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Untrained mind brings sufferings & disturbances, & a trained mind brings happiness & peace. Therefore the Buddha's Teachings were the highest educations man ever encountered before. It can protect human race from all dangers & disasters. It's universal, practical & workable in our daily life. Our destinations & directions are in our mind. Which way we want to go? The way to Heaven or Hell, all are in our mind. There was an interesting discourse by the Buddha, "Sesaka Sutta", in Samyutta Nikaya. It was about protection. Once in the past an acrobat set up his bamboo pole & addressed his apprentice, to climb the bamboo pole & stood on his shoulder. And told the disciple to protect him & he would protect him also. When this was said the disciple replied that this was not the way to protect each other. The teacher should protect himself. And also the disciple should protect himself. In this way each self-guarded & self-protected they would display their skills, & got down safely from the bamboo pole. The Buddha taught the monks in this way. One would protect oneself; should the foundations of mindfulness - satipatthana be practised. One would protect others should satipatthana be practised. By protecting oneself one protects others. And to protect others & protect oneself. And then the Buddha continued to say how to protect oneself & protect others. And to protect others & protect oneself. The way of protecting oneself & protects others is persisting, developing & cultivating the 4 Satipatthana. The way of protecting others & protecting oneself is in patience, harmlessness, good will & sympathy. Therefore if everyone wants to be free from dangers, misfortunes, illnesses, etc., one has to protect oneself first. If each person protects for oneself & protecting others are already finished.

For the 45 years of his teaching, the Buddha taught a lot for the welfare of human beings in many different ways on mundane to supramundane levels. With the knowledge of the Buddha's Teachings we know how to think, speak & act accordingly to protect oneself & protecting others & nature. If we behave wrongly, improperly & foolishly will have the detrimental consequences to ourselves, societies, nature & environments. Now some of these things are already happening around the world. Nowadays the world urgently need right & wise educations, instead of wrong & unwise educations. Do human beings need survival or indulgence?

In Theravadin Buddhist countries, Burma, Thailand, etc. lay people invite the monks for paritta chanting, & at the same time making paritta water. (also translate as holy water). Some monks in the chanting made the water in cups & pots to rise up in bubbles, even overflowed. These kinds of monks are very rare indeed, & not many of them.

Recently one of them in Burmas was Sayadaw U Littamasara (1909 - ?). He was well known for his love & compassion, even may be one of the first or few Buddhist monks spread the Teachings of the Buddha to hill tribe people. In his talk on the "Power of Parittas", he mentioned that, to become effective it must be the parittas of the Buddha. These kinds of paritta water has the protective & healing power. Some asked asked Sayadaw was why the parittas had these power. Because the parittas were about the attributes of the Triple Gems, Buddha, Dhamma & Ariya Sangha, The assertion of truth & loving kindness (metta) made by the Buddha & the Bodhisatta of some of his past lives. Also some asked if anyone recited them would show the power clearly. Not everyone who recited the parittas showed its power clearly or evidently. Some had the & some did not. What make them differently? His answer was their volitions, metta, karuna, sila, samadhi & pañña had differences.

The one listens to the paritta chanting should has 3 factors.

1. Not committing the 5 heavy kammas (Patricide, matricide, killing the arahat, shedding the blood of the Buddha, Splitting the Sangha)
2. Believe in the law of karma (i.e, has right view)
3. Must has faith in the power of the parittas which were the Buddha's words

The reciter of the parittas should has 3 factors.

1. Has studied & learnt the parittas rightly or correctly in their meanings & grammars.
2. Recite fully of them.
3. Has the volition of good-will (metta) for the listeners.

Here I want to present 2 incidents on the effective of the parittas. One had happened in Burma & connected to Ven. Ledī Sayadaw & the other in Thailand to a forest monk. In 1906 Ven. Ledī Sayadaw spent his 40th vassa (rain retreat) in the vicinity of Prome City. The same year in August during the raining season Henzada area was without rain & liked a drought. This was a delta area in lower Burma & usually had a lot of rain. Therefore the farmers in that area had difficulties. They sent application letters to the government offices for not be able to give ^{pay} the taxes. The High Commissioner of Irrawaddy Division, Mr. Maxwell was inspecting this area & came to Henzada City. He had been seen the situations there. Therefore he summoned all the government officers & respected people of that area. And then ordered them to invite Ven. Ledī Sayadaw for a Dhamma ceremony to solve the problem. Some didn't believe that Ven. Sayadaw could solve this problem. Anyhow to follow the order some officers & a few respectable men went to Prome for the invitation. People in Henzada grandly prepared for the Dhamma Ceremony. After arriving there they invited Sayadaw. It was the rain retreat period for the monks.

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Therefore he told them that it was better for him after the rain retreat (The Buddhist monks rain retreats are usually between July & October). But they explained to him the importance of raining. Because for another week if the fields did not get water & many plants would damage & encounter famine. It was already many fishes, shrimps & other animals had died. Therefore Sayadaw accepted their invitation immediately. They arranged the Irrawaddy postal steam ship for the next day journey. And then Sayadaw told his disciple U Pannita as follow. "Now I have the chance to show the Henzada people about the power of water duties which I had done for over 20 yrs before. Including offering water to the Shwe-zi-gon Ceti & to the monks for drinking, washing & bathing. The result of water dana (offerings) is at the time of water shortage or no water & 'the wishes for water will get it'." (Shwe-zi-gon Pagoda is a well known Ceti in Monywa, Upper Burma. Sayadaw not only did the water duties every day to the Ceti & his own monastery but also to the other monasteries near the vicinity.) Starting from that night Sayadaw remembered & contemplated his water duties. And using the rosary beads to count the paritta chant of the Bodhisatta King Fish or Rain Paritta. (Not mentioned 'how many time' he was reciting & the help of rosary beads counting. It must be many times. Sayadaw was well known for his great vitaya.) And spread special metta to the rain god & sky god. When the steam ship came near to the Henzada City port & the whole sky suddenly changed & covered in rain clouds & rained heavily & thunders. It rained heavily for 1½ hrs that the steam ship couldn't enter the port & had to anchor in the middle of the river. The High Commissioner Mr. Maxwell & other people were waiting Sayadaw on the bank.

Some yrs ago a forest monk stayed in a retreat forest near the Thai/Burmese border in Kamchanaburi, west of Bangkok. This forest is called Dton Dum - Black Tortoise. One day he came back from BKK after a medical check & on the way ^{spent} stayed a night at a branch monastery. This was a very wide area & known to some monks as a haunted place. The north of the area had an old sala (an open wooden building for meals & practice) & a few old kutis (monk dwelling place or hut) closed to the mountain range. Between the north & the south area also had a new built concrete sala, some new kutis & including an open wooden sala for guest monks. This guest sala had a small room at the north-side, except that the whole building was opened. The monk settled into the small room. At round about 8 to 9 p.m. he heard a loud thud sound outside his room. It was liked someone dropped a heavy object from the ceiling to the floor. Therefore he went out & had a check. Nothing was there, & he went back to the room. It happened like this for 3 times & he knew it was the ghost. Therefore he made a request to the unseen being not to disturb him. And then chanted the metta Sutta and

spread metta to the ghost. After that it stopped haunting him & never happened again. This ghost was a violent ghost. Because after sometimes some monks came to Dton Dnm for practice & had to spend a night there. One of the monks was during sleeping ^{the} was haunted by this ghost violently & had an injury on his head. According to the information a man was murdered near this place before.

Dton Dnm forest is an amazing & interesting place. It's worthy of recording here & connection to the protection of nature & environments. most people never think human beings are part of nature. Therefore we are exploiting the earth in an extreme way. The earth, water, air & heat give us lives. We are depending on them for survivals. In some suttas the Buddha even mentioned how human minds & actions effected nature. We are interdependent to each other. If we harm to nature, it'll harms us. If we destroy nature & it'll destroy us. (it'll = it will). It's like the Newtonian dynamic law, action \rightarrow reaction. Negative action \rightarrow negative result. Positive action has positive result. A Japanese scientist had already made a research on this point ^{of} how our mind states effected the water ^{molecule} crystals. The mother earth is likened to a physical body. If any part of the body is damaged or harmed, it can't function properly or even dies. We should have gratitude to her, because it cares us like a mother. Ingratitude is the sign of an inferior person & has no good future for him.

Even though Dton Dnm is not a virgin forest, a lot of wild animals still living there. The forest monks & some important lay people had tried to protect it from destruction. A business woman had a contract & mined tin-tungsten minerals in this area for sometimes. Later she invited the forest monks to establish a forest monastery there to protect the forest. It started ^{the} project in 1994. Two kutis (monk dwelling huts) & an open sala ^{were built} on the top of the hill. The open sala was on the edge of the hill & overlooked the valley ^{& the green} forest. It was used as meditation & meeting hall. An open eating hall also ^{was} built down the hill. An open eating hall was also built at the base of the hill. Later also an inner sala also was built deep in the forest for the monks in the summer retreat. Because north-east Thailand ^{for} was so hot that unpleasant to the heat there. Therefore every year a group of forest monks come down here for 2 months to stay in the deep forest for practice. Usually come here in March & go back to E-san (north-east Thailand) before the Vesak. (Vesak is the full moon day of May celebrate for the Birth, Enlightenment & Passing Away of the Buddha). Every year before the monks come here for summer retreat the miners help to build some bamboo platforms across the deep forest. There are a lot of big bamboos in this forest.

Some of These big bamboos are the homes of tiny squirrels. These are lovely & cute little creatures. Never seen them in day time for moving around. In the beginning even ^{don't know} these small round holes are their homes! At night w/ a torch light looking into it & found the cute little creature inside & curiously looking at you w/ the bright eyes. In Rajagaha King Bimbisara offered the Venuvana - Bamboo Forest Monastery to the Buddha & Sanghas, & mentioned it as the squirrel sanctuary. Did it has any connection w/ these cute little creatures?

From the eating hall to the mine area has to walk a few hours along the rugged ^{stony} stream ^{ston} road & only 4 wheels drive car can be used. In 1994 & 1995 there were heavy raining that even couldn't go in & out w/ cars. The main stream was roaring down carrying w/ it rocks & tree trunks. Most bamboo bridges were carrying away by water & 2 monks stayed there couldn't go down for the meal (They ate one meal a day at 8 a.m.) Therefore some miners had to carry some foods for them. The mine owner could not go out for buying foods & rice for the monks. To solve this problem an army helicopter brought some rice bags for the monks & miners. The forest monks ate forest vegetables for sometimes.

This is a tropical rain forest & teeming w/ wildlife; such as elephants; bears; tigers (including black leopard); tapirs; forest pigs; deer; deers; monkeys; a squirrel liked animal without tail, 3 or 4 times bigger than a large squirrel w/ plump body & yellow furs; bamboo squirrels; white snakes; boas; green bamboo vipers (There can be also other animals). We invited bird watchers from Bangkok & their research found out over 200 species of birds in this area. There are 2 species of horn bills, white & yellow. The white horn bill is bigger & when flying made a loud flapping sound in the air. Mostly they are flying in a small group. There are also many song birds. Once time heard a small bird making sound liked playing a flute. There are also some harmful insects; such as ticks appear in winter & some are too small that can't see w/ the eyes; leeches appear in rainy season; gnats; bees; some insects have very poisonous stings; have both types of malaria mosquitoes. There are not many majestic tall trees left. Its trunk is straight & good for building house. There are were 3 incidents encountered w/ big cats. There was a white tiger's family living in this forest. In 1996, January 16th. a monk after his morning meal went up to the hill. On the way he met 3 white tigers from a stone throw distance. They crossed the path from the right to left under the bright sun & looked very majestic. During the summer of very hot

temperature sometimes has forest fire. Once time at the base of the hill some miners caught a white baby cub. At that time there was a forest fire burning. Therefore the miners tried to extinguish it. Then they saw the white mother tiger & 2 cubs tried to escape the fire. The 3rd time was during the 2 months summer retreat period. One night a western novice ^{went} back to the deep forest from the outer sala holding a candle lamp. Unexpectedly he met a big black cat watching at him quietly near his path. He was so frightened that didn't know what to do. (you can't run at night & a dim candle lamp light.) With his whole body shaking he had to move on. He had escaped the danger but became sick. Most humans fight fear wild beasts. Actually man is dangerous than beasts. Man is not only dangerous for animals even to one's own fellow beings & nature. (There are a lot of contemplation on this point in modern day situations) man can create heavens & hells on this planet & even can transcend them. It depends on education. The types of education we follow. There is a major stream coming down from the inside deep forest which other side is the Thai / Burmese border. This stream is coming down towards the mining area. On half way of the hill the stream passes through a high cliff & creates a big water fall. Its sound can be heard very clearly during the night because the whole area is very quiet. The stream water is cool & clear like a crystal. Staying in this forest after a few years & it becomes an unforgettable place to a forest monk. Sometimes went to the city of Bangkok couldn't feel the great differences between the natural life in the forest & an artificial life in the big city. The life \in nature is peaceful & calm, \in joy & happiness which any material progress, science & technology can never bring about to man. If we can't use them wisely or properly even can increase greed, hatred & delusion which create a lot of sufferings. This point everyone knows, no-one can deny about it. Earth, air, water pollutions, climate changes, more natural disasters, chemicals in the food chains, weapon of mass destruction, 21st century terrorism, polluted medias, etc. These are no end to mention them. These facts are the reflection of the human mind. Without our polluted minds these things can't arise. Living \in nature for sometimes only can be realized that man is part of nature. If nature survives, then man can survive. If nature is destroyed then we are in destruction. We are in interdependence & mutually ~~co-exists~~ co-existing. Therefore, by protecting myself & one protects others & nature. There is a question arising in my mind. Why Dhamma in a small area is teeming \in wildlife? This is my own contemplation.

Because human beings destroyed a lot of forest & These animals needed a place for survival. Therefore they had to be moved into any forest to survive. It is very similar today refugee problems in the middle east, & some African countries. To solve their difficulties & problems migrate into Africa & parts of Asia. For their survivals these refugees have to move into the Europe, & surrounding countries.

All these external problems were warning human beings, careful to our behaviours & actions, from politics, economics, sciences, technologies, medias, etc. So all are coming back to our minds, wise educations & actions. By protecting oneself, one protects others & nature.

The following Dhamma Reflections are from 2 main sources. From the Dhamma Talks by 2 Burmese Bhikkhus: Ven. Sayadaw Dr. Nandamalabhi-varsha & Ven. Sayadaw Uttama. Using their talks & Dhamma from other sources for the reflection & contemplation. If there are something wrong or mistakes; then all of them are mine & nothing to do to others. Contemplation & reflection are very important parts of the Buddhist practice. It's very good for dealing problems in daily life. If become a habit it will strengthen our wisdom faculties. It can be also called yoniso manasikara - wise attention, proper attention, careful attention, which is the forerunner of pañña - wisdom. With unwise attention defilements arise & increasing them if they have already arisen. And wise attention is the opposite. My main attention is on the 3 parittas or suttas; Mangala Sutta, metta Sutta & Khamsha Sutta. Mangala Sutta - The Discourse on Blessings or Protection was dealing to the ways of different levels of blessing, from mundane to supramundane levels of achievements. Metta & Khamsha Suttas - The discourses on Good-will, Loving-kindness, Loving Friendliness are dealing to love & kindness to all living beings which today world urgently need. Because there are a lot of conflicts & violence going on like the severe climate changes. The Buddha's Teachings or Educations are the best medicines for all the ills of human beings.

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Mangala-sutta / Protection or Blessings

- ① Asevana ca bālānam;
- ② Panditānām-ca sevana;
- ③ Puja ca pujantyānam,
Etam mangalam-uttamam.

- ④ Not consorting w/ fools;
- ⑤ Consorting w/ the wise;
- ⑥ paying homage to those worthy of homage,
This is the highest protection.

- ⑦ Patirūpa-desa-vāso ca,
- ⑧ Pubbe ca kata-puññata;
- ⑨ Atta-sammā-panidhi ca,
Etam

- ⑩ Living in a civilized land,
- ⑪ Having made merit in the past;
- ⑫ Directing oneself rightly,

This is

- ⑬ + ⑭ Bahu-saccān-ca sippān-ca,
- ⑮ Vinayo ca susikkhito;
- ⑯ Subbhāsitā ca yā vācā,
Etam

- ⑰ + ⑱ Broad knowledge, skill,
- ⑲ Well mastered discipline;
- ⑳ Well spoken words.

This is

- ㉑ Mātā-pitu-upatthānam,
- ㉒ Putta-dārassa sangaho;
- ㉓ Anākulā ca kammantā,
Etam

- ㉔ Support for one's parents,
- ㉕ Assistance to one's wife & children;
- ㉖ Consistency in one's work,

This is

- (14) + (15) Dānañ-ca dhamma-cariyā ca,
 (16) Nātakānañ-ca saṅgaho;
 (17) Anavajjāni kammāni,
 Etam - - - - -
- (18) + (15) Giving, living in rectitude,
 (16) Assistance to one's relatives;
 (17) Deeds That are blameless,
 This is - - - - -
- (18) Āratī viratī pāpā,
 (19) Maṭṭha-pānā ca saññamo;
 (20) Appamādo ca dhammesu,
 Etam - - - - -
- (18) Avoiding, abstaining from evil,
 (19) Refraining from intoxicants;
 (20) Being heedful of the qualities of the mind,
 This is - - - - -
- (21) + (22) Gāravo ca nivāto ca,
 (23) + (23)²⁴ Santutthī ca katañ-nūtā;
 (24)²⁵ Kālena shammassavanam,
 Etam - - - - -
- (21) + (22) Respect, humility;
 (23) + (24) Contentment, gratitude;
 (25) Hearing The Dhamma on timely occasions,
²⁷ This is - - - - -
- (26) + (26) Khanti ca sovacassata,
 (28) Samanānañ-ca dassanam;
 (29) Kālena dhamma-sākacchā,
 Etam - - - - -
- (26) + (27) Patience, compliance,
 (28) Seeing contemplatives;
 (29) Discussing The Dhamma on timely occasions,
 This is - - - - -

(30) + (31) Tapo ca brahma-cariyāñ-ca,

(32) Ariya-saccāna-dassanam;

(33) Nibbāna-sacchikiriyā ca,
Etam - - - - .

(30) + (31) Austerity, celibacy;

(32) Seeing the Noble Truths;

(33) Realizing Unbinding,
This is - - - - .

Phutthassa loka-dhammehi,

(34) Cittam yassa na kampati;

(35) + (36) + (37) Asokam virajam khemam,
Etam - - - - - touched

A mind that, when by the ways of the world,

(34) Is unshaken;

(35) + (36) + (37) Sorrowless, dustless, secure,

This is - - - - .

Etādisāni katvāna,

Sabbattham-aparājita;

Sabbattha sotthim gacchanti,

Tan-tesam mangalam-uttaman-ti.

Everywhere undefeated,

When acting in this way;

People go everywhere in well-being,

This is - - - - .

Nearly all the Theravadin Buddhists heard this sutta chanting. The Buddhist children learnt it from monasteries & schools. At the time of the Buddha men & deities pondered, discussed & argued about the true meaning of blessings (mangala). Different people had different view & they could not come to an agreement for 12 years debates. They went to the Buddha for his answer & he was staying in Savatthi at Jetā's Grove, Anāthapindika's monastery. The Buddha gave different kinds of blessings from mundane to supramundane levels. Buddhists recite it for blessings & free of dangers. Reciting is reminding us & for contemplation. The most important point is put into practice. All the Buddha's Teachings were nearly on human beings & human mind. It was more like education than religion. A being born into human world has 2 ways to choose & walk along one of the paths. One is downfall & failures. The other is development & success. These are the unwholesome & wholesome ways or negative & positive ways. All of them are related to the law of actions (kamma) or cause & effect. To choose the right one we need the wholesome education & have to rely on the Teachings of the Buddha, noble beings & ancient sages.

(It's also interesting to compare some of the mundane blessings mentioned by the Buddha & some of the teachings of the Chinese ancient sages.

There are some similarities among them. May be this was one of the reasons Chinese people easily accepted Buddhism when it was spreading into China. We were learning Mingala Sutta by heart even at young age as children. But we are still distancing ourselves & it from the practical way of life.

(It was the same as most Chinese & Di Gi Gui - Chinese Virtue Standard. Chinese moral or virtue education was handed down from ancient time until the end of Ching Dynasty.) Therefore we have to study & learn it, & Then use it in daily life.

- ① Not consorting & fools;
- ② Consorting & the wise;
- ③ Paying homage to Those worthy of homage,

This is the highest protection/blessing.

① Not consorting & fools:

In suttas the Buddha talked about what should not be done first. After that continued to talk what should be done. Because if someone acts something which should not be done will has problems & suffering. Therefore it's more important. This is not difficult to understand but if we observe the current world situations in every aspect of it something is going wrong. A sentient being after taking rebirth into human world he or she is not alone, & family members surrounding them.

So man has companions. Each family is the smallest part of society. Not only human but also animal is the same. The differences between them is man has knowledge. Every man has 2 kinds of companion - Natural selection or send by law of kamma & later ī one's own choice, or selection. By law of kamma you meet this or that family members. With one of the past kammas, someone has born into the family of a fishing village, into a Buddhist family, etc... Later in life one makes one's own choice ^{etc 2} ~~who are~~ ^{consorting ī} ~~practising~~ ^{drunkards, drug addicts, gamblers, etc} Buddhist ^{practising} Dhamma, etc... There are a lot to say & contemplate about for these 2 kinds of companions. And then we'll see the important of the law of kamma & wholesome educations. Blessing (mangala) has the meaning of the cause for progress or success. Not consorting ī fools was so important that the Buddha described it as first as a foundation.

Without following this instruction & other blessings ^{are} also out of reach.

What is a fool (bālā)? Someone has unwholesome thoughts, speech & action is bālā. ~~These are the characteristics which know a fool.~~ It lead to bad results. Therefore he is a fool. Unwholesome energy or element can spread like a disease. This is the nature of energy. Element also has the nature of combination. For e.g. Ven. Sariputta was foremost in wisdom & his energy spread to his students who also had wisdom. The monk Devadatta was a renegade to the Buddha & his students also liked him. The negative element or energy not only effect human beings but also to nature, such as animals, trees, fruits, weather, etc. Positive or wholesome energy ^{is also the same way.} If there are more fools (bālā) in the world & it will lead to destruction. Living together ī fools is like living ī enemies. The Buddha even mentioned that dukha-^{sufferings} were made by fools. If we contemplate the current situations around the world will appreciate this point. Someone consorts ī fools not only without benefits in this life but also next life to come. For e.g. prince Ajātasattu was consorting ī The renegade monk Devadatta later killed his father King Bimbisara & after death fell into Hell. Consuming of unwholesome things such as, drugs, alcohol, polluted medias, etc making a person becoming a fool. At last at the Dhammic level association ī unwholesome Dhamma (greed, aversion, delusion, etc) is foolish & ī wholesome Dhamma is wise.

② Consorting ē the wise:

Why the Buddha encouraged us to consort ē the wise? To absorb & saturate wholesome energy or elements into our hearts. The Buddha said: living ē fools is living ē enemies; ē the wise is living ē family & relatives. The wise has 3 characteristics: has good, wholesome thoughts, speech & actions. Practicing accordingly ē the wholesome education only can be a wise person. Therefore knowing & not practicing is not a wise man. The Chinese Saying said: Saying ^{talking} & not doing is Pyant Ren. Pyant Ren means impostor. Are we in this class? After knowing & practising ^{will become} is a wise man; if not, ^{only an educated fool} ~~at foolish~~ wise person. With a lot of knowledge & could talk ^{no book, no fear} is still not wise. Live a life without dangers, enemies, & ~~not~~ ^{only} ~~frighten~~ can be wise. The jataka story about 2 parrots was a good examples of the fool & the wise.

^{The place of} Two parrots chicks blew away by wind; one of them landed to at a group of hermits & looked after by them. It grew up & had the kind nature & behaviour liked the group of hermits. The other chick landed at the place of a group of bandits & looked after by them. It grew up ~~to the~~ & had the violent nature & had behaviour liked the bandits. Therefore making friends & association ē people are very important part of human life. And should not take it lightly.

