

“namo tassabhagavato arahato sammāsambudhassa”

NIBBĀNAGAMINIPATIPADA
WAY OF PRACTICE LEADING TO NIBBĀNA

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"Monks, I (should) say that only the monk who is obedient (easy to be admonished), paying proper respect, regard and honour to the *Dhamma*, is truly an obedient monk (easy to be admonished). So, you must exert yourselves, considering that only the monk who pays proper respect, regard and honour to the *Dhamma* can (will) be an obedient monk (easy to be admonished).

"Monks, there are five ways by which others may speak to you , namely:-

- 1 (a) At a proper time, or
(b) At an improper time: or
- 2 (a) Truly, or
(b) Untruly (falsely); or
- 3 (a) gently = politely, or
(b) Harshly ; or
- 4 (a) Reasonably, or
(b) Unreasonably; or
- 5 (a) Having loving-kindness, or
(b) offensively.

"Monks, others may speak to you by (one of) these ways.

"Monks, you must practise thus, when spoken by others to you:- Our mind will not change. We will not speak the vulgar speech. We will live with loving-kindness, wishing the others' welfare, not having offensive (aggressive) mind. We will live, radiating (our) loving-kindness to him who speaks thus. And we will live, radiating (our) unlimited loving-kindness to all beings, thus "May they be free from dangers and sufferings."

"Monks, for example, suppose (that) a man, taking hold of a hoe and a basket, may say, "I will make this earth empty." He digs the earth, saying 'Be (it) not earth! Be not earth," and spread it here and there, spit and urinate here and there. Monks, what do you think of it? Can that man make the earth empty?" asked the *Buddha*

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Monks replied, "No sir, Blessed One. It is impossible." When the *Buddha* asked, " Why is it impossible?", the monks replied, "Blessed One, as this earth is too thick, and unlimited in breadth and length, it is not easy to make that earth empty, and it is just painful for that man".

"Monks, in the same way there are five ways of speech (as stated above) by which others may speak to you. When others speak to you by (one of) these five ways, you must practise thus, "Our mind will not change. We will not speak the vulgar speech. We will live with loving-kindness, wishing others' welfare, not having offensive mind. We will live radiating (our) loving-kindness to him who speaks thus. And we will live, radiating (our) loving-kindness to all beings, thus; - "May they be free from dangers and sufferings". [Just as the man who takes hold of a hoe

and basket cannot make the earth empty, so the mind full of loving-kindness of the monk (who practises or enters the *Jhānic Mettā*, unlimitedly radiated to all beings) cannot be changed by the speech of one who speaks by these (above-said) five ways.]

"Monks, for example, suppose (that) a man, taking the liquid of lac, or any liquid, yellow or brown or reddish, may say, "I will paint a figure and make it appear in this sky". Monks, how do you think of it? Can that man paint a figure and make it appear in this sky?," asked the *Buddha*.

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The monks replied, "No sir, Blessed One. It is impossible." When the *Buddha* asked "Why is it impossible?" the monks replied, "Blessed One, this sky is formless, and not a visible thing. It is not easy to paint a figure and make it appear. It is just weary and painful for that man."

"Monks, in the same way..."

[It is meant that the speech spoken by '*vacana.patha*'= these (above-said) five ways is like the impossibility to paint in the sky a figure with the multi- coloured liquid, and the mind of the monk who practises (enters) the *Jhānic Mettā* that cannot be changed by such kind of speech is like this sky. So live practicing (entering) the *Jhānic Mettā*"]

"Monks! for example, suppose a man, taking a fire-brand red-burning with the straws, may say:- "With this red-burning fire-brand, I will burn (heat) the River *Ganges* and the whole environment." Monks, how do you think of it? Can that man burn (heat) the river *Ganges* and the whole environment with the red-burning fire brand made of straw?"- thus the *Buddha* asked.

The monks replied, "No sir, Blessed One, it is impossible." When the *Buddha* asked, "Why is it impossible?" the monks replied, "The river *Ganges* is very deep, very broad and unlimited. So it is not easy to burn (heat) the river *Ganges* and the environment with the red-burning fire-brand made of straw. It is just painful for that man".

"Monks, in the same way ..."

