

Vipassana Newsletter

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin,

as taught by S. N. Goenka

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WORDS OF DHAMMA

*akkocchi ma½ avadhi ma½
ajini ma½ ah±si me
ye ca ta½ upanayhanti
vera½ tesa½ na sammati.*

*akkocchi ma½ avadhi ma½
ajini ma½ ah±si me
ye ca ta½ nupanayhanti
vera½ tes³pasammati.*

*na hi verena ver±ni
sammant²dha kud±cana½
averena ca sammanti
esa dhammo sanantano*

—Dhammapada 3-5

"He abused me, he struck me,
He defeated me, he robbed me,"
The enmity of those harbouring
Such thoughts are not appeased.

"He abused me, he struck me,
He defeated me, he robbed me,"
The enmity of those not harbouring
Such thoughts are appeased.

Hatreds never cease through hatred
In this world;
Through love alone they cease.
This is an eternal law.

THE CAUSE OF MISERY AND ITS ERADICATION

by S. N. Goenka

(The following is an extract from "Was The Buddha A Pessimist?" in which Goenkaji has sought to dispel misconceptions about the Buddha and his teaching.)

The Buddha wanted to create an inclination in the minds of the people to free themselves from misery. This was why he taught the truth about suffering, its cause and how to come out of it. In this light, how can the following statement stand? "The Buddha's view of life seems to be lacking in courage and confidence. Its emphasis on sorrow, if not false, is not true..." If anything, such a statement only proves the writer's ignorance of the Buddha's teaching. Who can deny the reality of suffering associated with birth, decay, disease and death, association with the unpleasant and disassociation from the pleasant; the suffering of wanted things not happening, and of unwanted things happening? Are not these realities true?

We get attached to the five aggregates thinking, "This is my mind," "This is my body," and we cling to them as "me" and "mine". This deep attachment to these five aggregates leads to the repeated cycle of birth and death. Who can deny the truth of this reality of suffering? All the spiritual traditions of India accept the cycle of becoming as misery and aim at getting liberated from this cycle, to attain the deathless.

The Buddha said in this context:

Dukkha± j±ti punappuna½.

(Before becoming liberated) I took repeated births in this misery.

Before attaining Buddhahood, a *Bodhisatta* thinks thus:

Kiccha½ vat±ya½ loko ±panno.

Oh, all people suffer so much!

J±yati ca j²yati ca m²yati ca cavati ca upapajjati ca.

Getting born, decaying, dying, passing away and arising again.

Atha ca panimassa dukkhassa nissara°a½ nappaj±n±ti jar±mara°assa.

One does not know how to come out of the misery of repeated births and deaths.

A *Bodhisatta* searches for the answer and rediscovers the noble liberating path of *s²la-sam±dhi-paññ±* (morality, concentration and experiential wisdom) using which he liberates himself and helps many others to get liberated.

Therefore it is said:

Punappuna½ gabbhamupeti mando.

An ignorant person repeatedly falls in the womb (takes repeated births).

Punappuna½ sivathika½ haranti.

Again and again, one is taken to the cemetery.

How foolish it is to go through the suffering of *dukkha± j±ti punappuna½* repeatedly, out of ignorance!

Yet:

Magga½ ca laddh± apunabbhav±ya

Finding out the way out of (the cycle of) becoming, *na punappuna½ j±yati bh³ripañño*

Having great wisdom, (the Buddha) does not take birth again and again.

Many others, besides the Buddha, became liberated by taking up this very path. We have a treasury of the joyous utterances of hundreds of *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunis*, wherein they declare their attainment of liberation.

Some examples:

Ekadhammassavaṇiya

Ekadhammassavaṇiya was the son of a businessman from Setabba. In the joyful mood of liberation, he declared:

Kiles± jh±pit± mayha½

My passion has been extinguished.

Bhav± sabbe sam³hat±

All becoming has been eradicated.

Vikkh²°o j±ti sa½s±ro

The process of (repeated) births has been ended.

Natthi d±ni punabbhavo

Now there is no more birth for me.

Bhikkhu Mendhasira

Bhikkhu Men¹hasira had gone forth into homelessness from an affluent family of Saket. He proclaimed:

Anekaj±tisa½s±ra½, sandh±vissa½ anibbisa½.

