

A Manual of Religious Heritage

Sāsana Dāyajja Dīpanī

Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D.Litt.



Translated by
U Tin Shwe

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Edited by
Bhikkhu Pesala

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Editor's Foreword

The late Venerable Ledi Sayādaw lived during the time of the British occupation of Burma in an era when long journeys were often made by ferries. While on such long journeys he used the opportunity to write a number of articles.

This short summary of his discourses given during his twelve day visit to Akyab was completed during his journey back to Rangoon, on the sea-voyage around the Burmese coast. The date of it is uncertain, as the only copy I have gives its date as after his demise in 1923.

I will be pleased to hear from any scholars who know more about the Venerable Sayādaw's life and works.

Bhikkhu Pesala
October 2021

Translator's Dedication

Heartfelt thanks to:

U Sumanābhivaṃsa, Mahā Ledi Nayapyan Sayādaw who copied this manual from stone inscriptions, and

U Sajjana (Dvipiṭakakovidha) Rangoon who pointed out the original sources of Pāli Texts and Commentaries.

Rangoon,
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(Tin Shwe)

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Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa

There are three discourses on the heritage of the Buddhist religion (*sāsana*). One was delivered by Venerable Mahā Moggaliputtatissa, on the four ways of using the bhikkhus' requisites; a second is concerned with inherited use (*dāyajja-paribhoga*); the third is the Dhammadāyāda Sutta.

According to Venerable Moggaliputtatissa, even though one piles four requisites up to the highest point and offers them for the welfare of the Buddhist religion one is only a donor of property. One is not an heir of the Buddhist religion in any way.

The person who offers his or her son to be ordained as a novice (*sāmaṇera*) or a monk (*bhikkhu*) in the Saṅgha is an heir of the Buddhist religion according to the Commentaries. In conformity with the Subcommentaries, one who gives their son to be ordained in the Saṅgha in honour of the Buddhist religion is an heir of the Buddhist religion. This means one that becomes a relative of the Buddhist religion — the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha.

How does one become a relative? In the world, if one's son is married to another's daughter, both parents become relatives because of their offspring's marriage. Similarly, making one's son to be a sāmaṇera or bhikkhu is honouring him to be the son of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. On account of their son, the parents become the relatives of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha.

The word, 'relative' must be noted according to the discourse:

*“Ārogya-paramā lābhā,
Santuṭṭhī paramaṃ dhanam
Vissāsaparamā ñāti,
Nibbānam paramaṃ sukham.”*

“Health is the highest gain,
Contentment is the greatest treasure,
A trustworthy friend is the best relative,
Nibbāna is the supreme bliss.” (Dhp v 204)

Among relatives, everybody wants to see the benefit and welfare of each other. Help, consideration, trust, and loving-kindness in welfare and misery are the main factors in relationships.

Here is the meaning of that verse. In the world, there are various gains of gold, silver, wealth, and so on. Freedom from ailments and diseases is the highest gain. Why? One suffering from ailments and diseases cannot enjoy any pleasure even though he gets a hundred thousand gold-coins. Even if he is the Universal Monarch of four great continents, he would not be able to enjoy the universal pleasures.

Through health one can enjoy the internal pleasure of the body without a bit of wealth. He can conceive and carry out good, productive secular and spiritual affairs. Thus, good health, freedom from ailments and diseases is the highest gain. This is the meaning of “*Ārogya paramā lābhā* — health is the highest gain.”

Contentment (*santuṭṭhi*) is superior to the possession of gold, silver, gems, and so forth. Why? Wealth can extinguish anxiety due to desire and worry to a certain extent. People seek wealth to be free from desire and worry. However, a discontented person is not free from the burning of desire and worry even though he possesses 800 million gold-coins. He still wants more. His wealth of 800 million gold-coins cannot extinguish the flames of desire and worry that are burning in him. Moreover, wealth can add fuel to the flames that give rise to various tribulations and misdeeds.

