

Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as taught by S. N. Goenka

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Words of Dhamma

*Kiñcāpi so kammaṃ karoti pāpakaṃ,
kāyena vācā uda cetasā vā.
Abhabbo so tassa pañicchadāya,
abhabbatā diṭṭhapadassa vuttā.
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṃ pañītaṃ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.*

— K.N., *Khuddakapāṭhapāli-6-12, Ratanasuttaṃ.*

Even if a highly evolved sadhak who has attained the state of Sotapanna, does an unwholesome act by the body, speech or mind, he cannot hide it. It has been said (by the Buddha) that it is (impossible to hide a negative act done) by (the one) who has realized nibbana. Truly! This too is a sterling jewel in the Arya sangha. With these words of truth, may all be happy.

The Great Buddha's Noble Teaching, The Origin & Spread of Vipassana

A graphic account of Buddha's life as it relates to Vipassana meditation is on display in the large Art Gallery at the Global Vipassana Pagoda in Mumbai. The text that accompanies each of these paintings was written by Respected Guruji. Burmese artists who resided on the Global Pagoda grounds at Guruji's invitation laboured tirelessly while transferring the Indian artist Shri Kamath's drawings to canvas. The captivating story of the Buddha is beautifully depicted through these paintings. This state of the art facility also has an audio listening device for each painting. A book containing these paintings and their stories is also available in numerous languages. For the benefit of our readers a few of these episodes are narrated below.

— Editor

Yasodhara

The Buddha was not oblivious of the virtues of Yasodhara. Therefore, he himself went to her residence. King Suddhodana accompanied the Buddha, holding his alms-bowl. Sariputta and Mogallana also joined them. The Buddha instructed his chief disciples that they should not stop Yasodhara from whatever way she chose to pay her respects to the Buddha.

It is not allowed for any female to touch the body of a bhikkhu, not even the feet. Here, he was not just an ordinary bhikkhu, but an arahat, the Fully Enlightened One. No female, even if she were his wife in the past, should touch him. But infinite metta arose in the mind of the Compassionate One. Yasodhara came and seated herself before the Buddha and paid respects in the manner she wished by holding his feet. No one stopped her. Then, King Suddhodana described the

virtues of Yasodhara in brief—

1. When you renounced household life and there was no hope of your return, many royal princes wanted to marry this young lady. But my daughter did not even raise an eye to look at them.
2. When my daughter heard that having become a samana you had shaved your head, she also got her head shaved.
3. When she learnt that you had taken to ochre-coloured robes, she also gave up her fine royal attire and accessories, and took to coarse ochre robes.
4. When she heard that you were having only one meal a day, she also restricted herself to just one meal a day.
5. When she heard that you had given up sleeping on high luxurious beds, she also started sleeping on a low platform.
6. When she heard that you had given up adornments, perfumes and other bodily decorations, she also refrained from using them.
7. When she heard that you had given up enjoying dance, music and all kinds of other entertainments, she also kept herself away from them.

This was bound to happen.

Countless aeons ago, when Siddhartha Gotama was the ascetic Sumedha in one of his past births, he had obtained blessings from the then Buddha, Dipankara Buddha, that he would become a Buddha named Gotama. At that time, Yasodhara, who was then a brahmin girl, had obtained blessings that she would be his life partner and would support him through his future lives.

Now, this was their last birth. Being his wife, how could

it be possible that she would not support Siddhartha Gotama to become the Fully Enlightened One?

If Yasodhara were not thus mentally prepared, she would have grieved like an ordinary householder when her husband went forth. She would have cursed her husband for deserting her. She would not have given up her adornments, but being extremely beautiful and attractive young princess, she would have chosen to marry some handsome prince and enjoy the luxury of a happy married life.

However, Yasodhara was the life-partner of a Bodhisattva (future Buddha) for many past lives. How could she act thus? She understood the high aim with which her husband had left home. Instead of grieving, she kept wishing him success in his great mission.

