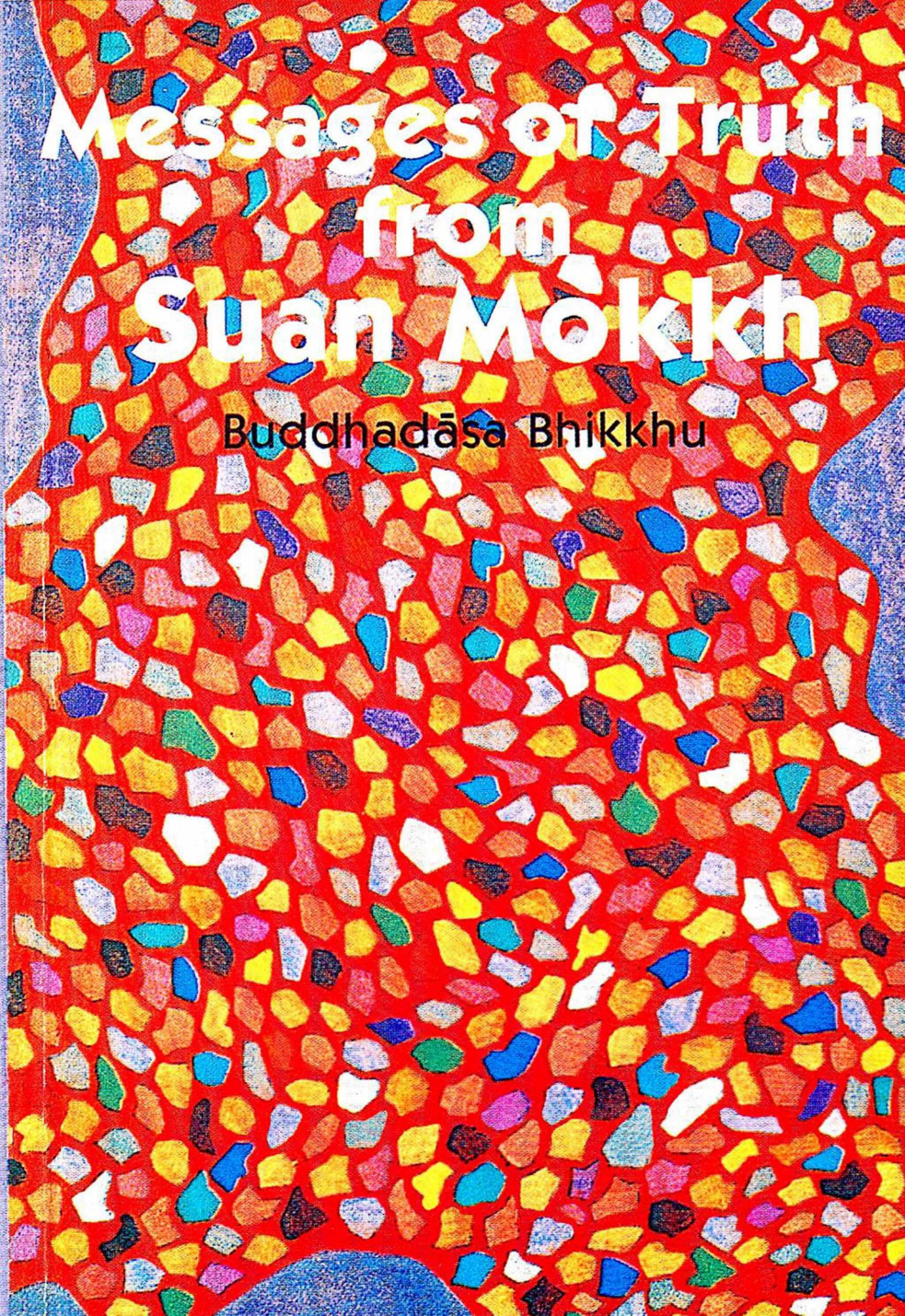




# Messages of Truth from Suan Mòkkh

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu



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**Messages of Truth from**  
**Suan Mokkh**  
**Buddhadāsa Bhikku**



**The Dhamma Study & Practice Group**

**Messages of Truth from  
Suan Mokkh  
Buddhadāsa Bhikku**

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# FOREWORD



*Messages of Truth from Suan Mokkh* is a collection of Than Achan Buddhādāsa's writings that deserve attention from Buddhists and other people of the world. These writings were first published in form of pamphlets for distribution during the **Buddhadhamma-Buddhādāsa Week**, May 22 - 28, 1988, at Chulalongkorn University. They were later republished several times in a book form. Later on, **The Dhamma Study & Practice Group** was advised by the Than Achan to have them translated into English so that they can be distributed more widely among foreigners, for they are like a present produced from the wisdom of Thai Buddhist writer and translators, and thus benefiting the world. Since 1990 is the year of the Than Achan's 84<sup>th</sup> birthday anniversary, then, to commemorate the auspicious occasion, **The Dhamma Study & Practice Group** publishes *Messages of Truth from Suan Mokkh* once again by putting the Thai original and the English translation together. This is for dual study and for practice in a wider scope.

*Messages of Truth from Suan Mokkh* consists of six writings which are all important and absolutely essential. They are:

**1. Help! The Kalamasutta, Help!** In this writing, the Than Achan indicates criteria for a Buddhist's decision to believe or disbelieve a statement. The criteria will prevent mistake, absurdity, and lack of intellectual freedom in study and practice of dhamma. The Kalamasutta is one of the important hallmarks of Buddhism and is so valuable that the Than Achan calls it a "diamond in the Tripitaka," for it helps eliminate problems and preserve the truth and the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

**2. Kamma in Buddhism** indicates the kind of *kamma* that leads to the end of all *kammas* and complete extinction of sufferings. This constitutes a unique teaching that differentiates Buddhism from India's other ancient doctrines. It is the teaching on kamma that is truly benefiting. It neither is a wrong view nor impairs development of human potentiality.

**3. Nibbāna for Everyone** points out the ultimate goal for humanity, that is, calmness and coolness as a result of freedom from defilements and sufferings—the state that can be experienced in the present life, here and now, without having to wait until after death, which neither is benefiting nor encourages practice of dhamma. This particular writing is, therefore, extremely interesting.

**4. A Single Solution for All of the World Problems** is summarization of the teachings that constitute the hearts of all religions and can help solve all problems at the grassroots level. The single solution is elimination of selfishness, which is the breeding ground for craving, arrogance, opinionatedness, greed, anger, delusion, etc. In this writing, the author exemplifies a Thai traditional training for lessening selfishness and points

out that Thai Buddhist monasteries were universities for training in unselfishness. This, among other things, helps us see a social life of the Thai people in the past.

**5. Comments on Education** Since education plays an important part in creating or solving man's problems, by helping a person develop a right or wrong view that leads to his desirable or undesirable behaviors and makes a complete or deficient human being out of him, then it has to be critiqued from the religious standpoint. This will lead to improvement on what is wrong and promotion of what is right. Education is another important issue that followers of Buddhism must pay attention to, for dhamma practice in Buddhism is none other than study, training, and development of individuals.

**6. Let's Become A Buddhadāsa** This final writing of the collection proposes a way to lead one's life and to work for the religion and the society—another matter that deserves consideration. The Than Achan indicates that all of us can and should become Buddhadāsas. This gives confidence and encouragement to all of the readers in their choosing the best possible way to follow—the one the Than Achan has been preaching and practicing as a precedent all along.

All of the writings cover important issues which we Buddhists and other people of the world should pay the utmost attention to. In so doing, we can attain the truth and goodness that the Than Achan himself has proved and witnessed through practice and describes to us. We are asked to consider

following the "truth" that can always endure the test and help extinguish sufferings for all times.

The translators and the publishers of *Messages of Truth from Suan Mokkh* humbly dedicate this work as a tribute to the Than Achan's extreme graciousness. May the noble Buddhaddhamma succeed in solving problems, leading to true world peace that stays forever along with the Buddha's noble religion.

**With best wishes**  
*The Dhamma Study & Practice Group*

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## Help! The Kālāmasutta, Help!



All people in the world, including the Thai people, are in the same situation as were the Kālāma people in Kesaputtanigama, India, during the time of the Buddha. The village of the Kālāmas was situated in a location where many religious teachers went through. Each teacher taught his own doctrine as the only truth; and the Kālāmas could not decide which doctrine they should accept. The Buddha once came to their village, and the Kālāmas complained to Him that they did not know which teacher they should believe. So the Buddha taught them what is known as the Kālāmasutta, which we will discuss further. Nowadays, people study different disciplines of knowledge for development. In Thailand, we have so many teachers, interpretations of the Buddha's teachings, and meditation centers that people are confused about which teaching they should accept, or which practice they should follow. It can be said that we are in the same position as were the Kālāmas.

The Buddha taught us not to accept a thing to be true immediately without questioning. He detailed ten ways of acceptance which we should use

so that we would not fall intellectual slave to others' concepts, even those of the Buddha Himself; and we should be able to select which teaching is capable of truly relieving us of suffering. The ten ways declared by the Buddha in the Kālāmasutta are as follows:

1. ***Mā anussavena***: One should not accept a thing to be true just because it is spread by the word of mouth. This is the way of stupid people such as those in Bangkok who once believed that there would be crisis for the persons who were born in the years of the small snake, big snake, horse, and goat, according to the Thai calendar.

2. ***Mā paramparāya***: One should not accept a thing to be true just because it is practiced as a tradition. People tend to imitate what others do. The story of the excited rabbit and other animals that ran after it for safety but tripped and tumbled or fell into an abyss can be cited as an example. The *vipassanā* practice that is done by imitating others leads to similar results.

3. ***Mā itikirāya***: One should not accept a statement to be true just because it is sensationally spread far and wide. Doing so implies oversusceptivity to news – a manner of a fool who does not exercise his power of discrimination.

4. ***Mā piṭakasampadānena***: One should not accept a thing to be true just because it is cited in a piṭaka. The word "*piṭaka*" means inscription on some writing materials. The oral tradition is not

considered a piṭaka. A piṭaka is a conditioned thing which is made by man and can also be changed by man. So we cannot trust every word in it. We need to actually examine whether it leads to elimination of suffering. Schools of Buddhism have their own canons, among which there may be differences.

5. *Mā takkahetu*: One should not accept a thing to be true on the ground of takka. Takka is a method of gaining knowledge known as logics. This method can be wrong if its data or the inferences are wrong.

6. *Mā nayahetu*: One should not accept a thing to be true on the ground of naya (deductive and inductive reasonings) or what is called philosophy. In Thailand, we translate the word philosophy as prajñā. Actually, the Indian people accept "naya" as a point of view. They do not accept naya as leading to the highest knowledge, which should be called pañña or prajñā. Naya, or nayāya, is a method of reasoning with assumption or hypothesis.

7. *Mā ākāraparivitakkena*: One should not accept a statement to be true just because it appeals to one's common sense, which is a prompt judgement by one's habit of thought. Some arrogant philosophers rely on common sense; they think of themselves as very smart.

8. *Mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā*: One should not accept a thing to be true just because it agrees

with one's preconceived idea. It can be wrong because the incorrect method of proving or testing cannot lead one to the truth. It seems to be a scientific approach, but actually it is not, since its proof or experiment is inadequate.

