

Vol. 29, No. 3, 21 March, 2019. A monthly publication of the Vipassana Research Institute Website: www.vridhamma.org International website: www.dhamma.org

# WORDS OF DHAMMA

Vācānurakkhī manasā susaṃvuto, kāyena ca nākusalaṃ kayirā, Etetayokammapathevisodhaye,ārādhayemaggamisippaveditaṃ. Dhammapada -281 Maggavaggo Watchful of speech, well restrained in mind, let him do nought unskilful through his body. Let him purify these three ways of action and win the path realized by the sages.

# 50th anniversary of the Return and Spread of Dhamma: A great occasion to express gratitude to our teacher Mr. Goenkaji

We have strongly resolved to celebrate the Golden Jubilee 50th anniversary of the return and the spread of Vipassana, July 3, 2018 to July 2, 2019, throughout the year. It is hoped that this will be helpful in strengthening the daily practice of all students of Goenkaji. To this end, a one-day course will be held, daily, at the Global Vipassana Pagoda throughout the year. Old Students can avail the benefits of these courses on any day. In other places also, people will celebrate this Golden Jubilee ceremony by meditating and practising Dhamma even more seriously. This will be a true expression of gratitude to respected Mr. S. N. Goenkaji.

The vignettes from the life of the world renowned Vipassana teacher Mr. Satyanarayan Goenka, from the days prior to his coming into pure Dhamma, are given here with intent that it may inspire others when they see how a person steeped in devotional fervor from a very young age could change so much. We offer this series from his autobiography--**NL Part - 7** 

### Continued ...

# A New Birth A Strange Coincidence

On the first of September 1955 I reached the International Meditation Centre for the ten-day course. In the massive, recently constructed Mahāpāsāna Guhā, or 'Great Cave', a short distance away on Prom road near the Kaba Aye Peace Pagoda, 2500 scholarly bhikkhus from various countries were immersed in the reciting of the Tipitaka. The sacred work of the Sixth Saṅgāyana (Dhamma Council) was underway. Until then I had no inkling, even remotely, of its historical importance, though my friend U Chan Htoon had made me a member of one of the subcommittees of this gigantic undertaking. This subcommittee was in charge of the food arrangements and I was responsible for organising the vegetarian fare. Up to this point, all I knew about this undertaking was that a large number of bhikkhus were reciting their scriptures and it would last for a few years. Making food arrangements for public events always interested me and I was happy with this task.

After completing the ten-day Vipassana course I realised the vital importance of this great work. Prior to this, five such Sangāyanas had been organised over the span of 2500 years under contemporary scholar bhikkhus, who established the authenticity of the Buddha's words after examining them thoroughly and comprehensively. At present 2500 bhikkhus converging from different nations, were collectively reestablishing the authenticity of the Buddha's words that had been maintained in their respective countries with utmost care for centuries. The words were preserved in their original language of Pali and though the scripts and pronunciations in the various countries differed from each other, there was rarely any difference in their essential meaning. These 2500 scholars from the five countries were immersed in reestablishing the authenticity of the original teachings of the Buddha once again.



Respected Guruji and Mataji giving mettā to all beings at Dhamma Tapovana-1, on 2nd Jan. 2000 before the start of construction.

This Sangāyana was being held at the time when the first period of 2500 hundred years of the Buddha's teaching (sāsana) was ending, and the 2500 hundred years of the second period was beginning. As the course ended, Sayagyi U Ba Khin told me about an ancient belief that the second period of the Buddha sāsana would start with the spread of paññā. He further commented that the wisdom developed through Vipassana meditation would not only spread in Burma, but would return to its source, India, and from there spread all around the world. It was a coincidence that I received this priceless jewel in the year when the two periods of the teaching met – one ending and the other beginning. Truly a profound blessing for me.

