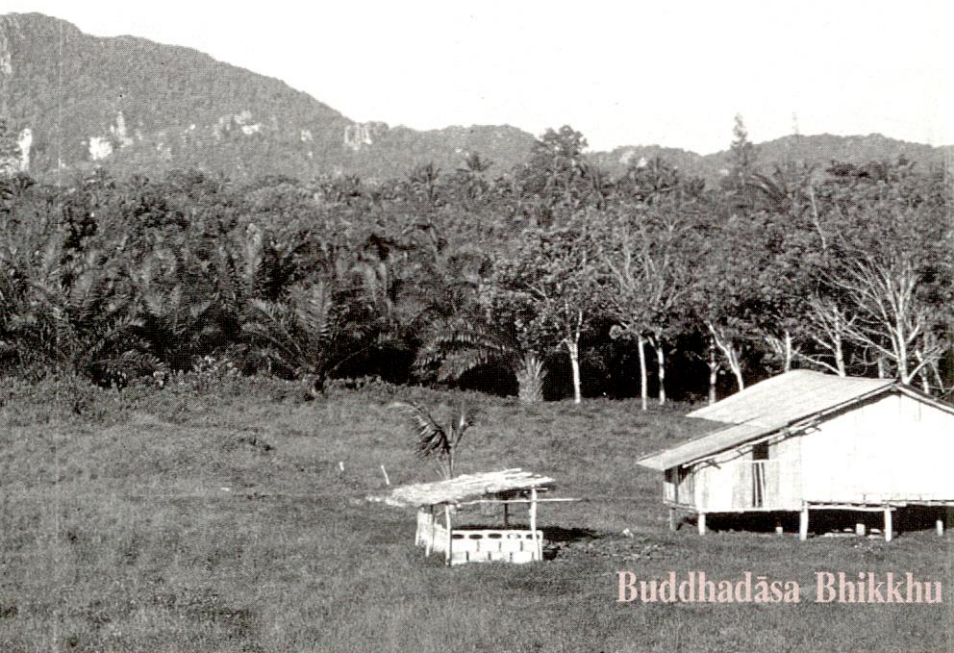


TOWARDS BUDDHA-DHAMMA



Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

TOWARDS BUDDHA-DHAMMA



Condensed and freely translated
from the lecture (in Thai) under the title

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๑๓ กรกฎาคม ๒๕๔๓

ณ พุทธธรรมสมาคม, กรุงเทพฯ

of
Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu
by
Nāgasena Bhikkhu

TOWARDS BUDDHA-DHAMMA

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

Translated by Nāgasena Bhikkhu

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ANUMODANĀ

(To all Dhamma Comrades, those helping to spread Dhamma:)

Break out the funds to spread Dhamma to let Faithful Trust flow,
Broadcast majestic Dhamma to radiate long living joy.

Release unexcelled Dhamma to tap the spring of Virtue,
Let safely peaceful delight flow like a cool mountain stream.

Dhamma leaves of many years sprouting anew, reaching out,
To unfold and bloom in the Dhamma Centers of all towns.

To spread lustrous Dhamma and in hearts glorified plant it,
Before long, weeds of sorrow, pain, and affliction will flee.

As Virtue revives and resounds throughout Thai society,
All hearts feel certain love toward those born, ageing, and dying.

Congratulations and Blessings to all Dhamma Comrades,
You who share Dhamma to widen the people's prosperous joy.

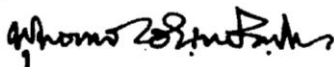
Heartiest appreciation from Buddhadāsa Indapañño,
Buddhist Science ever shines beams of Bodhi longlasting.

In grateful service, fruits of merit and wholesome successes,
Are all devoted in honor to Lord Father Buddha.

Thus may the Thai people be renowned for their Virtue,
May perfect success through Buddhist Science awaken their hearts.

May the King and His Family live long in triumphant strength,
May joy long endure throughout this our word upon earth.

from



Mokkhabalārāma

Chaiya, 2 November 2530

(translated by Santikaro Bhikkhu, 3 February 2531 (1988))

PREFACE

The translator would like to emphasize that this translation has been done freely as to make a literal translation was found to be difficult in maintaining the spirit or sense of the original in the Thai language. The written language and the way of speaking of the Venerable Buddhadāsa Mahāthera is very simple but what is expressed thereby is very lofty philosophy, the very quintessence of Buddhist thought. For this reason it is difficult to translate literally. Though translated freely to maintain the spirit of the original, to some extent, the translator must confess that in English it rather lacks the stirring message of the original which urges all of us to practise the Dhamma. In case there are some aberrations and faults, I beg to accept them as my own.

The Venerable Buddhadāsa rightly lays stress on the aphorism of the Buddha, found in the Cūḷataṇhāsāṅkhya Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya,

which reads: "*Sabbe Dhammā Nālaṃ Abhinivesāya* ('All things' are not to be grasped at.)", as the quintessence of the Master's Teaching. The wheel of this explanation of the Dhamma turns on the axle of this aphorism of four words. For the last two decades or so the venerable teacher has been expounding this quintessence of the Teaching from different angles. Here he deals with *Cattāri Upādānāni*, the four kinds of attachments, namely, *Kāmapādāna*, *Diṭṭhupādāna*, *Sīlabbatupādāna*, *Attavādupādāna* –the attachment to the pleasures of senses, views, superstitious practices and self, soul or ego. The word 'covering' as used here in this work is but another figurative name of these four evils. Here, in this language *Kāmapādāna* is the first covering, *Diṭṭhupādāna* and *Sīlabbatupādāna* the second, and the *Attavādupādāna* is the third.

I have added an appendix to clarify some points. The words marked with numbers have been explained in the appendix. In the appendix (point 4) I have quoted a Pāli verse with its translation by Ven. Ñānamoli. In the translation by Ñānamoli the word 'travelled' is not mentioned. To make the point clear that there is travelling but no traveller, I have inserted it at the suggestion of the author.

I am deeply indebted to the Venerable Khantipālo for his corrections and encouragement

in bringing out this translation.

The Marble Temple

(Wat Benjamabopit)

Vesākha māse, 2507: (May, 1964)

SUGGESTED READING

Other books by Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu:

Buddha-Dhamma For Students
Christianity and Buddhism
Dhamma – The World Saviour
Gesänge und Sprüche zur Verehrung und Andacht in Dhamma
Handbook For Mankind
Heartwood From The Bo Tree
Handbuch für die Menschheit
Keys to Natural Truth
Life Should Be Harnessed By Two Buffaloes
Mindfulness with Breathing: Unveiling the Secrets of Life
No Religion
Paticca-Samupāda: Practical Dependent Origination
The Buddha's Doctrine of Anattā
The First Ten Years of Suan Mokkh
The A, B, C of Buddhism
The Prison of Life
Zwei Arten der Sprache

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TOWARDS BUDDHA-DHAMMA

July 13, 1940

at Buddha-dhamma Society, Bangkok.

What is Buddha-dhamma? Before dealing with the Way to Buddha-dhamma, I would like you to know the meaning of this word. Its meanings are various, but at this time I will confine myself to the meaning which has to do with the highest blissful state of mind.

Literally, this word can be translated at the *Dhamma of the Buddha*. In this case it means the teaching of the Buddha, and as such, it refers to the *Pariyatti-dhamma* or the learning the Scriptures.

Secondly, it can be translated as *the Dhamma* which leads us to attain Enlightenment, that is to say, the way which, when well practised, makes a worldling into a noble one (Ariya)—free from suffering. It is evident that it refers here to the *Paṭipatti-dhamma*, or the practice according to the Way.

