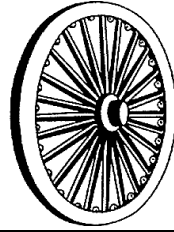


Vipassana

In the tradition of Sayagyi U Ba Khin, as



Newsletter

taught by S. N. Goenka

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WORDS OF DHAMMA

Sabbadānaṃ dhammadānaṃ jināti,

sabbarasaṃ dhammaraso jināti;

sabbaratiṃ dhammarati jināti,

taṇhakkhayo sabbadukkhaṃ jināti.

The gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts.

The flavour of Dhamma excels all other flavours.

The delight in Dhamma surpasses all delights.

The destruction of craving overcomes all suffering.

—Dhammapada 354

Sayagyi U Ba Khin: Truth Triumphant

(The following article was written by S.N. Goenka to mark the occasion of Guru Purnima, the holiday when people in India traditionally pay respects to their spiritual guides. The date of the holiday is the full moon day of July, coinciding with the date when the Buddha is believed to have set in motion the wheel of Dhamma by giving his first discourse at Sarnath.)

The Buddha was called *saccanāma*. It was a suitable name for him. The word “mind” is *nāma* in Pali. *Saccanāma*, therefore, means one whose mind knows only the truth, nothing but the truth.

Even before my revered teacher Sayagyi U Ba Khin came in contact with the Buddha’s teaching of Vipassana meditation, he was a truthful person by nature. He was of outstanding merit from his boyhood. In the year he graduated from secondary school, he stood first among all the students in Myanmar in the matriculation examination. This achievement won him a government scholarship.

Unfortunately, his family could not afford for him to continue his studies. Instead he had to begin work, taking odd jobs. Already he was interested in accountancy, and on his own he read books on the subject and became thoroughly versed in it. With this background, he was able to find a job as a clerk in the Office of the Accountant General. His happiness knew no bounds.

After some time he went to learn Vipassana from Saya Thet Gyi, and advanced far even in his first course. On returning to work, he was informed that he had been promoted to the post of superintendent. From his first day as a clerk in the office, he had seen that corruption was rampant. Almost all employees, senior or junior, took bribes. But this truthful man had never done so. Now that he had become a Vipassana

meditator, accepting a bribe was totally out of the question.

In 1942, Japan attacked Myanmar, and its aerial bombers destroyed Mandalay Railway Station, where U Ba Khin was then the Accounts Officer. He saw that the station’s safe had not been damaged in the bombing raid. The senior railway officers, who were British, were intent on escaping to India. If U Ba Khin had kept the government money for himself, no one would have known about it. But he unlocked the safe, took out the contents, drove two hours by car and handed over the money to the seniormost railway officer, who was on the way to the airport. U Ba Khin had need of money at that time because his daughter was ill. But he did not want to keep even a penny that belonged to others. Such a selfless person, free of craving, was Sayagyi U Ba Khin.

After the war Myanmar became independent, and the new government appointed U Ba Khin Accountant General. He was fully aware that bribetaking was commonplace in his office. As head of the office, he decided to end this unethical practice. But he also knew that someone who takes bribes never changes for the better merely under threat of punishment. He therefore persuaded employees to practise Vipassana.

He set aside a large hall in his office as a Vipassana centre for the use of employees. There he started conducting Vipassana courses. The result was a noticeable change as the employees stopped taking bribes. Gradually the whole atmosphere of the Accountant General’s Office changed, attracting widespread praise.

The Prime Minister at that time was a very honest man. He had tried to introduce reforms but without success. Now he sent for U Ba Khin and asked him to take responsibility for three other departments in

addition to his own. U Ba Khin agreed, giving part of his workday to this task. A truthful man is necessarily a man of action. His capacity to work increases. U Ba Khin began to promptly settle pending files at the other three departments. At the same time he inspired the employees to practise Vipassana.

According to government rules, U Ba Khin was entitled to a full salary from his home department and an additional one fourth of his salary from each of the three other departments that he headed. But this truthful man would not accept the extra pay. He said that he worked only eight hours a day, and it did not matter whether he spent the time in his home department or another one. He saw no reason to receive more money.

In those days, the State Agricultural Marketing Board had a monopoly on purchases and sales of rice, Myanmar's leading crop and a major export. The Board would sell the rice to foreign governments at four times the price it paid to Myanmar farmers, but its balance sheet still showed huge losses because of fraudulent practices. To reform the Board, the Prime Minister asked the truthful U Ba Khin to become its head. U Ba Khin accepted the post on condition that no one interfere with his decisions and that he be allowed to run the Board independently. The Prime Minister agreed but the response was panic in the office of the Board. Fearing to be exposed as corrupt, the senior officer called on all workers to strike.

