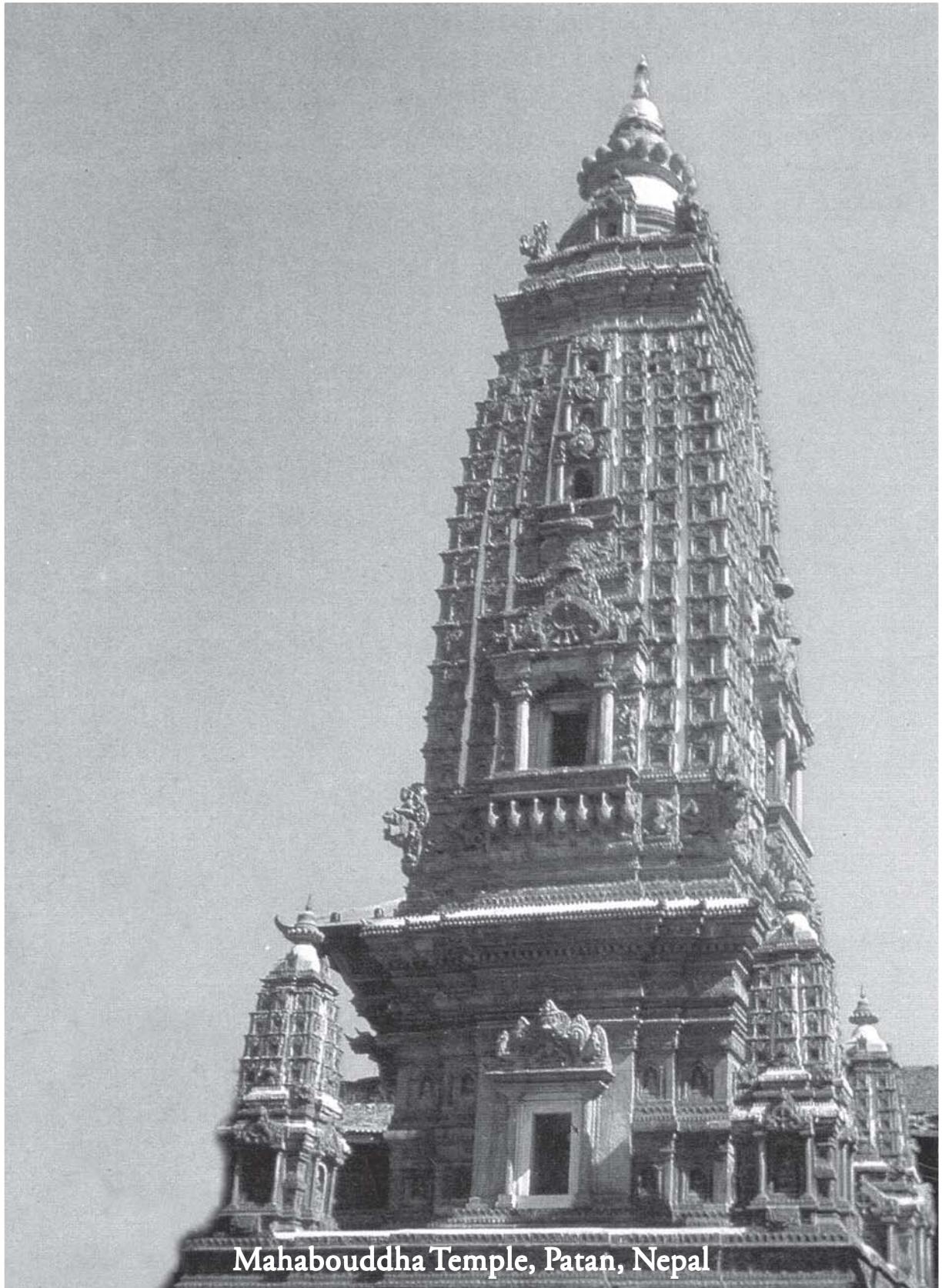


Lumbini

JOURNAL OF THE LUMBINI NEPALESE BUDDHA DHARMA SOCIETY (UK)

Volume 12

May 2009



Mahabouddha Temple, Patan, Nepal

Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)

Buddha was born more than 2600 years ago at Lumbini in Nepal. His teachings of existence of suffering and the way out of the suffering are applicable today as they were applicable then. The middle way he preached is more appropriate now than ever before.

For centuries Buddhism remained the religion of the East. Recently, more and more Westerners are learning about it and practising Dharma for the spiritual and physical well-being and happiness. As a result of this interest many monasteries and Buddhist organisations have been established in the West, including in the UK. Most have Asian connections but others are unique to the West e.g. Friends of Western Buddhist Order.

Nepalese, residing in the UK, wishing to practice the Dharma for their spiritual development, turned to them as there were no such Nepalese organisations. Therefore, a group of Nepalese met in February 1997 and founded Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) to fill this gap. The society is non-political, non-racial, non-profit making voluntary organisation and open to all, both Nepalese and non-Nepalese, whatever their faith and tradition.

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Objectives

1. To make Buddhism known to the wider public and to help them understand the benefits of the Buddha's profound teachings,
2. To have a forum for the meeting of Nepalese residents in the UK and others with an interest in Buddha Dharma as a spiritual practice for discussion, exchange of ideas, constructive dialogue and to build Nepalese Buddhist community in the UK etc.,
3. To establish links with similar organisations in the UK, Nepal and other countries,
4. To organise voluntary work to help reduce human suffering in Nepal and other countries, and
5. To promote and publish religious and cultural heritage of Nepal.



L u m b i n i

Journal of The Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK)

Lumbini is the journal of LNBDS (UK) and published annually depending upon funds and written material; and distributed free of charge as Dharma Dana. It is our hope that the journal will serve as a medium for:

1. Communication between the society, the members and other interested groups.
2. Publication of news and activities about Buddhism in the United Kingdom, Nepal and other countries.
3. Explaining various aspects of Dharma in simple and easily understood language for all age groups.
4. Discussion on Dharma through a readers column.

Lumbini is run purely on donation. Therefore, any donations are welcome and greatly appreciated. Cheques/Postal orders should be made payable to Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) or LNBDS (UK) and forwarded to the society.

Lumbini for you...

For the forthcoming issues of Lumbini, we welcome your articles, anecdotes, short stories or news features, which are linked to Nepal and/or Buddhism. Send your contributions and comments to:-

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Please include your full name, address and telephone number. We regret we cannot acknowledge or return items we do not publish.

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Editorial

Happy 2553rd Buddha Day (*Buddha Jayanti, Vesak Day, Swanyapunhi*) and warm wishes from LNBDS! This year is 2553 Buddha Era since the Buddha passed away. 'One who sees the teaching sees me', said The Buddha. The greatest way to pay our respect and homage to the great master is to practise his Noble teaching.

It is 12 years ago that LNBDS (UK) was established. During this period your support, encouragement, constructive criticism and guidance had been a great help in the growth of our society. To continue and expand the society's activities in the future for the benefit of many, your continued support is essential and will be greatly appreciated. To coincide with the twelfth anniversary of the society we are holding an essay competition on 'Buddhist attitude to conflict' this year as in 2007 with the collaboration of Buddhist Youth Group, Kathmandu in Nepal.

Nepal is a living museum of religious shrines and temples. We are proud of our heritage but we seemed to lack knowledge of historical, religious and social background of our heritage. One of such sites is Mahaboudha Temple in Patan, Nepal (front cover) which is an example of the fine craftsmanship of Nepalese showing compassion and devotion to the Buddha.

To be born as a human being is a blessing, a rare opportunity (*dullabho manussa patilabho*). Eating, resting, to have fear and sensual pleasures are common to all living beings, may it be beast or human. Cultivated heart/mind, which is like mirror differentiates us from animals. Concentration and mindfulness cleanses defiled mind, like cleaning a mirror and helps us to differentiate wholesome acts (*Kusala Karma*) from unwholesome acts (*Akusala Karma*). 'The mirror that has no stand' by Venerable Sochu gives us extensive profound teaching on this point. We are indebt to Venerable Sir for such an enlightening article.

The Buddha's teaching is not a dogma to follow with blind faith. Dogma has no place in his teaching. The profound teaching (*Dharma*) is to be grasped with experience along with wisdom (*Panna*) and devotion (*Saddha*). Extracts from Bhante Kovida's book 'An Inquiring Mind's Journey: a book about a life with Buddhism' give some rays on basic Buddhism. We are grateful to Bhante for granting permission to publish extracts from his book.

The Buddha taught 'four noble truth' (*Catu Ariya Sacca*) and 'noble eight fold path' (*Ariya atthangiko Maggo*) in his

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first sermon (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*) 'setting in motion the wheel of the Dhamma'. By grasping the four noble truths one can attain the bliss of *Nirvana*, enlightenment. Taking this to scholastic level Dr. Sunil Kariyakarawana analyses the word '*Ariya*' Noble in his article 'What's 'Noble' about 'Four Noble Truths?': The Meaning of '*Ariya*' in the Pali Canon'. I am sure our readers will benefit from this analytical observation of the term '*Ariya*' used in the noble teaching.

In who is who in Buddhism in Nepal, Venerable Phra Sujano writes a brief biography of late Venerable Pragyananda Mahasthavir, the first Maha Sangha Nayaka of Nepal. Similarly, for those Nepalese who would like to read in their own language, we have included an article on 'Significance of Buddha Day' by Prof. Swasti Ratna Shakya. Mr. Hari Singh Thapa and Mr. Gopi Krishna Prasai contributed fitting poems on 'The Buddha's birth' and 'The Buddha's eye' respectively.

We hope all our readers will enjoy reading this journal, as much as we have enjoyed presenting it to you. May peace and contentment be with you.

'Bhavatu Sabba Mangalam'

Mahabouddha Temple Patan



Main altar of the Mahabouddha Temple (Front Cover)

Mahabouddha temple is situated in the crowded residential area of Patan about 1.5 Km from Durbar square – the palace complex of the Patan Malla kings. This temple was built in the same style as shikhara temple of India. This temple is also known as the temple of thousand Buddhas as every niche and bricks have a small image of Buddha - a total of nine thousand Buddha images. Unfortunately the courtyard where the temple is situated and the entrance leading to it are surrounded by private buildings obscuring the temple completely from main road.

The shrine is a terracotta structure but when it was built was not known for certainty. There were three different versions of when this temple was built. The first version stated that it was built during the regime of King Mahendra Malla, some time before 1585. The second version stated that it was built by a Buddhist devotee named Jiva Raja after his visit to Bodhgaya and the third

version stated that it was built by a Brahmin scholar named Pandit Abhaya Raja in 17th century (1601).

The temple was completely destroyed in the great earthquake of Kathmandu valley in 1934. It was rebuilt to its same original design and specification proving that Nepalese maintained their magnificent architectural skills alive to date.

From the extra bricks left out after reconstruction of the main temple, a small shrine was built which was situated at the right side of the temple. There is a narrow pathway for the people to circumambulate this small temple.

Mahabouddha temple is a popular site for the tourists and for local people. Local people visit this temple and adjacent goddess Bidhyadhari Devi in great numbers to pay their respect.

