

Vipassana Newsletter

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

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WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Āraddhāviriye pabitate,
Niccamaṃ dalha parakkame;
samagge sāvake passa,
etaṃ Buddhānavandanam.*

*Resolute, intent,
constantly striving ardently—
behold these meditators assembled!
They truly honor the Buddha.*

—Mahapajapatigotamitheriapadanam-2/7-171

Seeking Enlightenment

(The following articles have been excerpted from 'Glimpses of the Buddha's Life,' published by VRI. For more information, contact vri_admin@dhmma.net.in.)

The Journey to Magadha

Prince Siddhattha crossed the river Anoma, took the robes of a recluse and proceeded towards Magadha. He was new to the life of a monk. Close to Anupriyā village, there was a mango orchard. Staying there for a week, he experienced for the first time the happiness of monkhood. To learn meditation, he decided to go to the teacher named Alara Kalama (Ālāra Kālāma).

From Anupriyā village, he went straight to Rajgir (Rajagaha, the capital of Magadha kingdom). On the main street of the city, he started walking from house to house for alms. The people were impressed by his radiant face and long-limbed (ājānubāhu) body. They had never seen such an attractive monk. Whoever saw him kept gazing at him.

The king of Magadha also couldn't contain himself when he saw the monk on his alms round from his balcony. He felt that this monk was not an ordinary person. So he asked his men to follow the monk. They saw that as soon as the monk received enough alms-food, he went to the Pandu cave on the outskirts of the city, sat on a stone and started eating.

Prince Siddhattha had never seen, let alone eaten, such dry and tasteless food as he received on his first alms round. He ate the food with fortitude. The king's men told King Bimbisara what they had seen. The king decided to go and meet the young recluse. By then the monk had finished his meal. The king saluted the recluse and asked him, 'You seem to be a youth from the noble class. Who are you?'

The young recluse said that he was the son of the king from a republic in Kosala from the Himalayan

Tarai region. He belonged to the Sun Dynasty and was Sakyan by birth.

King Bimbisara at once understood that the recluse was the son of the Sakyan king, Suddhodana, from the Kosala Empire. The king thought that he might have become a recluse due to a quarrel with his family. He offered the recluse a part of his kingdom. The monk prince declined his offer. He said that he had become a monk because he wanted to experience the truth which is beyond all realms. He was determined to attain this goal. Therefore he could not accept King Bimbisara's offer.

King Bimbisara was greatly impressed by the strength of his resolution. He requested the monk to come to Rajagaha to give him a discourse once he attained enlightenment. The ascetic prince agreed and proceeded on his way.

Uddaka Ramputta

After learning the seventh jhāna (dhyāna, concentration, absorption) in Alara Kalama's meditation centre, the ascetic prince proceeded to the meditation centre of Uddaka Ramputta where he learned the eighth jhāna within a very short period.

The eighth jhāna is the meditation of nevasaññānāsaññāyatana. After the seventh akiñcana jhāna, in the next jhāna, perception (saññā, the evaluating faculty of mind) becomes so feeble that it is difficult to differentiate whether it is present or absent. Saññā does the work of identification and evaluation. In this state whom to identify? What nomenclature to give to what state? To what can we term as infinite sky or infinite consciousness or nothingness (sunya). This state is beyond all this and cannot be named. Saññā becomes unable to recognize any object. However, the

meditator is not totally without saññā. In this state, it cannot be said whether saññā is present or absent.

Passing through the experience of this eighth jhāna, the Bodhisatta found that it is the highest formless state of existence, that is, arūpa brahmaloka. This is the highest amongst all existences in the cycle of life and death. Taking birth in the arūpa brahmaloka enables one to live a long life of thousand of eons. But this state is not immortal. Even though it is the highest, it is still a mortal existence. It is the territory of Mara and it is not free from his clutches. The cycle of life and death is still in motion here. This does not grant one the state of total cessation of misery.

The Bodhisatta wanted to experience the reality of going beyond all existences, the state that is permanent, eternal, deathless and immortal. He wanted to find the way out of all misery, the misery of life and death. For this he had to attain omniscience, which would enable him to understand why beings suffer and the way out of all suffering.

With these auspicious thoughts, the Bodhisatta proceeded towards Uruvela which was a very suitable place for meditation.