# Kālāma Sutta

When I reached the meditation centre at the start of the course, I left my belongings in the assigned room and went to pay respects to Sayagyi. There I found a small booklet and on its first page these words from the  $K\bar{a}l\bar{a}ma$  sutta were written:

The Buddha gave the following advice to the Kālāmas:--

- Do not accept anything:
- because it has been believed traditionally for generations;
- because you have heard it many times;
- because it is believed by a large number of people;
- because it is in accordance with your scriptures;
- because it seems logical;
- because it is in line with your own beliefs and thinking;

• because it is proclaimed by your teacher, who has an attractive personality and for whom you have great respect.

Accept it only after you have realized it yourself at the experiential level, and have found it to be wholesome and beneficial to one and all. Then, not only accept it but also live up to it. (*Kalāma Sutta, AN 3:65, I 188-93*)

Then Sayagyi U Ba Khin told me that the visage of the Tathāgata was splendorous and respectworthy, yet he did not permit his teachings to be accepted on the basis of blind faith. Hence, he said to me, "Do not accept whatever I teach in blind faith. When you see with your own experience that it is totally beneficial, then alone accept it and carry it forth in your own life. You have come here for practising the teachings of the Buddha at the experiential level".

My heart welled up with joy upon hearing and reading these words of my Guru and the Buddha. How do I pay enough respect to such a one as the Buddha, and a teacher like Sayagyi U Ba Khin who say to develop these teachings based on one's own experience and accept them if they prove beneficial, and not to accept them blindly.

Until now, all the religious masters I had encountered had said to accept what they were saying in faith and devotion, and not to be hesitant or mistrusting in their words. Then enticing heavens were promised to believers, and dark hells to those who doubted them. And what was being said here? I was told not to merely accept what is taught on faith, but to experience the teachings for myself.

Hearing and reading about this essential religious truth, I felt truly blessed and made a firm resolve to unhesitatingly give it a trial at the experiential level.

# The Storm and then Peace

The camp started. Guruji taught us the sādhana of  $\bar{A}n\bar{a}p\bar{a}na$ and I began the practice of remaining aware of the incoming and outgoing breath. My morning sitting was good. Then we assembled in the dining hall at 11 a.m. There were only a handful of students, and Guruji asked everyone about their practice. Every individual present there said that they saw light during their meditation. When my turn came, I mentioned that there was strong itching and some other neutral sensations below the nostrils, but no light. After lunch we all went to our respective rooms.

I became unhappy. In those days I was a very vain person. With success having quickly been achieved far beyond expectations in so many fields, the mind had become very self-centred and arrogant. Due to this, even the smallest failure or undesirable happening used to become unbearable for me and my heart would become heavy. If anyone approached me at such times, he would likely become the victim of an unreasonable outburst of mine. I preferred being left alone with my misery. Nothing felt good at such times and now was no different. I didn't feel like going to the meditation cell.

Even when I pushed myself to go there, I could not observe even a couple of breaths. My mind simply refused to comply with the meditation instructions and my misery grew. I returned to my residence and lay down on the bed. But the agitation grew and a feeling of inferiority and failure took over as I began to contemplate on how I had become trapped: "This meditation is good and others are indeed benefitting from it, but I am not worthy of it. Other meditators are good people; one is a school teacher while another is a retired government officer. Their lives are simple and wholesome, and all of them experienced the divine light. I was the only one left out. I am a businessman with a cunning and calculating mind, while these persons are worthy candidates. Divine experience or flights to spiritual heights are not meant for a worldly person like me."

Now I was truly dejected. I felt so low that I decided to leave the camp and return home. I knew that the Centre's rules were very strict and I would not be given permission to leave. But I knew that Sayagyi left for his office after lunch, returning only in the evening at 6 p.m. My car would be coming by 5 p.m. with a few essentials from home that I had called for, so I could leave then. Even if I was unable to take my bags with me, it didn't matter as the driver could come back later to pick these up. Thus, with the intention of running away I packed my bags.

It was due to some past pāramīs (virtuous qualities) as well as my very good fortune that at that time I encountered Daw Mya Sein. She was a professor and the head of the Geography department at Rangoon University whom I knew. She was a scholar of high standing and had been very happy to see me participating in the meditation camp. But now seeing me so unhappy, she inquired as to the problem. I told her the truth, that I was going home before Sayagyi returned as the meditation was not suitable for me, or I was not suitable for this meditation.