(Photo by Srijana Shakya)

The mirror that has no stand

✍ Venerable Sochu
Shobo-an, London

The Sixth Chinese Patriarch Eno Daikan (Ch. Hui Neng: 638 – 713), once wrote a short verse:

*There is no Bodhi Tree
The Heart – Mirror has no stand
When there is absolutely nothing
What dust can alight, where?*

It was written in response to a verse by the head monk at the monastery where Eno was staying, who had been asked to compose a verse expressing his insight by the abbot. The head monk's verse went as follows:

*This very body is the Bodhi Tree
The Heart is a bright mirror on a stand
Everyday wipe the mirror clean
So that no dust can alight.*

Knowing how this story ends, with Eno becoming the sixth patriarch, the usual response is to side with the first verse and consider the second verse to be at fault. This tendency to take sides is a typical reaction for 'I', who because of being a delusion is dogged by insecurities and is always secretly yearning for affirmations. If this temptation is yielded to then something is lost. In the original story, the fifth patriarch, who asked the head monk for his verse, upon reading it, told the other monks that if they were to take it to heart and put it into practice then they would surely be delivered from the round of birth and death. Now we know that such a great man would not mislead his students so we can safely take that what he said was true. However, it is also true that he at once realised that his head monk's insight was not advanced and he had not penetrated through to the essence of the Dharma. He did recognise that Eno Daikan had attained such a level of insight in his verse and so passed on the Buddha's robe and bowl to him thus conferring the line of transmission and making the latter the sixth patriarch.

In order to make some sense of this apparent paradox we should look a bit more closely at the two verses and see what they point towards.

This body is the Bodhi tree

The Bodhi tree or tree of Enlightenment is the very tree under which the ascetic Gotama sat prior to becoming The Awakened One. Having reached a point where all that he had been born with he had now left behind and all

that he had achieved by his own efforts also now had dropped off, there was nothing much left just his own life. If we look at the Buddha's life story we get an uncanny feeling that in fact this story is not just that of someone who lived and died twenty-five centuries ago but in fact has much in common with our own individual lives today. We too, are born and by and large are looked after and given what we need to grow up and take care of ourselves. But we too, have to leave home and go and make our own way in the world. Quite often what our parents wanted us to do is not exactly what we want to do and there will have been some disagreement. We then go and make something of ourselves, perhaps we gained wealth and honours of some kind, but there comes a point when we begin to realise that such things do not last forever. We begin to wonder if perhaps there isn't something more dependable on which to lean for support. This becomes very apparent at such times when what we have been doing suddenly becomes redundant. When the children leave home, what then for the parent who has spent years looking after them? Of course, it means a job well done, that the children have now 'flown the nest', but inevitably there is a feeling of loss. Sometimes, if a relationship breaks down, there is too a feeling of aimlessness, or if we are made redundant from our job the same anxiety can arise for the future welfare of our families and ourselves. It is at these times that we, like Prince Gotama, have taken our trips out of the palace and seen for ourselves the reality of 'old age, sickness & death'. In other words the impermanence of life, our affairs and so on. Usually, we manage to scramble back to some kind of normality occupying our time with some other occupation or relationship to compensate for our loss. However by the time the great being who was to become the Buddha sat himself down under the Bodhi Tree there was a new possibility on the horizon. When something unpleasant happens to us we do not look deeply for the causes, we just suppose that the loss of one thing can be repaired by the acquisition of another. However by doing this we lose the opportunity to see how 'I' myself contribute to my own suffering. It was this opportunity that the ascetic Gotama took full advantage of when he separated from those five ascetics and made this great vow. He realised that the answer lay within himself and this is reflected in the Pali Canon when he said to his monks that the world, the beginning of the world, the end of the world and the way that leads to the end of the world lies in this very body. All the objects of meditation such as the Five Skandas, the Eighteen Dhatus, and the Twelve-Linked Chain of Arising

due to Conditions all relate to mindfulness practices rooted in the body and the Mind which it supports.

The Heart is a bright mirror on a stand

This term 'Heart' is the English translation of the Pali/Sanskrit term 'citta' – the seat of consciousness. The formula of the Five Skandas show the components of the Body – Mind: physical form, feeling, perception, mental volitions all arising in sense consciousness. This is what makes up a human being like you and me. It is through the faculty of this 'mirror' that these components can be seen. What is more that each of these components is empty of any trace of self-nature. Through practice, consciousness is refined so that it can see further into the sets of skandas as they arise. So that, in a moment of anger, the 'He has taken my parking space; how dare he!' can be seen not in terms of 'I', 'me' & 'mine' but as sets of skandas. This transformation of consciousness from the personal to the impersonal way of seeing not only prevents the passions from taking too strong a hold but also enables the best response to the situation to be seen. This is why the first step on the Noble Eightfold Path is 'Right View' which then naturally leads onto Right Thought, Right Speech and Right Action.

However, the Buddha makes it clear in the accompanying formula of the Eighteen Dhatus that even consciousness is not independent but interlinked with objects of mental sense and the organ of mental consciousness. This prevents the erroneous view that there is self in consciousness. Thus the mirror too must have a stand on which to rest.

Everyday wipe the mirror clean

Now we are in familiar territory with our daily life practice, often called Mindfulness. As in sitting meditation, whenever the awareness arises of having become caught up in thought – streams to gently, but firmly, bring awareness back to this moment. In this way awareness of living fully in this moment, with what the body is doing, is cultivated.

So that no dust may alight

The six senses are also called the 'dusts' and sometimes 'robbers'. This is because on the one hand, like dust on a mirror they prevent clear seeing. On the other hand they 'steal' the heart away into an endless round of picking & choosing. Wanting now this, running away from something I don't like, dreaming about how things could be, or should be etc. So the dusts are not allowed to become attached to the mirror and the heart does not therefore become fixated upon things or ideas.

This is all well and good; however there is a problem here too. The one idea that is perhaps most fixated in the heart, for most of us, is that of a separate 'I'. In particular the conviction that for anything to happen 'I' must do it; I am the perennial 'do-er'. If there is seeing then 'I' am the seer; in hearing 'I' am the hearer and especially in thinking am 'I' not the thinker? In wanting it is 'I' who wants; in understanding 'I' am the one who must comprehend and so on. All these activities are seen as revolving around 'I'. But this is just the illusion that the Buddha squashed in his Lion's Roar of – Anatta.

Even with mindfulness practice and sitting meditation is there not a feeling that it is 'my' practice? 'I' must meditate, 'I' must become more mindful or aware; from this the desire for progress comes along and a corresponding disappointment if things do not happen fast enough for 'me'. So insight must see into all these errors too and one by one let go of them. Now, looking closer, insight discovers that this 'I' who 'does' all these things in fact is nothing but a conception in the Mind – Heart supported by all the emotional reactions of wanting and aversion. This 'I' is a stream of thoughts which appears when the thoughts think about 'me'. Beyond that there is no substance to 'me' at all! Thus in the absence of thoughts, in the absence of conceptions, 'I' too disappears. This is the insight of Anatta. However, if all conceptions drop off then so too do thoughts about mirrors, stands, dusts, Buddha, practices, Nirvana etc. Such conceptions, useful and necessary though they are, can end up getting in the way of the quiet open-ness that is the true nature of the unchanging Mind – Heart. So in the end these too, if they are not to become in any way 'mine', must also drop off. Thus we have the matching poem of the Sixth Patriarch, which far from contradicting the Head monk's verse forms a complimentary matching pair.

To any 'I' this no-thingness seems terrifying, but in truth this no-thingness is the True Nature of things, not some time in the future but right now. Out of this no-thingness everything arises we look around and here it is! So not to make false conceptions about this anatta/no-thingness either.

In the absence of this conception of a separate 'I' then the spaciousness of this 'no-thingness' has room for all beings and the warmth and the compassion we hear so much about in Buddhism naturally wells up from the heart. And being too much for one heart goes out and touches the hearts of those around us.

'The Gift of Truth Excels all other Gifts'

Buddhism in Modern Society

Extracts From: An Inquiring Mind's Journey: a book about a life with Buddhism

✍ Bhante Kovida

Q: Do you have to become an official Buddhist in order to understand the Buddha's teachings?

A: No, you don't have to become an official Buddhist in order to understand the Dharma.

All you really need is a sensitive, inquiring mind and a deep wish to understand yourself and the nature of existence better. Many Buddhists do not understand what the Buddha taught; they say they're Buddhists because their parents were Buddhists by tradition.

Similarly, many people call themselves Christians because their parents and grandparents were Christians but only some of them really understand the teachings of Jesus Christ.

They may go to the temple or church every Sunday but they remain ignorant and superstitious. The Buddha wasn't a "Buddhist" and Jesus wasn't a "Christian". Both teachers were great mystics and spiritual beings who had made the effort to overcome human weaknesses and defilements—ignorance and delusion, craving and clinging, hatred and ill will. Personally, I do not consider myself a "Buddhist"; rather I'm a student of the Dharma, the teachings of the Buddha. Siddhartha Gotama did not become a Buddha through Buddhism; he was awakened to the Dharma [the truths of existence, the laws of Nature]. You can say that the Dharma produced a Buddha, and the Buddha proclaimed the Dharma so that we, too, can become awakened to the Dharma and attain freedom from suffering, ignorance and delusion.

In the last twenty-five centuries thousands of books have been written which seek to elaborate or simplify the Dharma. Religions have been formed around it and countless practices [rites, rituals, ceremonies, etc.] have been advised in its name, all of which tend to separate the Dharma from life, from everyday existence—all of which glorify and venerate the pathfinder [the Buddha, various mystics and their followers]—yet which ignore the Timeless Path and the qualities of nobility needed to even begin on the spiritual journey. This ignorance [ignore-ance] in which the bewilderment of suffering and confusion have their base, has been the reason why the one continuing advice of the Buddha has been continually ignored. What is this advice? Satipatthana [mindfulness, calm attention]. To be mindful of life. To pay attention, to be alert and awake! To examine and reflect sensibly and without preset views and opinions the physical and mental states of phenomena. To be aware of "what is" from moment to moment.

Each of us must therefore be mindful as we tread the ancient way of the Wise Ones. Each of us must see the path through our own eyes. Each must know the Dharma through one's own experience. Just reading books is not enough; the value of the Dharma isn't to be found in books or in rites, rituals and ceremonies. Those are external appearances of Dharma; just fingers pointing to the moon, they're not the realization of Dharma as a personal experience. If you realise the Dharma you realise your own mind, you see the truth there. When the truth becomes apparent it cuts off the stream of delusion. We must be mindful of our methods and conditioned habits of reacting, of forming opinions and prejudices. Through mindfulness, we may strip life of its illusions and complexities, its pretenses and hallucinations, its fears, anxieties, tensions and so on. We are able to experience the wordless truth of seeing things as they are in the flame of attention, in the clarity of perception, free from the conditioning/programming of the mind—labels, judgments, comparisons, criticisms, likes and dislikes, desires and aversions. The Buddha taught the way of Satipatthana through which the Dharma may be clearly realized.

Mindfulness and reflection in daily life lead to insight, self-knowledge, wisdom, compassion, freedom and harmony.

Q: Do you have to become a monk or nun to follow the path of the Buddha?