9. *Mā bhabbarūpatāya*: One should not accept a thing to be true just because of the speaker's credibility or prestige. The outside appearance and the knowledge inside may not correspond. We often find that speakers who have creditable outside appearances deliver unrighteous speeches. Nowadays, even computers are not totally trustworthy because it is man who feeds data into them and manipulates them. He may feed wrong information into them or manipulate them wrongly. So, do not overly trust computers, for it is not in accordance with this principle of the Kālāmasutta.

10. *Mā samaṇo no garūti*: One should not accept a thing to be true just because the preacher (speaker) is his teacher. The Buddha's purpose for this important point is that one should not be intellectually enslaved by someone else, even by the Buddha Himself. The Buddha often emphasized this idea; and there was one of His disciples, the Venerable Sāriputta, who confirmed this practice by saying that he did not accept the Buddha's words immediately but did so only after adequate consideration and having put the advice into practice. See for yourselves whether there is any other religious teacher in the world who has given such highest freedom to his disci-

ples or audiences! So in Buddhism there is no system of dogmatism to force others to believe without giving them a chance to decide for themselves. This is the greatest characteristic of Buddhism which keeps the followers from being enslaved by others' concepts. We Thai people should not volunteer to slavishly follow the West as we are doing now. It is better not to imitate anybody at all.

The ten ways in the Kālāmasutta are a surefire defense against intellectual dependence, that is, neglecting one's own intellect in perceiving what is said by others ("*paratoghosa*," as they are called in Buddhist term). When one listens to anything, he should fully pay attention to it and carefully scrutinize it. If the statement is definitely beneficial for elimination of suffering, then one should completely accept it.

The principles in the Kālāmasutta are appropriate for everyone, everywhere, in every era, and every world, even for the worlds of gods. Nowadays the world is narrowed by superb communications and easy and rapid exchange of informations. People can get new knowledge from every direction. In the process, they are confused and, therefore, are in the same position as were the Kālāmas during the time of the Buddha. Indeed, the Kālāmasutta can be their refuge in this situation. They should study this sutta and use it accordingly as much as they can. It is fortunate that the Buddha preached this sutta. It is a gift for everyone in the world. Only overly stupid persons will not benefit from this sutta.

The ten ways in the Kālāmasutta should be practiced by everyone, even children. For the latter, the principles will help them to be children of wisdom, not of ignorance. Parents should teach their children to know how to understand what they listen to and to see its causes and effects. When a parent teaches anything to his or her children, he or she should try to help them understand and see the benefit from practice of that thing. For example, if a parent tells his or her children not to take heroin, the children should believe him or her not merely because of fear but also because of seeing its results, and voluntarily refuse to take the drug. The ten ways in the Kālāmasutta do not state that children should not believe anyone. They state that one should believe a thing to be true only after having seen its real meaning and advantage which one will receive from such belief and according practice. When a teacher teaches anything, children should see the reason behind the teaching. This principle does not intend to lead children to obstinacy. If they are obstinate, we should punish them and at the same time give them a chance to reconsider. They will understand the principles in the Kālāmasutta more and more along with their growth. And they will absorb all of the ten ways in the Kālāmasutta when they become adults.

People in the scientific world nowadays will contentedly accept the principles of all the ten ways in the Kālāmasutta through a scientific approach. There is no contradiction at all between scientific principles and those in the Kālāmasutta. Even the

eighth way in the sutta, which states that one should not accept a thing to be true just because it corresponds with one's preconceived idea, does not contradict scientific principles. True scientists emphasize proofs and experiments. They refuse using one's own concept as a main criterion. Therefore, Buddhism will satisfy these scientists and serve their need through those principles in the Kālāmasutta.

One who follows the principles in the Kālāmasutta will have his own independent knowledge and reason to understand the meaning and true nature of things he newly perceives. For example, when he hears that greed, hatred, and delusion are dangerous and evil, he will clearly understand because he has already known those things through his own experiences. He, therefore, relies on himself instead of others. The practice is the same in other cases. If the statement has not been verified, one should try to understand it first; then he should consider whether to accept it or not. He must not accept a thing to be true just because he merely believes the speaker. He should take his time even if it would mean his whole lifetime. So, the Kālāmasutta can ultimately prevent one from becoming an intellectual slave of others.

When a new kind of medicine comes out with an advertisement, we can decide whether we should believe in the advertisement or should reasonably try it to see if it gives a good result before fully relying on it. We should respond to new statements and teachings in the same way by following the principles in the Kālāmasutta and taking them as a real refuge.

The Kālāmasutta requires us to develop wisdom before belief. If we want to take belief as a forefront, we should take one which comes from wisdom, not one which comes from ignorance. This is the same condition as in the Noble Eightfold Path, for which wisdom or right understanding is the first constituent. It is safe to have belief which comes from wisdom or right understanding, since we will neither blindly believe what we learn nor believe it because of fear or remuneration.

The world nowadays is so overwhelmed with propagandas that most people become slavish to them. Propagandas influence people to buy numerous kinds of unnecessary things. It is, therefore, extremely necessary to give the principles of the Kālāmasutta to the people. Propagandas are much more harmful than general advertisements, which are only a kind of *paratoghosa*. Even for paratoghosa, one needs the principles of the Kālāmasutta as his refuge. Therefore, one definitely needs the principles of the Kālāmasutta to counter propagandas, which are full of intended deceptions. We can say that the Kālāmasutta is beneficial even for solving economic problems.

Let's think about it and examine whether there is more spiritual freedom somewhere else other than in the Kālāmasutta. If one says that Buddhism is a religion of freedom, can there be any reason to argue or oppose it? Do people in the world who are obsessive with freedom really know or have the true freedom proposed by the principles in the Kālāmasutta? If the world does not have such freedom, is it

because people ignore the Kālāmasutta? They might even falsely claim that in that sutta the Buddha taught us not to believe or listen to anything. Moreover, some might say that the Buddha preached this sutta only for the Kālāmas then and there. Why don't we notice that people nowadays become intellectual slaves and lose their spiritual freedom much more than those Kālāmas in the time of Buddha? For those of us who are freedom-conscious, let's carefully consider the essence and purpose of the Kālāmasutta which the Buddha intended to convey to us, so that our Buddhist characteristics will only wax more and more rather than wane. Don't be foolishly thoughtless with objection to the Kālāmasutta. The word "Thai" means independence. Is there any kind of freedom that can offer independence suitable for the Buddhists, or the Buddha's disciples, other than the freedom we can have by following the principles in the Kālāmasutta?

Now we will look further to a hidden benefit in the Kālāmasutta: the sutta can help us to avoid using tactless talk which will lead to serious dispute. For example, to set an unalterable rule that either the husband or the wife should be the leader of a family is foolish, because it depends on conditions of each family. According to the principles in the Kālāmasutta and the law of Specific Conditionality (*idappaccayatā*), we can only say that a certain person in such and such family should be the leader or the follower. Therefore, we should not talk tactlessly, for it is an improper manner.

About suitability of **abortion**, there has been very hot debate without considering which individual case of abortion is suitable and which is not. If we follow the principles of Buddhist reasoning, we can judge properly according to the condition of each individual case. Therefore, we had better stop such tactless argument.

Also about **vegetarian foods**, there has been debate for a decisive agreement which indicates preference to either meat or vegetable. For the Buddhist, there is neither meat nor vegetable; both are only constituents in nature. The eater and the thing being eaten are only natural constituents. So we should decide whether to take meat or vegetarian foods properly by using the principles in the Kālāmasutta. The Buddha never said decisively that one should or should not take only meat or vegetable. To say so is tactless and un-Buddhist.

We should not blindly say that democracy is decidedly good without considering that democracy of selfish people is worse than dictatorship under an unselfish person who rules for the sake of dhamma or righteousness. Democracy of selfish people means freedom to use selfishness awfully. Therefore, there are problems endlessly among people under selfish democracy. Let's say no more that democracy or dictatorship is decidedly good. We had better think that both will be good if they follow righteousness, and we should choose one which suits the particular circumstance.

To say that the Prime Minister must be elected only from members of the parliament, not from outsiders, is a careless statement. To be appropriate, we should consider the situation as it really is and act according to the Specific Conditionality. This is the Buddhistic way, for Buddhism embodies democracy in the form of dhammic socialism. Therefore, election of members of the parliament, establishment of the Government and the political system, and even development, should be done by using the principles in the Kālāmasutta. If we consider each situation, we will see the necessity of using the principles in the sutta.

The present world really needs the principles in the Kālāmasutta as its practical guide. The world turns faster because of man's defilements; it becomes narrower because of better transportation and communication. But it is on the path to destruction because of lack of awareness and proper knowledge. People in the world are worshipping materialism and indulging in sensuality and luxury according to their defilements. Because they do not use the principles in the Kālāmasutta and do not know how to choose properly according to the principles, the world is full of improper things that hinder peace but encourage crime and other evils more and more. Let's eliminate the problems and all the evils by following the principles in the Kālāmasutta.

Finally we come to the problem of the name of this sutta. If we name it after the people who listened to it, then it should be called the Kālāmasutta. If we

name it after the place where the Buddha preached it, then it is Kesaputtasutta. In both cases, the names represent the same teaching. During the time when the Venerable Phra Mahasamanachao Kromphraya Vachirayanavarorot printed a set of dhamma books called the *Dhammasampatti*, or the Dhamma Treasure, in order to publicize the Pali Canon, This sutta was well known as the Kālāmasutta. Therefore, here I would like to yell "Help! The Kālāmasutta, help!"

In conclusion, the Kālāmasutta never forbids our belief in anything; it only helps us to believe with intellectual independence. It does not forbid our listening to anything but helps us to listen without falling intellectual slave to others. It also enables us to consider and decide profoundly; it helps us to find a residuum of gold in a big heap of rubbish. Therefore, may the Kālāmasutta exist in the heart and mind of every Buddhist in the present world.

**Help! The Kālāmasutta, help!**

*Mokkhabalārāma*  
May 6, 1988.

# Kamma in Buddhism



**As Buddhists, we must know the essence of *kamma* (action and result of action) in Buddhism. We should not blindly take *kamma* taught in other religions for our practice; otherwise, we will pitifully go through *kamma* without being able to get beyond its power or become free from it.**

**Why do we need to know the essence of *kamma*? It's because our lives associate with it and go along with it. To be more precise, we can say that life is actually a stream of *kamma*. Desire to do deeds causes one to perform actions and receive the results of the actions; then desire to do deeds arises again and again endlessly. Therefore, life is only a pattern of *kamma*. If we rightly understand *kamma*, we can smoothly lead our lives, having no problems or sufferings.**

**There are two *kamma* doctrines: one has been taught since pre-Buddha time or, otherwise, it is taught outside Buddhism, the other is a principle in Buddhism. The first doctrine presents only half of the whole story. In that doctrine, one cannot conquer *kamma* but has to be under it; one desires to be under it and asks for its help without ever trying to fight for his own liberation. One performs *kamma* as if he were**

accumulating assets for more satisfactory rebirth. He never thinks of ending his kamma. He expects himself to rely on it instead of trying to end it. But in Buddhism, we can understand kamma up to the level that we can conquer it or get beyond it, that is, we do not carry the burden of kamma any more. We will neither merely sit waiting idly nor put our fate in gods, nor perform a black magic in a sacred river to purify kamma.