③ Paying homage To those worthy of homage:

With this we become intelligence & wise, & will do the right things. To those worthy of homage are: the triple gems; Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha, parents, teachers ^{family members, relatives}, & people older than us or wise. Especially people have sila, samadhi & panna. The results of homage, ^{veneration} & respect are long life, beauty, ^{happiness}, strength, of wisdom. Why should pay homage to people? We must think about the qualities & gratitude. The qualities of nobility, purity, etc. which are sila, samadhi & panna (In Pali-guna) ^{ing & shaking +} appreciation, respect, gratitude on these guna is paying homage to those worthy of homage. Some people don't have guna but have gratitude on us. Paying homage should base on metta-good will & good volition. Without it is not real homage. The person receiving the homage responds ē good-will, & kindness & compassion. Therefore both sides develop wholesome mental states. These energy spread to the surroundings. With the wholesome energy or element has good weather & effects the crops, & fruits, & trees & plants. The foods have nutritions & by eating them human being have long life & healthy.

What is the results of homage to things which shouldn't be homaged? It can be mentioned a lot of them. The outcomes are always negative, harmful & dangerous. The obvious ones are some religious cult leaders & their cult teachings & cult followers. Admiration to some political figures, artists, etc who don't have moral standards. All these come from ignorance or delusion. Therefore we should not homage to unwholesome or negative shammas. Should pay homage to wholesome or positive Dhamma, such as sila, samadhi & pañña. The highest homage & veneration are the Buddha, Dhamma & Ariya Sangha which They represent sila, samadhi & pañña. There was a Jataka story on ^{wrong homage} paying (Veneration). In one of his past lives the Bodhisatta was born into a noble brahmin family, which worshipping fire. His parents kindled a fire for him after born & looked after for it until 16 yrs of age. At this age a brahmin youth could choose one of the 2 ways in his later life. Had a family or continued to worship the fire. He chose the 2nd one & brought the fire to him to the forest & continued the duty. One day he received a cow by begging. He wanted to offer the meat to the fire but didn't has salt to him. Therefore he left it at the forest & looking for salt elsewhere. When he was away a group of hunters arriving there. They killed the cow & took all the meat to them. After he came back only found the head, skin & tail of the cow. He came to his common sense; how could a fire protecting me even it could not protect its offerings. Therefore he gave up the wrong practice, lived a hermit life & practised jhanas. After died born in heaven.

Some brahmans believed by worshipping fire after die born as Brahma gods. Once, a brahman at dying & seeing hell fire, told people what he saw. They told him, this was Brahma Heaven & inclined his mind towards it. After died & born in Hell. There are many wrong views & practices in the world. People must have the courage to give up all of them as soon as they know it. It was like the Bodhisatta in this story. After knowing the useless, unbeneficial, harmfulness consequences of views & practices should give up instantly, such as terrorism in the name of religion. What is the best offering, veneration or homage? The Buddha mentioned 2 kinds of veneration; amisa puja - offerings of external objects such as the 4 requisites, etc. The 2nd is Dhamma puja - offering to Dhamma, i.e., practising Dhamma or Dhamma-dhamma-patipatti-practice in accordance to the Dhamma. At the time of the Buddha's total unbinding-mahā-parinibbāna, the heavenly beings were paying homage & offering of heavenly flowers, sandalwood powder, incense, etc. The Buddha said in all the offerings Dhamma puja was the best.

The Buddha taught the Mangala Sutta 10 verses in groups. The first group of verses as explained in above had 3 blessings: ① Not consorting with fools
 ② Consorting with the wise ③ Paying homage to those worthy of homage. These are very important to fulfill the other blessings to follow. It can be said fundamentally important. If we analyse these 3 blessings & they are connected. Therefore we know the skills & wisdom of the Buddha in teachings which were very systematic, Hence he was called Teacher of gods & humans.

- ④ Living in a civilized land,
- ⑤ Having made merit in the past;
- ⑥ Directing oneself rightly;

This is the highest protection/blessing.

④ Living in a civilized land:

To reside in a suitable locality or good places. The Buddha mentioned the importance of locality or places for development & progress in worldly & spiritual matters. What are the things to choose for a suitable locality? On education, economy, health, spiritual etc. ~~or whatever what one to do.~~
 If we are living at wherever we are in will no progress for our whole life. A place for the chances to realize Path & Fruit of the Buddha Dhamma is the best place to reside. A place can fulfill the perfections (paramis) of the Buddha's Teachings. To reside in countries have the Buddha Sāsana. In general a place can support us for making merits, obtain wealth, education & health. We can also distinguish a place to 3 periods of human life span. When young a suitable place for education, during ^{the} middle period for wealth & the last period for spiritual progress. There are 6 noble Dhammas - aruttiya Dhamma. A place can fulfill these 6 noble Dhammas is a blessing place. To obtain them must live in a suitable & good place.

The 6 noble Dhammas are: ① The best seeing ② The best hearing ③ The best obtaining ④ The best training ⑤ The best service ⑥ The best remembering.
 The best seeing is seeing the Buddha & Sangha. The best hearing is hearing the Buddha Dhamma. The best obtaining is faith - saddha. Having faith in the Triple Gem (Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha) & the law of Karma.

For ordinary worldly people there are a lot of seeing, hearing & obtaining for worldly matters which are never end. Some are quite harmful & polluting our hearts. To get the best training is sila, samadhi & panna. The best service is serving the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha & to the parents. Serving the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha is very important for every Buddhist. Mostly we don't aware or not know it profoundly. This is a very rare chance & opportunity. Why?

Because only a Buddha appeared that the Triple Gems existed. Even a Buddha appeared we must have the human birth & also encountered them. Having a human birth is even quite difficult. In the whole of samsara we were slaves of our bodies & family members only. Ledi Sayadaw was always looking for chances to serve the sangha. But the sangha stopped him to do the services for them. What he said or responded to them was very remarkable. He said: in the whole of samsara his hands were the slave for ^{the} wives & children only. Therefore requesting them to allow him for their service. It's true; if we were doing a lot of services for the Triple Gems in samsara ^{will} not here anymore. Now, Buddhists shouldn't miss this chance & opportunity. It's very rare to come by. Look after the parents also very important in human society. The Chinese filial piety - shao tao is very well known. This education & practices were handing down for many centuries, may be more than over 5000 yrs. Without love, kindness & filial duties to one's parents there is no future for someone. The best remembering or memory is the qualities of Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha - Gunas. There are a lot of worldly memories to ordinary worldlings. It's good to have the memorries of one's parent kindness, love & gratitude. And then repay to them. (*) add here.

There was a good story of a sutta representing the anuttariya Dhamma. Once time the Buddha was going alms round & met a group of people. He asked their names & livelihoods. One of them was a fisherman & his name was Ariya - Mr. Noble. His actions were ignoble. So the Buddha gave him a talk on what was noble. At the end he entered the Stream (became a sotapanna). From an ignoble person he became a noble person (ariya). This was also he was living in a suitable place for his spiritual progress. (i.e., no. ④ blessing).

Even it's a suitable place for most people; if a person is very bad & doesn't make any difference to this person (as e.g., Devadatta & his followers). Even can commit unwholesome actions. Also it depends on the each person. Therefore wholesome education is very important. In the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha taught about the 8 unsuitable places - Akkhana Sutta.

These are: hells, animals, ghosts - realms; Brahma gods & only mind & only physical body; a man/woman without wholesome roots; border areas or countries the Buddha Dhamma can't reach; people & wrong views & the time when no Buddha arises.

* (someone who can fulfill the 6 anuttariya dhamma has the 7 benefits as mentioned in the Satipathana sutta: purification of beings, surmounting of sorrow & lamentation, the disappearance of dukkha & discontent, acquiring the true method & the realization of Nibbana.) * (*) add this up there

(5) Having made merit in the past:

Someone is intelligent, wise, encounter & good things, suitable situations, etc. because he/she made merits in past lives. People who had good or wholesome merits in their past lives, mostly they had success whatever endeavours they were in. In the Buddha's time the billionair Jotika was a very good example. In modern day the Hong Kong business tycoon Mr. Li also a very good evidence. He came from mainland China into Hong Kong & met a feng-sui master. He asked him about his future. He predicted that Mr. Li would make a lot of money. And also business he would do & success. These were later come true. As his businesses succeed & always donates a lot of money for ~~philanthropic matters~~. Therefore he is also a well known philanthropist. How to use the money is more important than how to make money. Most people instead of using the money in better ways, just wasting them & even sometimes using them in unwholesome ways. Do we really believe in the law of karma? Just think about it. Two persons even they have the same effort, the results are different. These differences are connecting to their past karmas. An old man is very often reciting this verse; Even though intelligent (nyan) I've past merits always poor. Sometimes we may encounter an ~~idiot~~ intelligent person whatever he tries to do something doesn't get the result. This is the cause of lacking good conducts (carana). The law of karma is profound & complex. Most people know about it superficially. Even the Buddha mentioned it as one of the unconceivable subjects.

There was an interesting jataka story on this point. A wood cutter went into a forest for fire woods. He came back late & the city gate was closed. He had to sleep outside the city. The place he slept was near a tree & 2 forest cocks also slept on the branches. At night some noises made him wake up. The cocks were in quarrel. Because the cock on the upper branch shot on the cock on the lower branch. The lower cock said to the upper cock to conceal; "If someone roasts my meat & eat will get 1,000 coins." The upper cock retorted as; "If someone eats my inner organs will become a king, my flesh will become a field marshal, if she a woman becomes a queen. Eat the flesh sticks to the bones becomes steward a treasurer or the teacher of the king." The wood cutter caught the upper cock & took it home & asked his wife to cook it. After finished, put it in a basket & both of them took it to the river Ganges. They planned to eat it after bathing. Suddenly a strong wind came & blew away the basket into the river. The basket was floating down the river & arrived to a place where the king's elephant trainer bathed the elephants. He brought the meat to his home & shared to his wife.

He wanted to share it his wife & brought it home. At the same time his teacher, the hermit knew everything & his psychic power. He waited for him at his home & made the arrangement. Asked the elephant trainer to eat the inner organs, to the wife the flesh & himself the other. He made a prediction for him as would become a king after 3 days. At that time another king came & made war to this country. Without any other reason the king put the elephant trainer like a king on the elephant to fight the war. The real king died in the war. But the elephant trainer was a good planner & leading the battle to success, & became the king. We don't know our past kammas. Therefore to have merits for the future, in this life we should develop wholesome or good kammas. Another important point on karma is wholesome or unwholesome karmic results (or energies) are following us all the times. Therefore in every moment to have wholesome thoughts & actions are very important. Negative & positive results are looking for chances to come in ^{at} anytime.

If we only know the benefits ^{or values} of merits (meritorious deeds) that wanting to perform it. Then only we will have the no. 5th blessing. We should also very often reflect on the results of merits. The merits we should perform are: giving (dāna), precepts (sīla), careful & look after our speech, look after our sense faculties, etc. or dāna, sīla, samadhi & pañña. This is like buried gold, gems, treasures in the ground.

No-one takes away from you & become your own properties.

It'll follow behind us all the time like a shadow. The Buddha gave a Dhamma talk on the 4 treasure pots - Nitidana Sutta. It was about dāna, sīla, samadhi & pañña. The results of these merits are:

- ① Fair complexion ② Pleasant voice ③ Having a good bodily structure
- ④ Good looking face ⑤ Have power & influence ⑥ With many companions & servants.
- ⑦ Having the human happiness ⑧ Having the celestial happiness
- ⑨ Can realize Nibbāna. All these wholesome Dhammas were praised by the wise & noble person. It could lead to great disciples, chief disciples, Solitary Buddha (Pacceka-buddha) & Samma-sambuddha. Therefore we must perform merits for this life & future lives to come. We should do it better & better.

⑥ Directing oneself rightly:

To set up oneself in the right course: If someone does not has faith-saṅsāra, develops it & makes it strong. If no sīla-morality, follow the precepts & practising it, etc. Atta-sammā-panihi - is let the mind in the wholesome & good direction. Therefore speech & actions also include. Tha-pye-kan Sayadaw took it as a very important blessing.

In the Dhammapada: unwholesome mind brings sufferings & wholesome mind brings happiness. Unwholesome mind brings more sufferings to oneself than one's enemies. Wholesome mind brings happiness to

— others can't give. Negative mind is untrained mind & without protection. If we look at the world situations a lot of social problems natural disasters & other sufferings come from this mind. For directing oneself rightly; Sayadaw told us to follow the instructions & practised accordingly to the Ambalatthika-Rahulovada Sutta in the Majjima Nikaya;
The gist of the instruction & practice was: Before our mental, speech & bodily actions we must reflect before first it has benefit to oneself & others or not, harmful to oneself or not. During the actions also has reflect in this way. After the actions also reflect in this way. It had 3 stages. If we do something wrong should admit it. And then make a determination not to do it again. If the actions were good & right, bring happiness we should take joy in it. This instruction was the Buddha giving to his 7 yrs old son novice Rahula. It's good to train, educate children, in this sutta. There was a sutta in the Anguttara Nikaya called Cakkavatti Sutta - The Wheels. There are 4 wheels: ① Living in a civilized land, ② Associating with people of integrity (wise & noble) ③ Directing oneself rightly ④ Having done merit in the past.

They are mutually conditioned & supporting each other. Therefore like a wheel. If human beings endowed with them achieve greatness (status, honour, etc), abundance in term of wealth & happiness.

Most Buddhists have the chances & opportunity to develop them, because more or less we have it. Only we don't know the suttas or educate to the suttas that not doing it rightly or properly. Instead we waste our times in worldly matters. We can give a very good example for the no. ③ wheel importance of no. ③ wheel in Devadatta. He had no. ①, ② & ④ wheels but didn't have the no. ③ wheel. He couldn't direct himself rightly that, & at last fell into Hell (Maha Avici Hell - The most severe & terrible one)

If we want progress & happiness we need these 4 conditioned cycle or wheels. In the past if we had the 4th wheel & in this life we have the chances of ①, ② & ③ wheels. In this life if we have ①, ② & ③ wheels & will do the 4th again. Therefore it's like a cycle, & very important for every human beings. By study & understanding the Buddha's Teachings clearly & we know how to use this life properly & wisely. Human beings using their lives foolishly that many problems & sufferings arise in societies.

In this section want to discuss more on kammas. Because it's universal & natural laws. No living beings can't escape it or stay away from it. Also has a lot of connections to this section. Only we have the right & good education & know how to live this life for oneself & others; create a harmonious, peaceful & happy societies. In the small booklet: Abhidhamma in Daily Life by Ven. Sayadaw Mahagandayone, included a section on Kamma.

^{success} Sampatti & ^{failure} Vipatti: Complete & related causes & Lacking & related causes in living beings' minds. There are a lot of karmic result energies or power latent in them. If they don't have the chances to give the results & always following the living beings in their khandhas' processes. When the chances & causes are there wholesome kammas give the results & unwholesome kammas give the unfavourable results.

The 4 Sampattis:

1. Gati-sampatti: Having a good birth
2. Upadhi-sampatti: Having a good looks & physical structure
3. Kala-sampatti: Living at the time of good periods
4. Payoga-sampatti: Present mindful intelligent exertion.

The 4 Vipattis:

1. Gati-vipatti: Having a bad existence
2. Upadhi-vipatti: Having an ugly looks & physical structure
3. Kala-vipatti: Living at the time of chaotic period, bad leaders & governments.
4. Payoga-vipatti: Lacking of present mindful intelligent exertion.

i. Having a good birth or existence:

Human being, deity, Brahma-god are good existences. When the beings are in these existences, Their wholesome kammas have the chances to give the results. Even human world still has some dukkha, the others two are not. With the wholesome kammas have the chances to give the results that a person has the good sense objects as experiences. Even he has some unwholesome karma to him, it not have much chance to come in. Human existence, even though not free from dukkha, it's ^{a lot} better than the 4 woeful states (hell, animal, ghost & asura).

more or less

Therefore, the wholesome kamma has the chance to come in & experience the good sense objects & stay away from the bad one.

2. Having a bad existence:

The 4 woeful states is called gati-vipatti. When a being is born There, & the unwholesome kamma has the chance for the result. The beings in hell & ghost realms, always have dukkha, torturing & burning & sufferings. Even animals are a little better, they still have ^{the} chance of unwholesome kamma give the results of starvation, thirst, ^{encounter} strong heat & rain. And kill & sticks & knives or eaten by others. The small insects are very easily kill by human beings to step on them. Even They have the past good kamma & then none of them it can save them.

3. Having a good looks & physical structure:

Physical good looks is important in human world. A woman poor & low status but beautiful & attractive could reach to a higher status. Then her past good kamma has the chance to give good results. For e.g., a woman had beauty became a queen, consort, etc.

Mrs. Simpson became the wife of King Edward was having a good looks. Don't say about human beings; even lovely & cute animals are looked after by wealthy people. Their lives are better than some human beings.

4. Having an ugly looks:

Someone has any ugly looks, but & wealth & higher status, still he has difficulty in their same social class. This was evident in the jataka story of Prince Kusa & the beautiful woman Pashavati. To conquer her heart the Bodhisatta had to suffer a lot. A beautiful woman & an ugly husband & people would think will take him as her servant. Once I met a business woman & white skin & good looking. Near her was a man & brown skin & not good looking. He was managing her business & some workers. I took him as her worker. Later found out that he was her husband.

5. Living at the time of good period:

The time when countries are governed by good leaders & governments. These leaders & governments have skills, morals, good plannings, etc. for the welfare of the people & the countries. At that time human beings good kamma can have the chances to experience good sense objects.

People are free from worries & difficulties. If we study the ancient Chinese history, the Chou Dynasty periods were a very good example. It lasted for 800 yrs & the longest dynasty in Chinese history. —was prosperous & long lasting because the emperors & most citizens had moral integrity & virtues. Why was that?

Because from emperors to citizens had the education on morality & virtue, starting from young age. They followed the teachings or educations of the sages & wise people handed down from generation to generation. People had these kinds of education in family life, schools, societies.

By studying & researching the Chinese written characters will find out the profound wisdom of the Chinese sages of the past. Human moral integrity, virtues is like the root of a tree. If the root is rotten; then the tree will die & doesn't have the chance to bear fruits. Human mind & behaviour not only effect societies greatly also to the nature.

Again if we study & research the Buddhist culture in some Theravadin countries such as Burma, etc. Until the first half of the 20th century Burmese ^{were} starting their education very young age at village monasteries. Parents are also very close to the monasteries & monks. Therefore the whole family have the knowledge of the Dhamma more or less, especially in morality & virtues. They have heard or read the Jataka stories & the law of kamma. (including the Dhammapada stories). The well known international meditation teacher S.N Goenka once time mentioned the moral virtues of Burmese Buddhists in one of his essays in Vipassana Journal. It mentioned his grandfather on a business journey forgot his money bag in a public rest place. Only he knew about it after arrived to a week-end market place far away. He had no time to go back to get the bag of money. Only after he finished his business & went back to get it. The money was still there waiting for him. Even his grandfather mentioned that someone lost his/her gold ring in a market place no-one ^{would take} took it. This kind of moral integrity were very evident in villages. The farmers went to the fields for work or slept at night, they never closed their home-doors & never lost their properties.

Buddhist Texts mentioned 3 kinds of aeon; an interim aeon, an incalculable aeon & a great aeon. Antarakappa - " " " is the period of time required for the life-span of human beings to rise from ten yrs to the maximum of many thousands of yrs. And then fall back to 10 yrs; ^{the time} human life-span are rising up is Kala-Sambatti. Human life-span increasing are depending on moral integrity, weather & foods, as mentioned in the Cakkavati Sutta; Digha Nikaya.

6. Living at the time of chaotic period:

This is the period bad, evil, unqualified, immoral emperors, kings & leaders governing the countries. The time when countries are destroyed or in wars are also kala-vipatti. All these points we can see in the middle east & other places. There are also other causes, some foreign powers interfere to purposes & make the problems worse & greater. At these kinds of periods the unwholesome kamma of human beings have the chances to come in. People are becoming poor & starving, diseases & many other sufferings arise. At this time people's good kamma ^{even} their kamma don't have the chances that they have to run for their lives & hiding. They can't eat what they want, separate & their loved ones, etc.

7. Having the present mindful intelligent exertion:

Sati, viriya, nyan are payoga. Nyan-knowledge is not only the good one but also include knowledge & faults in unwholesome matters. Therefore in everything has sati, perseverance, clever, heedful, etc are payoga-sampatti. In the realms of celestial beings & Brahma-gods this is not evident. But the results of this is very clear in human world. Very few have the strong unwholesome kamma & them to give the immediate results. Therefore other kamma depending on one's payoga-sampatti will give the results. In gist, to get the good results should not depend on the past kamma only. We should also have to rely on this present payoga-sampatti. This payoga is supporting for the past good kamma. For someone's success in businesses the past good kamma includes 25% & the others 75% connected to this life sati, viriya & nyan. The 16th United States president Abraham Lincoln was a very good example. Even though born into a very poor family his present good qualities; such as wise, intelligent, sympathy & effort made him a great man. Man has this quality not only progress in worldly affairs but also in Dhamma & can develop the paramis for Nibbana.

Payoga-sampatti can prevent the unwholesome kammic results to arise. We can divid unwholesome kamma into 2 types; strong & not strong, or big or small, or heavy & light. We can't free from the strong, big, heavy kamma in payoga-sampatti but can reduce its power. For e.g., King Ajatasattu by killing his father ^{sure} for falling into the Great Hell-Anici. But later he had remorse, had strong faith (Saddha) in the Buddha & other merits (all these were payoga-sampatti) only fell into a smaller hell. Therefore the smaller unwholesome can be prevented in it.

Present payoga-sampatti can make one's success in business & having good health. In this way payoga-sampatti is the main point for the wholesome kamma to give the results. Someone has it can get education, good spouse, good friends; can meet good teachers; can develop in education, prosper in wealth & status.

In payoga-sampatti, knowledge of understanding things is the first important. And then having sati & awareness in matters; not to be lazy when matters arise make effort & perseverance.

8. Lacking of present mindful intelligent exertion:

Without knowledge & intelligence, foolish, no sati, heedless, laziness, no effort, etc. are payoga-vipatti. ^{Theravada} - envy, macchariya - avarice on others. Impatience, anger & conceit in matters, etc. all These is payoga-vipatti & disturb & hinder progress. The main point here is except the strong or heavy unwholesome or wholesome kammas, the small or light kammas of the past have the chances or not depending on human payogas (payoga-sampatti & vipatti) If someone always has payoga-sampatti, then the unwholesome kammas don't have the chances & only the wholesome ones. (e.g Liao Fan's 4 lessons)

There are a lot of Dhamma can be contemplated on concerning in payoga-sampatti & vipatti. Because it's the subject of present kammas & situations. In the 31 realms of existence, human existence is the most important one. It's like an International Airport. From here every human can go to any part of the world. Human beings or living beings create all sorts of kamma from here; to hells, ghosts, animals, back to humans & all kinds of deity. Even now we can see human hell, human ghost, etc. on the earth. Born as a human being & encounter the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha are priceless. Majority of human beings are wasting their priceless opportunities. Instead they misuse their times in sensual pleasures, even doing meaningless & foolish things. Therefore They create a lot of negative kammas on earth. Very few people have wealth & power, but they misuse them & create more serious negative kammas. (Some world leaders, governments & rich people). These are the greatest fools. Wise & intelligent people use their wealths & power for others. These are the wisest men & women. Therefore every Buddhist should create a lot of wholesome kamma, study & practise the Dhamma.

- ⑦ Broad knowledge,
- ⑧ Having Skills,
- ⑨ Well mastered discipline;
- ⑩ Well spoken words;

This is the highest protection/blessing

⑦ Broad knowledge:

After the Buddha talked about "Directing oneself rightly" & continued continued on broad knowledge as a blessing. Therefore without broad knowledge can't directing oneself rightly. Broad knowledge is also vast learning.