A: No, it isn't necessary although being a monastic does give one more time to devote oneself to study, mind cultivation, and reflection. One can practice equally as well as a lay person; the important thing is the seriousness of one's intention and the effort made. If one has an inquiring, contemplative mind then one will be motivated to go deeply into the Dharma to attain self-knowledge and increased awareness, mindfulness and attention, which lead to wisdom, compassion and freedom. Some monks and nuns do not have inquiring minds; they become monastics for reasons other than spiritual—family expectation, escaping an unhappy marriage or a stressful life situation or poverty, and so on. Some monastics become lazy and corrupt; some remain worldly-minded, ignorant and deluded. Instead of cultivating humility and simple living, they become obsessed with building temples and monuments, and how to get more funds for their egoistic schemes. They try to glorify Buddhism in the vain hope of glorifying themselves in the process but they cannot escape from suffering.

Sometimes becoming a monk or nun can be a hindrance to awakening: without proper training and guidance the deluded ego gets easily caught up in the image of being someone very holy and special and so a lot of suffering and conflict is experienced. As in lay life, deluded monks and nuns, if they get into positions of power or influence, can also cause a lot of suffering and problems in the temple and monastic environment.

Power is indeed corrupting, aggressive, violent and destructive unless there is wisdom, compassion and mindfulness.

Q: What is the most important thing in following the Buddha's path?

A: The most important thing in following the Buddha's path is first recognizing our human defilements [ignorance and delusion, craving and clinging, hatred and ill-will] and then making the effort to purify our minds and hearts of these defilements which cause us suffering and dis-ease, and disharmony in society and the world at large. Liberation means letting go of suffering. The Buddha's advise was: "Do good, refrain from unwholesome actions, and purify the mind." Many Buddhists do not make the effort to purify their minds so they remain greedy, self-centered, fearful and superstitious, envious and jealous, proud, arrogant, and conceited, and resentful of others. In short, they remain ignorant and deluded. They do not know the freedom and virtue of loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Following the Noble Eight-fold Path of wholesome living, mind cultivation and wisdom leads to the ending of suffering. In today's world, it is essential that we learn to relax and let go of tension, stress, agitation and anxiety in order to recognize our defilements and to look deeply into the true nature of existence, into the way things are. Mental repose is essential to mind training and cultivation, to mindfulness and insight.

If one reflects on the life of the Buddha, there are essentially three qualities that stand out: renunciation and simplicity, loving kindness and compassion, wisdom and mindfulness. It is no coincidence that these qualities lead to the attainment of Nirvana, a state of peace and contentment. In the context of the three defilements and the repeated arising of suffering, discontentment and dis-ease, we can see that renunciation and simplicity is the antidote for craving and clinging, loving kindness and compassion is the antidote for hatred and ill will, and wisdom and mindfulness is the antidote for ignorance and delusion. Through cultivating these three qualities one is able to eliminate the defilements and attain the peace and bliss of Nirvana. So it is no coincidence that these qualities should stand out so prominently in the Buddha's life.

Q: How is the Buddha's teaching relevant today in modern society?

A: There's a great deal of mental suffering in modern society and the Buddha's teaching is about understanding the nature of suffering and how to overcome suffering. He called this the Four Noble Truths—the truth of suffering and mental dis-ease, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

This teaching was relevant 2500 years ago and it's most relevant today in our consumer, materialistic society where there's a lot of stress, self-centered craving, greed and attachment, fear and insecurity, frustration, loneliness, isolation, depression and sadness.

Although people today are more educated, sophisticated and literate, they still suffer from ignorance and delusion, craving and clinging, hatred and ill will. In modern society people have an absurd sense of "I", "me", and "mine", they are far too self-centered and take themselves far too seriously, and so they experience a great deal of suffering, craving and fear.

Most people do not understand themselves, their own minds and the laws of Nature.

Their minds are restless and confused and so they're caught by greed, resentment and delusion. There is constant grasping and clinging, craving and attachment to worldly things including to ideas, concepts, ideals, views and opinions, to personal preferences.

There is a great deal of fear, anxiety and insecurity, including the fear of death and of letting go of attachments. Due to ignorance and delusion, we do not see death as a natural phenomenon any longer. We see it as the cruel end to the self or ego-personality with its many attachments, its pleasures, enjoyments and habits. We don't see that death, sickness and old age exist simply because there is birth of the physical body; that all these natural conditions are inseparable, and that there is no permanent self or ego personality within us. All that we are is a mind-body process consisting of water, earth, fire and air. The ego-personality is only conditioning based on memory and past experiences. Our very existence is based on constant change and impermanence yet due to ignorance [ignorance] we crave permanency in our relationships, in pleasure and enjoyment, in being and becoming, in having and possessing, in our attachments, and so there is the fear of these things coming to an end—we don't want people, material things, and situations that we're attached to change. So there is suffering—craving and clinging, fear and anxiety, frustration, despair, and dis-ease.

The realisation of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and the non-existence of a permanent, concrete and separate

self leads to peace, harmony and freedom. In Dharma practice, we come to realise the unsatisfactoriness of sensory experience; when we expect to be satisfied from sensory objects or experiences we can only be temporarily satisfied, gratified maybe, momentarily happy—and then it changes. This is because there is no point in sensory consciousness that has a permanent quality or essence. So the sensory experience is always a changing one, but out of ignorance and delusion, we tend to expect a great deal from it. We tend to demand, hope and create all kinds of illusory expectations, only to feel terribly disappointed, frustrated, despairing, sorrowful and fearful. Once we understand non-self, then the burden of life is lifted. We'll be at peace with the world. When we see beyond the conditioned self, beyond the idea of “me” and “mine”, we no longer cling to happiness and security, and then we can be truly happy, peaceful and secure. We are able to let go without struggle—to be light, innocent, joyful and free. By knowing our own body, heart and mind, we can let go of grasping and clinging, let go of mental—emotional states instead of being caught and deluded by them. We can be content with little, with simple living and wise understanding.

Nature of suffering [dukkha]

Dukkha is anything that disturbs the natural peace and balance of the mind. The mind [and body] is an aspect of nature, like the leaves, grass, pond, etc. It has its own peace and equanimity but this is easily disturbed because it follows moods and emotions, it reacts and becomes upset, like the wind that blows the leaves and grass around and disturbs the calm surface of the pond. So, dukkha covers the whole range of human experience—craving, greed, envy, frustration, disappointment, despair, depression, sadness, sorrow, grief, hatred, jealousy, resentment, ill-will, fear, worry, anxiety, guilt, obsession, loneliness, boredom, and so on.

Dukkha also means that all things—physical, mental and emotional—are impermanent and transitory, and are therefore unsatisfactory and unreliable. Nothing in the world—people, material possessions, sense pleasures and enjoyment, feelings, ideas, etc.—can give us permanent happiness, satisfaction and security. After all, happiness [and unhappiness] is only temporary mental states, only changing conditions of the mind. A happy feeling, a pleasant sensation or experience, a comfortable situation is not permanent, it doesn't last forever. It has to change sooner or later. And when it does, it produces mental pain, disease, frustration and disappointment, and despair. The Buddha realised that the world—conditioned existence, inside and outside of ourselves—was a constant, ceaseless

बुद्धको जन्म

नेपालको माटो बुद्धको जन्म
विश्वलाई दिए शान्तिको धर्म
मोहलाई त्यागी मोक्षको मार्ग
जप र तप सुकर्म आर्ज

बुद्धको ज्ञान जंगलको यात्रा
त्यागनु नै भला सन्सारी जात्रा
जन्मदै हिंडे सात पाईला गन्थे
हिंसा र हत्या नगर्नु भन्थे

कमलको फुल सात पाईला टेके
आश्चर्य माने संसारले देखे
ज्योतिको ज्वाला जगाई लियौं
नेपाली शिर उच्च पारी दियौं

बुद्धले दिए अर्ति र उपदेश
ऐस आरम छोडी सन्तको भेष
दुनियांलाई दिए मुक्तिको बाटो
पवित्र पारे नेपालको माटो

यहि बुद्धि ज्ञान लिएर मन्मा
शान्तिको ज्योति फैल्याई जनमा
जुनीको मोक्ष बुद्धको ज्ञान
श्रद्धा र सुमन चढाउछु पाऊमा ।

हरि सिंह थापा

अध्यक्ष, नेपाली साहित्य विकास परिषद् युके

flow of changing and unsatisfactory states. Nothing is fixed and everlasting.

Dukkha also includes birth, sickness, ageing and death; being with unpleasant aggravating persons and conditions—hot or cold weather, rain, floods, storms, earthquake, etc.; being separated from loved ones and pleasant conditions, not getting what one desires, not having things the way we would like them to be, unfulfilled wishes and expectations, and so on.

The cause of Dukkha is mainly due to self-centered craving and attachment, grasping and clinging. There is craving for pleasant experiences, craving for material things, craving for eternal life, and craving for eternal death. We all enjoy

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WHO IS WHO IN BUDDHISM IN NEPAL

Late Ven. Pragyananda Mahasthavir (1900 - 1993)

The First Sangha Mahanayaka and the Father of Theravada Buddhism in modern Nepal

Phra S. M. Sujano

‘There was Buddhist monks only in wall paintings, there was no living Buddhist monks left on earth.’ This fact represents the situation in Nepal before 1930 (Amritananda, The History of Theravada Buddhism in Nepal). It indicates the extent to which Buddhism and Buddhist monks were concealed from the country of its founder’s birth place, Nepal. After more than 600 years this situation was making known in 1930 with the re-appearance of ven. Karmasheel or ven. Pragyananda Mahasthavir the first *Sangha Mahanayaka* (chief monk) of modern Nepal. He was born into the Buddhist family of Mr. Harkha Bir singha Tuladhar and Mrs Mohan Maya Tuladhar, a family of a traditional physician *uday* of Itumbahal, Kathmandu in 1900. He was named Vaidya Kulman Singh Tuladhar. He received his formal education at Durbar School, and went on to study Ayurvedic traditional medicine which later became his profession. This brought him in to contact with Buddhism in 1928 while he was in Lhasa.



Mr. Kulaman was married and living in Lhasa at the time when he was inspired by his client Ven. Mahapragya (then Tibetan Ghelung). He then decided to become a monk in the Tibetan Ghelung tradition with Forankha Rimpoche in 1928. He took ghelung vows and was named Thile Chhulthim, which means Karmasheel in Nepalese. After becoming a ghelung, he went to meditate for several months at Kapakya and went to Kalingpong. Via his pilgrimage to Buddhist sites at Kusinagar, Ven. Karmasheel met with Ven. U. Chandramani, a Burmese Buddhist monk living in India. He was greatly inspired by ven. Chandramani’s practice and knowledge of Buddhism, which he thought to be more real and authentic teachings of the Buddha. Under the advice and inspiration of Ven. Chandramani, he re-ordained into Theravada Buddhism from the Tibetan tradition in 1930 and was named Sramanera karmasheel. He studied Theravada Buddhist doctrines, philosophies and basic ceremonial activities with Ven. Chandramani following his ordination and decided to visit Nepal with the aspiration of propagating the Buddha’s teachings under the Umbrella of Theravada Buddhism. At that time, the local Buddhists had long forgotten the true convention of Nepal being the birthplace of the Buddha. Instead they

adopted the Vajrayana or sahayana sect of Tantric Buddhism (Vandya, 1978, p. 11).

