



SEEING THROUGH

The Monthly Newsletter of Buddhist Monastery and Meditation Center

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The contents

බුද්ධං සරණං ගච්ඡාමි

I go to refuge of the Buddha

Right mindfulness; the divine dwelling in life

Vesak Programs at HJBM

Vesak Bhakti Gee (Devotional singing)

Live in concord – 2

Inevitable is the death...

Five Conditions for disappearance of the Dhamma

A Peaceful and Happy Vesak season

Cleaning and preparing the monastery for Vesak festival...

Marvelous and wonderful qualities of the Bodhisattva

Ceremonial opening of the new Ottawa inter-community Buddhist Vihara

බුද්ධං සරණං ගච්ඡාමි

I go to refuge of the Buddha

By Bhante Jihananda

The above sentence in Pali is familiar to most people who know about the Buddha, the sage who lived 25 centuries ago in India. In general, this is recited like a Mantra almost every day in Buddhist temples and households. Even very young children can recite it in most Buddhist homes. If people are not able to recite it, they at least can sense that it is something to do with the Buddha. If you visit India through Bodhgaya airport, the first thing you can hear is a background music which includes this sentence as a part of a song that is played continuously by the Indian immigration. Although they play the song for business purposes, it implies that many people who live in a non-Buddhist area also can understand the meaning of it, at least, the general connotation of it.

Our focus is not to discuss the simple meaning of “බුද්ධං සරණං ගච්ඡාමි - I seek refuge in the Buddha” or do a research on how popular the song is. Our genuine intention is to explore the insight behind the statement and how it has to be understood by a true follower.

According to the entire Buddhist teaching, seeking refuge in the Buddha is the first and foremost requirement for one who seeks to reach the highest goal, Nibbana. Yet, how do we seek refuge in something to attain Nibbana? We have to understand the following word; ‘the Buddha’ and the reasons why he is envisaged as the Buddha. Also we need to see what he had accomplished to gain such recognition? Next, the meaning of the word ‘refuge’ also



should be discussed with respect to this line that is uttered ever so often by millions of Buddhists.

The ‘Buddha’ is the title suitable for any human being who understands the truth of suffering, its origin, the cessation, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering. According to Theravada teaching, anybody can reach Buddhahood if the person so wishes and fulfills the Paramithas, the necessary conditions for enlightenment. Let’s look at the textual information to understand better the word ‘Buddha’.

The Buddha understands the reality without help of others, so he doesn’t have a teacher. He discovers the truth that is not heard before and gains powers with super knowledge. There are these sixteen definitions appeared in Mahanidessa (192), Culanidessa (97) and Patisambhidamagga (1:162) as follows;

1. He is the discoverer of truth so he is called the ‘Buddha’ (බුද්ධං සරණං ගච්ඡාමි බුද්ධො).

Next page...

2. He is the awakener for others thus he is called the 'Buddha' (බොධෙනා පජායාති බුද්ධො).
3. He knows everything so he is called the 'Buddha' (සබ්බඤ්ඤානාය බුද්ධො)
4. He sees everything so he is called the 'Buddha' (සබ්බදස්සාවිතාය බුද්ධො)
5. He is incapable of enlightened by others so he is called the 'Buddha' (අනඤ්ඤනෙය්‍යතාය බුද්ධො)
6. He possesses many qualities so he is called the 'Buddha' (විසව්තාය බුද්ධො)
7. He destroys all fermentations so he is called the 'Buddha' (විණාසවසඨ්ඛානෙන බුද්ධො)
8. He is free from obstructions so he is called the 'Buddha' (නිරුපලෙපසඨ්ඛානෙන බුද්ධො)
9. He is free from greed so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකන්තච්ඡරාගොති බුද්ධො)
10. He is free from hate so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකන්තච්ඡතදොසොති බුද්ධො)
11. He is free from delusion so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකන්තච්ඡමොහොති බුද්ධො)
12. He is free from defilements so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකන්තනික්කිලෙසොති බුද්ධො)
13. He has travelled the path that goes on only to one direction so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකායනමග්ගං ගතොති බුද්ධො)
14. He alone discovers the peerless enlightenment so he is called the 'Buddha' (එකො අනුත්තරං සම්මාසම්බොධිං අභිසම්බුද්ධොති බුද්ධො)
15. He defeats unenlightenment and gains enlightenment so he is called the 'Buddha' (අබුද්ධිවිහන්තා බුද්ධිපට්ටලාභාති බුද්ධො)
16. He is called the 'Buddha' because it is not a name given by mother, father, brother, sister, ministers...etc. it is due to omniscient knowledge obtained by him under the Bodhi tree, so it is a title based on realization (බුද්ධොති නෙතං නාමං මාතරා කතං න පිතරා කතං..... පට්ටලාභා සච්ඡිකා පඤ්ඤන්ති)

