

Vipassana Newsletter

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

Vol. 15, No. 12: 15 December 2005
Published every month

Vipassana Research Institute
Dhamma Giri, Igatpuri-422 403, Maharashtra

WORDS OF DHAMMA

*Etañhi tumhe paṭipannā
dukkhassantaṃ karissatha
akkhāto vo mayā maggo
aññāya sallakantaṃ.*

By following this path,
You will make an end of suffering;
After having learnt the removal of thorns,
I have taught you this path.

—Dhammapada 275

The Buddha – The Noble Physician

S. N. Goenka

(The following has been adapted from the opening talk by Goenkaji at the Vipassana and Ayurveda Conference at Dhamma Giri on 15 October 2005 and discourses given during the 30-day course.)

The Buddha was called a great physician, a great doctor. He was also called a surgeon (*sallakatto*).

It is essential for every physician to develop compassion towards his patients: “A sick person has come to me; I have to cure him.” The nationality, religion, race, gender, caste or philosophical belief of the patient is of no importance to the physician; the only thing that matters is that the patient is a human being and is suffering.

Similarly, the patient also does not ask the doctor his religion, caste or philosophical belief—these are irrelevant to the treatment of his illness.

Anything that is not related to the illness, the cause of the illness, the eradication of the cause of the illness and the treatment of the illness is irrelevant to the doctor.

Prince Siddhattha Gotama left the household life in search of liberation from all suffering. First, he went to two renowned meditation teachers and learned deep absorption meditation (*jhānas*) from them. In those days, they were called the seventh and eighth *jhānas* and were the highest meditation states in those days.

After mastering them, Siddhattha realized that he had not attained the ultimate stage of full liberation. So he continued his search. It was a common belief of those days that liberation can be gained only through torturing the body. He tried the practice of extreme torture of the body but did not achieve anything.

Finally, because of the *pāramis* of innumerable past

lives, he found the middle path, discovered Vipassana meditation and became fully enlightened.

Then the Buddha taught the Dhamma for the first time to his five companions. This discourse is called the *Dhammacakkappavattana sutta*. He rotated the wheel of Dhamma, not the wheel of a particular religion or philosophical belief. He called it Dhamma. Religions, philosophical beliefs, festivals, rites and rituals may be different but Dhamma is always universal.

The Buddha explained the Four Noble Truths:

The First Noble Truth

There is suffering, *dukkha*. Suffering starts from birth itself. Birth is suffering; old age is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering. Throughout life, undesirable things happen, desirable things do not happen—this is suffering.

The Buddha not only understands that there is suffering but also gains full knowledge of it. Anyone can understand the superficial aspects of suffering but this is not true enlightenment. One has to understand the entire field of suffering at the experiential level.

The knowledge of the first Noble Truth is complete only when its three aspects are accomplished. The first aspect: *dukkha*—this is suffering. But this alone did not make him a Buddha.

Then, the second aspect: *pariññeyya*—one understands that this truth of misery must be fully understood at the experiential level. The entire field of suffering, the totality of suffering, must be experienced. One can say that the entire field of *dukkha* has been experienced only after attaining the first experience of *nibbāna*. Even those few moments before *nibbāna* are moments of *dukkha*. The entire

field before *nibbāna* is *dukkha*, so the entire field must be explored. Even this did not make him a Buddha.

Then the third aspect of the first truth, *pariññātam*—one has explored the entire field of *dukkha*. Nothing remains unknown to him about *dukkha*—*pariññāna*.” The totality of *dukkha* is realized—*pariññātam*.

The Second Noble Truth

What is the cause of suffering? There are many superficial causes: undesirable things happen, desirable things do not happen. There is separation from dear ones and association with unpleasant ones. This is the apparent reality: one feels that one has become miserable because of these undesirable incidents.

But the truth is that the real cause of one's suffering is within and not the result of any external event. So the root cause of suffering has to be uprooted. Only then will one gain true liberation from suffering. So one has to go to the root and understand the real cause of suffering.

It became clear that one becomes miserable if one's desires, cravings, longings are not fulfilled. Further, whatever one has obtained, one worries about how to keep it secure. If it is lost, one becomes miserable. Until the cause of suffering is completely uprooted, one is not free from misery.

Witnessing the truth at the experiential level, one understands that whenever any defilement arises in the mind, misery arises along with that defilement. The defilement and misery arise together. It is impossible for a mental defilement to arise without being accompanied by misery; misery is certain to arise. Understanding this truth at the experiential level, one has to ensure that defilements do not arise at all. When there is no defilement, there is no misery.