Despite facing many difficulties, he managed to get into the Kathmandu Valley and stayed at Kindol Vihara. His arrival was rather an unusual sight for the people of Kathmandu. He was the first yellow-robed monk since the historic suppression of the King Jayasthiti Malla about 600 years earlier. He also faced hardship from his friends and family who found his decision to be a Theravadin recluse unacceptable. However, his decision was firm and he was determined to serve the dhamma. He was accompanied by lay Buddhist Dasha Ratna (later Ven. Dhammaloka) and Loka Ratna at Kindol vihara, when he started his propagation. His task at that time was politically risky, socially tedious and philosophically challenging. He was received with mixed feelings of public curiosity and apathy on one side, to the exhibition of malice, malignity and ill-treatment on the other side (Vandya, p.14). He was even ordered to exile from the country by the government along with other members in 1944. Nevertheless, his determination to serve the dhamma would never diminish for the rest of his life.

In 1932, he went to Arkhan, Burma to study both theoretical and practical Buddhism for two and half years at Lemado chaun Vihara, where under the preceptorship of Ven. U. Manawa Mahathera, he took a higher ordination (*upasampada*) as Bhikkhu Pragyananda. He was known by this name for the continuation of his life. He travelled to many Buddhist temples and centres for Buddhist studies abroad to further contribute towards the revival of the Buddhist movement in Nepal. He finally returned back to Nepal in 1940 with even greater confidence in the Buddha’s teachings. He engaged himself more vigorously in the task of promoting of the recently revived Buddhism in Nepal.

Slowly but steadily Pragyananda’s work inspired the people of Nepal. Many disciples including men and women took ordination in Buddhism under his guidance and helped to revive Buddhism in the country. To this day, Theravada Buddhism has been reintroduced for

almost 70 years in Nepal as a result of the dedication of Pragyana in his lifelong promotion and propagation of Buddhism. Apart from religious propagation, he engaged in various social developments, in particular gender equality and caste eradication. He was a pioneer and incomparable person whose influence and impact on Buddhist Nepal will remain forever. He travelled far and wide forging close relationships abroad and became an inspirational person for a new generation of Theravada Buddhism. He was awarded title 'Ariya Dhammarakkhita Nepal Buddhasasana Vamsalankara Siri' in 1991 by government of Myanmar and title 'Bhasa Java' from Nepal Bhasa Association of Nepal. He was an influential writer, poet, traditional physician, artist, multi-linguist, great speaker, figure head of Theravada Buddhism and one of the most important and influential persons of the modern era in Nepal. Although, he departed this life in 1993 in peace, he left his legacy of spreading Buddhism in the country of its birth for later generations to carry on.

Sayings/Quotations

Actions speak louder than words. "Merely to call oneself a Buddhist is of little value." – HH Dalai Lama

Teach by Example. "Before teaching others, before changing others, we ourselves must change. We must be honest, sincere and kind hearted." - HH Dalai Lama

The Goal of Religion. "The purpose of religion is not to build beautiful churches or temples, but to cultivate positive human qualities, such as tolerance, generosity and love." – HH Dalai Lama

"If anyone calls you a fool, agree immediately because it is true." – Soko Morinaga Roshi

Do as you would be done by. "Since at the beginning and end of our lives we are so dependent on others' kindness, how can it be that in the middle we neglect kindness towards others." – HH Dalai Lama

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes." – Mark Twain



Some sayings from Tipitaka

There are five contemplations which ought to be practised by everyone, bhikkhus or layfolks, men and women:

'I am certain to become old. I cannot avoid ageing'.

'I am certain to become ill and diseased. I cannot avoid illness'.

'I am certain to die. I cannot avoid death'.

'All things dear and beloved will not last. They will be subject to change and separation'.

'My kamma (past and present actions) is my only property, kamma is my only heritage, kamma is the only cause of my being, kamma is my only kin, my only protectiton. Whatever actions I do, good or bad, I shall become their heir.'

- Anguttara Nikaya, Pancaka Nipata Pali (para 57)

There are three root causes for the origination of actions (kamma): Greed, hatred and ignorance. An action done in greed, hatred and ignorance will ripen wherever the individual is reborn; and wherever the action ripens, there the individual reaps the fruit (vipaka) of that action, be it in this life, in the next life or in future existences.

- Anguttara Nikaya, Tika Nipata Pali (para 38)

"True friends are rare to come by these days; a show of friendship very often hides some private ends. Man's mind is defiled by self-interest. So, becoming disillusioned, roam alone like a rhinoceros."

- Khaggavisana Sutta

"Not by birth does one become an outcast, not by birth does one become a brahmana; By one's action one becomes an outcast, by one's action one becomes a brahmana."

- Vasala Sutta

"As a mother even with her life protects her only child, so let one cultivate immeasurable loving-kindness towards all living beings."

- Metta Sutta

बुद्ध सम्बत २५५३ स्वाँया पुन्हिया लसताय् सकसितं दुनुगलंसिं भिन्तुना!
"भवतु सब्ब मंगलं"

What's 'Noble' About 'Four Noble Truths': The Meaning of 'Ariya' in the Pali Canon

✍ Dr. Sunil Kariyakarawana

Buddhist Chaplain to HM Forces

1. Introduction:

‘The Four Noble Truths’ (*catu ariya sacca*) is the most central teaching in Buddhism. This embodies and encompasses all other teachings that the Buddha expounded within forty-five years in His dispensation of Dhamma. Following is a short exposition of this teaching as presented in the Pali Canon:

1. The Noble truth of suffering (dukkha-sacca)
2. The Noble Truth of the origin of suffering (samudaya-sacca)
3. The Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering (nirodha-sacca)
4. The Noble Truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering (maggasacca)

“Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of suffering: birth is suffering; aging is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; union with what is displeasing is suffering; separation from what is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants is suffering; in brief, the five aggregates subject to clinging are suffering”.

“Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the origin of suffering: it is this craving which leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight and lust, seeking delight here and there; that is craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, craving for extermination”.

“Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: it is the remainderless fading away and cessation of that same craving, the giving up and relinquishing of it, freedom from it, non-reliance on it”.

“Now this, bhikkhus, is the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering: it is this Noble Eightfold Path; that is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration”.

(SN 56.11)

Much has already been written about the teaching of the ‘Four Noble Truths’ by many scholars and practitioners from several different angles and perspectives. The aim of this short essay is to re-visit the term ‘*Ariya*’ in this context which is also extendable to other contexts in the Pali Canon and investigate why the Buddha has consistently used this

term as in ‘*Ariya-sacca*’ ‘noble truth’, ‘*Ariya-magga*’ ‘noble path’, ‘*Ariya-puggala*’ ‘noble being’ in many a discourse with a clear emphasis of the term and frequency of its use.

1.1 Common vs. Specific use of ‘*Ariya*’

The term ‘*Ariya*’ is often translated into English as ‘noble’ and therefore prima facie it tends to convey a general sense that denotes something of a higher value, something altruistic and spiritual as it is found in many contexts as in: ‘noble deed’ or ‘noble friend’ ‘noble personality’ etc., meaning something or someone with higher spiritual qualities.

The term ‘*Ariya*’ too, particularly in the Indian context, had acquired a common connotation similar to the meaning covered by the word ‘noble’ in English. In Brahmanism, for instance, the term ‘*Ariya*’ refers to the ‘noble’ people who migrated to India. In the Sanskrit literature including Maha-bharat and Gita, term ‘*Arya*’ is used in a similar sense.

Something that is common to both ‘*Arya*’ in Sanskrit and ‘noble’ in English thus is that they both can refer to mundane ‘things’ or ‘people’ which even fall outside of ‘spiritual domain’. Hence the general use of the term. Such uses certainly are subjective in the sense that they describe the perspective of the person who uses it. In other words, the ‘nobility’ used in such contexts may not have any universal application and therefore fail to retain any objective sense or connotation.

In Buddhism, however, the term ‘*Arya/Ariya*’ has a specific spiritual meaning. Buddha does not seem to use this in any sectarian sense. In the very first sermon of the Buddha, in *Dhamma Cakka Pavattana Sutta* (SN 56.11) ‘Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma’ for example, this term is used by the Buddha to denote a very specific spiritual sense and experience as described as follows:

“Thus, bhikkhus, in regard to things unheard before, there arose in me vision, knowledge, wisdom, true knowledge, and light”.

“So long, Bhikkhus, as my knowledge and vision of these ‘Four Noble Truths’ as they really are in their ‘three phases’

and ‘twelve aspects’ was not thoroughly purified in this way, I did not claim to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its devas, Mara, and Brahma, in this generation with its ascetics and Brahmins, its devas and humans. But when my knowledge and vision of these ‘Four Noble Truths’ as they really are in their three phases and twelve aspects was thoroughly purified in this way, then I claimed to have awakened to the unsurpassed perfect enlightenment in this world with its devas, Mara and Brahma, in this generation with its ascetics and brahmins, its devas and humans. The knowledge and vision arose in me, unshakable is the liberation in my mind. This is my last birth, now there is no more renewed existence”

(SN 56.11)

2. Issue

Though the commentators interpret the compound ‘*Ariya-sacca*’ in the above passage to mean: “truth of the Noble one(s)”, “truth for a noble one”, i.e., “truth that will make one a noble” or some times, “noble truth”, the above description of the Buddha’s enlightenment experience certainly raises serious questions in interpreting the term ‘*Ariya*’ as ‘noble’ given its connotations described above.

Prof. Peter Harvey (2003) in his article on “The Ennobling Realities of the Pain and Its Origin: Reflections on the First two *ariya-saccas* and their Translations” notices this problem:

“It actually sounds a little odd to call a truth ‘noble’ and the reason the ‘noble ones’ (who are either partially or fully enlightened: Stream enterers, once-returners, non-returners and Arahants, along with the Buddhas) are as they are is precisely because they have had insight into *Ariya saccas*: ‘seeing’ them with the Dhamma-eye is what makes a person a stream-enterer or higher”.
(P.360)

Then he proposes to translate the term as “ennobling truths”:

“... I thus prefer ‘ennobling truth as an apposite rendering for *ariya-sacca*. In ‘*an introduction to Buddhism*, I translated *ariya* as *Holi*, to emphasize the numinous quality associated with this word in Buddhism, but am now happier talking of the ‘ennobling Truths’.

(P 360-370)

Dr. Rupert Gethin (1998) correctly points out that the

word that is being qualified by ‘*Ariya*’ (*ariya-sacca*) is also not a propositional truth:

“The Word *satya* (Pali *sacca*) can certainly mean truth, but it might equally be rendered as ‘real’ or ‘actual thing’. That is, we are not dealing here with propositional truths with which we must either agree or disagree, but with four ‘true things’, or realities, whose nature, we are told, the Buddha finally understood on the night of his awakening. (p.60).