U Ba Khin was free from animosity, fearless and a steadfast man of action. With staff from the Office of the Accountant General, he began to work through the many pending files of the Board. He remained calm. Finally, after three months the strikers came to him, begged forgiveness and said they were willing to return to work. But U Ba Khin did not accept their offer. He said that before returning, each employee must complete a Vipassana course. By then, U Ba Khin had established the International Meditation Centre in a suburb of Yangon. Practising Vipassana there, the previously corrupt workers gradually benefited and consequently the nation benefited. The State Agricultural Board began to show a large profit.

After years of successful work, U Ba Khin's time to retire drew near. But how could the government afford to lose such an honest officer? Instead, year after year it extended his service. This continued for 12 years. Finally U Ba Khin insisted on stepping down so that he could devote the rest of his life to the service of Dhamma.

As a senior official, he had had the use of a government car and driver. The government was happy for him to continue to have this perk of office, but U Ba Khin would not hear of it. Instead, whenever he needed to be driven somewhere, he would inform us and my son Sri Prakash, whom he loved just like his own son, would take him. Although busy with school

studies, Sri Prakash was happy to be of service because he was devoted to Sayagyi and had sat eight ten-day courses with Sayagyi. Almost all the members of my family, including my elder brother Bal Krishna, had sat courses with Sayagyi and derived great benefit.

It is because of my meritorious deeds of past lives that I came in contact with such a virtuous and saintly person. I received the gift of Dhamma from him. He made me grow and develop in both the theoretical and practical aspects of Dhamma for 14 years. I suppose he showed me so much affection because of our association in past lives. I benefited greatly from his guidance. When the government of Myanmar issued me a passport to go to India, I was pleased but Sayagyi was far more delighted than I.

Everyone knew that he had unbounded love for India. Myanmar had received from that country the technique of Vipassana as well as the Tipitaka containing the words of the Buddha, but both had been completely lost in the land of their origin. We heard Sayagyi say again and again that India had given the priceless gift of Vipassana to Myanmar, which therefore was greatly in India's debt, and that now was the time to make repayment, which was badly needed by India. He also used to say, "I will repay the debt." And again and again Sayagyi would say, "The clock of Vipassana has struck. I need to go to India as soon as possible to revive Vipassana, the great technique of meditation discovered by the Buddha." But the government of Myanmar had stringent travel restrictions and he could not obtain a passport.

Therefore, when I received permission to travel, he said that I would repay the debt on his behalf. In June 1969, Sayagyi appointed me his representative and an *c riyā* (teacher) to teach Vipassana in the old tradition and said to me, "You will fulfil all that I wanted to do." I was taken aback to hear this. How can an ordinary man like me fulfil the Dhamma mission of this great person! Knowing what was in my mind, he said to me firmly, "You are not going alone. I am going with you. Dhamma is going with you."

Although I felt hesitant, his words reassured me and I came to India. I had doubts that people there would help me with this Himalayan task. All the members of my family were deeply committed to a different spiritual path. How could I hope that they would help with the spread of Vipassana? When I prepared a list of my friends and acquaintances in the whole of India, I saw that the number did not reach even a hundred. How was I to find help to carry out the great task entrusted to me?

But somehow Sayagyi's confidence proved warranted. The Dhamma worked, and only 12 days after I arrived in India, the first course of Vipassana began. Since then the Ganges of Dhamma has flowed without interruption. Now it flows not only in India but around the world.

In the beginning, the courses were all in Hindi since I felt I lacked sufficient fluency in English. For this reason I refused a request to give a course in Dalhousie, with discourses in English. The disappointed students contacted Sayagi, who phoned from Myanmar to chide me. He said, "You are not conducting courses, I am conducting them. Dhamma is conducting them. Go and teach in English." Obediently, I conducted the first course in English in 1971. I was myself greatly surprised to find that it was easy for me to give the evening discourse in fluent English.

There were many such occasions making it clear that not I but Sayagi was teaching Vipassana. How can I forget his generosity to me? My devotion and gratitude to him have grown day by day. I am now 88. More than 1.5 million people have learned Vipassana and benefited from it. When they meet or write to me, they express their gratitude to me with deep emotion. But I think to myself, "Why are they grateful to me? They have received Dhamma from Sayagi. I am simply a Dhamma messenger sent by him. I distribute only what I have received from him. It is through *his* kindness that they have learned Vipassana."

When this happens, I recall the words of a traditional Indian song from the state of Harayana:

O God! Who can fathom your wonderful power?

