

Dhamma Talk: The Two Types of Ordinary Persons in Buddhism

Introduction

Today, my aspiration is to talk about the ordinary person in Buddhism. According to the discourse of **Sabbāsava Sutta** in the **Majjhima Nikaya**, there are two types of ordinary persons:

1. **Asutavā Puthujjana** – The Uninformed Ordinary Person
2. **Sutavā Puthujjana** – The Informed Ordinary Person

The Asutavā Puthujjana – The Uninformed Ordinary Person

So, dear Dhamma friends, I need to explain the characteristics of the **Asutavā Puthujjana – The Uninformed Ordinary Person**.

1. "**Asutavā**" means one who has not heard or learned the true Dhamma or teachings.
2. This person is ignorant of the Buddha's teachings and lacks proper guidance.
3. They do not understand the **nature of suffering (dukkha), its origin, cessation, and the path**.
4. As a result, they engage in **unwholesome views, attachments, and wrong practices**, leading to the accumulation of more **defilements (āsava)**.

Furthermore, an **Uninformed Ordinary Person** is:

- Someone who **does not like to see spiritual human beings**.
- A person who **does not like to engage with the doctrine**.
- A person who **lacks knowledge of the cause-and-effect theory**.
- A person who **does not have the ability to understand the cause-and-effect theory**.

The Sutavā Puthujjana – The Informed Ordinary Person

Dear Dhamma friends, when it comes to **Sutavā Puthujjana – The Informed Ordinary Person**, they also have distinct characteristics in life.

- "**Sutavā**" means one who has heard, learned, and understood the Dhamma.
- This person has been exposed to the **Buddha's teachings**, knows about the **Four Noble Truths**, and understands the importance of **Right View**.
- However, they are still an **ordinary, unenlightened being (Puthujjana)** because they have not yet attained **Stream-entry (Sotāpanna)**.but
- They recognize **defilements (āsava)** and strive to **abandon them through right effort and wisdom**.

Furthermore, an **Informed Ordinary Person** is:

- Someone who **likes to see spiritual human beings**.
- A person who **likes to engage with the doctrine**.
- A person who **has a pure knowledge of the cause-and-effect theory**.
- A person who **has the ability to understand the cause-and-effect theory**.

Conclusion

Yes, the Buddha classifies two types of ordinary persons in this sutta: **one who lacks knowledge (Asutavā)** and **one who has knowledge but is still unenlightened (Sutavā)**.

However, dear Dhamma friends, let us **strive to be Sutavā Puthujjana – an Informed Ordinary Person**, who listens, learns, and applies the Dhamma in daily life.

Thank you for listening to these Dhamma facts. May you all be well, happy, healthy, and peaceful.

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!