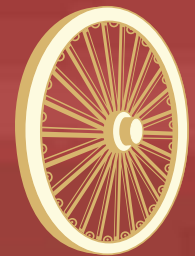


# The Great Buddha's Noble Teachings The Origin & Spread of Vipassana

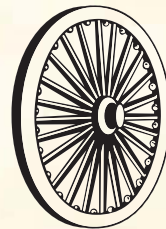


Acharya S.N. Goenka



The Great Buddha's Noble Teachings  
**The Origin & Spread of Vipassana**

Acharya S.N. Goenka



Vipassana Research Institute  
Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri

# Contents

• PREFACE .....	iv	29. They Became True Arahats .....	61	63. Brahmin Mahasala.....	129	93. The Destructive Casteism.....	189
1. Will Surely Become a Buddha .....	1	30. Return to Magadha.....	63	64. Alavaka.....	131	94. Advice to the Licchavis on Security of the Republic.....	191
2. Mahamaya's Dream.....	3	31. Sariputta and Moggallana.....	65	65. The Buddha Always Dwells Happy.....	133	95. Ambapali and the Licchavi Princes.....	193
3. Birth .....	5	32. Criticism Galore .....	67	66. Two Earthen Pots.....	135	96. At His Mother's Service .....	195
4. Ascetic Kaladevala .....	7	33. Censure and Praise .....	69	67. Angulimala .....	137	97. The Proper Way to Worship the Buddha .....	197
5. First Meditation of Child Siddhartha .....	9	34. Arrival at Kapilavatthu .....	71	68. Sundarika Bharadvaja .....	139	98. Proper Honour of the Buddha ..	199
6. Violent Devadatta.....	11	35. Yasodhara .....	73	69. Dhamma Messenger Punna .....	141	99. Ordination of Subhadda .....	201
7. Incomparable Archer .....	13	36. Rahula .....	75	70. Pukkusati, the King of Gandhara .....	143	100. The Mortal Remains of the Buddha .....	203
8. Brave Warrior and Amazing Horsemanship.....	15	37. Rahula's Ordination.....	77	71. Abusive Bharadvaja.....	145	101. The First Council and The Second Council .....	206
9. Suppabuddha and the Marriage of His Daughter .....	17	38. The Seven Who Went Forth .....	79	72. The Proper Way to Pay Respect the Buddha.....	147	102. The Emperor Who Won Hearts .....	209
10. Four Omens.....	19	39. Anathapindika .....	81	73. Untouchable Girl.....	149	103. The Third Council, Sona and Uttara .....	211
11. Going Forth .....	21	40. Supreme Brahmin, Sunita.....	83	74. Spurned .....	151	104. Bhikkhu Mahinda.....	213
12. Taking up the robes of a recluse .	23	41. Sopaka.....	85	75. The Amazing Tolerance of One Who is Established in Wisdom..	153	105. Sanghamitta.....	215
13. The Journey to Magadha .....	25	42. Slave Khujjuttara.....	87	76. Free from Anger .....	155	106. The Fourth Council .....	217
14. Alara Kalama.....	27	43. Sakyans and Koliyans .....	89	77. Brahmayu Was Blessed!.....	157	107. Restoration of Pure Dhamma .	219
15. Uddaka Ramaputta .....	29	44. Establishing the Bhikkhuni Sangha.....	91	78. Monk Daruciriya – In Seeing, Only Seeing.....	159	108. The Fifth Council .....	221
16. Self-Mortification and Giving Up Self-Mortification .....	31	45. Saccaka.....	93	79. Serving the Ailing .....	161	109. Venerable Bhikkhu Ledi Sayadaw .....	223
17. Five Dreams .....	33	46. Proud Beauty, Khema.....	95	80. Prisoner Becomes Free.....	163	110. The Sixth Council.....	225
18. Sujata's Porridge .....	37	47. Ban on Miracles .....	97	81. Dhammadinna .....	165	111. Householder Saint Saya Thetgyi.....	227
19. Mara Defeated.....	39	48. Bhikkhuni Sisupacala.....	99	82. Migaramata Visakha.....	167	112. Sayagyi U Ba Khin.....	229
20. The Enlightenment .....	41	49. Cinca Manavika .....	101	83. Change in Sujata .....	169	113. Sayagyi U Goenka and Mataji	231
21. The fruitless efforts of Mara's daughters .....	43	50. Sundari Paribbajika .....	103	84. Anandabodhi Tree .....	171	• Vipassana: an Intoduction .....	239
22. Tapussa and Bhallika.....	45	51. Ideal Couple .....	105	85. Who is an outcast? .....	173	• Keeping the Buddha's Words Secure.....	240
23. Gratitude of the Enlightened One	47	52. Prince Bodhi .....	107	86. Noble Bimbisara.....	175	• List of VRI Publications .....	241
24. Turning the Wheel of Dhamma ..	49	53. The Brahmin Magandiya.....	109	87. The Conspiracy to Kill the Buddha. ....	177	• List of Vipassana Meditation Centers.....	242
25. Yasa and Meal at Yasa's father house .....	51	54. Shower of Abuse .....	111	88. Nalagiri.....	179		
26. Go Messengers of Dhamma! Wander for Spread of Dhamma! ...	54	55. Sins Are Not Washed Away by a Dip in the River .....	113	89. I Myself Will Do The Killing ...	181		
27. Angry Cobra in the Cottage at Uruvela.....	57	56. The Buddha Dwells in Solitude ..	115	90. Terrified Ajatasattu .....	183		
28. False Arahats.....	59	57. Farmer Bharadvaja.....	117	91. Tolerance and Equanimity.....	185		
		58. Veranja.....	119	92. Kissing the Feet of the Buddha who is Full of Dhamma.....	187		
		59. Patacara .....	121				
		60. Kisa Gotami .....	123				
		61. Proper Sacrifice .....	125				
		62. Sonadanda: The Dhammas that Make one a Brahmin .....	127				