Here the most important knowledge is the Dhamma knowledge of the Buddha. This can be come from study & research Dhamma Discourses, listening to the talks of the scholar monks & practicing monks, etc. Listening of Dhamma is one of the 7 noble treasures (The other 6 are: conviction, virtue, conscience, concern, generosity & discernment). Another groups of Dhamma for noble growth are: conviction, virtue, learning, generosity & discernment. Here include suta-learning. Therefore the Buddha emphasized on learning as progress in worldly & spiritual matters. Paññā-knowledge as worldly has 2 kinds: arts & sciences which worldlings develop in many different ways. Some of them are harmful & some are beneficial. If we talk about them will never end. Most important point for ^{all} worldly knowledges, i.e arts & sciences are not to harmful & always beneficial to human race & nature.

According to Ta-byé-kar Sogyadaw; had broad knowledge was skill in literatures. It include arts, sciences & spiritual literatures. We have to study, learn, research broad knowledges which are useful, beneficial to oneself & others. Why human & other living beings are quite different to each other? Their 3 types of kamma are quite different, so their results are. The 3 types of kamma differences come from different views & knowledges. Human beings ^{are} creating kammas & their views & knowledges. (This subject is very wide & profound & have a lot to say. This point also support the important of moral education & the law of kamma) Therefore broad knowledge of the Buddha Dhamma is very important. Knowledge can't steal by others like other things. It will never used up by giving. The Buddha Dhamma is priceless. With practice only broad knowledge & learning are useful & beneficial: if not it become useless. A person has broad knowledge but no moral value & virtues is without blessing. For this point there was a story in The Dhammapada on Tamha vagga- Chapter on Craving. This was about Kapila the Fish. In The Buddha Kassapa's time, Kapila the monk was very learned in the Teachings. Because of his great learning he gained fame & fortune. And then became very conceited & was full of contempt for other monks. When others pointed out his mistakes & never accepted. In course of time all good monks shunned him & only the bad ones gathered around him. He also disregarded the Monk Disciplines & abused other monks. For these evil deeds & reborn in hell. During the Buddha Gotama's time became a golden fish & a stinking mouth.

In accordance to the Buddha; study & learning for knowledge should have right intention & purpose. Using it also have to be right.

There are 3 kinds of study: 1. Studying for preservation, e.g liked Ven. Ananda. 2. Studying for transcending dukkha, i.e., study & practice.

3. Wrong study; it's like catching a poisonous snake in the wrong way.

As e.g., Kapila monk, Arittha monk. There are 4 ways people can increase in defilements (kilesa). These are: 1. With broad knowledge 2. With old age, increase in sensual pleasure & age 3. With fame, e.g. actors & actresses 4. With increasing in wealth, this is quite clear. most rich people don't know how to use them properly. Power-mongers of politicians want to become rich. Wealth-mongers of business men want power. They are supporting each other. Today some of the human problems & environmental problems ^{were made} ~~make by~~ them. Therefore broad knowledge is not always good. It depends on what kinds of knowledge & how we use it.

The Buddha's right knowledge, ^(samma-nyan) is always overcome our defilements, our real enemies-greed, hatred & delusion, etc. & benefit to human race & protect ^{nature}.

^{Except} That all are harming to human race & nature is wrong knowledge (miccha-nyan). Why today human mind is so polluted & harmful?

Modern day human mind is a lot of influence by medias, books, T.V, internet, video games, movies, music, etc. There are a lot of stuffs connection & sex, violence, distraction, etc. which are unhealthy to the mind. If we don't use the 6 sense-doors (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body & mind) mindfully, wisely, properly, then the sense objects - medias are poison for our minds. Most people ^{only} think school education as

earning a living & professions are educations. How to use the 6 sense doors is also education, even we know it or not. All of our knowledge come ^{this is the most important & fundamental education.} from these sense doors. Every human being comes into this world there are 2 ways to go. Down fall - downward way & progress - upward way. A man without moral foundation or morality & virtues, then his life is going downward. He will reap the negative results & no benefits for himself & others. Progress - upward way is the opposite, & positive results & benefit for himself & others. No-one wants to be a bad, evil person or a criminal in one's own family, ^{in a} society & in a country. But everyone wants a good, wise, sage like a noble person in one's own family, etc. These need a wholesome education.

The best sources can be from The Buddha's Teachings & The teachings of the ancient Chinese sages & teachers. For the Buddha; it's unquestionable because he was teacher of gods & human. Ancient Chinese sages had the history of over 5000 yrs. It had rich experiences & systems.

8: Having skills:

The Pali-sippa is handicrafts. The Burmese word sippa (it seemed to be come from this Pali word) is sciences. Therefore it include all worldly skills. It'll be a very wide subject in today world. It's important for material progress & development. If harmful to people & environment & become useless & no blessings. It must benefit to human & nature. So any skill in arts & sciences (& technology) must support the happiness & welfare for human beings. If not it will have the detrimental consequences. In the Khuddaka Nikaya, Peta Vuttu - Ghost Stories, There was an interesting story support this point. In Baranasi City There was a man who had a skill of throwing stones. He could make many different types of pictures by throwing stones on tree leaves. He made his living in this way. One day the king of Baranasi came to this place & seen his skill. He invited this man into his palace. The king had a brahman teacher who was very talkative. Therefore he wanted to teach him a lesson. The king & the stone thrower made the arrangement for it. He was hiding behind the king inside the curtain. The king summoned the brahman teacher & he was talking none stop. So the stone thrower threw pellet of goat shit as soon as the brahman opened his mouth to talk. It went straight into his mouth every time he tried to speak. In this way the brahman teacher corrected his talkativeness. The king gave 14 villages to the stone thrower as a prize money. This man taught his skill to others. One of his servants learnt this skill from him. After mastered it, the man wanted to test his skill & went to the Ganges River.

A Pacceka-buddha named Sumitta was staying near the river. At that time he was in meditation. This foolish man out of delusion decided to test his skill on the Pacceka-buddha. He threw a stone to his right ear & it went through & came out from the left ear. With the injury the Pacceka-buddha passed away. When people knew what happening & became angry & killed the man. After died & he was born in hell. After freed from hell & became a ghost (peta) near Rajagaha at the time of Buddha Gautama.

Because of ^{the} result of his heavy kamma this ghost's head was hitting in many iron hammers at the same time. After he fell to the ground & the hammers disappeared. As soon as he got up again the hammers appeared & struck his head again. In this way was the ghost suffered continuously. The result & power of kamma was unthinkable. Therefore anyone should not use his/her skills to harm people or nature & the outcome of suffering is unthinkable.

Here skills mean all kinds of skill including in politics, economics, any types of arts & sciences, technologies. For power & money only, it is like licking the honey on the tip of the razor blade.

④ Well mastered disciplines:

Vinaya is disciplines & not only Buddhist monks should have it. All human societies must have it. Only following & practising ^{it} that human beings can have progress & development. Understanding & practising has to be begun in family life & spreading into all parts of society. Starting from ^{family life} have to teach & train the children. Lay people disciplines are: ^{to avoid} 10 unwholesome courses of action; & To develop the 10 wholesome courses of action.

① The 10 unwholesome courses of action:

- (1) Destruction of life (2) Taking what belong to others (3) sexual misconduct
- (4) Lying (5) Malicious speech (6) Harsh language (7) Frivolous talk
- (8) Covetousness (9) ill-will (10) Wrong view (Here not believe in the Law of Karma) (Note: Someone can ask; "What about using intoxicants - i.e. drugs & alcohols?" This is including in no. (3)).

② The 10 wholesome courses of action:

- (1) To avoid the destruction of life & be anxious for the welfare of all lives.
- (2) To avoid taking what belongs to others.
- (3) — — Sexual misconduct.
- (4) — — Lying, not knowingly speaking a lie for the sake of any advantage.
- (5) To avoid malicious speech, to unite the discordant, to encourage the united, & to utter speech that makes for harmony.
- (6) To avoid harsh language & speak gentle, courteous & agreeable words.
- (7) To avoid frivolous talk; to speak at the right time, in accordance with facts, what is useful, moderate & full of sense.
- (8) To be without covetousness.
- (9) — — free from ill-will, thinking; "May these beings are free from hatred & ill-will & will lead a happy life free from trouble." etc.
- (10) To possess right view, such as - gifts & offerings are not fruitless & there are results of wholesome & unwholesome actions. That is believing in cause & effect of law of karma.

Human beings are alive & living in 3 types of action (kamma); i.e., mental, verbal & bodily actions. All are including in the 10 unwholesome & 10 wholesome actions. Therefore these are very important. If we live our lives free from the 10 unwholesome courses of action & follow the disciplines. Rule of law is also discipline. So disciplines are a very wide subject. It include worldly affairs to spiritual matters.

Human degeneration & progress are connecting to disciplines. In the world many problems & sufferings arise from man without disciplines. Therefore disciplines are fundamentally important.

We can justify a nation & its people by its standard of discipline.

Why people have no disciplines? Because some people don't have proper education in moral disciplines & how to become a human.

They didn't bring up or grow up in disciplines. Usually we overlook or even don't know the importance of how to bring up a child & develop disciplines. So every type of goodness must to be trained in the early age.

Without a proper education & training on disciplines & grown up in bad habits & behaviours. And then becomes an immoral person.

It is like a white sheet of canvas & a piece of soft clay. You can draw any picture, other colours on it. You can model in the soft clay into any image. But in the hard & dry clay it can't.

Nowadays man never care or seriousness on disciplines & trainings children. Instead they let all sorts of media to teach & train

them. Therefore at homes children are difficult to teach & at schools also difficult to discipline them. There are also signs of disrespectful to parents & teachers, by youngsters. If we look at the present day human societies will see the signs of decadence. Compare in the Chinese Standards - Di Gi Gui & see the negative sides of societies.

When we were young never seen youngsters ^{ever} reported to the parents & teachers when they taught them. Nowadays hearing news of beating & killing them. We can get good children & citizens only by educating & training. Can't let them go their own ways without disciplines & moral standards. Without these foundations no family, society & country will stable. We can justify this point to current situation around the world.

Nowadays we heard a lot of very nice words on democracy, human right, equality, etc. Do we really use them rightly & wisely? No, mostly use it as empty words & even create more problems, chaos.

Without disciplines & moral standards not only become empty words but also create instability, chaos, problems, violence, etc in family, society & the country. We can see all these things going on in this 21st century around the world. For an e.g., a super rich power can has weapon of mass destruction but another small country can't has it or keep it. This country can interfere & invade a small country. But if another country does the same thing is unacceptable. Promoting & protecting sexual misconducts are human right? There are a lot to say & contemplate on some of the modern day philosophies. The ways of correcting & cure is not promoting & protecting unwholesome matters & also not by punishments. To educate & change people's mind.

Only a proper & right education can solve the problems. Using these philosophies wrongly are not only create problems in politics, economics, media, etc. but also spreading into family life & schools. Therefore nowadays children & youngsters ^{are} can't teach, & train & control them in the right directions. So these nice words should only use in good & wholesome matters. It's the same as nuclear power. If you use it wisely & helping human race ⁱⁿ progress. If you use it improperly & unwisely it brings destruction to human.

It's also very important to take heed of ^{admonition who} someone ^{has} knowledge, intelligence, wise & noble. (e.g., parents & teachers). There was a jataka story demonstrating this point. In one of his past lives, the Bodhisatta was a king. Later he had the sense of urgency (samvega) & renounced the world & became an ascetic. Another king who was the past life ^{of} Ven. Ananda heard this news & also became an ascetic. Later they met each other in the forest & stayed together.

One day they went alms round & took back their foods to the forest. Ananda took out the salt salt bag which he stored before & put it into his own foods. The Bodhisatta saw it & admonished him. He said to him; "you have been already renounced the kingship & the whole country. It's not proper & appropriate for clinging to this salt." Ananda retorted; "you also renounced your kingship & came here for practice. Is it good for you to admonish others?"

The Bodhisatta replied; "What I have reminded you is sensible. Therefore I am not wrong." Ananda made a remark again; "If you said something people didn't like, then it was wrong." At last the Bodhisatta explained to him that he had to say something which was beneficial & appropriate. If not it was like a wild buffalo moving around blindly in the thick forest & encountered suffering. Then Ananda became aware of his own mistake. Therefore it's very important to take heed of admonitions from parents & teacher & eagerness, will & compliance. Today in society a lot of youngsters have problems in family life & in schools is lacking of this quality. Therefore well mastered discipline is really a blessing & protection.

10. Well Spoken words:

This is a very, very important topic. Even most people not take it serious & think about it carefully. It's a very wide & profound subject, & not a small thing. We use words & speech nearly all the times. Thinking is also an inner chattering. Speech also connection to the 10 unwholesome & 10 wholesome dharmas (See on the topic of well mastered disciplines). Therefore we should abstain from speech connection to the 10 unwholesome dharmas. And should develop the kinds of speech connection to the 10 wholesome dharmas.

~~It's~~ impossible without speech & can't escape it from hearing. There are 4 kinds of wrong speech & 4 kinds of right speech. The 4 kinds of wrong speech are including in the 10 unwholesome dharmas. These are: lying; divisive speech, abusive speech & idle chatter. The 4 kinds of right speech are including in the 10 wholesome dharmas. These are abstaining the 4 wrong speeches: speaking only true; to unite the discordant, to encourage the united & to utter speech that makes for harmony; speak gentle, courteous & agreeable words; to speak at the right time, in accordance to facts, what is useful, moderate & full of sense. The 4 kinds of right speech are including in the Noble Eight Fold Path as right speech. Speech - good or bad has power. Therefore we must take them seriously. The results of wrong or right speech will follow living beings in the round of existence. Even a Buddha couldn't escape from it.

Mouth is for speech & eating. Man needs to communicate to each other, so we use it all the times. If we are not deaf can't escape from hearing. Therefore man invented speech & letters. All our human civilization is depending on it. Even though it's very important we don't take it seriously. Therefore we use it improperly,

unnecessary & harmful to oneself & others. Wholesome speech & skillful speech bring harmony, happiness & peace & even leading to the ending of dukkha. One of the factors for realization of Dhamma is listening Dhamma. In Chinese language, the explanation of the Chinese letter character mouth (口 = kho) an opening where speech comes out & foods go in. Whatever coming out & going in are very important for everyone. We can create a lot of negative kammas & problems in it. Also can create a lot of positive kammas & benefit in it. It depends on how you use it. Can harmful oneself & others; & also can benefit for oneself & others. If we observe today world there are a lot of unwholesome things going on for the mouth. Polluted medias & foods are very harmful to the mind & physical body. Most medias are talking about the development & promoting of greed, hatred & delusion. Using science & technology poison the food chains (chemicals, pesticides, etc.). Some politicians are using wrong speech & nasty tricks to get elected. How can the citizens rely on these leaders & their governments?

In the Buddha's Teachings we can study & learn a lot in wrong speech & right speech. The Buddha was the most skillful person in using speech. We should learn from him. There are a lot to reflect & contemplate on this subject. I'll quote some of them here.

In the Sutta Nipata, the Buddha gave a discourse on Well Spoken Words (Subhasita Sutta). He distinguished 4 poorly spoken words & 4 well spoken words. ① Unwholesome or poorly spoken words & wholesome or well spoken words. ② Unworthy or unjust — worthy or just words. ③ Unpleasant or unendearing words — pleasant or endearing words. ④ False words & true words.

Then Ven. Vangisa (The arahant poet) praised the Buddha in the attractive verses: Speak only not cause us pain & not hurt each other. These are truly well spoken words. Use pleasant speech which made people glad. Not resorting to evil speech. These are pleasant speech. The speech, the Awaken One (i.e, The Buddha) speaks is leading to Nibbana, putting an end to Dukkha. This is the unsurpassed or the worthiest speech. Therefore we should take care in the wholesome & friendly qualities constantly watch the movements of our minds & speeches.

The Buddha divided the speeches into 4 types, in The Discourse to Prince Abhaya (Abhaya-rāja-kumāra Sutta), Majjhima Nikaya. In the discourse, the Buddha shows the factors that go into deciding what is & is not worth saying. The main factors are 3: a statement is untrue or true; unbeneficial or beneficial & not pleasing or pleasing to others. The Buddha only speaks what is true & beneficial. He would look for the time to speak these things whether or not it was pleasing to others. With the main 3 factors then speech can divide into 6 types:

1. untrue, unbeneficial & not pleasing
2. True , " " "
3. " , beneficial " " "
4. Untrue, unbeneficial & pleasing
5. True , " " "
6. " , beneficial " "

The Buddha speaks only that is true & beneficial. It may be pleased or not pleased to others. But he would look for the appropriate time to speak them. So the Buddha speaks only 3. & 6. types of speech. One of the attributes of the Buddha is Sugato - well spoken person (Sugato also has other meanings). The first quality of the Dhamma is svākhata - well expounded that is good in the beginning, in the middle & the end. Therefore the Buddha is the well spoken person. His speeches are educating & training to become worthy. The speech the Buddha talks for attaining Nibbana that make an end to sufferings (dukkha). Therefore it is unsurpassed. The Buddha himself encourages people for it. Therefore among the speeches, the speech on the Four Noble Truths is the most blessing & protection.

At last I want to quote a sutta on the topics of conversation. It is in the Anguttara Nikaya. It's very important because we converse with people nearly all the times. With conversations human beings create a lot of wholesome & unwholesome karmas in all walks of life from the family level to government level. Therefore we should take it very seriously. In the sutta, the Buddha reminds it to the monks. But it also concern to lay people. If everyone follows the instruction will bring happiness & peace in life & not pollute the mind which is the source.

Topics of Conversation (Anguttara Nikāya)

The Buddha was staying in Sāvatti, Anāthapindika's Monastery. One day a large number of monks, on returning from alms round, gathered in the meeting hall & were engaged in many kinds of bestial topics of conversation: conversation about kings, robbers, & masters of state; armies, alarms, & battles; foods & drink, clothing, furniture, garlands & scents; relatives, vehicles; villages, towns, cities, The countrysides; women & heroes; the gossip of the street & well; tales of the dead; tales of diversity; the creation of the world & of the sea; talks of whether things exist or not. The Buddha, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the meeting hall. He asked the monks what they were talking about. They mentioned their conversation & he told them that it was not right for monks to have these kinds of conversation. He taught them the proper conversation.

"There are 10 topics of proper conversation. Talk on modesty, contentment, seclusion, non-entanglements, arousing persistence, virtue, concentration, discernment, release & the knowledge of vision & release. If you were to engage repeatedly in these 10 topics of conversation, would outshine even the sun & the moon, so mighty, so powerful—to say nothing of the wanderers of other sects."

We are not only engage in conversation & others. Nowadays we are listening a lot of them from the medias; such as radio, movie, internet, etc. Most of us will never think that these medias are teaching/educating us all the times. Why there are a lot of youth problems in family, school & society? Because they were educated by some medias. If parents not control & leading them in the right directions most problems will never solve. Instead their minds will become more polluted. Speech is so important that it can lead to problems, disharmony, violence & wars in politics, economics, nationalism, racism, religion, etc. These are ill speech, hatred speech & others. Speech also can lead to harmony, peace, love, compassion, enlightenment. There are 8 causes for wrong views to arise. Two causes are very important & the Buddha mentioned it very often in some of his discourses. These are: listening to wrong talks/teachings & unwise attention (ayoniso manasikara). Right view also based on listening to right talks/teachings & wise attention. In the Noble Eight Fold Path, right view comes first, because it will lead to the right directions. Therefore wrong view also will lead to the wrong directions.

Therefore the outcomes of wrong views are bad consequences & right views are good consequences. Topics on speech are wide & profound. People are using it everyday in life. And if we can use it skillfully, then it's a better world to live. To understand more on speech it need to study the suttas. The Buddha is called - Teacher of gods & humans / Sattā deva-maṇusśānam. Therefore well spoken words is a real protection & blessing.

- (11) Support for one's parents,
 - (12) Assistance to one's wife & children;
 - (13) Consistency in one's work,
- This is the highest protection/blessing.

(11) Support for one's parents:

Everyone's life has duties. We have filial obligations to support & look after our parents. Nowadays human beings are very weak in this duty, & even neglect about it! This is not a good sign for society.

The sign of selfishness, ingratitude, disrespect, no love, etc. Someone neglects this duty & obligation & it's sure that he will not good to others also. The Buddha & other ancient sages emphasized this duty strongly. In the whole Chinese history & culture there were highly developed philosophy & practices in this virtue as filial piety. A man doesn't have this virtue will never progress & no future.

Why we must support for one's parents? There are many good reasons for it. Someone has this virtue can be called a humane person, & without it a beastly person. If anyone has common sense this is not difficult to understand. Our beginning of life is totally dependent on parents. Our survivals in life are starting from our mothers' womb until grow up to take our own responsibility.

The most fundamental importance is the basic education which our parents, especially mothers teach & train us when we were young. This basic education is on morality & virtues. Nowadays most people neglect & overlook its importance. Mothers are our first teachers & our progress in the right or unwholesome directions are in their hands. Good emperors, leaders, sages & great people came from the care of good, intelligent & wise parents. Even we can say filial obligations is the foundation of all goodness to arise. It represents gratitude, respect, love, sympathy & concern for others.

There is a saying: the hand swings the cradle conquers the world. A woman has the most important role within the society. Even most people in today society may be not aware of it. In ancient time Chinese sages & wise people knew this point very clear & profoundly. Therefore they created & handed down a lot of written words in texts & books from generation to generation. She can teach & train her children become a noble person, a sage & a great man for the society. And also can produce a wicked, evil, dangerous & criminal for the society. A good, intelligent & wise daughter^{is} born to good parents. And then later in life becomes a good wife & mother. Therefore a happy, peaceful, & harmonious society has a lot dependence on women. It's not surprising that filial obligations/piety is the fundamental quality or virtue in Chinese culture, philosophy, education & practice in the Chinese history.

Support for one's parents is a noble action & must has to be done. With its obligation & action brings a lot of merit, satisfaction & happiness. It's important to understand the gratitude of parents & always remembering it. To forget the duty is very bad indeed. We should not remorse or remember whatever bad things had done before. Make a determination not to repeat it again is enough. These things can appear near the time of death, & bring more sufferings. But for good things & Dhamma, good to remember & reflect very often. For e.g. one's own dana & sila, reflection on death, etc. There was a remarkable jataka story on parents' love. This was the story of Bodhisatta in one of his past lives as a hermit Sumanasama. He & both of his parents were living in a forest as ascetics. His parents were both blind & had to look after them. One day the king of Benares went hunting & shot Sumanasama with poison arrow, because he was mistaken him as a deer. To save his life both parents & the female deity who was also the mother of the Bodhisatta 7 lives back before in the past. Each of them made the assertion of truth. Both parents said that they loved him more than their lives. The deity said that her love on Sumanasama was more than on anyone she had before. With the power of their truthful assertions made the arrow poison disappeared.

Someone can ask this question; of the parent's love who love is stronger? In Dhammapada, in the chapter of mind (Cittavagga), the story of Soreyya gave a clear cut answer. The love of a mother is more than the father. This story was strange & interesting. It expressed the power of the mind & should not neglect its functioning. Soreyya, the son of a rich man & some attendants went for a bath. On the way he met the Ven. Maha-kaccayana, who was adjusting his robes outside the city for alms round. He saw the golden complexion of the Thera & thought; "How I wish the Thera was my wife, or else the complexion of my wife was like him." As the unwholesome thought arose in him, his sex changed & became a woman. She ran away & arrived at Texila. And met a rich man & married him & 2 sons were born. There were also 2 sons from the previous marriage as a man. Later she had the chance to meet & offer foods to the Ven. Maha-kaccayana. And respectfully asked forgiveness to the Thera for her wrongful thought on him some yrs before. Then the Thera said to her; "I forgive you." As soon as these words were spoken she changed back to a man as before. With reflection, he was feeling very weary & repulsive of all these things & left the household life & became a monk.