Another source to understand the nature of the Buddha is the Dona Sutta (4:36) in Anuguttara Nikaya. Having seeing the

very strange and extraordinary footprints on the road, Brahmin Dona followed the footprints until he reached the Buddha who owned the footprints. In profession, Brahmin Dona was a well-versed scholar in identifying the characteristics of a 'Mahapurisa' and thought this person might be such a person. Dona then asked a few questions;

'Could you be a deity, sir? "I will not be a deity Brahmin"

"Could you be a Gandabba? "I will not be a Gandabba Brahmin"

"Could you be a Yakkha? "I will not be a Yakkha Brahmin"

"Could you be a human being? "I will not be a human being Brahmin" (Dona Sutta – AN 4:36)

Brahmin Dona confused by the answers the Buddha gave then asked him who he is. In answering the question, The Buddha stated that since he has pulled out all the taints that make a deity, a Gandabba, a Yakkha, and a human being, he cannot be known by any of the names mentioned above. The Buddha explained further that these taints stated above are not of the nature to arise in him. Therefore, he is compared to a lotus flower which grows under water but grows out of the muddy water and blooms and absorbs the sun's bright rays not touching the muddy water at all. Similarly, the Buddha has overcome the world and lives untouched by the world. The Buddha then concludes by saying; "hence, remember me as 'the Buddha'.

The journey to Buddhahood of an aspirant Bodhisattva starts by making a great determination. The Buddhapadana (Apadanapali –KN) reveals how and what the Gautama the Bodhisattva accomplished to become the Buddha. Having seeing the previous enlightened Buddhas and their glorious power of morality, concentration and wisdom, he made wishes to be a future Buddha. The Buddha explained that he practiced ten perfections (Paramita), one in three levels altogether thirty. Being practiced giving (Dana) and principals (Sila), he completed developing of renunciation (Nekkhamma).

Next page..

The fruits of giving

අග්ගතො වෙ පසන්තානං අග්ගං
ධම්මං විජානතං

අග්ගෙ බුද්ධෙ පසන්තානං
දක්ඛිණෙය්‍යො අනුත්තරෙ.

**If we have confidence
in regard to the
highest (triple gem),
know the highest
Dhamma and confidence
of the Buddha who is
supreme and
unsurpassed**

අග්ගෙ ධම්මෙ පසන්තානං
වීරාගුපසමෙ සුඛෙ

අග්ගෙ සධ්ද්ධෙ පසන්තානං
සුඤ්ඤක්ඛන්තෙ අනුත්තරෙ
**If we have confidence
in regard to highest
Dhamma that is
peaceful in dispassion
and Sangha who is
incomparable field of
merits**

අග්ගස්මිං දානං දදන්තං
අග්ගං පුඤ්ඤං පට්ඨස්මි
අග්ගං ආශුච්චි වණ්ණොච යසො
කිත්ති සුඛං ඛලං

**Giving Dana to those
highest will increase
merits. It will
increase life span,
beauty, glory, good
reputation, happiness
and strength.**

අග්ගස්ස දානා මෙධාවී
අග්ගධම්මසමාහිතො
දෙවභූතො මනුස්සො චා
අග්ගජ්ජන්තො පමොදති

**The wise person who
gives offerings to the
foremost Buddha and
Sangha develops
concentration. Whether
he is a human or a
deity, he rejoices
with the attainment of
highest.**

(Cundi Sutta – AN
5:4:2)

Developing wisdom (panna) and fulfilling of right perseverance (Viriya) are the next perfections. Also the Bodhisattva cultivated patience (Khanti) and truth (Sacca) as factors of enlightenment throughout many lives. Loving kindness (Metta) and Equanimity (Upekkha) are the last perfections the Bodhisattva practiced. There is not a particular order of completing them; each one can be develop together. However, certain Paramis need other factors like morality and wisdom to present in Bodhi citta to complete the act of Marami.