Therefore, the second Noble Truth also consists of three parts: first, *taṇhā*—craving is the cause of suffering. Second, *pahātabbam*—understanding that this cause of suffering should be destroyed. Third, *pahīnam*—the cause of suffering has been destroyed at the root. If all these three aspects are accomplished, the second Noble Truth is fulfilled.

The Third Noble Truth

The complete cessation of suffering so that it cannot arise again. The first aspect of the third Noble Truth: *dukkha-nirodha*—the eradication of suffering. Secondly, *sacchikātabbam*—one understands that one has to directly experience the eradication of suffering. Merely accepting the fact that there is a stage free from misery, a stage which is beyond mind and matter, does not help. One has to witness it. Thirdly, *sacchikatam*—one directly experiences that suffering has been eradicated and cannot arise again. When these three parts are accomplished, the third Noble Truth is accomplished.

The Fourth Noble Truth

What is the way to eradicate all suffering? Merely wishing is not enough, one has to exert effort. First, *dukkha-nirodha-gāminī paṭipadā*—the path to eradicate all suffering. Secondly, *bhāvetabbam*—intellectual understanding that every part of the Noble Eightfold Path has to be understood at the experiential level. Thirdly, *bhāvitam*—one experiences every part of this Noble Eightfold Path; one develops it to the fullest extent.

Thus, when each Noble Truth was fulfilled in three ways and the four Noble Truths were fulfilled in twelve ways, Siddhattha attained perfect enlightenment. He accepted the truth not merely at the intellectual or devotional level but directly experienced it. Only then did he announce “I am a Buddha, I am liberated.” Anyone who wants to become liberated has to accomplish the three parts of each of these four Noble Truths.

Imesu catūsu ariyasaccesu evaṃ tiparivattaṃ dvādasākāraṃ yathā-bhūtaṃ ñāṇa-dassanaṃ suvisuddhaṃ ahoṣi.

“By practising these Four Noble Truths, each in these three aspects, my *yathā-bhūtaṃ ñāṇa-dassanaṃ* became pure.”

What is *yathā-bhūta ñāṇa-dassanā*? *Yathā-bhūta* means whatever is happening now, at this moment. The reality of every Noble Truth; the reality of the First Noble Truth—*dukkha*—at this moment one is experiencing *dukkha*. “This is *dukkha*.” One understands *yathā-bhūta*—this is *dukkha*. One understands even the most pleasant sensation is *dukkha* by *dassana*, by observing it objectively. *Ñāṇa*: with this experience, wisdom arises. Observing the reality objectively, the wisdom that arises is *ñāṇa, sammā-ñāṇa*. The *dassana* becomes *sammā-dassana*. *Yathā-bhūta ñāṇa-dassana* is no longer a philosophy, it has become *suvisuddhaṃ ahoṣi*. It has become free from all the philosophical beliefs, and bondages, free from the impurities of all kinds of beliefs. It is experienced now. Unless that is done then his teaching will also become a philosophy, a *diṭṭhi*. The *diṭṭhi*, should become *sammā-diṭṭhi*, it should become *yathā-bhūta ñāṇa-dassana suvisuddhaṃ ahoṣi*. That is his teaching. Simply accepting the teaching of Buddha at the devotional level or at the intellectual level cannot liberate us. It is only the direct experience which will liberate us.

Philosophical beliefs or dogmas are not going to help. However correct a belief may be, if one just depends on one's belief, this alone will not help. One must experience the truth. Direct experience of the truth will make it *sammā-diṭṭhi*. Otherwise, it will just remain a philosophical belief and every philosophical belief is a bondage. A Buddha becomes a Buddha because he understands how these philosophies create

bondages for people. He himself came out of all these bondages and then gave the path, which is free from such bondages. His only goal was to get rid of the suffering of all beings.

Every person has the illness of mental defilements. Each person is afflicted by the illness of ignorantly generating defilements. When one experiences a pleasant sensation, however slight, one develops craving: "I want more of it, I want more of it." When one experiences an unpleasant sensation, however slight, one develops aversion: "I don't want this, I don't want this." One generates craving for the pleasant and aversion for the unpleasant and loses the balance of the mind, loses equanimity, loses peace of mind and loses happiness. This is the illness.

One is freed from craving, from aversion and from the ignorance of the truth within when one understands the truth—a pleasant sensation has arisen, and simultaneously, craving has arisen in the mind; an unpleasant sensation has arisen, and simultaneously, aversion has arisen in the mind. When one develops this awareness, ignorance is being eradicated.

However pleasant the sensation, it is not eternal; however unpleasant the sensation, it is not eternal. It arises and sooner or later passes away. The entire field of mind and matter is impermanent, transient, inconstant, changing. This is not mere philosophy, it is experiential truth. As long as we are in this impermanent, transient, changing field, we are in the field of suffering. How to go beyond this field?