After that he was often asked; "Whom do you love more: The 2 sons you had as a father or the other 2 you had as a mother?" To them he would answer that his love for those born of the womb was greater. The important lesson we gain from here is we can't think about things foolishly out of control. Should not neglect the mind & become its slaves. Have to control & train it for one's own benefit & others. Any sexual fantasy & misconduct including homosexuality can bring problems, dangers & sufferings.

The Buddha compared ~~the parents~~ the Brahma deity. Because they treat their children in love, sympathy & appreciative joy in success. We can appreciate the mother's love, if think about carefully her periods of pregnancy (9 months), delivery (very painful indeed, even sometimes risking their lives). After the delivery she has to look after you carefully in all possible ways. She has to feed you in her breast milk until we could take foods by ourselves. Therefore a mother's love is enriching in courage, patience, unselfishness, care, etc noble, & has healing power. When I am writing down these things it makes me cry. It's very noble & touching to the heart. Where is breast milk coming from? Changing from her own blood.

Once a Chinese movie director kept his wife breast milk in a small bottle & kept it very well for some yrs. One day he took out & checked it. It changed back into blood. There was a story, a cow feeding her calf & at that time a hunter came & hit her ^{was} in a spear. Instead of harming her the spear ^{was} damaged. Unselfish love is very powerful & has healing power.

Parents are our first teachers, especially mothers. Our progress in life is depending on their education & training. Good & moral people, great men & sages are the outcomes of proper education & training. It has to be started from family life. Therefore the proper duties of a mother is very important for the growth & progress in good qualities of the child. Without a good & skilful mother, the child's future is hopeless. We can't easily repay back for the kindness & gratitude of our parents. According to the Buddha the best way to pay it back is helping them growth in conviction (saddha), virtue (sila), learning (suta), generosity (caga) & discernment (pañña). It's important to treat our parents very well. Can't treat them like others. For e.g., the anger you have on your parents is more harmful. Insulting the parents is burning oneself in fire.

The Buddha mentioned 7 kinds of fire in the Agi Sutta - Fire Discourse Anguttara Nikaya. The fire of greed, hatred & delusion have to be removed. The fire of parents, husband & sages - Samanas have to be worshipped (Show respect & making supports). The last fire is has to be taken care; that is fuel fire. A husband gives security to the family. Therefore has to be respected. If someone very badly treating his/her parents & will get the same outcome from his/her children. And both can't get good children. This we can see in the life of King Ajātasattu. He killed his father King Bimbisara for power. Later in life he was also killed by his son. Again his son was killed by his grandson. Three generations committed patricides. Nowadays if we observe our present societies there are more & more cases of insulting, beating & killing parents than before. Can see more & more older homeless people on the streets. These & other things are the signs of decadence in human societies. Human beings ^{are} creating their own hells on earth.

(12) Assistance to one's wife & children:

In Sigalovāda Sutta - Advice to Sigala, Digha Nikāya, The Buddha gave instructions to Sigala, the house holder's son, on the duties & obligations as a husband to wife & children.

Assistance to one's wife in 5 ways:

1. By respecting her
2. By his courtesy
3. By being faithful to her
4. — handing over authority to her
5. — providing her 2 adorments.

Assistance to one's children in 5 ways:

1. Restrain them from evils
2. Direct them towards the goods
3. Train them to a profession
4. Arrange suitable marriages for them
5. In due time hand over the inheritance to them.

The 5 Duties & Obligations of a wife:

1. By doing her duties well
2. By hospitality to attendants, etc..
3. — her fidelity
4. By looking after his earnings
5. — skill & industry in all her business dealings

The 5 Duties & Obligations of a child:

1. Once I was supported by them, now I'll be their support
2. I'll perform those duties they have to perform.
3. — maintain the lineage & tradition of my family.
4. — look after my inheritance.
5. — give alms or generosity (caga) on behalf of them (when the parents are dead).

This 12th blessing/protection of assistance to one's wife & children is very interesting ^{important} topic, have a lot to say for contemplation. It's also wide & profound, depending on how someone ^{views} seen it. People want to penetrate them should study, research & contemplate all the teachings of ancient sages & the Buddha. Most people using or spending a lot of time & money to study & research to norish greed, hatred & delusion which are the mind pollutants. Instead they should work in the mind which is the closet to them than anyone else. It can bring them to happiness or destruction.

It covers from family life to society. Each family life is the smallest part of a society. It's like each part of the whole body. If every part of them ^{has} problems or becomes abnormal you will surely suffer or dies. If each family handling their matters very well & will solve many problems ^{which} nowadays people encounter in societies.

Therefore it's so very fundamental that good education within family life can has strong effects & influences in society. We should not take educations as only making a living. Our experiences in all the 6 senses are educations. Therefore no-one can free from it. Educations can be wholesome or unwholesome. Even science & technology, if we use it properly become right knowledge, & wrongly become wrong knowledge. All other human knowledges also has to be counted, including religions. All wrong & harmful actions come from wrong views & thinkings. The assistance to one's child is the duty & obligation of all parents. As the Buddha mentioned about it in 5 ways; the most important are three. These are: restrain them from evils; directing them towards good; & train them to a profession. One & two are fundamental education, which is morality & virtue. Without it never become a good person & going towards the right direction. Here I'll present 2 stories in the Buddha's time. The first is the story of the son of Mahadhana in Jāravattha - Ageing; & the other, the story of Kāla, son of Anathapindika in Lokavattha - The World. Both from Dhammapada. The first one without morality & virtue had the negative results & the other opposite.

The Story of the Son of Mahadhana:

He did not had any education while as a youth. When he came of age married the daughter of a rich man & also no education. Here both sides of parents did not teach so their duties & obligations. Among the 5 duties only the 5th one was fulfilled (In due time hand over the inheritance to them). Without the other factors it became useless & harmful. Therefore some wise parents, even they were rich not left wealth for their children. Only gave them good educations; morality, virtue, professional works, etc. So that they could stand on their own feet in life. When the parents on both sides died, They inherited a lot of money & very rich. Both of them were ignorant & only spending the money by wasting it (just only for sensual pleasure) Just ate & drank had a good time by squandering their money. When they had spent all, sold their fields & house. Later became very poor & helpless. Because they did not know how to make a living & became beggars. Wealth & power are like very poisonous snakes for the fools. It's only become a real treasure to the wise. The problems in society is there are more fools than the wise.

One day the Buddha saw him leaning against the wall of monastery eating the left-overs given by the novices; seeing him & the Buddha smiled. Ven. Ananda asked the Buddha the reason of his smiling? Then the Buddha answered to Ven. Ananda; "Ananda, look at this son of a rich man; he had lived a useless life, an aimless life of pleasure. If he had learnt to look after his riches in the first stage of his life would have been a top ranking richman. If he had become a monk, could have been an arahat & his wife an aragami. If he had learnt to look after his riches in the second stage of his life, would have been a second rank richman. If he had become a monk, could have — an aragami; & his wife a saktagami, etc.... However, because he had done nothing all the 3 stages of his life that lost all the riches, & also all the chances of realization any of the Paths & Fruits."⁹⁾

The Story of Kāla, Son of Anathapindika:

Kāla, the son of Anathapindika always kept himself away whenever the Buddha & his company of monks came to their house. Anathapindika was worried that if his son kept on behaving in this way would not get any benefit. So he used money as bait to change his son. He promised to give him 100 coins, if the son consented to go to the monastery & keep the Sabbath for one day. So Kāla went there & returned home early the next day without listening to any Dhamma discourses. Next time, Anathapindika said to his son; "My son, if you learn a stanza of the Buddha's teaching, I'll give you 1000 coins on your return."¹⁰⁾ Therefore Kāla went to the monastery again. This time he tried to learn something from the Buddha. The Buddha gave him a short stanza to learn by heart. At the same time made him forgot it. Thus he had to repeat it so many times that in the end came to understand the full meaning of the Dhamma. And then attained the Path & Fruit of a stream-winner (sotapanna). Early in the next morning, Kāla followed the Buddha & the sangha to his house. His father offered the rice gruel to the Buddha & sangha. After that the father brought 1000 coins & gave him, in front of the Buddha. But he refused to take it. Then the Buddha told Anathapindika; "Dayaka, your son has attained the fruit in state of a Stream-winner; which is much better & greater than the riches of a Universal Monarch, the status of celestial beings & Brahma-gods.

These 2 stories in the time of the Buddha gave us food for thought, on the parents' duties & obligations to children. If they neglect it the children will be like the son of Mahashana & going downhill in their lives. It was a nuisance for the family & society. The 2 outcomes were like heaven & earth. For the parents to behave like Anathapindika, they themselves first should have the qualities of good & skillful parents. They must have the education & training from their parents, i.e. experiences & learning (sutta). Therefore fundamental education & training should begin in the family life. The ancient Chinese sages understood it very clear & not much different from the Buddha. The systems & skillful means in the Chinese Texts were more detailed & rich experiences. At least it might had over 3,000 yrs of ~~in-existence~~^{of Aristotle} Chinese history. In the Sigalovadha Sutta, the first duty & obligation is by doing her duties well. The wise of the past had a lot to say on these duties & obligations. They had the clear cut right views on these matters. One of the very important duties of a wife is as a mother. A very important duty of a mother is to educate & train her children in the right & wholesome direction. Nowadays a lot of mothers neglect this duty & obligation. Instead their children are educating & training by many kinds of media; such as video games, T.V., movies, internet, music, etc. There are a lot of unwholesome contents in them. Only someone has the knowledge of the Buddha's teachings knows the harmfulness. Why nowadays more youth problems in family life, schools & societies than before? Mental pollutions are increasing like the other external pollutions. External pollutions are the reflecting of human mind. A good & skillful mother came from a good wife. And a good wife came from a good daughter. Not selected by votes; by educating & training.

Most people not take ethics, morality, virtues as very important & fundamental for human beings. Therefore they think, speak & act foolishly out of delusion (moha). These are the foundation of all goodness to arise. These good & wholesome qualities of the mind are not invented by sages & the Buddha. They discovered & penetrated it in wisdom. These are parts of nature, mind laws & also effect the physical world. They have the universal characteristic, such as the law of kamma. They are also closely related. They also represent the human standards & status. Human beings are the masters of their own destiny.

Other types of living beings do not have this chance & opportunity. Therefore the right & fundamental education is very important for everyone. Parents are first teachers of children & more important than school teachers. So it has to begin early in family life. Chinese sages classified education into 4-types. ① Family education: The standard text book is a booklet called Di Gi Gui - Chinese standards, compiled by a Ching Dynasty scholar ^{from} Confucian Classics. On human relationship within family, schools, societies & states; on standards of ethics, morality, virtue, etc. ② Education on law of kamma: Actually this is the province of Buddhism. The subject on law of kamma is profound, deep, related to all living beings & unfathomable, except for a Buddha. One of the inconceivable phenomena ^{can} & the province of a Buddha. Therefore except a Buddha no-one ^{can} fully penetrates it. Even we can say that it's the perfect knowledge of a Buddha. If he was only giving teaching on the law of kamma & no other teachings still no-one equals or greater than him. This law of kamma governs all kinds of living beings. Why most living beings during their wandering in the round of existences encountered many different kinds of sufferings? The main answer is They ^{do} know the law of kamma & never heard about it. Even the majority of Buddhists, they know about it superficially, not profound & clear enough. Therefore can't use it good enough in their daily life. Eventhough most Buddhists encounter the teaching & not receive much benefit which should be.

③ Worldly educations:- Many kinds, types of education of the world; schools, universities, professions for a living & ordinary knowledge, etc.

④ Religious educations:- All the major religions, not include cults.

With my contemplation; whatever people religions or faiths & cultural backgrounds the education on law of kamma should be in the first place. Because it is the universal law & all living beings are under this law. All beings can't escape time & space; it's the same as I law of kamma. All human actions; wholesome, unwholesome & mixed under this universal law. After studying & contemplating on laws of kamma & its working principles will have clear knowledge on it. And then study & contemplating & practising ethics, morality & virtue become more effective. If human beings can study, contemplate & practising these 2 educations (law of kamma & ethics) in their daily life the human world will be like a heaven on earth.

In the Srigatavāda Sutta, on the duties & obligations of a husband to wife; the 3rd one is by being faithful to her. In the same way a wife to husband is by her fidelity. Faithful & fidelity between husband & wife is very important for the family & also to the society. Some of the problems in family & society are connecting to infidelity between husband & wife. It will create unhappy marriages & harmful to family members, especially children. Then this effects the society. A lot of youth problems are connecting to broken marriages. Because it effects the mind of children & they can't have proper education & training. Why nowadays more youth problems & crimes than before? According to some researches, if there are more & more broken marriages, create more & more youth problems & crimes. Most people only take adultery as sexual misconduct. But there are also other sexual misconducts harmful to oneself, & then to the society. Even these sexual misconducts are like entertainments in some medias.

(13) Consistency in one's work:

Doing one's own tasks not wasting & postponing of time. Active persistence, energetic & perseverance in it. Doing only the kinds of task or job which should be done. That is not harming to oneself & others; benefit to oneself & others. There are some ignorant & deluded people doing silly & foolish things just for money & fame, even give up their lives for it. Doing things which only have values; not trivial, meaningless, frivolous, silly & inferior. Nowadays human beings doing all these meaningless things than before. Do human beings become more wiser than before? Do they progress or regression? If we observe the society & environment all kinds of internal & external pollution's going on. Why is that? Anthropologists say: Human beings are developing from a type of ape. If it is true, then human beings should be become more wiser & intelligent. This is evolution. But if we observe & contemplate about human beings more closer to ape than human. Human mind is becoming more & more liked a monkey. Is it human becoming in de-evolution? Actually evolution & de-evolution are in our mind. If someone behaves like an animal, then he is in de-evolution. If someone has love, kindness, compassion, selfless, etc., then he is in evolution. You cannot measure progress & evolution to power, money, fame & the amount of sensual pleasure. This is the way to downfall. These nothing to do in external matters, the internal ones. Therefore each human creates hell, animal, ghost, heaven, etc. for himself on earth. This also his future destiny after dies.

man on the highest evolution level can become a Buddha; & to the lowest level a hell being. All levels are in each one of us. One early morning in June, there was a pink lotus flower opened up its beautiful & fragrant petals in a small pond. It decorated the earth & its beauty & purity. After sometimes the sun was rising up higher, & then the weather became very hot. The lotus closed its petals & protected itself from the strong heat. But nowadays human beings know all the dangers come out from pollutions, continue to do all the foolish things is quite stupid & foolish. Could human beings have future? Yes, they have. Only they behave like a human; not like an animal, ghost & hell being. They should only do things which have values & for the welfare of human race & nature. If we practise samatha & vipassana regularly & consistency is a great blessing & protection. Consistency in one's work is very important whatever task we are doing. It's worldly or spiritual matters. We should not spoil by laziness, not wasting & postponing of time & careless.

During the time of the Buddha, there was a good story on these points. Three friends became monks. Two of them learnt meditation & instruction from the Buddha. After that they went to a secluded place, practised diligently & realized the Dhamma. They came back & went to see the Buddha. The Buddha was praising them. The 3rd monk who was lazy & wasting time in the monastery heard about it. He also wanted to be praised by the Buddha in front of others.

Therefore he was practising hard in the monastery. Because of his restless & careless in the practice fell down seriously & broke his hip. So his 2 friends had to take care of him & couldn't leave the place. The Buddha knew about this & told them about their past lives.

In one of their past lives; These monks were the students of the Bodhisatta - a teacher. One day the teacher asked the students to collect fire woods in the forest for the next morning meal. Because they had to go to a distant place in the early morning for an invitation. All the students went to the forest & did their duties properly. But the lazy student (the injured monk) not did his job properly. Instead he chose a big tree, lied down & slept. Thinking that near the time of leaving he could go up & break the branches for fire woods. At the time of going back; he quickly got up, & climbed the tree & broke some branches.

He had done it in a rush & carelessness, the tip of a branch hit his one eye. Suffered in pain he came down quickly, took the wet branches of fire woods & followed behind the others. His wet fire woods mixed w/ the dry ones. The servant did not know it & picked up the wet ones for cooking gruel. At last the students missed the chance to the invitation. This story taught us a good lesson. We shouldn't do things w/ disinterest, wasting time, in rush, improperly, disarray & confused. What about today human beings do things? Are they better than this monk or student? By studying, observing & contemplating today humans & society will know that it's not better. Some politicians, business men (including economists), scientists, technologists, artists, etc. are viewing & doing things w/ greed, hatred, & delusion for power, wealth & fame. Not only harming themselves (they have to pay for their karmic consequences) but also to human race. The reasons are not difficult to see; severe climate changes & all sorts of pollutions, both internal & external ones. Leaving a dangerous earth for the future generation. Human beings however crazy & craving for power, wealth & fame, near death can't take anything w/ them. Even the clothes they wear on. When a very severe drought comes their power, wealth & fame can't do anything.

As a Buddhist the best protection & blessing ~~for~~^{is} consistence in one's work is to end dukkha. This is the most important task for all: i.e. the Noble Eight Fold Path - sila, samadhi & panna. Therefore we should not wasting time by doing many useless things. If we miss this chance, near death will be in a miserable situation.

- (14) + (15) Giving, living in rectitude,
 - (16) Assistance to one's relatives;
 - (17) Deeds That are blameless,
- This is the highest protection.

(14) + (15) Giving; Living in rectitude:

(14) Giving:

This is on dāna practice. In all world religions have dāna practice mostly dāna is a blessing for the giver, but not all of them. For e.g.) if someone offer liquor & drugs to drunkards & drug addicts.

(5) Athaka... Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi & Bhagyu (Bhagu) - Ancient Brahmin rishis (49) Composers of the Vedic hymns.

Dana practice is the way of progress in this life & for the future. There were many stories in the Buddha's time & modern days stories. There are many ways of givings. The best way of giving is with understanding & knowledge. There was a sutta in the Anguttara N. on Giving. The discourse discusses the possible motivations for generosity, & rates in ascending order the results they can lead to. It is interesting to mention here. Once time Ven. Sariputta & a large number of lay followers went to see the Buddha for a Dhamma talk. Ven. Sariputta said to the Buddha: "Might there be the case where a person gives a gift of a certain sort & it doesn't bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort & it bears great fruit & great benefit?" The Buddha answered it as "yes". Then Ven. Sariputta asked the Buddha the cause & reason for this. He answered him the 7 kinds of motivations & their results.

- ① Having given the gift seeking his own profit, in a mind attached to the reward, seeking to store up for himself, in the thought of enjoying it after death. After death, born in the company of the Four Great Kings, from here after death, return to this world.
- ② Someone gives a gift in the thought, "Giving is good", on the break-up of the body, after death born in the company of the devas of the 33. From here after death, return to this world.
- ③ Someone gives a gift in the thought, "This was given in the past, done in the past, by my father & grandfather. It would not be right for me to let this old family custom be discontinued" After death born in the company of the devas of the House (Yāma).
- ④ Someone gives a gift in the thought, "Just as there were the great sacrifices of the sages of the past - Athaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, ... etc: in the same way will this be my distribution of good gifts", after death born in the company of the devas who delight in creation (Nimmanarati).
- ⑤ ④ Gives a gift in the thought, "I am well-off. These are not well-off. It would not be right for me, being well-off, not give a gift to those who are not well-off.", after death born in the company of the Contented devas (Tusita).
- ⑥ Gives a gift & the thought, "When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise" Born in the company of devas who have power over the creations of others (Paranimmitavasavatti).
- ⑦ Gives a gift in the thought, "This is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind". Born in the company of Brahma's Retinue (the lowest of the first jhana plane). Then, having exhausted his kamma he is a non-returner. He doesn't come back to this world.

The commentary explained it as, giving & the enrichment of Samatha-vipassana practices.

There are also some givings not become dāna practice. Giving to someone for fear (e.g., mafia gang), giving by expecting something (e.g., bribery), giving to raga (sexual desire), etc. Actually giving is not an easy thing to do. Have to make effort. Why is that? Because every living being more or less has lobha (greed) & self view. Greed of covetousness, confiscation, clinging & craving, etc all these make dāna difficult to perform. Therefore we have to make effort to do it. But if we know & understand the benefit & value of dāna or have the knowledge about them, will sure to perform it. Even can give up things too valuable for us, as example the dāna parami of a Bodhisatta.

There was a very touching story to the heart in the Buddha's time represented unselfish nature & right motivation of a dāna. Also it gave the immediate results in the present life. It was about Ven. Mahākaccana & a poor lady. He was the foremost disciple in the detailed exposition of brief sayings, & a native of Avanti, to the far southwest of the Ganges basin. King of Avanti, Chandapajjota heard about the Buddha & sent mahākaccana & others to invite the Buddha. After they listened his talk & became monks. Later they became arahats & went back to Avanti to see the king. On the way back they went ^{for} alms-round in a village & did not get anything. There was a young lady, now very poor ^{ing} knew-it. Before she was the rich man's daughter, & had strong saddha (faith). She had beautiful, long, shining black hair. There also another rich man's daughter wanted to buy her hair, & paid 1000 coins for it. This was happening sometimes ago, but this poor lady did not sell it. This time she was urgently needing the money to prepare the meal for the monks. Therefore she cut her beautiful long hair & sent the maid to sell it to the rich lady. This time instead of giving the 1000 coins, only gave 8 coins for it. The maid became very sad & cried. The poor lady prepared the meal for the monks, each 1 coin of value. (The monk's number were 8). When the monks were receiving the meal the beauty of woman was long, soft, shining black hair. But Ven. Mahā knew all these things & invited the lady to come out. She came out & as soon as bowing to the monks, her hair were growing back to normal. Scientists will take it as supernatural. No, this is supernormal. It's in accordance & the mind or mental laws, cause & effect. Insects, birds, jets, aeroplanes, etc can fly, but scientists can't fly in the air. Already ^{has} mentioned an episode connecting to Ven. Mahākaccana before.

A layman, Soreyya had an evil thought & changed into a woman. There were 2 main causes including in these 2 episodes; internal & external ones. More important is the internal ones. The mind of the lady & Soreyya; & the purity of hearts of the arahats. If we can accept the atomic power, this is not difficult to understand. Mind is more powerful than matter. Therefore all human beings especially leaders, governments, business people, business corporations someone has power (political), wealth (tycoons), scientist, etc. know how to use their mind properly & wisely for the benefit of human race, not to harm them & destroy the earth.

Ven. Mahakaccana went to see the King & he also knew the episode. And the King took the poor lady as his consort. With strong Saddha (faith) & volition (cetana), then the results are greater.

On one occasion the Buddha was staying near Vesali, in the Great Forest, at the Gabled Pavilion. General Siha went to the Buddha & asked him; it was possible to point out a fruit of giving visible in the here & now. The Buddha answered in positive & gave 5 results of it. These are:-

- ① One who gives, who is a master of giving, is dear & charming to people at large. We can see this kind of giver in the past & present.
- ② Furthermore, good people, people of integrity, admire one who gives, who is a master of giving: this too is the fruit of giving visible in here & now. The people mentioned here are: moral & virtuous people; sages & noble beings (ariyans). Therefore the giver has the chances to close & near them attending their teachings & knowledge that will give wholesome & progressive life, in the noble direction. & even ^{he can} end ^{see} dukkha. We can know this kind of giver in the Buddha's time & present Theravadin countries.
- ③ Furthermore, the fine reputation of one who gives, a master of giving is spread far & wide: this too is a fruit of giving visible in here & now.
- ④ Furthermore, when one who gives, a master of giving, approaching by assembly of people - noble warriors, brahmans, householders, or contemplatives - he / she does so confidently & without embarrassment: This too is a fruit of giving visible in here & now.
- These results of ① to ④ are visible in here & now.
- ⑤ Furthermore, at the break-up of the body, after death, one who gives, the master of giving, reappears in a good destination, the heavenly world: this is a fruit of giving in the next life.