Sujata's Porridge

Senani was a rich man from a village named Sena in Uruvela's forest area. Sujata (Sujātā), his daughter, had immense faith in a tree-deity. She was certain that her successful marriage to a businessman of Varanasi was because of the blessings of this tree-god. She also felt that the birth of her son twenty years ago was also due to the blessings of this tree-deity. So every year she returned home to worship the tree-deity on the full moon night of Vesāka.

This year Sujata prepared delicious khīra (milk-porridge) to offer to the tree-deity. She sent her maid to the tree to clean the place. When the maid saw the attractive personality and radiant face of ascetic prince Siddhattha meditating under the tree, she felt that the tree-deity had taken this physical form to receive her mistress's offerings.

She rushed home to give this good news to her mistress. Sujata was joyously surprised. She came to the tree with her khīra in a golden vessel to offer to the tree-deity. However, she immediately realized that it was not the tree-deity but a recluse. She offered him the khīra and was delighted when he accepted it.

Not knowing this truth completely, some people started adding their own stories. This is why it was believed by some that Sujata prayed to the tree-deity for an ideal husband and a son. Due to such fabricated stories, she was portrayed as a young and a single girl. The truth is that she was a middle-aged woman at that time. She was married in a rich family and she had a youthful son who was also married. Since Sujata was certain that her wishes were granted because of the tree-

deity she came home every year to make offerings to the tree-deity. This year, she had come to pray that like other young men, her son would develop an attraction to worldly things.

But on seeing this meditating youth, maternal affection arose in her. Instead of asking for anything, she offered him the khīra and showered her blessings on him with the words, 'May your meditation be fruitful.' This was the Siddhattha's last meal as the Bodhisatta. He attained enlightenment the next night and hence, this offering of food is considered to be of great importance. ☸

Group Sitting, Discourse and Metta at Global Pagoda in the Presence of Pujya Guruji

7 June 2009, Sunday, Purnima

16 August 2009, third Sunday

Group Sitting: 3 to 4 pm

Discourse and Metta: 4 to 5 pm

One-day Course at Global Pagoda in the Presence of Pujya Guruji

7 July 2009, Tuesday, Guru Purnima

Time: 11 am to 4 pm

Contact: Mr. I. B. V. Raghvan

Mobile: 98928-55692, 98928-55945

Tel: (022) 2845-2111, 2845-1204 ext. 105.

Email: global.oneday@gmail.com

globalvipassana@gmail.com

Websites: www.globalpagoda.org

www.vridhamma.org.

Meditators are requested to bring their own water bottles, which can be refilled at the Pagoda. They should switch off their mobile phones and observe noble silence during the course. There is no facility available at present for overnight stay for one-day course students at the Global Pagoda.

(In addition to these courses, one-day courses are conducted every Sunday from 11 am to 4 pm at the Pagoda. For gate pass to visit the Pagoda, call: Tel: (022) 2845-2111, 2845-2261. Website: www.globalpagoda.org; Email: globalpagoda@hotmail.com; Tel/Fax: 2845-2112.)

Vipassana in Ethiopia

The first course in Ethiopia was organised from 30 January to 10 February 2008. Servers from South Africa, France, Canada, and Indians living in Ethiopia helped to make it a success.

The second course was conducted from 27 January to 7 February, 2009 with 35 students (34 Ethiopians, one Italian) including ten old students. The course was held at a Catholic retreat

and three Catholic nuns also attended the course. The next ten-day course will be held in October 2009 and a three-day course for old students in May 2009.

Ten-day and three-day course discourses and instructions have been translated into Amharic (main language in Ethiopia).

The local students plan to create a Vipassana trust and try to obtain land from the Government for a Vipassana center in Ethiopia. For more details, contact Email: dhammaethiopia@gmail.com

Winter Long Courses in 2009-2010

Following is the schedule of courses for Dhamma Giri and Dhamma Tapovana (Igatpuri) and Dhamma Pattana (Mumbai) in winter 2009-2010:

30-day Teacher's Self Course

Dhamma Giri: November 1 to December 1, 2009

Admission criteria: Applicants should have completed at least one 30-day course. Admission will be at Goenkaji's discretion. Please note that Goenkaji will not be present at Dhamma Giri during this course.