You impoverish the rich and shower wealth on the poor.

I do not know whether there is any god who showers wealth on the poor. But definitely there was a man affluent with Dhamma who showered his wealth on a poor man like me. Material wealth is sure to be lost sooner or later. But the immeasurable wealth of Dhamma never decreases, even though one distributes it throughout one's life. Instead, it keeps increasing.

It is he who gave me Dhamma, it is he who is distributing it through me. Again I recall a song, this time from Rajasthan:

It is oil and wick that burn,
but the credit is given to the lamp.

When a flame arises from a wick soaked with oil, light is produced. But people say, "See, the lamp is burning and its light is spreading." In fact the lamp is simply a receptacle for the oil and wick. It does not burn or produce light. Similarly I simply convey the teachings of Sayagi. The true Dhamma within me was given by him, and that is what produces light all around. For this reason, those who say that I am distributing the light of wisdom are missing the truth. Sayagi's light—the light of the true Dhamma he taught to me—is radiating through me and spreading far and wide.

May the men and women who have learned Vipassana, and all who will learn it in the coming years, feel infinite devotion and gratitude to Sayagi.

In ancient times the Emperor Asoka sent Sona and Uttara as Dhamma emissaries to Myanmar. People there eventually forgot the names of these two

messengers, but they have never forgotten Asoka. After the Buddha himself, Asoka is their Dhamma king, the emperor of their hearts, and it is natural to feel grateful to him. In the same way Vipassana meditators should always remain grateful to the Buddha and to Dhamma Teacher Sayagi U Ba Khin, who sent this beneficent meditation back to India and from there around the world. If they know nothing about the Buddha and this saint of modern times, if they do not remember both, they are lacking in gratitude.

It is important to ensure that their memory will survive for 2,000 years and that people will feel grateful to them. And that is the reason for constructing the Global Vipassana Pagoda in Mumbai, a monument of peace and harmony. Whenever people see this Pagoda, they will recall the Buddha and this modern saint Sayagi U Ba Khin who very compassionately made Vipassana meditation available to the world. Truly, that is cause for gratitude.

I am reminded of a verse by the poet Rahim. In his lifetime he was the commander of the Emperor Akbar's army and enjoyed immense wealth. He was generous by nature, and every day he would sit on the terrace of his house, distributing coins to the poor. But while doing this, he kept his eyes downcast and head bowed. When people asked him why, he replied:

The giver is someone else. He gives day after day.

Lest people mistake me for him, I lower my eyes and bow my head.

By these words Rahim meant, "People mistakenly think I am the giver, when in fact it is God."

Every day new meditators are joining Vipassana courses and new meditation centres are coming up. These continue spreading the light given to me by my revered Teacher. They feel gratitude for the gift of Dhamma; but the gratitude should be to the givers of this gift: the Fully Enlightened One and the great Sayagi U Ba Khin.

Do not forget to feel and express gratitude to them. This is my Dhamma message on this auspicious day of Guru Purnima.

May all be happy! Kalyanamitta S.N. Goenka

Vipassana Course at Atma Darshan

Atma Darshan is a centre for counselling and spirituality promoted by Society of Divine Word and is open to people of all religious, ethnic and cultural affiliation. It is situated at Mahakali Caves Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai.

The Vipassana course conducted here from 22 May to 2 June 2011 was the eleventh—the first course was held in 2000. 45 participants completed the course successfully, most of whom were priest, nuns and novices.

For more details of future courses, contact: 1. Sr. Regina, Atma Darshan, Off Sher-e-Punjab Bus Stop, Gyan Ashram, Mahakali Caves Road, Andheri (E), Mumbai 400 093. Tel: (022) 2824-2419, 2836-3120; Email: atma@mtnl.net.in 2. Mr. Jayantilal Shah, Tel: Res. (022) 2618-2601; Mobile: (0)98196-60625; Off. 2821-9292, 2821-9298; Email: jsshah@molygraph.com

Children's Meditation Courses in Mumbai

Date	Course site	Age (years)	Registration
7-8	Matunga	10-16	4 and 5-8
21-8	Ghatkopar	10-16	18 and 19-8
4-9	Matunga	10-16	1 and 2-9
18-9	Ghatkopar	10-16	16 and 17-9

Course Timing: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration Timings:** 11 am to 1 pm on the specified numbers and dates for each location.

Course Venues: Ghatkopar: SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, Opp Vidyut Society, Mumbai 400086. Tel: 25011096, 25162505. **Goregaon:** Siddharth Hospital, Goregaon (W). Registration will be done on specified dates only. Tel: 2624-2025 (or sms to 98690-23884). **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Tel: 25101096, 25162505.