Yet in a third sense, this word is translated as *the nature of the Buddha* or 'Buddhahood' or the thing which the Buddha attained, that is to say, *Ñāṇa* or wisdom and peace. So in this case it refers to the *Paṭipatti-dhamma*, or the attainment that follows practice. Wisdom and peace is the nature of the Buddha. Wisdom, in this case, referring to the supreme knowledge which once attained, resolves all doubts and makes for complete spiritual satisfaction, having thereafter no desire to know any more. Peace means purity plus tranquility.

The last translation, that is, *the thing which the Buddha attained or found* needs a detailed explanation. It is only then that we can understand it fully. If we want to explain it in a most concise way we can say that it means a state of **complete freedom** or that of **eternal happiness**. It is this meaning or sense of the word Buddha-dhamma that I am going to deal with. So when I speak of the way to 'Buddha-dhamma', you should bear in your mind that by Buddha-dhamma I mean here **the thing** which Siddhattha Gotama found or attained

and so became a Buddha.

Why do we speak of the last meaning¹? Why do we not speak of the first and the second meanings, neither of learning the teaching or the *Pariyatti-dhamma*, nor of the way of practice or the *Paṭipatti-dhamma*? The simple reason is that by the *Pariyatti-dhamma*, as is generally understood, we mean the study of the whole of the Tipiṭaka (the sacred books of Buddhism containing Lord Buddha's words and those of His disciples). The question for most people will be whether sufficient time is available to devote to their reading and assimilation? As for the *Pariyatti-dhamma* how many men are able to renounce the world to lead an exalted or strict religious life? If the Buddha-dhamma is something to be attained only through learning the Tipitaka or through leading a strict monastic life, then Buddha-dhamma will only suit a few persons. But because Buddha-dhamma is for the welfare of all, I have therefore said that by Buddha-dhamma is meant here **the thing** which the Buddha found or attained. We can all attain it without going through the Holy Texts and even without leading a strict ascetic life. This is clearly demonstrated if we regard what occurs even in worldly attainments. It seems natural for nearly everybody to want wealth, fame, and wide social contacts, yet these may be obtained without necessarily having academic qualifications,

greatness or even hard work and where the former are possessed no account is taken of the latter. All these three much-desired things are not limited only to those who are great men. In the same way Buddha-dhamma is not limited to a select few, it is within the reach, of everybody.

Ñāna or wisdom is that kind of knowledge which makes man free all desires, and being so, this *Ñāna* can be attained by a person who after having enjoyed worldly pleasures according to this desires, has become tired of them. Note that he may never study the Scriptures or lead a strict ascetic life. An *Arahanta* of this type is called *Sukkhavipassaka*, one who having seen phenomena through 'dry' insight as being devoid of essence (*Anattā*) is emancipated by wisdom (*Paññāvimutta*). Although an *Arahanta* like this is decidedly not so well-versed in matters of doctrine as compared with others, he is perfectly freed from evil and is as blessed in his realization as other types of *Arahantas*. He has attained calmness or peace where there is no suffering. That calmness is called the Tranquil state. Where there is *Ñāna* or wisdom and tranquillity in any person, we say of that person that he has attained Buddha-dhamma. That which should be done in life has been done by him nothing is left for him to do. So it should be clear from this that everybody can attain Buddha-dhamma **without** going through the

Scriptures or leading the life of an ascetic or even without undergoing a strict meditation course.

Moreover, we must keep the fact in mind that the Buddha did not search for Buddha-dhamma only for his own sake, he was, quite to the contrary, moved to search for it by the vision of the universal suffering of beings. Buddha-dhamma is naturally for all and is within the reach of all since it is really something common to all, as it exists everywhere. Moreover, all beings may 'touch' (contact) this Dhamma at any moment. But due to the presence of ignorance and craving, there is an inability to perceive this fact and it appears to us as something extremely mysterious and impossible to understand.

We have as a rule, five sense-organs, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body, these are our instruments for knowledge of objects in the world '*outside*'. We quickly but ignorantly deduce that the world is only comprised of things which are known or felt through our five sense-organs; or if there is something else, we think that it must be of the same nature as these things known or felt by our senses and we try to understand it in terms of those things. And that which makes 'the thing' which is internal or beyond the five sense-objects invisible to us, is the curtain of our own misunderstandings through which we try to understand

it while using the same terms and standards as we ordinarily employ when dealing with things felt by the five sense-organs. This is why we fail to understand 'the thing' beyond the five sense-spheres.

It is because of this reason mentioned here that I urge you to look inward in order to understand things as they are. We make contact with things through our senses, but the problem for us is that we do so in an outgoing manner, and consequently we feel and know them, more or less, outwardly; or, to put it in another way, we use instruments which are suitable for making contact with outward things. This is why we do not find 'the thing' which can be found only by looking inwardly, otherwise, we may say that this thing, Buddha-dhamma in the sense of attainment, can be found only by using the correct instruments which can be focussed for looking at inward things. It is this way that the Buddha employed while dealing with the sense-objects themselves. In trying to understand what 'looking inwardly' means, we may think in a comparative manner of the nature of things while looking outwardly, but the distinction between this way or stage of thinking and that of the true 'inward-looking' is so subtle that some may be deceived and confound the latter with the comparative thought-processes of the former.

All the different apparent things which are collectively called 'the world' are just those things which we can feel or know by our five senses. They form the basis of contact. But the world may be more than this. I mean to say that there may be some other things which we cannot perceive or feel. We cannot know by our senses what is beyond the perception of our senses. We even cannot correctly guess about these things. Nevertheless, we can reasonably believe that if we had more sense-organs or more delicate ones than we have, then we could make contact and feel many other strange things that we never dreamed of. Suppose, for instance, we had no ears, it would thus be impossible for us to have any idea of sounds or of music which is so melodious. Our condition would be the same as that of some creatures, for example, earth-worms. But, as we *have* ears we *can* make contact with the vibration-range of sound. Suppose, we had more than five sense-organs, say, twenty, to contact with other worlds, then the phenomena which would become perceptible to our senses would be much greater and more varied. We should then meet with things other than form, sound, odour, taste and tangible objects (but since we have not been able to get at or discover such sense-objects, we have no words coined even to name them). At present we only know the world to a certain and limited extent, that is, according to

the range of our five sense-organs.

Moreover, our sense-organs can make contact only within certain limits. For example, though the human ear can hear many kinds of sounds, its ability to hear is limited to the vibration-range which it is fitted to receive. If the frequency of sound-waves reaching our ear is higher or lower than this, they will pass into the ear but we will not hear anything at all. Scientific experiments show that the ears of dogs and bats, for instance, can hear sounds having very high frequencies. Such sounds are inaudible to the human ears. There are some kinds of insects which can see things, such as ultra-violet-rays which are invisible to the human eye, and so on.

All this shows that although we have ears and eyes, we are unable to hear some kinds of sounds or to see colours of some kinds which exist in the same way as the sounds and colours perceptible by our senses. The only difference is that of range. We neither pay any attention to them nor search for them. We just have an idea that they have no existence. So in this respect, we do not know the real nature of things. Generally we have so much misunderstanding about them that, to speak the truth, we are completely ignorant of them and consequently mistaken regarding them. For example, some people let their minds hold so firmly to

colours as something real and having different real varieties that they even believe that such and such a colour has a good or bad effect on our affairs! Science has revealed the truth that colour as a reality has no existence. The seeming existence of different colours is dependent on the ability of our eye to pick up different vibrations of light-waves thus giving rise to visual impression of different colours. The same colour may appear to be different to different kinds of creatures or by some it may not be perceived at all. So, we can conclude very easily that colour is merely an illusion. In this way all the five sense-objects are liable to arouse the wildest delusions. So it is clear how mysterious even our physical world is, and how very difficult it is to understand.