Everybody is familiar with the following stanza mentioned in the Buddhavagga in the Dhammapada;

සුඛො බුද්ධානමුප්පාදො,
සුඛා සද්ධම්මදෙසනා
සුඛා සඛසස්ස සාමග්ගී,
සමග්ගනං තපො සුඛො (Dhp:194)

Arising of such a wonderful Buddha is considered a happy occurrence to humans, deities and other living beings in different planes of existence. He preaches the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, in the middle and in the end. The Buddha's vision is to teach the Dhamma for the benefits of living beings. His wholesome wish is to show the beings the path to full-enlightenment, at least to show the path for the stage of Sotapanna. On one occasion, The Buddha explained the qualities of a Buddha to the Sakya king Mahanama, that a single thought of the Buddha can help a person to reborn in a happy existence.

The great wisdom and compassion of the Buddha are incomparable to any other's wisdom and compassion in the world. The Great disciples, the chiefs of Brahma and the king of the divine realms, scholars, kings, and many beings were mesmerized and enthralled by the Buddha's qualities. The Buddha's great wisdom is evident in the expounding of the aggregate of the Dhamma namely the thirty seven

factors of awakening (Sattisbodhipakkshika Dhamma).

His incomparable compassion is seen in many incidents related to the Buddha's life. After the first group of five monks attained enlightenment, the Buddha instructed them to preach the Dhamma to others in great compassion to all beings who lived in delusions;

“Wander abroad monks for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare and happiness of devas and humans. Do not go two together monks, but teach the Dhamma that is lovely in the beginning, lovely in its middle, and lovely in its ending, both in the letter and in the spirit and display the holy life fully complete and perfect. There are beings with little dust on their eyes who are perishing through not hearing Dhamma: They will become Knowers of Dhamma. (Translation of Mahapadana sutta –DN: 14 by Maurice Walshe)

The Buddha dedicated most of his time of each day for the welfare of other beings. His daily routine was divided in to five segments; the forenoon, the afternoon, the first watch, the middle watch, the last watch. This daily routine was followed whether the Buddha was in the Jetavana monastery or in the forest. Every morning, the Buddha would survey the world looking for beings who were distraught and needed help. Many fortunate beings were visible the Buddha's divine eye and were raised to fortunate circumstances. If a helpless person lived far away from where the Buddha was, he went to that person by psychic energy or in many instances the Buddha traveled to the person and helped the person with the Dhamma.

As disciples, we need to seek refuge in the Buddha as explained in the Dhamma. right understanding is required in going refuge in the Buddha. It means that it is not as a mere belief of the Buddha's arahant hood or full enlightenment, but by realizing the Buddha nature through our own Dhamma reflection and practice.

There is a difference between belief and reflection about reality. Belief about someone or something can be bias or partial. Hence, it is not an acceptable approach to gain wisdom. This is why the Buddha instructs monks to see the Dhamma with right reflection and then he says one would see the real Buddha. One day, monk Vakkali who was possessed by the beauty of the Buddha's body, was gazing at the golden complexion of the Buddha's body. The Buddha questioned Vakkali and asked what was the purpose of looking at his body which was subject to decay, old age and death (Vakkali Sutta – SN 22:87). The Buddha explained Vakkali, that it is one who really practices the Dhamma, is the one who sees the Buddha. During this Vesak month in which the birth of the Bodhisattva, the great enlightenment and the passing away of the Buddha took place, let's follow this advice, and practice the Dhamma. To seek genuine refuge in the Buddha;

- ❖ Observe five precepts
- ❖ Practice generosity
- ❖ Respect parents and adults
- ❖ Try to appreciate the good qualities of others
- ❖ Reflect the Buddha qualities as in 'Etipi so...' at least once a day
- ❖ Reflect the Dhamma qualities as in 'Svakkhato bhagavata...' at least once a day
- ❖ Reflect the Sangha qualities as in 'Supatipanno bhagavato so...' at least once a day
- ❖ Associate friends and families who help in overcoming wrong living
- ❖ Observe eight precepts once a month
- ❖ Develop loving friendliness and compassion to all
- ❖ Meditate at least once a week

May you all have an insightful Vesak season!

Right mindfulness; The divine dwelling in life

How to become a great human being - 4

Right Mindfulness is reckoned as a central teaching for awakening. Due to its significance in attaining enlightenment. The Buddha has explained the role of mindfulness as a way of living for one who aspires on the path and there is no development without this most important link on the path that the Buddha presented to all beings for their salvation. This is also the result of right effort. This is one reason why this concept of mindfulness has become more popular among many people than the other required qualities need for the fruition of the path. The other reason for mindfulness being talked about is because it is used in many different fields such as science, art, and business, in medicine and day-to-day activities. However, our intention is only to pay attention to some important aspects of mindfulness related to spiritual growth.