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"Monks, take another example. Suppose there is a bag made of the cat's skin, with the inner and outer sides well kneaded (trampled) and so soft like the cotton that it makes no sound 'Kywi, Kywi'. Then a man, taking a stick or a potsherd (shard), may say, the bag made of the cat's skin thoroughly trampled (kneaded) and so soft, will be sounded (made sound?) by me with the stick or the potsherd (shard)". Monks, how do you think of it? Can the bag made of the cat's skin, thoroughly trampled and so soft like the cotton be sounded (made sound?) 'Kywi, Kywi, by that man, with the stick or potsherd?"- thus the *Buddha* asked.

The monks replied, "No sir, Blessed One, it is impossible. When the *Buddha* asked, "Why is it impossible?" the monks replied, "This is the bag made of the cat's skin, thoroughly trampled and so soft like the cotton. So, that bag, made of the cat's skin, thorough trampled and

so soft like the cotton, cannot easily be sounded (made sound?) 'Kywi, Kywi', by that man, with a stick or a potsherd. It is just weary and painful for that man".

"Monks, in the same way ..."

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"Monks, the evil-minded thieves (robbers) may saw your bodily limbs, big and small, with a double-edged saw. In sawing (cutting with a saw), too, one who offends (him who saws oneself) is not the one who follows and practises my (the *Buddha's*) exhortation (admonition) on account of that offence. Monks, in sawing (cutting with a saw), too, you must practise, thus:- "My mind will not change (be corrupt). I will not speak the vulgar speech. We will live, radiating. (my) loving-kindness to him who speaks thus. And we will live, radiating (my) unlimited loving-kindness to all beings, thus, "May they be free from dangers and sufferings".

"Monks, (you) always bear in mind this admonition illustrated by the 'simile of saw'. Monks, ... have you heard of those unbearable ways of speech, big and small?" (asked the *Buddha*). (The monks replied):-"No, we haven't, sir, Blessed one". (The *Buddha* continued)" Monks, therefore you always bear in mind this admonition illustrated by the 'simile of saw'. This admonition (advice) will be for your welfare and happiness for your welfare and happiness for long." The *Buddha* thus preached (delivered) this sermon. The monks listened to and received (accepted) this sermon with great delight and satisfaction. (M-1-172-181: *Kakacūpama. Sutta*).

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Makkha-Palāsa (Detraction- Malice)

In connection with '*Dosa*' (hatred), *Makkha* (detraction) and *Palāsa* (malice), too, should be understood of them, '*Makkha*' means 'a kind of, *Dosa* (hatred) or ungratefulness (ingratitude) that erases (reduces) others' credit (honour, reputation). A being or a man may have received the kind services done by (his) parents, teachers, and friends, especially by the parents who take care of and nourish their baby (child) from childhood till grown-up. Most of the persons do not know and erase the kind services done by those benefactors, and become ungrateful by erasing those kind services, saying- "He does no kind service to me".

Some of them are not only ungrateful, but erase the benefactor's kind service, and such a man is commonly said to be an ungrateful one, '*Mitta.dubbi*', who offends his own friend (benefactor).

In one past existence, the Bodhisat was a white elephant, who served (attended on) his old blind mother. A hunter, the would-be Rev. *Devadatta*, was crying (weeping) wandering astray for seven days, in the *Himalyan*-forest. The Bodhisat placed him on his back and carried him to the road leading to the place where the human beings lived. But the hunter reported the news (matter) about the white elephant to the king, who sent the hunter and the elephant-trainers to capture the white elephant. The white elephant was captured. (*Jātaka*-A-4-91).

The service (favour) done by others is an obligation like a debt. Although one has not done a service in return yet, one should (must) be grateful, recognizing the benefactor, and one day when one finds an opportunity, one should whole-heartedly do a service in return. The

ancient wise men not only as a human being but also as an animal had done a service in return. In one past existence, the Bodhisat was a parrot, who was one day caught (entrapped) in the snare (noose), while going about (resorting) in the field of a **Brahman** in **Magadha**. The Bodhisat parrot ate the grains in the field, and took also the cars of corn when returning home. He was captured by the field-watcher by the order of the field-owner Brahman, to whom he was carried. When the Brahman asked the reason of taking the ears of corn, the Bodhisat explained to the latter that he did so in order to 1- repay the old debt, 2- to lend the new debt, and 3-to deposit a pot of gold.