For countless lives I have kept running in this endless cycle of becoming.

Tassa me dukkhaj±tassa dukkhakkhandho uparajjho.

From the suffering of (repeated) births, I have become liberated. The accumulated stock of misery has been destroyed.

Padmāvati

Padm±vat² was a courtesan of Ujjain and the mother of Abhaya. She was ordained by the Buddha as a nun and through her serious practice of meditation, she became an *arahat*. Padm±vat² utters these words:

Eva½ viharam±n±ya

Thus, following the teaching of the Buddha,

Sabbo r±go sam³hato

Uprooting all the craving for sensual pleasure,

Pari½ho samucchinnō

Extinguishing the burning of passion,

S²tibh³tamhi nibbut±ti

(I have) attained *nibb±na* to become transcendently cool and peaceful.

Aparā Uttamā Therī

Apar± Uttam± was born in a prominent Brahmin family of Kosala. Describing her meditation and resulting liberation, she joyfully exclaims:

Suññatassa nimittassa, l±bhin²ha½ yadacchika;

Oras± dh²t± buddhassa, nibb±n±bhirat± sad±.

My dream of experiencing the state where there is nothing to hold on to (*nibb±na*) has been fulfilled. I, a rightful daughter of the Buddha, ever enjoy the bliss of *nibb±na*.

Ye ime satta bojja²g±, magg± nibb±napattiy±;

Bh±vit± te may± sabb±, yath± buddhena desit±.

To attain *nibb±na* I completed the development of all the seven *bojjha²g±s* (factors of enlightenment) as taught by the Buddha.

Sabbe k±m± samucchinn±, ye dibb± ye ca m±nus±;

Vikkh²°o j±tisa½s±ro, natthi d±ni punabbhavo.

My yearning for all the sensual pleasures, of this world and of heaven, has been eradicated. The cycle of becoming has ceased. Now there is no rebirth for me.

If the scholars of our country had read even a few quotations from the hundreds of utterances of the Buddha and his disciples, they would not have committed the grave

error of characterising the liberating teaching of this supreme historic person as fatalistic and pessimistic.

Loving Kindness

When a householder invites a bhikkhu to offer him food and thus avails the opportunity of earning merits, the bhikkhu usually chants a *mettasutta* (verses of loving kindness). One feels great joy to hear these words of benediction. The same words of loving-kindness are heard in the early morning chanting in a ten-day Vipassana course permeating selfless love and creating a delightful atmosphere for meditation.

Na ca khuddam±care kiñci,

yena viññ³ pare upavadeyyu½;

sukhino va khemino hontu,

sabbasatt± bhavantu sukhittat±.

One should not do any mean thing that would invite censure from wise men. Let all creatures indeed be content, secure and happy within.

Ye keci p±°abh³tatthi,

tas± v± th±var± vanavases±;

d²gh± v± ye va mahant±,

majjhim± rassak± a°ukath³l±.

dijjhh± v± ye va adijjhh±,

ye va, d³re vasanti avid³re;

bh³t± va sambhaves² va,

sabbasatt± bhavantu sukhittat±.

Whatever living creatures there are, moving or still, without exception, long or large, middle-sized or short, small or big, visible or invisible, living far or near, whether they already exist or are coming into being, let all creatures be happy within.

Na paro para½ nikubbetha,

n±timaññetha katthaci na kañci.

by±rosan± pajjighasaññ±,

n±ññamaññassa dukkhamiccheyya.

One should not humiliate another; one should not despise anyone anywhere. One should not wish another misery out of anger or repugnance.

M±t± yath± niya½ putta½,

±yus± ekaputtamanurakkhe;

evampi sabbabh³tesu,

m±nasa½ bh±vaye aparim±°a½.

Just as a mother would protect her son, her only son, with her life, so one should cultivate infinite selfless love towards all beings.

Mettañca sabbalokasmi,

m±nasa½ bh±vaye aparim±°a½;

uddha½ adho ca tiriyañca,

asamb±dha½ averamasapatta½.