Later, Yasodhara, along with Mahapajapati Gotami, helped in establishing the Bhikkhuni Sangha. She helped many women. She herself not only became an arahat freeing herself from the misery of the cycle of birth and death, but also inspired others to walk on this Noble Path.

Such was Rahula’s mother, Yasodhara, a pure-hearted Dhamma being.

Rahula

Standing together with Rahula, on the verandah of the palace, Rahula’s mother Yasodhara acquainted Rahula with his father the Buddha as they watched him walking down the royal path along with his Order.

Esa hi tuyha pitā narasīho

Look! The one who is like a lion amongst men, he is your father.

Āyatayuttasusanñhitanāso

Look! How long and shapely his nose is.

Gopakhumo abhinīlasunetto

The sclera of his eyes is a lovely blue and his eyelashes are like those of a calf.

Indadhanū abhinīlabhamūko

His blue-black eyebrows are rainbow shaped.

Vaṭṭasuvaṭṭasusanñhitagīvo

His neck is round and well-formed.

Sīhahanū migarājasarīro

His jaw is like that of a lion; indeed, his entire body has the grace of a lion.

Kañcanasucchaviuttamavaṇṇo

He has a magnificent golden complexion.

Añjanavaṇṇasunīlasukesō

His hair is jet black like the colour of kajol.

Kañcanapaṭṭavisuddhanalāto;

His forehead is like a band of pure gold.

Osadhipañḍarasuddhasu-uṇṇo,

The hair between his eyebrows is light yellow like the osadhi star.

Puññasasaṅkanibho mukhavaṇṇo,

His face glows like a radiant moon on a full moon night.

Devanarāna piyo naranāgo;

Both men and gods adore this man who is like a majestic elephant.

Khattiyasambhavaaggakulīno

He is born in the foremost khattiya clan.

Devamanussanamassitapādo

The gods and humans worship him,

Sīlasamādhipatiññhitacitto,

because his mind is well-established in sīla (morality) and samādhi (concentration).

Gacchatinīlapathe viya cando, tāraṇāpariveñhitarūpo;

Just as the moon in the sky moves surrounded by stars,

Sāvakamajjhagato samañḍo

he moves surrounded by his disciples.

Lokahitāya gato naravīro

The courageous among men, who renounced household life for the benefit of humanity.

Esa hi tuyha pitā narasīho

Thus is your father, like a lion amongst men.

(Vinayapiṭaka, Sāratthadīpani Ṭikā 3.221-23)

Seeing the delightful manner in which Yasodhara introduced her former husband to her son Rahula, it is clear that she neither nurtured anger in her mind, nor grief regarding her husband’s renunciation. On the contrary, she had deep faith in him and was proud of his success in achieving the aim of his renunciation—to help suffering humanity. She wanted similar thoughts to arise in the mind of her son. Therefore, she gave such proper and admirable introduction.

Rahula’s Ordination

Introducing his father to Rahula, his affectionate mother Yasodhara said to him—‘Go to your father and ask for your inheritance. He has four pots filled with jewels.’

What were the four pots filled with jewels? The four Noble Truths, which are more valuable than jewels. These are truly invaluable.

Therefore, it is said—

Yaṃ kiñci vittaṃ idha vā huraṃ vā,

saggesu vā yaṃ ratanaṃ pañitaṃ;

na no samaṃ atthi tathāgatena,

idaṃpi buddhe ratanaṃ pañitaṃ;

(Khuddakapāṭhapaṭi 6, Ratanasuttaṃ- 3)

Whatever treasure there is in this world or beyond, whatever precious jewel is in the heavens;

there is none equal to the Tathāgata.

In the Buddha is this precious jewel.

The precious jewels of the four Noble Truths are in the Buddha, which he has experienced himself and which he is sharing with others. You have a right to it. You are the heir. This is your inheritance. Go, ask him for it!