## Preface

This book contains the photographs of the beautiful paintings in the picture gallery at the Global Vipassana Pagoda, as well as the associated stories about important incidents from the life of the Buddha. A vast amount of information is available about the many monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen who benefited from Vipassana during the lifetime of the Buddha and also helped many others in coming out of their suffering. If one were to make a TV serial about the life of the Buddha along with his previous lives, it would run into more than 1000 episodes. This publication gives only an outline of the origin and spread of the great technique of Vipassana, discovered and taught by that supreme man, the Buddha.

In India, there are many misunderstandings about the Buddha. Many believe that he is called a ‘bhagavan’ because he was an incarnation of God Almighty. The truth is that he discovered Vipassana and used it to totally rid himself of all craving, aversion and ignorance; and thus became a ‘*bhagavā*’ or ‘bhagavan’ (literally, one who has totally destroyed one’s craving, aversion and ignorance).

After some time, his teaching started being called ‘Buddhism’ and his followers ‘Buddhists’. In reality, he only taught Dhamma. Those who followed his teaching were called *dhammiko*, *dhammī*, *dhammacārī*, *dhammavihārī* and not ‘Buddhists’. Buddhism and Buddhists are associated with a sect. The Buddha never formed a sect. He was against sectarianism. The word for Buddhism *bauddha* is not found in any text until centuries after the Buddha. In Pali there is no parallel word to *bauddha*.

There are so many other misconceptions about the Buddha which need to be removed in order to bring the reality to light. Otherwise, one would remain confused and not understand the truth. This publication will not remove all misconceptions, but should certainly help in removing some.

Why did Prince Siddhattha renounce royal comforts, his beautiful young wife and newborn baby and choose the difficult life of an ascetic? He had no quarrel with his family members and didn’t leave them due to tensions as a consequence of any quarrel. He had loving relations with all of them. Therefore, when he discovered the universal path of liberation from suffering, he shared this knowledge with his family and relatives in addition to innumerable suffering people of the world.