"Why are these useless, unnecessary thoughts filled with

feelings of inferiority arising in your mind?" she asked. I replied with a heavy heart, "Everyone saw the divine light but I did not. I am not going to get anywhere with this, so why should I waste my time." She laughed and said, "During lunch time Sayagyi was truly praising your meditation. You have started experiencing sensations clearly in the area below the nostrils. Very few people are able to experience this on the first day. You are very lucky."

"What is so great about these sensations" I replied. "The main thing is to experience divine light. Divine light carries so much significance in our tradition." But she explained once again, "Sayagyi has instructed you to give importance to the sensations. Whether you see light or not is irrelevant as it is only a marker on the path of meditation. But at this point, the most important aspect of meditation is the sensations in the region of the nostrils. In due course, these sensations will spread throughout the body and be the medium of a successful meditation. There is no doubt that you will succeed in your endeavour. Just wait for one more night. If you must go, then take the decision in the morning," she added earnestly. "Now when you sit for meditation don't give any importance to light. You are getting such strong sensations below your nostrils, just focus on that along with the breath. This is what will help you progress." I though it was too late to leave then anyway, so I might as well do as she said. Though not fully convinced, I decided to stay for one more night.

I went to my cell at six that evening and gave my all to observing sensations below the nostrils along with the breath, and made a firm resolve not to pay attention to whether I saw light or not. Focusing my entire attention on sensations, as suggested by Daw Mya Sein, I also remembered our teacher's words that breath and sensations were the important factors for us. I was now fully immersed in meditation, and with great surprise I saw lights here and there; indeed light filled the entire space. I remained firm in my resolve not to pay any attention to light, and that sensation alone was my point of focus. After some time, there was not just the presence of divine light but I could hear celestial sounds too. The sound of a huge water fall pervaded one ear while the other ear was inundated with sweet sounds of chimes. But now even these divine sounds could not distract me. I had read a lot about divine light and primal celestial sound and always gave huge importance to them, but now I decided not to pay any attention to them. Rather I made a firm resolve that my meditation practice must only be based on sensations and I kept my focus steadfastly on them. After some time I saw that, besides the light and the sound, some additional aspects of the sixth sense were becoming active, but I ignored these as well and continued giving all importance to sensations.

I was very happy when I emerged from my cell at 9 p.m. that evening. The dejected feeling I had experienced in the afternoon had vanished, and there was absolutely no question of my running away. I remain to this day immensely grateful to Daw Mya Sein who truly helped me to overcome the desire to escape which had arisen in me. Had I been so foolish as to run away, I would have been deprived of this priceless jewel forever. I am also deeply grateful to my friend U Chan Htoon who brought me to this path, suggesting that I give this beneficial technique at least one try.

My progress surpassed all expectations. And when Vipassana was given after two days, the experience was truly extraordinary. The entire body melted into a mass of atoms, with varied movements and sensations. This inner world was totally unknown to me. That there was a constant flow of varied sensations throughout the body was something that I could have never even conceived of. I felt as if I had entered a magical land.

Vipassana was given in the morning before lunch. When Sayagyi came for checking he said, "What has been received by you is invaluable. Now you must ensure that you never leave it." He called for an assistant to bring a blanket. Covering my head and face with it, the assistant guided me from the cell to my room so that I did not get distracted by some external stimuli and thus lose this precious reality within. I was told to lie on my bed and meditate; a helper would bring my food to the room. While eating, too, I was to remain aware of these sensations, being careful not to break the continuity. I did as I was told, which was to see that the inner awareness with paññā continued in every posture – sitting, standing, walking, lying, eating and drinking.

The days passed. I remained immersed in meditation during which I came across many unusual experiences. The inert body became enlivened with no solidity anywhere; only wavelets, wavelets everywhere. The entire spinal cord turned into a mass of wavelets and hundreds of openings on the head burst into wavelets, and then from the top of the head a fountain erupted. By the end of the course it felt as if tonnes of weight had been lifted off me. I felt so light, as if the gravitational pull of the earth was no more and I was ready to fly in the air.