1- "to pay the old debt" means "to do a service in return for his being brought up in his youthfulness by his parents".

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2- "To lend the new debt" means "to bring up his unfledged children who, he hopes, will one day serve (attend on) him in return by his children."

3- "To deposit a pot of gold" means "to give charity by serving the old and feeble parrots, and to deposit the gold-pot of charity which will follow him through the cycle of existences.

When the Bodhisat, parrot explained these noble things, which are absent (not present) even in some men, the Brahmin was very much satisfied and so allowed him to take the ears of corn as many as he wished. (*Jātaka*.A.4. 276-281)

The favour of the teacher

The step-mother **Gotamī** gave (donated) to the **Buddha** a pair of yellow robes prepared (made) by herself. The robes let be given (donated) to the **Sangha** by the **Buddha**. Then Rev. **Ānanda** requested the **Buddha** to accept the robes donated by the step-mother **Gotamī**, who greatly favoured the Bodhisat, by feeding (nourishing) and bringing him up since the death of **Mahā-Māyā** (the Bodhisats own mother). Then the **Buddha** explained the incomparable favours (virtues) of the teacher who leads a pupil (a being) to the stage of Ariyāship, as follows-

"**Ānanda**, this word is true, **Ānanda**, depending on the (his) teacher, the pupil takes refuge in the **Buddha**, in the **Dhamma** and in the **Sangha**. **Ānanda**, I do not say that it is a good service in return done by the pupil to his teacher, by means of saluting (worshipping), welcoming and respecting him with the folded hands, and by giving him the robes, alms-food, dwelling and medicine (fourfold requisites).

"**Ānanda**, depending on the (his) teacher, the pupil refrains (abstains) from killing, taking what is not given (stealing), adultery, telling lies and taking the intoxicating drinks (and drugs). **Ānanda**, I do not say that it is not a good service in return done by the pupil to his teacher, by means of saluting, ...

"*Ānanda*, depending on the (his) teacher, the pupil is endowed with (possessed of) the unshakable and firm faith (confidence) in the *Buddha*, in the tenfold supramundane *Dhammas*
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(states), namely, fourfold Paths, fourfold fruitions, *Nibbāna* and the (other) *Dhamma*-groups, in the *Sangha* (order) of *Ariyās*, and endowed with the fivefold precepts loved and esteemed by the *Ariyās*. *Ānanda*, I do not say that it is a good service in return done by the pupil to his teacher, by means of saluting ...

"*Ānanda*, depending on the (his) teacher, the pupil has no doubt in the Truth of Suffering, in the Truth of Cause of Suffering in the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nibbāna*) and in the Truth of the Path Leading to *Nibbāna*. *Ānanda*, I do not say that it is a good service in return done by the pupil to his teacher, by means of saluting, ...

(M- 3- 297; *Dakkhina-vibhanga sutta*). [pali quotations ...]

A good (suitable) service in return cannot be done by the pupil to the (his) teacher who favours his pupil, by means of '*Dhammānuggaha*' that is, by teaching the *Dhamma* to his pupil who (there by) comes to realize the four Noble Truths, even by means of giving (the teacher) the four requisites of immeasurable (unlimited) amount that fills up the whole universe. The *Dhammānuggaha* that the teacher favours his pupil who, due to the teacher's favour, realizes the four Noble Truths surpasses-hundred, thousand, hundred-thousand times-the '*Āmisānuggaha*' that the pupil gives service in turn to the (his) teacher by means of the four requisites of unlimited amount.

Depending on the teacher, if the pupil attains the '*Catusacca-Sammāditthi. ñāna*' (the wisdom that realizes truly the four Noble Truths) up to the *Arahatta*-Fruition,

- 1- When he becomes the Stream-winner, he is free from (falling into) the four woeful states;
- 2- When he becomes the Once- returner, he has the chance to be return only once in the abode of human beings;
- 3- When he becomes the Non-returner, he will not return to the abodes of sensuality and attain to *Parinibbāna* in the abode of Brahma-gods;

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- 4- When he becomes an *Arahat*, he will never be reborn in any of the 31 abodes and totally be free from fearful dangers of rebirth, old age, disease and death.