Yashodhara thought to herself, ‘I shall also obtain the inheritance of this invaluable jewel. But, due to various reasons, the Buddha has not yet established the order of nuns. Whenever he establishes the order of nuns, I shall get ordained and walking in his footsteps, I shall follow his teachings and after attaining liberation, I shall dedicate myself to show this path to others for their benefit. What will my beloved son gain by the sensual pleasures in the palace? If he grows up under the guidance of his father, he will earn the invaluable treasure of Dhamma. His life will be truly successful.’

Thinking thus, she bade goodbye to her son saying, ‘Go, my son, ask your father for your inheritance.’

Rahula happily went to the Buddha. As he approached, he experienced great peace and said,

‘*Sukhā te, samaṇa, chāyā’ti.*’

O recluse, even your shadow is pleasing to me.

It is natural to feel joy on seeing the Enlightened One. In his presence, all evil states disappear. Rahula obtained the benevolent protection of his father. The Buddha gave the invaluable treasure of the Dhamma to Rahula as his inheritance. He called Sariputta and instructed him to ordain Rahula.

Growing up in a Dhamma environment, Rahula learnt Vipassana, and practising it, he became an arahat. Rahula was fortunate. His inheritance was infinitely beneficial.

From- The Great Buddha's Noble Teaching, The Origin & Spread of Vipassana. (The book on Buddha's Life History.)

Kalyanamitta,
Satya Narayan Goenka

Question and Answer During STP Course

Q. From where do kalāpas (smallest indivisible units of matter) arise and to what do they pass away? Something cannot come from nothing?

Goenkaji: Whence did the universe start, and how was it created? This is speculation, how all philosophies start. The Buddha called them all irrelevant questions. They have nothing to do with misery, its arising, its eradication, and the way to its eradication. Creation is going on every moment: kalāpas are created, they arise and pass, and ignorance of this arising and passing results in misery. Anything else is meaningless. Human life is short and you have such a big job to change the habit pattern of the mind at the deepest level

and reach full liberation. Don't waste your time: work, and the reality of your experience will later on reveal everything.

Q. What is the cause behind the existence of this world of mind and matter?

Goenkaji: Ignorance generates saṅkhāras (mental reaction, mental conditioning), and saṅkhāras multiply ignorance. The entire universe is created by this mutual support, nothing else.

Q. How did ignorance begin? It could not co-exist with love, wisdom, and knowledge?

Goenkaji: Certainly, but it is more important to see the ignorance of this moment and let purity come. Otherwise it becomes a philosophical question, which doesn't help.

(Discourses on the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta Day Seven by S.N. Goenka)

Future Course Schedule and Applications

Information on future Courses is available on the internet. All types of bookings are currently available online only as per the Government's new rules due to Covid-19. Applications will not be accepted on paper. Therefore, you are requested to check the following link and apply online directly for your appropriate course or for dhamma service at Dhammagiri:

<https://www.dhamma.org/en/schedules/schgiri>

Please apply similarly as per the schedule of other centres. Here is the link for all Indian centres:

<https://www.dhamma.org/en-US/locations/directory#IN>

New VRI website for applying for courses:

<https://schedule.vridhamma.org/> and for worldwide courses: www.dhamma.org

Very Important Notices

1. Central IVR (Interactive Voice Response) number-022-50505051. Applicants can call this number from their registered mobile number (the number mentioned in the form), to check their status, cancel, transfer or re-confirm their application. They can also contact the centre through this system. This is a central number for all Vipassana centers in India.

2. If you are sending non-centre Dhamma programs to be published in Newsletters, please send through the CAT (Coordinator Area Teacher) and if it's for a centre, it should come through the Centre Teacher.