To stay beyond kamma is incredible to most people; they may even consider it as a form of deception. But it is really possible if we take the Buddha as our true friend. This will help us in practicing the complete set of ten rightnesses: the Eightfold Path with right insight and right deliverance in accordance with the law of Specific Conditionality. In such practice, there is no foolish feeling which leads to desire for various results of kammās. A doctrine master in Southern India who was the Buddha's contemporary heard that the Buddha taught cessation of kamma. He then sent his disciples to ask the Buddha questions and ask for His instructions. This story is stated in the *Soḷasapañhā*, *Pārāyanavagga* of *Khuddakanikāya* in the Pali Canon. It is a well-known story. Many people learn the Buddha's answers in that story and take them for study and practice.

The wrong teachings on kamma are publicized nowadays in the books written by some Indians or some Westerners under the topic of "*Karma and Re-birth*." They are about kamma and rebirth in Hinduism but presented in the name of Buddhism. So the right

teaching in Buddhism is being misrepresented. This should be known and corrected for the undistorted essence of kamma in Buddhism. The Buddha accepted such half-way teaching on good and evil deeds and their results that was presented before His time or outside His teaching as a right statement, that is, not a wrong view of kamma. But the Buddha added to it the final aspect, namely, cessation of kamma according to the principle of Buddhism, thus completing the teaching on kamma. The cessation of kamma can be called by two names. The first is called "the third kind of kamma" because there are good and evil deeds and the deed leading to cessation of both good and evil deeds. But we may count in another way as good deeds, evil deeds, mixed deeds, and kamma that leads to cessation of all kammās. If we count in this way, then the additional kamma taught in Buddhism becomes the fourth kind of kamma. But if we take mixed kamma as either good or evil deeds, then there are only three kinds of kamma; and the kamma that leads to cessation of all kammās becomes the third kind. This way of counting is easy, convenient, and compact. Without the third kind of kamma, the essence of kamma in the real Buddhistic sense cannot be complete.

**Kamma and rebirth.** There is a rebirth every time one does a deed, and that rebirth occurs spontaneously at the moment of action. We have no need to wait for rebirth after death as we generally understand in the worldly sense. When one thinks and acts, his mind is spontaneously changed through

the power of desire and clinging, which leads to becoming and birth in accordance with the law of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). There is no need to wait for rebirth after death – this truth should be realized as the true teaching in Buddhism. It is a principle in the original, untarnished Buddhism which states that there is no self to be reborn. How the concept of rebirth after death crept into Buddhism is difficult to explain, and we need not concern ourselves with it. To merely prevent rebirth in the stream of Dependent Origination is enough for us. Such practice is truly in accordance with Buddhism, and our action will become kamma which we can take as a refuge. When a good deed is done, goodness spontaneously arises; when an evil deed is done, evilness spontaneously arises. There is no need to wait for its result at any other moment. If there will be rebirth after death, that rebirth only occurs through kamma one has done in this very life, and its result has already occurred here. We should not worry about it or let it obstruct our practice.

Receiving the result of kamma. We should truly see that the mind which performs a deed is kamma itself and the subsequent mind (consciousness) is the result of that kamma. Other results that follow are only uncertain by-products, since they may or may not occur or do not keep up with our expectation because of other interfering factors. The result of action occurring to the mind that performs the action is certain. This is the Buddhist principle about

the voidness of self or soul to be reborn. This truth is stated by the Buddha in the Kevattasutta. To hold the view that soul is reborn means deviation from the truth of non-self. When a good deed or an evil deed is done, goodness or evilness spontaneously arises accordingly without our having to wait for it later on. But most people expect the results. They, then, become disappointed because of interfering factors. Such a circumstance may lead one to holding a wrong view that a good action brings bad results and a bad action brings good results. We should be careful of this wrong view and should develop the right understanding about this point.

Receiving the result of kamma must be self-perceiving, immediate, and inquiry-inviting and should not contradict the truth of non-self of the five aggregates. Mind is merely a phenomenon which is pushed this side and that side according to the environments. The resulting reaction has to be accepted and defined as good or evil according to one's satisfaction or dissatisfaction. However, we should aim at ending kamma or being beyond it; we will then become an enlightened, awakened, and intellectually enlivened one, that is, a true Buddha.

There is a definition of kamma with the sense of self on the level of morality. This definition contradicts the principle of non-self stated by the Buddha. We should correctly understand this definition; otherwise, we will not benefit from the practice, since we will not be able to get beyond kamma. Being endlessly

under the power of kamma is not the principle of kamma taught in Buddhism. Let's aim at performing the kamma that leads to cessation of all kammās. That will prevent us from ignorantly going astray.

**Action and reaction.** The action or movement of sentient beings that is done with volition, particularly that of craving, arising through defilements is called *kamma*. An action which is not caused by defilements, for example, an arahant's volition, is not called kamma; it is still called *kiriya* (function). The result of *kiriya* is called *paṭikiriya* (reaction). The result of kamma is called *vipāka* (fruit of action). These results justly occur in accordance with the law of nature. Ordinary people have volition as the cause of their actions which then become kamma. Good volition leads to good action; evil volition leads to evil action. Through morality and culture, everybody is taught to do good deeds which do not cause trouble to anybody but merely give good results to everyone. Therefore, kamma is under the law of nature; and it is scientific.

**Types of kamma.** There are many types of kamma depending on characteristics of deeds and their doers. Some do deeds with selfishness for their desired selves. Some do deeds that lead to cessation of self and attainment of *nibbāna*. There are people who are pleased with worldly prosperity, heavenly prosperity, and successful attainment of *nibbāna*, which always seem to contradict one another. Some like to show off their good deeds, but some perform

their good deeds covertly. Some proclaim their meritorious deeds with fanfare; but some do not need such a proclamation. Some do their deeds with excessive ceremony, but some do theirs without any ceremony at all. Some do theirs out of fear for black magic or superstition, but some do theirs properly as Buddhists. Therefore, it is apparent that there are various types of kamma. However, they can be classified into two categories: that with self or for self and that for cessation of self or of selfishness. Some do deeds in a business-like manner, expecting an excessive profit. But some wish for cessation of the vicious circle of life. Let's see for ourselves! Most people do good deeds merely for an excessive profit.

**Kamma and non-self.** The concept of kamma and non-self is confusing and difficult to understand in various points. A monk once asked the Buddha, "How does kamma done by non-self give result to self?" This question arose because of the teaching on non-self which indicates how the doer whose mind and body are void of self, once he has done the kamma, will receive the result and how the result will affect the self, that is, the doer who intentionally does that deed. The new concept of self contradicts the old concept of self. There is a self which decides to be non-self and does deeds in the name of non-self, but the feeling of self still exists to receive the results of the deeds. The question, therefore, arose as such. If we see it rightly, we will understand that if the body and mind are void of self, the result of their action will

go to the non-self body and mind; but if that body and mind are full of feeling of self, the result of their action will always go to the self. If kamma is non-self, its result will be non-self, and what occurs in accordance with kamma will be non-self. What is considered as man or animal who does the kamma will also be nonself. The kamma and non-self never separate and never oppose each other.

**Cessation of kamma is the same as nibbāna.** In other words, it is synonymous with nibbāna. But most people are taught that death is the end of kamma. When someone dies, they murmur, "His kamma has already ended." Moreover, they often say that one dies according to the good and the bad he has done; they realize neither that what is happening to them is also in accordance with their good and bad kammas nor that real cessation of kamma is attainment of nibbāna.

**Nibbāna is not only freedom from kamma and its result but also cessation of the vicious *samsāra* (life circle), which goes on according to kamma.** Nibbāna, therefore, is lovable, not horrible. Even so, many people still prefer being trapped in the vicious circle of life according to kamma, particularly the kamma they desire as a result of their defilements but never get as they wish. One who has a big ego will normally hate and fear cessation of kamma because what he desires for his self is the result of kamma that is lovely according to his viewpoint.

**Kamma is substratum (*upadhi*) or burden.** When one performs kamma, his life goes on according to kamma, that is, bound by good or evil kamma. Good kamma makes one laugh; bad kamma makes him cry. But both make him tired almost to death. Even so, people in our congregation still like to laugh, since they have misconception that good kamma is great wholesomeness. When kamma does not bind our lives, it becomes as if there is no chains, that is, no iron chains or diamond-studded gold chains whatsoever, on our legs. Life is a burden because it is weighted down by kamma; and we have to carry it. Cessation of kamma makes our lives light and free. But only few people like it because most are blinded with a screen of self.

**In conclusion, as Buddhists, let's try to do only deeds which lead to cessation of kamma.** When we see that kamma has occupied our lives, we should try to practice and improve ourselves and fight in every way to triumph over both good and evil karmas, so that they will not oppress our mind. Let's develop our mind until it is pure, enlightened, and peaceful so that we can live without being troubled by kamma and its result. Most people nowadays give kamma a meaning of a bad, undesirable thing. This is actually right because both good and evil karmas are unlovable: they cause the vicious circle of life to go on without cessation.

The kamma in Buddhism is that which leads to cessation of all kammās and lets us live beyond them. It should be recognized and incorporated into our lives. "Staying beyond kamma" is the state that we must try to reach and attain.

*Mokkhabalārāma*  
*April 7, 1988.*



# Nibbāna for Everyone



When you hear a phrase like "Nibbāna for everyone," several of you may shake your heads in disbelief and understand that someone has tried to dye a cat just for sale. So you might not have any interest in the subject. This is because we have so little understanding of the meaning of the expression and what we understand is not what it really is.

Small children in schools have been taught that nibbāna is the death of the arahants (enlightened ones). Laymen in general have been informed that nibbāna is a special city or country without suffering but with happiness as one wishes. The place is usually reached after death by those who have already achieved perfections in several thousand reincarnations. The developers of the present generation view nibbāna as a hindrance to economic and social development, something that should not be studied or even mentioned. Students generally put nibbāna in a category for old devout Buddhists so they do not need to pay any attention to it. Young people see nibbāna as something bland, with no taste, something truly awful. Buddhist ordinands mostly pay lip service when they say that they would like to be ordained in order to realize nibbāna clearly. Old monks say that nibbāna can no longer occur today and that an

arahant, one who has attained nibbāna, cannot exist either. Finally, nibbāna has become a mystery which no one pays attention to, and the subject has become sterilized in the Buddhist scriptures, only to be mentioned at times without knowing what it really is.

In point of fact, without nibbāna, Buddhism itself cannot exist. If we are not interested in nibbāna, then we are not interested in Buddhism. That is, if nothing in Buddhism interests us, then we do not obtain any beneficial effect from Buddhism. I believe that the time has come for us to pay attention to nibbāna and to make the best of it so that you match the practice with the meaning of nibbāna as the supreme ennobling virtue, or the highest objective of living things, and we are to be concerned with nibbāna all the time in our daily life.

Nibbāna is not related to death in any sense. The word *nibbāna* means cool. When it is spoken by laymen at home, it also means cool. Once it became an expression in the dhamma language of the Buddhist religion, the meaning remained the same but the term refers to the coolness one attains from the extinction of defiling fire, or vices of conduct, whereas in the laymen's language it retains the sense of being cool as a result of extinguishing of an ordinary fire.

Generally in the Pali Canon, nibbāna has never been applied in the sense of death. When discussing about death there is either the word '*maraṇa*' or '*parinibbāna*,' as in the following sentence: 'The parinibbāna will occur three months from now.'