Contentment can extinguish the burning fire of desire and worry. It can liberate one from the many and diverse troubles and wrong actions originating from desire and worry. Therefore, the wealth of contentment is superior to the wealth of gold, silver, and gems. This is the meaning of the phrase “*Santuṭṭhī paramaṃ dhaṇaṃ* — contentment is the greatest treasure.”

Even brothers are not relatives if they have no loving-kindness, consideration, or the other factors of a relative, between them. If there are disputes and malice between them, they become enemies. Even a stranger or foreigner who is endowed with the factors of friendship, etc., is a relative. Therefore, trustworthy friendship is more important than family connections regarding relationship. This is the meaning of “*Vissāsaparamā ñāti* — a trustworthy friend is the best relative.”

Pleasure is of two kinds:

1. Pleasure that is enjoyed (*vedayita-sukha*), and
2. Peace (*santi-sukha*).

Enjoyment of the luxuries of human beings, devas, and brahmās is enjoyed pleasure. Enjoyment of visible objects, audible objects, sapid objects, tangible objects and ideational objects is enjoyed pleasure.

The cessation of craving for those enjoyments is peace. Peace is superior to enjoyed pleasure, because enjoyed pleasure is rooted in craving, and tends to increase it. All the tribulations and wrong actions originating from craving are then multiplied. However, peace, the cessation of craving, gives freedom from tribulations and wrong actions.

Of human pleasures, the royal luxury of a Universal Monarch who rules over the four continents is supreme. That royal luxury is to the liking of craving. It is attractive to a man who has craving. It is unattractive to the man who has no craving. It is a mass of burdens and dangers for him. Crows and vultures are attracted to putrid carcasses. The carcasses of dogs and corpses of human beings are attractive to crows and vultures that have that kind of craving. The putrid is agreeable to them. To good people who do not have that kind of craving, they appear ghastly and repulsive, but due to their perverse craving, crows and vultures look for putrid carcasses and corpses. They are happy when they find them. Lacking perverse craving, ordinary people do not want to see putrid carcasses and corpses. They are not happy if they find them.

To those without craving, the luxuries of the Universal Monarch are similar to putrid carcasses. Those pleasures of the six celestial planes of devas, Sakka, and brahmās are the same. Though those luxuries are desirable to those who have craving, they are undesirable to those who have no craving.

In this way, the eye is useful to one who has craving for visible objects. It is agreeable. To those who have no craving for visible objects, the eye is useless. The ear is useful to one who has craving for audible objects. The nose is useful to one who has craving for odorous objects. The tongue is useful to one who has craving for sapid objects. The body is useful to one who has craving for tangible objects. Mind-consciousness is useful to one who has craving for ideational objects.

The enjoyed pleasures of those who have craving can increase it. The serene pleasure of those who are devoid of craving can liberate them from all sorts of tribulations and suffering. Therefore, the serene pleasure of nibbāna is the best of all pleasures. This is the meaning of “*Nibbānaṃ paramaṃ sukhaṃ* — nibbāna is the supreme bliss.”

The verse of that discourse should be noted and so it is mentioned here. However, “A trustworthy friend is the best relative” is the main thing concerning the heritage of the Buddhist religion. Ordination of one’s own son to be a sāmaṇera amounts to one’s relationship with the Buddhist religion according to the meaning of trustworthy (*vissāsa*). This is the good deed of relationship with the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the disciples such

as Venerable Sāriputta, Venerable Moggallāna, Venerable Ānanda, Venerable Anuruddha, and Venerable Mahā Kassapa including the Noble Ones (*ariyaśaṅgha*) and the ordained Śaṅgha or conventional Śaṅgha (*samuttisaṅgha*).

For that kind of relationship, the parents of a novice (*sāmaṇera*) or bhikkhu become the relatives and intimate associates of the Buddhist religion. Thus, they become the heirs of the Buddhist religion according to the Subcommentaries.

