



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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How to be a Great human

By Bhante Jinananda...

Part- I

The most important discovery in human history is the right solution to the problem of suffering found by the Buddha. The marvel of the enlightenment of the Buddha and the other liberated human beings bear witness that they were and are the great beings in the universe. They embarked on their journeys to enlightenment as ordinary human beings many life times ago but completed their quest as supreme human beings. According to the Buddhist perspective, they may have developed a lot of skillful actions throughout *samsara*. One of the decisive factors to their achievement must be the right guidance and spiritual support they were fortunate to get from qualified teachers like the previous Buddhas and the noble ones in their dispensations. Moreover, the unbroken interest and continued effort to practice the path geared by growing spiritual qualities is also significant in their venture to enlightenment. There is no doubt, that strong commitment and dedication played an important role in the lives of these Noble ones on their journey towards enlightenment.

Likewise, our primary intention too as disciples, is to become such great humans by practicing the noble eightfold path. A large number of discourses have been taught and explained by the Buddha to show us the path and the fruitions. Yet,

it is not easy to be a great person as mentioned in those suttas because it is an outcome of great discipline that can perhaps be spread out to many lives. In brief, one must practice all thirty seven factors of enlightenment completely to attain Nibbana. Meanwhile, some people think that observing five precepts is the path to greatness while some may decide giving Dana as the path for the purpose. Both are correct if they are practiced continuously because those actions themselves are powerful to build the foundation to develop the higher qualities required for enlightenment. Some argue that only a form of meditation is the path to purification. It is true that all of them are methods towards achieving this goal. However, the truth is that practicing them is not easy. Despite the difficulty of practicing the teaching and gaining the results, many humans have achieved liberation from suffering. Today, many people aspire to become liberated; therefore, this discussion about great thoughts will be beneficial in exploring how some noble individuals penetrated the truth and became Noble persons.

Let's consider the story of Ven. Anuruddha. *Next page...*



He was another Noble disciple in the order of the Bhikkhus, who practiced the Dhamma and left behind many wonderful teachings to the world. There are a couple of Suttas which bear his name because Ven. Anuruddha's extraordinary qualities created opportunities for the Buddha to explain some aspects of the Dhamma which was universal in nature. Before exploring the necessary facts to become a Noble being, it is beneficial to study Ven. Anuruddha's life in brief. He was declared a great Arahants in the community of Bhikkhus due to the divine eye which is surpassed by human ability; he was foremost in this skill. At the time of the Buddha's Mahaparinibbana, Ven. Anuruddha described the Buddha's mental states as the Buddha proceeded from one Jhana to another Jhana, whereas the other monks were not aware of the Buddha's mental states. (Before passing away, the Buddhas attain Jhanas). The Sutta mentions that the Ven. Anuruddha mostly lived in the forest with Bhikkhus such as Nandiya and Kimbila. In the Upakkilesa sutta (MN 128), the Buddha visited them uninvited at the Eastern Bamboo Park and appreciated and praised their solitary forest dwellings. The most remarkable source available to learn about the greatness of this great Arahant is Anuruddha Sutta in Anguttara Nikaya (AN8:30). One day, Ven. Anuruddha was meditating at the place called Ceti in Eastern Bamboo Park and some thoughts arose in him. The sutta reports that he proliferated on seven thoughts about the purpose of the Dhamma. At this moment, the Buddha saw the profound thoughts that went on in Ven. Anuruddha's mind and appeared in front of him.

Since these thoughts shed light on the Dhamma, the Buddha praised his reflection on great thoughts and added one more thought making a set of eight great thoughts (මහාපුරිසවිතක්ක) that are often discussed in many Dhamma talks and investigated over and over again by many Dhamma practitioners.