Nibbāna is a natural condition. It is the cool state of mind without any *kilesa* (defilements). The condition is divided into two kinds: the first state of mind that has been free from defilements, and thus cool, but the system of the body sense-faculties that receive sense-objects is not cool yet; and the second state of mind whose system of the sense-faculties has cooled down. The first state of 'cool mind' may be compared to brightly burning charcoal which, once extinguished, is still too hot to touch. We need to wait for a while for it to become completely cool so that we can touch it. It is the same with the first state of cool mind. The meaning of nibbāna has changed to 'death' through the explanation of people in the later generation. This is a common phenomenon in the world. Even the Thai people in the present period also apply the word in this sense. As a schoolboy I was taught this way and as a newly ordained monk, I still understood the word as such. I went on to tell my friends or my students the incorrect meaning as well. Only after studying the original Pali Canon did I find out that nibbāna is a different event from death. It is life without death and it is an essence that is nourishing to all living things; even though the body may yield to death, the mind in a state of nibbāna does not die.

However, other religions in India that were contemporary with Buddhism also used the word nibbāna. As appearing in the Pali Canon, leaders of other religious beliefs sent their men to ask the Buddha about His version of nibbāna. Their meaning of

nibbana might be death. They were in the area of Gotāṃbārī River in south India. We are well aware of the inquiry, which has been referred to as Soḷasa-pañhā (Sixteen Questions) of the Pārāyanavagga in the Khuddakanikāya (Minor Anthologies) of the Pali Canon. We may conclude that nibbāna is the ultimate subject of the religions contemporary to Buddhism in India. Among them, one group might have interpreted nibbāna as death and might have come to teach in Suvannabhūmi (the Southeast Asian region) before Buddhism spread over the area. The meaning of nibbāna as death was thus locally instilled. The incident is more or less the same as that of *attā* or *atman* (self). Now let us continue considering nibbāna in Buddhism.

When he first entered the monkhood, the Buddha went in search of nibbāna – in the sense of total extinction of suffering (rather than death) – from the leaders of various religious sects existing in India during the period. The highest realm he found was *neva-saññānāsaññāyatana* (the realm of neither perception nor non-perception), that is, the calmness of the mind to the extent of neither death nor non-death. This he did not accept but continued searching for his own approach. Consequently he reached nibbāna which is the cool state of the mind resulting from extinction of defilements. He termed it the “cessation of suffering,” which means the extinction of the heat from defilements. The more one’s defilements decrease, the higher degree of coolness one attains. This will continue until the highest degree of coolness

is reached because all of one's impurities are completely extinct. In conclusion, the fewer impairments, the more cool or the more nibbāna there exists at a particular level of mind. It may be summed up that nibbāna is the coolness resulting from the extinction of defilements whether they become extinct of themselves or by one's effort. Where there is the extinction of defilements, there is what may be called nibbāna whose meaning is "cool."

Now we look further to the fact that defilements are also *sankhāradhamma* (compounded things), or things that have birth and death, and according to the Pali Canon which says "*Yankiñci samudayadhammaṃ sabbantaṃ nirodhadhammaṃ*" this shows that defilements occur and, when causal conditions are not present, defilements simply become extinct. Although the extinction is temporary, or in other words the coolness takes place temporarily, the phenomenon has the real sense of nibbāna, even though not the lasting one. Hence temporary nibbāna does exist for those who unavoidably have some impurities left. This indeed is temporary nibbāna, which nourishes all sentient beings though they still retain certain impairments. Anybody can see that if defilements are with us all day and night, every second without ceasing, who can ever stand them? Under such conditions, living things must either die or become insane and finally die anyway. Let us consider well the fact that one survives because there are periods that the fires of defilements are not burning. As a matter of fact, we can say that these periods last

longer than when the fires are burning. Periodical nibbāna keeps all of us alive and well, without making any exceptions, even animals at a certain level. We survive because of the nourishment from this kind of nibbāna. This nourishing condition is thus normal to what may be called life or mind. When defilements are absent, the value or meaning of nibbāna is present. There must be enough of this condition for any sentient being. We have periods of rest (or relaxing) physically and mentally, making us refreshed and alive and well. Why don't we know or feel thankful for this kind of nibbāna? It is fortunate that our instinct manages to gain this nibbāna for us. That is, whatever has any heart and mind will look for periods when defilements or strong desires are absent. If the living thing maintains unceasing desires, it will have to die. Therefore, an infant knows how to suck for milk, and a mosquito knows how to go around sucking blood to keep itself alive until it is smashed. Our instinct inherently has such a quality, that is, it is in search of spans of time when the mind is free from defilements or free from desires, enough to maintain one's life. Whenever it happens, a little nibbāna always comes in. The phenomenon will continue until one learns how to convert it into permanent nibbāna or complete nibbāna, and thus becomes an arahant. This is not death but non-death, especially of one's mind. Whoever sees this truth will realize by himself that we all survive with this kind of nibbāna, not solely with food, which we are infatuated with. We also feel that we all must have the experience called nibbāna and

rely on it as our nourishing condition to keep us alive. How can we not state that nibbāna is for everyone?

To understand the meaning of the word "nibbāna" further, we need to study it linguistically or lexicologically.

In the material world, there is an expression "*pajjotasseva nibbānam*," and this word nibbāna means the usual extinction of fire. For example, some boiled rice is still hot and a child calls out from the kitchen, "Wait a while for it to become nibbāna." Another example is when a goldsmith melts some gold and then pours water over to cool it down, a Pali expression used in this case is "*nibbāpeyya*," which means 'make it nibbāna or cool it down.' Once cooled, the gold is used for gold ornaments. Even for fierce animals caught from the forest and trained to be tame like cats, we say that we make them nibbāna. Sensual pleasures make ignorant people cool down in their own way. *Rūpajhāna* or *jhāna* (absorption) of the fine-material sphere brings the coolness away from the fire of sensuality temporarily for people. This can also be called nibbāna at a certain level. *Ākiñcaññāyatana*, the sphere (or realm) of nothingness (*arūpajhāna*) yields some coolness away from the fire that is caused by materiality or corporeality which is enticing. Nibbāna as a result of the extinction of all defilements gives the ultimate coolness of all aspects.

Some religious teachers of certain groups have created the word '*sivamokkhamahānibbāna*' and have

explained the meaning of the term even as home or city. This is not understandable. It is better for us to keep the word as something to salute with joined palms of hands when it is heard spoken from a preaching seat.

There is still another term, *nibbuti*, which contains the meaning of nibbāna at the level of morality. It denotes calmness plus happiness in a relaxed style, or in other words – cool life, as illustrated in the following cases. A young girl praised Prince Siddhattha, "For this man, whatever parents he was born to, they must be happily *nibbuta* (cool), whatever girl he married, she must be *nibbutā* (cool)." All this has the meaning of nibbāna. At present, the monks in Thailand preach the merit of *sīla* (moral conduct), "*Sīlena nibbutim yanti* – those who practice *sīla* attain *nibbuti* through *sīla*." This comes after they have enjoyed their complete worldly properties and entered *sugati* (the happy states). The preaching is intended to get the concept of nibbāna involved in our daily life.

The coolness and calmness which everyone wants entails the meaning of nibbāna. But they misunderstand it and head toward sensual pleasures which are fiery. What they receive is just false nibbāna and such practices have been in existence since the time of the Buddha or even before that period as seen in the 62 *ditthi*s (views) of the Brahmajālasutta.

We have thus seen how the word nibbāna has its historical trace and how its meaning can be summed up to also include an aspect of coolness and

calmness, all with a matching degree of a high or low feeling of each individual. The significant point remains with the fact that nibbāna nourishes and sustains life. It puts out the mental fire and decreases the span of burning time enough for living things to survive. The supreme state of nibbāna can be attained when all the fires of defilements are extinguished. The highest possible degree of attainment in Buddhism, as stated by the Buddha, involves the extinction of lust, anger, and delusion. That is the ultimate extinction of all the fires and the subsequent coolness is as supreme as life can attain.

Nibbāna is not the mind but the state that the mind can achieve which the Buddha referred to as an *āyatana* (sphere) to be reached by mindfulness and wisdom. Visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangible objects are of the material *āyatana*, the material sphere or physical sphere. Our physical body can attain it. *Ākāsānañcāyatana* (the sphere of unbounded space) and other spheres up to *neva-saññānāsaññāyatana* (the sphere of neither perception nor nonperception) are mental spheres that the mind can reach. However, nibbāna is an *āyatana* of wisdom, which mindful, wise people may perceive or attain. Nibbāna therefore may be considered as something that nature holds for human beings of a higher spiritual level. We should be mindful of this fact so that both nibbāna and all of us do not exist in vain. Everyone of us has mindfulness and wisdom to sense nibbāna. Please don't let them go to waste.

The sphere of nibbāna is something that naturally exists for people to attain. It is like precious medicine which can extinguish all kinds of suffering. Indeed, suffering or disease exists and no ordinary medicine can ever relieve it. This is the disease caused by defilements which must be cured with the extinction of the defilements that leads to the condition of nibbāna. This sickness is the utmost ailment of the soul, hidden secretly in us and secretly tormenting us. Whoever extinguishes it will be the person who reaches the pinnacle of his being human.

To say that there is no nibbāna in the present time is absolutely wrong because the nibbāna condition is ever present in nature – but no one is interested in searching for it. The Buddha discovered it and most kindly disclosed it. But we cut the discussion short by saying that no nibbāna exists instead of saying that at present no one knows about it nor is interested in it. If we just behave as truly right-minded followers, nibbāna will appear because it has been waiting for those people in search of it

We cannot create nibbana because it remains above all causal conditions and aiding conditions but it is possible for us to create aiding conditions for the attainment of nibbāna, by doing everything we can to abstain from defilements. We will not say what people usually say, that we do something good so that the good deed will be an aiding condition for nibbāna. The right statement is that such action is an aiding condition for the attainment of nibbāna, which can be accomplished in any period or era. Elderly people like

the expression "a stairway of nibbāna" because it takes them into a building or a city. They have been taught to understand it in that way. The meaning is more or less acceptable since it again refers to the aiding condition for the attainment of nibbāna.

**Synonyms or other words representing nibbāna are numerous, in fact many dozens, such as deathlessness, permanence, peace, the state of being without fear or danger, health, the state of being without diseases, freedom, emancipation, the shelter, the refuge, the stronghold, the float for people who have fallen into the water, the highest gain, the highest bliss, the further shore, the place one will reach in the future when the physical and mental constitution of the body comes to an end, and others. These terms mean coolness for there is no burning fire. These are of such a delicate level that they are not wanted by those people who are still covered with too many defilements. Once some of their defilements are taken away, they will surely be more contented with nibbāna than any other things. This process can happen to any person. Let us hold to the word "cool" as the most valuable.**

**The expression which best conveys the meaning of nibbāna is "the cessation of suffering" used by the Buddha, but it is still not interesting enough for those who do not feel that they are suffering. They do not feel that way. They want what they want. For them, there is no suffering to extinguish. Therefore they do not need the extinction of suffering or the cessation of suffering. Even numer-**

ous foreigners at Suan Mokkh have that feeling. But once they are told that it is a new life, a life in which there is quenching of thirst, or a life that is beyond being positive or negative, then they become extremely interested in it. This is what is so difficult with language, to persuade people to become interested in nibbāna. For each individual we must have a particular translation of the word nibbāna. This is not easy at all. Deep down, everybody wants nibbāna – without being conscious of the need or without any intention but purely with the power of instinct.