Advantage of Being Heirs to the Buddhist Religion

It is good to be familiar and close to the Buddhist religion by means of confidence and loving-kindness. As the result of that meritorious deed, one will be reborn in regions where the Buddhist religion is well-developed and prosperous. On encountering the Buddhist religion, one can readily have firm faith in it. These two special benefits can be obtained without any prayer. Beyond the time of the Buddhist religion, one can meet a Bodhisatta, future Solitary Buddha, noble and trustworthy disciples, men, devas and hermits. One can associate with good people. One will be inclined to become an ascetic or a bhikkhu. These will also be fulfilled without any prayer.

Two Kinds of Heirs

Among the heirs of the Buddhist religion, there are bad and good heirs, just like the worldly bad heirs and good heirs. Since they lack true respect for the Buddha, Dhamma, Śaṅgha and Buddhist religion, some people cannot even keep five precepts. They are bad heirs. They will not be able to enjoy the heritage. Those who are fully equipped with the five precepts and the factors of a devoted disciple are good heirs. They will be able to enjoy the said benefits without prayer.

In accordance with the texts and Commentaries, one becomes an heir of the Buddhist religion by honouring one's own son to join the Śaṅgha. Making sons and grandsons of others to join the Śaṅgha is also tantamount to being an heir of the Buddhist religion. This fact should be noted with confidence. Bad or good heirs are to be differentiated and noted in compliance with the above-mentioned exposition. This is the discourse on the heritage of Buddhist religion concerning lay people delivered by the noble Arahant, Venerable Moggaliputtatissa.

The Heritage of Bhikkhus

The bhikkhus' heritage of the Buddhist religion is mentioned in Commentaries concerning four kinds of consumption. They are:

1. Use as a thief (*theyya-paribhoga*),
2. Use as a debtor (*iṇa-paribhoga*),
3. Use as an heir (*dāyajja-paribhoga*), and
4. Use as an owner (*sāmi-paribhoga*). (M.ii.308, Vism i.41)

Use as a Thief

Not being a bhikkhu, a person of defective morality accepts and consumes, like a virtuous bhikkhu, the requisites donated by devotees out of confidence. It is theft by fraud, and is called '*theyya-paribhoga*.' It is totally different from heritage.

Use as a Debtor

Without reflection, the use of requisites by a bhikkhu of pristine morality, free from offence of defeat is identical to use as a debtor. Therefore, it is called indebted use. The indebted user is always oppressed by the burden of debt. Similarly, a bhikkhu who uses requisites without reflecting properly is oppressed by the burden of rebirth in lower realms or inferior results in the next existence.

Use as an Heir

The ordinary bhikkhu who uses requisites with proper reflection is called a good heir. His use should be included in "use as an heir (*dāyajja-paribhoga*)."

Reflection (*paccavekkhaṇa*) is the method briefly mentioned in the Pāsārāsi Sutta.¹ A hunter laid traps made of animal's tails to catch forest deer. The traps were covered by fresh, green grass. Not seeing the traps, foolish deer come and eat the grass. Their legs are caught in the traps and they are killed by the hunter. However, clever deer avoid the traps, eat the grass, and are safe from the danger of the hunter.

In this simile, the murderers called five sorts of Māra are akin to the hunter. Craving is identical to the hunter's trap. The four requisites of almsfood, robes, dwellings, and medicine are like the fresh, green grass. The renounced state of a bhikkhu resembles the big forest, free from traps. Bhikkhus who carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Buddhist religion are similar to the deer.

¹ M.i.160, also known as the Ariyapariyesanā Sutta, Majjhimanikāya, Sutta 26.

Living in the forest free from traps, deer have to come for food near the traps. In the same way, bhikkhus live in the forest of renunciation free from apparent craving, but they have to come out of the said forest to accept requisites that invite many and various kinds of greed and craving. Like the foolish deer that are caught in the traps and killed by the hunter, the bhikkhus who lack the knowledge and wisdom of reflection are caught in the trap of craving, and are executed by Māra.