1. This Dhamma is for one with a few desires, not for one with strong desires (අප්පිච්ඡස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො මභිච්ඡස්ස)
2. This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontented (සන්තුට්ඨස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො අසන්තුට්ඨස්ස)
3. This Dhamma is for one who resorts to solitude, not for one who delights in company (පවිචිත්තස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො සඨගණිකාරාමස්ස)
4. This Dhamma is for one who is energetic, not for one who is lazy (ආරද්ධවීරියස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො කුසිතස්ස)
5. This Dhamma is for one with mindfulness established, not for one with a muddled-mind (උපට්ඨිතස්සතිස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො මුට්ඨස්සතිස්ස)
6. This Dhamma is for one who is concentrated, not for one who is unconcentrated (සමාහිතස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො අසමාහිතස්ස)
7. This Dhamma is for one who is wise, not for one who is unwise (පඤ්ඤවතො අයං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො දුප්පඤ්ඤස්සා)

Next page...

Benefits of Practice

A monk endowed with five qualities practices both for his own benefit and for that of others.

Which five?

1. There is the case where a monk is himself consummate in virtue and encourages others to be consummate in virtue.
 2. He himself is consummate in concentration and encourages others to be consummate in concentration.
 3. He himself is consummate in discernment and encourages others to be consummate in discernment.
 4. He himself is consummate in release and encourages others to be consummate in release.
 5. He himself is consummate in the knowledge & vision of release and encourages others to be consummate in the knowledge & vision of release.

Endowed with these five qualities, a monk practices both for his own benefit and for that of others.

*Hita Sutta: Benefit AN-5.
Translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu*

In the end these things matter most: How well did you love? How fully did you live? How deeply did you let go?



Our Dhamma School

Happiness

Beyond victory and defeat



ජයං වෙරං පසවති,
දුක්ඛං සෙති පරාජිතො;
උපසන්තො සුඛං සෙති,
භික්ඛා ජයපරාජයං.

Victory brings hatred to the defeated person. He also suffers because his lost. But, the person, whose mind is calm and tranquil, lives with happy thoughts as he has gone beyond both victory and defeat.

-The Buddha-
[Dhammapada, verse-201]

First Fund Raising Event-2013

A food fair will be held on March 3rd, 10:00 a.m. at the Masonic Centre on Walkley Road. This is the first fund raising event of the temple organized by the teachers and parents of Sunday Dhamma School. All are invited to come and enjoy the delicious Sri Lankan food.

8. This Dhamma is for one who delights in non-proliferation, who takes delight in non-proliferation, not for one who delights in proliferation, who takes delight in proliferation (නිජපපඤ්චාරාමස්සායං ධම්මො නිජපපඤ්චරතිනො, නායං ධම්මො පපඤ්චාරාමස්ස පපඤ්චරතිනො) (Bodhi, 2012)(AN, 8-3, 10)

These eight great thoughts of a Noble person show the genuine purpose of the Buddhist teaching, who the teaching is for and the qualities of the Bikkhu and Bikkhuni institutions the Buddha established. In addition, these eight great thoughts are showing a clear direction in which the followers should tread on. Some people in six century B.C and also in the modern world question the greatness of the Buddha and the purpose of his teaching. Some critics are against Buddhism because they believe Buddhism pushes people towards pessimism. However, these great thoughts of a Noble person points out the real picture of the teaching, that it directs people towards a happy end.

These thoughts are neither simple as they appeared to Ven. Anuruddha nor are they easy grasp and develop. According to the Sutta, they are perceptions (Sanna), which arose in the mind of a great person. First, let's discuss the concept of 'perception' in the light of great thoughts and later find the connection between perception and great thought; a perception, according to Oxford Dictionary is "the ability to see, hear, or become aware of something through the senses". The Buddhist definition of perception is deeper than explained in the dictionary; it identifies perception as another phenomenon that has to be dealt with, in understanding

the reality of mind and body. The Buddhist teachings emphasize the illusionary nature of perception. In elaborating the concept of perception in terms of using it to describe the psychology in Buddhism, two types of perceptions are mentioned, namely, the perceptions which have to be uprooted from the mind and the perceptions which have to be cultivated. The First type of perception is detrimental to peace and happiness. Let's explore how perception arises. For instance, when the eye encounters and a visible object, eye consciousness arises. Meeting of these three results in the arising of contact (Passa), when there is contact, there is feeling. Whatever feeling is there, it perceives the way it is felt. This is the process which continues further until a positive or negative thought is created. If the person is deluded by greed, hatred or ignorance, the thought or 'perception' of a person would be negative. On the other hand, there are wholesome perceptions to be developed to defeat negative perceptions. In Girimananda sutta in Anguttara nikaya, tenfold perception is described in terms of clearing one's perception from impurity.