As for Buddha-dhamma, it is something beyond the sphere of the physical world, we might use the word, meta-physical, and can only be understood by turning within. It is imperceptible by our senses including *the ordinary mind* and we can make contact with it only through meditation, or a mind which is fully and rightly concentrated. If we want to attain Buddha-dhamma we must see things by looking inward. To see things outwardly has become an instinct with us. We see, for example, a red rose with an attitude of liking. We are fascinated by its seeming colour. Generally, however,

we do not see roses having the attitude of mind which enables us to see that there is no such thing as a red colour for which we have so great a fancy. Our mind is mistaken by the seeming colour which creates a liking for the rose. This liking or passionate attitude towards things is the covering which makes us unable to know things as they are.

The moment we do away with this covering, Buddha-dhamma which is existing everywhere, can immediately be contacted by our mind. To make this matter more clear, if there is an insect covered completely by a cocoanut shell, it can not see the light or feel the air outside. But the moment the shell is taken off, the light or the air can make contact with the insect quite automatically without any request or effort on the part of the insect. So the gist of the technique for attaining Buddha-dhamma is to destroy that strong covering of deluding impressions completely.

Nowadays people keep fowls and everybody has seen little chicks hatched alive or sometimes, when they are undeveloped, dead in their shells. Everybody has seen chicks like this. But there is another chick, on its way to death which is more important than the others, and almost everybody has overlooked it. That little chick is none other than all of us who are surrounded with and warped in ignorance and are liable to die in the shell of

that ignorance. But there is still a special and an ideal chick which is able to destroy the egg-shell and appear in the world by coming out of the shell. This chick is the Buddha – as the Buddha himself has stated in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. He says there that the Enlightened One is the first chick to destroy and come out of the egg-shell. All the chicks are being brooded by the hen are hatched safely after Him. All other chicks followed that first one, the Buddha.

By this simile the Buddha meant that he was the first to destroy the shell of ignorance in order to attain the Buddha-dhamma, namely, wisdom and peace. It is because of this ground that I say precisely and briefly that the Buddha-dhamma means *the thing* which the Buddha found and it becomes tangible to us when the hard shell is destroyed by inward-looking. Now before I proceed further, I must ask you to cooperate with me in two ways. Firstly, please listen attentively. Secondly you must get rid of your all ideas, beliefs and feelings which accompany your mind, because, if I am allowed to stress this matter, it is indispensable for you to be free from 'these things' if you really want to attain Buddha-dhamma. You must not even have any feeling of amazement while listening to these words of mine. All the religious, sectarian or even social feelings and views that you cherish are based on

different philosophical conceptions and have dominated your mind. Now you are to give up these conceptions and make your mind impartial, that is, free from any kind of inclinations, both negative or affirmative. Listen impartially and you may comprehend what I say.

To see introvertedly in order to attain Buddha-dhamma, we must use a special organ. The special organ required for the purpose is *Paññindriya*, wisdom-organ or right understanding faculty. Our sense organs, namely, eye, ear, tongue, nose, body and mind are ordinarily wanting in power to attain Buddha-dhamma. However, when these six organs are no longer influenced by craving but are controlled instead by wisdom (*Paññā*), they are so to speak transformed into wisdom-organs and then become valuable instruments for gaining Insight. This Insight or introversion means penetrating through the worldly phenomena which are so alluring and fascinating a screen, so much so that people stop dead there without going further. To explain matters: whatever direction we look in we never go beyond the world of the senses. Our sense organs are confined in the encirclement of the world of objects namely, form, sound, odour, taste, tangible objects and mental phenomena. People always hang about these objects of one sort or other under the influence of liking or disliking them; it is as if we were haunted by

ghosts in all the directions. These sense organs are therefore usually bereft of any working capacity with regard to attaining Buddha-dhamma. Therefore, we must aim at creating an extra organ which is able to perceive things beyond the world of sense objects, by penetrating through the interior world.

‘The Thing’ beyond the world is admittedly something difficult to understand and some people may doubt and question as to where it can exist if it is really beyond the world. As to this fact one should have an initial understanding that the words we use are limited in their meaning and sense and may fail to convey the meaning of philosophy, appearing to make philosophy an abstract subject which is difficult to understand. To say that it is ‘beyond the world’ does not mean that it is somewhere else outside the world, but it is to be understood with relation to this world itself, much the same way as “chair” and the state of “chair-being-absent” are interrelated. We may say that when a chair is removed from its place, there is the state of “chair-being-absent” at the very spot from which the chair has been removed. So, in fact the state of “chair-being-absent” is always there, notwithstanding whether the chair remains or is removed from its place. You look at the chair but fail to see the state of its being absent which is nowhere but there itself. In a like manner we

should see 'the thing' beyond the world, that is, we are to look at the world (of objects) itself, but only through interior perception. But when we ourselves are involved in or become one with the world, this matter becomes a hard nut to crack. We are too much attached to the world of objects, and this attachment of ours forms too strong a covering to give us a chance to come in contact with the Buddha-dhamma.

To understand clearly the thing beyond the world or the super-mundane state, we should consider it in relation to the world itself. All mundane things, whether material or mental, are produced by causes, that is, their existence depends on other conditions. In the course of time they undergo changes and then cease to be, and then appear again. This process of coming into being, changing and ceasing continues so long as those conditions or causes necessary for the process are there. So we see that all mundane things are in motion, changing, they are subject to motion, and even their very existence depends on motion. The moment they cease to move, they cease to be. The so-called world is therefore, nothing but these things, both organic and inorganic, which are in constant motion. And when these conditioned things are dissolved, the thing left is an unconditioned, indestructible and self-existing state which is quite opposite to the

mundane phenomena in that it is not subject to motion or impermanence. It can exist without being in motion. So on the whole we can divide things into two categories namely, those conditioned, produced by causes and which are impermanent, and the ones opposite to the first-permanent, without motion, free from the process of coming into being and ceasing. The former are, in another way, called *Saṅkhata-dhamma*, things created (by causes), and the latter *Asaṅkhata-dhamma*, things uncreated (by causes). Anyone who perceives both categories clearly is said to have perceived the BUDDHA-DHAMMA, *the thing* which the Buddha found. To perceive in this case implies to have such an Insight or Wisdom that can change our heart and mind, to the extent that we become quite indifferent and unattached to worldly allurements and understand thoroughly the super-mundane state that our mind has fully attained. So in other terms, if you see the interior of mundane things that are dominating and covering the mind, you can release yourself and can see the super-mundane state then and there, for both are relative much in the same way as a chair and the state of "chair-being-absent", as mentioned above, are relative.

To see things outwardly means to see in terms of their different shapes and forms, colours, tastes and the like. The cause of our liking or

dislike is this way of seeing things. And this liking or dislike for things resembles a cancerous growth, it covers our heart and mind more and more so that the light of *Lokuttara-dhamma* or the super-mundane state can hardly reach there.

As different from the first way of seeing, to see introvertedly, or to see the interior of mundane things, means to see in terms of their general characteristics, if we can see in this way, things will not appear to us in terms of likes and dislikes.

General characteristics mean characteristics common to all mundane things. They are three in number, namely, impermanence, suffering, and non-self (*Anicca, Dukkha, Anattā*). These general characteristics are visible everywhere in the world. They radiate thousands of times brighter than the sun. But people fail to see this radiance for they look at things in the light of or in terms of liking and dislike, which neutralize the effect of that radiation. The moment we do away with liking and dislike, the radiance or vision of impermanence, suffering and non-self becomes apparent to us. Oneness of all things is exposed. Things, whether form, sound, odour, taste, tangible objects or mental phenomena do not appear different in shape, taste and the like. They are one, in as much as they are all impermanent. They come into being and then cease to be. It is the Laws of **Time** and **Space** that

make us feel these things as different in various ways and this is nothing but pure delusion. When we see all phenomena in terms of this oneness which is harmony of the movement of these things mutually related by cause and effect to one another, until their total dissolution, then the world is exposed to us, reduced to its true nature (or natural processes). And seeing this, non-attachment, non-clinging and non-grasping will result, without any effort or request on our part, it is the same way as the darkness vanishes by **itself** as soon as a fire is lighted.