The Buddha taught the technique to go beyond this field of mind and matter. Every wise energetic person can walk on the path and get liberated from all sorrows. Vipassana, the great meditation technique of India, arises from time to time. It is rediscovered by a perfectly self-enlightened Buddha (*sammāsambuddha*) and is again lost after some time. It is rediscovered and lost again and again.

About 2500 years ago, Gotama the Buddha rediscovered the technique of Vipassana and taught it to the people of India. Within 500 years, it was lost in India but fortunately the neighbouring country of Myanmar preserved it in its pristine purity. Now, 2500 years after the Buddha, Vipassana has returned to India and intelligent people here have readily accepted it. From India, it has spread throughout the world and people everywhere are accepting it.

Every doctor should practise Vipassana themselves and become proficient in it. Then they will find that their therapy will be very successful, very beneficial, very rewarding.

May all beings be happy! ☺

NEW VIPASSANA CENTRE IN KONDAPUR

The centre consists of ten acres in a predominantly rural agricultural setting surrounded mostly by farms on either side and forest area inhabited by some rare species of birds and beautiful peacocks. It is situated in Kondapur, Medak district, about 69 kms from Hyderabad Railway Station and 6 kms off the Hyderabad-Mumbai Highway. Goenkaji has named the centre *Dhamma Koṇḍañña* (after Koṇḍañña, one of the first five disciples of the Buddha).

On 7 August 2005, the first one-day course was conducted here. 130 old students participated in this course. Since then, one-day courses are being conducted every Sunday in a temporary Dhamma hall, which can accommodate 50 meditators.

The total construction cost to build a meditation centre for 100 meditators is estimated at Rs. 1.3 crore (13 million) including main Dhamma Hall, three small halls, pagoda, AT residences, residences for 100 students, kitchen and dining halls, office block and residences for Dhamma servers. For more information, contact: A. Harish Nath, cell phone: 93462-51537 and Sarveshwar: 93940-08438

FIRST VIPASSANA CENTRE IN AFRICA

Dhamma Pataākā (Flag of Dhamma) is the first Vipassana Centre to be established in Africa. Located in 7.5 hectares of land with abundant trees and water, the centre rests amid a mountain range that has its impressive peak Audenberg as the rear view of the property. The site was originally a holiday resort known as Rustig (meaning peaceful in Afrikaans).

Dhamma Pataākā is 130 km from Cape Town, Western Cape Province, just off the N1 Cape Town-Johannesburg highway, and 7 km up a tarred road from Worcester, a medium-sized town with excellent infrastructure and necessary facilities.

With 12 chalets, a large farmhouse as the Dhamma Hall, two residences for teachers, Dhamma servers and segregated dining halls, *Dhamma Pataākā* can accommodate around 60 students. Long term plans include increasing this number to about 100 meditators. The first ten-day course was conducted here in March 2005.

Dhamma Pataākā, (Rustig) Brandwacht, Worcester, 6850, PO Box 1771, Worcester 6849, South Africa.

Tel: [27] (23) 347 5446; Email: info@pataka.dhamma.org
Website: <http://www.pataka.dhamma.org> Contact: Ms. Shanti Mather, Tel: [27] (21) 761 2608; Fax: [27] (23) 347 5411;

LONG COURSE CENTRE IN MYANMAR

Twenty-two acres of land have been donated for development of a long course centre in Myanmar. The centre is in a very quiet location, within easy reach of Yangon and Bago. It has several large cashew trees. A brook runs through the property in the monsoon. Goenkaji has named it *Dhamma Nidhi* (Treasure of Dhamma).

GOENKAJI'S DISCOURSES ON TELEVISION

India: A new series of Hindi discourses by Goenkaji is being telecast daily at about 9:40 am on Aastha TV channel.

USA: Aastha will be telecasting Goenkaji's discourses at 6 pm EST (Monday to Friday) on the WORLDDIRECT platform of DIRECTV on channel no. 2005.

Zee TV: Daily, 4:30 am (IST). Please confirm exact timings.

VIPASSANA NEWSLETTER ON THE WEBSITE

<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/NewslettersHindi/index.html>

<http://www.vri.dhamma.org/newsletters/index.html>

CHILDREN'S COURSES IN MUMBAI

Date	Venue	Age	Registration
18 Dec	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	15 & 16 Dec
25 Dec	Matunga	10-12 years	22 & 23 Dec
08 Jan	Mulund	10-12 years	5 & 6 Jan
08 Jan	Ulhasnagar	10-12 years	5 & 6 Jan
15 Jan	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	12 & 13 Jan
22 Jan	JNPT	13-16 years	19 & 20 Jan
29 Jan	Matunga	10-12 years	26 & 27 Jan
05 Feb	South Mumbai	10-12 years	2 & 3 Feb
12 Feb	Ulhasnagar	13-16 years	9 & 10 Feb
12 Feb	Andheri	13-16 years	9 & 10 Feb
19 Feb	Ghatkopar	10-12 years	16 & 17 Feb
05 Mar	South Mumbai	13-16 years	2 & 3 March
19 Mar	Ghatkopar	13-16 years	16 & 17 March
26 Mar	JNPT	10-12 years	23 & 24 March