The English translation 'Mindfulness' for the Pali word 'Sati' is derived from old scriptures. It simply means the ability to be vigilant or awake, or the act of observing all things that are happening every moment or applying one's attention on the moment. The Buddha didn't explain only 'sati' or 'mindfulness' as they are meant in daily usage. Sati or mindfulness in that sense can be achieved by anyone, even animals. Then what did the Buddha teach about mindfulness in terms of developing mind? It is 'Samma Sati' or 'right mindfulness' that the Buddha practiced and advised others to develop. The prefix 'Samma' or 'right' was added to the beginning of sati and mindfulness. According to canonical evidence, mindfulness is the quality which pushes our mind to see the reality of things that have the nature to arise and pass away. In addition, the word 'mindfulness' implies our mind fills with something. In this case our mind fills with awareness and wisdom when it associates with right mindfulness. Prevalence of right mindfulness can be likened to lighting a candle in a dark room. The flame of the candle provides

a clear vision to see things in the room. Seeing things in the room and recognizing them in details are wisdom, but the facilitator for wisdom to see things in their true light is the right mindfulness. So this simile illustrates that the presence of right mindfulness is crucial to culminate right wisdom. The development of right mindfulness has to be studied as a single factor of enlightenment and also when it works with other factors of enlightenment.



In essence, right mindfulness is compared to a gatekeeper or a guardsman near the gates in a city. In a certain country, the king needs to protect the city from possible dangers and appoints the gatekeepers to be on duty in each gate. These gatekeepers play vital roles to block the unwanted entrants to the city and allow the important ones to enter. The city has six entrances from six directions which are left open almost all the time. In protecting the city and the King, the gatekeepers have to check everyone and everything that is coming in and going out. Basically, the safety of the city and the king depend on the gatekeeper's skills. This simile is given to explain a deep teaching in a simple way; the mind is compared to a city and the king of the city is right wisdom. Then what are the six entrances and who is playing the role of the gatekeepers that were appointed by the king to safeguard the city? The six entrances are likened to the six senses and the gatekeepers are compared to right mindfulness in singular form. This simile shows very clearly that right mindfulness is playing a vital role in protecting the mind from Unwholesomeness and establishes the mind in peacefulness. The king in a spiritual sense is right wisdom, but the king depends on the gatekeeper's skillfulness

Next page...

Vesak Programs at HJBM

Commemorating the birth of prince Siddhartha, the great enlightenment and Mahaparinibbana of the Buddha, the HJBM organized a series of program;

The adult Sil observance was held on May 19th with the participation of many devotees. In the day long program, meditation sessions, Dhamma discussions and the Buddha Puja were conducted to respect the Buddha. The Dana for monks and Sil observant were offered by Mr L. Mrs. Vidyaratne and family to transfer merits to departed parents and relatives.

Vesak Bhakti Gee (Devotional singing)

The annual Bhakti Gee was successfully held at the premises of the HJBM last Sunday to celebrate the triple anniversaries of the Buddha. The HJBM Dhamma School children and adults with talented musicians of HJBM came together and sang devotional songs. Dansala (offering free food) and flower auction was also held by the Dayaka Sabhawa. Illuminating Vesak lanterns was the last event of the day.

I do not know a thing so harmless as the developed mind. The developed mind is harmless. (The Buddha)



Ruwani De Alwis - Dhamma School

The duty of right mindfulness in the case of the five spiritual faculties and the five powers is like the gatekeeper's role in obtaining Samma Sati. When looking at a discussion amongst some Buddhist scholars, we discussed the importance of mindfulness as the commander of the group; being in the middle of the order of the five factors of enlightenment, mindfulness leads other qualities towards the right direction of "Samma Patipada".

On one occasion, the Buddha mentioned that the advice of the Tathagata for his disciples is to dwell with right mindfulness and clear comprehension (Sati Sutta – SN 47:02/Mahaparinibbana sutta – DN 22). It implies the significance on the importance placed by the Buddha himself to this key element of Dhamma that has to be fulfilled by all people who journey towards enlightenment. Essentially, right mindfulness is the impetus of right understanding and other factors of the eightfold path. The noble eightfold path would be non-existent without right mindfulness as mentioned in Mahacattarisaka sutta (MN 120).

The most important teaching of right mindfulness is given by the Buddha when four foundations of mindfulness are expounded in Satipatthana Sutta preaching.