The covering that makes the Buddha-dhamma invisible to us, is three-fold or has three layers. **Firstly**, the outermost is the liking or attachment for sense objects which constitute this world and which people are very proud to grasp at as though they were a permanent treasure. Our sense organs always run after these objects and this has become instinctive. People think that they are masters of things, but on the contrary, they are really slaves of their senses. In fact, it is only when we attain Buddha-dhamma that we become their real master. So we must destroy this outermost covering of instinctive attachment for sense objects in order to attain Buddha-dhamma. And this can be done through subjugation of the senses and insight into their vanity.

Secondly, the intermediary covering is attachment to and belief in ideologies, creeds or cults that people have of one kind or the other. Belief is something that a worldling cannot do without. People believe in their teacher's religion, philosophy, sect, etc. as being right and therefore that the beliefs of others are wrong. Any kind of belief is a hindrance for *Nibbāna* as *Nibbāna* implies total non-attachment, that is, non-attachment to belief, etc. To take refuge in something other than ourselves is an incomparably strong instinct. Even if a man takes refuge and strongly believes in a teacher who teaches him to be unattached, he cannot enjoy non-attachment simply because of his attachment to his belief in the teacher. To believe in the teacher is useful only as far as moral values are concerned, but it is a hindrance for higher values of the super-mundane state--in that way the mind is not freed. Buddha-dhamma, *Nibbāna*, is, as stated elsewhere, unconditioned, and independent, for it does not depend on any agency for its creation, existence, or destruction. The world or things which are objects of senses, have no meaning if they are not seen as enduring in time and extending in space. By contrast, Buddha-dhamma, in our special sense of attainment, has nothing to do with time and space. It is timeless and nowhere located in space. It can only be contacted with the eye of spiritual Insight. As the Buddha-dhamma is

independent, or free from any agency for its existence, so the mind of the person who wants to attain it must be free likewise. He must be free from worldly allurements, free from any kind of belief that confines wisdom to a limited approach. If a man cannot maintain this freedom, he cannot attain the Buddha-dhamma, for to attain what is free necessitates being free. We find the Buddha speaking in the *Kālāma-Sutta*, *Anguttara-Nikāya* to this very effect that one should not believe anything simply because it has been handed down from time immemorial, or because one has heard so or because it is written in the Scriptures, or because one's teacher says so and so on. The Buddha teaches us to believe in ourselves, to have a free inquiry into truth, that is to say, to believe after having seen the truth by ourselves. In fact, when we have seen the truth by ourselves, the question of believing does not arise. It should be called "recognition of truth" instead. Truth is to be seen and not to be believed. Seeing is believing. But believing is not seeing. So if we stick to believing, we cannot see the truth.

Somebody may question as to why then should we take the Triple-Gem as a refuge? Is it a hindrance for attaining Buddha-dhamma? I confirm that it is. It is, as we said above, only morally useful, and results in the attainment of a heavenly abode. There is no taking any refuge in the stage

of non-attachment, for the state of non-attachment of all the unattached ones is one and the same; they are not mutually a refuge to one other. In terms of absolute sense there is no such relation as teacher and pupil except the state of being a 'good friend' (*Kalyāṇamitta*). The Buddha teaches us to be *Attasaraṇa*, or to make one-self one's own refuge. The Buddha but points out the way and it is up to us to tread it for our own liberation. To take refuge in the Buddha has some meaning only in the lower stages for an ordinary worldling, as he is unable to understand how to take refuge in himself and then finally give up all refuges whatsoever, including his own. The DHAMMA, the teaching, is like a raft or boat and to practise the DHAMMA is like sailing the boat to reach the other shore of liberation or non-attachment. The man who must take refuge in this boat of DHAMMA is the man who has not yet reached the other shore. He must take refuge in so far as he is not liberated. We have to give up attachment for this boat of the teaching. This is the utter non-attachment. So to conclude, we must destroy this intermediary covering which has found its way into mind and heart in the guise of belief in one's own religion.

What the Buddha points out is that it is necessary to have no attachment for anything including the Buddha himself and certainly not for one's own

self.

So **the last** or the innermost covering left is to believe in oneself. This is rather difficult to understand. One may wonder how the Buddha teaches to take refuge in one's own self, or to believe in oneself, and again says it is a covering. To understand this one must know what is **SELF!**

The idea of "self" or "I" results from the instincts of the man who is engrossed in ignorance. This instinct results in the conception of self which in turn gives rise to feelings for love of self, love for life, fear, etc. As long as man is engrossed in ignorance he can never know what is "self" or "I". He can never know that, in the absolute sense, there is no "self", that there are only natural processes of natural phenomena which give rise to conceptions of "I" and "my". Ordinarily, a man cannot show or point out his "self", as to where it exists, for it does not exist. But in most cases people hold the mind as "self". When a man is hurt, he says that he is hurt instead of saying that the hand is hurt or the leg is hurt. When one loves somebody, one says, "I love" whereas truly speaking, love² is a kind of illusion which dominates the mind and there is in reality no "self" or "I" who loves. When the eye sees form, or the ear hears sound, one thinks, I see or I hear. In fact, the act of seeing or hearing is the result of contact between eye or

ear-consciousness and the form or sound outside, with eye or ear as mediator. The act of seeing or hearing is a natural process that goes along in accordance with mental laws or in harmony with the working of natural phenomena. "Self" or the idea of "I" and "my" is only a conventional truth. In the absolute sense there is no **self**. We use "I" or "my" only as a necessary conventional mode of speaking, as we cannot do without, for we must have contact with others, and do things, including making our effort to attain Buddha-dhamma. **The difference between a worldling and an enlightened person is that the former misconceives "I" as something real while the latter knows that it is unreal and is used only for conventional purposes.**

You may think: "If there is no real **self** or **I**, who is it that wants to practise the way leading to the cessation of suffering or that wants to attain Buddha-dhamma? If there is no 'self' then why practise DHAMMA, and for whose sake?" The answer is that this notion or clinging to "I" is necessary only for those who are not yet free from suffering or have not attained Buddha-dhamma. But, as a matter of fact, the state of complete freedom from suffering, and the feeling of "I" or "self" cannot co-exist in the same mind or the same person. For where there is a state of freedom from suffering there is nobody or no "I" who wants to

be free or, where there is "self" or "I" who wants to be free from suffering or who wants to attain Buddha-dhamma there is no freedom from suffering or attainment of Buddha-dhamma. So, to put it in another way, to be free from suffering is to destroy the very (misconception of) "I" or "self" who wants to be free from suffering. So to think in terms of "self" or "I" is the most subtle innermost covering, it is very difficult to gain insight into, as it is the very suffering itself. It is one of the forms of misconception of "I" resulting from the mind which is over-powered by ignorance.

Everyone of us who wants to free himself of suffering is like an unhatched chick, in a twisted form, in the egg-shell. Why do I say, "unhatched chick in **twisted** form"? I say so because a man who ignorantly takes "I" or "self" as real is confined in the egoistic and therefore twisted realm of the imagination, thinking that whatever may be the situation there must be "I", "self" or "soul" that belong to him. Even if a man has freed himself from the above-mentioned two covers of worldly allurements and different kinds of beliefs, he is not yet free from the idea of "I" and "my". He takes the five aggregates, namely, body, feeling, perception, mental co-efficients and consciousness, as his own. Not only that, he even takes birth, old age, pain, death, etc., as his own. And when he comes to

know that there is a state called *Nibbāna* which is unborn, unoriginated, uncreated, unformed, free from birth, old age, pain, death, etc., there then arises a desire in him to attain that state of *Nibbāna* and he clings to *Nibbāna* as his own SELF or SOUL. He does not understand that after the idea of SELF or SOUL is done away with birth, old age, pain and death cease also, and that there are only pure natural phenomena, namely Solid, Fluid, Heating and Vibrating Elements, which are left. We misunderstand their natural processes in terms of birth, old age, pain and death. Desire to attain *Nibbāna*, if misunderstood in terms of SELF or SOUL which is free from birth, old age, etc., is a kind of craving called **Craving for Existence** (*Bhava-taṇhā*). To understand *Nibbāna* in terms of SELF or SOUL is ignorance (*Avijjā*). So we can see how subtle this innermost and last cover of attachment or ignorance really is. To attain Buddha-dhamma it is indispensable to destroy that attachment to the idea of a self.