The similarity between perception and great thoughts is clear. Those great thoughts about the Dhamma can be called 'Dhamma Sanna' which means the way how a yogi must reflect on phenomena. For example, in developing the perception of impermanence, the Yogi reflects the transitory nature of the five aggregates of clinging. When this perception develops, it is easy to detach the mind from attachment.

Next page...



1. This Dhamma is for one with few desires, not for one with strong desires (අප්පිච්ඡස්සායං ධම්මො, නායං ධම්මො මභිච්ඡස්ස)

The first great thought doesn't imply that the Buddha taught the Dhamma only for those who had few desires. Even though wise disciples understood the Dhamma without making the Buddha too much tired, the Buddha preached his teaching to all without exception. Although it is easier for a wise person with few desires to grasp the Dhamma, the Buddhist history doesn't support that each and everyone realized the truth. A large number of people who came to the Buddha were people with strong desires. Yet, many of them learnt and benefitted by the teaching while some remained unchanged due to the intensity of their desire. The first great thought means that the Dhamma can bring great benefits for people who are able to be satisfied with a few belongings or desires. According to the teaching, strong desire is an unwholesome mental state which gives rise to suffering. It is also one root of unskillful thoughts. It is compared to fire that burns mental peace. When this fire like desire exists in a mind, it is hard to expect wholesome behavior. But, the wholesome Dhamma is compared to water as it extinguishes the flame.

After praising Ven. Anuruddha's great thoughts and adding one more to the list, the Buddha went back to the deer park at Bhesakala grove. There, the Buddha addressed the assembly of monks and explained each great thought in detail. Referring to the first one, the Buddha explained that when a disciple is with a few desires, he lives a modest and simple life. The word 'මභිච්ඡස්ස' denotes the person's wish to be famous among others and the word 'අප්පිච්ඡස්සා' implies unwillingness to show to the world his way of simplicity.

This is an important point in the teaching because these two words reveal not only the degree of desire of a person to material wealth but also the positive and negative thinking that takes place according to the degree of self-development. Both ordained Sangha and lay people need to realize that good qualities should be developed in order to be happy and content but not for showing them to others. If one wishes to popular proclaiming his attainment, this will bring about his downfall. Reveling in one's progress is an impediment which declines mental peace. The wise do not appreciate such attitudes. Although some people like to talk about their spiritual development it is due to their ignorance and conceit and this brings only negative results.

In addition, when the disciple is content with his practice, he should not expect others to know his contentment and expect respect from others. The first great thought implies this too. The type of contentment a Noble disciple feels causes to develop the thought of seclusion. When he inclines to noble solitude, he does not wish others to know his noble state. Similarly, whenever the disciple is energetic and puts effort to practice, the Dhamma develops according to that practice. Again the more he becomes mindful, the better the Dhamma establishes in him. Furthermore, concentrated he is but he does not use it to win others. The wisdom the wise person possesses is only an asset to him to experience bliss but he never uses that power to belittle others. Another fact to show the wise person's significance is the non-proliferation, but he is doing that not to show up his greatness to others.

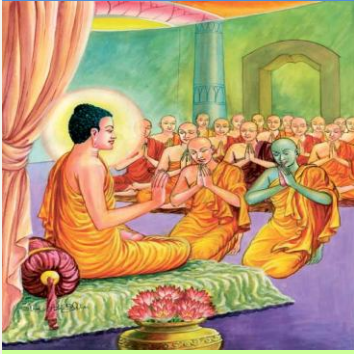
In conclusion, these great thoughts emphasize the significance of the Dhamma in terms of attaining enlightenment, and they function as sources of beings purification making them great individuals.

To be continued...