Without the knowledge and wisdom of reflection, why are bhikkhus caught in the trapped by craving? After study of scriptures, bhikkhus should practise the four customs of the Noble Ones for the whole life. However, they are far from these good customs and are attached to the four requisites.

Use as an Owner

The four customs of the Noble Ones (*ariyāvamsa*) are:

1. Contentment with any robe (clothing)
2. Contentment with any dwelling (shelter)
3. Contentment with any almsfood, and
4. Delighting in the practice of insight. (D.iii.188)

Contentment with robes is the acceptance of enough robes, but not of extra robes. Possessing this contentment, the bhikkhus will not be in the hands of people. Otherwise, the bhikkhus will die at the hands of the donors of good robes.

Contentment with food and dwelling is also the acceptance of enough food and a monastery for one's own use, and non-acceptance of extra food and shelter. The result of discontent with almsfood and monastery should be known in the same way.

Being far from the enjoyment of mental development, they are caught by sloth, torpor, indolence, and indulgence in sleeping, talking, and socialising. This is the loss of being entrapped because of the absence of wisdom and knowledge of reflection.

The bhikkhus who are equipped with knowledge and wisdom of reflection resemble clever forest deer. Undertaking the four practices of the Noble Ones firmly, they are not trapped by the donors of four requisites: almsfood, robes, dwellings, and medicines, even in youth. Like birds of the forest, they have the noble quality of light livelihood. Finding delight in their primary duty of mental development, they are liberated from the clutches of Māra.

What are knowledge and wisdom of reflection? There is the trap of craving that likes good quality robes in abundance. Not indulging that craving, a bhikkhu should reflect as follows: “I can be free from people if I were not wearing robes. However, I cannot be free from robes. Without robes, I’ll be suffering from severe cold, heat, mosquitoes, gnats, wind, sun, snakes, and scorpions. I will be embarrassed if some parts of my body are not covered with robes. To remove these troubles, I cannot be free from robes.”

How will a bhikkhu accept and wear robes with wise reflection? Suppose, a donor comes and offers a bhikkhu three sets of robes made of rough cotton, fine cotton, and silk. The bhikkhu should reflect with knowledge like this. “Rough cotton robes are sufficient for me. Fine cotton robes, and silk robes are not needed. I should not accept those best quality robes. They are enjoyed by craving for abundance. If I accept the best quality robes, I will be trapped by craving. Craving that enjoys abundance will develop. I will be entrapped by those who can donate the best quality robes. I will die at the hands of Māra.” This is far-sighted and wise reflection.

In connection with robes, soiled and discarded robes (*paṃsukūla*) are free from any trap. Resisting craving for the good in abundance, one should accept a monastery also with wise and far-sighted reflection in accordance with the Pāli text. Using trees and bushes as a dwelling is free from trap. Almsfood that is collected by wandering on foot from door to door is free from traps.

Acceptance and use of the four requisites with this wise and far-sighted reflection exempt a bhikkhu from traps. He is endowed with the virtue of light livelihood. He is free from indebted consumption (*iṇa-paribhoga*). His use of the four requisite is use as an heir (*dāyajja-paribhoga*). What is use as an heir? It is the usage similar to inherited consumption. Consumption of one’s heritage is free from the burden of debt. There is no impediment regarding others. A bhikkhu can live at his own free will.

This is the discourse of inheritance concerning both laymen and bhikkhus:

“*Dhammadāyādā me, bhikkhave, bhavatha, mā āmisadāyādā.*
Atthi me tumhesu anukampā — ‘Kinti me sāvakā
dhammadāyādā bhaveyyuṃ, no āmisadāyādā’ti.” (M.i.15)

Bhikkhave = Monks; **tumhe** = all of you; **bhavatha** = be; **Dhammadāyādā** = heirs of the teaching; **me** = my. **Mā bhavatha** = Don’t be; **āmisadāyādā** = heirs of material things. **Kinti** = How; **me** = my; **sāvakā** = disciples; **bhaveyyuṃ** = will be; **Dhammadāyādā** = heirs of the teaching; **no bhaveyyuṃ** = will not be;

āmisadāyadā = heirs of material things; **iti** = thus; me = I, the Buddha; **atthi** = have; **anukampā** = (far-sighted) compassion; **tumhesu** = for all of you.

Here is the explanation in detail. There are the heritage of the teaching and the heritage of material things left by the Buddha. Of those two, the three practices of morality, concentration, and wisdom are the heritage of the teaching. Almsfood, robes, dwellings, and medicine such as ghee, butter, honey, and molasses¹ are the heritage of material requisites.

These four requisites appear in Buddhist religion because of the glory and power of the Buddha. Therefore, they are the heritage from the Buddha even though they are donated by the people. Of those two kinds of heritage, the heritage of material things is a cause for some to drown in the ocean of saṃsāra if they are not clever. It is an inferior heritage. Being the cause of liberation from saṃsāra, the heritage of the teaching is superior. Hence, the Buddha urged the bhikkhus “Monks, be heirs of my teaching — don’t be heirs of material things.”

So why are four requisites allowed in the Vinaya? Wishing for lay people to accumulate merits, the Buddha allows them. Will future generations of bhikkhus be drowned due to that grant?

The Buddha delivered the Dhammadāyadā Sutta,² Pāsāsari Sutta,³ Ariyavaṃsa Sutta,⁴ Paccavekkhaṇā Sutta,⁵ and Lābhāsakkāra Saṃyutta,⁶ to warn bhikkhus not to be drowned in the endless cycle of existences (*saṃsāra*) on account of the four requisites. Those who have not found and heard of those Suttanta Discourses and Vinaya Treatises will be drowned in saṃsāra for four requisites. They forbid and interfere with those monks who avoid the meat of oxen and buffaloes.⁷

¹ There are medicines allowed for the bhikkhus that can be stored and consumed for a period of seven days. They are ghee (*sappi*), butter (*navanītaṃ*), oil (*telāṃ*), honey (*madhu*), and molasses (*phanītaṃ*). In Burma, the lay devotees offer, as a medicinal requisite, “*cātumadhu*” (pr. satumadhu), a concoction of the four sweet things. This is allowable for a bhikkhu who is sick, not for a bhikkhu who is not sick. “Sick” means that he is famished due to being unable to obtain or eat suitable solid food at the right time (between dawn and midday). A bhikkhu who is not sick can take sweet drinks to sustain himself (editor’s note).

² M.i.12. ³ M.i.160. ⁴ A.ii.27. ⁵ Ud.65. ⁶ S.ii.225.

⁷ This may seem out of place unless you know that the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw was someone who abstained from eating beef. Reading between the lines, it seems that other bhikkhus may have criticised him for this practice. See his [Gonasurā Dipani](#) on cows and intoxicants. Although meat (including beef) is allowable for bhikkhus, a bhikkhu is not allowed to ask for meat for his own consumption, unless he is sick according to the training rule on superior food (*Paṇītabhojanasikkhāpādaṃ*). If invited to ask for whatever he needs, a bhikkhu can ask for meat, but a contented bhikkhu will not ask for superior food such as meat unless he needs it. Some bhikkhus are greedy for meals with meat, and are discontented when vegetarian meals are offered (editor’s note).

Detailed Exposition of the Dhamma

Here is the detailed exposition of Dhamma that is of three kinds:

1. Study (*pariyatti*),
2. Practice (*paṭipatti*), and
3. Realisation (*paṭivedha*).

The Tipiṭaka, which contains five volumes of the Vinaya, thirty-seven volumes of Suttanta and seven volumes of Abhidhamma, plus the Commentaries, is the religious heritage of study. The threefold practice of mundane morality, concentration, and wisdom is the religious heritage of practice. The nine supramundane states — the four paths (*magga*), the four fruits (*phala*), and nibbāna — are the religious heritage of realisation.

The heirs are bhikkhus, bhikkhuṇīs, devout laymen and devout lay women. Among them, bhikkhus and bhikkhuṇīs are denominated by an announcement (*ñatti*) and formal act of the Saṅgha (*kammavācā*). Conventionally, they are called the sons and daughters of the Buddha. Devout laymen and devout lay women have undertaken the three refuges in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha are worthy sons and daughters of the Buddha. Those four kinds of person are heirs to the heritage of Dhamma of the Buddha.

The Vinaya Piṭaka is the Dhamma heritage that concerns bhikkhus and bhikkhuṇīs. It should be read by devout laymen and lay women who have firm confidence and sound wisdom. The Dhamma heritage of Suttanta and Abhidhamma concerns all four types of disciples.

Regarding practice, the 900 million moral precepts in the Vinaya Piṭaka are the heritage of practice that concerns only bhikkhus. The five moral precepts and eight moral precepts in the Suttanta and Abhidhamma are the heritage of practice that concern lay disciples. The ten moral precepts concern both lay disciples and novices (*sāmaṇeras*).

The religious heritage of concentration and wisdom concern all four classes of disciples. The religious heritage of concentration consists of mental development using ten kinds of meditation devices (*kaṣiṇa*), ten contemplations on corpses (*asubha*), ten recollections (*anussati*), four divine abidings (*brahmavihāra*), four formless contemplations (*arūpa*), one perception of the loathsomeness of food (*āhārepaṭikulasaññā*), and analysis of the four primary elements (*catudhātuvavatthāna*).

There are five kinds of concentration as first *jhāna*, second *jhāna*, third *jhāna*, fourth *jhāna*, and fifth *jhāna*. The contemplations of in-breath or out-breath, bones, and the noble qualities of the Buddha are concerned with the first *jhāna*. The religious heritage of wisdom starts from analysis of the

five aggregates, mental and physical phenomena, in accordance with the seven volumes of the Abhidhamma. Analysis of three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and not-self, the ten stages of insight-knowledge,¹ the four paths and the four fruits are the religious heritage of wisdom. The aforementioned three types of religious heritage — study, practice, and realisation — concern all four classes of disciples, *viz.*, bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, laymen and laywomen.

During the Buddha's lifetime, five hundred devotees led by the millionaire Citta² and five hundred princes led by Prince Hatthaka Āḷāvaka³ are the worthy sons of the Buddha as they inherited the threefold Dhamma heritage well. Five hundred ladies-in-waiting led by Queen Sāmāvati and the same number of ladies led by Queen Mallikā are the worthy daughters of the Buddha as they received the threefold dhamma heritage well. King Kosala asked the Buddha to send a bhikkhu every day to his palace to teach the Dhamma. Therefore, Venerable Ānanda went to his palace and taught 500 ladies-in-waiting led by Queen Mallikā.⁴

The maid Khujjuttarā⁵ had to go daily to the monastery of the Buddha and learn the Dhamma from a bhikkhu. Then, she entered the palace of King Udena and taught 500 courtiers led by Queen Sāmāvati every day. Of fifteen volumes of Khuddakanikāya, Itivuttaka is the volume taught by Khujjuttarā and learnt by 500 ladies-in-waiting led by Queen Sāmāvati.

King Mindon, who founded his capital city at Mandalay and who was the patron of the Fifth Buddhist Council, let his courtiers led by Queen Setkyā Devī study Dhamma in the palace from learned young Sayādaws of great fame. The Compendium of Abhidhamma (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha), the introduction to Conditional Relations (Paṭṭhānapaccaya-niddesa) and the Discourse on Setting up Mindfulness (Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta) were learnt by all members of the palace. Some lords and governors of towns and villages as well as some courtiers could enjoy and appreciate the Pāli texts together with their Commentaries and Subcommentaries without the help of word-for-word Burmese translations (*nissaya*). Queen Setkyā Devī was conversant with the whole Tipiṭaka.

¹ Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Course of Practice (*paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*): 1) Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*), 2) Awareness of Fearfulness (*bhayaṭupaṭṭhāna-ñāṇa*), 3) Knowledge of Misery (*ādinava-ñāṇa*), 4) Knowledge of Disgust (*nibbidā-ñāṇa*), 5) Knowledge of Desire for Deliverance (*muñcitu-kamyatā-ñāṇa*), 6) Knowledge of Re-observation (*paṭisaṅkhānupassana-ñāṇa*), 7) Knowledge of Equanimity about Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*), 8) Insight Leading to emergence (*vuṭṭhānagāmini-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), 9) Knowledge of Adaptation (*anuloma-ñāṇa*), and 10) Maturity Knowledge (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*). (editor's note).

² Dh.p.A.ii.74.

³ AA.i.388.

⁴ Viv.158.

⁵ AA.i.418.

There were thousands of men like the millionaire Citta and women like Uttarā, the lady of Veḷukaṇḍa City who attained five kinds of *jhāna* in connection with concentration. Sāvatti had a population of seventy five million. According to treatises, there were fifty-five million Noble Ones. Similarly, in Rājagaha and Vesāli there were more Noble Ones than ordinary worldlings. At that time, the middle country of India (*Majjhimadesa*), was full of Noble Ones and worldlings did not dare to enter the assembly hall.

Now, men and women are heirs, sons and daughters of the Buddha, but only a few can inherit the heritage of scriptural studies. The heirs of practice are fewer, and the heritage of realisation is not thought to be attained.¹

Of worldly heritage and Dhamma heritage, the heirlooms of farm, field, land, gold, silver, and jewels are called worldly heritage. Dhamma heritage is the threefold heritage that Buddhists receive from the Buddha. For the people of other faiths, there is only the worldly heritage, not Dhamma heritage. There are two kinds of heritage for the Buddhists.

Of those two, worldly heritage can be enjoyed by looking after it well. Otherwise, it can be destroyed within a day or night by five kinds of enemy (flood, fire, bad government officials, and thieves.) The Dhamma heritage can confer three benefits — human pleasure, celestial luxury and *nibbāna* — from this present existence until the attainment of *parinibbāna*. The heritage of study confers the benefits of being clever, wise, and intelligent in successive lives. It can also ensure rebirth in wealthy and powerful families in successive existences. The heritage of realisation confers liberation from ruinous and repeated sufferings. It is not associated with five kinds of enemy.

The worldly heritage has been enjoyed countless times in former existences. It will also be enjoyed repeatedly before the attainment of *parinibbāna*. However, the Dhamma heritage can only be enjoyed on the auspicious occasion of the Buddhist religion. Those who receive the Dhamma heritage will even once gain the prospect of benefits in the beginningless and endless cycle of birth and death. Therefore, good and wise people should try to gain the Dhamma heritage that is beneficial up to the attainment of *parinibbāna* more than worldly heritage that is enjoyed only for a single life.

There are many kinds of heirs in the world. Some heirs cannot enjoy their heritage fully, some enjoy only a little. Although children of a millionaire who owned eight hundred million gold coins, some heirs do not get anything, while others receive only a little. Some obtain their deserved shares, but some are disinherited as they do not obey the words of their parents.

¹ I am not sure what this refers to. In Burma nowadays the belief is that there are still Noble Ones who have attained realisation (editor's note).

The Simile of the Millionaire

There was a great multi-millionaire. He owned eighty-four thousand good farms and fields. He had also buried many pots of silver put in five-cubit-deep holes, many pots of gold in ten-cubit-deep holes and many pots of jewels in fifteen-cubit-deep holes. He had many sons and daughters as heirs. Some of them were very lazy and heedless. The inherited farms and fields remained without cultivation. The silver pots, gold pots, and pots of jewels were not dug up. They did not even know where they were hidden and buried. They became poorer and poorer.

Some toiled and cultivated some of their inherited lands. The rest became forest again. Enough gold and silver was dug up for their daily livelihood. The remainder was lost as they could not remember the signs shown where it was buried. They had to live from hand to mouth.

Some heirs cultivated all their inherited farms and fields. All pots of silver, gold, and jewels were taken out. They became millionaires.

In the simile, the Buddha is the great millionaire. Buddhist men and women are like the millionaire's children. The 84,000 sections of Dhamma are the heritage of study, which are similar to the good farms and fields. Mundane morality, concentration, and wisdom are the heritage of practice, which are equivalent to the holes where the silver pots are buried. The four paths, the four fruits, and nibbāna are the heritage of realisation, which are comparable to the holes in which the jewel pots are hidden.

Men and women who grow old eating and wearing without studying the Pāli texts and without practising morality, concentration, and wisdom are like the first group of sons and daughters. They will have to endure repeatedly lack of wisdom, power, and glory. They will be reborn repeatedly in ruinous and unhappy existences.

Those men and women with some knowledge of scripture and superficial practice of morality, concentration, and wisdom are like the second group of children. In successive lives, they will become ordinary working class and middle class human beings. They are free from the hells and woeful existences.

Those men and women with scriptural knowledge and genuine practice of morality, concentration, and wisdom as well as the ardent desire for realisation the path, its fruition, and nibbāna are like the third group of children. In successive existences, they will be endowed with reason, intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom.

In connection with the heritage of study, someone who learns two verses is better than another who learns only one verse. He will be endowed with

more reason, intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom in coming existences. Similarly, the person who learns four verses is better than the person who learns only two verses. He will be endowed with better reason, intelligence, knowledge, and wisdom than the latter. Thus the potential in future existences of those Buddhists who have great desire and those who have little desire for the Dhamma heritage can be understood.

The Dhamma heritage is of two kinds as uncertain (*aniyama*), and certain (*niyama*). Some men and women are attached to the five aggregates, material qualities and mental phenomena, as a self, a person, or a being, by personality-view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*). For them, scriptural study, morality, and concentration accumulated in this present life are uncertain Dhamma heritage. They are lost at death.

Some men and women have constant practice of insight, and personality view has ceased totally. To them, their Dhamma heritage is always certain and constant Dhamma heritage for successive lives and world cycles from this present life until the attainment of nibbāna without remainder (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*). Dhamma learnt in this life is not lost. Five precepts, and eight precepts, or eight precepts with right livelihood, are not lost either. Like the millionaire Anāthapiṇḍika and the female lay disciple Visākhā, they attain nibbāna without remainder and progress to successively higher planes of existence. Therefore, all Buddhists should try not to be drowned again after enjoying the status of heirs of the Omniscient Buddha, but should try to gain their full share of certain Dhamma heritage. The Commentary mentions two kinds of Dhamma heritage as imitated (*pariyāya*), and genuine (*nippariyāya*). The nine supramundane states (the four paths, four fruits, and nibbāna) are the genuine Dhamma heritage.

The independent donation for the attainment of nibbāna and mundane enlightenment factors are imitation Dhamma heritage.

“Here ends, at 1 pm, before the arrival at the port of Rangoon, the discourse written on the sea-voyage from Akyab to Rangoon (in 1935)¹ in compliance with the request of Saya U Po Min from the discourse that he delivered for 12 days in Akyab (Sittwe).”

¹ Since the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw died in 1923, this must be an error. The Burmese books always give the dates in the Burmese Era. I assume that in converting this to the Christian Era, that a miscalculation was made, or perhaps I have made one. The distance around the coast of Burma from Akyab (Sittwe) to Rangoon is considerable, over 500 km, so quite long enough for the Sayādaw to write this brief article (editor’s note).