Now, having dealt with the meaning of Buddha-dhamma and the three-fold covering that covers it we come to the point at issue: how to destroy this three-fold covering? This constitutes **the Way towards Buddha-dhamma**.

Salvation is to be worked out individually. The individuals who can free themselves are of two kinds, namely, *Cetovimutta*, one who gains

emancipation through the power of Concentration and *Paññāvimutta*, one who gains emancipation through the power of understanding or Insight. The former develops his mental faculties through meditation and leads a very strict life. He is generally one who has renounced the world to lead the life of a **Bhikkhu**. The latter is one who cannot gain freedom in this way for he is wanting in some faculties, as will-power etc. He does not develop Concentration³ (*Samatha-bhāvanā*). But he develops Insight (*Vipassanā-bhāvanā*) instead by constantly, closely and earnestly observing his own life and environment. Both kinds of individuals attain Buddha-dhamma. The only difference is that the former, unlike the latter, in addition to the attainment of Buddha-dhamma, gains, super-natural powers and is well-prepared to teach convincingly and marvellously. But both are equally called *Arahantas*, the Sanctified-ones. The former kind of *Arahanta* is called the *Chalabhiñña*, one possessing six branches of supernormal knowledge and the latter is called *Sukkhavipassaka*, dry-visioned or dry-insight worker: there is no difference between them with regard to their attainment of the Summum Bonum.

Now you have seen that one can attain Buddha-dhamma either by first developing *Jhāna* or by developing *bare* or *dry-insight* according to one's

own aptitude. But I hope that you are in agreement with me to the effect that the first method of developing *Jhāna* requires a lengthy explanation. And we do not have enough time at our disposal to deal with that. I will deal with the second method of developing Insight for it can be universally applied and, though it takes a comparatively long time, it is not risky. But before one can take to this enterprise one must, first of all, have a strong conviction as to what is the ideal of life or perfect manhood, for such a conviction will undoubtedly be very helpful for a speed up of the attainment of Buddha-dhamma. We have six faculties, namely, seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and thinking, that we can make use of in our life. Now the question is to what purpose shall we use them? As we all know, people mostly use these faculties to gain material things such as wealth, glory, name and wide social contacts. There are only a few who use them to gain Buddha-dhamma, or at least to see the world by insight as it really is. Enjoyable as the materialistic ideal of life is to the many folk, it is not the perfect life (for it is tainted by all kinds of suffering, as diseases, old age, dying, changefulness of things, etc., etc.). Life has a spiritual aspect also. Even if a man enjoys life to the full, that is, pursues material pleasures to the utmost, he is in fact semi-human. To be a full-fledged human-being or to enjoy perfect manhood he must be spiritually perfect.

HOW TO CONTROL THE MIND

The next step which concerns us is how to solve the problem of controlling the mind. Those who cannot control their mind constantly, find it difficult to see into the world by insight. We should know what is an easy way of doing this, useful for ordinary men in the beginning stages so as to get rid of obstacles which may arise on our way, thus protecting ourselves. So I will deal with this subject as an additional one of general interest.

To train the mind or to get control over the mind is not only the most important thing but also **the most simple process**. But few people care to do it, for it seems to be very difficult or beyond the power of the materialistic-minded man of our age. I say it is simple because the mind can be trained step by step, if one earnestly wants to do so, much as one can develop one's body by proper exercise. As we have very often heard, the mind is fickle, light and quick resembling a monkey. In order to subjugate the monkey the trainer requires a strong stake fixed in the ground to tie the monkey with a rope; and to train the mind as well, there must be a stake likewise. The most commonly known *Kammaṭṭhāna* (Meditation Subject) which the Buddha himself practised and praised is

Ānāpānasati, Mindfulness of Breathing. It is convenient and peaceful. We can practise it anywhere and at any time. In this meditation subject we have the breathing in and breathing out as the stake at which to tie the mind. *Sati* (Mindfulness) is like a rope to tie the mind to this stake of breathing. *Sampajañña*, Discrimination, is like the trainer's whip to lash at it so that it may not go its own way. Mindfulness is to be fixed on the breathing in and out. Unless one is negligent, the rope of mindfulness will remain unbroken and the mind, like a monkey tied with the rope, cannot get loose to leap into the jungle of sense objects. Also, an uncontrolled mind is like a wild animal. For example, an elephant which is newly caught for taming dashes to and fro trying to wrench himself free; sometimes so violently that the rope cuts into the flesh or to the bone thereby leading to bleeding at the neck or legs. Before, when he was in the jungle he did not behave in this violent manner as he was not then subject to any restraint. Nor when he is well-tamed does he behave fiercely but becomes gentle. In the same way the mind does not show its ferocious nature while enjoying sense objects. But when it is tied up with the post of mindfulness of in-breaths and out-breaths, it dashes to and fro in such a dreadful and strange manner that many a man is discouraged, so much so that he thinks that he is born unfit for meditation. One should,

therefore, know this first, before going on to apply mindfulness to control the mind that for the mind to try to 'free' itself (really it only entangles itself further) is only natural in the same manner as a wild elephant does while he is being trained or tamed. This process of controlling the mind is technically called *Samādhi*, Meditation, or *Samatha-kammaṭṭhāna*---*Samatha-bhāvanā*, Development of Tranquillity. It results in making the mind calm, pleasing, tractable and workable for higher training. The next step is to apply this tranquillized mind to observe all events (*Dhammā*) to gain a penetrating insight that will enable one to be unattached or to be freed from grasping anything. This application of mind is technically called *Vipassanā-kammaṭṭhāna* or *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*, the Insight Development, and finally results in the attainment of *Magga-Phala*, Noble Path and the Noble Fruition. It is in this stage of attainment that a man secures supermundane enduring peace.

THE STATE OF MEDITATION

The following is a brief account of breathing as a Meditation Subject. The very first step of directing mindfulness towards the Meditation Subject, namely breathing, is like the coupling of two things. This is technically called *Vitakka*, Thought Conception

or Applied Thought. By *Vitakka*, Thought Conception, is not meant thinking from a logical standpoint. It actually means just a state of mindfulness directed toward an object, in this case breathing, without any reasoning. The state when the mind, by the power of *Sampajañña*, Clear Comprehension, is unswervingly associated with or involved in the Subject of Meditation, breathing, is called *Vicāra*, Sustained Thought. Like *Vitakka*, *Vicāra* also does not mean logical thinking, it is simply unswerving association of the mind and the breathing. It has the characteristic of continued pressure on the object and does not go astray. If *Vitakka* and *Vicāra* be compared to the simile of taming a monkey, the former is like tying the monkey to the post and the latter is like the state of the monkey being held to the post. This first state of *Vitakka-Vicāra*, Applied Thought and Sustained Thought is called *Parikamma*, Preliminary Work. When this stage is maintained for some period it will result, according to the natural mental law, in a kind of marvellous satisfaction technically called *Pīti*, Rapture. In this state of Rapture one feels physically light for the body is not stiff, becoming gradually calm and cool, until one feels as if it does not exist. The breathing also slows down to the extent that one feels as if there is no breathing. The nerves become free from strain. Also, this Rapture is accompanied with a feeling of joy called

Sukha, Happiness. After this, one has only to maintain equanimity of this feeling, for the mind has stopped wandering and the rope of mindfulness is freed from pullings. In fact this state of equanimity has been in the state of development from the very beginning. But, now, one has to develop this state still further, until the mind is absolutely concentrated on this single object of breathing, and when this is done the Meditation attains the first stage of perfection. This state of mind being concentrated is called *Ekaggatā*, One-pointedness. When these five factors of Meditation, namely, Applied Thought, Sustained Thought, Rapture, Happiness and One-pointedness are in complete harmony, the so-called mind-training is partly completed and is technically called the First Absorption (*Pathamajhāna*). One can develop Insight, *Vipassanā-bhāvanā*, on the foundation of this first Absorption. So that even if one does not strive for the Second, Third or the Fourth Absorption, one can still attain the Super-mundane happiness or the Bliss of *Nibbāna*.