All loving-kindness towards the entire world. One should cultivate an unbounded mind, above and below and across, without obstruction, without enmity, without rivalry.

Tijjha½ cara½ nisinnō va,

say±no y±vat±ssa vitamiddho.

eta½ sati½ adhijjhēyya,

brahmameta½ vih±ramidham±hu.

Standing or walking or seated or lying down, as long as one is free from drowsiness, one should practise this mindfulness. This (they say) is the *brahma* state.

Similar delightful words are found at many places in the Pali literature. If this country had preserved only the

Dhammapada, a tiny fraction of this huge literature, its scholars would not have mistakenly come to view the Buddha as a negative, pessimistic person. The first two verses of the *Dhammapada* are:

*Manopubba^agam[±] dhamm[±], manose^{jjh}± manomay[±];
Manas[±] ce padu^{jjh}hena, bh[±]sati v[±] karoti v[±];
Tato na^½ dukkhamanveti, cakka^½va vahato pada^½.*

All bodily and vocal actions have mind as their precursor, mind as their supreme leader; of mind they are made. If one speaks or acts with an impure mind, suffering follows him as the wheel follows the hoof of the animal yoked to the chariot.

*Manopubba^agam[±] dhamm[±], manose^{jjh}± manomay[±];
Manas[±] ce pasannena, bh[±]sati v[±] karoti v[±];
Tato na^½ sukhamanveti, ch[±]y[±] va anap[±]yin².*

All bodily and vocal actions have mind as their precursor, mind as their supreme leader; of mind they are made. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows him like his shadow that never leaves him.

It is clear that whatever one does with an impure mind will be unwholesome and will definitely result in misery. Similarly, whatever one does with a pure mind will be wholesome and will definitely result in happiness. These two verses alone would have clarified to anyone that the Buddha's teaching is not fatalistic and that he is stating truths about both suffering and happiness.

If one looks at the *Dhammapada*, one finds that there are twenty-six chapters on various aspects of Dhamma, which teach one to live happily here and hereafter. One such chapter is *Sukha Vagga* (Chapter on Happiness). We note that there is no chapter on misery! This should prevent anyone from saying that the Buddha was pessimistic or that he was lacking in a positive attitude.

Whenever the Buddha talked about suffering, he did so only to bring to light its root causes and to encourage people to eradicate these causes. Whenever the Buddha talked about happiness, he did so to bring to light its basis and to encourage people to develop it.

Instead of talking of the cause of misery and its eradication, if the Buddha had said:

There is only misery everywhere now, and there is going to be only misery everywhere in future; it is futile to even try to come out of it; one should not waste one's energy on this endeavour—

then, he could be truly called a fatalist, a pessimist, and a cynic lacking positive attitude and promoting inaction. If so, certainly the Buddha would have been the cause of harm not only to this country, but also to the entire human society. In that case, it would have been commendable to end his teaching not only in India but in the rest of the world as well.

But the truth is that the Buddha never said, "There is no escape from misery." Instead, he gave a practical, here-and-now method to come out of all misery. We in India lost the experiential aspect of his teaching. Our repeated distortion of the theoretical aspect of his teaching deprived us of its benefit. Whosoever around the world preserved it, benefited from it. The time has come now for us to understand the real facts, to heed their manifest lesson and to follow the practical path taught by the Buddha.

GOENKAJI'S DISCOURSES ON TELEVISION

Goenkaji's discourses in Hindi are being broadcast on Aastha TV channel daily from 9:30 to 9:50 a.m. and from 5:00 to 5:20 p.m. for children.

In addition, Goenkaji's ten-day course English discourses are being broadcast every Sunday at 11:00 a.m.

FIRST VIPASSANA COURSE AT TRIPURA

The first ten-day course at Tripura was organised from 20 February to 3 March 2002 at Jetavana Vihara, Machmara, North Tripura. Twenty-four students took part in this course. This was followed by a second course from 4 to 15 March in which there were 29 students. Thereafter, a one-day children's course was conducted for the benefit of 64 children. The organisers plan to conduct two ten-day courses and courses for children next February at a new site that has been offered to build a Vipassana centre.