The sole purpose of his search was to discover the true cause of suffering and the right means for its eradication. He spent six years of his life making strenuous effort to discover the truth and he finally found the real solution to this problem. *Pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu*—the truth that he had never heard before manifested itself.

This truth was not prevalent in society nor was it being practised in the spiritual field. How then could he have heard of it? From whom could he have heard of it? Let us take a look at what was prevalent as the truth in the spiritual traditions in India during the Buddha’s time. Let us also look at the truth discovered by him which, far from being popular, was not even known?

In almost all traditions in those days, the belief was that the six sense doors (eyes, nose, ear, tongue, body and mind) constantly come in contact with their respective sense objects (form, odour, sound, taste, touch and thoughts). Because of this contact, one constantly generates *taṇhā*—craving to preserve and increase what is pleasant and aversion to get rid of what is unpleasant.

Whenever craving or aversion arises due to contact, suffering arises. Craving or aversion comes with suffering. Thus, the commonly held belief was that when the sense doors come in contact with sense objects, one should not generate *taṇhā*—craving or aversion. On coming in contact with sense objects, one should not react with craving or aversion.







# 1. Will Surely Become a Buddha

“Come, Revered Lord! Welcome to Samma Sambuddha Dipankara!”

These greetings were reverberating to welcome the Samma Sambuddha along with a big congregation of bhikkhus.

Ascetic brahmin Sumedha saw that indeed Dipankara Buddha had come very close. He had not been able to finish the work on the road that he had undertaken. There was still a yard or two of road that wasn't covered with sand. It was still muddy. This meant that the Lord would have to walk on mud. Sumedha quickly removed the deerskin he had on him and put it on the mud. But he saw that the mud was too deep for the deerskin to protect the feet of the Buddha. He quickly thought of a way out. He lay down prone on the deerskin. He didn't want the Buddha to walk on mud.

While lying down on the mud, Sumedha took the auspicious vow in his mind that he would also become a Samma Sambuddha like Dipankara Buddha, so that he would not only liberate himself but also help many to get liberation.

When Dipankara Buddha arrived there, he saw the mental state of the young ascetic. A Samma Sambuddha can see the past and the future. Dipankara Buddha immediately realized that Sumedha had accumulated enough merits of the past to become an arahat there and then if he were taught Vipassana. Having attained eight jhanic absorptions and the supra-mundane knowledge, Sumedha also understood this. But he did not wish for himself alone to become an arahat and get liberated; he would rather take the vow to become a Samma Sambuddha and help many in their liberation. He knew that he would have to accumulate merits to an extraordinary extent to become a

Samma Sambuddha. He comprehended that he would have to live countless difficult lives through countless eons. He was ready to face those difficulties.

Dipankara Buddha understood his mental state and saw that Sumedha would become a Samma Sambuddha in future. So he made a prediction with blessing that after four *infinities* and one lakh aeons, having accumulated requisite perfections, he would definitely become a Buddha by the name of Siddhattha Gotama.

*Dhuvam buddho bhavissasi.*

*(Buddhavaṃsa, 2.83-107)*

This auspicious declaration by the Buddha rang out through the sky and its echoes were heard for a long time.



At that time a Dhammic brahmin girl named Sumitta saw Sumedha and became attracted to him. She took the Dhamma vow that as long as this young man would go from life to life, fulfilling perfections, I would also do the same and in his last life become his wife. Dipankara Buddha saw her future and gave a prediction that her vow would be fulfilled. In the last birth of Sumedha, she would be his wife by the name of Yasodhara and would become liberated after learning Vipassana from him.

Dipankara Buddha's prediction and blessing lead to ascetic Sumedha getting a seed of enlightenment, therefore he was called a *Bodhibīja* (literally Seed of Enlightenment). Since Bodhi sprouted in his mind, he was called *Buddhankura* (literally Bud of Enlightenment) and was therefore called a *Bodhisatta*.