"Bhikkhus, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true way, for the realization of Nibbana-namely, the four foundations of mindfulness" (Bodhi Bhikkhu, 1995, Satipatthana sutta translation)

According to the statement, the Buddha clearly points out the reason why he recommends right mindfulness to be developed in as the foundation. Even though there are other approaches to purify our minds, this is the only path that goes to definite conclusion, the enlightenment. Further, Satipatthana sutta is the only discourse in the Tripitaka which bestows an assurance for one who practices the four foundations of mindfulness, of reaching the final goal of enlightenment within a specific time

period (Mahasatipatthana sutta – DN: 22). Right mindfulness is also shown by the Buddha as the key to overcome sorrow and lamentation, pain and grief. Finally, by cutting off these negative emotions by right mindfulness, the Buddha explained, it lets the disciple practice the noble path which leads to the realization of Nibbana, the ultimate goal of the aspirant who practices Buddhist meditation. The importance of establishing right mindfulness to attain enlightenment is elaborated by Ven. Anuruddha in his reflection of the eight great thoughts of a noble being. He realized that the teaching of Tathagata is for one with mindfulness well established; it is not for one with a muddled-mind (Anuruddha sutta – AN 8:30). He came to this decision after a long investigation; he certainly knew the sources of mindfulness and heedlessness. In his statement, right mindfulness is established on the four domains such as the body, the feelings, the mind and mental states or Dhamma, and a disciple has to stay within the boundaries of these four domains and meditate on them. No matter what type of meditation a disciple practices, he has to focus on the ever changing phenomena within these four domains. A few interesting stories about the importance of restricting mindfulness to the four domains are explained in Satipatthana Sanyutta. (To be continued...)

DHAMMA ACTIVITIES IN JUNE

DHAMMA SCHOOL (SUNDAY 02ND 2:00PM-4:00PM)

1ST OUTDOOR MEDITATION AT THE HJBM MEDITATION GARDEN (SUNDAY 9TH 9:00AM-11:00AM)

DHAMMA SCHOOL (SUNDAY 9TH 2:00PM-4:00PM)

POSON POYA SIL PROGRAM (SATURDAY 22ND 8:00AM-5:00PM)

MEDITATION AND DISCUSSION IN ENGLISH EACH MONDAYS (7:00PM-8:30PM)

MEDITATION IN ENGLISH EACH TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS (12:00 NOON-1:00PM)

MEDITATION AND SUTTA DISCUSSION IN SINHALA EACH WEDNESDAYS (7:00PM-9:00PM)

CHANTING AND SUTTA STUDIES IN ENGLISH EACH TUESDAYS (6:30PM-8:00PM)

දිස්වා ආදීනවං ලොකෙ
ඤ්ඤවා ධම්මං නිරුපධං
අරියො න රමති පාපෙ
පාපෙ න රමති සුචී

Seeing the drawbacks of the world, knowing the state without acquisitions, a noble one doesn't find joy in evil. In evil, a clean one doesn't find joy
(Udanapali 5:6)

Live in concord – 2

Bhante Vijitha

In this article I would like to explain some of the great visible qualities of a person who loves to live in concord with the Dhamma.

Once, when the Buddha was living at Sala, a Brahmin village of Kosalan Country, in answering the questions raised by the Brahmin householders, he explained why some beings are born in good places like human world and some in bad places like hell. Here the Buddha illustrates the practice of ten unwholesome and wholesome deeds as the reasons for being born in good and bad existences. Out of these ten unwholesome deeds, I would like to elaborate the fifth which is speaking malicious words. Abandoning of malicious words is the fifth wholesome action. Here it is good to understand what is meant by malicious words? Many Buddhists when observing precepts take the precept of “*pisunawaca veramani sikkapadam samadiyami* (I undertake the training rule of not speaking malicious words)”. Most people repeat these *Pali* words unaware of its true meaning as the way the Buddha explained it. Here, the Buddha explains the word “*pisunawaca*” clearly as malicious speech.