When These 5 results of giving were mentioned to General Sika : he replied the Buddha that the 4 fruits of giving (from ① to ④) visible in here & now were not by faith (saddha) in him. He himself knew it & experiences because he was a master of giving. But the last fruit, after death, reappeared in a good destination, the heavenly world, he did not know. That was he believed in the Buddha by conviction (saddha). Some people are not giving to others, but they spend it themselves. Even worse than these are people not only not give to others ^{but} also not spend by themselves. Even the worst of all are encouraging people not to give.

There was once a very wealthy man named Ananda in Savatthi. He was a miserly man & encouraged his son Mulasiri not to give. This rich man had 5 pots of gold buried in his house & died & without revealing its location to anyone. He was reborn in a village of beggars not far from Savatthi. From the time his mother was pregnant in the village had difficulties in beggings. They thought there must be a wicked & unfortunate person among them. By dividing themselves up in groups & the process of elimination. They found out the pregnant woman & she was driven out of the village. A son was born to her & he was very ugly & repulsive. If she went out alone by begging & got something's. And the boy got nothing. So, when the boy could go out by himself for begging & she left her son.

He wandered alone in Savatthi for begging & remembered his past life & old home. After arriving there, he went straight into the house. When the children of Mulasiri saw him, they were frightened & crying. The servants beat him & threw him out of the house.

The Buddha was on his alms round & saw the incident. Then the Buddha told Mulasiri that the young ugly beggar was his own father of previous life. He did not believe it. Therefore the Buddha asked the beggars to show them the buried gold. And Mulasiri became a lay disciple.

Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follow:-

Verse 62: "I have sons & wealth ; & this the fool is afflicted.

Indeed he himself is not his own, how can sons & wealth be his." From Dhammapada: The Fool

The above story warning us a very important lesson; wrong view, unwholesome mental states, thoughts & actions gave ^{the} miserable sufferings to beings. The negative energies, even effect to others. Why nowadays humans have a lot of problems & sufferings than before? We need to contemplate it & find out the causes to correct it.

There was also another interesting story on giving in the time of the Buddha.

The Story of a Childless Rich man:

On one occasion, King Pasenadi went to see the Buddha. He told the Buddha about a rich man who had died in Sāvatthi without leaving heirs. Therefore he had to confiscate all the man's properties. This man was very rich & stingy. While he lived & did not give anything in charity. And even was reluctant to spend his money for himself. So ate very sparingly & wore cheap & coarse clothes. Then the Buddha told the king & audience about this rich man, one of his past lives. At that time also he was a rich man. One day, when a Solitary-buddha came & stood for alms at his house. He was on his way out that asked his wife to offer foods to the Solitary-buddha & left. It was very rare that her husband gave her permission to give things to someone. So she filled up the alms-bowl & choice foods. The rich man again met the Solitary-buddha on his way back home, & looked into his alms-bowl. And found out that his wife had offered a lot of good foods. So, he was thinking that this monk would only have a good sleep after a good meal. It would have been better if the servants were given such good foods, because they would give him better service. He regretted to ask his wife to offer foods to the Paccaka-buddha. There was also another incident connecting to him. He had a brother & who was also rich. The brother had an only son. Coveting his brother's wealth & killed his young nephew & wrongfully inherited his brother's wealth.

Because the man had offered alms-foods to the Paccaka-buddha that he became a very rich man in his present life. He regretted having offered foods to the Solitary-buddha that no wishes to spend anything even on himself. Because he had killed his own nephew for the sake of wealth that he had suffered in hells for 7 existences. This evil karma having come into an end & was born in this life as a rich man. But here also he had not gained any nobleme actions. After hearing the story the king made a remark; "Ven. Sir! Even though he had lived here in the lifetime of the Buddha himself, he had not made any offering of anything to the Buddha or to his sangha. Indeed, he has missed a very good opportunity & had been very foolish."

Then the Buddha spoke the following verse:

Verse 355: "Wealth destroys the foolish; but it can't destroy those who seek the other shore (Nibbana). By his craving for wealth the fool destroys himself & would destroy others"

From Dhammapada: Craving

What do we learn from this story & teaching? It taught us important of the mind. Even we can't think about foolish & stupid things which most people thinking all the times.

Also it reminds us The first & 2nd verses of Dhammapada; The Pairs.
 Even we're doing good things should not let unwholesome mental states come in between. We have already discussed about the possible motivations for generosity (dāna). It should be like the number sixth giver, giving ē joy & happiness before, during & after the charity.

The-pye-kam Sayadaw made a comment on these 2 stories.
 These rich men were like the alchemist's billows which breathing in & out, but don't life. Therefore they were dead people. How many dead politicians & wealthy men in the world today? Most of them are fighting for power & wealth. Not for the welfare of human race & the mother earth. We can see them clearly in today situations of the world. Temperature are rising every year & getting hotter & hotter. We're killing animals sometimes in a very cruel ways. One way of eating them is roasting meat. Now the sun is roasting human skin. If human beings are still continuing doing foolish, silly & stupid things, the sun will roast our flesh.

Talking about dāna will never end. So here will do a general contemplation on its subject. The Buddha's Teachings are wisdom teachings or wisdom education. Wisdom is has the qualities of deep, profound & wide, & immeasurable. If you can only see it superficial, then it's superficial. Like the Buddha's wisdom, then it's immeasurable. We study, research & practise the Buddha's Teachings is inheriting his wisdom. As a human being this task is precious & priceless. And not like all the others worldly knowledges & educations, if we human beings can't use it wisely & properly, even create great sufferings & disasters.

Dāna subject is one of the very basic teachings of the Buddha. So, we can find them a lot in the Pali suttas. Most people will think, including many Buddhists, the Buddha's Teachings are not concerning ē worldly matters & human societies. If we research the Pali Suttas & can find that this Great man (the greatest of all) was a human being, born on this earth by a woman, living on this earth, after his great enlightenment, & teaching living beings (mostly humans) for 45 yrs without rest. Not living in heavens & talking to super-beings like bodhisattas, devities, devines, etc. As a human being & living on this earth, if not talking to humans, & then talking to who? He was talking to all walks of life, from lower to higher caste, & from beggars to the kings. Therefore he had to talk about mānas, societies & human problems & how to seal ē them. If he didn't has the deep, profound & immeasurable wisdom how could he help them.

The 10 perfections (paramis), dana parami is the first one to come. It has 3 levels in each parami. The lower, middle & higher levels respectively; in Pali-parami, upa-parami & paramattha-paramis. Except one's own bodily parts, giving outside properties, such as wife, children, wealth, etc. are ordinary one. Giving up one's bodily parts, such as eye, kidney, etc. is upaparami. It can be count only still alive. May be not after death; such as donate one's body. Even after death, donate one's body is not many people can do it. We can see how strong ditthi-tanha is - this is me/mine. After death, donate one's body is quite a noble thing to do. Because it can save some one's life or vision (i.e. for eye), etc. Therefore dana-giving practice is actually not very easy to everyone, especially someone has strong ditthi-tanha. It need to put a lot of effort. So, we need to know the benefits of dana very clear that & more easy to let go of our attachment to outside things.

For a true bodhisatta - follows the ways of becoming a future Buddha even to give up his own life is not difficult - paramattha dana parami. Can we recognise or know a true/real bodhisatta among humans. Nowaday we have a lot of self-declared bodhisattas. In the Majjima Nikaya, we found about 2 bodhisattas in 2 suttas, Ghatikara & Dakkhinā-vibhanga Suttas. In the Ghatikara Sutta, it mentioned about Gautama bodhisatta as Jotipāla young brahman in the time of ^mKassapa Buddha. Jotipāla - the Gautama bodhisatta even didn't know himself as a true bodhisatta. In the beginning didn't want to meet the Kassapa Buddha. In the 2nd Sutta it mentioned about the Metteya bodhisatta of the future Buddha. Bhikkhu Ajita was the Metteya bodhisatta & had supernormal powers. He got the robes offered by the Buddha's foster mother Mahāpajapati bhikkhuni. Many monks there even didn't know he was the Metteya bodhisatta. Even a real bodhisatta, if he knows himself will not make people to know about it, or declare about it.

Because of very deep rooted-ditthi/tanha, even doing wholesome things always calculate loss & profit. Therefore the results of merits are mostly a mixed ones. Not always good in the beginning, in the middle & in the end. We have seen the extreme self-views of nationalism, fascism & racism done a lot of atrocities during the 2nd world war. They were not only harming others but also leading to their own sufferings in the end. Even some were not want to say sorry or asking forgiveness. They would never healing their wounds.

In the Noble 8-Fold Path; the Buddha arranged Right View-Samma-ditthi in the begining. Why is that? Because it's wisdom factor & the most important one in human knowledges. Even, the intention is

good without right view, the results follow are usually not satisfactory. With right view & right thinking will follow. With right thinking or thought then right speech & right action — — respectively. These are causes & effects relationship. Right view has 2 kinds; worldly & spiritual. Without worldly right views can't develop spiritual right view. The most fundamental worldly right view is the belief in the Law of Karma. Being human happiness, peace & prosperity based on this very important fundamental law. It's not made by humans. It's the law of nature; a truth. The sun ^{is} arising in the east & sets in the west. Can express the law of karma in a simple slogan - Wholesome actions beget wholesome results; Unwholesome actions beget unwholesome results. The law of karma is deep, profound & complex. One of 4 inconceivable phenomena that are not to be conjectured about - the mechanism & precise working out of the results of karma. To become a Buddhist at least has faith in the law of karma! Therefore whatever kind of action we make, it will bear fruit & never wasted, & will give the result sooner or later.

Another one very important point need to contemplate is why are we coming to this human world? We're not sending here by God, or without reasons. One of your past good kammas sent you here - cause & effect relationship. After born as a human what do you want to do? Most people will think indulgence in sensual pleasures or seeking for sensual pleasures - including politicians, economists, scientists & highly educated people. Very few people thinking about the welfare of oneself & others. Just looking at nowadays the world situations - the internal & external ones. The Buddha taught us very clearly - we protect ourselves then we protect others, & vice versa. To achieve this inspiration, man has to do goods. For want to do goods human ^{should} has right view, right thinking & has ethical standards & values for actions. The human world is the great field of merits which other realms of existence don't have. Therefore a Bodhisatta always will arise in the human world. A true Bodhisatta only has the chances to develop their 10 paramis in this world. So, every human should take these chances to do goods for developing the paramis. Not come here as a human & harming oneself & others. Doing stupid & foolish things by wasting their times as a precious human. And then go back to our frequent homes - the 4 woeful existences.

Developing the 10 perfectings is a noble sacrifice. So, if we give up a little a little happier; & more - more happier. Therefore dāna practice is a very wholesome action creates happiness here & after (see the answers the Buddha gave to General Siha - the fruits of giving). We can protect our wealth from fire, flood, kings (governments), thieves or hateful heirs by giving. If we die can't take any wealth & properties & us - come naked, go naked. So, don't become a naked ascetic. Therefore keep our wealth, intelligence, skills, etc doing all kinds of goodness & take all the wholesome kammas ^c us. This is called wholesome karmic bank account. This kind of bank account following you like a shadow as mentioned by the Buddha in the 2nd verse of Dhammapada: "All mental phenomena have mind as their fore-runner. They have mind as their chief; They are mind made. If one speaks or acts ^c a pure mind, happiness follows him like a shadow that never leaves him." Human bank account can't be safe, it still has outside factors & only last for this life. The wholesome karmic bank account has more increments & then you'll have it until your last life in Saṁsāra - Every deposit has seven mind moments increments. This kind of person only (the richest man in the world & a true super-billionaire. Humans don't have these karmic bank deposits & accounts, then all are naked ascetics - come naked & will go naked. Then their most possible existences are apaya bhūmis. The most pitiful man will be ^{some} the naked billionaire. In the Buddha's time or our time, there were ~~a lot of~~ stories about people who were very rich & became richer & richer. Not because they were stingy & only making money. Because they had done a lot of merits in their past lives & continued to do more & more in this life. I have already mentioned some of them in the 5th blessing - Having made merits in the past.

So, wealth & fortunes come from the results of giving. Not by stingy, envy & avarice. It's also one ways of practice conquer tanhā - craving, greed, or reduction of it. Wealth is like a burning charcoal, if you're clinging to it & become more suffering. And letting go of it have peace & happiness. The Buddha mentioned about the 3 wholesome shannas in many suttas. These are: sāvīha, sila, suta, cāga & pañña - conviction, virtue, learning, generosity & discernment. These are also called noble growth. These shannas have the power of fulfilling one's wishes. Dāna or cāga is one of them. Dāna is; act of giving & gift. Cāga is; giving up & generosity. Carana is good conduct. These 3 Pali words have close relationship. Dāna - giving & gifts are many ways. Giving one's time & energy for any wholesome matters to others also including in it.

Sabbadānam Shammadānam jinati - The gift of Dhamma is greater than all other gifts. Because it relates to intelligence, knowledge, discernment. Without merits & discernment / wisdom all beings wandering in round of existence is very painful. They are also supporting each other. The most important for giving is right & wise motivations. Give a gift & the Thought & this is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind.⁹⁾

This is giving to the enrichment of Samatha-vipassana practice or wise contemplations. All the merits & wholesome dharmas as the support of ending samsaric dukkha or Nibbana Element. All living beings & non-living beings are the parts of the whole nature. We all are related to each others. One affects the others, especially human beings.

(15) Living in rectitude:

Rectitude is a quality or attitude that makes people behave honestly & virtuously. Here living according to wholesome dharmas - the 10 wholesome courses of action. The 10 kusala dhamma has already mentioned in the 9th blessing - well mastered disciplines. In the world the best protection is one's own wholesome dharmas. In the world why all living beings are quite differently to each other. Please don't say about other types of living beings, even in humans themselves. Because their views, thoughts & actions are quite different. Not all of them have the same qualities & attitudes.

Therefore living beings are different, the results of different kammas.

It's interesting to read & contemplate the Cula-kamma-vibhanga Sutta (No.135), in Majjima Nikaya. Young Subha, son of the Brahmin Tadeyya, was curious to know why some were born in high class families, some in low class families; — — — rich, others poor; why some were beautiful, others ugly; — — — of good health & a long span of life, others of poor health & a short span of life, etc. He approached the Buddha & asked 14 q's in all to satisfy his curiosity. The Buddha gave a long discourse on karma & its resultant effects. Deeds, words & thoughts have endless consequences of joy & sorrow to be experienced in this very life & hereafter.

There is another discourse on karma, the Mahā-kamma-vibhanga Sutta (No. 136). Its result & effects which are most difficult to foresee.

How the workings of karma were most strange & surprising were explained in reference to 4 types of individuals.

A young brahman Subha wanted to know why there were differences in society. Why there were some born in high class & low class families respectively. Some were rich & others poor; beautiful & ugly appearances; good health & long life & poor health & short life, etc. He asked the Buddha 14 questions on this subject. So, the Buddha gave a long discourse of karma & its different results. Thoughts, verbal & physical actions have endless consequences of happiness & suffering.

[*] There is another discourse on kamma, the Mahākamma-vibhanga Sutta (No. 136). Kamma & its results are difficult to foresee. The workings of kamma are strange & surprising.

* [In the Culakammavibhanga Sutta - The Shorter Analysis of Action, Subha, Todeyya's son went to see the Buddha. He said to the Blessed One: "Master Gotama, what is the reason, what is the cause, why baseness & excellence are seen among human beings, among the human race? For short-lived & long-lived people are to be seen, sickly & healthy, ugly & beautiful, unimportant & influential, poor & rich, low-born & high-born, stupid & discerning people to be seen." The Buddha answered him: "Subha, beings are owners of their actions, born of their actions, related through their actions, & have their actions as their arbitrator. Action is what differentiate beings in terms of baseness & excellence." Subha did not understand the detailed meanings of them & requested the Buddha to explain in details.] *(add on the top).

Therefore the law of action (kamma) is very important for living beings, especially for human. Law of cause & effect covers all types & kinds of living beings. Man understands it & living accordingly in the wholesome dharmas will become a good person & the wholesome life. This is the way of protecting oneself & others. Only the human existence is beneficial & fruitful. Even, we can say education on law of action is the basic education for man. In the Dīga Nikāya - Long Discourses of the Buddha, there is a discourse called Lakkhana Sutta - Physical Marks of a Great man. There, the Buddha mentioned the 32 bodily marks of a great man. Only 2 persons could have it; a Buddha & a Universal Monarch. But these marks on a Buddha were more clear & distinct than the other. These marks on the Buddha came from the results of meritorious deeds previously cultivated by the bodhisatta for many lives. These acts were the 10 paramis - perfections. Here I'll mention the first & 2nd marks only, the actions (causes) & the results (effects).

The first mark - the lowest part of the feet were full & without any depression. Therefore the Buddha's foot print was full & completed on the ground. This mark appeared on the body because the bodhisatta cultivated wholesome meritorious deeds & firmness & confidence. Kept his words (never broke the promises), never gave up & in low spirit completed. This mark no internal & external enemies & dangers could make him tremble. It gave him the stable results. Respected by beings. Had the stable sila, samadhi & pañña.

The 2nd mark: had the wheel symbols on both of the lowest part of the feet. In past lives, the Bodhisatta was giving himself for the happiness of others. And helping to dispel others' fear & dangers. While performing dana, enriched & other things. As example, when offering a building together & other things such as, bed, chairs, table, etc. Doing every dana always in this way. Because of this meritorious deed acquired this mark. With this mark & the result was, the Buddha had human followers of 4 types - bhikkhus, bhikkhunis, lay mans & lay women & other beings - deities, divines (brahma gods), asuras, etc.

Here my emphasis is not for the physical characteristics. The emphasis is the importance of human's thinking, verbal & physical actions which effect the physical world internally & externally. These things were already mentioned by the Buddha over 2500 yrs ago. Nowadays scientists also confirm it by experiments & research. For e.g. They played different kinds of music to the flower plants & observed its changes. The most well known researches for many years was by a Japanese scientist. He also used different kinds of music, sounds, visual images, letters & words (good meanings & bad meanings, etc.) in water. Later he observed the changes of water crystals under the powerful microscope. The water crystals were changing accordingly in different sounds & visual images. Wholesome sounds & images created beautiful water crystals. The unwholesome ones created ugly & difficult to see.

There was a remarkable documentary film about a Chinese man in N.E of China. A middle aged man from a village in Liao Ning province, craving for snake meat. He killed them & ate them for some years, may be in a cruel way. One day his body started showing illness. His body skin was very itchy & painful. He had to scratch it unbearably all the times. And later became well known as a snake man. The news spread to the city & a group of Buddhists came to see him. They arranged a special ceremony for him to ask forgiveness to the snakes he had harmed & killed. And then chanting Sutras & mantras surrounding him. And then they were surrounding & chanting Sutras & mantras for him, especially Earth Store Bodhisattva. They performed it for many hours. The Buddhist group did the same ceremony for 3 times separately for a few months. Surprisingly his miserable illness was cured & the skin colour went back to normal, bright & yellow skin. Before it was dark grey, & dry & ugly.

There was also another amazing documentary film experiment in insects. This was done in Yun-nan Province in Southern China. A farm grower of fruits & vegetables made an experiment like this. He did not use pesticides & fertilizers in his orchards & vegetable plots. Because he knew the outcomes of these chemicals which harmed humans, animals, insects & the nature. He used organic farming, but how he protected from the insects. He was a Buddhist & had strong confidence in the wholesomeness of the mind, good-will, compassion, appreciative joy & a good-heart. So, he arranged a small piece of land for insects to eat fruits. Closing not far from it larger plot of land for the fruits to sell. For vegetable plots were also arranged in this way. He hung letters in each fruits & vegetable plots to invite the insects & requested them not to disturb the others. Surprisingly it worked; the insects could feel it & not — — — fruit trees & vegetable plots, for human consumptions. They left for the human consumptions untouched.

It seems to me nowadays science & technology developed; & some scientists made researches & experiments on the mind & its power. They had some knowledge on it & wrote some books about it. Therefore human viens, thinkings, verbal & physical actions effect the physical world & nature internally & externally, which I had already mentioned above. As a human being physical out appearance is also important. Who will marry an elephant man & woman? (Referred to the Elephant Man, the movie). Who will use them in the 5 stars hotel & restaurant? These are individual matters. For the larger scale effect, it's more important. Connection & societies, human race, & nature & the mother earth becomes very important. It becomes about human survival. The earth becoming more & more polluted, rising temperature^(50C), north pole ice melting, hurricanes (Katrina, Harvey, etc.), many typhoons in Asia, heavy rains, floods, landslides, forest fires, etc.)

Even animals & insects are sensitive to nature & aware the dangers. But human beings are not, even they don't know themselves. Scientists make a lot of researches & experiments the external, but they don't know their own minds. Their minds are closer to them than any other things, ^{more than} even their wives & children. They were born in it, living in it & die in it. All human problems come from ^{it} & they don't know themselves. This is ignorance (avijja). The natural sufferings of birth, aging & death we can't escape. The others are human-made & we can escape from it. Then, just follow the Buddha's wisdom-Discernment. By following the Buddha's wisdom we can prevent & solve a lot of human-made problems & sufferings. You can't find anyone on earth knowing about

human beings than the Buddha. After enlightenment he talked about Dhamma for 45 yrs all the times. If we know & understand the Buddha's teachings, then we can live our life in accordance to the wholesome Dhamma. This way of life is living in retitude. This way of life is benefit oneself & others, protecting oneself & others. And after death not becoming a naked person (empty person). This is a real blessing. The Buddha declared it very clear that ^{anyone} who practised the Dhamma; & it would protect him/she. Here the Dhamma here was wholesome Dhamma - the positive ones & not the unwholesome Dhamma which is the negative one. Still it comes back to law of action - cause & effect. Therefore, someone ^{is} practising Dhamma at least has 3 results.

1. You look after & protect yourself from dangers. 2. Can bring you happiness.
3. After death not falls into painful existences.

There is a good Jataka story for contemplation on these points. This was Dharmapala Jataka. In ancient time, Kasi Country had a village named Dharmapala. The Bodhisatta was also called Dharmapala & the son of the village headman. He went to Taxila for education. His teacher's son was suddenly died at very young age. Therefore the family members & the students ^{there} were suffered to sorrow, pain & grief. Dharmapala saw these events & became very surprised about it. Because it was not the time for death at this very young age, in his own village. So, he & the other students were in argument about this matter. This case arrived to his teacher. The teacher questioned him. He said that in his own village nobody died at young age. All lived up to full life span. The teacher was very curious about it & decided to make an inquiry in this village. So, he took some animal bones to him to the Dharmapala village. And met the Bodhisatta's father, informed to him that his son died unexpectedly. By hearing it, the people were laughing. Then he took the animal bones out & showed them as evidence. They responded that it would be the bones of ^{an} animal & not belonged to Dharmapala. The teachers asked them why they did not believe it & the reason of behind long lives. The reasons or causes were:-

1. Approach sages, holy men & teachers 2. Listening to their teachings. Any ascetic & teacher came to their village & taught them; They would take only what was good & followed it. If somethings were not good they did not take it or not criticized them. From these 2 points, we know that these people were maturity in nature. These 2 factors similar to the 1st & 2nd factors of practice leading to stream entry. These are:-

② Association c people of integrity ③ Listening to the True Dhamma.

Let us observe nowadays men & societies. Do they have the standards & intelligence like Dhammadipa village or what the Buddha wanted them to be? Most people approach unwise, ignoble men & polluted matters. What did they learn from these men & stuffs? They learn ^{wrong views}, violence, greed, selfishness, hate, ingratitude, exploitation, meanness, etc. So most human beings become more & more deluded; many problems & disasters arise internally & externally.

③ The Dhammadipa villagers were observing the 5 precepts very well & practised accordingly.

④ They performed generosity as much as they could. They took joy & interest in these performances before, during & after. This was the proper way of doing merits & also taught by the Buddha.

⑤ The villagers were living together in harmony, friendliness & helping to each other. Therefore it was a peaceful & happy society. These qualities are now very rare in societies now, even ~~very rare~~ in families. In the past in a small area people knew each others very well. Our neighbours were like family members, & helping each others. Nowadays these things are changing dramatically. Living next door each other & don't know each others. Regarding to others & suspicions & no feelings of security.