Once during the course I did consider that all of this might be an imagination. But my teacher gave me advice on how to check whether it was reality or not, and I realised that this was neither imagination nor hypnotism. It was the inner truth. A layer of ignorance exists on the surface of the mind which does not allow us to realise the truth. With the right application of the Buddha's beneficent teachings, this external layer was broken and a new inner world was revealed, just like a chicken before being hatched, is in ignorance of another reality.

With this outer layer covering me no more, I felt as if I was born again; just like we could say a bird is born from its mother's womb in an egg, and then is born a second time when it hatches out of that egg. I too came out of my mother's womb with the layer of ignorance covering me, and now this powerfully beneficent insight had helped break that layer, giving me a second birth. This second birth was my real birth.

I had not taken the sacred thread as per our Hindu traditional beliefs. This being due to my stubborn resolve of not taking it unless and until our society permitted everyone, including the lowest born, to take the sacred thread. As a result I was still considered a low born. I was fine, indeed even happy with this state of affairs. But now, with this sadhana, I had become twice born in the true sense of the word. After all, how does one become twice born merely by fulfilling the ritual of taking the thread? But by coming to this meditation centre and breaking the shell of ignorance, I had truly become twice born. I was blessed, immeasurably blessed.

(from the Autobiography of Mr. SN Goenka) -Continued...

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### **Centuries Corpus Fund for the Operation of Global Vipassana Pagoda**

As desired by Guruji, a Centuries Corpus Fund has been set up to meet the daily expenses of GVP. To fulfill this desire of Guruji, Global Vipassana Foundation (GVF) calculated that if each of 8960 persons donates Rs 1,42,694/- then the amount will be Rs 125 crores. The interest earned from this amount will meet its daily expenses. If one cannot deposit this amount at one time he can do it in instalments in a year. (Some have deposited the money and it is hoped this amount will be collected soon.)

This is a great occasion for all meditators and non-meditators to increase their parami by contributing to this fund

For more information and making contribution please contact GVF office: 1. Mr. Derik Pegado, 9921227057. or 2. Mr. Bipin Mehta, Mo. 9920052156, Arc. Office: 022-62427512 / 62427510; Email--Mr. Bipin audits@globalpagoda.org; Bank Details: 'Global Vipassana Foundation', Axis Bank Ltd., Sonimur Apartments, Timber Estate, Malad (W), Mumbai - 400064, Branch - Malad (W). Bank A/c No.- 911010032397802; IFSC No.- UTIB0000062; Swift code: AXISINBB062.

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# **Celebrating 50 years of the Journey of** Dhamma

To mark the Golden Jubilee year of the completion of the first Vipassana Course in India, the following events have been organised:

### 1). Daily One-day courses at Global Pagoda

Eveyday one-day courses 11a.m. to 5 pm. Those who have completed at least one 10-day course taught by S. N. Goenka in the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin can take part in them. It is necessary to know the number of participants so that proper arrangements can be made for them. Therefore please register. Registration is easy. Just write 'yes' with 'date' on this mobile no. 8291894644 on Whats App or by SMS on 8291894645...

### 2). 1-day course on 3rd July at Panchayati Wadi, Mumbai

The second two one-day courses in a day are arranged again at the Marwari Pancayati Wadi for Vipassana meditators in this tradition on July 3, 2019. First session 9am to 1:30pm and Second session 3 to 7:30pm. Please arrive 45 minutes before the course starts for accommodation allotment. Venue: Pancayati Wadi rest-house, 41, second Panjarapol lane, CP Tank - Madhavbaug, For registration of the above two events, please book. Mumbai-400004. Contact: +91 9930268875, +91 9967167489, +91 7738822979 (Tel booking: 10 am to 8 pm daily). Online registration: http://oneday.globalpagoda.org/register

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### 3). Golden Jubilee Celebrations, Igatpuri

On the 50th anniversary of the first Vipassana course in India, what better tribute to our Dhamma Father Goenkaji could be than to meditate together in a course-setting.