Vipassana Activities in Greater Mumbai Area

There are several Vipassana Centres & Meditation Facilities in Greater Mumbai area- Please View the link: <https://mumbai.vridhamma.org/>

1-day Courses and Group Sitting Information in India: Please view the link below:

<https://www.vridhamma.org/1-day-Courses-Information-in-India>

Additional Responsibility

1. Shri Vinod Vatani, (SAT) to serve as CT for Dhamma Ajanta, Aurangabad.

New Responsibility Teachers

1. Shri A. Subramaniam, Chennai.

Senior Assistant Teachers

1. Shri. Shivram Sampat Wagh, Jalgaon

New Appointments Assistant Teachers

1. Shri Suresh Vairagade, Raipur,
2. Shri Vishal Kamble, Satara, (MS)
3. Dr. Apeksha Khobragade, Nagpur
4. Shri Kalpesh Patel, Mahemadabad (Guj.)
5. Shri Ratanshibhai Patel, Navsari, South Gujarat
6. Mrs. Sangeeta Taji, Jalana MS

7. Shri Govind Sabhay, Rajkot

8. Shri Avinash Chincholikar, Aurangabad

9. Shri Bishaka Chakma, Mizoram

10. Shri Mohan Ramchandran, Chennai

11. Shri Siddharth Sonkamble, Kutch.

12. Shri Sunil Kulkarni, Nanded

13. Shri Sham Athawale, Akola

14. Shri Sunil Kumar Sinha, Bihar

15. Dr. Ila Thakrar, Surat

Children Course Teachers

1. Mr. S. K. Kumaran, Madurai

2. Mr. M. Ganeshan, Madurai

3. Mr. M. Sudhakar, Chennai

4. Mrs. Anandavalli, Chennai

5. Mrs. Savari Prasanna Simon, Chennai

6. Mrs. Rajeswari A., Chennai

7. Mrs. Gautama Meena, Chennai

8. Ms. Natratamon Kaweera, Thailand

9. Mr. Yuichiro Harada, Japan

One-Day Mega Courses at Global Vipassana Pagoda, Gorai, Mumbai

- (1) **Sunday**– 15th January, 2023, Mataji’s (5th Jan.) and Sayagi U Ba Khin’s (19th Jan.) *Death Anniversary*.
- (2) **Sunday**– 07th May, 2023 Buddha Purnima,
- (3) **Sunday**– 02nd July, 2023 Ashadha-Pūrṇimā (Dhammacakkappavattana day)
- (4) **Sunday**– 1st October, 2023 Sharada-Pūrṇimā plus Pujya Goenkaji’s Death Anniversary.

In addition there are **Daily One-Day Courses** being held in the Pagoda for Vipassana Students. Please follow the link to join and take advantage of the immense benefit of meditating in a large group. **Contact:** 022 50427500 (Board Lines) Mob. +91 8291894644 (from 11 am to 5 pm).

Online registration: <http://oneday.globalpagoda.org/register> Email: oneday@globalpagoda.org (Pl. bring a bottle so you can fill it with drinking water at GVP.)

Dhammalaya Stay during Mega Courses:—Meditators can stay at Dhammalaya during mega courses and avail maximum benefit. Please **contact:** 022 50427599 or email-info.dhammalaya@globalpagoda.org

For any other information for One day or Mega courses you may **contact:** info@globalpagoda.org or pr@globalpagoda.org

DHAMMA DOHA

*Buddha ratana-sā jagata meṇ, anya ratana nā koya;
Satya vacana ke teja se, dharama prakāśita hoyā.*

There is no other jewel like the Buddha in the world;
May dhamma radiate with the power of the words of truth.

*Dharama ratana-sā jagata meṇ, anya ratana nā koya;
Satya vacana ke teja se, dharama prasārita hoyā.*

There is no other jewel like jewel of dhamma in the world;
May dhamma spread with the power of the words of truth.

*Saṅgha ratana-sā jagata meṇ, anya ratana nā koya;
Satya vacana ke teja se, dharama pratiṣṭhita hoyā.*

There is no other jewel like the Sangha in the world;
May dhamma get established with the power of the words of truth.

*Tīnoṇ ratnoṇ meṇ nihita, dharama ratana pahacāna;
Binā dharama nā buddha hai, nahīn saṅgha yaha jāna.*

Recognise the dhamma jewel inherent in all the three jewels;
Know that without dhamma there is no Buddha, no Sangha.

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