The study of nibbāna in our daily life is possible and through it we gain more understanding of the meaning of nibbāna and we grow to be contented with it. When we see a fire burns out or something hot cools down, we realize the meaning of nibbāna. When we take a bath or have some ice or when the breeze blows past or when it rains, we are able to determine the meaning of nibbāna. Once the fever subsides or the swollen spot goes down and the headache is gone, we again can point to the meaning of nibbāna from those incidents. As we perspire, sleep, or are full, we realize the meaning of nibbāna. Again we see its meaning when we witness the animals becoming tame and no longer rebellious or dangerous. These examples are lessons that help us understand the nature of nibbāna every time. Our mind will regularly tend to become contented with nibbāna and this helps the mind to flow along the path of nibbāna more easily.

Whenever you find some coolness in your feeling, keep conscious of that coolness in your mind and then breathe in and out. Taking it in is cool, and so is letting it out. In -- cool, out -- cool. Do this for a while and it is a good lesson for you to become *nibbānakāmo* (one who wishes to realize nibbāna) more quickly. Your instinct will change increasingly often toward enlightenment, increasingly more than not to do so. Natural nibbāna, or the extinction of defilements without being conscious of it, will occur more often and more easily; it is indeed the best help to nature.

In conclusion, nibbāna is not death but coolness or non-death that is alive and well. In the Pali Canon, the word nibbāna was never used in the sense concerning death. Nibbāna is a natural condition, ready to be in touch with the mind since it is a kind of *āyatana* (sphere or realm). If nibbāna does not exist, Buddhism does not mean anything. The real kind of nibbāna, which is different from the nibbānas in the other doctrines, was discovered by the Buddha. The natural nibbāna is possible, because defilements can occur and then die down since they are a kind of compounded thing. This natural process initiates the presence of nibbāna every time defilements are absent. This kind of nibbāna nourishes life of all sentient beings and helps them survive and not become insane. At least, they can get to sleep. Nibbāna is no special city somewhere but it is in our mind as long as defilements are not active. For the moral practice of all laymen, nibbāna is referred to

as *nibbuti*. Nibbāna is not the mind but can occur to the mind as *āyatana*. Nibbāna can be present here and now by taking your breath in cool and letting it out cool. It is the realm that cools down the heat, quenches the thirst, and extinguishes the sufferings existing in our daily life -- automatically without our being conscious of it. It really is a nourishing process for our life all the time.

It is hoped that all of you now begin to realize that "nibbāna for everyone" is not dyeing a cat for sale, but it is a real cat which is used to catch mice -- that is suffering -- to the degree that matches the power of mindfulness and wisdom of everyone!

*Mokkhabalārāma*  
*April 3, 1988.*

## A Single Solution for All of the World Problems



Our world is ridden with problems; it will be doomed unless its course is changed. We all know that no less than 50,000 nuclear war-heads were stockpiled by various countries some time ago. No one knows how many more war-heads have been made since. But even only 50,000 of them can destroy the whole world several times over. This is a result of selfishness of the people who try to conquer the world. Selfishness is rampant everywhere; it is limitless. Let's thoroughly consider the cause of the crisis so that we can find a possible remedy.

Selfishness originates from the instinctive sense of self that is out of control and becomes defilements in all aspects. Every activity of a selfish person's, or an egoist's, is controlled by his defilements. When he is alone, his selfishness torments him with insomnia and headache; when he associates with others, he, compelled by his selfishness, can harm them to a great extent. Under democratic rights, he probably makes use of his selfishness and cunningly evades laws. Let's look at such behavior, which exists everywhere in social, economic, and

political activities and the livelihood of the so-called educated people; it is so ridiculous that pre-historic people, had they known of it, would be greatly amused and would die laughing.

In a democratic system, if people are selfish, they will elect selfish representatives, who will constitute a selfish parliament, which in turn will form a selfish government. Then the whole country is under the power of selfishness. How many of us who are not selfish will then remain in this world?

Democracy of selfish people is worse than the worst dictatorship. This is because such democracy puts no limit on selfish exploitation; the more cunning a selfish person is, the wider and more inconspicuous his exploitation becomes. An unselfish dictator will be better, for his dictatorship will be righteous. Only with dhamma, however, will all be well, irrespective of whether the system is dictatorial or democratic. Let's consider the benefit of unselfishness to the utmost and give unselfishness a fair chance.

Unselfishness must return in due time, before the world lies in ruin. People in the whole world must know this truth and must hurriedly find the way for the due return of unselfishness. If selfishness is retained, Bangkok, for example, cannot rid itself of

mosquitos. But with return of unselfishness, mosquitos can suddenly be eliminated from the City.

**Unselfishness is a purpose of every religion,** whatever category it is in: theistic or atheistic. Even an occultist religion does not want selfishness. If all the religions cooperated in eliminating selfishness from the entire world, using the methods of their own, the world would be free from selfishness and all the crises would also disappear. As for the United Nations Organization, whose member countries are still more or less selfish, it alone cannot do anything more than always trying in vain to keep the member countries in line. It should instead cooperate with all the religions in eliminating selfishness from the world. The religions are of different types, which can satisfy people at all levels; therefore, they have a good chance to succeed.

**Buddhism itself has not-self (*anattā*) as a major principle.** If one practices Buddhistic principles, he will be more or less free from selfishness. Other religions which preach the principle of self would probably find it difficult to teach their followers the principle of egoless self. May the Buddhist people hurriedly try to perceive the essence of their religion, thus making use of it in spite of its inferior popularity.

Selfishness is caused by the instinct of self that goes along a wrong way, namely, a way that leads to defilements instead of wisdom. Because of the environment, our children are apt to succumb to defilements all along from the time they are small. We have traditions that nurture babies with selfishness; we give them all the pleasant things: tasty foods, beautiful clothes, and cuddly toys, all of which cause attachment. So the children become possessive and greedy: they call their parent "my father," "my mother" and their residence "my house;" whatever they want is always granted. There are no such parents that bring their children to a toy-shop with all those wonderful and expensive toys and say to them, "My dear children, they have all these toys to make us foolish." Instead, most parents tell their children to choose any toy they want from a toy-shop, no matter how expensive it is. Or they tell their children to choose any tasty food they want from a restaurant, no matter how exotic and expensive it is. Sometimes too much food is ordered and too little is consumed, resulting in a lot of leftover. There are many other environments which strengthen selfishness more and more as children grow older, or at least while they are under their parents' overflowing attention. Therefore, we should have a household cultural training that will instill children with unselfishness, starting from their birth and keeping at it until unselfishness becomes their habitual character as they grow up. By then, they would have had very little selfishness. Cultural training in the past did not encourage children's

selfishness so much as does its present counterpart. It is easy to have peace among people who detest and fear selfishness.

We Thai people must have a few things that will eliminate or lessen selfishness for our well-being. Such things must be included in the Thai culture and identities, which have Buddhism as the inner core. Instead of classical Thai music, classical Thai dances and plays, Siamese cats, fighting fish, etc., we should take, as the Thai identity, unselfishness or our ever-present, unselfishness-based smile without intention for deception. Or if we take our pagodas and temples as symbols of our country, we should also have unselfishness to substantiate them.

We must have a complete education process that not only gives people intelligence but also keeps their intelligence in line with morality, so that it will not fall under selfishness. Nowadays, we organize an education which is so advanced that it can do many miraculous things, such as going to the Moon as easily as stepping out to our own backyard. But there is no education process whatsoever that keeps people's intelligence under control of morality. I am severely criticized for having called the present education system the "tailless-dog" or "spireless-pagoda" form of education. I can't help calling it so because of the fact; therefore, I say it outrightly. We should not expand such a form of education but should improve it instead. There has been much talk about expansion of education. We must be careful

not to allow it without first having improved education according to its problems.

We must have ordination and education for young men, and we must train them most rigorously in unselfishness until it can be said that ordination means study of not only the religion but also work for others without expecting any benefit, even a word of gratefulness, in return. At Suan Mokkh we have a labor day for the monks and novices to sweat at work, form a work habit, and take sweat as a means to deliverance. Later on, they will not be idle, thus causing no problems for the society or themselves. For whatever work that one will do, he must see clearly that it is for the Buddha and for the religion's existence under any circumstance. **What we will call Single Solution for all the problems of the individuals and the whole society is unselfishness.** At Suan Mokkh we preach self-contentment with the slogan "Eat from a cat's plate, bathe in a ditch, sleep in a pigsty, and listen to singing mosquitos!," which discourages some people from staying with us. We must eat frugally and work for the highest spiritual attainment; if we selfishly aim at good eating, we will make progress in nothing except accumulation of selfishness forever.

**A complete "university for monasterial boys,"** which I have studied in, should be given a great deal of attention. If I have not graduated from such a "university," the person widely known as Buddhādāsa

may not have existed in this world. Please think about it carefully, for it has nurtured people like myself. As monasterial boys, we learned a complete lesson for thoroughly scraping off selfishness twenty-four hours a day.

We monasterial boys had a rule to arise for work before all the chickens got out of their coop. Anyone who was still sleeping at that time could be soaked with water by others. (Sometimes, one of the boys would playfully harass others by getting the chickens out of the coop before the due time and soaking up his sleeping friends, who then woke up without any ill feeling toward their tormentor. This was just a test for sporting spirit among friends – a practice that may not be tolerated nowadays.) After having awakened, the boys would go out to villages to fetch foods. Then they would come back to the monastery to prepare a complete dining facility for the monks, wait on them without absence while they were eating, and later on offer a part of leftovers to cats, which, as a responsibility, the boys must take care of. After the monks and cats had been feasted, the boys could have their breakfast. Traditional etiquettes for eating were enforced; for example, they must not blow their noses while eating. After the meal, the boys must tidy up the place and pair off for study. They had to be wary of the penal rod, which often fell on their backs unjustly. The serving process was repeated at lunch time. And after lunch, another study session would follow. Late in the afternoon, they would cultivate a plot of land for growing yams or prepare another

near a pond for other vegetables, and gather fruits to be given to villagers as a return for their everyday food offerings. They also raised monasterial animals, namely, chickens and dogs. (My monastery had a pig as an extra. It scared off chicken thieves at night so well that it received a special liking from the abbot. It never dug up our yams to eat by itself, thus surprisingly showing its unselfishness.) There were shifts of the boys for fetching water and filling water containers, but small boys like myself were exempted from this duty. Instead, the small boys had to prepare garlands for monks at the morning and evening prayer ceremonies; and at night they had to give their master monks a massage while listening to strange and interesting tales from the masters. Apart from the routine work, the monasterial boys had to also do the cleaning of the buildings, scrape out grass, and sometimes do the boxing drill to conserve the cultural tradition and prepare themselves for a fight with boys from some other monasteries. Another rigorously enforced rule we monasterial boys had to follow was greeting the elderly with a "*wai*," that is, putting both hands together as a gesture of respect. This must be done to all senior citizens regardless of their mental condition or social status. My monastery was close to a walking path, so it was rather difficult for us to often put down our work tools and greet the elderly. It was also very painful to greet marijuana-smoking men, who did not deserve our respect. But it was probably good for us to reduce our egoby this activity anyway. I did the greeting like this for two years

and "graduated" with the self-conferred **"diploma of the perfect, world-serving monasterial boys."**

Then I continued with an education in a school.

My school then had no janitors. We schoolchildren had to come to school very early in the morning and joyfully contested one another in sweeping the floor, for we had to tidy up everything. Sometimes we were asked to help carry things of a monastery from boats in a canal, climbing up the canal bank to the monastery; we always did this when we had an opportunity. Some other times we would help in pulling up wood planks from a canal to its bank and enjoy it very much. All of these were excellent spiritual lessons for eliminating selfishness. There are no such lessons in present-day schools, where they always have janitors. So the children nowadays are more selfish and malicious than those in the past. The **"diploma of world-serving monasterial boys"** is the Single Solution that can solve social or world problems.