15-day Teacher's Self Course

Dhamma Pattana, adjacent to the Global Vipassana Pagoda, near Mumbai: November 15 to December 1, 2009

Admission criteria: Applicants must have made a very significant contribution to the spread of Dhamma and should have sat at least one Satipatthana course. Admission will be at Goenkaji's discretion. Goenkaji will meditate in this course.

Other courses (all at Dhamma Tapovana, Igatpuri)

45-day course: November 2 to December 18, 2009

20-day course: December 23, 2009 to January 13, 2010

60-day course: January 18 to March 20, 2010

(The admission criteria for these courses are as specified in the long course application form.)

Goenkaji's Discourses on Television

Aastha: Daily, 9:40 am

Zee: Urja, Daily, 4:30 am

Hungama and Bindass: Daily, 4.30 to 6.00 am

USA: Aastha 6 pm EST (Monday to Friday) on Worlddirect platform of Directv on channel no. 2005.

(Please confirm exact timings.)

Pali Workshops

The following Pali workshops have been organized for Hindi-speaking Vipassana meditators from India and Nepal:

1. **Jaipur:** 23 to 31 May 2009 at Kothari Farms (Marugandha), Bhankrota-Jaisinghpura Road, 2 kms. off Jaipur-Ajmer Express Highway, Bhankrota, Jaipur. For registration, contact Ms. Meghana, Mobile: 96028-48896. Email: paliworkshop@yahoo.co.in

2. **Indore:** 15 to 23 August 2009 at Pukbraj Palace, Phuthi Kothi, Indore. For registration, contact Mrs. Sangeetha Chaudhary, 81, Bairathi Colony, Opposite Sindhi Colony, Indore 452 014, M.P. Mobile: 98930-29167. Email: dhammmakwa@yahoo.co.in

Online Vipassana Newsletters and Archives

Vipassana Newsletter is available in several Indian languages. For archives of the VRI Newsletter in English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Gujarati and Malayalam, visit: www.vridhamma.org/Newsletter_Home.aspx

Children's Courses in Mumbai

To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
3-5	South Mumbai	14-18 years	30-4 & 1-5

10-5	Ulhasnagar	10-12 years	7 & 8-5
17-5	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	14 & 15-5
7-6	South Mumbai	8-13 years	4 & 5-6
14-6	Ulhasnagar	9-16 years	11 & 12-6
21-6	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	18 & 19-6
21-6	Goregaon	9-16 years	18 & 19-6
5-7	South Mumbai	9-16 years	2 & 3-7
19-7	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	17 & 18-7
2-8	South Mumbai	9-16 years	30-7 & 1st-8
16-8	Goregaon	9-16 years	13 & 14-8
23-8	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	21st & 23-7
6-9	South Mumbai	9-16 years	4 & 5-9
20-9	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	17 & 18-9
4-10	South Mumbai	9-16 years	2 & 3-10
18-10	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	16 & 17-10
25-10	Goregaon	9-16 years	17 & 18-12
8-11	South Mumbai	9-16 years	6 & 7-11
22-11	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	20 & 21st-11
6-12	South Mumbai	9-16 years	4 & 5-12
20-12	Ghatkopar	9-16 years	17 & 18-12
27-12	Goregaon	9-16 years	17 & 18-12

Course Timings: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. Registration: 11 am to 1 pm

Course Venues: **Ghatkopar(W):** SNTD School, New Bldg., Cama Lane, Opp. Vidyut Soc. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505.

Goregaon(W): Siddharth Municipal Hospital, Opp. Motilal Nagar Post Office. Tel: 2308-1622. **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Rd, New SNTD College, King's Circle. Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **South Mumbai:** Tel: 2308-1622. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693.

NB Please: *bring cushion, *register on specified phone numbers, *inform in advance if unable to attend after registration, *arrive on time for the course.

Workshops at Dhamma Ganga, Kolkata Vipassana centre

AT Workshop for Vipassana teachers, SATs, ATs, and trainee ATs: from 27 July (morning) to 31 July noon. Participants may arrive on 26 July. **CCT workshop** for Eastern India will be held from 1 August evening to 5 August noon. For more details, contact the centre management.