For more details, contact:

Mr Dewan Mohan, Netaji Para, P. O. Sabroom, South Tripura 799 245. Tel: (03823) 70327; Fax: (03823) 70160

NEW VIPASSANA CENTRES

Dhamma Patijjh[±]na, Paithan Open Jail: This is the third Vipassana centre in a prison in India. The first course was organised from 12 to 23 March 2002 for 35 prison staff members and 15 inmates. Goenkaji visited the centre on the first day of the course and gave Anapana. He named the centre *Dhamma Patijjh[±]na* (Established in Dhamma). The authorities plan to organise a course every month for prison staff and inmates. The second course has started from 10 April.

Dhamma Makaranda, Mexico: This first Vipassana center in Latin America is located in the state of Mexico, two hours west of Mexico City. The ten-acre property, donated by old students, is in a secluded highland valley surrounded by pine and oak forests. Goenkaji has named it *Dhamma Makaranda* (Nectar of the Flower of Dhamma).

The first phase of construction of facilities for 100 students will include a Dhamma hall, teachers' residence, dormitories, kitchen and dining halls. Construction will be primarily in adobe brick made on site. Phase I buildings will cover about 20,000 square feet, at an estimated cost of US\$450,000. Later, phase II will include a pagoda and additional residences for up to 200 students.

The design work and architectural plans for *Dhamma Makaranda* are being done as *d[±]na* by old students. For more information please contact:

Vipassana Association of Mexico,
Potrero Verde # 201-6, 62420 Cuernavaca, Morelos.
Tel: [52] (73) 184449; Fax: [52] (73) 121135;
e-mail: info@mx.dhamma.org

VIPASSANA CASSETTES AND CDs

Arrangements have been made by Mr Dipchand Shah to supply the audiocassettes of Goenkaji's discourses, dohas and chantings at concessional rates. Therefore, the full set of 11 audiocassettes of ten-day discourse will now be available at Rs 165/-. (full set of 11 Sony cassettes: Rs 440/-). Distributors can avail of 15 percent extra rebate. Set of audio CDs containing dohas and chantings will be available at Rs 250/-. Set of Video CDs containing ten-day discourses will be available for Rs 650/-. Meditators should directly contact the following: 1. Mr Dipchand Shah, B-35 Dalas Bldg, Gyanmandir Road, Dadar (W) Mumbai 400 028. Tel: 022-4228134. 2. Mr Rathi, Shivkrishna Medical Store, 206, Old Agra Road, Igatpuri-422 403. Tel. (02553) 44036.

[PLEASE DO NOT CONTACT *DHAMMA GIRI* OR *VRI*.]

FIRST COURSE AT DHAMMA JANANI

The first course at *Dhamma Janan²*, Lumbini, birthplace of the Buddha, was conducted from 3 March to 14 March 2002. Thirty students participated in this course. A ten-day course will be conducted at the centre from 15 to 26 every month. For more details, contact:

1. *Dhamma Janan²*, Lumbini Vipassana Centre, Near Lumbini Peace Flame, Rupandehi, Lumbini Zone, Nepal. Tel: [977] (071) 80282;
2. Mr Gopal Bahadur Pokharel, Bairav Color Lab, Butwal, Khasyauli, Lumbini Zone, Nepal. Tel: [977] (071) 41549; e-mail: dhammajanani@yahoo.com

GOENKAJI'S DHAMMA TOUR OF NORTH AMERICA AND EUROPE—2002

Meditation Now Inner Peace Through Inner Wisdom

Goenkaji and Mataji are touring the U.S. and Canada from 20 April to 6 August 2002 for events in thirty-five cities and seven Vipassana centres. Goenkaji will attend meetings with business executives, prison officials, government representatives and community leaders; give public talks and media interviews; and meet with monks and nuns and Asian communities. Goenkaji and Mataji will also be present at regular ten-day courses, one-day courses for old students and children's courses.

Goenkaji will visit Belgium and Germany en route from North America. These visits will provide a rare opportunity for European meditators to meet and meditate with him and for the public to hear about Vipassana and its relevance to the present world. For details, contact local Vipassana centres.

This Dhamma tour is the best opportunity for the friends, and family of Indian meditators in Europe and North America to come in contact with Goenkaji and Vipassana.