Vasetthi The Madwoman

Overwhelmed with grief
for my son —
naked, demented,
my hair dishevelled
my mind deranged —
I went about here & there,
living along the side
of the road,
in cemeteries & heaps of trash,
for three full years,
afflicted with hunger & thirst.
Then I saw the One Well-
gone,
gone to the city of Mithila:
tamer of those untamed,
Self-Awakened,
with nothing to fear
from anything, anywhere.
Regaining my mind,
paying him homage,
I sat myself down.
He, Gotama, from sympathy
taught me the Dhamma.
Hearing his Dhamma,
I went forth into homelessness.
Applying myself to the
Teacher's words,
I realized the state of
auspicious bliss.
All grieves have been cut off,
abandoned,
brought to this end,
for I've comprehended
the grounds from which
grieves come into play.

Therigatha - Translated from the Pali by
Thanissaro Bhikkhu



The Sil Observance and meditation on Navam Full Moon day

The full moon day in February is called 'Navam Poya day' according to the Lunar calendar. Historically, this Poya day is significant due to three main reasons; appointment Ven. Sariputta and Moggallana as chief disciples, imposing of vinaya rules for the first time and the announcement of the Buddha's intended parinibbana took place on this full Moon day of February.

Many devotees observed eight precepts last Sunday at Hilda Jayewardenaramaya and took part in meditation, listening to Dhamma sermons and participated in Dhamma discussions.

The Dana for monks and preceptors was offered by Dulip and Maheshya Mahanama and family along with their friends.



The Eight Requisites for the Development of Wisdom

Wisdom (ဗုဒ္ဓိဇာနည်) is the culmination of the Buddhist practice. Through hard work, wisdom should be gained. The following eight conditions are required to gain wisdom that is not yet arisen, and to further develop wisdom which has already arisen, developing still further to achieve the level of wisdom which brings liberation.

1. Associating the Buddha or an accomplished teacher. He or she has established moral shame and fear, devotion and reverence toward the Buddha and towards the well-educated teacher. Due to having this devotion, wisdom develops. This is the first cause for the arising of wisdom.
2. Being in dependent on the teacher, one can question about things in the practice that one may have doubts about, ones that are not yet resolved, can have a better understanding about things that are already known, and so there would be an opportunity to dispel the perplexities. This is the second cause for the arising of wisdom.
3. Having heard the Dhamma, one is able to relax physically and mentally because he is free from complex mental perplexities. This is the third reason for the arising of wisdom.
4. One becomes virtuous and restrained by moral principles. One lives by good conduct and sees the danger even of small mistakes. This is the fourth reason for the arising of wisdom.
5. The person now knows much, maintains a sound knowledge, and recollects what he has collected or achieved. He knows the teaching which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end. Also he is able to explain the teaching, paraphrase and proclaim. Due to these skills acquired, he has right view. This is the fifth reason for the arising of wisdom.
6. He has an energy that has already arisen to abandon unwholesome qualities and develop wholesome qualities. He has established energy and effort to continue his practice. This is the sixth cause for the arising of wisdom.
7. He has refrained from useless talk in the assembly of monks and lay people; he may either preach the Dhamma or request someone to do so; otherwise, he is silent amidst community. This is the seventh cause to arise wisdom.
8. He is contemplating the originating, passing away of five aggregate of clinging. This is the eighth cause to arise wisdom.

When these eight conditions are completed, wisdom develops and results in reaching the final goal.

(AN.8.1.1.2 – Adibrahmacariyapanna sutta)



THE MEDITATION PUZZLE

Instruction;

The words used in the puzzle have been selected from the previous newsletters only. The words are situated in the puzzle as follows; (->), (v), (/>), (/<). First, fill in the blanks and then find the words and circle. Copy and paste this page to a new word document before trying. Please email the solved puzzle.

- CON__TRATION PRA__E ARA__THS C__TA BH__TE
__FIDENCE NIB__A CON__NESS E__O JHA__A
IGN__NCE ANA__A S__SARA CHA__A P__CE
ATT__DE __GATIVE PATICCAS__DA VIE__S D__TH
COM__ION EMO__S __AINTS HA__E HE__
__LIGHTEN HAR__NY WI__OM BR__MA TR__H
FETT__S PRE__TS CRA__ __ATUE __EAR
AT__MENT DE__RE WI__E STRE__S E__ES

Grid of letters for the puzzle, 15 rows by 20 columns.