the Buddha) is the best example for a wise person. He acquires that insight through investigation into reality. Then, not only does he become a great person but he also becomes a saint to many beings.

To understand this quality of the Dhamma, one has to examine important evidence of the wise people who understood the Dhamma. Who are recognized as the wise people in the teaching? They are the eightfold disciples, who were praised by the Buddha on many occasions. In the Ratana sutta in Sutta Nipatha, they are distinctly identified and their qualities are elaborated. In the sutta, the Buddha confirms that both the Buddha and his disciples attained enlightenment completing and culminating skills as given in the Dhamma specially according to their level of wisdom. They gained results according to their aspirations and subsequent development along the path. Therefore, "the wise people" have been categorized as the following.

- 1) The Buddha
- 2) The Silent Buddha
- 3) The Arahant
- 4) The aspirant of Arahantship
- 5) The Non-returner
- 6) The aspirant of Non-returner state
- 7) The once returner
- 8) The aspirant of once returner state
- 9) The stream enterer
- 10) The aspirant of stream entry

The Buddha-to-be or the Bodhisattva is not included in the above list but is also a great Vinnu produced by the wholesome Dhamma. Also the one aspiring to be a silent Buddha and his nature can be included in the topic. They all practice the noble path that brings about the same unique results.

When People practice the Dhamma and benefit from it, they should originally be recognized, not by their names or status in life, but the respective titles. These titles interestingly express the qualities of the mental states of these noble ones. On approaching the path, the Buddha has described two types of persons. A Saddhanusari (one who approaches the path based on confidence), and Dhammanusari (one who practices the pathipada as stated in the Dhamma). After proceeding on the path and reaching the above mentioned mental states, the birth name is only used as a label to identify one from the others. It is important to look at the karmic energy that vibrates from life to life. Various beings such as humans, deities, Brahmas come into being due to their karmic potential created in previous lives. Humans have taken their state as a result of the good deeds done in the past. Also Devas, Brahmas even beings in unhappy states like animals, hungry ghosts and beings in hells are undoubtedly results of Karmic consequences of their previous lives.

In defining the wise person, the first and foremost significant factor is the ability to differentiate the truth from untruth. According to Sammaditthi sutta in Majjhima Nikaya, understanding material and immaterial things as impermanent, and seeing the unsatisfactory and non-self nature of all compounded things, is the key element of the wise individual. The Sutta further discusses the concept of right view, the degree of wisdom that one needs to realize the teaching. The descriptive explanation of Ven. Sariputta shows how diverse views are created because beings understand things differently. In other words, Ven. Sariputta explained the concept of right view in sixteen ways, because the wisdom and the interest for seeking the truth in people are certainly not the same. This shows that even if they have different viewpoints, everyone at least has opportunities to enter the perfect community of the Buddha by developing a clear view of life.

Another explanation about the wise persons is found in

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Greeting...!

We, the resident monks of Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Buddhist monastery warmly wish a very happy and successful year 2013 to all Sri Lankans, Canadians, Indians, Thai and Bangladeshi friends who supported us in many ways.

At the dawn of the New Year, we sincerely invite you all to be with us to practice together the path of freedom. We take opportunity to bless you for a trouble free life with happiness and peace of mind throughout the New Year.

Our Special thanks go to all the visiting monks during the past year, who shared their experience with us. Also the board of directors, the friends who gave Dana and numerous donations, the Dhamma school staff, parents and children and the many friends who were the supporting pillars for us.

The Buddha reminds us;
 ආරභට් නික්මමට යුත්ථට්
 බුද්ධසාසනේ ධුතාට්
 මව්වුනෝ සෙනං
 නලාගාරන් ච කුන්ථරෝ
 යො ඉමස්මිං ධම්මවිනයො,
 අප්පමන්තො විහස්සති;
 පහාය ජාතිසංසාරං,
 දුක්ඛස්සන්තං කරිස්සති -
arouse your energy, strive on and exert diligently in the Buddha's teaching until you sweep away the army of evil Mara just like an elephant breaks a hut of reeds.
Therefore, one who lives ardently in the Dhamma and discipline will end the suffering and cease wandering in Samsara.

May you all be happy and peaceful!