But, is this beyond one's power? If strong courage is rightly exercised, it is not so difficult. Everyone is capable of attaining it, for, to speak the truth, the First Absorption is not so subtle; it is still coarse. There are men of high will-power who are not only able to attain the Fourth Absorption but can also attain the four immaterial Absorptions

(*Arūpajhāna*), the last of which is the highest and most subtle possible stage of mind-training. But, for the Development of Insight, such a high degree of concentration is not necessary. Keeping the majority of people in view, the Buddha-dhamma is attained through Insight-Development and not through the Development of Concentration. We know from the biographies of the *Arahantas*, the passionless-ones, that in most cases, after having trained their minds to the stage of only First Absorption (and in many cases even without attaining the First Absorption), they could attain the Summum Bonum.

THE SIMPLE WAY OF MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING

The suitable way for all, and more simple than the one technically but rigidly explained in different books, is as follows:

Everybody breathes in and out. When we direct our mindfulness toward the breathing we know it goes in and comes out. **The first step** is to notice how long or short we breathe in and out and where the centre of our breath is. We should do this in a natural way without the use of any force. And when the breathing is thus observed it becomes soft or delicate making our body calm. If

the breathing occurs too soft to be observed, we then should take a little heavier breath until we have normal breathing again and are able to fix our mindfulness on in-breaths and out-breaths regularly. **The second step** is that we should fix mindfulness only on its gate, or the nostrils, and feel as if there were a tender wound there. We must not now fix our mindfulness on in-breaths and out-breaths, but simply feel the touch of the breathing in and breathing out at the nostrils. This can be understood by the simile of a gate-keeper. Just as a gate-keeper has the duty of examining people only at the gate, he has no concern as to what they do and where they go after having entered and gone out by the gate, so too, we are not to fix mindfulness on in-breaths and out-breaths but just fix likewise on the gate, or the nostrils, where breathing touches while going in and out. We do so in order to make the breathing occur softly and become calm.

The breathing, as observed in both the above-mentioned steps, is called *Parikamma-nimitta* (Sign of Preliminary Work). This Sign of Preliminary practice is the outer air itself and one must distinguish it from the following *Uggaha-nimitta*, (Acquired Sign) which arises in the state of *Upacāra-samādhi*, Access Concentration, for the Acquired Sign is merely a conception or something imagined. The latter is merely an unwitting imitation of the

former and is an outcome of familiarity with breathing that mind has been constantly attentive to. But this mental image has a distinguished character of high flexibility and is most active. In the following stage it can be changed according to one's slightest intention.

When the Acquired Sign is well-maintained, it tends to be still, and the mind is calmed down. After this the Acquired Sign begins to change in shape. How big or small it appears or how beautiful it is or where it is placed, is different to different individuals. For example, to some this mental image appears as something white right in front of their face, or as a huge moon in the sky or on the top of a tree or in the nostril: this depends on individuals and their slightest idiosyncrasies which are more or less automatic. But, finally, after having taken some particular shape and place, this mental image becomes invariable without the least change. This is the stage where mind, like a well-tamed monkey, becomes peaceful and calm. One feels showered with bliss owing to pervasion by the feeling of happiness. One can notice Applied and Sustained Thoughts, Rapture, Happiness and One-pointedness being present in complete harmony with the mind as described above. And the mind, at this stage, can be directed to the highest penetrating Insight. This is the stage in which we have the

Patibhāga-nimitta, the Absorption Sign. The moment we arrive at this stage, the mind is completely freed from the unwholesome mental objects which are technically called the *Five Nīvaraṇas*, (Mental Hindrances), namely, Lust, Ill-Will, Torpor and Sloth, Restlessness and Mental Worry and Doubt. Not only that, all the time when the mind is in this state and even after one has left the Absorption and is abiding in any posture, no unwholesome mental object can find its way into the mind. The taste of meditation is powerful enough to check these unwholesome phenomena, and make one feel a calm satisfaction.

THE FRUIT OF MEDITATION

The fruit of meditation is two-fold. The first fruit is a new kind of happiness that we have never had before. This happiness is not based on sense objects which are only the causes of emotional happiness and this in turn is nothing but potential Suffering. The happiness derived from meditation is inexpressibly cool or calm. We may say that this is like the tasting of attainment of *Nibbāna*, or of freedom from the defilements, in advance. Although *Nibbāna* has not yet been attained, one may presumably compare the taste of attainment of

Nibbāna with this present quality, the only differences being those of subtlety and quantity. This is the first fruit of Meditation. It is technically called *Diṭṭhadhammikattha*, Immediate Profit. If one's energy is exhausted after having reached this stage one's effort is not totally in vain. One has still profited.

The second fruit of Meditation is that the mind is fully prepared to have penetrating Insight into all the phenomena, for practising meditation is like sharpening a knife for cutting clearly or like polishing a glass so as to see clearly. A well-trained mind is amenable like a tame monkey or elephant. It is active, strong and unwavering under the impulse of passion, anger, hate, envy and the like. Such a mind cannot be overpowered by these difilements. When these evil forces try to stimulate the mind, there arises a sense of humour and one laughs at them, and so they cannot distract the mind which is well-trained.

When your mind is endowed with these two fruits of meditation, namely the Immediate Profit and the Penetrating Insight, you can see the world through inward sight. Henceforth nothing in the world can prick you through your sense organs. Nothing can lead your eye, nose, ear, tongue or body into temptation. Your mind will be free from all kinds of temptations and attachments. All worldly objects or allurements will appear to be

something humorous. You can laugh them off. You will feel as if the world as a whole is reduced to a handful of something and is completely in your grip, for it cannot delude your mind while you see it introvertedly in its real nature. If you can establish your mind in this state and do not lose your inward sight, no matter in which posture or place you are, it must be regarded as a very great stability of attainment. But as you are not yet so skillful, for your introversion or intuition is newly grown and is under-developed, it may easily fade away. So you must guard it with all your efforts. As the Scriptures say: just as a chief queen takes care of the child in her womb who will one day be a Wheel-Turning Monarch, (a World-Emperor ruling by righteousness) lest she should have a miscarriage, so too, one should guard diligently one's newly grown insight, until, it is stable. For its sake you should willingly give up income and rights in much the same way as when we are ready to sacrifice everything upon contracting a fatal disease. To this end, you must live in an environment which is suitable for Meditation and avoid disagreeable persons and places in the same way as a sick person avoids taking things which disagree with him.