Courses are also held regularly at the following areas of Mumbai.

Venue	Day	Registration Nos.
Sanpada	First Sundays	98694-05600
Dombivili	First Sundays	98202-71594
Anushaktinagar	Fourth Sundays	98690-16885
Airoli	Fourth Sundays	98923-29410

Please call on the respective numbers two days in advance to confirm the course and for registration.

[NB *Please bring cushion. *Please register on the specified phone numbers. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. *Please arrive on time for the course.]

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Assistant Teachers: Mr. Rudra Datt Tiwari, Lucknow
To assist the area teacher in serving Dhamma Lakkhana

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers:

1. Mr. Mahesh Kumar Gupta, Ghaziabad
2. Mr. Rampal Singh Chauhan, Panipat
3. Mr. Rakesh Singh Bisen, Jammu
4. Mr. Kapil Nath Sahu, Raipur
5. Mr. Hem Bajra Shakya, Nepal
6. Miss. Shova Silpakar, Nepal
7. Mr. Kirshna Das Rajkarnikar, Nepal
8. Ms. Nalini Shakya, Nepal
9. Mr. Madhav Prasad Dhungana, Nepal
10. Mr. Dharma Raj Shakya, Nepal
11. Mr. Kamal Kumar Goyal, Nepal
12. Mrs. Subhalata Shrestha, Nepal
13. Mr. Arjun Giri, Nepal
14. Mr. Lee Kwok On, Korea
15. Mr. Brian Wagner, South Africa
16. U Maung Maung Sein, Myanmar
17. U Thant Sin, Myanmar
18. U Aung Myat Cho, Myanmar
- 19-20. U Sai Hsai Leng & Daw Nan Khin Htay, Myanmar
21. Mrs. Song Jun-ying, People's Republic of China
22. Dr Judith Shaw, Australia
23. & 24. Mr. Grisha Krivchenia & Mrs. Rosa Blair, USA

Children's Course Teachers:

1. Mrs. A .P. Rajeshwari, Chennai
2. Mrs. K.Shija, Chennai
3. Mr. Shantaram Gaikwad, Phaltan
4. Mr. Vijay Jambale, Phaltan
5. Mrs. Neera Kapoor, New Delhi
6. Ms. Poonam Atey, Delhi
7. Mrs. Sudha Agarwal, Ghaziabad
8. Mrs. Seema, Ghaziabad
9. Mr. Charan Singh, Ghaziabad
10. Mr. Yashwant Singh, Ghaziabad
11. Ms. Suraj Kumari Negi, Solan (H.P.)
12. Mr. Gopal Singh Negi, Kinnaur (H.P.)
13. Mrs. Dechen Wangmo, Leh-Ladakh
14. Dr. (Mrs.) Rinchen Wangmo, Leh-Ladakh
15. Dr. Thinlas Tashi, Leh-Ladakh
16. Mr. Sonam Rinchan (Ratan), Leh-Ladakh
17. Mrs. Dechen Rinchen, Leh-Ladakh
18. Mrs. Lobzang Chhosdol, Leh-Ladakh
19. Mr Charith Fernando, Sri Lanka
20. Mrs. K. W. Jayanthi Gunasekara, Sri Lanka
21. Mr. Deng Lin, China
22. Mrs Luo Fan, China
23. Ms. Tang Xian Jun, China
24. Mr. Julio Hervas, Spain
25. Mr. Carlos Pelaez, Spain

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Śīla samādhi jñāna hī, śuddha dharama kā sāra;
kāyā vāṇī citta ke, sudhare saba vyavahāra.
Śīla, samādhi and paññā—
this is the essence of pure Dhamma,
transforming all actions of body, speech, and mind.*

*Vāṇī to vaśa meṅ bhalī, vaśa meṅ bhalā śarīra;
para jo mana vaśa meṅ kare, vahī saccā vīra.
Good to have mastery over speech,
good to have physical mastery,
but one who is master of his mind is a true champion.*

*With much mettā,
A Vipassana meditator*

*Prajñā śīla samādhi hī, maṅgala kā bhaṅḍāra;
saba sukha sādhanahāra hai, saba dukha tāraṇa-hāra.
Morality, concentration, and wisdom—a treasury of well-being,
conferring all happiness, removing all misery.*

*Śīla-dharama pālana bhalo, nirmala bhalī samādhi;
prajñā to jāgrta bhalī, dūra kare bhava-vyādhi.
Good to practice morality, good is right concentration,
good is the awakening of insight to cure the ills of life.*

*With best compliments from
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS*

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