"Many do not realize that we here must die. For those who realize this, quarrels end."



Our Dhamma School SANGHAMITTA DAY

The arrival of Arahant Theri Sanghamitta, the daughter of emperor Ashoka, from India to Sri Lanka is a very significant, historical and commemorative day for all Sri Lankans. She brought the southern part of the sacred Bo-tree (tree of awakening), which highly venerated by all devoted people in the country. Also, she established the Bukkhuni Order (Order of female monks) giving the precious opportunity to all women to find happiness and freedom in this very life.

In order to recollect these historical and meaningful incidents and teach our children the importance of paying gratitude, Hilda Jayewardenarama Dhamma School organize "Sanghamitta Day Celebration" on the 30th of this month.

Sil Program for Children

The first Sil Program in 2013 for the Dhamma School children will be on Sunday January 6th, sharp at 09:00 a.m



Ugghatithagngnu Sutta in Anguttara Nikaya. It is a wonderful piece of Dhamma to remember as it explains nothing but the glory of the Dhamma with its power. It shows why some people cannot understand the Dhamma while for some it is so easy to comprehend. This discourse gives the four types of people who understand the Dhamma.

1. The one who understands the truth immediately when a few words of the Dhamma are heard (උග්ඝවිතඤ්ඤා)
2. The one who understands with elaboration (විපඤ්චිතඤ්ඤා)
3. The one who needs to be guided (නෙය්‍යො)
4. The one who knows only words (පදපරමො)

The first person in the list has a quick learning ability. He has a keen and sharp wisdom to understand the Dhamma when a few words of the Dhamma are heard. Ven. Sariputta and Ven. Daruciriya are ideal examples for this type of person. With a few words heard, they reflected on the deepest aspects of the Dhamma and understood the reality instantaneously. The Buddha mentioned that he found no difficulty in showing them the path to Nibbana.

The person in the second category, one who understands the Dhamma with elaboration, takes some time to understand the Dhamma. He requires more clarifications. There are many examples of this category in the Tripitaka. They are considerably slower than the first.

Meanwhile, the third person takes longer, to understand this profound Dhamma. He has to be taught using explanations, examples, similes, etc. This disciple needs constant guidance by the ones, who have already understood the profound teaching. This disciple often makes mistakes and takes longer practicing and achieving results. However, he too finally achieves the same states as the first and second persons.

The fourth person is entirely different from the others as given by the name "Padaparama" which means that 'the words are ultimate in his life (පදපරමො)'.

He just knows only words. He may speak fluently and write things elegantly. Also his words may be powerful to influence others towards the Dhamma. But he is limited to only words. Even though some people have the full advantage of listening to the Dhamma, they cannot experience the bliss due to lack of wisdom. Perhaps, they hold onto words and hence the progress is slow.

The scientific means to develop wisdom are also explained by the Buddha on many occasions. They are threefold; the wisdom gained through learning (Suthamaya Panna), the wisdom through analysing or thinking (Cintamaya Panna) and the wisdom gained through meditation (Bhavanamaya Panna). One has to complete all of the above to acquire the expected goal. Accordingly, the wise person is also differentiated. Some people gather knowledge through reading, listening, writing and participating in discussions. The overall knowledge from these efforts is defined as the wisdom through learning. Today, it seems that many people fall into this group because they inherently like to collect knowledge. This intellectual understanding is certainly a major factor in transforming the mind into a state that associates with wisdom. However, the wisdom in this state may decline or it may take a long time to develop strongly as a factor of enlightenment, unless he or she develops the second type of wisdom. Whatever we do, it must support us to pull out the fermentations (Sankara) that are accumulated throughout many lives. So what they need to do is to reflect on the impermanence of the fundamental structure of sentient beings or on five aggregates of clinging based on the acquired knowledge. The one, who is not reflecting on that, achieves no progress soon. The realization comes from that effort is called wisdom through reflecting. Eventually, the task of attaining Nibbana is merely completed with the wisdom sharpened through Bhavana or meditation (Bhavanamaya Panna).

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"There's a mess inside you: You clean the outside."