Now, you should also know that the practice of controlling mind in this manner does not make you abnormal or disagreeable to society, or make

you walk, stand or sleep in unusual or strange ways. Also, you are not supposed to sit meditating all the time or everywhere you go, for after you have gained mastery over Meditation, the taste of it becomes one with your mind. Although you have done or practised meditation for the first time, your mind is bathed in the pleasing taste of it for a considerable time until the meditation, for want of heedfulness on your part, fades away. Defilements, such as passion, delusion, anger, hatred and jealousy, can hardly pollute you. If you are a politician you can debate carefully, patiently and convincingly. If you are a missionary you can laugh off the strong opposition and mockery of non-believers. Whatever may be your occupation or profession, you can do it successfully and will be self-sufficient. You may go to any place or associate with anybody, and you will be able mindfully to maintain the state of equilibrium, or what has now become a normality for you. All that has been said will suffice to show how the mind well-trained through the practice of meditation is useful both from the material as well as the spiritual point of view.

So, to conclude this brief, account of meditation, we have seen that mind control results in Happiness and Immediate Profit or *Diṭṭhadhammikattha* and makes you able to attain still higher values. To see things in their real

nature or to attain Buddha-dhamma calls for one-pointedness of mind. The stronger the one-pointedness of mind you have, the easier and more rapidly you can attain Buddha-dhamma. In case you fail to attain the Dhamma now, you will manage to attain it before long, if you make it your way of living and are determined to practise it all the years and months until the end of your days.

Now before rounding off this description, I would like to stress the point that the practice of a *Paññā-vimutta*, one who is emancipated through Insight, is mostly concerned with reflection or, to put it in other words, he takes refuge in Insight rather than in Meditation. He develops his Insight more than meditation or concentration. Thus after having known about meditation and having gained a workable mastery over the mind one should start treading the path of developing Insight as we said before, that is to say, one has to maintain the freedom of mind by not harbouring attachment or clinging to any sect, view or philosophy for which previously one used to dispute with others. In order to attain Buddha-dhamma you must be frank and pure at heart. You must be free from sectarian prejudices. **Take the right and the righteous as "Sect" and attainment of the Summum Bonum as token or symbol of "Sect".** So to begin with you must get rid of your obstinate feelings towards

Sectarianism. Hoping to purify the mind from the dust of delusion and attachment, you should be bold enough and should not feel timid or ashamed of giving up the views that you once held. The mind is calm when this film of sectarianism is removed. Also, you can maintain the peace of mind and can undoubtedly develop it still further—and there will be a pleasant smile on your face when you reflect on those defiling views which formerly you clung to so tenaciously.

Non-attachment to views or sects implies non-attachment to individuals and other things also. Even if the person for whom you have attachment is an *Arahanta*, your attachment is of no use, for you cannot recognize an *Arahanta* until you yourself become an *Arahanta*. Your grasping cannot grasp the real nature of *Arahanta-ship*, you only foolishly grasp some kinds of wrong views. At most you grasp an *Arahanta* in terms of his bodily form. This kind of grasping, as said before, is useful only from the ethical point of view, but it is a dark cover, as far as the emancipation of mind is concerned. So you should try to have an insight into the real nature of the *Arahanta* rather than just think about and be satisfied that so and so is an *Arahanta*. We respect monks not because of our attachment for them. In fact, one truly respects the banner or symbol of the *Arahanta*, in much the same way as

people respect the national flag as the symbol of the nation. So you may respect anything that is worthy of respect without having the least attachment, for this always imprisons the mind and heart. This is just rational conduct. But if we observe carefully we find that many of us do not hold fast abiding by this rational thinking and are constantly under the influence of attachment. Even in Buddhist circles quite a good number of people bow to the image which is made of brick and cement or the like, as if it be **alive** and greedily and foolishly pray for favours!

We respect the Buddha, for our heart is filled with joy when we think that the Buddha discovered that secret thing, the Buddha-dhamma. We feel delighted when we realize that the teaching of the Enlightened One is so meaningful and rational, and glorious in the beginning, middle and end, that if we practise according to it, undoubtedly we will be freed from suffering. At this stage of our understanding, we do not harbour any attachment for the person of the Buddha except respecting him as a Torchbearer who has shown us the way which we have already seen clearly. In this way we do not make a spirit out of the Buddha that bestows everything in accordance with the propitiation of people. We should not even think that the Buddha can help us or can lead the way, for the Buddha

says that we are to walk by ourselves. In truth, the Buddha has lighted the fire (of understanding), so that from it we may light a similar fire for our own sake. When we know that the Buddha is the embodiment of the light which lightens our way, then we ourselves, after we have embodied that light, become the Buddha, enlightened. From this we must understand that there is no sense in saying that the Buddha teaches us to depend upon anyone—including even Him, or commands us to do this and that.

The reason why I speak rather at length about this matter is that even the majority of Buddhists are in so pitiable a condition that to attain Buddha-dhamma is deemed something impossible. This kind of misunderstanding is widespread like an epidemic disease, and it has assumed an awkward position which is difficult to cope with. Also, I speak about these facts to show you how *Paññā-vimutti* or 'Emancipation through Insight' necessitates annihilation of attachment and misunderstanding to make way for an unbarred penetration or Insight. So you can see that the underlying force that shapes the mentality of a *Paññā-vimutta* and *Ceto-vimutta* is basically different. For here we aim at *Paññā-vimutti*, so it is absolutely necessary to have a reflective investigating spirit so as to gain a highly powerful Insight having thorough

penetration of things, in much the same way as people climb high mountain peaks and, are then able to obtain panoramic pictures of the earth below.

To attain Buddha-dhamma through *Paññāvimutti* calls for, as we said before, much time and constant reflection, whereas a *Ceto-vimutta* attains it by the force of his highly concentrated mind in a comparatively short period. Therefore, the way to earn one's livelihood is an important question for those who take *Paññāvimutti* as their way for attaining Buddha-dhamma. If a man gains his livelihood by a right way of living, his sacrifice bears fruits. All Buddhists sacrifice or are supposed (or expected) to sacrifice anything for Buddha-dhamma. There are those who even go so far as to renounce the world (to become monks and nuns). But for what? Is it for enjoying an easy-going life, or for material gains, or for name and fame? Is it for enjoying lengthy Scriptural studies from different literary or historical points of view? When we reflect upon this, we come to the conclusion that it is absolutely not for these purposes, for all these things can be acquired otherwise, and in ways that will be more convenient and self-respecting. To speak the truth, the ultimate or the original or the true purpose of the sacrifice is to attain Buddha-dhamma that makes us gain the evergreen life which is characterized by wisdom and peace.

There is another important way that should be taken into consideration for attaining Buddha-dhamma. That is to serve other. It means to render help to others by teaching or showing the way to Buddha-dhamma itself. When you have trained your mind to the extent that you can keep a check on your emotions, you are able to guide or teach others in proportion to the experience that you derived therefrom. The Buddha disapproved of teaching what one cannot put into practice by oneself. But he encouraged the teaching of that which one can really practise. The Buddha himself served humanity in this respect. Teaching others is beneficial, for one teaches oneself as well, regarding the attainment of Buddha-dhamma, in the cultivation of benevolence or friendly feeling, moreover the intellect is developed. Also, one should know that this is the line of conduct that the Buddha set forth as an ideal way of conduct. Therefore, I exhort you to help others out of your compassion in their emancipation by guiding them to the extent you have emancipated yourself. The friendly feeling that you cultivate through guiding others is very beneficial for the concentration and culture of mind. This is so because when you are cross-questioned, you have to investigate and think over the issue carefully and deeply. You have to thoroughly understand the matter first. So in this way, by helping others, you help to elevate yourself. We

find in the *Vimuttāyatana-sutta* that some people attained the Summum Bonum while trying to explain to others that very matter, i.e. regarding the Summum Bonum itself. This is because some individuals have a strange kind of mentality in that they can better and more easily think and feel delighted when they teach or advise other. In case of such people, flashes of new ideas in mind and words in mouth find their place simultaneously and they, out of their deep understanding, feel very much exhilarated all the time. So it is clear that to try to think in order to guide others when asked is not only to enlighten others but is to enlighten oneself also. Thus it is something to be practised and desirable. So, it is clear that the line of conduct explained above constitutes a salient feature and that to serve others is very beneficial for the attainment of Buddha-dhamma.