Gethin’s intuition is quite correct here and the truths that are being discussed here are not the kind of truths that we ordinarily talk about. Nor can ‘*Ariya*’ the qualifying term to such ‘realities’ therefore be a set of values or sectarian epithets. A reasonable characterisation of ‘*Ariya-saccas*’, therefore, would be something like: ‘absolute realities’ mainly because they denote something which go far beyond any worldly descriptions of things.

Better rendering of the Pali term ‘*Ariya-sacca*’ thus seems to be ‘absolute reality’ rather than ‘noble truths’, ‘Holy’, ‘ennobling truths’.

Buddha’s description of the ‘*paticca-samuppada*’ (theory of dependent origination) which is intrinsically connected to the ‘second absolute truth’ (*samudaya-sacca*) (the noble truth of the Origin of Suffering) by ‘four’ following terms strengthen this point further:

1. tathata ‘objectivity’
2. avitathata ‘absence of exceptions’
3. anannatata ‘invariability’
4. idha-paccayata ‘conditionality’

In the *Maha-Satipattana Sutta* (DN22) ‘The Great Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness, the ‘*Ariya-magga*’ this path is described as the ‘only’ or ‘single-most’ path (*ekayana*) for liberation.

In semantic terms, translating and trying to understand ‘*Ariya-sacca*’ as ‘noble-truths’ thus seems not only to dilute the intended meaning of the term but also can be quite misleading. All descriptions of the term ‘*Ariya*’ that the Buddha makes as shown above are unique set of circumstances which may better be characterised as “absolutes” and therefore trying to fit such realities into subjective and sectarian words like ‘noble’ or ‘Holy’ does not seem to be appropriate.

Why has then the Buddha Himself chosen to use such a common term like ‘*Ariya*’ which obviously has been in

the contemporary use in the language and loaded with different connotations? Answer to this question indeed points to something quite interesting concerning the Buddha's choice of language.

3. 'Re-defining' the terms

One remarkable characteristic that emerges in the early Buddhist scriptures is the Buddha's use of language. Though the repetitions are quite common (possibly to avoid ambiguities) it is always quite concise, cohesive, connected to one's own experience. Buddha always chose the simple language which is quite expressive and economical. The discourses therefore are formulaic. There's hardly any term, word or phrase that can be newly added to or subtracted from a given discourse to make the presentation better.

The other important fact is that the Buddha chose to ascribe new meaning to old terms which some scholars describe as "filling new wines in old bottles! Most of the terms Buddha used, specially the religious or spiritual terms, were the terms that were already in use in the contemporary society. Buddha however in most cases added new meanings to them. **karma, dharma, mokshya, brahamana** are few examples. They all had different semantic value in the contemporary philosophical and religious context. Buddha kept the same terms but gave new definitions to them. The content of the terms in the Buddha dhamma thus vary significantly to the ordinary meaning of the terms.

The practical value of that is it enables ordinary masses to relate to the concept easily and then the Buddha points how the use of such word in his teaching differs from the rest of the other teachings/spiritual paths.

Consider the term 'Karma' for instance. It literally means intentional/volitional 'action' 'deed'. However this was understood in the Hindu context as 'pre-destination', the effects of something that is not possible for an individual to change. The Buddha however, reverted to the original literary meaning of the word and formulated His theory of '**Kamma**' on that basis by re defining the existing term.

Brahmana may not necessarily be a person born to a high caste (from the mouth of the creator Brahma) as it was traditionally understood by people, but one who well-conducts one's life developing higher spiritual qualities.

'**Ariya**' too seems to be such another term that the Buddha used creatively. While it is possible for the term '**ariya**' to capture the ordinary spiritual virtues of the existing term,

in order to fully understand it one has to follow it all the way through in one's practice.

4. "Absolute" qualities of '**Arya**'

When the Buddha's description of the '**Arya-saccas**' are carefully considered they all point to a set of "absolute" unchangeable and unchallengeable realities. Such characteristics as birth, aging, decaying, death/demise and our responses to things are indeed absolute realities. They are not just propositional truths, or subjective realities but are universal characteristics which are universal afflictions.

For example, consider how the Buddha defines birth:

" And what, monks, is **birth**? In whatever beings, of whatever group of beings, there is birth, coming-to-be, coming forth, the appearance of the aggregates, the acquisition of the sense-bases, that monks is called birth."

" And what is **aging**? In whatever beings, of whatever group of beings, there is aging, decrepitude, broken teeth, grey hair, wrinkled skin, shrinking with age, decay of the sense-faculties that, monks, is called aging.

" And what is **death**? In whatever beings, of whatever group of beings, there is a passing away, a removal, a cutting-off, a disappearance, a death a dying, an ending, a cutting off of the aggregates, a discarding of the body, that, monks, is called the death.

....

The above definitions of 'birth', 'aging', 'decay', 'death' and other characteristics are not simple occurrences of things that we ordinarily call by those terms. The list include far more things than that. For example, appearance, cessations and disappearance of a sense faculty is also called by those terms respectively because they exhibit the same sorts of characteristics as other commonly called 'birth', 'aging' and 'death'. Nothing come under those fundamental characteristics fail to escape the list whether it is animate or inanimate or an 'object' or an 'animate being'.

This clearly shows that the Buddha was referring to certain fundamental characteristics/phenomena that He captured through His divine eye, through the direct experience with the help of His own enlightenment wisdom.

5. Conclusion

The term '**ariya-sacca**' thus seems to capture much more than what we ordinarily understand from the English term 'noble'. The description of Dhamma as 'come and see'

not 'come and believe' stems from this 'absolute reality' which is to be grasped by every individual by oneself. If some thing is a reality one must see it for oneself even the Buddha cannot show it to one. For this reason the Buddha stated 'Buddhas are there to show the path, one has to make all efforts to see it.

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हे जेठ केठजइ thet एठपुछे इ
एठपुछे जौं बोवपुइ हवरह एठपुछे.

~ Lao Tse ~



*We wish all readers Happy
2553rd Buddha Jayanti!*

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बुद्धका आँखा

गोपीकृष्ण प्रसाई
लण्डन, यु के

बुद्धका आँखा

शान्तिका आँखा

वाचुसंगको सार्थकता

अनि भाईचाराका आँखा

विश्वबन्धुत्वका आँखा

लुम्बिनीमा बलेको शान्तिको दियो

नेपाल र नेपालीको गौरव

हाम्रै भूमिमा भगवान जन्मेको थियो

आज संसारलाई हेरिरहेछन् यी आँखा

अहंकारीलाई सत्मार्गमा ल्याउन

अभिमानीलाई सचेतना जगाउन

यी आँखाहरुमा विशाल आकाश आँट्न सक्छ

यी आँखाहरुमा सिंगै पृथ्वी बस्न सक्छ

मानव सभ्यातमा प्रेमको सद्भाव बढिरहेछ

शान्तिको अतृप्ति मनको अन्तरमा गढिरहेछ

मनको शान्ति चाहन्छन् मानिसहरु

युद्धले प्रताडित यो दुनिया

तनका शान्ति चाहन्छन मानिसहरु

यसरी आज जताततै बुद्ध दर्शनको खाँचो छ

शान्ति सौहार्दता र प्रेम

जुन कुरा नेपाललाई चाहिएको छ

गौतम बुद्धको देश नेपाल

लुम्बिनीबाट शान्तिको परेवाहरु उडिरहेछन्

बुद्धका आँखा अनि शान्तिका परेवाहरु

एशियाको ज्योती र ब्रह्माण्डमा फैलिएका शान्ति ध्वनीहरु

अहा कति राम्रो सहस्रब्दी

कति मीठो बुद्धको आर्शिवाचन

ती बुद्धका बाँचिरहेका आँखाहरु

ती बुद्धका हाँसिरहेका आँखाहरु

सारा संसारमा प्रेमको गीत गाउदै नाँचिरहेका आँखाहरु ।

आज वैशाख शुक्ल पुर्णिमा अर्थात बुद्ध पुर्णिमाको दिन सम्पूर्ण मानव जगतले नेपालका महाज्ञानी शाक्यपुत्र महामानव गौतम बुद्धलाई अति आदर तथा श्रद्धा भक्तिका साथ विश्वकै परम पुज्य गुरुको रूपमा स्मरण गर्दछन् । त्यसैले यो बुद्ध पुर्णिमाको दिन सम्पूर्ण मानव जगतको लागि अतिनै श्रद्धा भक्तिको पवित्र दिन हो । शान्तिका अग्रनायक महामानव शाक्यमुनि गौतम बुद्धको जीवनीको प्रमुख तीनवटा घटनाहरूसित सम्बन्धित यस वैशाख पुर्णिमाको दिनलाई ठूलो श्रद्धा र भक्तिका साथ विश्व भरमा नै बुद्ध जयन्तीको रूपमा मनाइन्छ ।

शाक्यमुनि गौतम बुद्धको जन्म आज भन्दा ठिक २६३२ वर्ष अघि शाक्यहरूको अञ्जन सम्वत् ६८ मा (हाल शाक्यहरूको अञ्जनसम्वत् २७०० वर्ष हो) अर्थात इस्वी पुर्व ६२३ (हाल इस्वी सन् २००९ हो) को वैशाख शुक्ल पुर्णिमाको दिन हाल नेपाल संघिय गणतन्त्र राज्यको तौलिहवा जिल्ला अन्तर्गत पर्ने तत्कालिन कपिलवस्तु गणराज्यको एक सुन्दर शान्त तथा मनमोहक लुम्बिनी शालोद्यानमा भएको थियो । जन्मना साथ सात पाइला हिडेको र उत्तर दिशा तिर हेरेर एक औला मात्र ठडाएर 'अगो हो मस्सी लोकस्स' अर्थात संसारको अग्र पुरुष म नै हु भन्ने सिंहनाद गरेका थिए । त्यस बेला आकाशबाट पुष्पवृष्टि भएको थियो र राजकुमार सिद्धार्थलाई सोहि लुम्बिनी उद्यानको सानो पोखरीमा नुहाइ दिएका थिए जुन पोखरी आज भोलि पनि सिद्धार्थ पोखरी नामले प्रसिद्ध छ । लुम्बिनीको मनमोहक शालोद्यानमा जन्मनु भएको बोधीसत्त्व बालक राज कुमारलाई स्वयंम् राजा सुद्धोधन सहित ठूलो लावा लस्कर आई धुमधाम सित राजकुमारको हर्षोत्सासका साथ सिन्दुरे जात्रा गरी राजभवनमा भित्राइएको थियो । जुन वास्तवमा सिद्धार्थको पहिलो जन्मोत्सवको रूपमा मनाइएको पहिलो जन्म जयन्ती हो भन्नुमा अत्युक्ति नहोला ।

लुम्बिनीको मनमोहक शालोद्यान, कपिलवस्तु र देवदह भ्रमणमा आएका प्रसिद्ध चिनीया यात्री ह्युन सांगले पनि वैशाख पुर्णिमालाई बुद्ध जन्मको पुर्णिमाको दिन भनी उल्लेख गरेको पाइन्छ । यस हिसाबले पनि विचार गर्दा सर्वप्रथम वैशाख पुर्णिमाको दिन राजकुमार सिद्धार्थको जन्म जयन्ती कपिलवस्तु र देवदह वासीहरूबाट मनाइएको देखिन्छ । यस दृष्टिकोणमा राजकुमार सिद्धार्थको जन्मोत्सव हरेक वर्ष मनाउँदै आएको थियो भन्ने प्रस्टछ । एवं रितले २९ वर्ष सम्म राजकुमार सिद्धार्थको जन्मोत्सव मनाइएको र सो जन्मोत्सवमा दहि चिउरा फलफुल आदि दान

गर्ने गरेको व्यहोरा उल्लेख गरिराखेको बुद्ध जीवनी सित सम्बन्धित पुस्तकहरूमा पाइन्छ । यो परम्परा आज भोलि सम्म पनि शाक्यहरूले मानि चलाईनै आइरहेका छन् ।

पच्चिस शय वर्ष अघि पनि मानिस बुढो हुने, शरीरमा रोग लाग्ने अन्तमा केहि समय पछि मर्ने पर्ने सबैलाई थाहा नभएको अवश्य पनि थिएन होला तर राजकुमार सिद्धार्थ वाहेक त्यस सम्बन्धि कसैले पनि गहिरिएर बिचार गरेका थिएनन् । शाक्य राजकुमार सिद्धार्थले सो कुरामा एक चित्तले चिन्तन मनन गरी जन्म, जरा, व्याधि मरण दुखबाट मुक्ति पाउन सकिने निर्वाण मार्ग पत्ता लगाउन गहिरो चिन्तन मनन गर्दा सबै कुराको बोध भएको थियो र सर्वज्ञाता भएका थिए । सम्यक संवोधि ज्ञान हासिल गरेका थिए र शाक्यहरूको अञ्जन सम्वत् १०३ वैशाख शुक्ल पुर्णिमाकै दिनमा शाक्य राजकुमार सिद्धार्थले बोधि ज्ञान प्राप्त गरी बुद्ध भएका थिए । मानव मात्रको लागि बोधि ज्ञान प्राप्त गरी बुद्ध भई निर्वाण प्राप्त गर्ने सजिलो मार्गको रूपमा बुद्धयानको प्रतिपादन गरेका थिए ।

सिद्धार्थ गौतमले बोधि ज्ञान लाभ गरेको दिन पनि यहि वैशाख पुर्णिमाकै दिन थियो र यसै सन्दर्भमा वैशाख पुर्णिमाको दिन सिद्धार्थ कुमारको समयमा पनि अति पवित्र दिनको रूपमा मान्ने चलन थियो भन्ने त्यसताकाको सांस्कृतिक परम्परालाई नियालेर हेर्दा प्रष्ट हुन आउंदछ । सुजाता नामकी एक आइमाई सो दिन नुहाई धुवाई गरी सफा शुद्ध भई एक हजार गाईको दुध राखी क्षीर भोजन पकाएकी र बोधीवृक्ष मुनि तपस्या गरिरहेका बुद्ध योगी (सिद्धार्थ कुमारलाई) वृक्ष देवता थानी सुर्वण पात्रमा क्षीर भोजन दान गरेकी थिइन । सोहि शुद्ध हृदयले क्षीर पकाई दान गरेकी भोजन ग्रहण गरेपछि मात्र सिद्धार्थ गौतमले बोधिज्ञान प्राप्त गरेका थिए । क्षीर भोजन गर्ने गराउने सांस्कृतिक परम्परा आज सम्म पनि कायम नै छ । वैशाख पुर्णिमाको दिनमा क्षीर भोजन गर्ने चलन शाक्य तथा बौद्ध गृहस्थी घरहरूमा आज भोलि पनि कायमै छ । बुद्ध विहारहरूमा क्षीर भोजन दान गर्ने प्रचलन पनि कायम नै छ । प्राय सबै जसो बौद्धहरूले सो दिन क्षीर भोजन नै गर्दछन् । आफ्नो मन बुद्धले जस्तै जगत सत्त्व प्राणीको हितको लागि एकाग्र गर्न सकोस् र बोधि ज्ञान लाभ गर्न सक्ने मार्गमा लाग्न सकौं भन्ने कामना गर्दछन् ।

बुद्ध ठाउँ ठाउँमा आफै जानु भई मानव मात्रको हित र कल्याणको लागि धर्मदेशना गर्दै सबैलाई उद्धार गर्ने कार्यमा पैतालिस वर्ष

विताउनु भएको थियो । विभिन्न ठाउँमा लाखौंको संख्यामा भिक्षु संघ बनाई आफ्नो मानव धर्म प्रचार गरेका थिए। उहाँले धर्म ग्रहण गर्ने सम्बन्धमा यसो भन्नु भएको छ । यो कसैले भनेको भन्दैमा, कहिँ लेखेको भन्दैमा कुनै कुरो स्वीकार नगर्नु । आफ्नै विवेकले जाँचि लिए पछि मात्रै स्वीकार गर्नु भनी कालाम सुत्रमा भन्नु भएको छ । त्यस्तै सबैले आफ्नो धर्म ठूलो छ भन्नु स्वाभाविक हो तर जुन धर्ममा चार आर्य सत्य हुन्छ त्यहि धर्म नै सर्वश्रेष्ठ हुन्छ । यही उपदेश आफ्नो जीवनको अन्तिम समयमा शिष्य हुन आएका सुभद्र परिव्राजकलाई दिनु भएको थियो । अन्तमा आफ्नो ठिक अस्सिऔं वर्षको सुखद उपलक्ष्यमा वैशाख पुर्णिमाकै दिन कुशी नगरमा दुईवटा शाल रुखको बीचमा प्रथम, द्वितीय, तृतीय र चतुर्थ ध्यान गरी अञ्जन सम्वत् १४८ मा निर्वाण प्राप्त गर्नु भएको थियो । यसलाई महापरिनिर्वाण भन्दछन् ।

वैशाख पुर्णिमा राजकुमारको शुभ जन्मोत्सवको दिन थियो नै त्यसमाथि सोहि दिनमा अनुत्तर सम्येक सम्बोधि ज्ञान हासिल गरी बुद्ध हुनु भएकोले एउटा पवित्र दिनको रूपमा अर्को महत्व थपि सो दिनको महत्व बढ्नु स्वाभाविक नै थियो । फेरी वैशाख पुर्णिमाकै दिन कुशीनगरमा शाक्यहरूको अञ्जन सम्वत् १४८ मा निर्वाण प्राप्त गरी वैशाख पुर्णिमाको महत्व माथि महत्व थपिन्दै बुद्धको जीवनका तीनवटा मुख्य मुख्य घटनाहरूसित सम्बन्धित हुन गयो । बुद्धको निर्वाण पछि सोहि वैशाख पुर्णिमालाई बुद्धको स्मरणमा बुद्ध जयन्तीको रूपमा मनाउन थाले । वैशाख पुर्णिमालाई स्वांया पुन्ही, पुष्प पुर्णिमा, हानामात्तुरी, वैशाख दिवस , बुद्ध पुर्णिमा र बुद्ध जयन्ती आदि आदि विभिन्न नाम बाट पनि सम्बोधन गर्ने र उत्सव मनाउने गर्दछन् ।

आज शाक्यहरूको अञ्जनसम्वत् २७०० वर्ष को वैशाख शुक्ल पुर्णिमाको दिन २०६६ साल बैशाख २६ गते शनिवार अर्थात ईस्वी सन् २००९ मे ९ तारिकको वैशाख पुर्णिमाको दिन महामावन गौतम बुद्ध जन्म, सम्बोधि ज्ञानलाभ र महापरिनिर्वाण भएको दिन, वैशाख बुद्ध पुर्णिमाको अतिनै पवित्र दिन हो । गौतम बुद्धको जीवनी सित अति घनिष्ट सम्बन्ध रहेको यी तीन वटा महत्वपूर्ण घटनाहरूसित सम्बन्धित यस पवित्र दिनको स्मरणमा मनाइने महत्सवलाई बुद्ध जयन्ती भन्दछौ । यो बुद्धको जीवन मरणसित सम्बन्धित भएकोले बुद्धको निर्माण पछि पुण्य तिथिको रूपमा मनाइँदै आइरहेको हो । त्यस्तै यस वर्ष हामी २५५३ औं बुद्ध जयन्ती मनाउँदै छौ । यदि जन्मको हिसाबले मात्र जयन्ती मनाउने हो भने यो महामानव गौतम बुद्धको २६३२ औं वर्ष

दिनको जन्म जयन्ती मनाउने हो र यदि गौतम बुद्धले बुद्धत्व प्राप्त गरेको दिनलाई मात्र मान्ने हो भने यो २५९२ औं बुद्धत्व प्राप्ति दिन हो । त्यसैले बुद्धको निर्वाणको दिन लिने हो भने यो २५५३ औं निर्वाण दिन हो । त्यसैले बुद्धको जन्म, बुद्धत्व प्राप्ति र निर्वाणको दिनहरू मध्ये पछिको सो दिनलाई लिएर स्मरणको लागि नयां सम्वत बुद्ध सम्वत् प्रचलनमा ल्याईएको थिए । त्यसैले आजकै दिन तमाम बौद्धहरूको लागि बुद्ध सम्वत् २५५३ को नव वर्ष पनि हो । त्यसैले शाक्यमुनि गौतम बुद्धको स्मरणमा यी तीन वटा प्रमुख घटनाहरू समेटी विश्वका महामावन, शान्तिनायक गौतम बुद्धको पुण्य तिथिको रूपमा विश्व मानव सामुदायका सत् गुरुको स्मरणमा हामी बुद्ध जयन्ती मनाउँदै आईरहेका छौ ।

शाक्यमुनि गौतम बुद्ध एक ऐतिहासिक महामानव हुन् । हाम्रो नेपालकै राष्ट्रिय विभूति हुन् । त्यसैले वैशाख शुक्ल पुर्णिमाको दिन मनाइने यो बुद्ध पुर्णिमा अर्थात बुद्ध जयन्तीको पुर्णिमा हाम्रो देशको राष्ट्रिय महोत्सवको एक गौरवमय दिन हो । आजैको दिनमा बुद्धको जन्म, उहाँले बुद्धत्व प्राप्त गर्नुभएको र उहाँको महा परिनिर्वाण पनि भएकोले आजको दिनलाई जन्म जयन्ती, अन्धकाररूपी मार माथिको विजय गरेको विजय दिवस र आफ्नो शरीर त्याग गरी निर्वाण प्राप्त गरेको पुण्य तिथिको रूपमा मनाइन्छ । वैशाख पुर्णिमा अर्थात बुद्ध पुर्णिमाको दिनलाई संयुक्त राष्ट्र संघले पनि महत्व दिई अन्तराष्ट्रिय स्तरको गौर वमय दिन भएकोले आजको दिन विश्वभरमा नै वैशाख दिवसको रूपमा बुद्ध जयन्ती मनाइन्छ । हामी नेपालीलाई यो भन्दा ठूलो गौरवको कुरा अरु के हुन्थ्यो र ? त्यसैले यो दिनलाई राष्ट्रिय महोत्सवको रूपमा धुमधाम संग मनाउनु हामी सबैको दायित्व पनि हुन आएको छ ।