This Single Solution is similar to *"nam phrik,"* or shrimp-paste sauce, which is a small dish indispensable in traditional Thai meals. Our ancestors, who never tasted exotic Chinese or Western foods, always had this dish during their lifetimes; they were also trained to be unselfish and to love others. But their children and grandchildren, who eat exotic and expensive foods, become selfish more and more. They are most cunning in their selfishness and never think of serving anybody except themselves; some even think of conquering the whole world. This is because they

have never been to the "University of the Single Solution," that is, never been trained in lessening their selfishness.

We must have an education that does not support selfish democracy or freedom of cunning persons who are unrestrained. They are good at thinking, speaking, and doing but are full of the most inconspicuous selfishness. The more educated they are, the more selfish they become, eventually transforming themselves into crooks and hooligans without anybody's noticing. This happens even in schools and universities, whose majority of graduates do not or cannot accept the Single Solution. We only have such kind of education that serves economic and political reasons but does not serve morality. So morality is disappearing; and there are violent rivalry and quarrels among students of schools, or even universities. We have an education that teaches women not to function as women or mothers, and men not as men or fathers, resulting in competition for work among both sexes under the so-called human rights, which seemingly encourages unisexism. Among married couples, there is a foolish argument about who should lead and who should follow. This problem did not exist among our ancestors, who had the Single Solution; in each family, they properly agreed upon this matter of who should do what.

**We must have the kind of education that does not lead men and women to compete for work but teaches men to become fathers and teaches women to become mothers; the father is the provider to the family so that the mother does not have to work outside the family and can fully take care of the children, bringing them up to be good human beings and good citizens, who will not cause their parents' suffering due to their misbehaviors. Then the world will have peace because it has proper citizenry. The children will be righteously brought up, boys and girls being unselfish. There will be no sexism or sexually oriented beauty contests that encourage both the contestants' and the spectators' parting with guilt and fear for immorality. This activity indicates the worst kind of selfishness, for it erodes morality and induces young people to become slaves of defilements, thus destroying themselves and menacing the society.**

**If we base our education on Buddhism, we will easily have dhammic socialism as our political system. It is righteously in accordance with natural requirement. Socialism of the egoist cannot create world peace; but dhammic or unselfishness-based socialism can. The latter creates love among fellow mortal men, in accordance with the ideal of the utopian world of the future Buddha, namely, Sri Ariyamettiriya, whose arrival is looked forward to by those who know. The essence of this is again the Single Solution of unselfishness.**

In conclusion, our ancestors' Single Solution, or unselfishness, must accompany every activity to promote peace and national culture. It is the essence of every religion which aims at eliminating our world's evils, being suitable for the central theme of morality. In other words, it is sufficient for present-day people to have only one precept: **unselfishness**. Think about it, and you will see that, once you haven't had selfishness, you automatically have all the precepts and are free from all moral problems. In effect, there will be no more economic, political, and governmental problems. This is how the Single Solution can eliminate all of the world problems.

*Mokkhabalārāma*

*April 6, 1988.*



## Comments on Education



**Education is a guidance for an individual's life; it can be considered a creator of the world. However, it is human beings who design education for themselves or collaborate to guide themselves – an act which seemingly follows the Buddhist concept that one should take himself as his own refuge. But in what direction are they heading? The issue must be thoroughly considered and discussed.**

**What strikes one's mind first is that there exists only the kind of education that promotes intelligence; but there hardly exists any control over intelligence. People have intelligence in their mentality, vocation, technology, and all kinds of things that help them to acquire wealth and power, which are ingredients for success required by their defilements and facilitated by freedom of selfishness. This results in spiritual deterioration, which can be seen in economic, political, social, and cooperative activities. It causes both hot wars and cold wars all over the world. Damages in ecology and conservation of natural resources, damages of public properties, and even corruption are rampant everywhere. There are all sorts of things that should never exist, such as narcotics and new problematic diseases. The number of prisons, police stations, courthouses, mental**

hospitals, and psychiatric wards never decreases; on the contrary, it is increasing more rapidly than the population growth. Material progress is excessive and at present becomes a world problem, which causes either people's exploiting one another or their avoiding being exploited.

**Present education cannot get rid of animal instinct in man;** instead, it may even promote the instinct unwittingly. Man is still unable to solve his problems peacefully, and has to use force like some animals that lack reasoning ability, thus blocking the path to peace and spiritual advancement. There is so much material and physical growth that the world is full of economic, political, and social animals, but without civilized animals or civilized human beings. Man's intelligence falls slave to materialism, which leads to conflict, competition, and eventually wars. Wars are unnecessarily caused to break out; they are waged without consideration to morality or value of religion, even when both warring parties are of the same faith.

This makes inhabitants of the modern world uncomparably more evil and dangerous than their primitive ancestors. The "uncivilized" men of the prehistoric past would have thousands of reasons to laugh at the "civilized" men of today, for the more progress modern men make, the more chaotic and the less peaceful the world becomes – to the extent that there are only permanent crises. We have more electricity but people's minds are less illuminated; we have more ice but people are more hotblooded. We

have better communication but it brings more robberies, hold-ups, and accidents.

**We have only the kind of education that promotes selfishness** without our being aware of it. This is because such education is organized by those who are selfish. And this, in turn, results from an education that promotes intelligence without a controlling element as previously mentioned – the kind of education that is too well organized to include control of selfishness. In this respect, it can be said that **selfishness is the actual organizer of the present education**. So far selfishness has become so severe that people split into groups which fight one another in an attempt to conquer the world. Selfishness causes democracy to become dangerous: the system allows people freedom to act out their selfishness in seeking personal gain. As an obvious example, selfish people vote for selfish representatives, who, in turn, constitute a selfish parliament. Such a parliament can elect only a government that consists of selfish persons. You can imagine for yourselves what will follow.

**Selfishness is a threat to our existing democratic system:** it can inadvertently cause the system to become unsteady, to deteriorate, or even collapse. It can also overwhelm the system with various problems. Or the opposition parties may act foolishly, as a result of their selfishness. Actually, democracy is not a system for people who are still selfish; it is for those who are educated well enough to be unselfish. Giving democracy to a society in

which people are not adequately well-educated is tantamount to offering them a weapon which they may use to kill themselves. Even from the viewpoint that giving democracy to the people will make them progress, there will be, among the selfish, no one who can bring about such a result – unless the kind of education that can control selfishness-causing intelligence or lead to true intelligence, that is, intelligence without selfishness, is immediately organized.

In conclusion, the kind of education that has no control over intelligence is a threat to democracy; in other words, it can inadvertently turn democracy into a hazard. It is pitiable that democracy cannot flourish in the present world because of the kind of education that cannot eliminate selfishness.

At present, we have the same education for boys and girls. This is unnatural and harmful to the progress of humankind. It is comparable to populating the world with neuters only, that is, there are neither men nor women, neither fathers nor mothers. Consider the human body which is created by God or nature. Particularly, women are entrusted with pregnancy and child-bearing and men have the responsibility to provide for the family, in the manner of a cooperative. This prevents extinction and leads to a satisfactorily superior breed of the human race. As neither men nor women are deficient in their duty, humanity will progress without problems. Specifically, the problem of men and women competing for the same kind of job, or that of an unnaturally competitive

examination, should not exist.

Women have a duty to raise the best possible children so that they will become good world citizens. Men have the responsibility to provide for the whole family, without women's having to work outside their homes. If women have to work, they should do the work at home, incorporating it with child rearing; and they should consider that it is a great honor to raise good human beings. Nowadays children grow up without guidance and preparedness for a perfect human being because they are brought up by servants or those who lack knowledge and true love for them. Therefore, they grow up to become machine-like adults, lacking good moral and cultural foundation. Women should receive the best possible education so that they can become best mothers. They should not feel slighted by consideration that child-rearing is an honorless job, or by blind faith in human rights without realizing the reason for human existence in this world.

When people of both sexes have the same duty, the world has neither men nor women, neither fathers nor mothers in the right sense, but has only neuters who are blind to their individual duty. So let's have rules, culture, and education that help make perfect men and women, who develop properly to their full capability in their own way but cooperate in unity to carry out the duty of a human being in the true sense of the word: a highly spiritually developed being who is beyond problems and does not create any problems or anything conducive to his own misfortune.

At present, we have an education system that is separate from religion, for religion is considered as an impediment to material progress. In this age of materialism, education is no longer integrated with religion. The dissociation is started by the Westerners; we Thai people follow suit without adequately knowing our own selves and what is called religion. It is generally understood that those who want to know more about a religion must acquire the knowledge for themselves. This is difficult and leads to weak foundation. Therefore, young people lack a firm base for their spiritual refuge and lack association with their cultural heritage, which should have religion at its core. Otherwise, we will have another form of culture which cannot be a refuge. We should incorporate religion into education in such a way that each becomes the integral part of the other. This will be a safer arrangement.

We have only ready-made education which is externally imposed on the students under the influence of outside factors that are mainly material. Buddhism, however, offers an education that reflects the truth from within. Its principle is based on the mind. One looks at his own inner self; sees it; and knows what it is, the problems it has, as well as its cause and effect. One then knows how to deal with his own self correctly and perfectly.

Besides, we have students learn too much about the outside world. Children are forced to study and memorize information of the whole world.

However, they don't even know what are parents, parental graciousness, and obligations towards parents. The problem is serious to the extent that some graduates with a long list of degrees cannot describe parental graciousness; they don't even want to know about it. So children should be made to learn about themselves, their family, and their country as much as the outside world. They should start to know about the mind and defilements when they are still young, for such internal knowledge constitutes the foundation for subsequent external knowledge and adequately enables them to face outside problems.

Education at present is mostly concerned with theories or class lectures and discussions. There is neither training nor practice that brings about an adequate spiritual change. There is no attempt to nurture children so that they become good sons and daughters, good students, good friends, and eventually good citizens and good religious followers. With this deficiency, we have seen that some secondary-school graduates who continued to higher education suffered so much barbaric treatment from the upper-class students during an initiation that one was dead. This is a vivid example of the result of our existing education.

We must accept practice as education itself. This is in keeping with Buddhism, which takes practice of *sīla* (precept), *Samādhi* (concentration), and *paññā* (wisdom) for education. With practice as education, there will effectively be a spiritual change which eventually reveals itself physically and verbally.

But we have the kind of education that puts knowledge into notebooks rather than students. Therefore, we fail to create good children, good pupils, good friends, good citizens, and good religious followers, who would contribute to our national stability, a fortress that protects Buddhism.

The existing education should not be broadened; instead, it should be improved. This kind of education should not be expanded which gives people intelligence without control, promotes only selfishness, and cannot decrease the number of prisons, police stations, courthouses, mental hospitals, and psychiatric wards. It should be upgraded to reverse the trend satisfactorily: to make people attain higher spiritual levels in agreement with the real meaning of human being, so that they will not cause problems to themselves and the society. Expansion that increases the quantity but decreases the quality cannot be called expansion at all; it should rather be called contraction. But everyone is pleased with the word "expansion" while overlooking its inadvertent harmful effects.

To finally summarize, our education system deserves discussion and criticism for improvement suitable for situations in our country, which is a Buddhist stronghold. The purpose is to retain Buddhism in a country of proper religious followers: those who are really enlightened, awakened, and spiritually enlivened in accordance with the meaning of Buddhism; who are neither materialistic nor spiritualistic but are dhammic, that is, completely righteous both materially and spiritually. And this concludes my comments on education.