If we observe & contemplate these 5 factors & will found that these were had connection. They are leading to peace, harmony, long life & happiness.

In the Sakka-pañha Sutta - Sakka's Question (No. 21, Majjhima Nikaya), Sakka the deva-king asked the Buddha: Living beings wanted to be free from hostility, violence, rivalry, ill-will, free from those who were hostile. These were also measured, long life, healthy & happiness. But the beings were not fulfilling these wishes. Why is that? The Buddha answered to ^{-arice} This was: Beings were fettered to envy & stinginess (selfishness), which was why they lived in hostility, violence, rivalry, ill-will & to those who were hostile. These 2 unwholesome mental states are interesting. It represents lobha & dosa - greed & hate. If we observe & contemplate today world situations, these unwholesome things & matters are happening up to the international levels. In country some countries political parties are fighting each others for power & using many dirty tricks, even some super powers are in this group. They exploiting the citizens just for power & greed. If they really for the country & people no need to fight for power. Whoever wins is the same, even have to support the winning party for the welfare of people. The Buddha also taught people the important role of political leaders (in ancient time - kings) & governments.

Bad leaders & governments (i.e., immoral people). Their behaviours & acts effect the citizens & nature, & leading to dangers, such as drought, famine, wars & diseases, etc. Regarding to these disasters, even the Buddha said that, people would not believe what he had said. This point was not difficult to understand. Even most human beings are not understanding themselves. To understand & see things, not their knowledge. Human knowledge is very limited.

If we observe & contemplate the provinces of economics & sciences/technologies, there are also problems created by some economists & scientists. The main problems are unsustainable economic policies & scientific inventions. The main culprit is craving, greed, over indulgence (tanha). These are ^{out} your greatest enemies, The inner ones. More destructive than any external one, even than natural disasters which are also cause by these enemies. Greed, hatred & delusion (wrong views) are the weapons of mass destruction (WMD), not Saddam Hussein or Kadafi or Osama bin Laden or other people. They are already inside us or each one of us. If written about current situations of nature, politics, economics & science & technology. There are a lot of problems in these provinces. If we study, observe & contemplate & can see very clear. The Buddha said that the source of suffering is greed/craving. Combine it wrong views & become WMD. But humans take them as their best friends. Nourishing & developing them in their whole lives.

Many yrs ago There was a Hollywood movie called "The Man with the X-ray Eyes". The actor was Ray Milland, who was a scientist. He was researching a chemical liquid which could use as an x-ray. After he had found it & used it on himself. And using it as an eye-drop. What he found out it made him happy & a lot of joy. He could see men & women naked bodies after using some drops. In the beginning it desire & craving he was happy about it. In the long run it caused problem & destruction like a drug addict. After sometimes using the x-ray liquid eye medicine, his eyes starting degeneration.

He could not see naked women & other things very clear. And then later seeing only bright light. This made him unbearable & ended up in destroying his eyes. There are some important & valuable lessons can gain from it. ~~Motivation~~ The scientist's motivation was not good. Some economic policies & scientific researches & inventions are not good. It bring more problems than solve problems because these are based on greed & selfishness. There are a lot of envy & avarice going on in politics, economics & sciences & technologies. There also protectionism on economics & sharing of knowledges.

Greed never brings satisfaction & happiness. If greed is ~~biger~~ & ~~biger~~ it brings more problems & sufferings. It's like a balloon, if put more air more ~~biger~~. With over limit, then it ~~blown up~~ explodes. We can see the effects of human greed & craving on earth, in societies & nature. Climate changes & Temperature rising are now closer to the limits. Therefore we can saw a lot of natural disasters. Hurricane Harry was a good example. And then, we heard & knew some human ^{health} problems connections to food chain, pollution, chemical, etc. Now even we heard some news of young girls as young as 10 yrs old gave birth has child births. Even these kinds of things mentioned by the Buddha a long time ago & difficult to believe it. Now it comes true.

It is important to know roughly about our inner enemies of greed, hatred & delusion (ignorance). If we like something then it becomes greed & don't like it's hatred (aversion). So hatred can be grouped into greed. We do things blindly because don't know the outcome. This is ignorance or delusion. Greed & hatred go to delusion (ignorance). In the beginning ignorance is leading greed or hatred. If we used to it & become a habit we & even knowing the outcome can't stop it. Then we are leading by greed or hatred, even we know the outcome. As example, someone addicted to drugs. The Buddha gave a simile (there are many) for greed or craving or clinging was a drop of honey on the edge of a very sharp razor blade. Sensual pleasures are liked this. If we are in very strong desire to enjoy the pleasant feeling & liking the honey, then will encounter great suffering. Therefore restraint of the senses bring peace & happiness to human race. Over using it or indulgence to it & burning us like fire. The story of the man with x-ray eyes reminded politicians, economists & scientists how to use their powers & knowledges for human race.

(16) Assistance to one's relatives:

In the Khuddaka Nikaya, the 15th Text is Cariya Pitaka. This text included some of the jataka stories connecting to the practices of Bodhisatta on the 10 perfections (paramis). How he developed his paramis for the welfare of the world, relatives & himself. Therefore, Assistance to one's relatives is one of the Cariya. This blessing/protection is related to love & compassion (metta & karuna). Nowadays, ^{to be} more and more mans are quite weak in these noble qualities. It seems, becoming more cruel & violent to human beings & animals. Even we seen & heard more & more stories of children's ingratiitudes to their parents, even in Asian culture. Therefore assistance to one's relatives can be a difficult thing to do, because of lacking of metta-karuna. Support for one's parents, assistance to one's wife & children, & assistance to one's relatives & others (friends & strangers) are in the three cariyas.

So these practices are a true blessing for oneself & others. Here assistance to one's relatives is not only included in blood relationship, but also one own people & country. There were many jataka stories for these points. We only contemplate 2 of them.

1. The Story of Bodhisatta Crow:

One time the bodhisatta born as the leader of crows. One day a crow in the city shat on the head of the brahman who was the king's teacher. He was quite angry & had a grudge on the crow population. Unfortunately for the crows, the king's elephants got disease. So, the king discussed this matter in the brahman teacher. He had strong ill-will to the crows & wanted to revenge them. And then he told the king that there was a medicine which could cure the disease of the elephants. This was the body ^{fat} oil of the crows. Therefore the king ordered to kill the crows for oil. So, many crows were killed & reduced the members of crow. At last the bodhisatta crow could not neglect this matter anymore. The bodhisatta met the king & explained to him that crows never had fat/oil in their bodies. The reason was crows were always in alert & living their lives in fear & dangers.

When we were young as boys, had been eaten crow meat before. But never thinking about this point as crows don't have oil in the body. Even their bodies don't have much liquid inside, skinny & dry. At that period there were a lot of crows everywhere. In cities they were making a lot of noises. Chasing & fighting each others for foods, & quite noisy. Could see them in the backyard of houses, around kitchens, searching & stealing for foods. Nowadays we can't see them anymore. It seems extinct from the cities. One of the reason may be poisoned by ^{as} men poison men by pesticides, & other chemicals & pollutants. These are the results of greed & selfishness. In the Sutta Nipata, There was a discourse called Kama Sutta - Sensual Pleasure. The Buddha gave some similes for sensual pleasure/sensuality. One of them was a bird (crow, vulture, hawk etc.) had a piece of meat (here represented sensuality) & other birds following behind him & tried to get this meat. So they attacked him in their beaks. If he did not drop it then it would never end. If he dropped it, then another bird got it. Therefore the other birds followed this bird again to attack him for the meat. But the first one was free from suffering after he let go of the meat.

2. A Noble Leader:

This was the story of a monkey king called Mahakappina from a Jataka Story & a past life of bodhisatta. It was a very touching story. At that time the bodhisatta was born as a monkey leader called Mahakappina. There was a forest upwards stream of the Ganges River. A big mango tree was at near the bank of the river. It had very delicious mangoes. Therefore the bodhisatta asked all the monkeys not let any mango which grew out on any branch stretched out to the river. Because if any mango which was ripe & dropped into the river & carried downstream could eat by men. Then, men would follow its trace upstream & found them. It would be a danger for them.

Unlucky, once there was a ripe mango covered by red ants & all the monkeys not aware of it. After sometimes it dropped into the river & arrived to the human place. Someone found it & presented to the king. The taste was very delicious that the king craved for it. He himself & a group of people followed the river upstream to find the mango tree. At last they found it & ate as much as they could. And then slept under the tree for a rest. After they were in sleep the monkeys came & ate the fruits. But some monkeys made noises that they woke up. And then saw the monkeys tried to catch them. There was only one way the monkeys could escape. That was crossing to the other bank of the river which side also had some big trees.

So the bodhisatta came in. He selected the strongest & long enough creeper on the mango tree; & his strong force jumped over to the river to the other side. From the other side of a tree, he took nearly the same length of creeper jumped back to the mango tree. Here the bodhisatta made a mistake. He forgot to calculate for a length to bind the mango tree. There was not enough time to do it again. So he bound the end of the creeper on his 2 legs & the body & the hands holding to a strong branch made a bridge. All the monkeys tramped trod on his body, & with the help of the creeper & arrived to the other side. But there was an evil monkey who was the past life of Devadatta - the Buddha's cousin. He had a strong grudge & hatred on the bodhisatta in a very long distant past which he carried a long & him until the bodhisatta's last life. With the evil intention, by force he jumped on the — back & crossed to the other shore. The bodhisatta heart was broken & bore the intense pain & patience. The king & the others saw this incident & surprised. They tenderly took the bodhisatta down from the tree. And then, the bodhisatta taught the king to has discernment, love, compassion & protection on ones own people & died. The king took the bodhisatta's head to his country & it was plated in gold, kept it as a souvenir to remind him of this memorable event.

Even we heard some animals stories (some ^{were} age facts) who saved human lives in modern days. What about human beings? It is true that human qualities are changing a lot. Men are becoming more & more self-centred; greedy & selfish. Don't talk about common people. Even political leaders & governments, they have the duties to govern their countries' people & love, sympathy concern & only for their welfare. But we ^{saw} quite a lot of them (here means more than before) exploited the citizen for their powers, misusing their powers & corrupted. The worst thing was even some power mongers created wars & instability within the countries & also to other countries. Some super powers they used many reasons & excuses to interfere other countries & behaving like ^{some} mafia bosses. Therefore now we have seen many problems, refugees, wars & instability in many parts of the world.

In this remarkable story we see the bodhisatta gave up his life to save his rat species. And an evil monkey who destroyed him. Actually all the big problems are coming from the small ones. Because of man's ignorance or delusion & becoming a great fire. Hatred is the most harmful & dangerous unwholesome mental state which create hells on earth & after death.

In the middle east there are a lot of wars going on & some are only a few years old. ~~& plus Palestinian & Israel~~ The hatred between Israel & Palestinian is more than a half century old. That means hatred can't overcome by hatred, only by love, compassion, forgiveness & understanding. Tit-for-tat view & policy never bring happiness, peace & harmony, only more & more misery & suffering which will never end. It's human hell.

(12) Deeds that are blameless:

There are quite a lot of blameless deeds, from smaller one to a great one. Therefore it is a very wide subject to talk about. In general any wholesome deed for the benefit & welfare of others can be counted here. Everyone can do it. It has to be started from the family life, & then spreading to societies, country & international levels respectively. Every goodness has to be started from the family life when we are young. Therefore family education is the foundation for all other goodness to develop & arise. All goodness ~~are~~ has to be based on ethical & moral values & standards. Only wholesome causes have wholesome results. Human beings should never forget this natural law & always keep it in mind for our whole life. To have confidence/conviction in the law of cause & effect is the basic principle to all human beings. At least to become a Buddhist is to have this very important view. As a human being to know what should be done & what should not be done. It seems very simple, but even ~~most~~ ^{still many} people don't believe in it or not take it very seriously.

Deeds that are blameless can be included in carana-good conduct.

One of the nine attributes of the Blessed One (Buddha) is -

Vijja - carana - sampanno - Consummate in knowledge & conduct.

This 3rd attribute of the Buddha includes 3 types of Dhamma: sila, samadhi & pāñña. Sila & samadhi are including in carana-conduct & pāñña in knowledge. Therefore carana is including all the worldly conducts of goodness. To do things for the benefits & welfare of others include oneself. The Buddha as a Bodhisatta for many lives was the best example for it. Someone believe in the law of kamma will keep the precepts - sila & not harming others & oneself. Without sila can't develop Samadhi. Without sila beings are wandering or falling into painful existences. Conduct is 2 kinds; ordinary one & related to perfection (parami). Knowledge is also the same. Conducts include in parami are sila, sila & Samadhi bhavana.

Knowledges — — — — listening, studying, spreading sūtrata Dhamma - such as, tebhanda, ayatana, dhatu, etc. Contemplating them & insight & teaching to others. In the past people who met / encountered the Buddha's Teachings had fulfilled these 2 perfections. Therefore when later they encountered the Buddha's Teachings again & realized Path & fruit. For examples; Ven. Sariputta, Ven. Mahā-moggallāna; Khema Theri, Upali, Uppalavanna Theri; laymen Anathapindika & Citta; lay women Kisākha & Uttara, etc.

Someone only had the perfection of conduct & not knowledge, when later encountered the Buddha's Teachings, even listened his teachings very often did not realize the Path & fruit. For examples; King Pasenadi of Kosala, & his Queen Mallika, etc.

Someone only had the perfection of knowledge & not conduct - such as caga, sila, bhavana, etc. For e.g. the well known scholar monk Kapila of Brother Kassapa's time. After death fell into painful birth-hell.

In the Buddha Gotama's time born as animal - big golden fish.

I have met this kind of lay Buddhists, they are not interested in conduct only meditation. In the beginning they are serious, but as time going on their saddha are going down. Like a straw fire burning very quickly & die out very quick.

Nowadays very difficult to find someone has both qualities; conduct & knowledge. It seems to me more & more people lacking of both. People are more & more greedy & selfish, their 6 sense doors are occupying & pollutant meditas. Saddha is very important factor for developing good conducts/deeds. Which lead to fortunate rebirths & having good lives & fortunes. Carana parami & saddha give the results of high class people, such as - Kings, leaders, rich people, etc.

Pāñña is very important factor for developing knowledge - rūpa - which leads to understand & has profound knowledge. Giving the results of becoming teachers, & sages & noble beings. Therefore every Buddhist should develop both qualities.

What about ordinary good conduct? These are also very important for a human being. For human race to have happiness, peace & harmony every man has to follow, & practise & develop good conduct. This is to be started from the family level, societies to international levels. To be fulfilled this inspiration & purpose, humans have to lay down the basic cause for it. This basic cause is moral value, standard & education. Only we understand & see this basic cause very important & unavoidable; if we observe & study present societies & international situations around the world. I had seen a documentary film on human problems in societies, & environmental pollutions & some natural disasters caused by human deeds. I'll mention about them ⁱⁿ general only.

There was a scene a father & son were liked playing a funny game. (i.e. in the father's view). They step^t slapped each other face in turn. The son might be 4 or 5 yrs old. This small boy was using force & sometimes seeing the father rubbing his face, but he was still laughing? Was this the way a father teaching his son becoming a good person? Now he was slapping you only 2 hands. But in the future will ^{stab} step you & knife. Nowday instead of teaching children respect & gratitude to their parent, teaching them in the opposites. Around the world shouting loudly democracy, equality & human right. Are human beings using it rightly & properly & wisely. All these good qualities have to be used in the right place in wholesome matters. If not societies & the world will be in chaos.

There was another scene in China. A father was filming ^a video camera to his 2 children; ^a 5 yrs old boy & 10 yrs old girl. What was he filming about? He was ^{writing & encouraging} encouraging them to fight each other. Both children were quite different in body size & strength. Everytime he was beaten & fallen on to the ground. And then she kicked & stepped on his body by force. After sometimes the man's aunt came out to the compound & see what happened. This elderly woman did not say anything, & went back inside the house. The father asked the boy to get up & fight. Everytime the boy was beaten & cried, the father was laughing. By looking into the girl's eyes & face & we can know she had cruel nature. Where this video came from? It was sure the father put it in the internet, it was also broadcasting in T.V news. Did he trains his children to become criminals & terrorists? Why there are many violence, terrorist activities & wars around the world?

Even men are very cruel & violent to men; ^{So it} there is no need to mention on ~~about~~ animals, even worse. For money, men can do horrendous things to animals. They how humans treat animals, can be even worse. There were some video clips showing how humans treated animals.

Some human cruelty on animals are shocking & unbelievable, similar to hell scenes. Mains kill animals for meat, skins & furs to satisfy their sensual pleasure. Sometimes the killings are like torturing animals in hell scenes, as example - stripping off the skin furs alive, etc. Even it's unpleasant to talk about these things & never end.

Some of the human atrocities to animals can see in shark fins, dolphin meat industries, etc. Sea water is red to blood.

These business people & their workers are creating hells on earth for their future births in hells. Some humans are for money. They can do any evil thing you can't imagine. For a momentary fleeting pleasure they harming others & themselves, really stupid & foolish.

Also men can't escape dangers from men, such as air, water, earth & foods poisonings & many kinds of pollution. All these things create health problems, life threatening & surviving problems.

There are also sex problems in societies. We heard about young girls as young as 10 yrs old pregnant girls in news. Homosexuality among young boys & girls, even no need to mention about youth & grown-up people. Why these kinds of sexual abnormality becoming more & more in humans? Because we don't see it as abnormal & immoral.

Therefore we encourage & protect these things to happen.

Sexual misconducts create these results of abnormality. That is people born in these ways because of their past sexual misconducts. There is also some causes of this present life. These are unwholesome or polluted medias. For money or ill-will make these things happen.

The only solution is not by punishments, but in educations - on virtue, morality & ethics; the results of their values, standards & benefits. All worldly & spiritual development always base on these qualities. Even without these qualities even can't be called a human being.

Another human problem is ignorance & delusion. Why human beings are becoming more & more ignorant & deluded? In short their views & knowledges are wrong. Because of misguided opinions & attitudes come from medias are wrong. Some of these medias are promoting & spreading polluted things - can be called unwholesome educations to public. Therefore we can see more & more smokers, alcoholics, drug addicts & their ages are younger & younger. Even some governments make illegal drugs become legal drugs. That is encouraging their own citizens becoming drug addicts & ignoramus, deluded citizens. What a pity? The ways of solving problems are totally wrong.

It was the same as solving sexual misconducts & unlawful sexes, not by encouraging & promoting, but in wholesome education. Violence, terrorism & wars are also in the wrong ways. Solving violence & others in love, compassion, appreciative joy & wholesome education. With tit-for-tat it will never end, & becoming more serious. Like the polluted earth, & more & more pollutions (internal & external) more & more natural dangers & disasters.

Human beings should check & contemplate/reflect their thinkings/views & behaviours to find the solution for living beings & the earth. Within a half century (estimation only) human beings & the development of sciences & technologies & unsustainable economic views & policies & making the earth becomes today situations. We are nourishing the 3 unwholesome roots of sufferings - greed, hatred & delusion for over indulgence of sensual pleasure. And never thinking about the outcomes it brings to human race & the earth. We are nourishing & merking friends & our real enemies - so the outcomes are dangers, disasters & sufferings. We can't become sages & noble beings instantly, at least become virtuous, moral & ethical persons. For this inspiration to achieve we must reduce the forces of greed, hatred & delusion or becoming influence on us. This is wholesome education - starting from family life to societies & international level. At last our deeds will become blameless & will have the blessings of happiness, peace & harmony among us & to nature.

There was an interesting story about Magha - The past life of Sakka - the king of devas. This story represented deeds that were blameless. Magha was a young man of Macala village. He had a good heart & was repairing damaged roads & planting trees. In the beginning he was doing alone & then later increasing to 33 men & their wives. Therefore their social works & welfare increased to many ways. The head-man of these groups of villages was becoming displeasure & their social welfare & activities of social welfare. Because he was making great fortunes & his promoting of wrong livelihoods - such as gambling, liquors, etc. more & more people became good & ethical persons & his black income he got less & less money. So, he planned to get rid of them. He informed the king that Magha & his group were planning to revolt him. At last the king believed his in him & arrested Magha & his men & condemned them to death. The executioners buried their bodies in the ground & the heads above & stamped in elephant.

They had prepared for this. Magha asked his men not to have ill-will & hatred to the king, executioners & the elephant. Instead spreading love & good-will to all. Because of the power of metta & many of their wholesome merits for the welfare of others, the elephant could not ^{desire to} stamp on their heads. The executioner tried to the elephant ^{for} 3 times & all were failed. At last the king asked Magha did they have any mantra - sacred syllables to stop the elephant to harm them. Magha answered to the king that they had it. These were metta & social welfare services to others. The king got rid of the evil head-man of the villages & replaced to Magha.

Magha was not an ordinary man. Because of his many past deeds after death born as the king of 33 devas of Tavatimsa Heaven. And then met the Gautama Buddha, listened to one of the Blessed One's talk & became a stream-winner (sotapanna). His life taught us humans a very valuable lesson what to do as a human being. The Buddha taught that a human birth was a difficult to attain. Not the direct meaning of difficult to born as a human. The birth of a brahma-god was more

than a human birth. Because has to practise jhanas. But as a human has many chances to do wholesome deeds & merits. Other higher births don't have these chances. They only enjoy their merits & jhanic pleasure only. Human world is like a treasure island. There are 7 kinds of treasures hidden on the earth. These treasures are: 1. The treasure of conviction 2. The treasure of virtue 3. The treasure of conscience 4. The treasure of concern 5. The treasure of listening 6. The treasure of generosity 7. The treasure of discernment (1. saddha 2. sila 3. hiri 4. ottappa 5. Dhammasaranam 6. caga 7. panna)

What happen to nowadays human beings? Do they know about the hidden treasures & find it? Even most human beings don't know these are existing. They don't have the treasure's map. Therefore most of them behave like rats, ^{cockroaches}, ~~cockroaches~~, flies. They don't behave like bees, which are selfless creatures & doing their duties for the welfare of others. If someone behaves like rat, cockroach & fly & becomes a minute nuisance to society. Their future births will be very painful. Now someone is power-monger (politicians, leaders), war-monger, money-monger, etc.. Because of their misdeeds & next time will be a servant cleaning toilets. And a rich person will be a beggar begging for food. These 7 kinds of treasures are noble treasures can be found only in the Buddha's Teaching. Everyone can attain it by noble deeds or seeds that are blemless. Therefore every Buddhist should cultivate these blemless seeds & attaining the highest blessing in life - i.e Nibbana.

(18) Avoiding, abstaining from evil,

(19) Refraining from intoxicants;

(20) Being heedful of the qualities of the mind,
This is the highest protection/blessing.

(18) Avoiding, abstaining from evil:

Avoiding & abstaining are in Pali ārati & virati respectively. Avoiding is the matter of the mind & abstaining is the matter of speech & bodily action. Avoiding from evil means even not thinking about evil or unwholesome things in the mind. Speech & bodily action come from the thinking mind that mind is more important of the 3. In one sutta of the Buddha (discourse) a monk wanted to go back lay life. The reason was there were many rules for a monk to look after that difficulty for following it. The Buddha knew about it & asked him to look after one only. That was the mind. What is evil? Pāpa is Pali word for evil. What

are the evil shannas? The 10 unwholesome shannas are evils.

See the 10 unwholesome courses of action in the 9th blessing - well mastered disciplines. In the 10 unwholesome courses of action, 3 connect

& the bodily actions, 4 & speech & 3 & the mind actions respectively.

In this 18th blessing/protection avoiding means not thinking about all the 10 unwholesome shannas. There was a Dhamma talk by Sayadaw U Nandabhidamma - The karmic results of misconduct, based on Duccaritavipaka Sutta. Here I'll give the gist of this talk on the results of misconduct & the nature of karma-actions. So that people will know how much importance the protection/blessing of avoiding, abstaining from evils. Actions after done can give the results for many world actions.

The resultant energy of the action & its quality will not disappear.

The volition-cetana or mental factor has disappeared & the energy is leaving behind & following to the mind processes. It cannot be seen.