महामानव शाक्यमुनि गौतम बुद्धको शान्ति संन्देशले विश्वमा आज शान्तिको विस्तार भैरहेको छ त्यसैले हाम्रै नेपालका एक ऐतिहासिक महामानव, हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय विभूति शाक्य मुनि गौतम बुद्धको शान्ति संन्देश हामीले पनि हृदय बाटै पालना गरेर आजको लोकतान्त्रिक नेपालमा शान्ति ल्याई बिकसित नेपाल बनाउनु अतिनै आवश्यक भएको छ । जागौ आजको लोकतान्त्रिक नेपालमा हिंसा, अशान्ति ,अबिवेक, अत्याचार र अन्धकार हटाऔ र शान्तिको प्रकाश ल्याई हराभरा बिकसित नेपाल बनाऔ । जागौ आज बुद्ध पुर्णिमाको दिनमा हाम्रो राष्ट्रिय विभूति शाक्य मुनि गौतम बुद्धको शान्ति संन्देश हामीहरूले पनि हृदय बाटै पालना गरेर लोकतान्त्रिक नेपालमा शान्ति ल्याउने प्रण गरौ ।

विश्वमै शान्तिको बिस्तार होस् । भवतु सव्व मंगलम् । अस्तु।
(लेखक पब्लिक युथ क्याम्पसका पुर्व सहायक क्याम्पस प्रमुख पनि हुनुहुन्थो)

good food and drink, lovely music, pleasant company, etc., and we want more and more of these things. We try to prolong these enjoyments and we try to get more and more of these pleasures using a great deal of effort, time and money. And yet somehow, we are never completely satisfied. If we eat our favorite food again and again we soon get bored with it. We try another kind of food, we like it, enjoy it and again we get bored with it. We go on to look for something else; we get tired of our favorite piece of music. We get tired of our friends [and lovers]. We look for new experiences. Sometimes this chase after pleasant experiences leads one to very unhealthy forms of behavior such as alcoholism, drug addiction, infidelity and sexual obsession, and compulsive shopping. It is said that trying to satisfy one's desire for sense pleasures is like drinking salt water to satisfy one's thirst: rather than being quenched, our thirst only increases.

The desire for wealth or material possessions is involved with three major sufferings or problems. The first one is the problem of getting it. You have to work a lot and save enough to buy that house or car or whatever, there is the mortgage and interest payments, etc. Secondly, there is the worry, anxiety of protecting and maintaining these things. And finally, there is the suffering of losing them because sooner or later these material possessions will fall apart. Likewise, our friends and family members do not last forever.

Despite all the problems and frustrations of life we all crave for eternal existence. This is due to our strong attachments to family and friends, material possessions, money, power, fame and status, also, to our knowledge and experiences, to our ideas and ideals, views and opinions, concepts, theories, beliefs and superstitions. We cling to the past, to bad memories and negative emotions, to our likes and dislikes, and we worry about the future. We cling to our bodies and appearance, hence the fear of growing old and unattractive, getting fat, growing bald, losing our hair, dying, and so on. Clinging to that which is changing and impermanent results in suffering and dis-ease. Then there is the desire for annihilation or non-existence, what we might call the desire for eternal death. This expresses itself as nihilism and in suicide. Craving for existence is one extreme.

Craving for non-existence is another extreme.

The root cause of craving and attachment, grasping and clinging, is ignorance and delusion. Ignorance is not seeing things as they really are, or failing to understand the reality of experience or the reality of life itself. Without the right conditions, right training and right instruments we are unable to see things as they really are. For example, none of us would be aware of radio waves if it were not for the radio receiver. None of us would be aware of bacterial and microbes in a drop of water if it were not for

microscopes. Likewise, planets and galaxies were it not for telescopes. If we do not train our minds to have calm attention and insight, then we would remain ignorant of the true nature of things. We are familiar with the fear that we experience when we see a snakelike object at night while taking a walk or a dark shape while lying in bed. That snakelike object may be just a piece of rope or garden hose and the dark shape in your bedroom may be just a jacket on a hanger. Yet it is due to our ignorance and delusion that we get scared and quicken our steps or hide under our blanket and perspire with fear. If there were light we would not react with fear, we would not be fooled or deluded by the snakelike object or the dark shape. We would see the piece of rope or garden hose or the hanging jacket for what it is.

Specifically in Buddhism, we are speaking about ignorance regarding the self or ego, taking the self as real, as a permanent, fixed, separate and independent entity. This is the fundamental cause of suffering or Dukkha. We see the world in terms of "I", "me", and "mine". We take our body or ideas or feelings as a self or belonging to a self, an independent ego just as we take the snakelike object for a dangerous creature or the dark shape for a ghost or a potential assailant. Upon enlightenment, the Buddha realised that the mind-body process was a constantly changing phenomenon and that it did not contain a fixed, independent and permanent self. We are not the same person [mentally and physically] from one moment to the next. That the self seems unchanging and separate from the rest of existence is a deep-rooted illusion. The Buddha realised that the self was only a result of conditioning, based on memory, past experiences and accumulated knowledge, that "I", "me", and "mine" were just concepts in the mind, created by the thinking process. Because of this illusion of a solid and independent ego-personality, separate in time and space, we become very self-centered, we take ourselves very seriously, and we spend a lot of effort trying to satisfy, protect and magnify this self and its images. From this notion of self, we have persistent craving and attachment, aversion and ill will. We become attached to our likes and dislikes, to our ideas and opinions, etc.

Out of the root and trunk of ignorance and delusion grow self-centered craving and clinging—desire, greed, envy, jealousy, hatred, competitiveness, pride, arrogance, conceit, the whole lot. All these branches grow from the root and trunk of ignorance and delusion, and these branches bear the fruits of suffering, discontentment, dis-ease.

According to the Buddha's analysis, all the troubles and problems in the world, from little personal conflicts and quarrels in the family to big wars between tribes, nations and countries arise out of this selfish craving. From this point of view, all economic, political and social problems

are rooted in this self-centered grasping and clinging, greed and attachment. [And yet we all have to die and leave this world some day]. Great statesmen and diplomats who try to settle disputes and talk of war and peace only in terms of political and economic terms touch on the superficialities, the surface of human conflict, and never go deep into the real root-cause of the problem. Mankind has been trying to solve its problems with a mind that is the problem. The mind, the restless, confused, reactive, untrained mind is the problem-maker, the creator of selfish desires, hatred and delusion.

In summation, the cause of suffering is ignorance and delusion, a false way of looking at reality. Thinking and believing the impermanent is permanent, the changing is fixed and concrete, that is ignorance and delusion. Thinking there is a permanent, unchanging, separate and independent self when there is not, that is ignorance and delusion. From ignorance is born craving, greed, hatred, fear, insecurity, jealousy, and countless other sufferings. The path to liberation is the path of looking deeply at things in order to truly realise the nature of change and impermanence, the absence of a separate, isolated self, and the interdependence of all things. This ancient path is the way to overcome ignorance and delusion. Once ignorance is overcome, suffering/dis-ease is transcended. This is true liberation. There is no need for a self for there to be liberation. Once you understand nonself, then the burden

of life is gone. You'll be at peace with the world. When we see beyond self or ego, beyond "me" and "mine", we no longer cling to happiness and security, and then we can be truly happy, secure and free.

C o n d o l e n c e s

We would like to express our sincere condolence to Bhante Sumana for the loss of his maternal grandmother unexpectedly. We wish her eternal peace *Nirvana*.

Anicca Vata Samkhara

(All Conditioned Phenomena are impermanent)

LNBD family

***Truly oneself is one's own
refuge, what other refuge could
there be? With oneself
well - tamed one acquires a
refuge hard to obtain.***

(Dhammapada 160)



From craving springs grief, from craving springs fear; for him
who is wholly free from craving there is no grief, much less fear.

(Dhammapada 216)



*We extend our heartiest wishes for your prosperity & longevity on
the auspicious occasion of 2553rd Buddha Jayanti.*

Greenwich London College

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His Holiness Dalai Lama's Visit to UK, May 2008

His Holiness Dalai Lama visited UK in May 2008 and gave teachings in London, Nottingham, Oxford etc. Some of our members including Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana (at Oxford) and Venerable Bhikkhu Sujan (at Nottingham) attended his teachings at all three venues. His main teaching was given at Nottingham Arena, Nottingham from 24th -28th May which was attended by up to 10,000 people of all nationalities and faiths. Huge numbers of Nepalese attended his teaching on the last day i.e. 28th May 2008 and took Vajrasattva Initiation. On Sunday, 25 May 2008 afternoon His Holiness answered questions put to him by students of Nottingham. This discussion was facilitated by TV presenter Jonathan Dimbleby. Besides giving teachings His Holiness also met with spiritual and political leaders during his visit.

2552nd Buddha Jayanti Celebration in London, UK (Sunday, 1 June 2008)

Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) celebrated 2552nd Buddha Jayanti (Buddha Day) on Sunday, 1st June 2008 at the Priory Community Centre, Acton, London. The celebration started with procession of newly acquired Buddha statue in a ceremonial way and placed with due respect in the stage for every one to pay homage - Buddha Puja by devotees followed by administration of Panca Sila by Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana and chanting according to Tibetan tradition by Venerable Lodro Thaye. Nepalese ambassador to the UK Mr. Murari Raj Sharma gave a brief speech in which he emphasized the importance of Buddha's teaching in the present day world.

During the occasion Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana gave a talk on '**Buddha's message of peace**' and Venerable Sochu from Japanese Zen tradition gave an inspiring talk on '**Six Parmita (six perfections)**' which would be Bodhisattvas need to practice. Venerable Bhikkhu Sujan conducted guided meditation and emphasized the importance of regular meditation for calming the mind and preparing oneself for the day in a better mood. A DVD of Namu Buddha prepared and presented in an international Buddhist conference in Taiwan in 2007 by Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya, Director of Nagarjun Institute was shown. Namu Buddha is one of the holy Buddhist sites in Nepal where the prince Mahasattva fed his own flesh to a hungry tigress who was about to eat her own cubs because of extreme hunger.

To mark the occasion, the society's publication *LUMBINI* magazine was released. Newly formed UK Gyanmala Bhajan Khalah with participation of Angela Singh, Binod Shrestha, and Chorus-Nani Shova, Rasana, Anu, Reema, Rabindra and Sharmila Singh sang devotional songs in between the speeches. Music was provided by: Keyboard - Krishna Chakhun, Tabala - Sabin Rajbhandari and Guitar - Binod Shrestha. Gyanmala Bhajan (Garland of wisdom devotional songs) was used by early Theravada Buddhist monks in Nepal to propagate Buddha's message to ordinary people at a time when any Buddhist teaching especially in Nepal Bhasha was strictly prohibited. At present it has become an established and effective method for propagating Buddhism in many Nepalese cities. These devotional songs are sung at many Buddhist sites in Kathmandu and outside Kathmandu not only at special occasions but also regularly at some important religious sites.

Dr. Swayambhu Tuladhar thanked every one for their help and for attending the celebration and Mr. Amrit Sthapit conducted the programme professionally with comments in English and Nepali where appropriate.