Course Timing: 8:30 am to 2:30 pm. **Registration:** 11 am to 1 pm.
Course Venues: **Andheri:** Dada Saheb Gaikwad Sansthan, Babasaheb Ambedkar Marg, RTO Corner, Four Bungalows, Andheri (W), Tel:2510-1096, 2516-2505 **Matunga:** Amulakh Amirchand High School, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai Road, New SNTD College, King's Circle, Matunga (CR), Tel: 2510-1096, 2516-2505. **Ulhasnagar:** Guru Nanak High School, Kurla Camp, Ulhasnagar-4. Tel: (0251) 252-2693. **JNPT Vipassana Center:** JNPT Township, Trainee Hostel Bldg, Sector 3, Sheva Taluka, Uran, Navi Mumbai. 98923-87145, 98218-08488, 2747-2554. **South Mumbai:** Times of India Bldg., Opp CST Station. For registration and information call Tel 23081622 **Ghatkopar:** SNTD School, New Building, Cama Lane, Ghatkopar West, opp Vidyut

Society, Mumbai 400086, Tel: 25101096, 25162505 **Dhamma Saritā:** Jivan Sandhya Mangal Sansthan, near Khadavli station -Tel: 25101096, 25162505 NB *Please bring cushion. *Please register on the specified phone numbers. If you are unable to attend after registration, please inform in advance. *Please arrive on time for the course. (To serve children's courses in Mumbai, call 98200-22990.)

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Acāryas:

Mr. Ratilal & Mrs. Chanchal Savla, *Mumbai*

To serve GCC countries including UAE, Oman and Bahrain and Dhamma Vāhinī, Titwala, near Mumbai

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Teachers:

Mr. K. R. Lakshmappa, *Bangalore*

IN MEMORIAM

Mr. N. H. Parikh, Vipassana Teacher passed away peacefully in Mumbai. He was among the first assistant teachers appointed by Goenkaji. He served Dhamma in various capacities for many years and made a significant contribution to the spread of Vipassana.

For the past few years he was mostly confined to his house due to his advanced age and ill-health. On 23 November 2005, he passed away peacefully at his residence.

He is survived by his wife Mrs Kausalyaben who is also a Vipassana Teacher.

May he be happy, peaceful and liberated.

DHAMMA DOHAS

*Kitane dina yoñ hī gae, karate vāda vivāda;
 Avasara āyā dharama kā, cākha dharama kā svāda.*

So many days have passed in discussions and debates;
 The time has come for Dhamma;
 taste the savor of Dhamma.

*Duralabha jīvana manuṣa kā, duralabha dharama milāpa;
 Dhanya bhāga! donoñ mile, dūra karen bhava tāpa.*

Rare is human life, rare to encounter the Dhamma;
 We are fortunate to have both;
 let us banish the torment of becoming.

*With much metta,
 A Vipassana meditator*

*Jīvana sārā kho diyā, grantha padhanta-padhanta;
 Tote mainā kī taraha, nāma raṭanta-raṭanta.*

All your life is wasted in reading book after book;
 like a parrot or mynah that repeats names by rote.

*Jīvana sārā kho diyā, karate buddhi-vilāsa;
 Buddhi-vilāsoñ se bhalā kisakī bujhatī pyāsa?*

All of life is wasted in playing intellectual games;
 By intellectual games whose thirst has been quenched?

With best compliments from

MOTILAL BANARSIDASS

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 LIFE SUBSCRIPTION: RS 500 (U.S. \$100 OUTSIDE INDIA) BY BANK DRAFT, PAYABLE AT IGATPURI IN FAVOUR OF VRI.

Edited and published by R. P. Yadav for VRI, Igatpuri 422 403 and printed at Akshar Chitra Press, 69B-Road, Satpur, Nashik 422 007.

15 December 2005

Posted at Igatpuri, Dist. Nashik

Posting Day: *Purnima* of every month

POSTAL CLAUSE NO. 232 REG. NO. 49916/90
 LICENSED TO POST WITHOUT PREPAYMENT OF POSTAGE - LICENCE NUMBER - AR/NSK/WP-13
 POSTAL REG. NO. AR/NSK 39/2003-2005

PRINTED MATTER

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Dist. Nashik, Maharashtra, India.

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