In conclusion, may I repeat that the way to attain Buddha-dhamma is to harbour no feeling of attachment to anything, no matter whether it is sense objects, views or one's own assumed (supposed) "self". All troubles arise from attachment which has ignorance as its mother. The feeling of attachment is an instinct which is common to all creatures who can think, and the more one thinks (outwardly), the stronger the attachment will be. The power of thinking makes one able to enjoy the different

kinds of tastes of sense objects more and more. And the more one clings on to the taste, the stronger the bond of attachment becomes. Animals, as compared with human beings, are less sentimental with regard to sense objects, namely, form, sound, odour, taste, and tangible things. This is because animals are endowed with a comparatively weaker faculty of thinking. Their enjoyment of the taste of sense objects is as their nature has given them, limited in quality, quantity and time, for, unlike men who can refine their tastes, they are unable to do so. (Nevertheless their taste still results in their own strong delusion.) But this does not mean that we should behave like animals. What I mean is that man should use his faculty of thinking for higher values, that is to say, he should try to be free from self-deception in proportion to the products of his brain. So let the production of your mind be your servant rather than being your master. Let it be helpful rather than destructive to your well-being. It should not delude you. Man must be better than the animal by using his power of thinking in a proper and constructive way. His knowledge should not bring about his own ruin. He should possess decisive knowledge with regard to good and bad, right and wrong. The sense of beauty, melody, etc. is, as said elsewhere, the product of man's attachment which is gradually and unconsciously developed. A man whose mind is not trained as to

what is beautiful and what is melodious cannot have any conception or idea of beauty or melody. For example, old people in the countryside who are uneducated in Fine Arts such as music or in fashions of dress do not have any fascination for such things as many of the city folk will consider important. They will rather feel that fashionable dressing is an offensive sight while city music is dull or noisy. On the other hand they may have a liking for the old-style dress and for the chanting of the monks. Why is it so? It is because of different levels of attachment. All the objects are or can be coloured or pictured in any way in the light of man's illusive attachment. All melodious music is nothing but the harmonized combinations of sounds ranging through different frequencies. Every sound is regarded as melodious and so, when they are harmoniously and ingeniously combined, the composition seems all the more melodious in proportion to one's presuppositions. The gay or sad feelings that are aroused in the human mind by the combination of sounds are, in fact, only the off-spring or result of attachment. **The so-called sad or gay music cannot make a dog, like man, feel sad or gay!** But here, as befits a matter of self-delusion, man is juggled by the jugglery of his own way of thinking, since man, out of his own ignorance or illusion, has created and developed a system of taste which he then calls Education, Art and so on, but wanting real

intelligence, he is caught by his own creation in that he fails to remain unattached. Man paints a picture of a lion and is frightened by it, paints lovely things and is inspired by them, paints ugly things and hates them! Though he himself paints he fails to understand that there is nothing frightful, inspiring or hateful in the picture he has painted. All this is because of the covering of ignorance. To do away with attachment is to gain that Wisdom which drives away ignorance. When a man has no attachment or attraction, the very forms, sounds, etc. do not delude him for they lay bare to his insight showing their real nature and then man can handle them in the right way, that is, they can no longer exercise an influence on him in terms of passion, grievance, and the like. On the contrary, they become helpful and instructive and promote his quietude or healthy state of mind and body. So as we have already said, the salient or general feature of the Way to Buddha-dhamma constitutes the removal of the coverings. The moment you dismiss the feeling of attachment from your mind, you realize the Buddha-dhamma radiating in you. You discover or rediscover what the Great Buddha discovered and taught. Everyone of us should attain it, for it marks the standard of perfection in manhood. This is the end of the holy life. This is the **realistic ideal**, or aim of life. You must strive for it, for you can raise yourself above the

world or worldly phenomena and can control them thereby. You can be free from or above all the problems of life whatsoever. Indeed, no problems of life can touch you and you become superior to all worldly things. There is no state of your being, whether monk or nun, layman, male, female, young or old which can be a hindrance to you and there is no form, sound, odour, taste or tangible thing in this world or in any other world, truly, there is absolutely nothing whatsoever which can in the least disturb your majestic quietude. Indeed the only thing left is an immovable and unmoved state where there is no birth, old age, suffering or death. **It is a state of everlasting radiant smiles with nobody smiling.**⁴ This state is the very perfection of the values of life which everybody who earnestly follows the Great Buddha, the Enlightened-One, the Perfect-One, hopes for and sets his heart on.



APPENDIX

¹ In Thailand (as elsewhere?) there is often a kind of psychological atmosphere to the effect that *Pariyatti* means to study the whole *Tipitaka*. There are institutions in which there are fairly good arrangements for the Scriptural studies: Some people study the *Tipitaka* throughout their whole lives. They are satisfied with their Scriptural studies. They never think of developing Concentration or Insight. They seem to have an idea that Scriptural knowledge is all that a Buddhist is supposed to have. Many of them even go so far as to believe that in this modern age there is no *Ariyapuggala* and that nobody can be a *Ariyapuggala* in our age. So naturally they are satisfied to be wedded merely to the Scriptural studies and they justify themselves by referring to the commentarial literature which says that Buddha-sāsana is said to be established even if only *Pariyatti* exists.

On the other hand there are people who look upon *Paṭipatti* as something to be carried out

in the jungles or in quite secluded places cut off from society. If somebody says to his friend, "I want to develop Concentration or Insight or want to practise the Dhamma.", his friend would say to him, "well, then, go to the jungle." The majority of the people have a curious idea that the Dhamma is something to be practised only in the jungles or in temples, as if it has nothing to do with their normal daily life. These words of Venerable Buddhādāsa are a reaction to such prevalent and wrong ideas.

² "Love" here refers to passionate love as distinct from "Loving-Kindness" or friendly feeling (*Mettā*) which is a Meditation Subject for emancipation from enmity or hatred.

³ It does not mean that he has no concentration at all. He does have, for without a certain degree of concentration (*Upacāra-samādhi*) nobody can develop Insight "He does not develop Concentration."-'Concentration' here refers to the attainment of the four Material and four Immaterial stages of Meditation (*Rūpa-Arūpajhāna*) which he does not develop because these stages of Meditation are not necessary for developing Insight.

⁴ It is an expression to the soulness nature of living beings in the same spirit as that of *Visuddhimagga*:

*“Dukkhamēva Hi Na Koci Dukkhiṭṭho
Kāraṇo Na Kiriyaṃ Va Vijjati
Atthi Nibbuti Na Nibbuto Puggaḥ
Maggamatthi Gamako Na Vijjati.”*

“For there is suffering, but none who suffers;
Doing exists although there is no doer;
Extinction is, but no extinguished person;
Although there is path (travelled), there is no
goer.”

(Trans. Ven. Nānamoli)



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 Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, his work, and Suan Mokkh spread over the years so that 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 Buddhadasa has worked painstakingly to establish and explain the correct and essential of original Buddhism. That work is based in extensive

research of the Pali texts (Canon and commentary), especially of the Buddha's Discourses (*sutta pitaka*), 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, straight-forward, and practical.

Although his formal education only went as far as ninth grade and beginning Pail 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 broadmindedness 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 Dharma 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 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 Buddhadasa and his helpers continue to explore the potential of mindfully wise actions within Nature according to the Law of Nature. He welcomes visitors.

W. Norman

 W. Norman

The difference between a worldling
and an enlightened person
is that the former misconceives
“I” as something real
while the latter knows that
it is unreal and is used only for
conventional purposes.

Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu

