

A Manual of the Path Factors

Maggaṅga Dīpaṇī



Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

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Editor's Foreword

This edition is based on that translated by U Saw Tun Teik, BA, BI, published as *Dhammadāna* by Mr Stanley Davidson in 1984.

I have removed many Pāli words, and simplified the language to make it easier to read for those who are not Pāli scholars.

The teachings of the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw given here are extremely valuable. If one could acquire a thorough grasp of the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path as explained here, it would be sufficient to remove any wrong views about the Dhamma.

If the readers could go one step further, and apply the advice given herein, they would begin the practice of insight meditation in earnest, and thus acquire priceless seeds of right understanding that would stand them in good stead for the realisation of nibbāna in this very life, or at least during the *sāsana* of Metteyya Buddha.

This latest edition has been updated to fix some errors and broken links.

Bhikkhu Pesala
October 2021

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Maggaṅga Dīpanī

A Manual of the Path Factors

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa
Veneration to the Blessed One, the Worthy One,
the Fully Enlightened Buddha

A Summary of the Noble Eightfold Path

1. Right View (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*)
2. Right Thought (*Sammā-saṅkappa*)
3. Right Speech (*Sammā-vācā*)
4. Right Action (*Sammā-kammantā*)
5. Right Livelihood (*Sammā-ājīva*)
6. Right Effort (*Sammā-vāyāma*)
7. Right Mindfulness (*Sammā-sati*)
8. Right Concentration (*Sammā-samādhi*).

1. Right View

There Are Three Kinds of Right View (*sammā-diṭṭhi*):—

- i. *Kammassakatā Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View Regarding Kamma. Only two things, wholesome and unwholesome actions performed by all beings, are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences.
- ii. *Dasavatthuka Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View in Ten Matters.
- iii. *Catusacca Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View of the Four Truths.

Right View Regarding Kamma

“Sabbe sattā kammassakā kammadāyādā, kammayonī, kammabandhū, kammappaṭisaraṇā, yaṃ kammaṃ karissanti kalyāṇaṃ vā pāpakaṃ vā tassa dāyādā bhavissanti.”

Sabbe sattā kammassakā: Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of all beings are their own properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences.

Kammadāyādā: Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of all beings are their inherited properties that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences.

Kammayonī: Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of beings are the origin of their wanderings in many existences.

Kammabandhū: Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of beings are their relatives and associates that always accompany them wherever they may wander in many existences.

Kammappaṭisaraṇā: Only the wholesome and unwholesome actions of beings are their real refuge wherever they may wander in many existences.

Yaṃ kammaṃ karissanti kalyāṇaṃ vā pāpakaṃ vā tassa dāyādā bhavissanti: If bodily, verbal, and mental actions are performed, whether wholesome or unwholesome, they will inherit that kamma throughout many existences.

Right View in Ten Matters

“Athidinnaṃ, atthiyiṭṭhaṃ, atthi huttaṃ, atthi sukata dukkaṭāṇaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, atthi mātā, atthi pitā, atthi sattā opaṭṭikā, atthi ayaṃ loko, atthi paroloko, atthi loke samaṇa brāhmaṇā samaggatā sammā-ṭaṭṭipannā ye imaṅca lokaṃ paraṅca lokaṃ sayamaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedenti.”

1. *Atthi dinnaṃ*: There really exists almsgiving as cause and its result.
2. *Atthi yiṭṭhaṃ*: There really exists offering on a large scale as cause and its result.
3. *Atthi huttaṃ*: There really exists offering on a small scale as cause and its result.
4. *Atthi sukata dukkaṭāṇaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko*: There really exist wholesome and unwholesome actions as causes and their results.
5. *Atthi mātā*: There really exist the good and the evil deeds done to one's mother as causes and their results.
6. *Atthi pitā*: There really exist the good and the evil deeds done to one's father as causes and their results.
7. *Atthi sattā opaṭṭikā*: There really exist beings who are born by apparitional rebirth such as beings in purgatory, *petas*, *devas*, Sakkas and Brahmā who cannot ordinarily be seen by men.
8. *Atthi ayaṃ loko*: There really exists this visible world.
9. *Atthi paro loko*: There really exist other worlds where one may arise after death. Or, there really exists this human world and the other worlds (four lower worlds, six *deva* worlds and twenty Brahmā worlds). Or, there really exists this universe consisting of the human world, four lower worlds, six *deva* worlds and twenty Brahmā worlds and other worlds, which are infinite in all eight directions.

10. *Atthi loke samaṇabrāhmaṇā samaggaṭā sammā-paṭipannā ye imaṅca lokaṃ paraṅca lokaṃ sayamaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedenti*: There really exist, in this human world, recluses and priests who correctly practise the Dhamma, and having realised this world and the other worlds through higher knowledge, impart that knowledge to others.

Right View of the Four Truths

1. *Dukkha-ñāṇaṃ*: Penetrative insight into the Truth of Suffering.
2. *Dukkha-samudaye-ñāṇaṃ*: Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Origin of Suffering.
3. *Dukkha-nirodhe-ñāṇaṃ*: Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering.
4. *Dukkha-nirodhagāminipaṭipadāya-ñāṇaṃ*: Penetrative insight into the Truth of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering.

2. Right Thought

There Are Three Kinds of Right Thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*):—

- i. *Nekkhamma-saṅkappa*: Right thought free from greed and sensuous desire, aimed at escaping from the round of rebirths.
- ii. *Abyāpāda-saṅkappa*: Right thought for the welfare of all living beings.
- iii. *Avihimsa-saṅkappa*: Right thought for the non-injury of all living beings.

3. Right Speech

There Are Four Kinds of Right Speech (*sammā-vācā*):—

- i. *Musāvādā-virati*: Refraining from telling lies.
- ii. *Pisuṇavācā-virati*: Refraining from back-biting and calumny.
- iii. *Pharusavācā-virati*: Refraining from using abusive language, words, or speech hurtful to others.
- iv. *Samphappalāpa-virati*: Refraining from frivolous talk such as telling legends and fables, that is fruitless for this world and the next.

4. Right Action

There Are Three Kinds of Right Action (*sammā-kammantā*):—

- i. *Pāṇātipātā-virati*: Refraining from killing and injuring living beings.
- ii. *Adinnādāna-virati*: Refraining from taking property which is not given.
- iii. *Kāmesumicchācārā-virati*: Refraining from unlawful sexual intercourse with those who are still in the care of parents or guardians, and from taking intoxicants.

5. Right Livelihood

There Are Four Kinds of Right Livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*):—

- i. *Duccarita-micchā-ājīva-virati*: In the case of laity, refraining from wrong livelihood by means of immoral physical and verbal actions.
- ii. *Anesana-micchā-ājīva-virati*: In the case of monks and recluses, refraining from wrong livelihood, e.g. by means of giving fruits and flowers to laymen to win their affection.
- iii. *Kuhanādi-micchā-ājīva-virati*: In the case of monks and recluses, refraining from trickery and deception by means of working wonders.
- iv. *Tiracchāna vijjā micchā-ājīva virati*: In the case of monks and recluses, refraining from wrong livelihood, e.g. by means of performing base arts, such as reading signs and omens, which are against the rules and practices of the Order.

6. Right Effort

There Are Four Kinds of Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*):—

- i. *Anuppannānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ anuppādāya vāyāmo*: Striving in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path so that those vices that have never arisen during the present existence may not arise even for a moment in future existences.
- ii. *Uppannānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pahānāya vāyāmo*: Striving in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path so that those vices that have already arisen or are arising during the present existence may be dispelled and may not arise even for a moment in future existences.
- iii. *Anuppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ uppādāya vāyāmo*: Striving in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path so that the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya dhammas*) that have never arisen during the present existence may arise here and now.
- iv. *Uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ bhīyyo bhāvāya vāyāmo*: Striving in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path so that virtues such as morality that have already arisen and are arising during the present existence may develop continuously until the attainment of final nibbāna.

7. Right Mindfulness

There Are Four Kinds of Right Mindfulness (*sammā-sati*):—

- i. *Kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*: Application of mindfulness to the contemplation of physical phenomena, such as respiration.

- ii. *Vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*: Application of mindfulness to the contemplation of feelings, such as pain and pleasure.
- iii. *Cittānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*: Application of mindfulness to the contemplation of thoughts, such as lustful or angry thoughts.
- iv. *Dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhānaṃ*: Application of mindfulness to the contemplation of mind-objects, such as sensual desire.

8. Right Concentration

There Are Four Kinds of Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi*):—

1. *Paṭhamajjhāna samādhi*: Concentration of the first *jhāna* produced by fixing one's attention on one of the objects of tranquillity meditation (*samatha*) such as *kaṣiṇa*.¹
2. *Dutiyajjhāna samādhi*: Concentration of the second *jhāna*.
3. *Tatiyajjhāna samādhi*: Concentration of the third *jhāna*.
4. *Catutthajjhāna samādhi*: Concentration of the fourth *jhāna*.

The Exposition of Right View

The Exposition of Three Kinds of Right View:—

- i. *Kammassakatā Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View Regarding Kamma.
- ii. *Dasavatthuka Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View in Ten Matters.
- iii. *Catusacca Sammā-diṭṭhi*: Right View of the Four Truths.

Exposition of Right View Regarding Kamma

“*Sabbe sattā kammassakā, kammadāyādā, kammayoni, kammabandhū kammappaṭisaraṇā yaṃ kammaṃ karissanti kalyāṇaṃ vā pāpakaṃ vā tassa dāyādā bhavissanti.*”

1. *Sabbe sattā kammassakā*: Properties such as elephants, horses, vehicles, cattle, fields, buildings, gold, silver, jewels, etc., can be said to belong to us in the present existence. However, when we pass away they do not accompany us beyond death. They are like properties that we borrow for some time. They are liable to destruction during the present existence. As such property does not accompany beings to new existences, it cannot truly be said to belong to them. The Buddha therefore said, “*Sabbe sattā kammassakā* — All beings are owners of their actions.” The only property that accompanies all beings is their own volitional actions.

¹ There are ten *kaṣiṇas* (meditation devices). See Visuddhimagga (*The Path of Purification*), trans. By Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, BPS, Kandy 1975.

Only the mental, verbal, and physical volitional actions of beings always accompany them in this and future existences. They are not destroyed by fire, water, thieves, etc.

Herein, physical action means all movements of such parts of the body as hands and legs, etc. Verbal action means all verbal expressions made by means of the mouth, tongue, and throat. Mental action means the functioning of the mind. These physical, verbal, and mental actions are known as the three kammās.

Beings perform these three kammās during all waking hours. All their work, great or small, is performed by means of these three kammās. These three kammās become inert when a person is asleep. In the case of a dead person, the three kammās cease to function as far as that body is concerned. This is how the three kammās operate in all beings.

These three kammās have two aspects: three good kammās, and three bad kammās. The three good kammās are of two kinds: that ripening during the present existence, and that ripening during future existences. The three bad kammās are of two kinds: that ripening in this existence, and that ripening in future existences.

Analysis of Wholesome and Unwholesome Kamma

There Are Ten Kinds of Immoral Conduct:—

1. Injuring and killing living beings (*pāṇātipāta*),
2. Taking or destroying animate and inanimate properties which are not given (*adinnādāna*),
3. Committing sexual misconduct (*kāmesumicchācārā*),
4. Telling lies (*musāvāda*),
5. Backbiting and slander (*pisuṇavācā*),
6. Using abusive language (*pharusavācā*),
7. Taking part in frivolous conversation (*samphappalāpa*),
8. Covetousness (*abhijjhā*),
9. Malevolence (*byāpāda*),
10. Wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*).

All those physical, verbal, and mental actions that are free from these ten kinds of immoral conduct, including all kinds of livelihood, acquiring wealth and seeking knowledge, are good volitional actions that have to be performed for benefits in this very existence.

All those physical, verbal, and mental actions that involve these ten kinds of immoral conduct, including all kinds of livelihood, are bad volitional actions which are performed for this very existence.

TWO KINDS OF KAMMA FOR FUTURE EXISTENCES

The types of kamma performed in this present existence, physical, verbal, and mental, with a view to ripening in future existences, are also divided into two kinds: Three wholesome (*kusala*) kammas and three unwholesome (*akusala*) kammas.

All these physical, verbal, and mental kamma that are free from the ten kinds of immoral conduct including almsgiving, fast-day observance, conduct, practising meditation, taking refuge in and paying respects to the Three Gems: Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, are known as wholesome kamma done in this present life with a view to ripening in future existences and to being reborn in a good abode.

If any one of the ten kinds of immoral conduct be performed, whether for ripening in this existence or in the future, that kamma leads one to the lower planes in future existences. So it is known as unwholesome kamma ripening in future existence. In this way one should differentiate between the two types of kamma and contemplate all the three kinds of kammas, which are performed everywhere, on land, in water, and in the sky.

Having seen the three kammas performed in this world, we can also comprehend that all beings, on land, in water, and in the sky, have been performing these three kammas in their past existences during endless world-cycles and will also perform them in the future. Like this universe, there are in the four directions, infinite universes in which all beings in water, on land, and in the sky are performing these three kammas.

Having discerned this, it is self-evident that all beings live by these three kammas done by themselves. They enjoy happiness by virtue of these three kammas. By performing the three wholesome kammas they enjoy various beneficial results, and by performing the three unwholesome kammas they encounter various kinds of misery and suffering. The three kammas are their own property, which can never be destroyed by fire, water, thieves, robbers, and so forth. Though one may own nothing, not even a single coin, he can achieve happiness if he has mental kamma in the form of knowledge and wisdom. So the Buddha declared: "All beings have kamma as their own property."

THE RESULT OF PRESENT KAMMA

Those who wish to acquire worldly gains, such as wealth, governmental standing, and honour in this life, can achieve their wish if they exert themselves to acquire education and knowledge. If it be that such worldly gains can be had without acquiring education and knowledge and by merely worshipping God, the believers in God need not perform physical, verbal, and mental karmas such as trading, farming, learning arts and sciences. Instead, they need to perform only the act of worshipping God. However, it is not so. Like Buddhists, the Christians, Moslems, and others, are performing the three kinds of kamma, and so they acquire worldly gains. It is not God, but the three kinds of kamma that gave these to them.

THE RESULT OF PAST KAMMA

Just as we can see that in this life worldly gains are not given by God, but are acquired by one's own kamma, similarly we can realise that beneficial results of being reborn in a wealthy family or in the *deva* world are not by virtue of worshipping God, but by virtue of past kamma such as almsgiving, observance of morality, and so forth, performed in previous existences. One who is reborn in a wealthy family becomes the owner of the riches of that family. That is, all his possessions are due to his past kamma. Here, the analogy of vegetation should be given.

The process of the formation and growth of vegetation is commonly ascribed to the seed. According to the Abhidhamma, the element of kinetic energy (*tejo*), which is known as calorificity (*utu*) is said to be the cause. The seed is nothing but the element of kinetic energy. That element of kinetic energy is the real seed.

At the beginning of the world, before the existence of seeds, vegetation grew from *tejo*. Later that vegetation produced fruits and seeds from which trees grew successively.

In the same way all beings have kamma as their seeds of becoming: wholesome kamma as almsgiving, morality, *etc.*, and unwholesome kamma as taking others' lives, *etc.*

The process of becoming as men and animals is due to the past kamma in previous existences. On account of the wholesome kamma, *etc.*, they are reborn as men and devas, and because of the unwholesome volitional kamma they are reborn in four lower worlds: hell, animal world, *peta* world, and *asurakāya* world.

Previous vegetation produces seeds from which fresh vegetation arises. Seeds produce trees, and trees produce seeds repeatedly in an eternal cycle

of seeds and trees. Similarly, beings have seeds of kamma in their previous existences. From these seeds of kamma new existences appear. Thus beings perform kamma, which in turn gives rise to new becoming repeatedly.

Trees have physical phenomena only. A tree yields many fruits from which many trees are grown. In the case of beings, they have two kinds of phenomena: physical and mental phenomena. Of these two, the mental factor is the chief. One mental factor can produce not more than one new mental factor (*i.e.* the rebirth-consciousness, *paṭisandhi-viññāṇa*). Therefore, although beings have many seeds of wholesome and unwholesome kamma in one existence, one mental factor of the previous existence, *i.e.* volition (*cetanā*) produces in the next existence only one mental factor. Since many new mental factors are not produced, one corporeality-group of the past existence gives rise to not more than one corporeality-group in the next becoming.

Earth, water, sun, moon, stars, and so forth, come into existence from the seeds of kinetic energy, which go under the name of caloricity. It is not that they were created by God. Beings such as men, animals, *etc.*, come into new successive existences because of the seeds of their past kamma performed in previous world cycles of existences. Such view is known as Right View. To hold that God creates them is wrong view. It is the wrong view of those who, not knowing fully the operative power of kamma and climate, imagine that they were created by God. Thus to help people abandon wrong view, and to rely upon kamma, knowledge, and wisdom, the Buddha said, “All beings are owners of their kamma.”

2. *Sabbe sattā kammadāyādā*: There are such things as legacies and heirs. These legacies can be called our property only before we die; but when we pass away we have to leave them behind. They do not accompany us to the next existence. They are also liable to be destroyed by fire, water, thieves and robbers before our death, or we may use them up until they are exhausted.

As for the three kinds of kamma performed by beings, they remain their property in future existences. They are never destroyed by fire, *etc.* For this reason, kamma is said to be the only property inherited by beings. Beings are sure to reap the results of their own kamma in future existences. The wholesome kamma performed by feeding animals and birds can result in a hundred happy existences. The wholesome kamma performed by feeding virtuous monks can give rise to a countless number of happy existences as a man or *deva*. Giving alms worth about a quarter of a *kyat* in this present life can yield beneficial results worth more than a thousand *kyats* in future existences. If a person kills an animal, such as a fish, fowl, or pig, he may be killed in more than a thousand future existences.

In this world, if a tiny banyan seed is planted, a big banyan tree will grow up bearing innumerable fruits in more than a thousand years. Similarly, if a mango seed or a jack-fruit seed is planted, big mango trees and big jack-fruit trees will grow and bear more than a hundred thousand fruits for many years.

Thus in the case of trees, a small seed is able to yield more than hundred thousand fruits, leaves, branches and twigs. Similarly, a seed of wholesome kamma such as almsgiving, morality, or meditation practised at one time, can yield more than a hundred thousand good results in successive future existences. A seed of unwholesome kamma by killing a living being can yield evil and painful results in numerous following existences.

Banyan seeds, mango seeds, and jack-fruit seeds may be compared to the seed of physical, verbal, and mental actions. A small seed from which arise numerous leaves, fruits, branches, and twigs may be compared to a seed of kamma that produces many effects in the following successive existences.

If a person performs one kamma, the effects always accompany him in many existences yielding good or bad results at the opportune moments. One can never get rid of that kamma, but one has to enjoy or suffer its results under appropriate circumstances. So the Buddha declared: "All beings are the heirs of their kamma."

3. *Sabbe sattā kammayoni*: there are several causes for the growth of a banyan tree: the banyan seed, the earth, and the water. Of these causes, the banyan seed is the primary cause; the earth and water are the secondary causes. In the same way, in getting wages by working as a labourer, the present kamma, *i.e.* working as a labourer, is the primary cause. The place for working, the spade, the basket and the employers who pay wages are the secondary causes.

The wholesome past kamma, *i.e.* almsgiving, morality, and so forth, which enables one to be reborn as a human being, and the unwholesome kamma by killing others, *etc.*, which cause one to be reborn as an animal, are the primary causes similar to the banyan seeds. The parents are the secondary causes, just as the earth and water are for the growth of a banyan tree.

Similarly, with regard to the present good and evil results, one's own kamma performed in the present existence with knowledge and wisdom, or otherwise, is the primary cause. So also, one's own wholesome kamma as almsgiving, morality, *etc.*, and unwholesome kamma as killing beings, performed in previous existences, are the primary causes of good and evil results. The parents are not the primary causes, nor is it anything to do with God, For this reason, the Buddha declared: "All beings are born from their kamma."

4. *Sabbe sattā kammabandhū*: There are parents, brothers, sons, relatives, teachers, and friends whom we love and rely upon, but they can be loved and relied upon only for a short period, *i.e.* before our death. However, one's own physical, verbal, and mental kamma are constant companions, which accompany us and give us happiness and prosperity in future existences. So the wholesome kamma alone is one's real relative or friend, which should be esteemed and relied upon. Therefore, the Buddha declared: "All beings have kamma as their relatives."

5. *Sabbe sattā kammappaṭisaraṇā*: In this phrase, 'refuge' means reliance upon or taking shelter for protection against troubles and dangers. Those who wish to enjoy long life have to rely on food and drink. Food and drink protect people from starvation. Starvation cannot befall those who have sufficient food and drink. Similarly, it is necessary to rely upon doctors and medicine for protection against diseases, and to rely upon weapons for protection against enemies. All kinds of refuge are resorted to for different purposes.

'Refuge' does not mean only worshipping. It also has the meaning of reliance upon and taking shelter or protection, as mentioned above. We take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, teachers and those nobler than us by paying homage to them.

A man without property will soon get into trouble. Fearing that trouble, we have to rely upon kamma by doing such work as will give us money and property. Lack of wholesome kamma will lead to the lower worlds where one has to suffer grievously. Fearing such suffering, one has to perform wholesome kamma, which can lead one to be reborn as a man or *deva* in future existences. The present kamma of working with knowledge and wisdom can save us from danger in the present life, and wholesome kamma such as almsgiving and morality can save us from the lower worlds in future.

We have to rely on the present kamma of working for avoiding dangers in this present existence. We have to rely on wholesome kamma also to avoid suffering in the lower worlds in future existences. The Buddha therefore declared: "All beings have kamma as their own refuge."

Here we should analyse several kinds of refuge. In Buddhism there are four kinds of taking refuge for the future: Taking refuge in the Buddha, taking refuge in the Dhamma, taking refuge in the Saṅgha, taking refuge in one's own wholesome kamma.

Likewise, there are four kinds of refuge for sick persons: Refuge in a chief doctor, refuge in good medicine, refuge in assistant doctors, refuge in following their directions with confidence.

Of the above-mentioned four refuges, the chief doctors and the assistants are the refuge of the patient as they are capable of prescribing good and suitable medicines for particular diseases. The medicine is the refuge of the patient in that it can cure him of his disease. The patient's sensible action in following the directions are also his refuge, as without such action on his part the other three refuges would be ineffective for the cure of the disease. So all four together are the real refuge of the patient.

Those who commit evil deeds and indulge in sensual pleasures resemble sick persons; the Buddha resembles the chief doctor who is expert in curing diseases; the monks resemble the assistant doctors; and the Dhamma resembles the medicine. The physical, verbal, and mental wholesome kamma resemble the sensible action of the patient in following the directions. So there are four kinds of refuge in Buddhism. The three refuges of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha exist only during the Buddhasāsana. They do not exist outside it. However, the refuge in wholesome kamma exists both within and outside the Buddhasāsana. We can never be free from kamma, which is operating all the time in this universe as well as in other innumerable universes.

The teaching "All beings are owners of their kamma" applies to all universes both within and outside the Buddhasāsana. This is why the refuge of kamma alone, and not the three refuges of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, is dealt with in this discourse. These are the four kinds of refuges to rely upon for wise conduct in this existence and for rebirth in happy existences in the future.

Saraṇaṃ, usually translated 'refuge', means that which can save, give support or protection. Thus food and drink are the support of beings for a long life. Medicines and a healthy diet are the support for the cure of diseases. Kings or rulers are protection against the danger of dacoits and robbers. Buildings are the refuge for living comfortably and safely. Boats and steamers are for ocean and river voyages. The earth is for support. Similarly water, fire, and air are the supports for their respective purposes. In this way there are numerous refuges in this existence. This is the exposition about the different kinds of refuge in Buddhism.

In other religions only one refuge, the refuge of God, is known. So whatever comes into existence or is destroyed is attributed to God. I shall clarify this statement.

In other religions, such as Christianity and Islam, the true meaning of refuge is not understood and the respective followers regard God as their only refuge. Since they believe only in one refuge, they take it for granted

that the appearance and disappearance of the world and beings are due to the power of God. They believe that God saves those who have faith in him by his supernatural power. With this power he can wash away all sins and evils of beings and give them eternal happiness and eternal life after death. The good and evil results of beings depend on the will of God.

They disbelieve in kamma, thinking that kamma is not the cause of such results. It is most surprising that those who are really performing kamma entirely disregard their own acts. Kamma means physical, verbal, and mental actions of practising the teachings of a particular religion. The auspicious act of baptism, worshipping and praying to God daily, obeying his commandments, *etc.*, are really kamma. These people believe that God saves only those who perform such deeds, but not those who do not do so; but they do not realise that such deeds are really kamma.

In those religions also, as in Buddhism, there are four kinds of refuge. In Buddhism they are the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, and kamma. However, in those religions they are: Refuge in God, the Commandments of God, prophets, such as Christ and Mohammed, and priests, their own kamma in the performance of religious rites and duties.

The priests and missionaries of those religions do not realise that in their religions also there are several kinds of refuge. So they regard God as their only refuge and disregard kamma. Consequently they believe that good and evil, prosperity and ruin, happiness and suffering are created only by God and are not due to any other cause. They do not know that there are various and different causes.

Is it simply by worshipping and praying to God that the poor who desire wealth can get it, or would they get it by the present kamma of working diligently as a labourer, farmer, or trader? Wealth is not usually obtained by worshipping and praying to God. On the other hand, acquisition of property by performing the present kamma is self-evident. So it is reasonable to believe that acquiring property in this life is due to the present kamma, and has nothing to do with God.

God has no power to give property to anyone. Only the present kamma can do so. If God had such power to give wealth, his faithful followers would have no occasion to perform present kamma, they would be enjoying riches given by him; and those who are not his followers would not get any property although they were diligently performing the present kamma. However, it is not so. The devout followers of God have to perform the present kamma in order to acquire wealth and property; and those who are not his followers also can acquire it, if

they wish, by performing present kamma. For this reason, the acquisition of wealth in this life is the result of the present kamma. It is not the gift of God.

Similarly, if one desires education and knowledge, one can get it by performing the present kamma of studying and learning. They cannot, as a rule, be acquired by worshipping God. If one wishes to be a government officer, one will have to study government rules and regulations. Government posts cannot, as a rule, be obtained by worshipping and praying to God. Thus we can see with our eyes that all the worldly gains are obtainable only by the power of the present kamma and not by the power of God.

The believers in God believe that by worshipping God faithfully they are freed from all their sins and evils. However, as a rule the sick are not cured by taking refuge in God only. On the other hand we can see that the present kamma of taking medicine and regulating one's diet can cure them.

How surprising it is, therefore, to maintain that one could be freed from the result of sins in the next existence by worshipping God, when even a disease such as ringworm is not usually cured by praying to God in this life. Again, since even trifling wealth cannot as a rule be acquired by merely praying to God in this life, is it not surprising to believe that just by praying to God one can go to heaven after death, where one can enjoy a life of eternal bliss!?

Having seen that wealth and happiness, not previously attained in this life, are achieved by virtue of present kamma and not by favour of God, we can fully believe that there is no other refuge than the present kamma for the acquisition of wealth and happiness in this life. Similarly, we can believe that the attainment of the higher planes of existence after death is also due to wholesome kamma. It has nothing to do with God. God cannot enable one who lacks such wholesome kamma to be reborn in a happy plane of existence. Those who have such kamma can attain the higher states of existences, even though they do not pray to God.

Various beneficial results in the next existence means either rebirth as a member of a well-to-do or ruling family, or rebirth in the *deva* and Brahmā world as a powerful *deva*, Sakka or Brahmā and so forth. Hence the Buddha declared: "All beings have kamma as their own refuge."

APPENDIX REGARDING OWNERSHIP OF KAMMA

A being has two aggregates: a material group (*rūpakkhandhā*) and a mental group (*nāmakkhandhā*). The material group consists of head, hands, legs, etc., the mental group is feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousness.

Of these two, the material group comes to dissolution once in each existence. It has different shapes or forms in each existence. As for the

mind-group, there is no break in its process. It continually arises in succession from one existence to another. Good kamma causes it to arise in successive happy existences. Wherever the mind group arises, there a new and different material group comes to be formed. Unwholesome kamma causes the mind-group to arise in lower states of existence.

Exposition of Right View in Ten Matters

1. *Atthi dinnam*: Right View that almsgiving, such as giving to dogs, fowl, birds, lay persons, bhikkhus, etc., if performed with benevolence,¹ in a previous existence, yields beneficial results in subsequent existences.

2. *Atthi yiṭṭham*: Right View that liberality, if extended with belief in past kamma and with faith in and respect for the virtuous qualities of recipients, yields beneficial results in future existences.

3. *Atthi hutam*: Right View that, gifts, even on a small scale (*āhuna, pāhuna*), if made in previous existences with good will, yields beneficial results in future existences.

4. *Atthi sukāṭa dukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko*: Right View that cruel deeds done to beings in previous existences yield bad results in subsequent existences, and that refraining from such evil acts yields beneficial results.

5. *Atthi mātā*: Right View that good and evil deeds done to one's mother yield good and evil results respectively in subsequent existences.

6. *Atthi pitā*: Right View that good and evil deeds done to one's father yield good and evil results respectively in subsequent existences.

7. *Atthi sattā opapātikā*: Right View that there really exist beings by apparitional rebirth who are invisible to human eyes. Beings by apparitional rebirth means those that do not take conception in the womb of a mother. Due to the force of their previous kamma they are born complete with the limbs and organs of the body, which will not develop further but remain as they are.

Beings of the eight great hell regions and the lesser hells, certain *petas* and *asurakāyas* inhabiting mountains, forests, and lonely islands in the ocean; certain terrestrial *devas* living in towns, villages, mountains, and forests; certain ogres, ghouls, and vampires living on lonely islands in the ocean; certain *nāgas* and *garuḷas*; *devas* inhabiting the higher regions such as sun, moon, planet, stars, and six *deva*-planes of Cātummahārājika, Tāvatiṃsa, Yāmā, etc.; Brahmā inhabiting the twenty Brahmā planes consisting of three planes of the first *jhāna*, three planes of the second *jhāna*, three

¹ This means, of course, not with the intention of raising them for slaughter, but feeding wild-fowl and birds with left-over food, rather than discarding it thoughtlessly (ed.)

planes of the third *jhāna*, seven planes of the fourth *jhāna*, and four *arūpa jhāna* planes; all these beings are known as ‘beings by apparitional rebirth.’

UNKNOWN TO OTHER RELIGIONS

Of the twenty Brahmā planes, the Brahmā of great power lives in the lowest three planes of the first *jhāna*. That Brahmā is regarded as God in other religions in which higher planes existing above those three are not known.

The sun, moon, stars, and constellations in the sky are the heavenly mansions of *devas*. By seeing these heavenly abodes one can visualise the existence of higher planes of the *devas*, Sakka, and Brahmā.

Even when men are close to these beings, they are unable to see them with their human eyes. Only when these beings make their forms visible, and then only, can men see them. They are invisible to human eyes like the God, angels, and devils in other religions.

The belief that there really exist such beings by apparitional rebirth is called right view.

8. *Atthi ayam loko*: Right View that this world is the human world, and

9. *Atthi paroloko*: Right View that the other world consists of the four lower worlds (hell, the worlds of animals, hungry ghosts, and jealous gods), the *deva* worlds, and the Brahmā worlds.

In other religions, hell, the worlds of hungry ghosts, jealous gods, and the higher *deva* and Brahmā planes are not known properly.

Another interpretation is that there are in this universe the human world, the four lower worlds, and the heavenly *deva* and Brahmā worlds, which are called this world. Similarly, to the east, west, south, and north of this universe there are infinite universes, which are called other worlds. These universes are not known in other religions.

10. *Atthi loke samaṇabrāhmaṇā samaggatā sammā-paṭipannā ye imaṇca lokaṃ paraṇca lokam sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā pavedenti*: There are higher spiritual knowledge (*abhiññā*) and omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). Monks and brahmins who exert themselves diligently in fulfilling the perfections (*pāramitā*) and practising tranquillity and insight meditation in this human world can achieve such knowledge. Individuals who have achieved such knowledge appear in this world from time to time.

Of these two kinds of knowledge, some are capable of gaining only higher knowledge and they can see with this knowledge the four lower worlds, the six *deva* worlds, and some of the Brahmā worlds, as if with their natural eye. Some are capable of achieving both higher knowledge and omniscience and

they can see clearly all of the countless beings, infinite worlds and universes. Persons who have both knowledges are called 'Buddhas.'

These two kinds of persons appear in this human world from time to time and impart their knowledge of this world and the other worlds, but it is only a Buddha who can explain the round of rebirths and existence of universes.

Three kinds of belief, namely: belief that those with higher spiritual knowledge and omniscience appear in this world from time to time, belief in them and their teachings, and belief in the existence of the other worlds, constitute right view. Those who have this right understanding entertain no doubt that the Buddha, appears only in the human world, and not in the heavenly worlds.

In other religions, where there is no such right understanding, they imagine that the all-knowers, the all-seers, the Omniscient ones appear only in the highest heavens and not in the human world.

However, there are two kinds of power: the power of kamma and the power of knowledge. In the case of kamma, the power of *jhāna* is most effective. It can cause one to arise in the highest plane as a Brahmā with a long span of life. It cannot, however, cause one to become an Omniscient Buddha. That Brahmā has no knowledge with which he can see all and know all.

Only in this human world can one work for omniscience, and only one who perseveres diligently to achieve that knowledge can become omniscient. It is only in the Buddha Dhamma that profound, sublime, and wonderful teachings exist, and it is because they belong to the sphere of knowledge and wisdom.

To strive to become a wealthy person is one way, and to acquire insight and thus become a teacher of beings is another way. To strive to become a great Brahmā is similar to striving to become a wealthy man, and to strive as a bhikkhu or hermit for acquiring insight is like striving to become a great teacher.

Another Example: birds have wings to fly about in the sky but they do not possess knowledge and wisdom like man. Men have knowledge and wisdom but they have no wings and are unable to fly about in the sky.

The wholesome kamma of *jhāna* by Brahmā and *devas* resembles the wings of parrots, crows, and vultures. The insight-knowledge and higher knowledge of the monks and recluses resembles the knowledge and wisdom of men.

BUDDHAS ARISE ONLY IN THE HUMAN WORLD

The Brahmā and the *devas* live in the highest planes of existence due to the power of *jhāna* and kamma, so they are long-lived and powerful, but they have

no insight-knowledge and omniscience so they are not able to understand the deep and profound truths. Their knowledge is confined to their own experience.

The right view that enables one to believe: 1) that the Omniscient Buddha appears only in this human world and not in higher planes of existence; 2) that only monks and brahmins who are endowed with higher knowledge and omniscience can clearly discern the condition of the kappa and universes, the beings who are running the round of *saṃsāra* and how the wholesome and unwholesome kamma operate; 3) that the teachings of those monks and brahmins in the Sutta, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma are true, is known as '*atthi loke samaṇabrāhmaṇā sammā-diṭṭhi*.'

The Buddha rejected the wrong view that God who knows all and sees all cannot appear in the human world, but only in the highest heavenly abode, and that there cannot be many gods but only one, and that God, being the highest and noblest, must be eternal and free from old age, disease, death, etc.

Detailed explanations of wrong views are given in the *Sammā-diṭṭhi Dipani* — The Manual of Right Views.

Exposition of Right View Regarding the Four Truths

Right View about the Four Truths means:—

1. Knowledge of the real suffering.
2. Knowledge of the true cause of suffering.
3. Knowledge of the cessation of suffering.
4. Knowledge of the right path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Right View of the Truth of Suffering

FRIGHTFUL SUFFERING: The eye of human-beings, gods, and Brahmā constantly oppresses and harasses those who are attached to it; so it is most frightful and is the real suffering. In the same way, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind to which human-beings, gods, and Brahmā are attached, greatly oppress and harass them. They too are most frightful and are the real suffering.

Mode of Oppression: Of these six, the eye oppresses through kammic activities, instability, and suffering. Or, it oppresses through kamma activities, burning up (*santāpa*), and instability. Or, it oppresses through rebirth, aging, and death. Or, it oppresses or harasses by developing the fires of passion, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong view, mental defilements and corruptions by stimulating evil deeds such as killing, and by producing the fires of rebirth, aging, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair.

Oppression Through Kamma Activities: Possession of the eyes of men, gods, or Brahmā is produced by good deeds done in the past life, without which only the eyes of hell beings, animals, ghosts or demons would come into being instead. Thus the eye of a higher being oppresses that being through the good kamma-activities that created the eye. These same kamma-activities oppress him in the next existence, because he has to protect and sustain them so that he will not lose them. So the eyes of a higher being oppresses him through the kamma-activities that produce suffering. So the eye of a higher being perpetually oppresses him. Because the eye of the higher being does not arise independently of kamma-activities, it is said that the kamma-activities invariably oppress the possessor throughout the beginningless round of rebirths.

Oppression Through Instability: This means oppression by liability to immediate destruction whenever there is a cause for destruction. From the time of conception there is not a single moment — even for a wink of an eye or a flash of lightning — when there is no liability to destruction. And there is always the anxiety caused by impending destruction. When actual destruction comes, the suffering that is experienced is manifold. Thus the eye of a higher being oppresses him through instability.

Oppression Through Suffering: Suffering means physical and mental pain. The pain experienced through the existence of the eyes of a hell-being, ghost, or demon is obvious. When there is mental distress through contact with repulsive objects, or physical pain, there is oppression through ill of suffering. When the eye contracts some disease or whenever there is physical or mental trouble in the preservation and protection of the eye one is oppressed by the ill of suffering. Thus the eye oppresses beings through the ill of suffering.

Oppression Through Burning: The eye, which gives so much trouble to beings, and which is a source of suffering, is an alarming fact for one who has to wander through the beginningless round of rebirths because of that eye. So it is the real source of suffering. The ear, nose, tongue, body and mind should be regarded likewise.

The knowledge that enables one to realise and understand the immense suffering inherent in any of the three realms (sensual realm, form realm, and formless realm) such as produced by the six sense bases is knowledge of right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi-ñāṇa*).

Right View of the Cause of Suffering

Throughout the round of rebirths, as long as there is attachment to the eye as: “It is mine, it is my self,” so long will its continuous oppression be

maintained. Therefore, the craving and greed that is attached to the eye is the true cause of suffering. The ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind should be regarded likewise.

This knowledge that sees and understands the true cause of suffering is knowledge of right view regarding the cause of suffering (*sammā-diṭṭhi-ñāṇa*).

Right View of the Cessation of Suffering

When, in any existence, the greed and craving connected with the eye finally ceases, the eye does not arise again; and so the oppression by the eye does not arise again. The ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind should be regarded likewise. This knowledge that sees and understands the real cessation of suffering is knowledge of the right view regarding the cessation of suffering (*sammā-diṭṭhi-ñāṇa*).

Right View of the Path to the Cessation of Suffering

When, as a result of practice of the Dhamma and development of the mind through meditation, the true nature of the eye and the oppression by the eye are realised and understood, craving connected to the eye ceases. Then it does not arise after death, and so the oppression by the eye ceases too. The ear, nose, tongue, body and mind should be regarded likewise.

This knowledge that realises and understands the path leading to the cessation of suffering is right view regarding the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*sammā-diṭṭhi-ñāṇa*).

In the matter of the Noble Eightfold Path this right understanding of the Four Truths is the most essential.

The Exposition of Right Thought

There Are Three Kinds of Right Thought:—

- i. Thoughts of Renunciation (*nekkhamma-saṅkappa*),
- ii. Thoughts of Loving-kindness (*abyāpāda-saṅkappa*),
- iii. Thoughts of Compassion (*avihiṃsa-saṅkappa*).

Thoughts of Renunciation

There is a mental state free from greed that can renounce the five sensual pleasures — pleasant sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches — and which can abandon attachment to the five groups of existence, viz. mind and matter.

Thoughts arising from such absence of greed are thoughts of renunciation (*nekkhamma-saṅkappa*).

Thoughts of Loving-kindness

There is loving-kindness for all beings, be they men or animals and the wish for their benefit and welfare. Thoughts arising from loving-kindness are *abyāpāda-saṅkappa*.

Thoughts of Compassion

Thoughts arising out of compassion and sympathy for all beings who are afflicted with suffering is *avihiṃsa-saṅkappa*.

The Exposition of Right Speech

There Are Four Types of Right Speech:–

- i. Abstinence from falsehood (*musāvāda-virati*),
- ii. Abstinence from back-biting (*piṣuṇavācā-virati*),
- iii. Abstinence from abusive speech (*pharusavācā-virati*), and
- iv. Abstinence from frivolous talk (*samphappalāpa-virati*).

Abstinence from Falsehood

Speaking untruth to make it appear as truth, and speaking truth as though it were untruth, mean speaking falsehood. Abstinence from speaking falsehood is *musāvāda-virati*.

Abstinence from Back-biting

The kind of talk that makes two friends lose confidence in and regard for each other, that creates dissension between two persons or that slanders another is back-biting. Abstinence from such back-biting is *piṣuṇavācā-virati*.

Abstinence from Abusive Speech

Speaking with anger and using abusive language regarding race, family, personal traits, occupation, etc., amounts to offensive and abusive words. Abstinence from such speech is *pharusavācā-virati*.

Abstinence from Frivolous Talk

There are certain plays and novels that are of no benefit; they are written merely for the sake of entertainment.

Attha, Dhamma, and Vinaya

Words relating to benefit (*attha*) are those that could bring long life, health, and honestly acquired wealth in this existence, and good results such as human rebirth, *etc.*, in the next. Words relating to Dhamma are those that relate to ways and means for attainment of the above-mentioned good results. Words relating to Vinaya are those that relate to the rules of conduct for laity and monks, guiding them towards the destruction of greed and hatred. Words relating to *attha*, *dhamma*, and *vinaya* are not found in all plays and novels. Narrating such plays and novels to others amounts to frivolous talk. Avoidance of such talk is *samphappalāpa-virati*. Thirty-two types of unbeneficial talk (*tiracchāna kathā* lit. 'animal talk') are included in *samphappalāpa*. See the [Appendices](#).

Those who wish to develop wisdom should not waste time indulging in such thirty-two types of talk. Those who are developing mental calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*), should know the limit even of speech associated with *attha*, *dhamma*, and *vinaya*.

The Exposition of Right Action

There Are Three Kinds of Right Action:—

- i. Abstention from Killing Living Beings (*pāṇātipātā-virati*),
- ii. Abstention from Stealing (*adinnādānā-virati*), and
- iii. Abstention from Sensual Misconduct (*kāmesumicchācārā-virati*).

Abstention for Killing Living Beings

Pāṇātipātā means intentional killing or destroying beings by physical action or verbal incitement, ranging from causing abortion, destroying eggs of lice and bugs, to killing and destroying living beings. Abstention from such deeds is *pāṇātipātā-virati*.

Abstention from Stealing

Adinnādānā means taking with the intention of stealing any animate or inanimate property in the possession of the owner, such as grass, fuel, water and so forth, without the knowledge of the owner, either by physical exertion or verbal incitement. Abstention from such deeds is *adinnādānā-virati*.

Abstention from Sensual Misconduct

Kāmesumicchācārā means improper sexual intercourse of a man with a woman, such as one protected by her parents, or intercourse of a married

woman whose husband is still alive, with another man. It also includes taking intoxicants, and gambling with cards, chess, dice, etc. Abstinence from such deeds is *kāmesumicchācārā-virati*.

The Exposition of Right Livelihood

There Are Four Kinds of Right Livelihood:—

Abstention from:—

- i. Wrong Livelihood (*duccarita-micchājīva-virati*),
- ii. Improper Livelihood (*anesana-micchājīva-virati*),
- iii. Dishonest Livelihood (*kuhanādi-micchājīva-virati*), and
- iv. Low Arts (*tiracchāna-vijjā-micchājīva-virati*).

Abstention from Wrong Livelihood

Duccarita micchājīva means earning a livelihood by committing any of the three evil bodily actions (killing, etc.) and four evil verbal actions (lying, etc.) Abstinence from such harmful modes of earning a livelihood is *duccarita-micchājīva-virati*.¹

Abstention from Improper Livelihood

Anesana-micchājīva means earning a livelihood by sages and bhikkhus acquiring requisites by any of twenty-one improper means, by giving fruits and flowers, and so forth. (See [Appendix](#)). Abstinence from such acts is *anesana-micchājīva-virati*.

Abstention from Dishonest Livelihood

There are five crooked ways of earning a livelihood: (i) *kuhana*, (ii) *lapana*, (iii) *nemittikatā*, (iv) *nippesikatā*, (v) *lābhena lābhaṃ nijigisanatā*.

- i. *Kuhana* means trickery and deception. It means fraudulently obtaining gifts and offerings by making people think that one possesses extraordinary qualities such as noble virtue, although one does not possess them.
- ii. *Lapana* means impudent talk in connection with property and gifts.
- iii. *Nemittikatā* means making gestures and hints to invite offerings.
- iv. *Nippesikatā* means harassing with words so that one is obliged to make offerings.
- v. *Lābhena lābhaṃ nijigisanatā* means giving a small gift to get a bigger one. Abstinence from such wrong modes of livelihood is *kuhanādi-micchājīva-virati*.

¹ Selling weapons, livestock, flesh, intoxicants, and poisons (Vaṇijjā Sutta, A.iii.208).

Abstention from Low Arts

As the worldly arts such as prophesying from the signs of the parts of the body, palmistry, etc., are contrary to the practice of sages and bhikkhus, they are called low arts. Earning a livelihood by means of such low arts is *tiracchāna-vijjā-micchājīva-virati*.

Abstinence from such wrongful modes of earning a livelihood is called *tiracchāna-vijjā-micchājīva-virati*. See [Appendix](#).

The Exposition of Right Effort

Of the four kinds of Right Effort, the first two actions: i.e. the two unwholesome volitional actions — one arisen (*uppanna*) and the other unarisen (*anuppanna*) — constantly cause anxiety, moral corruption, and debasement to beings. The next two, namely: the wholesome volitional actions that have arisen and that are unarisen; always give peace, purity, nobility, and progress to beings.

Of the ten kinds of evil conduct, evil conduct that has arisen or is arising is called *uppanna-akusala*. Evil conduct that has not arisen, but may arise in the future is called *anuppanna-akusala*.

Of the seven kinds of purity — 1) Purity of Morality, 2) Purity of Mind, 3) Purity of View, 4) Purity by overcoming Doubt, 5) Purity by Knowledge and Vision of the Path and non-Path, 6) Purity by Knowledge and Vision of the Course of Practice, 7) Purity by Knowledge and Vision — such purity as has arisen or is arising is called *uppanna kusala*. The purity that has never before arisen or has not yet been attained in this life is called *anuppanna-kusala*. Thus both wholesome and unwholesome actions are of two kinds: arisen, and unarisen.

The Power of the Path Factors

If the Noble Eightfold Path is practised and developed in this life, by virtue of its power, the unwholesome actions that have arisen in this life will not arise again till one attains final nibbāna. By virtue of the Noble Eightfold Path, the unwholesome actions that have never arisen before in this life, but which could have arisen in the future, will never arise again until one attains final nibbāna. By virtue of the Noble Eightfold Path, the two kinds of arisen and unarisen unwholesome actions are eradicated and brought to an end.

ESTABLISHED AS NATURAL CONDITION

Similarly, if the Noble Eightfold Path is practised and developed in this life, by virtue of its power (*niyāma*), any one of the seven kinds of purity that arises in this life becomes indestructible and constant until one attains final nibbāna. Also by virtue of the Noble Eightfold Path, the stages of purity that have never arisen before, arise in this very life.

ONE'S OWN REAL BENEFIT

For these reasons, those devout laymen and bhikkhus who are fortunate enough to encounter the Buddha's teaching should be convinced of the fact that only the practice of Right Effort in the practice and development of the Eightfold Path is for their true welfare and prosperity. Mundane affairs should be transacted only when they are absolutely necessary and unavoidable. This is the elucidation of Right Effort, which is a fundamental factor in Buddhism.

In explaining what is arisen and unarisen, one can easily understand the unwholesome as the ten kinds of evil conduct, and in the case of the wholesome as the seven kinds of purification.

EFFORT TO PREVENT UNARISEN UNWHOLESOME STATES

Practice of the Eightfold Path with the intention of preventing unwholesome actions from arising at all in this very life and the following existences, is the first kind of Right Effort.

EFFORT TO ERADICATE ARISEN UNWHOLESOME STATES

Practice of the Eightfold Path with the intention of preventing unwholesome actions that have not yet arisen, but which are liable to arise in the future, is the second kind of Right Effort.

EFFORT TO DEVELOP UNARISEN WHOLESOME STATES

Putting forth effort to practise the Noble Eightfold path to attain or realise in this very life the higher purifications that have not yet been attained, is the third kind of Right Effort.

EFFORT TO INCREASE ARISEN WHOLESOME STATES

Putting forth effort to keep the Purity of Morality such as the Five Precepts or Eight Precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, which one is observing in this very life, and to make it stable until one attains final nibbāna, is the fourth kind of Right Effort.

These are the four kinds of Right Effort which have been expounded in such a way as to help one to understand them easily. They are enumerated

as four only with reference to function. In fact, there is only one relevant dhamma, namely effort, because when one tries to achieve any one purification, the effort put forth covers the four functions automatically.

The Exposition of Right Mindfulness

The minds of beings are never steady, but are always fleeting. They cannot fix the mind steadily on any object of meditation. Since they cannot control the mind they are like mad persons. Society has no regard for mad persons, who have no control over their minds. Those who cannot control the mind to keep it steady while meditating, find that they resemble a mad person. They are aware that they cannot control the mind when they try to fix it on an object of meditation. To eliminate the unsteady and fleeting mind and to fix it steadily on an object of meditation, one has to practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna*).

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness

MINDFULNESS OF THE BODY

Kāyānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna means that one's mind is firmly tied to one's own body with the rope of Right Mindfulness. One is constantly observing and focusing one's mind on physical phenomenon such as inhaling and exhaling. When this practice has been repeated for three or four months, the unsteadiness of the mind will disappear. Then one becomes capable of concentrating one's mind constantly on one's own material phenomena, such as inhaling and exhaling, for one hour, two, three, four, five, or six hours every day. Then one has gained control of the mind to fix it on any object of meditation.

MINDFULNESS OF FEELINGS

Vedanānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna means that one's mind is firmly tied to one's own feelings with the rope of Right Mindfulness. Pleasant and unpleasant feelings are constantly arising in one's body dependent upon conditions. Repeatedly fixing the mind on these feelings will put an end to mental restlessness. Then one has gained control of the mind to fix it on any object of meditation.

MINDFULNESS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Cittānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna means that one's mind is firmly tied to one's own thoughts with the rope of Right Mindfulness. Different types of consciousness, which are associated with greed and hatred, are alternately present in one's mind-continuum dependent upon conditions. Repeatedly

fixing the mind on these thoughts will put an end to mental restlessness. Then one has gained control of the mind to fix it on any object of meditation.

MINDFULNESS OF MENTAL STATES

Dhammānupassanā Satipaṭṭhāna means that one's mind is firmly tied to one's own mental states with the rope of Right Mindfulness. Mental states such as lust, ill-will, sloth, restlessness, worry, doubt, and so forth, are alternately present in one's mind-continuum dependent upon conditions. Repeatedly fixing the mind on these mental states will put an end to mental restlessness. Then one has gained control of the mind to fix it on any object of meditation.

Bind up with the Rope: Satipaṭṭhāna means the meditative work of getting rid of the mad, deranged, hot, and burning mind that has accompanied one's life-continuum from the infinite past, by tying one's mind with the rope of mindfulness to the four aggregates, namely, material phenomena, feelings, thoughts, and mental states. One must practise for a predetermined period, so that one's mind does not wander to external objects, but is confined to the aforesaid four groups only.

This should be practised for a fixed period of two or three hours every night according to one's personal circumstances.

The Exposition of Right Concentration

Only When the Mental Restlessness Disappears

In learning how to read, one has to begin with learning the alphabet. Only after one has mastered the alphabet can higher education be acquired. Similarly, in the process of mental development, the application of mindfulness is to be practised first. Only when mindfulness is steady, and the mad and deranged mind is got rid of, can the higher stages of meditation be practised properly.

When mindfulness is steady, and one is able to keep one's mind consistently (for one, two, or three hours daily), on one's own body, one should practise tranquillity meditation (*samatha*) to attain one or other of the four *jhānas*. It is like the higher studies of the Maṅgala Sutta, Nāmakkāra, Paritta, Grammar, or Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha, which can be studied only after thoroughly mastering the alphabets.

There are twenty-five meditation objects (*kammaṭṭhāna*).

- ▶ Ten meditation devices (*kaṣiṇa*),
- ▶ Ten kinds of loathsomeness (*asubha*),

- One contemplation of the thirty-two parts of the body,
- Mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*),
- Three kinds sublime abidings (*Brahmāvihāra*): loving kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), and sympathetic joy (*muditā*).

The first *jhāna* is attained by intense practice of one of these meditation objects by gaining the three stages of initial concentration (*parikamma bhāvanā*), access-concentration (*upacāra bhāvanā*) and attainment concentration (*appanā bhāvanā*).

Meditation by the fixing mindfulness on the respiration to get rid of the mad and deranged mind also leads to the first *jhāna*.¹

This is the end of the exposition of the Noble Eightfold Path.

Three Cycles Relating to Four Kinds of Saṃsāra

During the Buddha's dispensation, if people practise and develop the Noble Eightfold Path, they can free themselves from the cycle of suffering. There are three cycles of suffering:–

1. The cycle of defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*),
2. The cycle of volitional actions (*kamma-vaṭṭa*), and
3. The cycle of resultants (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

They can also be classified as:–

- i. Three cycles relating to rebirth in the lower realms,
- ii. Three cycles relating to rebirth in happy destinations,
- iii. Three cycles relating to rebirth in the realms of form, and
- iv. Three cycles relating to rebirth in the formless realms.

Rebirth in the Lower Realms

In the case of the three cycles relating to the lower realms:–

1. Defilements means personality-belief and sceptical doubt.
2. Volitional actions means the ten evil deeds: i) killing ii) stealing, iii) sexual misconduct, iv) lying, v) back-biting, vi) abusive speech, vii) idle chatter, viii) covetousness, ix) ill-will, and x) wrong view.
3. The cycle of resultants means the five aggregates of hell-beings, animals, ghosts, and demons.

¹ It should be noted that the practice of mindfulness of breathing serves the dual purpose of establishing mindfulness, and attaining the first *jhāna*. For a full explanation of the four *jhānas* refer to the “[The Path of Purification](#)” translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli.

Anyone who has not got rid of personality-belief and sceptical doubt, though he or she may be repeatedly reborn in the highest plane of existence for an incalculable number of times, is yet destined to fall repeatedly into the sphere of ten evil deeds to be reborn as a fisherman, hunter, thief, robber, or as one of the beings in the four lower realms. The cycle of suffering means wandering in the round of rebirths without gaining liberation.

Rebirth in Happy Destinations

In the case of the three cycles relating to rebirth in happy destinations:—

1. Defilements means desire for sensual pleasure, such as delighting in and attachment to sense objects.
2. The cycle of volitional actions means the three ‘Domains of meritorious Deeds:’ almsgiving (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), and mental development (*bhāvanā*).
3. The cycle of resultants means the five aggregates of human beings and of *devas* in the six celestial realms.

Rebirth in Form and Formless Realms

In the case of the three cycles relating to the realms of form and the formless realms:—

1. The cycle of defilements means attachment to form and formlessness.
2. The cycle of volitional actions means wholesome volitional actions leading to and practised in the form and the formless realms.
3. The cycle of resultants means the five aggregates of *Rūpa-Brahmā*, and the four mental aggregates of the *Arūpa-Brahmā*.

Thus there are three cycles: defilements, volitional actions, and resultants; regarding the round of rebirths in realms of form and the formless realms.

Relationship Between Path Factors and Cycles

The Eightfold Path can be classified as pertaining to Stream-winners, Once-returners, Non-returners, and Arahants.

The Eightfold Path of the Stream-winner completely eradicates the three cycles relating to rebirth in the lower realms. As regards the three cycles relating to rebirth in happy destinations, it extinguishes only those that would otherwise arise after seven more rebirths.

The Eightfold Path of the Once-returner completely eradicates the two cycles of defilements and resultants relating to the sensual realm that would otherwise arise after one more rebirth.

The Eightfold Path of the Non-returner completely eradicates the three cycles relating to the above rebirths in happy destinations, leaving only rebirth in the realms of form and the formless realms.

The Eightfold Path of the Arahant completely eradicates the three cycles relating to all rebirth. All defilements are completely eradicated.

The Three Stages of Wrong View

Of the four kinds of *saṃsāra* with the three cycles in each, the three cycles relating to the round of rebirth in the four lower realms are most important for the Buddhists of the present day. When a person's hair is on fire, the vital thing to do is to extinguish it. Such an emergency permits of no delay, not even for a minute. For those who have encountered the Buddha's teaching, it is more important to completely eradicate the three cycles of suffering than for that person to extinguish the fire burning his hair. So here I explain the Eightfold Path, which is able to eradicate the suffering in the lower realms. Of these two things — personality-belief and sceptical doubt — personality-belief is fundamental. Eradication of personality belief naturally implies the eradication of sceptical doubt, and the ten evil deeds also disappear completely. The natural result is that suffering in the lower realms also ceases.

Personality-belief (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*) means the delusion of a self (*atta-diṭṭhi*). The eye is regarded as 'Me' or 'Mine'. This view is held firmly and tenaciously. The same applies in the case of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and the mind.

Egoism

The expression, "The eye is tenaciously regarded as 'Me' or 'Mine' means that whenever a visible object is seen, people firmly and tenaciously believe "I see it," and the same remarks may be applied to the sound, smell, taste, touch, and to thoughts or mental objects.

The First Nibbāna

In former existences, beings committed foolish mistakes, and through personality-belief all those old evil kammās attach themselves to and continuously accompany the life-continua of beings. In future existences too, foolish mistakes will be committed by those beings, and fresh evil kammās will also arise due to the same personality-belief. Thus when personality-belief is extinguished, both the old and new evil kammās are utterly extinguished.

For that reason, suffering in the lower realms is utterly extinguished, and by the extinction of the personality-belief, all foolish and evil deeds, all wrong views and all rebirths in Hell, or as animals, ghosts, and demons, are simultaneously extinguished. That person attains the First nibbāna (with some remainder), which means utter extinction of the three cycles relating to rebirth in the lower realms. He or she becomes a Noble One in the supramundane sphere who will be reborn in successive higher planes of existence.

Match-box, Match-stick and Nitrous Surface

Personality-belief is established in three stages in the life-continua of beings.

1. The first is the latent stage (*anusaya-bhūmi*).
2. The second (*pariyuṭṭhāna-bhūmi*) is the active stage when the mind is disturbed by wrong views.
3. The third (*vitikkama-bhūmi*) is the transgression stage when wrong views result in moral transgressions.

Threefold bodily action and fourfold verbal action are the transgression stage. Threefold mental action is the active stage; and the latent stage is wrong view, which accompanies the life-continua of beings in the beginningless round of rebirths, and abides as the potential for bodily, verbal, and mental karmas before they are actually committed.

When objects that can give rise to evil karmas contact any of the six sense doors, such as eye-door and so forth, unwholesome volitional actions actuated by that wrong view rise up from the latent stage to the active stage. It means that mental action begins. If not suppressed at this point, these unwholesome karmas rise up from the active stage to the transgression stage, which means physical and verbal actions are done.

The latent stage of wrong view may be compared to the combustible material in the head of a match-stick. The active stage is like the fire that burns in the match when it is struck on the nitrous surface of a matchbox, and the transgression stage is like a fire lit with the match that consumes a heap of rubbish. The six external objects, such as beautiful sights, melodious sounds, *etc.*, resemble the nitrous surface of the match-box.

Three Groups of the Eightfold Path

1. Morality comprises Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood.

2. Concentration comprises Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration.

3. Wisdom comprises Right Understanding and Right Thought.

The three aspects of morality, when analysed in detail, are encompassed by the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājivaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) in the following manner:—

1. I will abstain from taking life.

2. I will abstain from stealing.

3. I will abstain from indulging in sexual misconduct and taking intoxicants. (These three comprise Right Action).

4. I will abstain from telling lies.

5. I will abstain from setting one person against another.

6. I will abstain from using rude and rough words.

7. I will abstain from talking frivolously. (These four comprise Right Speech).

8. Right Livelihood (*sammā-ājiva*) means earning a living without resorting to taking life, stealing, etc.

Permanent morality, such as the Five Precepts, the Ten Precepts observed by hermits and wandering mendicants, the Ten Precepts observed by novices and the 227 Rules of Vinaya observed by bhikkhus are within the domain of morality with right livelihood as the eighth. The Eight Precepts observed on the *Uposatha* days are just a refinement of the Five Precepts and morality with right livelihood as the eighth.

To Destroy the Three Stages of Personality Belief

Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood — the three factors of morality — are the path factors to destroy the third stage of Personality-belief. It means that they destroy the three bodily evil deeds and the four verbal evil deeds.

Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration — the three path factors of concentration — destroy the second stage of Personality-belief. It means that they destroy the three mental wrong deeds.

Right Understanding and Right Thought — the two path factors of Wisdom — destroy the first stage of Personality-belief. It means that they destroy the latent stage which has been latent in the life continua of beings throughout the beginningless round of rebirths.

How to Establish Morality

To get rid of the three physical evil deeds and the four verbal evil deeds, the three path factors of morality must be established, which means that the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth must be undertaken and observed.

To get rid of the three mental evil deeds conditioned by personality-belief, the three path factors of concentration must be established, which means that mindfulness of breathing, contemplation on bones, or concentration on meditation devices (*kaṣiṇa*), must be practised for at least one hour a day so that mental stability can be gained.

To get rid of the third stage of personality-belief, people should establish Purity of Morality by undertaking and observing the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth. They can either recite it and undertake it formally, or simply determine to abstain from killing living beings, and so forth, from that day throughout life, and successfully abstain from evil deeds. It is not necessary to accept the precepts from a bhikkhu. It is enough to determine as follows:—

1. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from taking life.
2. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from stealing.
3. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from sexual misconduct, and from the five kinds of intoxicants.
4. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from false speech.
5. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from divisive speech.
6. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from abusive and rude words regarding the caste, race, etc., of any person.
7. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from idle chatter, which is not conducive to the well-being of others either in the present life or in the next.
8. From today throughout my life, I will abstain from wrong livelihood.

Different Kinds of Stable Morality

Once taken, it remains pure until it is violated. Only the precept that is broken need be taken again, but there is no harm in retaking the others that are not violated. If any precept that has not been violated is taken again, one's morality becomes stronger.

It is best to renew the above eight precepts daily. It is permanent morality like the five precepts, unlike that observed on *Uposatha* days. Novices, hermits, and wanderers, who always have to observe the Ten Precepts, and

bhikkhus who always have to observe the 227 Vinaya Rules, need not undertake the eight precepts.

Factors Fulfilling the Seven Kinds of Evil Deeds

Five Factors of Killing Living Beings

1. The being must be alive.
2. One must know that it is alive.
3. One must intend to cause its death.
4. An action must be done to cause death.
5. Its death must follow from that action.

If all five factors are fulfilled, the first precept is violated and should be taken again.

Five Factors of Stealing

1. The property must belong to another person.
2. One must know that the property belongs to another.
3. One must intend to steal it.
4. One must act to steal it.
5. The property must be taken by that act.

If all five factors are fulfilled, the second precept is violated and should be taken again.

Four Factors of Sexual Misconduct

1. There must be a man or a woman with whom it is improper to have sexual intercourse.
2. One must intend to have such sexual relations with them.
3. One must strive to have intercourse.
4. One must consent to the contact of the sexual organs.

If all four factors are fulfilled, the third precept is violated and should be taken again.

Four Factors of False Speech

1. The statement must be untrue.
2. One must intend to deceive another.
3. One must try to deceive another.
4. The other must understand the meaning of what is said. (It is not necessary that they should believe what is said).

If these factors are fulfilled, the fourth precept is violated and should be taken again.

Four Factors of Divisive Speech

1. There must be persons to be disunited.
2. There must be an intention to disunite two persons.
3. There must be an effort made as a result of the said intention.
4. The other must know the meaning of the thing said.

If these factors are fulfilled, the fifth precept is violated and should be taken again.

Three Factors of Abusive Speech

1. There must be someone to be abused.
2. One must be angry.
3. Abusive language must actually be used.

If these factors are fulfilled, the sixth precept is violated and should be taken again.

Two Factors of Idle Chatter

1. There must be an intention to say things that bring forth no benefits.
2. Such things must be said.

If these factors are fulfilled, the seventh precept is violated and should be taken again.

“Things that bring forth no benefits” means such plays and novels as are merely intended to amuse and entertain. Nowadays there are numerous plays and novels satisfying all the conditions of idle chatter.

The abovementioned factors of false speech, divisive speech, and idle chatter relate only to violation of the respective precepts. They become conditions for kamma that leads to rebirths in the lower planes (*kammaṭṭhā*), if the following factors are added:—

1. In the case of false speech, another person must suffer loss or damage.
2. In the case of divisive speech, disunion must result.
3. In the case of idle chatter, others must think that the idle speech is true.

In the case of the four remaining precepts — killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and abusive speech — the above factors relate not only to violation of the precepts, but also to the respective kamma that leads to rebirth in the lower realms.

These are factors relating to the seven kinds of evil deeds should be known by those who observe these eight precepts daily.

How to Establish Concentration

For one who has well developed the three factors of morality and who has thereby established Purity of Morality, wrong livelihood and the seven kinds of evil deeds, namely: the three kinds of physical evil deeds and the four kinds of verbal evil deeds, which are born of personality-belief, are entirely eradicated.

To destroy the second stage of evil deeds, namely: the three kinds of mental evil deeds, the path factors of concentration — Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration — must be established.

Establishment of the three path factors of concentration means practice of one of the forty subjects of meditation, such as *kaṣiṇa*.

Mindfulness of Breathing

In this connection the practice of mindfulness of breathing will be briefly described. If those who are still householders have no time to perform these exercises in the day time, they should always practise about one or two hours before going to bed and about an hour in the morning.

The method of practice is as follows:—

According to the Buddha's teaching "*So satova assasati satova passasati* — mindfully he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out." For a predetermined period, one's mind should be entirely concentrated on inhaling and exhaling, and not allowed to stray elsewhere. To prevent the mind wandering both physical and mental effort should be exercised. Physical effort means the determination to practise for a fixed period every day without any lapse. Mental effort means taking great care to concentrate the mind on inhaling and exhaling, so that it does not stray elsewhere, and fervent application of the mind on inhaling and exhaling, so that sleepiness, boredom, and drowsiness do not come enter one's mind.

Let the Mindfulness be Constant

Fixing the mind on one's nostrils continuously, one should always note "Exhaling," when the exhaled air brushes against the nostrils, and "Inhaling" when the inhaled air brushes touches it. Right Effort means both physical and mental effort.

After applying one's mind diligently like this for a fortnight, a month, two months, etc., one's mindfulness becomes fixed on inhaling and exhaling. That mindfulness is designated as Right Mindfulness. Once the three path factors of morality are well established, the mental restlessness disappears day by day.

It should soon become apparent to anyone who tries to do this, that one has no control over the mind when one starts to practise meditation. Mad people are useless in worldly affairs because they have no control over their minds. Likewise, those who are perfectly sane regarding worldly affairs, are in the same position as mad people when it comes to the practice of meditation, since they have no control over the mind. They are useless at keeping the mind on the meditation object. That is why the three path factors of concentration must be well-developed to get rid of mental restlessness.

For more details about Right Concentration, my "[Manual of the Requisites of Enlightenment](#) (*Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī*)," and "[Manual of Respiration](#) (*Ānāpāna Dīpanī*)" may be referred to.

How the Mental Restlessness is Eradicated

Even if neither access concentration (*upacāra samādhi*) nor attainment concentration (*appanā samādhi*) are reached, if the mind could be fixed on the object of meditation for one or two hours every day, it would become easy to concentrate the mind on any other object of meditation. A person who can attain Purity of Mind by establishing the three path factors of concentration, eradicates three mental evil deeds — covetousness, ill-will, and wrong views born of personality-belief. The second stage of wrong view: *viz.* mental kamma, also becomes extinct, and the mental restlessness caused by the five hindrances disappears.

When Should One Establish Wisdom?

Once the three path factors of morality are undertaken and observed, from that very moment they become established in that individual and from then on, as long as there is no violation of the precepts, he is said to possess Purity of Morality. On the very day of undertaking the precepts, the path factors of concentration should be practised. Those who are sufficiently diligent will take no more than five or ten days to get rid of the mental restlessness, and having attained steadfast concentration on respiration, the three path factors of concentration will become established. Then one is said to have established Purity of Mind, and can begin to develop the path factors of wisdom.

How to Establish Wisdom

If one has succeeded in establishing Purity of Morality and Purity of Mind, one should immediately try to establish oneself in Right View and Right Thought — the path factors of wisdom — with a view to eradicating the first [latent] stage of personality-belief. To establish the two path factors of wisdom one must gain the five kinds of Purity of Wisdom (*paññā-visuddhi*) in due order: Purity of View (*ditṭhi-visuddhi*), Purity by Overcoming Doubt (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi*), Purity by Knowledge and Vision of Path and non-Path (*maggāmaggañāṇadassana-visuddhi*), Purity by Knowledge and Vision of the Course of Practice (*paṭipadā-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*) and Purity by Supramundane Knowledge and Vision (*lokuttara-ñāṇadassana-visuddhi*).

Description of the Four Elements

In the whole of our body, solidity and softness comprise the element of earth (*pathavi*); cohesion and liquidity comprise the element of water (*āpo*); heat and cold comprise the element of fire (*tejo*); and support and motion comprise the element of air (*vāyo*).

The whole of the head is nothing but a collection of the four elements. All the parts of the body, and the limbs, are nothing but collections of the four elements. All hairs of the head, hairs of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, lymph, fat, lungs, intestines, stomach, faeces, and brain are nothing but collections of the four elements.

1. Hardness is the strong form of earth, and softness is its weak form.
2. Cohesion is the weak form of water, and liquidity is its strong form.
3. Heat is the strong form of fire, and cold is its weak form.
4. Support is the weak form of air, and motion is its strong form.

Softness and Hardness

Sealing-wax in its original form is the strong form of the earth element (*pathavi-dhātu*). Its hardness is conspicuous; but when comes into contact with fire, hardness disappears, and softness manifests. When the fire is removed, softness gradually disappears and hardness reappears.

Cohesion or Liquidity

In the sealing-wax in its original form there is a weak form of water, so cohesion is conspicuous. When it comes into contact with fire, cohesion

(*āpo-dhātu*) disappears and liquidity manifests. When the fire is removed, liquidity disappears and cohesion reappears.

Heat and Cold

Sealing-wax at room temperature has a weak form of fire (*tejo-dhātu*). Coldness is conspicuous. When it comes into contact with fire, cold disappears and heat manifests. When the fire is removed, the heat disappears and cold reappears.

Support and Motion

Sealing-wax in its original form has a weak form of air (*vāyo-dhātu*). Support is conspicuous. When it comes into contact with fire, supporting disappears and moving manifests. When the fire is removed, moving disappears and supporting reappears.

'*Udaya*' means 'appearance', and '*vaya*' means 'disappearance'; *udayabbaya* is a compound of the two words. The illustration of the appearance and disappearance of the elements evident in sealing-wax has been given to help people realise and understand the meaning and nature of '*udayabbaya*' — which in insight meditation means appearance and disappearance.

Increase and Decrease

The head, the body, and the limbs may be dealt with in the same way as the sealing-wax. Heat and cold, the two aspects of the fire element, are always taking place alternately. Heat gradually increases in the whole body from sunrise until 2 p.m. and cold correspondingly decreases. Then cold increases and heat decreases. This is the personal experience of everyone. From this simple explanation, numerous inferences can be made.

The increase of heat in the various parts of the body resembles sealing-wax coming into contact with fire; and when the cold increases in the body, it resembles sealing-wax removed from the fire. Heat and cold increase or decrease throughout the day. Heat increases when cold decreases, and cold increases when heat decreases. Increase is '*udaya*' and decrease is '*vaya*.'

The two aspects of the earth element — softness and hardness — increase or decrease in accordance with the rise and fall of temperature. The two aspects of the water element — liquidity and cohesion — and the two aspects of the air element — motion and support — also increase or decrease in the same way.

The four elements in the various parts of the body resemble the numerous small bubbles that rapidly appear and disappear on the surface of boiling water

in a big pot. The whole body resembles a lump of foam. Vapour appears in each small bubble and it disappears every time the numerous bubbles disappear.

Impermanence, Unsatisfactoriness, and Not-self

Similarly, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and knowing — all these mental phenomena that depend on the four elements — vanish simultaneously with them. Therefore, the six kinds of consciousness — eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind-consciousness, and the four elements are impermanent (*anicca*), because they are not stable; they are suffering (*dukkha*), because they are associated with the danger of incessant appearance and disappearance; they are not-self (*anatta*), because they have no essence or substance in them.

Personality-belief and the Head

Personality-belief and Right Understanding with respect to the four elements in the head are explained below.

The hair and bones in the head are hard, and its skin, flesh, blood, and brains are soft, and these two, namely hardness and softness, constitute the earth element. The whole of the head is completely filled with the two kinds of earth element, and similarly with the two kinds of water, fire, and air. The earth element is not the head, nor are the other elements. Apart from these elements there is no such thing as the head.

Know, Perceive, Conceive, and View

Those who cannot differentiate the four elements in the head and who do not know that hardness, *etc.*, in the head are elements, know the head as such only; they note it as the head only; they only think that it is the head; and they see it as the head only.

- ▶ To know that it is the head is a delusion of mind (*citta*).
- ▶ To perceive that it is the head is a delusion of perception (*saññā*).
- ▶ To conceive that it is the head is a delusion of conceit (*māna*).
- ▶ To view it as the head is a delusion of view (*diṭṭhi*).

Knowing, perceiving, conceiving, and viewing the four elements of the head is knowing, perceiving, conceiving, and viewing them as permanent and as self. Thus to consider the four elements as the head is a misconception of taking what is impermanent as permanent and what is not-self as self.

Delusion

The four elements, which by nature disappear more than a hundred times in an hour are really impermanent and not-self, in accordance with the Buddha's teaching "*Aniccaṃ khayattaṃ ... anattā asāraṇaṃ* — it is impermanent, because it is vanishing ... it is not-self, because it is without any essence." The head of a man does not disintegrate at death, and it remains as a head until it reaches the cemetery. So it is regarded as permanent and self. From the conception that the four elements are the head arises the misconception of the impermanent as permanent and what is not-self as self.

Because They Do Not Understand

As regards the composite parts of the head also, to know, perceive, conceive, and view the four elements as hair, teeth, skin, flesh, muscles, bones, and brain, is to know, perceive, conceive, and view the four elements, which are impermanent and not-self, as permanent and self. It is personality-belief to conceive and view the elements of hardness, *etc.*, as the head, hair, teeth, skin, flesh, veins, bones and brain, not understanding that they are merely elements.

Right Understanding

Hardness is just the earth element. It is not the head, hair, skin, flesh, muscles, bones, nor the brain. Cohesion is just the water element. Heat and cold are the fire element, and support and motion are the air element. They are not the head, hair, teeth, skin, flesh, muscles, nor brain. Ultimately, there is no such thing as the head, hair, teeth, skin, flesh, muscles, bones and brain. Such understanding is called Right Understanding. (Personality-belief and the Right Understanding are also applicable to the remaining parts of the body.)

To think out ways and means to understand these four elements is Right Thought. Right Understanding may be compared to an arrow, and Right Thought to the hand that aims at the target with a bow.

This is the brief exposition of how to establish Right Understanding and Right Thought, which are the two path factors of wisdom. For a more detailed explanation, see the *Vijjā Magga Dīpanī* and *Bhāvanā Dīpanī* written by me.

One Must Be Persistent

When the two path factors of wisdom have been established by thinking and meditating deeply on the incessant arising and vanishing of the four elements all over the body, and eye-consciousness, *etc.*, just like the small bubbles in a pot of boiling water, and when the characteristics of impermanence and not-self have been successfully realised, one must try to maintain this realisation throughout one's life, so that the insight knowledges may be achieved successively. Labourers should practise the contemplation on the appearance and disappearance of psycho-physical elements in all parts of the body, as they do their work.

To Become 'Bon-sin-san' Individuals

By repeated and persistent practice of that meditation the knowledge of the arising and dissolution of the elements permeates the whole body. The first stage of Personality-belief in regard to the whole body disappears. The first stage of Personality-belief which has accompanied one's life-continuum throughout the beginningless round of rebirths is completely extinguished. The whole body is thus transformed into the realm of Right View.

The ten evil actions are totally destroyed and the ten good actions are firmly installed.

The round of rebirth in the four lower realms becomes completely extinct. Only rebirths in the higher realms as men, *devas* and Brahmā, remain. That person reaches the stage of a 'Bon-sin-san' Noble One.

This is the full explanation of the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path comprising the three factors of the morality group, the three factors of the concentration group, and the two factors of the wisdom group.

Here ends the exposition of Personality-belief in regard to the head, *etc.*

How to Establish the Noble Eightfold Path

Proper and full observance of eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth constitutes the practice of the path factors of morality — Right Speech, Right Action and Right Livelihood. Mindfulness of the respiration constitutes the practice of the path factors of concentration — Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration. Contemplation on the arising and dissolution of the four elements, and the six kinds of consciousness, constitutes the practice of the path factors of wisdom — Right Understanding and Right Thought.

Only When Wisdom and Effort Are Strenuous

According to the method of bare insight, tranquillity and insight are developed together. After observing the three path factors of morality, the practice of the path factors of wisdom is undertaken. The three path factors of concentration accompany the two path factors of wisdom. These two groups are together called the five factored path (*pañcaṅgikamagga*). These five, together with the three factors of morality, become the Noble Eightfold Path. As one practices like this, the mental restlessness disappears. However, this can be achieved only with great wisdom and strenuous effort.

Understanding Reality Whenever Contemplated

After Right View has become clear in respect of the whole body — whether in this existence or the next — it becomes clear, whenever one contemplates, that actually there are no such things as a person, an individual, a woman, a man, ‘me,’ ‘him,’ nor any head, leg, or hair. When such knowledge arises, Personality-belief, which delusively regards the elements in the head as the head itself, disappears for ever. Whenever one contemplates, this Right View arises.

Enjoying the Three Kinds of Happiness

When Right Understanding and Right Thought, the two factors of the Wisdom-group of the Eightfold Path, have been established in the whole body, the three cycles of rebirth in the lower realms completely disappear forever. From that instant that person is completely liberated from the misery of the four lower realms. He or she has reached and is established in the first stage of the full extinction of defilements with the aggregates of existence still remaining. That is he or she has become a Stream-winner. However, as he or she has yet to acquire the full knowledge of unsatisfactoriness, some craving and conceit still remain, which make him or her seek delight in the pleasures of men, *devas*, and Brahmā. So he or she goes on enjoying those three kinds of pleasures as one who will be reborn in the higher planes of existence successfully (which is the meaning of ‘*Bon-sin-san*’).

*This completes the brief exposition of how to establish the Noble Eightfold Path.
This is the end of A Manual of the Path Factors.*

Appendices

Animal Talk (Tiracchāna Kathā)

Thirty-two kinds of talk obstructing fruition and rebirth in higher planes.¹

5. Talk about kings (*rājakathā*)
6. Talk about robbers (*corakathā*)
7. Talk about ministers of state (*mahāmatlakathā*)
8. Talk about armies (*senākathā*)
9. Talk about dangers (*bhayakathā*)
10. Talk about battles (*yuddhakathā*)
11. Talk about food (*annakathā*)
12. Talk about drinks (*pānakathā*)
13. Talk about clothing (*vatthakathā*)
14. Talk about dwellings (*sayanakathā*)
15. Talk about garlands (*mālākathā*)
16. Talk about perfumes (*gandhakathā*)
17. Talk about relations (*nātikathā*)
18. Talk about vehicles (*yānakathā*)
19. Talk about villages (*gāmakathā*)
20. Talk about market towns (*nigamakathā*)
21. Talk about towns (*nagarakathā*)
22. Talk about districts (*janapadakathā*)
23. Talk about women² (*itthikathā*)
24. Talk about heroes (*sūrakathā*)
25. Talk about streets (*visikhākathā*)
26. Talk about watering places (*kumbaṭṭhānakathā*)
27. Talk about relatives who have passed away (*pubbapetakathā*)
28. Tittle-tattle (*nānattakathā*)
29. Talk about the origin of the world (*lokakkhāyikakathā*)
30. Talk about the origin of the ocean (*samuddakkhāyikakathā*)
31. Talk about annihilation belief (*numbers 27 to 32 are known as Itibhavābhavakathā*) —

¹ These 32 types of talk are listed in the Sandaka Sutta (Middle-length Sayings, Sutta 76), where the wanderers were talking all kinds of worldly talk. Seeing Venerable Ānanda coming, the wanderer Sandaka told them to be silent, saying that the Buddha's disciples do not like a lot of noise. (ed.)

² Talk about men is omitted in accordance with Majjhima-paṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā. p.156. 6th. Synod Edition.

32. Talk about eternity belief
33. Talk about worldly gain
34. Talk about worldly loss
35. Talk about self-indulgence
36. Talk about self-mortification.

Twenty-one Kinds of Wrong Livelihood for Bhikkhus

1. Medical practice (*vejjakammaṃ karoti*)
2. Acting as a messenger (*dūtakammaṃ karoti*)
3. Doing things at the behest of laymen (*paṇḍakammaṃ karoti*)
4. Lancing boils (*gaṇḍaṃ phāleti*)
5. Giving oil for medical application (*arumakkhaṇaṃ deti*)
6. Giving emetics (*uddhaṃ virecanaṃ deti*)
7. Giving purgatives (*adho virecanaṃ deti*)
8. Preparing oil for nose-treatment (*natthutelaṃ paṇḍati*)
9. Preparing oil for medicine (*pīvanatelaṃ paṇḍati*)
10. Presenting bamboos (*veḷudānaṃ deti*)
11. Presenting leaves (*pattadānaṃ deti*)
12. Presenting flowers (*pupphadānaṃ deti*)
13. Presenting fruits (*phaladānaṃ deti*)
14. Presenting soap-clay (*sinānadānaṃ deti*)
15. Presenting tooth-sticks (*dantakaṭṭhadānaṃ deti*)
16. Presenting water for washing the face (*mukhodakadānaṃ deti*)
17. Presenting talcum powder (*cunṇamattikadānaṃ deti*)
18. Using flattering speech (*cāṭukamyāṃ karoti*)
19. Acting like half-cooked bean soup, i.e., speaking half-truths (*muggasūpiyāṃ karoti*)
20. Fondling children (*pāribatyaṃ karoti*)
21. Running errands (*jaṅghapesaniyāṃ karoti*)

Trickery and Deception (Kuhanādi Micchājīva)

1. *Kuhana*. Making people have an undue high opinion of oneself to get alms by a) pretending that one does not want to receive alms, but accepts only for the sake of the donors, b) by pretending that one has attained *jhāna*, *magga*, and *phala*, c) by feigning deportment so as to make people think one is a Noble One.
2. *Lapana*. Talking to please donors with a view to gaining gain, honour, and renown.

3. *Nemittikatā*. Inviting offerings by giving all kinds of hints.
4. *Nippesikatā*. Harassing so as to induce offerings.
5. *Lābhena lābhaṃ nijigīsanatā*. Giving something with a view to getting something more.

Animal Arts (Tiracchāna Vijjā)

Editor's Note: Though not listed in detail by the Sayādaw, these wrong modes of livelihood for sages and bhikkhus are described in the Brahmajāla Sutta, where the Buddha describes the bhikkhus' morality in detail (D.i.9). They can be summarised as follows:–

1. Palmistry, divination by signs, portents, dreams, or body marks.
2. Knowledge of animal behaviour.
3. Judging the value of gems, livestock, and other goods.
4. Predictions about the movements of armies.
5. Predictions about the movements of planets.
6. Predictions about the weather.
7. Predictions about the harvest.
8. Accountancy and mathematics.
9. Composition of poetry.
10. Philosophy.
11. Arranging marriages and divorces.
12. Advising on investments.
13. Good-luck charms.
14. Black magic and spells.
15. Supplicating deities.
16. Consecrating building sites.¹
17. Giving ritual bathing.
18. Giving various kinds of medical treatments.

To Summarise: A bhikkhu should not do anything that would normally be done by lay people for a fee. He can teach secular knowledge or help others with voluntary labour out of compassion, but he should not accept anything in return. If he accepts any kind of reward for such services, it is wrong livelihood, and any goods he has received should be forfeited to another

¹ Although bhikkhus can visit a new house or a building site, and chant to ward off dangers and evil spirits, they should not be involved in choosing the site, the position for buildings on the site, nor the auspicious time for starting work. Such decisions should be made by qualified town-planners, architects, and builders.

monk. Allowable goods can then be returned to him, and he can use them, but a scrupulous bhikkhu would normally give such things away to others.

A bhikkhu's primary duty is to observe the Vinaya, study the Dhamma, and strive in meditation to realise nibbāna. If he receives any suitable gifts that people offer out of faith, it is right livelihood as he is fulfilling a monk's duty. If he can also teach Dhamma, it is excellent, but he need not, if he does not feel competent. Just by following the Vinaya strictly he is teaching the people how to restrain their desires and how to live a simple, contented life in accordance with the Dhamma. (ed.)

Books by Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

Below are some of the Subcommentaries, manuals, essays, and letters written by the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw.

In Pāli

1. *Paramattha Dīpanī*. (Manual of Ultimate Truths) or *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha Mahā Ṭikā*.
2. *Nirutti Dīpanī* or *Vuttimoggallāna Ṭikā*.
3. *Anu-dīpanī*.
4. *Vibhatyattha Ṭikā*.
5. *Vaccavācaka Ṭikā*.
6. *Sāsanasampatti Dīpanī*.
7. *Sāsanavipatti Dīpanī*.
8. *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī*.
9. *Sammā-diṭṭhi Dīpanī*.
10. London Pāli Devī Questions and answers.
11. Exposition of Buddhism for the West.
12. *Padhāna Sutta* (Pāli and word for word meanings).
13. *Anattavibhāvanā*.
14. *Yamaka Pucchā Visajjanā*.
15. *Niyāma Dīpanī*.
16. *Vipassanā Dīpanī*.

In Burmese

1. *Rūpa Dīpanī* (Manual of Material Qualities).
2. *Lakkhaṇa Dīpanī* (Manual of Characteristics of Existence).
3. *Pāramī Dīpanī* ([Manual of Perfections](#)).
4. *Vijjāmagga Dīpanī* ([Manual of the Way to Path-Knowledge](#)).

5. *Nibbāna Dīpanī* (Manual of Nibbāna).
6. *Mahāsayana Dīpanī* (Manual of the Great Lying Down).
7. *Uttama Purisa Dīpanī* ([A Manual of the Excellent Man](#)).
8. *Paṭiccasamuppāda Dīpanī* (Manual of Dependent Origination).
9. *Āhāra Dīpanī* ([A Manual of Nutriment](#)).
10. *Anatta Dīpanī* (Manual of Impersonality).
11. *Anatta Dīpanī* (New).
12. *Kammaṭṭhāna Dīpanī* (Manual of Meditation-subjects).
13. *Ānāpāna Dīpanī* ([A Manual of Respiration](#)).
14. *Catusacca Dīpanī* (Manual of the Four Noble Truths).
15. *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī* ([A Manual of the Requisites of Enlightenment](#)).
16. *Somanassaupekkhā Dīpanī* (Manual of Joy and Equanimity).
17. *Bhāvanā Dīpanī* (Manual of Mental Concentration).
18. *Sukumāra Dīpanī*.
19. *Saccattha Dīpanī*.
20. *Sāsanadāyajja Dīpanī*.
21. *Rogantara Dīpanī*.
22. *Dhamma Dīpanī*. ([A Manual of the Dhamma](#))
23. *Dānādi Dīpanī*. ([A Manual of Donation and Morality](#))
24. *Maggaṅga Dīpanī* ([A Manual of the Path Factors](#)).
25. *Goṇasurā Dīpanī* ([A Manual of Cows and Intoxicants](#)).
26. *Niyāma Dīpanī* (A Manual of Cosmic Order).
27. *Silavinicchaya Dīpanī*.
28. *Virati-silavinicchaya Dīpanī*.
29. *Ṇaṇṇaparibhoga-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
30. *Dīghāsana-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
31. *Asaṅkhāra-sasaṅkhāra-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
32. *Sikkhā-gahana-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
33. *Cetiyaṅgaṇa-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
34. *Upasampada-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
35. Decision on *Ājivaṭṭhamaka Sila*.
36. Decision on *Vikālabhojana-sikkhāpada*.
37. *Saraṇa-gamaṇa-vinicchaya Dīpanī*.
38. *Paramattha Saṅkhitta*.
39. *Vinaya Saṅkhitta*.
40. *Sadda Saṅkhitta*.
41. *Alphabets Saṅkhitta*.
42. *Prosody Saṅkhitta*.

43. *Alankā Saṅkhitta*.
44. *Spelling Saṅkhitta*.
45. *Paramattha Saṅkhitta*.
46. Chapter on Material Qualities (in brief).
47. *Nibbāna-visajjanā Manual*.
48. Ledi Questions and Answers.
49. Questions on Sotāpanna.
50. *Sāsanavisodhanī, Vols. I, II & III*.
51. *Gambhīra-kabyā-kyan* (A Manual of Profound Verses).
52. Open letter for abstention from taking beef.
53. Letter of reply to U Ba Bwa, Township Officer of Dedaya, saying that he could not go on a pilgrimage to Ceylon that year.
54. Admonitory letter to U Saing, Headman of Saingpyin Village for abstention from taking intoxicants.
55. Admonitory letter to the inhabitants of Dipeyin Township for abstention from taking intoxicants.
56. Admonitory letter prohibiting Lotteries and Gambling.
57. An Advice to hold a Lighting Festival at the Bo Tree within the precincts of Ledi Monastery, Monywa.
58. Letter to U Hmat, a Ruby Merchant of Mogok.
59. Inscription at Sihataw Pagoda, written by the Venerable Mahāthera Ledi Sayādaw at the request of U Hmat.
60. *Gambhīra Dīpanī* (A Manual of Profound Meaning, Epic on Saṃvega).

A Short Biography of Venerable Ledi Sayādaw

Known to scholars of many countries, the Venerable Ledi Sayādaw, Aggamahāpaṇḍita, D.Litt., was perhaps the outstanding Buddhist figure of this age. With the increase in interest in Western lands, there is a great demand for his Buddhist Discourses and writings which are now being translated and reproduced in 'The Light of the Dhamma.'

Bhikkhu Nyāṇa who was later known as Ledi Sayādaw was born on Tuesday, the 13th Waxing of Nattaw, 1208 Burmese Era (1846 C.E.) at Saing-pyin Village, Dipeyin Township, Shwebo District. His parents were U Tun Tha and Daw Kyone.

Early in life he was ordained a Sāmaṇera and at the age of 20 a Bhikkhu, under the

patronage of Salin Sayādaw U Paṇḍicca. He received his monastic education under various teachers and later was trained in Buddhist literature by the Venerable San-kyauṅ Sayādaw, Sudassana Dhaja Atulādhipati Siripavara Mahādhamma Rājādhiraṅga-guru of Mandalay.

He was a bright student. It was said of him: "About 2,000 students attended the lectures delivered daily by the Venerable Sankyaung Sayādaw. One day the Venerable Sayādaw set in Pāli 20 questions on Pārami (Perfections) and asked all the students to answer them. None of them except Bhikkhu Nyāṇa could answer those questions satisfactorily." He collected all these answers and when he attained 14 *vassa*, and while he was still in San-kyauṅ monastery, he published his first book, *Pārami Dīpani* (Manual of Perfections).

During the reign of King Theebaw he became a Pāli lecturer at Mahā Jotikārāma monastery in Mandalay. A year after the capture of King Theebaw, *i. e.* in 1887 C.E. he removed to a place to the north of Monywa town, where he established a monastery under the name of Ledi-tawya Monastery. He accepted many bhikkhu students from various parts of Burma and imparted Buddhist education to them. In 1897 C.E. he wrote *Paramattha Dīpani* (Manual of Ultimate Truths) in Pāli.



Later, he toured in many parts of Burma for the purpose of propagating the Buddha Dhamma. In towns and villages he visited he delivered various Discourses on the Dhamma and established Abhidhamma classes and Meditation Centres. He composed Abhidhamma rhymes or Abhidhamma Saṅkhitta and taught them to his Abhidhamma classes. In some of the principal towns he spent a *vassa* imparting Abhidhamma and Vinaya education to the lay devotees. Some of the Ledi Meditation Centres are still existing and still famous. During his itinerary he wrote many essays, letters, poems and manuals in Burmese. He has written more than 70 manuals, of which seven have been translated into English and published in 'The Light of the Dhamma'.

Vipassanā Dīpanī (Manual of Insight) was translated by his disciple Sayādaw U Nyāṇa, Pathamagyaw. *Paṭṭhānuddesa Dīpanī* (A concise exposition of the Buddhist Philosophy of Relations) was originally written in Pāli by the late Ledi Sayādaw and translated by Sayādaw U Nyāṇa. *Niyāma Dīpanī* (Manual of Cosmic Order) was translated by U Nyāṇa and Dr Barua and edited by Mrs Rhys Davids. *Sammā-ditṭhi Dīpanī* (Manual of Right Understanding) and *Catusacca Dīpanī* (Manual of the Four Noble Truths) and *Alin-Kyan* (An Exposition of Five Kinds of Light) translated in part only, were all translated by the Editors of 'The Light of the Dhamma.' *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī* (Manual of the Factors Leading to Enlightenment) was translated by U Sein Nyo Tun, I.C.S. (Retd.), and *Magganṅa Dīpanī* (Manual of the Constituents of the Noble Path) was translated by U Saw Tun Teik, B.A., B.L., and revised and edited by the English Editorial Board of the Union Buddha Sāsana Council.

He was awarded the title of *Aggamahāpaṇḍita* by the Government of India in 1911 C.E. Later, the University of Rangoon conferred on him the degree of D. Litt. (Honoris Causa). In the later years he settled down at Pyinmana where he died in 1923 C.E. at the ripe age of 77.