*Mokkhabalārāma*

*March 29, 1988.*



## Let's Become A Buddhadāsa



There is a kind of servant that does not need emancipation. The more there are such servants, the better the world will be. If everybody becomes one of them, the world will be peaceful and free from crises. Who are they? They are "Buddhadāsas," or servants of the Buddha.

Buddhadāsas mean those who dedicate their lives to serving the Buddha. They feel they are in debt to the Buddha's graciousness; they are grateful for it and foresee benefits for fellow men. So they wholeheartedly dedicate their bodies and souls to serving the Buddha, doing what are believed to be the Buddha's wishes.

What Buddha is meant here? In ordinary, worldly language, we mean the historical Buddha, who came to this world, attained enlightenment, and taught His followers more than two thousand years ago. In dhamma language, however, we mean the Buddha as mentioned in the Pali Canon by the following words: "Those who see dhamma see me [the Buddha] ; those who see me [the Buddha] see dhamma." This is the kind of Buddha that will stay forever

and can exist in everybody who sees dhamma. It is actually mindfulness (*satī*) and wisdom (*paññā*), which can eliminate suffering, as indicated by the Buddha's saying "Those who see the Law of Causation (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) see dhamma." With this consideration, serving the Buddha simply means serving one's own mindfulness and wisdom which have led one to seeing dhamma and the cessation of one's own suffering, then helping others to eliminate their suffering, thus benefiting the world in accordance with the Buddha's wishes. The servants of the Buddha undertake this activity as a mission to be accomplished with all their lives and souls.

**How do the Buddha's servants serve?** They serve by working towards establishment of righteousness in both study (*pariyatti*) and practice (*paṭipatti*) of dhamma, leading to dhammic attainment (*paṭivedha*). They serve by helping fellow men to know dhamma, accept dhamma, utilize dhamma, benefit from dhamma, and lead peaceful lives under *nibbāna* here and now in proportion to their individual wisdom and capability. They serve by propagating this kind of wisdom to every corner of this Planet Earth and to "all of the worlds," that is, to all kinds of persons who are obsessive with sensual pleasures (*kāma*); corporal, or material, objects (*rūpa*); and formless, or immaterial, belongings (*arūpa*) such as power and honor, or even meritorious deeds – in other words, to both human beings and gods. Human beings here mean those who have to sweat in order to earn a living, whereas gods mean those who never have

to sweat. In ordinary, worldly language, a world means an externally visible, corporal world; but in dhamma language, a world means the one within a person, namely, a plane of consciousness which can be on one of the many levels of spiritual attainment. Dhamma must popularly dominate the corporal world and all of the worlds within people.

**How can dhamma be popular world-wide?**  
 This can be done by having dhamma incorporated into everyday living of the majority of people in all walks of life. Everybody should have mindfulness (*sati*), wisdom (*paññā*), awareness (*sampajañña*) concentration (*samādhi*), and tolerance (*khanti*) in their functioning at every time instant and in every place, that is, every second and every square inch. Everybody should joyfully carry on with their duty, drawing contentment and consequent happiness from their work throughout their work period but not from work pay and any subsequent indulgence in pleasant, but self-destructive, activities. They should be righteous all day long so that at night they can look back and feel good about themselves to the point of self-salutation. This is the true heaven, which can happen here and now. None will then be idle, for all see every work and duty as the entity of dhamma – the perception that has been around since pre-Buddha time.

**What is meant by righteousness in study, practice, and attainment?** Righteousness here does not mean conforming to logical or philosophical

reasoning but to Buddhist principle: the end results are non-aggression and benefit to all. One can realize these results by himself, without being told or induced to believe in them (*sandiṭṭhiko*) ; he can show the results to others because they are within himself (*ehi-passiko*); the results are timeless (*akāliko*), that is, independent of time of practice – then, now, or in the future – but they are immediate throughout the practice. The righteousness means none are worried but all parties receive benefits, including the one who practices dhamma righteously. The meaning is clear, without further debate or judgment from a court of law. The study (*pariyatti*) is righteous, the practice (*paṭipatti*) is righteous, and the attainment or results (*paṭivedha*) are righteous because of the righteousness of the first two components.

**How can suffering be really eliminated?** This can happen if one has peace of the mind in everyday life. If one adequately understands voidness of self (*suññatā*), as-suchness (*tathātā*), unconditionability (*atammayatā*), nothing can worry him at all. His mind is not governed by positivity or negativity because he sees everything as subject to impermanence (*aniccatā*), stress (*dukkhatā*), and not-self (*anattā*); he has no hunger for anything but has contentment from having carried out his duty righteously. He understands that sweat is holy water or something that helps him in getting help from God or supernatural beings. He knows definitely that if he does not practice

dhamma, or does not undertake his duty, no supernatural beings can help him, no matter how numerous they are. But if he carries out his duty righteously, his sweat itself will turn into God or supernatural beings that can really help him. He is confident that some entity will help him until he has no more self and does not need help from anybody any more. Since selfishness is troublesome, whereas unselfishness or selflessness is beneficial, we must do our work with mindfulness (*sati*) and wisdom (*paññā*) or with right understanding (*sammāditṭhi*), all of which preempt selfishness, but not with selfishness, which will always trouble us.

How can we eliminate selfishness? We can do this by studying non-self. The body and mind is a natural composition that can think, perceive, speak and do things without first having to be possessed by a ghost or a disembodied soul. We must do everything in accordance with the law of nature and the results we want. If one is still ignorant, that is, still sees himself as having self, he must not be selfish, for the self can harm him with greed (*lobha*), anger (*kodha*), and delusion (*moha*), all of which are fiery. He must have mindfulness and awareness when he experiences sense-objects, so that they will not cause selfishness to occur in himself; he must have mindfulness and wisdom to properly handle those sense-objects; he must always have right understanding that selfishness, that is, taking the body and mind or the five aggregates (*khandha*) as self, is the cause of suffering

or the suffering itself. Without this self-attachment, suffering cannot occur and one's life cannot be troubled.

**What is the utmost right understanding?** It is knowing that all mundane things are compounded, that they come from compounding causative factors, and that they will further compound other things endlessly. They constitute flow of change or impermanence (*aniccatā*). What co-exists with impermanence is stress, or the condition difficult to endure (*dukkhatā*). And because no mundane things can endure impermanence and stress, all mundane things are essentially unsubstantial, or **not-self** (*anattā*). Being under impermanence, stress, and non-self is our **natural tendency** (*dhammatthitattā*). This is because we are under control of a **natural law** (*dhammaniyāmatā*). The way we agree with the law of Specific Conditionality (*idappaccayatā*), which is a natural law as powerful as what is called "God." The state that no mundane things can resist the law of Specific Conditionality is called voidness of self, or voidness of the meaning of self (*suññatā*). This is an ultimate truth of as-suchness (*tathātā*), which is absolutely independent of anyone's command. Those who try to bend it to their wishes will suffer. If they eventually feel the need of **unconditionability**, or dissociation from self (*atammayatā*), which can be colloquially translated as "I associate with you no more," and discard their selves, they will reach liberation. The right knowledge of conditioned or compounded things finally

leads to unconditionability and a group of knowledges for deliverance (*nibbānañāṇa*), which is supramundane (*lokuttara*) and is the starting point of cessation of suffering in accordance with the meaning of *nibbāna*.

The world eventually becomes peaceful because people are enriched with morality; their minds are normal and unperturbed in spite of the worldly commotion outside. Peace of the mind is easy to get for such people, even amidst confusion, because their minds are free from foolish attachment, refusing to join in the flow of worldly events. Then there would be fewer prisons, police stations, court-houses, mental hospitals, and psychiatric wards. Loving kindness and honesty would be common in the society of such people, characterizing the utopian world of the future Buddha Sri Ariyamettriya. Even if a nuclear bomb explodes on them, they can still laugh, because they have no self-attachment and thus take the event as ordinary; they have right understanding and do not let the experience make them unhappy or afraid. All these result from the work of those servants of the Buddha who try to do their best with their capability and intelligence.

How many can there be servants of the Buddha? If they are not overlooked, the servants of the Buddha, or Buddhadāśas, can be seen in great number everywhere. But they do not call themselves Buddhadāśas for fear of inferiority; they prefer being called male devotees (*upāsaka*) and female devotees (*upāsikā*). Actually they say in their everyday evening prayer "I am a servant of the Buddha; the Buddha is my master (*Buddhassāhasmi dāso va Buddho me sāmikissaro*).” Does this mean that they are inattentively declaring they are Buddhadāśas? Let’s think about it.

To be a Buddhadāśa truly or fully according to the Buddha’s wishes means to carry out one’s duty, not just to declare one’s allegiance without understanding the actual meaning. Duty means what the Buddha wished His followers to do and what the followers should carry out accordingly. To say the least, a Buddha’s wish is for everyone to be knowledgeable, awakened, and enlivened with freedom from suffering. The knowledge about *nibbāna*, which is self-realizable for an individual, timeless, and revelation-deserving, is now seen as beyond one’s capability and out-of-date in spite of its central importance. This sadly implies that Buddhism has probably become extinct; and those who volunteer as servants of the Buddha should sufficiently be aware of it.

Everybody can be a Buddhadāśa. They have everything necessary for the duty except for right understanding (*sammādit̥ṭhi*). Look carefully and you

can see that there are many Buddhadhāsas now who do not reveal themselves as such because, with firm intention, it is not necessary to do so. My request is not for you to declare yourselves Buddhadhāsas but to earnestly function as one by becoming a model follower of the Buddha, living a peaceful life, then trying to explain to others for their better understanding of the Buddhist way of life and their insight of dhamma, and in so doing, taking no favor or expecting nothing in return. Everybody can do something about this according to his or her ability; and there would probably be none who cannot do anything about it.

Finally, after we Buddhists have tried our best in so doing, the Buddha's wishes would be fulfilled. This would then benefit our own world, the world of gods (*devaloka*), the world of *māra*, the world of *brahma*, and all creatures including monks, gods and men, wholly according to the Buddha's wishes and His frequent utterance of such beneficiaries in His sayings.

Let's become servants of the Buddha. There can't be more appropriate time and place than right now and right here. So let's do it.

*Mokkhābalārāma*

*April 30, 1988.*

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu (Slave of the Buddha) went forth as a *bhikkhu* (Buddhist monk) in 1926, at the age of twenty. After a few years of study in Bangkok, he was inspired to live close with nature in order to investigate the Buddha-Dhamma. Thus, he established Suan Mokkhabalārāma (The Grove of the Power of Liberation) in 1932, near his hometown. At that time, it was the only Forest Dhamma Center and one of the few places dedicated to *vipassanā* (mental cultivation leading to “seeing clearly” into reality) in Southern Thailand. Word of Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, his work, and Suan Mokkh spread over the years so that now they are easily described as “one of the most influential events of Buddhist history in Siam.” Here, we can only mention some of the more interesting services he has rendered Buddhism.

Ajahn Buddhadāsa has worked painstakingly to establish and explain the correct and essential principles of original Buddhism. That work is based in extensive research of the Pali texts (Canon and commentary), especially of the Buddha’s Discourses (*sutta piṭaka*), followed by personal experiment and practice with these teachings. Then he has taught whatever he can say truly quenches *dukkha*. His goal has been to produce a complete set of references for present and future research and practice. His approach has been always scientific, straightforward, and practical.