For the latest information about the tour and for more details, visit <www.tour.dhamma.org>

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Assistant Teachers:

Dr Shwe Tun Kyaw & Dr (Mrs) Sann Sann Wynn
Dr (Mrs) Thint Thint Khine
Mrs Gabrielle Rann

WINTER SCHEDULE – 2002 AND 2003

At Dhamma Giri: TSC (45-day course): 14-11 to 30-12-2002 (Requirement for TSC: one 45-day course. For ATs: two 30-day courses.) **AT Workshop:** 31-12 to 3-1-2003. **AT Meeting:** 4 and 5-1. **At Dhamma Tapovana: 60-day course:** 10-1 to 12-3-2003 (only for Vipassana Teachers, SATs and ATs who have completed two 45-day courses.)

Myanmar Pilgrimage: 15 January to 30 January 2003

At Dhamma Thak, Jaipur: 30-day course: 2-2 to 5-3. **45-day course:** 2-2 to 20-3. (Meditators should send their applications for the above long courses at Jaipur center to *Dhamma Giri*).

ONE DAY CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

The following Anapana courses for children have been arranged in Mumbai:

Course date	Location	Eligibility	Regn. dates
12-5-2002	Matunga	Std. 7 to 10	9-5, 10-5
19-5-2002	Vidyavihar	Std. 7 to 10	16-5, 17-5
26-5-2002	Mulund	Std. 4 to 7	23-5, 24-5

Timings: 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Registration Tel.:** 8324820, 2812416

Course Address: 1) **Matunga:** Amulakh Amichand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, Near S.N.D.T. College, King's Circle, Matunga (C.R.), Mumbai-19. 2) **Vidyavihar:** Seminar Hall, 2nd Floor, Engineering College, Somaiya Vidya Vihar, Vidyavihar, Mumbai. 3) **Mulund:** Mulund College of Commerce, Sarojini Naidu Road, Mulund (W), Mumbai.

NB Please bring your own cushion. Please register your name on the specified phone nos. during the specified dates. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. Please come for the course on time.

TRAINING WORKSHOPS AT NEW DELHI

1) **VALUE INCULCATION THROUGH VIPASSANA MEDITATION**

(Workshop will start at 10 A.M. on the opening day and will end around 5 P.M. on the closing day.)

- a) **Workshop for School and College Teachers:** 8 to 22 June
- b) **Workshop for Assistant Teachers of Vipassana for conducting such Value Education workshops:** 19 to 23 June

2) **TRAINING OF RCCCS AND CCTS:** 22 to 31 May

Children's Courses [will begin at 9.00 A.M. and will end around 5.00 P.M. on the closing day] a) 26 to 27 May (boys only: 12 - 16 yrs). b) 28 to 29 May (girls only: 12 - 16 yrs). c) 30 to 31 May: (mixed: 8 - 12 yrs)

3) **TRAINING OF ASSISTANT TEACHERS:** 23 to 31 July

4) **TEACHING OF PALI:** 20 to 28 August

5) **TRAINING OF DHAMMA SERVERS/TRUSTEES:** 24 to 28 September

6) **STUDY OF ASOKAN INSCRIPTIONS:** 22 to 30 October

Venue: Vipassana Sadhana Sansthan, Opp. Radha Swami Satsang Phase- IV, Village Bhatti, (8.5 kms from Chattarpur Temple) Chattarpur Temple Road, New Delhi – 110 030. Tel: 011-6653178

Registration: Vipassana Sadhana Sansthan, Hemkunt Tower, 16th Floor, 98 Nehru Place, New Delhi 110 019. Tel: 6452772, 6485071/72; Fax: 6470658; e-mail: vipassana@dhammasota.org
(Registration of Participants for Workshops No. 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 will begin at 2.00 P.M. on the opening day. The workshop will end around 11.00 A.M. on the closing day.)

SUBSCRIPTION TO ENGLISH/HINDI MONTHLY NEWSLETTER: ANNUAL: RS 20/- (U.S. \$10/- OUTSIDE INDIA); LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 250/- (U.S. \$100/- OUTSIDE INDIA) BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF VRI.

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