These are the greatest and the best benefits favoured by the teacher. Any true virtuous man should never erase such a teacher's favours. A man who sits and sleeps under the tree should never break its branches. He who offends a true friend (benefactor) is really a wretch.

"*Yassa rukkhassa chāyāya, nisideyya sayeyya vā; Na tassa sākhambhañjeyya, mitta. dubbho hi pāpako*" (*Jātaka*-2-300; *Khu*-V-221-299).

***Palāsa* (Malice or Spite)**

'*Palāsa*' means 'a kind of anger (*Dosa*) willing to emulate (rival). It is a kind of rivalling (competing), saying "there is no difference between him and me", though knowing that he is better or higher than (Superior to) oneself in all respects- in morality, concentration and knowledge, in wealth, beauty and race (caste), in cleverness, strength and ability, (which do not exist in oneself). If (however) one speaks in rivalry, thinking (assuming) that one has all those qualities (virtues), it is not (called) '*Palāsa*'.

There was a village, half a *Yojana* for away, from the *Jetavana* monastery. There are many kinds of 'ticket food' and alms-food given at both bright and dark halves of a month, given (by the people) in that village. In that village, there lived a man called 'block-head' who put the monks and novices to shame by asking them the (difficult) questions. That 'block-head' put to shame by asking the (difficult) questions to the monks and novices who were going for alms-food the ticket-food, and the food given fortnightly and eating (taking having) the eatables and drinkable. The monks and novices, being afraid of that 'block-head,' did not go to that village for those kinds of food.

Then, one day a certain monk went to that village in order to tame (subdue) that 'block-head'. That 'block-head', running towards that monk, said;- "Monk, answer my question". The monk, postponing the time.. until he finished eating the gruel, sweeping the dining-hall and taking (receiving) the 'ticket-food-- , made (let) the latter take hold of his alms-bowl while going to and coming 'back (returning) from the village throughout the way (journey). Then he stood at a proper place, putting the folded robe on his shoulder and taking the alms-bowl from the latter (block-head). There the 'block-head' asked (demanded) the monk to answer his question. Then the monk, placing his alms-bowl at a suitable place and saying 'I will answer your question', felled him (down) on the ground by beating up his whole body, as if making his bones broken, and put the lumps of excrement into his mouth. Then he threatened the 'block-head' not to ask any question to the monks coming to that village from now onwards, saying:- "Know (Remember) what I will do to you, if you ask any question to the monks (whom you meet with)", and then departed. Since then the 'block-head' ran away when seeing the monks.

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That news reached the *Buddha*'s ear, who narrated a memorable past story (as follows):-

"In the past, when the people living in the countries of *Anga* and *Magadha*, went to each other's country, one day they were at an early time going on a journey together, after drinking liquors near a lake drinking liquors near a lake on the *Anga-Magadha* border, by their bullock-carts. At that time, the 'block-head,' who gave troubles to the monks by asking them (difficult) questions, had got further past existence as a coprophagi, which ate excrement. That coprophagi, getting (smelling) the smell of excrement and coming to that place, drank the liquor left by those people and got drunk. Then he ascended the heap of wet excrement, when the wet excrement

sank (lowered) he said (cried) boastingly (boastfully):- "This heap of excrement is unable to bear (uphold) me." At that very moment, an elephant in rut came (arrived) there and departed, as being disgusted with the smell of excrement. Then when he saw the elephant turning away (round), he thought that the elephant ran away, being afraid of himself, and so he invited the latter to combat with himself.

Then the elephant said to the coprophagi:- "Friend, I will not kill you either by my feet, or tusks, nor trunk, but by the lump of my excrement: (Let) you be dead by my excrement".

So saying, he discharged excrement on the coprophagi and then urine also on it, and thereby he made it dead on that very spot. Afterwards, he entered the forest, making the sound like that of a crane. This is an ancient example of ruin due to anger (*Dosa*) of one who vies with a superior (matchless) one.

(*Jātaka*-A-2-192-194 *Gūthapāna Jātaka*)