It is like the placing of the pinnacle of a Stupa. The pinnacle of the Stupa is a small part on top of the Stupa. Yet, we call that building a Stupa only when the pinnacle is placed on it. Otherwise, it is only a building that is going to be a Stupa. Similarly, achieving wisdom through meditation is considered the end of the task. This is the outstanding quality of the teaching and also of the wise person.

Heredity or blood relationship does not help to understand the Dhamma. The story of Mahapantahaka and Culapanthaka provides us the evidence for that. While the elder brother, Mahapanthaka attained the freedom from suffering in a short period of time, the younger Culapanthaka was unable to memorize at least a single verse. Finally, he was expelled from the monastery by elder brother until the Buddha found the right object for reflection for him to see the reality. Another example is the Buddha's relatives. They were reported as people with great conceit. Some of them like Canna and Thullathissa Bhikkhus faced severe disciplinary actions against misbehaviours from the community of monks. Ven. Sariputta and his family is also an excellent example. Ven. Sariputta had three brothers and four sisters. They all followed the elder Ven. Sariputta's footsteps and became free from attachment except their mother who refused to listen to the Buddha's teaching until the last moments of Ven. Sariputta's life.

It brings us to the fact that the Dhamma has the nature to change the quality of wisdom of an ordinary individual with time. We discussed earlier that transformation depends on both the techniques he uses and the effort he puts forth. For example, a meditator who starts practicing the four foundations of mindfulness would gradually feel and see things around him in a different light. His experience changes significantly, giving him much happiness. What he realized yesterday may deepen tomorrow with the advancement of his practice. That means his wisdom improves and stands with more energy. The same four foundations are, for some people, too deep and difficult to understand. On the other hand, some people can realize the subject and practice it successfully.

Not only with the four foundations, but also related to other teachings, that changing wisdom is clearly visible. Why is this difference seen in people that practice the same way? It is just like one family with members with different attitudes or interests. Some find happiness by frequent gathering and from material things while another doesn't get happiness from such things. Yet, they are both the offspring from the same parents. Modern researchers too have analysed and discussed the diversity of knowledge of similar groups. They are of the opinion that it is because of the different concepts and skills individuals have.

Many disciples accomplished their tasks through diligent practice according to history of the Bhikkhu and Bhikkhuni order. They didn't follow academic studies like obtaining Masters or PhD degrees. Farmers, businessmen, slaves and even scavengers became noble humans after entering the discipline. Sometimes, those individuals had better skills and higher wisdom than those who had higher academic knowledge. The discourses provide the necessary criteria to gain the wisdom needed to understand the Dhamma. To be more precise, listening to the right teaching and subsequent reflection upon listening, are the foremost two conditions for a person to transform his mind from a state of darkness to a state of wisdom.

In another context, the Buddha described the importance of having four factors that change one's life. The first one is to have excellent friends, who know right from wrong. Without the association of excellent friends, it is difficult for us to find the path. We are necessarily disciples; and as such, the Buddha and all liberated beings are wholesome friends to us. At the same time, we must also be able to develop these excellent qualities to be a good friend to others. Secondly, attentive listening to the teaching with interest is also important. Depending on friends one associates, he will have the opportunity to listen to Dhamma. Consequently, appropriate attention, one of the pre-requisites to enlightenment, starts to grow in one's mind as the third factor. With the presence of appropriate attention, it is inevitable to have righteous living, which is the fourth criterion needed. In other words, his life becomes perfect as a wise person as a

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The Bonds of Fellowship

"There are these four grounds for the bonds of fellowship. Which four? **Generosity, kind words, beneficial help, consistency.** These are the four grounds for the bonds of fellowship."

Generosity, kind words, beneficial help, & consistency in the face of events, in line with what's appropriate in each case, each case. These bonds of fellowship [function] in the world like the linchpin in a moving cart.

Now, if these bonds of fellowship were lacking, a mother would not receive the honor & respect owed by her child, nor would a father receive what his child owes him. But because the wise show regard for these bonds of fellowship, they achieve greatness and are praised.

*Sangaha Sutta:
Translated from the Pali by
Thanissaro Bhikkhu*

Wrong Livelihood

"Monks, a lay follower should not engage in five types of business. Which five? Business in weapons, business in human beings, business in meat, business in intoxicants, and business in poison. "These are the five types of business that a lay follower should not engage in."