“He speaks maliciously: he is a repeater elsewhere of what is heard here for the purpose of causing division from these, or he is a repeater to these of what is heard elsewhere for the purpose of causing division from those, and he is thus a divider of the united, a creator of divisions, who enjoys discord, rejoices in discord, delights in discord, he is a speaker of words that create discord.....Abandoning malicious speech, he becomes one who abstains from malicious speech: as one who is neither a repeater elsewhere of what is heard here for the purpose of causing

division from these, nor a repeater to these of what is heard elsewhere for the purpose of causing division from those, who is thus a reuniter of the divided, a promoter of friendships, enjoying concord, rejoicing in concord, delighting in concord, he becomes a speaker of words that promote concord.” (*Saleyyyaka sutta. MN: 41*)

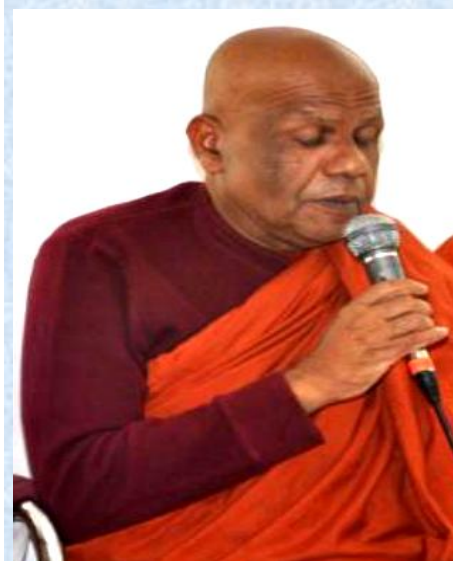
The Buddha encourages us to practice the ten wholesome deeds (*Dasa Kusal*) because that helps one to strengthen the Noble Eight fold Path, the way to attain Nibbana. At least by practicing *Dasa kusal*, one keeps away from the danger of having a bad rebirth. According to the above explanation of the Buddha, refraining from speaking malicious words is a great blessing for oneself and for the whole society because such a person never speaks a single word that would cause a division in society.

Once, during the time of the Buddha, the two tribes *Sakya* and *Koliya* started to fight over the water of river *Rohini*. They were relatives of the Buddha. *Kapilavatthu* was the town of the *Sakyans* and *Koliya* was the town of the *Koliyans*. Both these cities depended on the river *Rohini* for water for cultivation of their lands. When the water level in the river was low, both these groups fought for the limited water for their cultivation. They started to argue over and over again about this matter. Finally, these arguments lead them to a bloody war. How this was resolved is a very famous story among Buddhists. It is very interesting how the Buddha settled their conflict at the same place, where these people were about to start a fight. Standing among these two groups the Buddhas said: “For the sake of some water, which is of little value, you should not destroy your lives which are of so much value and priceless. Why have you taken this stupid action? Next page...

Inevitable is the death...

මෙත්තාවිහාරී යො භික්ඛු,
පසන්තො බුද්ධසාසනෙ;
අධිගච්ඡෙ පදං සන්තං,
සඞ්ඛාරූපසමං සුඛං. (Dhp 368)

The monk who pervades the friendliness to everyone becomes delighted in the dispensation. He is heading towards Nibbana, happiness which is gained through stilling all fabrications.



Venerable Mativiliye Pannakitti Thero, the chief incumbent of the Southern province of Sri Lanka passed away in April at a private hospital in Colombo. Venerable thero was a good friend of the HJBM for a decade. He was a compassionate teacher to many student monks at Sri Sarananda monastic college and devotees in the area. He was pleasant and energetic in practicing wholesome qualities. Venerable thero served the society as the Buddha mentioned and passed away at the age 64. As good friends, we wish him a safe journey towards peace and happiness!

If I had not stopped you today, your blood would have been flowing like a river by now. You live hating your enemies, but I have none to hate; you are ailing with moral defilements, but I am free from them; you are striving to have sensual pleasures, but I do not strive for them." After listening to the Dhamma they understood their own folly. They understood that they have started fighting where they should not have fought. They became aware of this foolish and unlawful action. They thought to themselves 'this is not suitable for good people like us'. The eye of Dhamma arose in them.

Sometimes these negativities such as quarrels, disputes, fights and hostility arise among us when we are not aware of our own goodness. It is hard to reflect on good when the mind is controlled by greed, hatred and delusion. Until the mind becomes free from these defilements, our mind has the potential of arousing unwholesome qualities. We have to see the danger of this uncontrolled mind. Seeing this danger of the uncontrolled mind one should develop the four right efforts to protect oneself from all

unwholesomeness. There is a very profound statement of the Buddha mentioned in *Attadanda sutta, Suttapitakaya*. "Having seen people struggling and contending with each other like fish in a small amount of water, fear entered me. The world is everywhere insecure, every direction is in turmoil; desiring an abode for myself I did not find one uninhabited. When I saw contention as the sole outcome, aversion increased in me; but then I saw an arrow here, difficult to see, set in the heart. Pierced by it, one runs in every direction, but having pulled it out one does not run nor does one sink." The arrow in us is nothing else but 'kelesas', the defilements. The wise in the world see this arrow and remove it and destroy it. Let it never to wound you again.