Accordingly, we have organized 10-day Special Courses from 3rd to 14th July 2019 at all the 3 centres located in Igatpuri campus, as follows:

(A) Special 10-day Course at both • Dhamma Tapovana-1 and 2 (Eligibility criteria, the same as 20-day course), and (B) Old Student 10-day Course at • Dhamma Giri: (Eligibility criteria, the same as Satipatthana Course) On completion of this course, over the next 3-days from 14th to 16th July, we plan to have paper presentations & some other programs. For taking part in the 3-day program one will have to register oneself separately.

Online registration is as follows: • Dhamma Giri: https://www.dhamma.org/en/ schedules/schgiri • Dhamma Tapovana-1: https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/ • Dhamma Tapovana-2: https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/ schtapovana schtapovana2 `@**≬**@

Cimarcin 5 information Courses in manibar		
Date	Course sites	Age 10-16,
First Sunday	Ulhasnagar, Churchgate, Thane, Khar	Registration
Second Sunday	Dombivili, Andheri	2 days before the Course, i.e.
Third Sunday	Thane, Ghatkopar, Goregaon, D. Vipula	Thursday &
Fourth Sunday	Airoli, Dhamma Vipula	Friday.

### Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai

"Please call or send a text SMS message with the name & age of the child two days in advance for registration."

Course Timing: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Registration Timing: 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location. Course Venues:- Ulhasnagar: A Block 703/1405, Gokul Nagar, Behind Netaji School, Near Mahesh Granite, Tel. 9970755130, Churchgate: Contact: Prashant Rao, Mob. 9820059287, Thane: Contact: Deepali Kadam, 9833116107, Khar: Mahabodhi Buddha Vihar, Baudha Smashan Bhumi, Carter Rd. Danda, Khar West, Mumbai-52, Mob. 9768123934, Andheri: Mayfair Meridian Meditation Hall, Ceaser Road, Off S.V. Road, Amboli, Near St. Blaise Mob. 9769926169, 9967813469. Dombivili: Tilak School, Tilak Nagar, Dombivli, Mob. 9819866615, 9029423540, Ghatkopar: SNDT School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar (W), Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25011096, 25162505. Goregaon: Vipassana Counselling and Research Centre, Siddharth Municipal General Hospital, Goregaon (W), Mob. 990867538, 8600044136, Airoli: Dnyandeep School, sector 2, Airoli, Mobile: 9969267720, 9892565765. --Please call two days in advance for registration. NB: \*Please bring a cushion. \*Please register on the specified phone numbers. If unable to attend after registration, please \*Inform in advance. \*Please arrive on time for the course. `~(9}**≬**@?

# Peaceful demises

• Sri Phundeji as an architect was the prominent person in the construction of Dhammagiri and Dhammavipula. Guruji appointed him Asstt teacher in1993 and Acarya in 2008. He conducted several courses, helped many meditators to grow in Dhamma and brought many to the path of Dhamma. On his Dhamma tour while he was in Sri Lanka he had a heart attack. He died peacefully on Jan, 8. Mangala metta to him from vipassana meditators .

Sri N. Y. Lokhande, also from Mumbai was associated with vipaasana right from the beginning of its introduction here. He organised many lectures of Guruji, brought many to the path of Dhamma. He was appointed Asstt teacher in 1997 and Ācārya in 2003. He served a lot of people. After an illness for some time he passed away peacefully on31st Jan. Mangala metta to him from all meditators.

• Mr. Samarn Sirisaeng (AT 2007) from Thailand passed away peacefully on January 30th. Together with Mrs. Sermsong Sirisaeng, they had served Dhamma well as CCTs for six years and were appointed ATs in the year 2007. His death is a great loss for us. Much metta to departed one.

• Kerry Waters, SAT from Pomona, QLDs, Australia passed away peacefully surrounded by Dhamma friends on December 23, 2018. She started meditating with Goenkaji in the early '70s and was involved in Dhamma service right from the beginning. She and her husband Chris were involved in setting up non-center courses in Australia & around the world including in China. They were involved in the earliest days in Dhamma Bhumi and also Dhamma Rasmi. Just two days before Kerry died she was still doing registration for Dhamma Rasmi. She was a Dhamma gal right to her last breath.