*Vanijja Sutta:
Translated from the Pali by
Thanissaro Bhikkhu*

"A man is not called wise because he talks and talks again; but if he is peaceful, loving and fearless then he is in truth called wise."



The Blessing ceremony January 1st 2013.

The program

Welcome speech
By Ven. Jinananda

Veneration to twenty eight
Buddhas begins at 5:00pm
conducted by Ven. Vijitha

Pirith chanting to invoke
blessing to all

Special talk by the abbot
Bhante Muditha
Brahmanagama

Refreshments

All are welcome!



Ven. Pasgoda Piyarathana and
Aththanayale Vijitha Piyarathana
from Sri Lanka will return on January
10th. They observed Vassana retreat
at our monastery and shared their
Dhammic experience with us during
Vassana period. On behalf of
resident monks and lay supporters of
HJBM, we sincerely pay gratitude to
venerable monks and say
good bye.
May you be well and happy!

result of causes and conditions.

In addition, one who performs a good deed in accordance with the Dhamma is accredited as a wise person in that moment the deed is done. For example, a butcher gives a Dana to monks. In this example, the butcher's thoughts of generosity and the recipient's are as pleasant as of those people, who are giving Dana every day. Therefore, any type of human can be a wise person even for a short time according to the mental state. That unique quality of the Dhamma has given solace to many people in the past. The story of Angulimala and the odyssey of King Asoka are great examples to show how the mental transformations of once evil persons changing from negative thinking to positive. Every one of us has the negativity within but a few people overcome it with right Dhamma.

The Dhammapada is a treasure chest which stores the best explanations to understand the wise and unwise person, especially in Balavagga and Panditavagga. The unwise is compared to a spoon that is used to make curries, in Balavagga. It is obvious that the spoon never knows the taste of the curry even though it has been used for that purpose for hundred years. In the same way, the unwise is unable to realize the truth. However, the wise surely taste the truth immediately. It is said that if he is associated at least for a few moments, others receive benefits because such a person's mind is not polluted by underlying tendencies. Therefore, he speaks acts and thinks with purity present in the mind and hence everyone benefits from such an association.

In conclusion, we would like to encourage the readers to research on this especial quality of the Dhamma for one reason; wise reflection is the pillar on which the wisdom of the noble disciple is built on.

Even though there are many facts related to this topic, we are unable to cover everything in this article. We encourage the readers to do their own investigation for their liberation.

Ten powers of the Tathagatha



1. Tathagatha understands the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible as it is
2. The Tathagatha understands the results of undertaking kamma in the past, future and present in terms of possibilities and causes.
3. The Tathagatha understands the ways leading everywhere
4. The Tathagatha understands the world with its numerous and diverse elements.
5. The Tathagatha understands the diversity of disposition of beings as it is
6. The Tathagatha understands the superior and inferior conditions of the faculties of other beings
7. The Tathagatha understands the defilements, the cleansing, and the emergence in regards to the Jhanas, emancipations, concentration and meditative attainments.
8. The Tathagatha recollects his manifold past lives
9. The Tathagatha has a divine eye which is purified and surpasses the human ability.
10. The Tathagatha has realized the taintless liberation of mind by the destruction of the taints.

“From the dear comes grief; from the dear comes fear. If you're freed from the dear you'll have no grief, let alone fear.”



The extraordinary being in the universe is ‘The Buddha’.

පුජාරහෙ පුජයතො, බුද්ධෙ යදි ච සාවකෙ
පපඤ්චසමතික්කන්තෙ,තිණ්ණසොකපරිද්දවෙ

The Buddha, in the above stanza explains that when a person venerates the self-enlightened Buddhas and their disciples with great devotion, they can overcome grief and lamentation. In fact, it emphasises the significance of the reflection about the great qualities of the Buddhas and disciples in terms of removing suffering from our life. The word ‘Buddha’ is a title that can be held by any human, who wishes to accumulate such a powerful energy. This great human is called Bodhisattva which means the one who gathers enormous spiritual energy in many eons to fulfill his task. Due to this very reason, reflection on the word ‘Buddha’ brings happiness to our mind.