Although his formal education only went as far as seventh grade and beginning Pali studies, he has been given five Honorary Doctorates by Thai universities. His books, both written and

transcribed from talks, fill a room at the National Library and influence all serious Thai Buddhists.

Progressive elements in Thai society, especially the young, have been inspired by his teaching and selfless example. Since the 1960's, activists and thinkers in areas such as education, social welfare, and rural development have drawn upon his teaching and advice.

Since the founding of Suan Mokkh, he has studied all schools of Buddhism, as well as the major religious traditions. This interest is practical rather than scholarly. He seeks to unite all genuinely religious people in order to work together to help free humanity by destroying selfishness. This broad-mindedness has won him friends and students from around the world, including Christians, Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs.

Now he focuses his energies on his last project, establishing an International Dhamma Hermitage. This addition to Suan Mokkh is intended to provide facilities for:

- courses which introduce friends, foreign and Thai, to the natural truth explained in the Buddha's teachings and start them in the Buddha's system of mental cultivation
- gatherings of representatives from the different religious communities of Thailand (and later the world) in order to meet, develop mutual good understanding, and cooperate for the sake of world peace
- meetings among Buddhists from around the world to discuss and agree upon the "Heart of Buddhism"

Actual results must depend on Natural Law, as Ajahn Buddhādāsa and his helpers continue to explore the potential of mindfully wise actions within Nature according to the Law of Nature. He welcomes visitors.

## **The Dhamma Study & Practice Group**

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KUAN YIN DEVOTEES  
TAN KHOR SUAN  
YEOH S.H. MRS

**RM50**

CHIN YEN MING  
EE SOON SENG  
LAU LESTERS  
LEE CHYE MENG  
MOK YOKE MOOI (IM)  
NG HUANG PENG  
NG YAT TIN  
TAN YOON FATT & FAMILY  
TEOH KIAN KOON & FAMILY  
YEAP KEAN SEK  
YEOH T.K. & FAMILY  
YEOH THEAN KHENG & FAMILY

**RM40**

CHEAH SOON SENG & FAMILY

**RM30**

CHAI PANG HANG  
CHARLIE, JANET, PUN  
CHEE ALECK  
UM HOW SOON & FAMILY  
OOI SAW LUAN (IM)  
THAM SEE LIN & FAMILY

**RM26**

CHING SEE TEE  
CHING SOOK FONG  
GOH KOK SIN  
POH JOO MENG MRS

**RM20**

ALICE  
CHIN S.T. VICTOR  
CHONG PAULINE  
ENG LAU HIANG  
FONG ERIC  
LAU PING CHENG  
LAU ALSTON  
LEE BEE BEE & FAMILY  
LEE GEOK NEO (IM)  
LIM LIAN CHOW

**RM20 (CONTD)**

LOO MR  
LOW & FAMILY  
NG & FRIEND  
ONG HOCK CHUAN & FAMILY  
OO KHAIK CHEANG  
SEOW BAN CHEONG (IM)  
TAN KAR HIN JIMMY  
TAN LEE WAH JASMINE  
TAN STEVEN & FAMILY  
TEONG, TONI & FAMILY  
YEAP KEN  
YEOH CHIN CHOO (IM)  
YEOH MAY LING IRENE

**RM10**

AU YONG SWEE LEN (IM)  
BOH ISSARA  
CHANG L.C.  
CHAW NGAI HOONG  
CHEW KION JIN & JUN  
CHEW LILY  
CHONG KEAT HIN  
CHOW KONG MENG  
CHRISTINE & MOM  
CYNTHIA  
EU PEK UNG  
FELICIA & TSAO  
FONG JEFFREY  
FOO MUN & FAMILY  
FOO YEE MOY (IM)  
KHOR HONG CHING  
KRIS  
KUA KEAN SOON  
KUAN TUCK KHEONG  
LAU JENETT  
LAU SEE TIAK  
LAU THIM FOOK  
LEE HONG MENG & FAMILY  
LEE K.K.  
LEE SIEW FATT  
LEE STAR & LEE FONG MENG  
LIM & FAMILY  
LIM L.C.  
LIM TONG KOH  
LOOI DAVID  
LOW HAN WHEE  
LUM TUCK SENG  
NG AGNES  
NG SAU CHING  
NG SOW YOUNG  
NG SWEE SIAH  
OO K.C.  
OOI EU HIN MRS  
OOI MARY (IM)

**RM10 (CONTD)**

SEE TO PING  
SIM MONG HEONG  
TAN BI HON (IM)  
TAN CLEMENT  
TAN KOOI HENG & FAMILY  
TEH EH WEE  
TEH ENG LIP  
TOH SAW LEE  
UNG MEI LIN  
UNG TAT HEAN  
WONG JEANNE  
WONG SIEW MEI & FAMILY  
WONG YOKE KONG  
YAP HOCK KENG

**RM6**

CHEN AI HOONG  
KOK ADELIN  
KOK LAURENCE

**RM6**

CHU CHARROL  
FONG HENG YIP & FAMILY  
FOO MADAM  
LIM TONG KOH  
LOH L.  
LOH YAM SENG & FAMILY  
LOH YOKE KHOON  
LOW MALIM  
MUTHU  
TEO SIEW ENG & FAMILY  
YAP TIM FOOK  
YEE CHEE LEONG  
YEONG

**RM3**

CHOOONG KAM YOKE  
FONG SWEE KUAN & FAMILY  
LEE CHEE HWA  
LEE KIM LIAN & FAMILY  
LEONG FAH KHEAN  
NG AH CHOI DAVID  
NG CHEE KOONG  
NG MEI LIN  
NG POH LIN  
NG WONG YEE

**KUALA LUMPUR - WYV**

**RM10**

WONG CHOON TAT

**RM10**

CHAN KEW (IM)

**RM10 (CONTD)**

CHEW WAI YEE & FAMILY  
HOOI & ALICE  
LEE BOON CHIN & FAMILY  
LEE SOO & FAMILY  
LIM CHENG EAN & FAMILY  
LIM CHUN CHEE (IM)  
NG KONG JIM & FAMILY  
TAN K.K. MRS  
TANG ON LIN & FAMILY  
WOO CHAI LENG & FAMILY

**RM5**

CHIN WENG FATT  
CHUNG CHAI YOK  
KHONG MADAM  
KONG GIM ENG  
KONG S.W.  
NG ENG CHONG & FAMILY  
NG SEK LUM  
NG SWEE KENG  
NG SWEE LING  
NG WYE KENG & FAMILY  
POH JOO MENG & FAMILY  
PONG MAGGIE  
SIEW CHEE HONG & FAMILY  
YEOH LEANNE

**MELAKA**

**RM16**

MIKE & FLORENCE

**RM6**

LIM DON TOON & FAMILY

**KLANG**

**RM60**

CHOO XIN ER

**RM20**

KIANG HSIANG SHENG

**KEDAH**

**RM60**

TAN BENG CHOO & FAMILY

**RM30**

S SUNDARARAJ DR  
LIM KEE KUAN

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ONG LEONG SOOI  
TEOH PEI SZE

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PENANG DEVOTEES

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ANG GHEE LEONG MR/S  
KHOR SIANG TAT

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KHOO SOO TEONG & FAMILY  
TAI MING LI  
YEW CHENG EAN

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CHOO YU SOO MR/S  
FRANKIE & FAMILY  
GOOI HOAY CHEAN  
KHAW CHEOW POH  
LIM SIEW LAN  
LYE MUNN LEONG RAYMOND  
ONG SAW SIM (IM)  
THONG WEI JUN & WEI SHAN  
YEW CHENG KEAT & FAMILY

**RM18**  
JIMMY  
LUCKY BOY

**RM16**  
TAN CHIEW CHOON MR/S  
YEW SIM HONG MR/S

**RM10**  
ANONYMOUS  
CHEAH GEORGE  
CHIN KEK PENG  
CHOONG WAI SUM  
CHOONG WAI TUCK  
CHOONG WENG YIK  
FONG H.W. & FAMILY  
GO JIT HONG & FAMILY  
HNG CHAI HENG  
HUM HONG FATT  
KHAW MEI CHEN AMY  
KHAW SIEW TUAN  
KHOO MOLLY  
KHOO SUAN GEOK AUDREY  
KHOR BOON TEIK  
KOAY GIN DEE  
KOAY KAR LIN & FAMILY

**RM10 (CONTD)**  
KOAY SIEW HONG  
LEE CHUI AI & FAMILY  
LEE MOO LAN  
LEE TAI OOI & FAMILY  
LIM AH KHOK MRS  
LIM BENG SOON  
LIM CHEW ENG  
LIM GUAT KEOW NANCY  
LIM KOOI ENG  
LIM MRS  
LIM SAW EAN  
LIM SIANG HOR & FAMILY  
LIM TEONG SENG  
LOO BEE GEOK  
LOO ROBERT  
LOOI TUCK LIM & FAMILY  
LOW KEAN SEANG & FAMILY  
LOW KOOI FONG & FAMILY  
ONG CHIN TEONG & FAMILY  
OOI HUAT POH  
OOI PENG HOCK  
OON KEVIN & ANDRINE  
PHANG HONG BENG & FAMILY  
PHANG K.C.  
QUAH BOON HOE  
QUAH KUNG SUN  
QUAH YIN LYNN  
TAN B.C. MR/S  
TAN CHEE HONG  
TAN GAIK KEE  
TAN K.S.  
TAN KAH ENG & FAMILY  
TAN LEE LEE  
TAN LIANG TONG & FAMILY  
TAN LUM HUAT  
TEO HO KIAM  
TEOH CHOON WAH  
WONG KUM WENG  
WONG PHILIP  
YEAP CHENG KUNG (IM)  
YEAP KIM HOE  
YONG KIN LENG & FAMILY

**RM6**  
CHAN SWEE CHEN  
CHANG POH CHOO  
CHEAH KEAT KIM  
CHEW KEE SENG & FAMILY  
CHEW S.L.  
GOH SWEE GUAN & FAMILY  
JINEH  
KHOO JULIA  
KHOO MIMI  
KHOO QUEE NEE

**RM6 (CONTD)**  
KHOR AH NYAT  
LAW SHIRLEY  
LEE MEE CHIN  
LEONG MOLLY & FAMILY  
LIM CATHERINE & FAMILY  
LIM GUAT TIN  
LIM HOCK HIN & FAMILY  
LIM KHAY SWEE (IM)  
LIM SAY SIEW  
LOH SAW HWA  
OH GAIK LEAN  
ONG ENG KIN (IM)  
OOI HUP JIN  
OOI LYE HOCK  
PAU SIEW LOON  
QUAH JOO LIAT  
TAN JESSIE  
TEH GUAT ENG  
TEOH SUAN KU  
TIO PIT SIN  
WONG GAIK SIM  
WONG NGAN KWAI (IM)  
WONG OY MEI  
WONG SIEW KIT  
YEOH KAR TEONG MR/S  
YEOH PAULETTE

**RM3**  
TEH YONG YUAN  
THILAGAVATHI  
TIO PIT SIN  
YAP SHENG GUAN

**RM2**  
BALAKRISHNAN P.  
CHAN DAISY & JACKY  
CHIN SEK LENG MR/S  
KOAY C.K.  
LAY KEAN  
MUN LENG  
SHERREN, LEONARD, LEONIEL  
TEOH

KELANTAN

**RM30**  
ANONYMOUS

K. TERENGGANU

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