The hall was decorated appropriately with Buddhist flags and tankas for the occasion. About 200 people from Nepal, India, Britain and other countries attended the ceremony. People from the press and director- public relation of Nepali Samaj UK took notes and photos for their respective publications. Sujan and Ujwal Shakya provided an excellent sound system. After the formal programme every one enjoyed the traditional Nepali refreshment '*Kheer*' generously provided by members and well-wishers of the society.

28th June 2008 British Landscape Conference at Taplow, Berkshire.

Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana and Dharma attended three day British Buddhist Landscape Conference organised jointly by Network of Buddhist Organisation (UK) and Institute of Oriental Philosophy on Saturday, 28-6-08 at Taplow Court in Taplow near Maidenhead, Berkshire. As a part of ethnicity and Buddhism session Bhikkhu Sumana spoke on Buddhism and Nepalese. About 70 Buddhists from various Buddhist traditions in Britain attended the conference.

Sunday 27th July 2008

Meeting of members of society's website committee took place in Slough.

Saturday, 16th August 2008 Felicitation Ceremony at London Buddhist Vihara, Chiswick, London

Members of the society attended a ceremony at the London Buddhist Vihara, Chiswick, London to felicitate Venerable Bogoda Seelawimala Nayaka Thera in his appointment as the head of the Vihara and the Chief Sangha Nayaka of Great Britain by the Supreme Sangha Council of Malwatta Chapter, Kandy, Sri Lanka. The ceremony was attended by heads of various monasteries, representatives of Christian tradition and Interfaith, dignitaries and huge number of supporters and lay devotees of the Vihara.

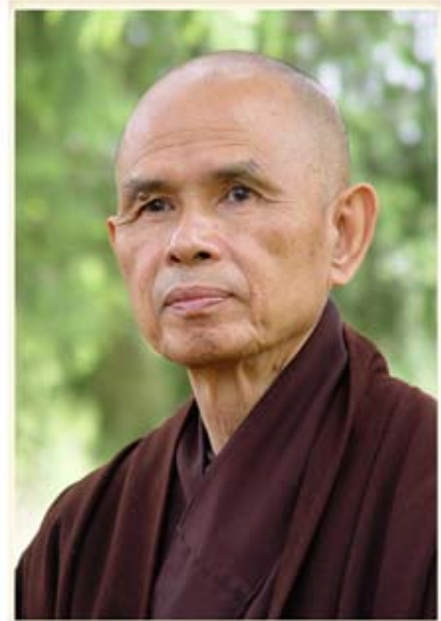
Sunday, 17th August 2008 one day Meditation in Kent.



A one day meditation retreat was held on Sunday 17th August 2008 at the residence of Dinesh and Rasana Bajracharya in Tunbridge Wells, Kent led by Ajahn Santacitta and an Anagarika from Amaravati Buddhist

Monastery, Hemel Hempstead and the society's president Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana. About 15 people attended this one day meditation consisting of sitting and walking meditations followed by question and answer session towards the end.

Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh (Thay)'s UK visit August 2008



As a part of world tour to conduct retreats in different countries famous Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh visited UK in August 2008. He gave public talk to a packed

Membership of the Society

Members whose valued memberships are due for renewal and new members who would like to support the society by becoming a member are requested to complete the section below and return it to the society's address **11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7JU** with your cheque made out to Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society (UK) or LNBDS (UK). We very much hope you will support the society by renewing your membership or by becoming a member.

Membership for 1 year: Individual -£ 10.00, Family - £ 25.00, Life Membership - £ 150.00

I/We would like to support the Lumbini Nepalese Buddha Dharma Society's work and would like to renew my membership/join the society.

Name:.....Address:.....
..... Tel:.....
Email:.....

I/We enclose the membership fee for the year of £ to renew my membership/join the society.

In addition, I/We wish to donate £ Total amount enclosed £

Signature:

Date:

audience of more than 1000 people of all nationalities at Friends' meeting house at Euston, London on the evening of Friday, 22 August 2008. He also conducted retreat from 24th – 29th August at Nottingham University. Two of our society's members attended both the public talk in London and the week long retreat along with other 750 people of various nationalities and faiths at Nottingham University. Most memorable part of this retreat was an environment of peace and quiet that prevailed throughout the retreat; and his excellent teachings. He is also visiting Italy, India and Vietnam to conduct retreats this year.

Wednesday, 10th September 2008 one day conference on contemporary religions in Swindon.

Dharma and Pramila attended this one day conference on Contemporary religions in Britain on Wednesday, 10-9-08 organised by Prof Peter Jarvis of Surrey University for University of Third Age (U3A) mature students at Swindon. Speakers from Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism spoke on their traditions. Dharma spoke on basic Buddhism. About 50 mature students attended the conference. The conference ended with the question and answer session to the panel of all the speakers of the day present.

28th September 2009 Buddhist Legacy in the United Kingdom Conference at Brent Town Hall, London.

Members attended the Buddhist Legacy in the United Kingdom, a centenary celebration of establishment of

Buddhism in the UK organised by World Buddhist Foundation on Sunday, 28-9-08 at Brent Town Hall, London. On behalf of the society and representing Nepal the members of Koseli Cultural Group Mr. Madan Thapa played Mangal Dhoon in Sarangi (a classical Nepalese musical instrument) accompanied by guitar from Mr. Amar Lama. Mangal Dhoon is a music played in many auspicious occasions in Nepal.



Sunday, 22nd November 2008

LNBDs (UK) executive committee meeting took place at Dinesh and Menika's residence in Manor Park, London.

Saturday, 20th December 2008, one day meditation at London Buddhist Vihara, Chiswick.

Members attended one day meditation retreat led by visiting Bhikkhu Bhante Kovida at the London Buddhist



He who wishes his own happiness by causing pain to others is not released from hatred, being himself entangled in the tangles of hatred.

(Dhammapada 291)

We wish all readers Happy 2553rd Buddha Jayanti!

Lotus Restaurant

(Nepalese Cuisine)

2 New Broadway

Uxbridge Road, Hillingdon, UB10 0LH

Tel: 01895 234 679, 01895 251 991

Contact: Shubha Ratna Shakya and Shyam Darshan Kunwar

Vihara, Chiswick, London. About 60 people attended this unique and inspiring meditation retreat consisting of sitting, walking meditation and dynamic meditation combined with Qi Gong for physical fitness and developing mindfulness.

Sunday, 22nd February 2009

LNBDS (UK) executive committee meeting took place at Sri Saddhatissa International Buddhist Centre, Kingsbury, London.

April 2009 Celebration to mark 50 years of monkhood of Bhikkhu Nyanapurnika

A week long celebration with various programmes was held at Vishwo Shanti Vihara in New Baneswhor, Kathmandu to mark the 50 years of monkhood of Venerable Nyanapurnika Mahasthavira. Delegates from various overseas countries and Nepal attended the ceremony. Some of the members of the society also attended this function. A temporary ordination of 50 Bhikkhus took place to mark the occasion.

6th April 2009

Dharma met with president and members of Young Men's Buddhist Association of Nepal at their head office at Lok Kirti Mahavihar, Kinhubahi, Iti, Lalitpur during his brief visit to Nepal. A very fruitful discussion about Buddhism in general and Buddhism in the UK in particular were discussed. He also discussed how our two organisations can cooperate with each other in promotion of Buddha's teaching for the benefit of mankind. The meeting felt that regular contacts and meetings like this one whenever possible will further improve our already well established relationship for the benefit of both our societies even though our society is much smaller and comparatively new as compare to YMBA which is well established and had lot of experience and recognised internationally. Dharma handed over some Dharma books on behalf of the society to YMBA president Mr. Sanu Raja Shakya for their library.

April 2009 Essay Competition on Buddhist Attitude to Conflict.

Our society is holding an essay competition on the subject **"Buddhist Attitude to Conflict"** in collaboration with Buddhist Youth Group of Kathmandu in Nepal. It is completed in April and prize distribution will be held in near future. As in 2007 cash prizes will be awarded to those who came First, Second and Third in the competition and Letters of Appreciation will be given to all those who participated in the essay competition. Dharma met with Chairman of Buddhist Youth Group of Kathmandu Mr Tri Ratna Manandhar and had a very useful discussion on the progress of the essay competition.

Friday, 24th April 2009

Society's president Venerable Bhikkhu Sumana attended third Loktantra Day Celebration on Friday, 24 April 2009 at Nepalese Embassy in London

Sunday, 3rd May 2009

LNBDS executive committee meeting took place at Durga and Ram Babu's residence in Charlton, London.

Search in the Right Place

There was once a great master who used to teach his students in many different and sometimes bizarre ways. One evening, they arrived at his house to find him crawling around on the ground. There was a lamp by the front door and he was moving around within the lamplight.

"Master, what are you doing?"

"Searching for the front door key."

They all joined him, crawling around, hunting for the key.

After quite a long period of fruitless search, one student asked,

"Master, where were you when you lost the key?"

"Over there."

He pointed to a distant spot, which was in darkness.

"Then why on earth are you hunting for it here?"

"Oh, because it's much easier to hunt here in the light."

This is what we all tend to do. Due to ignorance, and confusion, we strive to find happiness in places where it cannot be found. We keep on doing this because superficial appearances delude us into thinking that it can be found where we seek it- within the world of desires and senses. Happiness cannot truly be found there, so our efforts lead instead to suffering.

Lumbini Dana Fund

The LNBDS has launched the Lumbini Dana Fund in May 1998 on the auspicious day of Buddha jayanti. The purpose of the fund is to put the Buddha's teachings to practice. Karuna (compassion) is to extend our kindness to others in need. The fund intends to help poor and orphans in Nepal. Up to now the society has sponsored six orphans from Ramechhap village regularly since 1998, five destitute Cancer patients from Nepal in 2003 and regular donation to Dallu orphanage in Patan from January 2009. LNBDS hopes to expand such noble work. The LNBDS's aim is to concentrate on education, health and religion. The LNBDS depends on your generosity to make this task a success.

Please make cheque payable to the Lumbini Dana Fund

LNBDS (UK), 11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7JU

Like an image seen in a mirror, which is not real, the mind is seen by the ignorant in a dualistic form in the mirror of habit energy ... When it is thoroughly understood that there is nothing but what is seen of the mind itself, discrimination ceases.

(Lankavatara Sutra, ch. 3, LXXIV, pages 74-5)

Wishing All A Happy and A Prosperous Buddha Jayanti 2553

May Knowledge of Wisdom prevail the world

BUDDHA VIHARA FUND APPEAL

With aim of having our own Vihara for the benefits of all we have established a Vihara Fund.

Vihara in Pali, the language used by the Buddha himself, means a dwelling place where Buddhist monks and nuns dwell. In the Buddhist text it is written that to build or participate in any form in building a Vihara is considered highly meritorious act. This is the spiritual place where the nobleness is practised by many for the harmonious life and salvation of all

We would like to appeal to all our well-wishers to help the society to fulfil its aim by donating whatever you can. Please forward your donations to LNBDS (UK), 11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire SL3 7JU. Cheque should be made payable to **Lumbini Buddha Vihara Fund**.

*Please forward your donation to the society. Payable to **Lumbini Vihara Fund** and send to
LNBDS (UK) 11 Mulberry Drive, Slough, Berkshire, SL3 7JU*