The power of energy able to perform things. As example, some of the lessons we learnt at young age did not disappear. Good conduct-sucarita or wholesome shamma is like medicine. Misconduct-duccarita or unwholesome shamma is like disease. Wholesome shamma removes unwholesome shamma for e.g., see Ven. Angulimāla's story. It's good to know these things, so that people can avoid & abstain from evils. If not people will make mistakes again & again & becoming worse.

This discourse of the Buddha was from the Anguttara Nikāya. It was mentioned 8 factors - the 8 misconducts. ① The taking of life - when indulged in, developed, & pursued leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of hungry shades.

- The slightest of all the results coming from the taking of life is, when one becomes a human being, it leads to a short life span.
- ② Stealing - leads to hell, rebirth as a common animal, to the realm of hungry shades (ghosts). When one becomes a human being, the slightest result of stealing is leading to the loss of one's wealth.
 - ③ Illicit sexual behavior - leads to hell, rebirth as a common animal, to the realm of hungry ghosts. When one becomes a human being, the slightest result of illicit sexual behaviour is leading to rivalry & revenge.
 - ④ Telling falsehoods - to hell, rebirth as animal & ghost. When becomes a human being, it leads to being falsely accused.
 - ⑤ Divisive tale-bearing - to hell, rebirth as animal & ghost. When , it leads to the breaking of one's friendships.
 - ⑥ Harsh speech - to hell, rebirth as animal & ghost. When , it leads to unappealing sounds.
 - ⑦ Frivolous chattering - to hell, rebirth as animal & ghost. When , it leads to words that are not worth taking to heart
 - ⑧ The drinking of fermented & distilled liquors - to hell, rebirth , it leads to mental derangement.

In the 10 unwholesome courses of action, not included the drinking of fermented & distilled liquors. Therefore some think that it is wholesome. But in this sutta (the Bodhsha included in the misconduct-ducaritta & also in the 5 precepts. Although it does not include in the 10 unwholesome actions directly, but count it to the misconduct of illicit sexual behaviour. Because in the 5 sensual pleasures, alcoholic drinks are connecting to taste. Therefore count it to illicit sexual behaviour. Ducaritta - misconduct means all the bad/not good behaviours.

To fulfill a misconduct there are 5 factors included. As an ex for taking life:- 1. must be a living being 2. knowing that it is a living being 3. has the intention (volition) to kill 4. commit the action of killing 5. has been killed. Doing an action there are many stages; beginning many times, a lot or again & again. And then become a habit, & later a character. In the beginning you take drugs. Sometimes later the drugs take you. And then put you in the jail, becomes a criminal. Sometimes we are doing things without intention. This intentional/volitional killing can fall into hell. After freeing from hell & born as animal.

After death as an animal & born as a hungry ghost (peta). The slightest of its result is when becomes a human beings has a short life span. For stealing: The slightest result is the loss of one's wealth. For illicit sexual behaviour: The slightest result is hating by others & ^{has} many enemies. For telling falsehoods: The slightest result is being falsely accused & arrested.

For derisive tale-bearing: The slightest result is breaking of one's friendships & family break up. These things happen very often.

For harsh speech: the slightest result is not hearing about pleasant & happy things & matters. For frivolous chattering/useless & meaningless: the slightest result is no-one taking his words to heart or accepting what has said. For drinking of fermented & distilled liquors: the slightest result is leading to mental derangement or becomes dull & stupid person.

As a human being, it's very important to understand the analysis of action. Because human world is a place where a living being has more chances than any other existences to cultivate goodness.

Therefore there was a sutta in the Majjima Nikaya on the analysis of action; Cula-Kammavibhaṅga Sutta (Sutta no. 135). It's worthwhile to study for the avoiding & abstaining from evils & performing goodness. Therefore human birth is a precious birth & should use it properly & skillfully. If not & this precious existence can do a lot of evil deeds will suffer here & after. Also the nature of mind is difficult to control & it takes interest in unwholesome matters & sensual pleasure.

There are 3 ways of abstaining from evils (virati): 1. Sampattavirati: abstaining from evils by controlling one's mind when encounter to a situation. 2. Sammacāna-virati: undertaking the precepts & looking after it. 3. Samuccheda-virati: perfect or noble abstaining of noble beings (ariyas) from stream enterer to arahat. Because they had already eradicated defilement-kilesa related to evil deeds, & pali & Pari-knowledges.

1. Sampattavirati: There was a story in Sri Lanka related to sampatti-virati. There were 2 brothers & one day their mother got sick. So they invited a doctor to treat her. He told them a prescription which could cure her illness. That was to eat fresh rabbit meat. The younger brother went to the field to look for rabbits. After sometimes he saw a rabbit was eating young rice crops. The rabbit after seeing him & frightened & ran for its life. He was chasing the rabbit & at last its legs entangled in creepers. When he caught the poor losing lovely animal & it was trembling & fear. He had a strong sympathetic feeling to the rabbit & couldn't take its life. Therefore he released the poor creature & decided to go back home. His elder brother learnt what had happened & scolded him for not concerning their mother's illness. To please his brother, he decided to use the Dhamma of truth to cure his mother. He made the following assertion of truth: "In my whole life I have never been killed an animal intentionally." Here there were 2 factors; his sila was pure & the assertion he made also true. After repeating the assertion of

truth 3 times, the mother was cured.

In the world nearly everyone encounters unavoidable difficulty & problem. For e.g., doing unwholesome matter for livelihood. When encounter problems it's very important to use the right way or method. If not it becomes more confused or worse. (e.g., 2011 yr Syrian Civil War). Therefore world leaders & governments should contemplate this point very carefully. In the beginning solving the problem in an unwholesome way, it seems solved the problem for awhile. Later it becomes worse & chaotic. Because the purpose was overcoming it instantly. But it also like collecting unwholesome karmic results. This point is very important to consider & contemplate. There was a very good Dhamma talk by Sayadaw U Nandamala Bhikkhu on unwholesome & wholesome dhammas. There were many valuable points to contemplate & follow accordingly for everyone. This section also about avoiding & abstaining from evil deeds. Therefore Sayadaw's talk will help us to achieve this very important protection/blessing. Here I'll give a gist of it only.

Whatever thing we are doing, this must be wholesome matter. This was taught by the Buddha. By doing wholesome action, someone gains a valuable thing. Wholesome dhamma is not easy to arise. It needs the causes for it to arise. With its arising one gets the goodness of natural energy (karmic wholesome energy). This is the view of Buddhas & noble beings (ariyas). But worldlings don't see in this way. They only want to gain wealth & fortunes. For them wealth & fortunes are greater than unwholesome merits. But the Buddha was seeing it in the opposite way, because it gave the long time result. To attain wealth & fortunes also good but it has short life span. Only attain it for one life. Wholesome merits give the results for this life & next life until the end of Samsara. The Buddha was always thinking about for this life & next life, i.e. seeing both sides. For permanence & short term; we should choose the permanent results. If we get both, then it's better. If not, just choose the permanence. The Buddha always encouraged to have mindfulness & contemplation. With this will find out the answer & can solve the problem. If seeing things superficially can't see it or penetrate it. This is the case most leaders, economists & scientists. Therefore they create a lot of human problems & environmental pollutions in today world. Whatever matter must contemplate & reflect carefully & wisely. We-human beings should have the kind of education & discernment, wisdom, can discern cause & effect, good or bad, wholesome or unwholesome, long term & short term. Most human beings nowadays are lacking in these qualities.

These are the results of wrong educations which clouded the mind. The shining nature of the mind buried underneath of greed, hatred & delusion, which make the mind darker & darker. The wholesome kinds of education are valuable, & priceless treasures. Buddhists should not waste their precious lives & times. With wise contemplation & reflection to do what should be done to ~~end~~^{pass} our lives is the best way of life. In one sutta the Buddha reminded his followers-disciples as follow. The days & nights are relentlessly passing, how well am I spending my time? This should be reflected upon again & again. "Do we ever reflect how we spend our time's every day, every month & every year? Without contemplation no answer will come out. With it we'll find the answer & doing thing accordingly. It's like an econiz matter, has to reflect very often on loss or profit.

Very few reflect & life. Therefore most people don't know about loss & profit in life. Without any answer couldn't change the way of life.

With contemplation in economics can change the way, system & method.

Everyone wants to be: 1. long life 2. healthy 3. happiness & 4 fulfilled one's wishes. A life & these 4 factors can be called successful enough. But the Buddha mentioned more than that. Is long life good for everyone? Someone in life has a lot of misconducts & demerits & longer life means more misconducts & demerits. Like a war going on longer & more deaths. (see, Siriam Civil War). It's more harmful to this person & his longer life. Someone (miner) digging a pit, & more digging it becomes deeper & more dangerous. What the Buddha taught was always true. It's about natural law - cause & effect, without time limits. Only we don't know it. There was a verse in the Dhammapada worth contemplation.

The Buddha was comparing of 2 long lived persons. One is no sila & giving his life & unwholesome matters. The other is the opposite nature. A life without sila & misconducts like a pit & continuous digging becomes deeper. With sila & merits like building a high wall & continuous building becomes higher. For the 2nd person his long life is better. Therefore the verse said: A life & merits one day is better than a life & demerits for 100 yrs. Their values are quite different.

For a fool, his life also effects others (surroundings). According to law of action, everything what one has done is responsible for oneself. But it also effects the surroundings. A bad son creates suffering for the whole family. A good son brings happiness for the whole family. as long as But his path of life is nothing to do & the family. Therefore as long as a fool life & demerits effect the whole family. If he dies will bring peace to the family. A ^{gigantic} useful tree is a refuge for 10,000 birds. (A Burmese Saying)

It's amazing to know the wise social views of Chinese sages. There were many similarity among them. They knew a long time ago that moral & ethical education was the fundamentally importance for goodness & wholesome developments in societies. Even they emphasized it to start from the family. Because parents are the first teachers of a child & their mind is pure & innocent in the begining. Therefore the parents are easy to teach & train them. Whatever directions may be. Parents can teach & train a child becomes a sage or a criminal.

In life there are only 2 kinds of person; someone & moral, ethical standards & value & someone ~~can't~~ them. Their lives are far away to each other, as sky & earth. Attaining a human existence has 2 duties; performing the duty of one's welfare & others. In Pali language: These are called attahita & parahita. Based on these 2 duties, the Buddha divided human beings into 4 groups. These were: 1. Only for oneself & not for others 2. Only for others & not for oneself. 3. not for oneself & others 4. for oneself & others (both). The 3rd person is the worst of all. A person ~~in~~ attahita & parahita is the best. Without attahita, one has parahita. (By protecting oneself, one protects others - Sedaka Sutta, Samyutta Nikaya). Benefiting oneself & harming others is not good. Nowadays in societies this kinds of businesses & making money are more than before. For eng, using pesticides in crops, fruits, vegetables, etc. Tobacco & alcoholic businesses are making a lot of money & harming a lot of people ~~were~~ health problems, social problems, etc. There are no end to mention these things. But these people never think about their actions which they ~~can't~~ escape for a short term sensual pleasures. More consumers & make more money, but the karmic results they have to pay are greater & heavier. First, benefiting oneself & later helping others. Buddhas & bodhisattvas are noble beings who arose in the world for their welfare & others. Philanthropists are also in this group. Therefore they are becoming richer & richer. The Pali word-hita means good conditions for good results to arise. Sukha - means happiness, the result of hita.

Therefore people should create good conditions (hita) for the happy results of oneself & others. The education systems of Chinese sages were for this purpose. The Chinese civilization & culture surviving for over 3000 yrs of history is one of the main factors from these systems. Some government projects & planings are also a good example for hita. Parents are also must create good conditions (hita) for their children to develop in morality, ethics & virtues. To become a good & virtuous person is more important than a highly educated & rich person. Most worldly problems come from ^{the} fools not from the wise & virtuous people.

(go) (80) I had made a mistake!

Some parents instead of teaching or training them become good & virtuous people left inheritances for their children. Without moral foundations some of these outcomes are not good. Some parents create good conditions such as good educations (here mean for livelihoods), ^(fortune) money & good jobs only but not for the mind. So these children also don't have good endings. Good conditions are like good weathers. Therefore in the old days some highly venerable monks at the end of their treatises & wishes & prayers for good weather & rain. So that having good weather & rain no drought & other dangers. Then human beings & other animals can be survived. Every politician (leaders), economists & scientists should take these points very seriously. Our physical world (physical body & nature - earth) are depending on the 4 hita-good conditions: action (deed & behaviour), mind (mental states), weather (climates) & foods. If human beings continue to act & behave foolishly & stupidly like nowadays there will be more disasters, dangers & sufferings to arise. Do human beings want to be suffered & distressed? I hope, not. Therefore all parents & governments must create good conditions for their children & citizens.

The Buddha arose ~~on earth~~ in this world for this reason & purpose. Not like the God & gods of other faiths. They worship him & fear & rely on his power. If they do something wrong & confession is forgivable. God has the power of protecting & blessing. There is nothing to do & one's power & rely on the outside power. Therefore one's intelligence, knowledge & ability to do things become blunt & stagnant. In human the qualities of desire - wholesome desire (chanda), persistence (viriya) & intelligence / discrimination discernment (pañña) are very important. The Buddha gave us guidelines & showing the ways only. He taught people to increase & develop their goodness & stop & presented them ^{not to do} unwholesome matters.

Everyone has the inner powers & rely on them. These powers are good conditions (hita). Should never forget these powers & always increasing & developing them. These 4 inner powers are: conviction (saddha), virtue (sila), learning (suta), generosity (caga) & discernment (paññe). These are the best conditions for inner powers to a human being. as good conditions to every human. Someone has these best conditions or qualities he/she has worldly good fortunes & welfare in this life & after life. These inner powers or good conditions are also called noble growth or spiritual growth. Even the Buddha mentioned that someone has these qualities & performing the duties, ~~whatever wishes & inspirations~~ could be fulfilled. And then whatever wish & inspiration he made could be fulfilled.

These inner powers are good conditions (hita). Everyone should develop These qualities. Only Then will get happiness & peace. By knowing These Things (especially the Teachings of the Buddha) The wholesome paths we walk becoming clear & straight. In human world whatever we are doing, The main points or right standards are: should be done & should not be done, suitable & not suitable, benefit & harmful, etc. All combine these opposites together, Then There are only 2 kinds of phenomena (Dhamma) - wholesome & unwholesome (kusala & akusala). Others are only human's views. We should be afraid & fear of unwholesome things & matters, & not others. For e.g. most people are afraid & fearful of hells, but not the unwholesome deeds & dhamma. Anger, hatred & ill-will are dangerous & very harmful to both. The results of evil deeds come from them are leading to hell existences. The contemplation & reflection of benefits & faults of wholesome & unwholesome dhammas & their actions are the cause of progress & development for human race. In Pali - adinava & anicca (faults & benefits).

In the 4 satipatthana sutta: The first one is body contemplation. There is a section called mindfulness & clear knowing - sati & sampajana. The commentary commented 4 aspects of clear knowledge or knowing. The 1st 2nd are purpose & suitable suitability. These are connecting to what has mentioned above.

2. Samadana-viratti: undertaking the precepts & looking after it

In human life sometimes can be encountered & difficulties & don't know how to deal w/ it. Most people in these kinds of situations just follow what majority have done. Knowing that it's not good to follow it, but most people also doing it, therefore just doing the same mistake. Nowadays this kind of thinking is quite common. Not ability to use one's knowledge & decision just follow common people. But they don't know that in the world there are more fools than wise. There was an incident told by a bhikkuni bhiksuni. Once time she was travelling by train & met a Christian on it. The Christian also said that he also believed in the law of karma. But nowadays most people were doing things in unethical ways that we had to follow suit. And what can I do. What he said was very wrong, & 2 mistakes in his words. The law of karma & the Creator are 2 different views. If one of them is right, then the other is wrong. If he really believed in the law of karma would not follow the ways of harming oneself & others. We have to deal w/ livelihoods & family matters, but also try to avoid & abstain from evils at the same time.

The following story was abstained from unwholesome action. In Sri Lanka a man was going to the forest for firewoods & his ox. Later he lost the ox & was looking for it. Unexpectedly encountered a boa constrictor & it constricted his body. He was thinking to chop off to cut off its head & the knife in his hand. And remembered ^{had arisen} the 5 precept before & reflected about it for 3 times. After the last ^{and then} made the resolution of not taking the life of the ^{and then} ~~boa~~ threw his knife away. Because of his pure sila & mind power, the boa freed him & went away.

There are 2 main causes of or factors to fulfill this blessing.

Hiri - sense of shame & ottappa - fear of wrong doing are the ^{important} 2 factors for preventing someone to do evil actions. These dhammas are also called the guardians of the world. These are not ordinary kinds of shame & fear, & with knowledge in it. These are also including in the seven noble treasures. Someone has these 2 qualities will complete [&] this blessing of avoiding & abstaining from evils.

(19) Refraining from intoxicants: need ^{merely}

It is a very important matter to contemplate & reflect by human being. Alcoholism has the longest human history to harm human race. In some societies even it becomes a culture. Drug addiction is worse than alcoholism, but it is not become a human culture yet. But nowadays some countries legalized some drugs. That it also will become a human culture in the future. Alcoholism is less harmful than drug addition, but its effects in societies are much wider & complicated.

Here refraining from intoxicants means all kinds of intoxicants which clouded the mind & can't think clearly & behave foolishly. It is one of the very ill problems in societies. But majority of people not taking it seriously like the smoking problems. Why is that? Because they are in ignorance of the 5 precepts & no discernment on the harmfulness of alcoholism. It is including in the 5 precepts & may be the most dangerous one. If someone breaks this precept, there are more chances to break the others too. Because the mind doesn't have the ability to think good or bad, right or wrong, proper or improper, etc. Alcoholics are the nuisances to their families & societies they lived in. They usually create a lot of problems & unhappiness in their families. Therefore a very ill ^{2 serious} problem in societies, especially for families. Everyone in a family should tackle alcoholism successfully. And then will have a prosperous & happy family life. There are a lot to talk about the sufferings & unhappiness which ^{come from} alcoholism. There was a documentary film on alcoholism & the sufferings & dangers it bring to societies!

This was the photographs around the world of drunkards & alcoholics. From all these photos can see very clear the sufferings & dangers alcoholism brings to societies. These are very disgusting & shameless behaviour. When someone is drunk, the mind is becoming abnormal & out of control. And then can do any evil thing which bring harmfulness to oneself & others. Even their standards as a human being is lower than animals. Hiri - sense of shame & ottappa - fear of wrong doing are the 2 important factors for preventing someone to do evil actions. Therefore these are called the guardians of the world. A drunkard or an alcoholic can't has these 2 qualities. Then becomes shameless & not fear of wrong doing - ahiri & anottappa. These will destroy himself /herself & their family life. I had seen a lot of ^{these} people in my life. Some men & women because of their past lives' good kammas, in this life they had the good chances to meet good people as their spouses. But their present lives' kammas (misconducts) are not good that end up in miseries. They become alcoholics, drug addicts, gamblers, etc. because of bad companions & don't have moral, ethical educations. Not only effected their own lives but also their family members. If both partners are immoral the family lives are even worst. Even the husband is very bad, & a good wife or a mother the family can be protected. But if a bad wife or mother the family life is totally ruined. I had met both types of families in societies. In 2008, there was a tragic case in England. A man had a son & a woman. Not very long they were separated. The man left & his son to the mother. I did not know the reason behind their separation. Anyhow she was a drug addict & lived in another man who was also a drug addict. The little boy was known as Baby P. In news medias not mentioned the boy real name. The Baby P was tortured by the drug addict for sometimes that not very long died in many injuries. The cruel mother & her body friend were arrested. This sad news shocked the people.

There were many stories in the world about alcoholism (included drug addiction & drug addicts) problems & sad stories. Actually a lot of society problems are made by foolish, stupid & deluded people. Man made sufferings are unnecessary to happen, if people have good moral standards & education, started from family life. If everyone has the good knowledge/education on the law of karma & following his/her life accordingly to the natural law, life is quite enjoyable & better. But majority are ignorant about it & totally rely on outside power that done a lot of unwholesome things & matters. And then dishonestly

blame it on others & outside Power. They can't solve their problems & overcome them. Every story good or bad, suffering or happiness, pleasant or unpleasant, etc. has lessons to teach us. Even things in nature can teach us many valuable lessons, such as water, lotus flower, sun rise, sunset, etc. Here I want to present 2 true stories; a man & a woman both of them were alcoholics. It showed how alcoholism destroyed — lives & their good kamma results of past lives. With contemplation we can learn valuable lessons from the incidents.

The man was over 60 yrs of age when he passed away to cancer. Born in the beginning of 20th century in a Buddhist country, but the family was not Buddhist. His education was only middle school level. But he was a well known carpenter as a profession & had good incomes. As a young man married a young woman to the arranged marriage. Marriage is the most important matter between a man & a woman. He was very lucky in this matter, because encountered a dutiful wife. His wife was not only dutiful as a house wife, but also a good mother to the children. Where a good wife & mother come from? Without doubt that it came was the outcome of a good daughter. Even though she was low educated like most women of her generation, had the high qualities as ^{a good} daughter, wife & mother to her mother, husband & children. A perfect woman in accordance to the 818 Chinese standards. She was a considerate person & had extremely patience & endurance to pains & difficulties in family life. We may think this couple had a happy family life. There was a real & cruel enemy between them; alcoholism. It destroyed the man life. In real he was a good person, intelligent & creative mind. If not drunk a very nice man. And after drunk like a crazy person. Living among Buddhists but never became a Buddhist. His children were also very good because under the protection of a good mother. Some of them became Buddhist practitioners. He was successful in his livelihood & making money but most of them were wasted by drinking & gambling (in his early life). His drunken behaviour, especially speech creating a lot of bad deeds day in day out. At over 60 got terminal cancer & died in an unconscious mind state in the hospital. The sign of not a good rebirth. His wife because of her moral qualities & good deeds still alive, healthy & nearly becomes a centenarian.

The 2nd story was about a middle aged woman. A tribal woman of a small tribe in Taiwan. Most of them have the history of alcoholism. It seems to me came from their cultural background. Because I have seen many of them drunk regularly from old to young age, from grandparents to grand children. From this kind of cultural background, she was a low educated woman in this developed island. She also doesn't has a moral standard & education from her young age. This can be clearly justify from her behaviour & deeds. But she has the good karma from her past life. Because she married to a Chinese old man who was good & had a secure life. If she has moral standards & gave up her alcoholism it is no doubt that will has a happy family life. After born a child to this old man & ended up in separation. Now living a miserable life & doing a lot of evil deeds.

In these 2 true stories, the man's life was worth for contemplation. Actually he had a very good karma from his past lives. And nothing was lacking for his progress as a human. But he had 2 weak points: did not have the moral education like his wife. Another important cause for his down fall was bad companion's. But he also had the skill to make many friends, some were educated & high class people. He met these good people very rare. His usual companions were the alcoholics & always gave them free drinks. In The Mangala Sutta: the first blessing & protection is: not consorting & fools. What the Buddha taught was quite true. If someone is lacking this first blessing, then he/she will lack the others. He had never been consorting to religious people, even though he had many chances. All human problems & sufferings cause by the fools & not by the wise. Therefore he had wasted his precious human birth & good chances. We can see this type of people in the world; some were government leaders & rich men. Instead of using their political powers & riches for the benefits of others created evil deeds which will send them to the lower worlds & a lot of sufferings & miseries in the future to come. Drunkenness is like a culture in some tribal & hill tribe people. They never take it as harmful & unwholesome. Nowadays many people take alcohol as nothing wrong. Therefore alcoholics & cigarettes are successful businesses & making a lot of money. Because of that there are more social problems & health problems. I have been met a lot of people in drunkenness & alcoholism before, but never seen anyone made progress in their life. Even originally if they have good qualities only spoiled it. Therefore the Buddha mentioned that

There were 4 matters made a person never shine. These were money, women, wrong livelihood & alcoholism (all sorts of intoxicants)

There are 6 faults connecting to intoxicants; lost one's wealth & fortune, leading to quarrels & fights, get diseases & illnesses, has bad reputation, without shame & fear to evil deeds, weaken in perception & knowledge.