Likewise, if we can refrain from malicious speech and use good words that are true and beneficial it is beneficial for us and others. Also, if we can, from time to time reflect on our own good qualities as well as those of others and become happy by applying the fourfold right effort in our day-to-day life. This will itself be a foundation for a happy life. Those people indeed live a happy life.

Five Conditions for disappearance of the Dhamma

The Dhamma expounded by the Tathagata does not disappear all straight away just like a boat or a ship sinks down by a disaster. The Dhamma deteriorates and disappears due to five conditions responsible by The Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, the male and female lay followers, which continue for a considerable amount of time. They are as follows; The Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, the male and female lay followers;

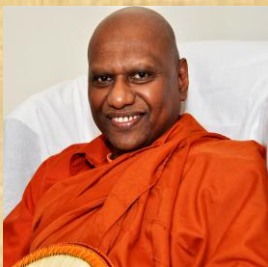
- 1) reside without reverence and deference towards the Teacher
(සන්ථරි අගාරවා විහරන්ති අප්පනිස්සා)
- 2) reside without reverence and deference towards the Dhamma
(ධම්මෙ අගාරවා විහරන්ති අප්පනිස්සා)
- 3) reside without reverence and deference towards the Sangha
(සඛ්භෙ අගාරවා විහරන්ති අප්පනිස්සා)
- 4) reside without reverence and deference towards the training
(සික්ඛාස අගාරවා විහරන්ති අප්පනිස්සා)
- 5) reside without reverence and deference towards the concentration
(සමාධිස්මිං අගාරවා විහරන්ති අප්පනිස්සා)

The reverence and deference towards the Teacher, the Dhamma, the Sangha, the training and the concentration by fourfold disciples cause to the longevity of the Dhamma

(Saddhammapatirupaka Sutta AN 16:13)

A Peaceful and Happy Vesak season

Greeting from resident monks, devotees and friends of the HJBM...



We wish a peaceful and fruitful Vesak Season

Venerable Brahmanagama Muditha thero (the abbot of the Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Buddhist Monastery and meditation centre, Ottawa, Canada and the Great Lakes Buddhist Vihara, Southfield, MI, USA) and Venerable Kulugamma Dhammawasa Nayaka thero (the chief Sangha Nayaka of North America and chief incumbent of the West End Buddhist temple and meditation centre, Mississauga, Canada and the Hilda Jayewardenaramaya Buddhist Monastery and meditation centre, Ottawa, Canada), two great prelates, strong pillars of the Buddha Sasana in North America.

May the venerable prelates live long lives with good health and serenity!

The mind is effulgent, it is defiled by external defilement. (The Buddha)

Cleaning and preparing the monastery for Vesak festival...



Marvelous and wonderful qualities of the Bodhisattva

A Buddha is a wonderful human being who arises once in uncountable number of eons. He is the savior of the beings in human and other worlds. He is the bringer of peace and happiness to the world. It is very difficult for an ordinary human to think of all the wonderful qualities of such a marvelous being. However, the following explanation is an attempt to describe the great qualities of the Bodhisattva which inclines us to reflect the greatness of the Buddha which helps our journey to enlightenment.

One day, a group of Bikkhus gathered in the assembly hall of Jetavana monastery in Savatthi. The Buddha had instructed the monks to do only two things when gathered as a group; either discusses the Dhamma or practice noble silence, and at that instance monks were talking about the marvelous qualities of the Buddha. What made this group of monks to have the discussion about the Buddha? They have listened to many Dhamma sermons about the previous lives of the Buddha and also about previous Buddhas. During the discussion, Ven. Ananda, the chief attendant to the Buddha joined the discussion. Meanwhile, the Buddha entered the hall and asked about what went on before his arrival. Ven. Ananda said that the monks were having a discussion about the marvelous and wonderful qualities of the Buddha. The Buddha, without interruption to the flow of discussion, permitted Ven. Ananda to elaborate on these wonderful qualities of the Buddha as it would be beneficial not only for the disciples gathered there, but also for the disciples of the future. According to Acchariya-abbhuta sutta (MN 123), Ven. Ananda says that 16 marvelous and wonderful qualities of the Buddha. These qualities had been explained by the Buddha to Ven. Ananda before this meeting.

Eventually, the Buddha added two more to the list of marvellous qualities.