Twenty eight names of the Buddhas are mentioned in Budhavansapali in Khuddaka nikaya. The Gauthama Buddha is one of them and he had taken special confirmation for his enlightenment in the future from twenty four Buddhas. However, the truth is that many Buddhas existed in the past and many would appear in the future as well. Their main duty is to explore the universal truth of beings which is hidden from the ordinary mind and reveal it to the world. It is said that they give up their opportunity to liberate and practice Sila, Samadhi and Panna for the sake of many beings. For example, Our Buddha, while being Sumedha ascetic during The Buddha Deepankara, gave up the attainment of Arahatsip and determined to be a Buddha to free others from suffering. Hence, the Buddhas generally distinguish from others by their great compassion and wisdom that surpasses everyone in the universe.

The qualities of a Buddha are thoroughly understood and explained perfectly only by another Buddha, even the Great disciples are unable to do it. That’s why the scope of the Buddha becomes a challenging subject to discuss. Yet, if someone needs to see the Buddha and understand his uniqueness, he must follow the teaching that is realized and proclaimed to the world. The Buddha says that one who practices the teaching are ones who respect him and finally see him.

Even though every Buddha is equal in attaining enlightenment, each one of them differs by many external factors such as names, parents, kingdoms, wives, great disciples, life spans and so on. Also the trees which they sat under for the final battle with Evil Mara are reportedly different.

However, the central teaching of their revelations is the four noble truths. The Paticcasamuppada is the heart of those teachings while the other key concepts such as Kamma, rebirth are exactly the same in each Sasana.

To refrain from wrong doings, perform wholesome actions that bring happiness and purify the mind is the advice of all the Blessed ones.

The advent of a Buddha is one of the rare occurrences in the universe. To be born a human in such an era is also rare. We are fortunate to be born humans and blessed with the gift of the Dhamma. As humans with such an advantage, let’s make use of this great opportunity to venerate those great Tathahathas.

What we need to do if we really want to respect them? The best way is to practice the noble path aiming for salvation. How do we do it in day-to-day life? First understand who am I and who are the others. Then, you will know what you mostly need, that is the happiness for yourself and the others. So be a good friend to yourself and others. It means you practice perfect morality, concentration and wisdom that all Buddhas expounded.

We are not rich enough to know and sing all the qualities of even a single Buddha because it is beyond our perception. Then, how can we reflect the qualities of twenty eight Buddhas? By sitting in a calm place and gathering the necessary energy, think of the Buddhas in this way; the Buddhas fully enlightened, perfectly tamed and tranquilized. They preached the Dhamma for us to attain enlightenment, tame and tranquilise our mind. Also they crossed over the ocean of sansara, realized Nibbana and preached the teaching for others to cross over and reach Nibbana. May these words of respect and gratitude be a humble veneration to all Buddhas!

Akasa Sutta: In the Sky

"In the sky, O monks, various kinds of winds are blowing: winds from the east, west, north and south, winds carrying dust and winds without dust, winds hot and cold, gentle and fierce. Similarly, monks, there arise in this body various kinds of feelings: pleasant feelings arise, painful feelings arise and neutral feelings arise."

Just as in the sky above winds of various kinds are blowing:
Coming from the east or west, blowing from the north or south,
Some carry dust and others not, cold are some and others hot,
Some are fierce and others mild — their blowing is so different.

So also in this body here, feelings of different kind arise:
The pleasant feelings and the painful and the neutral ones.

But if a monk is ardent and does not neglect
To practice mindfulness and comprehension clear,
The nature of all feelings will he understand,
And having penetrated them, he will be taint-free in this very life.
Mature in knowledge, firm in Dhamma's ways,
When once his life-span ends, his body breaks,
All measure and concept he has transcended.

Translated from the Pali by
Nyanaponika Thera

අපාරුතා තෙසං අමනස්ස ද්වාරා, යෙ සොතවන්තො පමුඤ්චන්තු සද්ධං!

**Open for them are the doors to the deathless,
Let those with ears now show their faith!**

අමාභොරවු ඇත ඔවුනට ඇරලා, දෙසවන් ඇත්තෝ සැදැහැ මුදන්වා!
(Arivaparivesana sutta - MN 26)

"If, as you travel, you meet none better than yourself, or equal, you should steadfastly travel alone. There's no companionship with fools."