NOTE: Vipassana Newsletter subscribers whose mailing address has changed should send both their old and new addresses to the Patrika Section, VRI, Dhamma Giri 422 403. Please mention the computer code number printed above the subscriber name in the address label in all correspondence about non-receipt of Newsletters, change in address, receipt of extra copies, change in language etc.

New Website of Vipassana Research Institute

VRI has launched a new website: www.vridhamma.org. This website has a new design, user-friendly display and new features such as audio and video downloads. Soon it will host an online shopping facility for books, CDs and DVDs. With this launch the old VRI site has been closed and automatically redirects visitors to the new website.

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Ācaryas:

1. Mr. Gopal Sharan Singh—To serve Dhamma Cakka, Sarnath
2. Mrs. Manju Vaish—To serve Dhamma Patthāna, Sonapat

Senior Assistant Teachers

1. Ms. Anita Kinra—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indian community in North America
2. Mrs. Dhanuben Raol—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indian community in North America
3. & 4. Mr. Narayandas & Mrs. Meena Salaria—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indian community in North America

NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

Ācaryas:

1. & 2. Mr. Surendra & Mrs. Urmila Naik—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indian community in North America and to assist Centre Teachers in serving Dhamma Siri
3. Mr. Sudesh Leal—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indians in Europe
4. Mr. Chandrashekhar Dahiwele—To serve Nanded
5. Mr. Murari Sharma—To serve Dhamma Kārunika, Karnal and Dhamma Salila, Dehradun
6. Mrs. Nirmala (Mira) Chinchkhede—To serve Wardha
7. Ms. Eilona Ariel—To assist the area teacher in serving Israel and audiovisual productions

Senior Assistant Teachers

1. Ms. A. Gayatri Balakrishnan—To assist the area teacher in serving Kerala
2. Mr. Pramodkumar Bhawe—To serve Dhamma Sikhara, Dharmashala and Ladakh
3. Dr. Prem Narain Somani—To assist the centre teachers in serving Dhamma Cakka, Sarnath
4. & 5. Dr. Sharat & Dr. (Mrs.) Sudha Jain—Spread of Vipassana among expatriate Indian community in North America
6. Ms. Victoria Robertson—Spread of Vipassana among people of African heritage in North America
7. Dr. (Ms.) Lemay Henderson

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers:

1. Mr. Damodaran Vasanth Kumar, Pune
2. Mr. Vamana Krishnan, Bangalore
3. Mr. Vijay M. Shah, Kutch
4. Mr. Gopal Babadur Pokharel, Nepal
5. Mr. Michael & Mrs. Hilde Huebner, Germany

Children's Course Teachers:

1. Ms. Bharti Batra, Delhi
2. Mr. G. Rajesh Kurup, Kerala
3. Mrs. Vangisha Narwade, Aurangabad
4. Ms. Vandana Gimekar, Aurangabad
5. Dr. Sachin Narawde, Parbhani
6. Mr. Balasabeb Andhale, Beed
7. Mr. Yadram Verma, Shivpuri, M.P.

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Dharma chute to sukha chute, ākula vyākula hoyā;
Dharma jage to sukha jage, harakhita pulakita hoyā.
If Dhamma is lost, happiness is lost:
one is anxious and agitated;
If Dhamma arises, happiness arises:
one is filled with joy and bliss.*

*Antara Gaṅgā dharama kī, labhara labhara labharāya;
Rāga dveṣa ke moha ke, maila sabhī dhula jānyā.
May the Ganges of Dhamma within keep flowing,
And wash away the stains of craving, aversion and ignorance.*

*With much mettā,
A Vipassana meditator*

*Maṅgala maṅgala dharama kā, maṅgala hī phala hoyā;
Antara kī gāṅṭhēṅ khuleṅ, mānasa niramala hoyā.
The all-auspicious Dhamma bears auspicious fruit;
Knots within are opened, the mind becomes stainless.*

*Jīeṅ jīvana Dharama kā, rabeṅ pāpa se dūra.
Cita dhārā niramala rabe, maṅgala se bharapūra.
Live the life of Dhamma, keep far away from evil,
Purify the flow of mind, and brim over with happiness.*

*With best compliments from
MOTILAL BANARSIDASS*

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