Marvelous qualities

1. Mindful and fully aware, the Bodhisattva appears in the Tusita heaven.
2. Mindful and fully aware, the Bodhisattva remains in the Tusita heaven.
3. The Bodhisattva remains in the Tusita heaven for whole life span
4. Mindful and fully aware, the Bodhisattva passes away from the Tusita heaven and descends into mother's womb. Then an immeasurable light surpasses the luminosity of the Gods throughout many world systems. The radiant light sheds even into unhappy worlds where beings live in utter darkness and they come to know that there are other beings who live close by due to the power of this light.
5. With the Bodhisattva's descending into the mother's womb, four deities guard the mother and the Bodhisattva from dangers so that the mother and the Bodhisattva cannot be harmed by humans, non-humans or any other evil spirits
6. With the Bodhisattva's descending into mother's womb, the mother becomes virtuous by refraining from killing living beings, from stealing, from misconduct in sensual pleasures, from telling lies, from taking

next page

intoxicants, which are the basis for negligence.

7. With the Bodhisattva's descending into mother's womb, the mother has no sensual thoughts of any male and nobody can access her with sensual thoughts

8. With the Bodhisattva's descending into mother's womb, the mother lives with sense pleasures and enjoys life with them

9. With the Bodhisattva's descending into mother's womb, the mother does not face any illness and also she is free from fatigue. The mother can see the Bodhisattva in her womb with limbs that have not grown yet.

10. The mother passes away after seven days of the Bodhisattva's birth and appears in the Tusita heaven

11. The Bodhisattva's mother gives birth to him exactly after ten months of being in her womb while other human beings are born before ten months is completed.

12. The Bodhisattva mother delivers the Bodhisattva while standing unlike other mothers who deliver their babies either in a sitting posture or lying down

13. When the Bodhisattva emerges from mother's womb, deities receive him first and then human beings

14. The Bodhisattva does not touch the earth immediately after his birth; the deities take him in to his mother and inform her that a son of great power is born to her

15. When the Bodhisattva is born, he is totally clean, free from impure water, blood or anything from mother's womb. He is clean and clear just like a gem in a Kasi cloth (a cloth which is very soft, smooth and clear made in Kasi in India)

16. When the Bodhisattva is born, both the mother and the son are bathed by two jets of water that pour down from the sky, one is cool and the other is warm.

17. The little Bodhisattva, after stepping down from the hands of four deities, stands firmly on the ground and walks seven feet to the north. He has a white parasol over his head and surveys each direction before uttering the words of a human who's born in his last birth, "I am the greatest in the world, I am the best in the world, I am the foremost in the world. This is my last birth; there won't be any birth hereafter".

18. With the birth of the greatest human in the world in his last link of samsara, an immeasurable light surpassing the luminosity of the Gods passes throughout many world systems. The radiant light sheds into unhappy worlds where beings live in utter darkness and they come to know that there are other beings living around them.

Having heard of these marvelous and wonderful qualities from Ven. Ananda, the Buddha adds two more marvelous qualities of the Buddha.

19. The Tathagata is well aware of the feelings as they arise, as they are present and as they pass away.

20. The Tathagata is well aware of the perceptions as they arise, as they are present and as they pass away.

As we all know the birth of a Bodhisattva is a very rare happening in the universe, extraordinary events take place as mentioned in Acchariya abbhuta sutta. This very rare occurrence is due to the power of the Bodhisattva who is going to be the future Buddha. It is amazing to think how a new born child makes a declaration that he is the greatest in the world. Modern science and technology cannot in any way explain the occurrences in the life of the Buddha. The modern world is based on materiality and it evolves based on the wonders of new findings, inventions and innovations. Yet, humans can know understand these happenings in Bodhisattva's life through the development of right path. Therefore, let's embark on this noble search in this Vesak season, the best time to see the Buddha.



Venerable Nattarampotha Chandima thero, the Chief incumbent of Buddhist Vihara, Brisbane, Australia visited the HJMB recently. He is a contemporary monastic friend of the abbot Bhante Muditha. He has been living in Australia for decades assisting Buddhists and non-Buddhists.

Ceremonial opening of the Ottawa inter-community Buddhist Vihara in a New location
The new property for the Vihara provides enough space for typical activities and it is a long felt requirement. With the guidance of the abbot Ven. Dr. Walasmulle Sirisumana and support of Ven. Batadurwe Santhamanasa, the New Vihara is established and ceremonially opened on May 11th Saturday with the participation of distinguished invitees. An overnight Pirith chanting and offering a Sanghika Dana were also held to bless the new temple and the congregation. We wish Ottawa Buddhist Vihara blessing of triple gem.