#### 2. Mrs. Manisha Sampat Laware, Newly Appointed Assistant Teachers 1. Dr. Shefali Shree Jog, Mumbai 2. Mr. Karna Bahadur Khadka, Nepal

- 3. Mr. Kamal Dhungel, Nepal
- 4. Mr. Dorji Tsering Sherpa, Nepal
- 5. Mr. Lila Neupane, Nepal

#### 6. Mrs. Natnapa Prapatpotipong, Thailand

- Children course teachers
- Mr. Adesh Salvi, Poladpur Raigad
- Mahad Raigad, 3. Mrs.Kunta Patil, Hatkangale, Kolhapur,
- 4. Dr. Amit Patil, Hatkangale, Kolhapur,
- 5. Mrs. Simran Kaur Nathani 6. Mrs.Budsaba Boonwong
- Thammarat, Thailand. 7. Mr. Tay Kok Fong, Malaysia
- 8. Mr. Chok MainFui, Malaysia
- 9. Ms Vivian Tan Loke Ying, Malaysia

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The occasion of Mr. S.N. Goenka's 95th birthday & the 50th anniversary of the Return of Dhamma to India was celebrated on 30th January 2019 in the Global Vipassana Pagoda's main hall. The film 'Journey of Dhamma' was shown here in two parts. The audience is seen in the hall..

# One-day Mega course and Mahāsanghadāna at Global Vipassana Pagoda for 2019

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May, Buddha Purnima; Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> July, Ashadha-Purnima (Dhammachakka Pravartan day); Sunday 29th September On the occasion of 5th death Anniversary of Rev. Goenkaji & Sharad Purnima. **One-day mega course** at GVP onwards till 4 pm. Non-meditators may participate in the 3 pm discourse. Please come only with prior registration. *Samaggānam tapo sukho:* Avail of the immense benefit of meditating in large group. For registration Contact: 022-62427544, 022-28451170- Extn: 9, Mob. 8291894644 (Tel. booking: 11 am to 5 pm daily). Online registration: http://oneday.globalpagoda.org/register

Sańghadāna on 29th September 2019, On the occasion of the death Anniversary of Rev. Goenkaji + Sharad Purnima, & 12th January 20120, on the occasion of death Anniversary of Res. Mataji and Sayagyi U Ba Khin are being organized at 9 a.m. respectively. Those who wish to take part in the meritorious Sańghadāna, they should Contact: 1. Mr Derik Pegado, 9921227057. or 2. Sri Bipin Mehta, Mo. 9920052156, Tel: 022- 62427512 (9:30 AM to 5:30 PM), Email: audits@globalpagoda.org.

## The Construction of Dhammalaya 2

To give free accommodation to Dhamma Sevakas and meditators who come here for a one-day course from far-off places, Dhammalaya-2 will be constructed soon. Those who want to earn merit by contributing to the construction work should contact at above GVF address.

## DHAMMA DOHA

Anukampā ho santa kī, mukti dvāra de khola; Dekha anitya asanga ho, pāye nitya amola.

If a saint is compassionate and opens the door to liberation Then one should observe/ experience impermanence without being attached to it and should experience priceless permanence. *Nija anubhava se jāna le, bhale bure kā jñāna;* 

Karen parākrama dharma-tapa, sadhe amita kalyaṇa.

Know from your experience what is good and what is bad And then by working hard and making right efforts, you will do yourself immense good.

### Kadama-kadama para satya hī, abubhava hotā jāya; Aisā satapatha dharama kā, manjila taka pahuncāya.

At every step one will experience the truth, The royal road of Dhamma is such that it will take one to the goal.

Kara len dūra kaṣāya saba, yahī janama kā dhyeya; Durlabha jīvana manuja kā, sādhen anupama śreya.

The goal of life is to remove all defilements, It is very rare to be born a man, therefore work hard to get the highest end of life.

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