1. Lost one's wealth & fortune:

Because of intoxications, people become heedless (पामदा) or negligence. Therefore easy to commit unwholesome deeds/acts. If an immoral person & intoxications more & more misconducts. Apamada means non-negligence & represents mindfulness (सति). Apamada is not an ordinary mindfulness, not forget in wholesome dhamma & actions. Always looking for doing good deeds. Therefore it is not easy to arise & has to be cultivated. So the Buddha taught the 4 foundations of mindfulness for it. Without sati knowledge can't arise. There was a jataka story reminding us the first fault of intoxicants - lost one's wealth & fortune. In one of his lives as human being, the bodhisatta had a son. After he died & born as the king of heaven, Sakka. He had strong attachment to his human son who became an alcoholic without him. ^{He has} So he came down to the human world & gave his human son a wish fulfilling magic pot. If he wished something just put his hand inside & took it out. [He had left some wealth for him but the son without doing any work & just spending the wealth left behind. After sometimes all the wealth was finished.] He warned his son to look after the magic pot carefully, & not let it broken. One day he was quite drunk & playing ^{to} the magic pot by throwing it up in the air & catching it when it came down. At one point he could not catch it & fell to the ground & broken ^{were} to pieces. Later he died in poor & misery. In the world there are some, ^{had} powers, wealth & highly educated ^{lived} to alcoholism or drug addiction, later their lives were destroyed ^{the} foolish son of the bodhisatta.

2. Leading to quarrels & fights:

This fault is very common to drunken people. Drunken behaviour is clumsy, noisy or foolish behaviour by someone who is drunk. When some are drunk they like crazy people & talkative, don't any sense. Talking & doing things blindly that it like insulting people. Therefore starting a quarrel & fight to others. Some drunkards are very good when they are ^{at} normal times. After drunk insulting people & beating their wives. People can be patient to crazy person but not to drunkards. So they can create enemies & dangers for themselves. Quarrels & fights sometimes lead to crimes. And then spoiled one's whole life.

3. Get disease & illness:

The common illness cause by intoxicant is cancer. There are also some of them I have no knowledge about it. It can also lead to mental derangement, or mental problems. I had known a family who had 2 children & mental derangement. The father was an alcoholics & married 2 times. From the first wife he had 2 children, a daughter & a son. The son after graduated & had a proper job. And later had mental derangement & became a crazy man on the street. From the 2nd wife the man had some children. The 1st best daughter ~~after became in her teens~~ & has mental derangement & became crazy. Sometimes the working of karma is very strange, inconceivable. I am allergic to alcohol & have aversion to alcoholics & drunkards. But in my life I ^{can} never run away ~~or stay away~~ from these people. Always encountered them & living near them. Did I have some karmas connected to intoxicants from my past lives? For e.g., selling intoxicants as a livelihood, etc.

4. Has bad reputation:

Someone has the reputation as alcoholic or history of alcoholism nobody trust him. Difficult to find job & don't want to hire him. Their bad reputation also effect their families. Not only they are look down by others also to their family members. I am sure a good family will not marry their children into the alcoholic family. They will shun them & stay away from them. Good reputation is very important in society to someone for progress & developing in the right direction. The Buddha himself encouraged to associate to the wise & not the fools. Because human problems, sufferings & dangers come from the fools not the wise. Therefore someone & bad reputation will never approach by good or wise people. And will not has the chances to correct himself / herself. So in his life can't progress & developing in the right direction. Only bad people will contact him/her for their evil deeds. So his life will become more & more darker. When I was young heard Buddhists doing morning & evening puja (worshipping in a shrine room). One of the wishes they made in their prayers was ~~to~~ wandering in existences (i.e., Samsara) never encounter & made companionship & the fools. At those time I did not understand the meanings very well & clear. Later studied the Buddha's Teachings in the Sutta Pitaka amazed & admired the wisdom of the Buddha. There were many stories in the pitaka mentioned some people lives' stories. Mostly good people encountered or made companionship & bad people, then their lives never became good, always in dangers & problems, & sometimes spoiled their lives even if we research human history golden ages were the periods when human beings had good moral standards.

5. Without Shame & fear to evil deeds: sometimes even people are in normal mind state, can do evil deeds without shame & fear. ~~that's~~ a drunken person it becomes more easier to be in misconducts. Because in the drunken state can't think clear & become ignorant person. So doing things foolishly & impulsively. Sometime people in the drunken state commit heavy or serious crimes which spoiled their whole lives. Therefore no-one should take intoxicants as lightly like cigarettes. Because many people take smoking lightly that it is the great killer to human as cancer. But still many worshipping Their killers - intoxicants & cigarettes. How much stupid these people are? Money is not easy to come by. Everyone has to work hard for it. And then ~~wasting~~ it or paid their killers to murder them. There are many foolish people in the world wasting their times & money for useless things & matters. Even these types of people are don't have common sense. As an e.g., there are 3 things; foods, intoxicants (including drugs) & cigarettes. To a young boy & a dog. Which one the boy & dog will choose? Another e.g., during famine time, if you ask people to choose only one of the 3. All will choose foods for survivals. I don't think at that time alcoholics & drug addicts (including smokers) will choose the others for their survivals. There are many things & matters & these kinds of stupidity going on around the world. Some foolish people give up their health & life for these kinds of useless & meaningless things & matters.

We should always remember & remind us that shame & fear of wrong doing (hiri & ottappa) are the 2 guardians of the world. Without shame & fear to evil things (ahiri & anottappa) are the destroyers of the world. With ahiri & anottappa human beings don't have moral values & standards. Therefore all sorts of evil deeds arise. It changes the weather & natural environments. And many society problems & natural disasters appear & human life span decreases. It's sure that these kinds of unwholesome conditions there will be no happiness, peace, & harmony among human beings. Therefore ~~everyone~~^{anyone} wants to be happy peaceful, harmonious, ~~in their life~~^{& hap} their beauty & long life should develop their moral values & standards. Therefore anyone desire of happiness, peace, harmony, health & long life should develop the moral values & standards.

There was a well known story of a monk who had psychic power & after drunk behaved shamelessly in front of the Buddha. There was a powerful dragon (nāga) made trouble in a village. Ven. Nagata who had psychic power went there & his supernormal power defeated it.

Out of gratitude & respect villagers there wanted to offer him the best thing they could think about. Some foolish men suggested the best alcohol of their village. At that time the Buddha ^{yet} not laid down the training rule of forbidding intoxicants for monks. In his almsround villagers offered him alcohols. With a lot of consuming & he was flatten out on the ground at the entrance of the village. Some monks found him & took him to the Buddha. After arriving there they laid down him in front of the Buddha ^{before} his head towards the Blessed One. But he changed his position by turning his feet towards the Buddha. (a sign of disrespectful) Then the Buddha mentioned to the monks presented that ^{before} Nagara had psychic power & respected him & now he had none & even could not conquer a water snake. The Buddha laid down the training rule monks can't consume alcohols. From this incident a sensible person become insensible & disrespectful & lost all his good qualities under the influence of intoxicants. Even a person ^{perception,} dignity becomes without any of them.

6. Weaken in ^{perception,} memory & knowledge:

Knowledge is conviction & mindfulness & perception (sati & sañña). It's the power of perception. Therefore become without discernment & wisdom. Even intelligent people, their mind becoming slowly dull & blunt. And don't have the power to distinguish good or bad, proper & not proper. There was a tragic story happened in a long distant past of Ven. Sariputta life. In one of his past lives he was a king, addicted to intoxicants & meat. Everyday he must take his meal including meat. One observant day (religious holiday) the meat in the kitchen was eaten by dog. It was the day no shop was killing & selling meat. The cook had to inform the king about the incident. The time he informed him, the king was very drunk & the baby son on his laps & the queen also sat near him. Suddenly liked a crazy man, he killed the baby on his lap by twisting the neck. And then asked the cook to use the dead baby as meat. The cook was so frightened that just took the body away & cooked ^{human} meat for him. After his meal, the king fell was fallen into sleep. After awaken from ^{the} sleep & his drunkenness was gone. At that time he remembered his baby son & asked the queen to bring the baby to him. Knowing what happened to the child he had great remorse, pain, & grief & sorrow. ~~And then had~~ strong hatred to intoxicants, & made the following strong resolution (adhitthana) on giving up this harmful stuff forever, from this life onwards until his last life in samsara.

(100), (90)

Intoxicants & drugs effect one's mind states is very great indeed. I have mentioned 2 stories above; baby P & baby prince, both of them killed by the drug addict & alcoholic. These seem a little better than killing one's parents. There were also stories alcoholics & drug addicts killed their parents. These — very worse cases. All these crimes cannot be corrected. After death, the destinations of rebirths will be hells. There are a lot to say about the problems, dangers & results of intoxicants & drugs. Some evil conducts are even become human culture.^{when} Unwholesome dhammas, things & matters become human culture, it represent the degeneration of human status & dignity. Evil things, matters & seeds becoming culture, then many people following & doing them, e.g. alcohols, drug, smoking, guns culture in U.S., homosexuality, etc. From my own experiences of encountering alcoholics & the documentary on alcoholics & alcoholism the problems & dangers it bring to family & society are very great. By seeing all these miserable things & matters give you the sense of gloom & disgusting, like seeing rats & cockroaches & their surroundings. It's also very clear why the Buddha included the abstaining of intoxicants in the 5 precepts. Human should never take the 5 precepts as insignificant & laid down by the Buddha. It's the law of nature, not a philosophy, not come from thinking, invention & impose by someone. It will always true, anywhere, anyplace, anytime in the whole universe. Truth is universal. Heavenly beings are depending on their livelihoods & the results of their wholesome kammas. Therefore they understand wholesome dhammas & actions more than human beings. Human beings have to rely on effort more than merits (that not much appreciate it). When heavenly beings are near death they want to take rebirths in human world. Because in human world they have more chances for making merits. Not because they like human world. With merits after death & then return to heavenly existences. In a sutta, Sakka-dewaking came down to the earth offered foods to Ven. Maha-kassapa, for this reason. Let us refraining on intoxicants & protecting oneself & others. Bring peace & happiness to the family & society. This is the highest blessing.

⑩ Being heedful of the qualities of the mind:

Here Apāmāda is heedfulness. Being heedful in wholesome dhammas, mainly referred to worldly good deeds or merits. Apāmāda is also mindfulness & can be covered the whole pitakas. This is not an ordinary heedfulness, being heedful in wholesomeness. Always doing performing goodness. Steadfastness in doing good. This is not an ordinary mindfulness that difficult to arise. Therefore have to be developed. Without sati knowledge can't be arisen. Therefore no discernment or wisdom without sati.

This kind of discernment or wisdom is not an ordinary knowledge. It's thoroughly penetrating of natural phenomena. For goodness to arise & realization of Nibbana element cannot be without Sati. In daily life must cultivate mindfulness & clear knowing (sati & sampajana). Near death also cannot be without it. Heedfulness (appamāda) has different levels; dana, sila, bhavana. In bhavana-mental development also has different levels; from sotapanna to arahat. Only becoming an arahat heedfulness is perfected. (from Dr. Nandamalarkhivamsa's talk)

It's very important for everyone to ask the question of why & what are we doing here (i.e. in human existence)? People will give different answers. Even some don't know the answers. Common worldly people will have different views & opinions depending on their desires. Different faiths also the same. With the Buddha's Teachings, Buddhists can give 2 general answers for this very important question. For worldly people for enjoying sensual pleasures & doing things to enjoy them. Different religions people are also for sensual pleasures & doing things to union w/ God in heaven after death. True Buddhists have different views & they have clear guidelines & clear paths for what to do.

According to the Buddha, human births are rare & the best place for doing good is also human world. Have more chances & opportunities than among others births. The most important thing to do now is studying & following the Buddha's Teachings to end dukkha - This is the highest things to do here. At least as a Buddhist doing good deeds & abstaining & refraining from misdeeds. To complete & fulfill the Buddhist task, we have to develop being mindful of the qualities of the mind. Living a life in heedfulness (appamāda). Appamāda is so important in the Buddha's Teachings that everyday he reminded the monks to be mindful or being in heedfulness. Before he passed away the last words of the Buddha was also being in heedfulness: Vayadhamma sankhāra-appamāda na sampādetha: All conditioned phenomena are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful.

~~Knowledge & sati is heedfulness (appamāda). Appamāda is a diamond. Sein-ta-lone mango is the best mango in all mangoes (The Burmese words sein-ta-lone means a diamond.) The Buddha's last words: Vayadhamma sankhāra-appamāda na sampādetha = All conditioned phenomena are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being more heedful. These 2 sentences representing contemplation & developing. Sein-khor (The Burmese words for challenging) means to invite someone to fight or compete w/ you. (The Burmese forward for diamond is sein) Sitting meditation is challenging kilesa (defilement) & khandha dhukkha. (more physical pains & aches during the practice). Sati defeats kilesa.~~

Therefore The Buddha taught the 4 foundations of mindfulness. Sati is a valuable dhamma. So it is sein-ta-lone (a diamond). Sein-pu (a big diamond situated at the topmost ^{structure} of a pagoda/cetiya) is situated at the topmost structure. Sati is also staying at the top of the practice. Therefore being heedful of the qualities of the mind is very important in worldly progress & spiritual development. In the Dhammapada, on the section of heedfulness the Buddha compared a person & heedfulness/non-negligence & a person & heedlessness/negligence as a person awake & a person in sleep; a race horse & a common weak horse. Heedfulness is the way to Deathless & heedlessness is the way to Death. Those who are heedful do not die & who are heedless as if already dead. A person & diligence, heedful pure in thoughts, words or deeds & done everything & care & consideration, restraining the senses, earning likelihood in accordance & wholesomeness, fame & fortune of this heedful person increase. The foolish & the ignorant give themselves to over heedlessness, whereas the wise treasure heedfulness as a precious jewel.

Someone delights in heedfulness & seeing danger in heedlessness advances as like fire burning up all fetters (samyojana).

Someone delights in heedfulness & seeing danger in heedlessness cannot fall away from the Path.

In practice to transcend dukkha; it is important for the 5 spiritual faculties to develop & mature. These are: 1. The faculty of conviction - sadhindriya
 2. The f... of persistence - viriyindriya 3. The f... mindfulness - satindriya
 4. — — concentration - samadhiindriya 5. — — discernment - pannindriya
 Of the 5 faculties, conviction (sakkha) & discernment have to be in balance. Persistence (viriya) & concentration (samadhi) also — — — .

Only mindfulness (sati) no need to be in balance, stronger & better. Sati is also like salt crystals in every food. Sati is necessary in everything we do. Therefore the Buddha ^{was} always reminding & encouraging to develop it.

On Dhamma level, the very important knowledge is not forget or not negligent the true nature of the khanda. Its true nature is changing (viparivitama), inconstant (anicca), suffering (dukkha), not-self (anatta) & deathsome (casubha). These are aging, sickness & death dhammas & not forgetting them. Everything will fall apart at sometime. With regular contemplation we do not waste times & live a meaningless life. Especially not forget about death or contemplation of death (maranamushti). Without negligence on death also leads to not negligence on wholesome dhammas, merits etc. It protects us from doing evil deeds & matters. And then just doing only what is proper, useful, benefit to oneself & others. Regular mindfulness on death can lead to ending of dukkha - Nibbana.

Death can be compared to big river flows into the sea, but they also have differences. The water flows down slowly it closes to the sea. In the same way everyone with times go in closer to death.

The differences are: we can measure the journey of the river to the sea & time span it arrives there. But we can't measure in death. Now how much time still left for us to continue for this life.

Even everyone has different life span, & not everybody the same way. It depends on different factors & causes. Some of these related to past karmas & some to present factors & causes, such as actions, mind state, climate & foods. It nothing to do w/ God or outside power. The most important factor is internal cause - the mind. Therefore every human being can change the destiny of his or her destiny. It can be better or worse. Therefore the Buddha's Teachings came in to give us the guidelines & show the way. Without the Buddha arose in human world even we don't know very clear about wholesome & unwholesome dhamma, not say about to transcend them. Therefore the Buddha was the Teacher of gods & human beings.

In the Buddhist text there are 4 factors not knowing on death.

These are: the time of death, the illness of death, the destination of rebirth & the place of death. Among the 4 factors the most important one is after death the destination of rebirth or new existence. Combine the 31 realms of existence & we get 5 existences. These are: hells, animals, ghosts, humans & deities. Only 2 groups, human & deity existences are good rebirths. The other 3, hells, animals & ghosts existences are very painful & miserable. To has a good rebirth & existence everyone should being heedful of the qualities of the mind by doing good & developing the mind & practice of bhavana in this life.

In the Theravada Buddhist tradition monks & teachers always encourage us to practise the 4 protective dhammas regularly in our daily life. These are: Buddhanusati (Recollection of the Buddha), Metta Bhavana (meditation on good will / loving kindness / loving friendliness), Asubha

(^{the repulsiveness of the body}) & maranamusati (mindfulness on death). These contemplations are called catu-ratthaka dhamma (the 4 protective dhammas). With regular practice can protect someone from fear, dangers, unwholesome mental states & living a heedful life.

In the Sutta Nipata, There are 3 suttas for metta bhavana, contemplation on the repulsiveness of the body & mindfulness on death respectively.

In the Snake Chapter; metta Sutta - Discourse on Good Will & Vijaya Sutta Discourse on Victory (victory over delusion or overcome attachment in the physical body).

In the Great Chapter, Sutta Sutta - Discourse on the Arrow (Mindfulness on Death). All These are very good for contemplation. Already mentioned, being heedful of the qualities of the mind has many different levels - from the worldly results to spiritual attainments. We have to cultivate & develop both & can't stop only at worldly level. Any worldly level & progress are unstable & can be changed. Only the spiritual ^(level) is safe & leading to the ending of dukkha.

Here I want to present a story in the Dhammapada about mindfulness on death - maranavasati - the great result it brought to a waver girl. Not forgetting on death reminds someone not to follow one's life in a ordinary & useless ways. It sharpens one's knowledge & develops right thoughts or thinkings. Therefore maranavasati is a very useful meditation object for mundane & supramundane achievements. It's also very close to the Noble Truth. With regular contemplation reduces greed, hatred & delusion. Also it helps someone to the sense of wise urgency (samvaga) to the fleeting ^{nature} of the world, suffering & unsatisfactoriness of the world. With the samvaga knowledge; & not wasting the human life span [&] encourage vipassana practice to end dukkha. All the Buddha's Teachings are not for intellectual knowledge ^{but} put into real practice, whether it's worldly or spiritual. The story of waver girl supported this view. This bhavana-mind development develops the wholesome roots of non-greed, non-hatred & non-delusion. It supports these 3 wholesome roots. It also related to heedfulness (appamada). It develops the perception of anicca, dukkha & anatta sanna (inconstant, suffering & not-self) on all living beings. And supports the discernment of anicca, dukkha & anatta universal 3 characteristics on mind & body realities or true nature.

The Story of a waver-girl:

At that time, the Buddha was residing in the country of Alavi. At the end of ^{alms-} giving ceremony he delivered a discourse on the inconstancy of the khandhas. He taught the people to be always mindful & put effort to perceive the true nature of the khandhas. With the practice it was like armed & a weapon to meet a poisonous snake - i.e., Death. One who was ever mindful of death would face death mindfully. And after death would has a good rebirth. In the audience a 6 yrs old girl understood the message & took it seriously, & practised the teaching regularly. After 3 yrs had passed by. One day the Buddha was as usual surveyed the world to help living beings. He saw the young waver woman in his vision & knew that the time was ripe for her spiritual attainment. Three yrs ago she received the meditation on death from the Buddha.

She had done the practice regularly for 3 yrs now. Her perfection for realization of the Dhamma was becoming mature. It was like a lotus bud waiting for the sun light to open up. Her mind was free from mental hindrances.

Therefore the Buddha went back to the country of Alavi for the 2nd time to help her. She heard the news of the Buddha arrived & went to listen his teaching. On the same day her father had also asked her to wind some thread spools which he needed urgently. So she also took them together to her. She listened the Buddha's talk among the crowd. He also knew that the woman would die when she arrived to the weaving shed. So the Buddha invited her came closer to him. And then asking her the following 4 Qs.

1. Where have you come from? I don't know Ven.

2. — are — going? — — —

3. Don't you know? Yes. I do Ven.

4. Do you know? I don't know Ven.

These were not ordinary Qs & As as most people thought. Only the Buddha & the young woman knew them. So the Buddha asked her to explain for them. The direct Qs & As of them were as follow.

1. From what past existence you have come here? I don't know.

2. To — future — — would be going from here? I don't know.

3. Whether you don't know that you would die one day? Yes, I do.

4. — — know when you would die? I don't.

The Buddha was satisfied with her explanations. And then spoke the following verse: ^{Verses 174:} Blind are the people of the world & only a few see them clearly. Just like only a few birds escape from the net. So only a few get to the world of deities & realize Nibbana.

At the end of the talk the young waver entered the Stream (Sotapanne). Then she continued her way to her father weaving shed. When she got there her father was asleep & suddenly woke up by her arrival. And then accidentally pulled the shuttle & the point of it struck his daughter's cheek. She died on the spot & he was broken-hearted. With great sorrow & pain he went to see the Buddha. The Buddha & teaching lightened his sorrow & pain. He had strong Samvaya (sense of wise urgency) & entered the monastic order & practised diligently & became an arahat.

Once, King Pasenadi of Kosala asked the Buddha a question. Was there any one dhamma in the world could complete & fulfill one's goal in the present & future. The Buddha short answer was - Appamada Dhamma - Being heedful of the qualities of the mind. This is the highest protection/blessing'.

(21) + (22) Respect, humility

(23) + (24) Contentment, gratitude

(25) Hearing the Dhamma on timely occasions,
This is the highest protection/blessing.

(21) Respect:

Show respect to people who are respectable & it is a noble state of mind. It is a praiseworthy action in this life. And in next life will have the result of good & noble life. Therefore it has good results in this life & after. The objects of respect are; the Three Noble Treasures - Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha (Tiratana), one's parents, one's teachers, people who are older than us (especially elderly aged people), people have noble qualities & someone has gratitude on you. The action of showing respect to people who are respectable supports the development of brahmavihara Dhamma - love, compassion, appreciative joy & equanimity for both sides. So both sides have benefits. The action of showing respect has 4 benefits; ^{longevity, beauty} long life, good looks, happiness, & strength (mind & body strength). These results were mentioned by the Buddha in a discourse. This story was in the Dhammapada, The Thousand (Sahassavagga).

The Story of Ayanadhanakumara:

A couple had a son & took him to see the Buddha. They paid obeisance to the Buddha, & he said to the parents only by "may you live long." Then the Buddha predicted the impending death of their son. To prevent his early death, he advised them to build a pavilion at the entrance of their home. Put the child on a couch in the pavilion. Invited the monks to recite the Parittas - Protective Charms for 7 days there. On the 7th the Buddha himself came & followed by deities from all over the universe. At that time an ogre named Avanodhaka came there & waiting the chance for ^{taking} took the child away. As many deities arrived the ogre had to retreat backwards taking way a very far away from the child. For the whole night the recitation of parittas were going on, & then protected the child's life. The next day the parents took their son to see the Buddha. After the child paid respect to the Buddha, he said to him, "May you live long." The Buddha also said "he would live up to 120 yrs" & named him Ayanadhana.

The child grew up & one day & his companions went to see the Buddha & Sangha. The monks recognized him & asked the Buddha; "For beings is there any means of gaining longevity?" The Buddha's answer was by respecting & honouring the elders, & wise & virtuous people would gain longevity, beauty, happiness & strength.

Then the Buddha spoke the following verse:

Verse 109: Someone always respects & honours those who are older & virtuous, the 4 benefits of longevity, beauty, happiness & strength will increase.

At the end of the talk, Āyuradchana & his companions entered the Stream.

The actions of respect & honour are always practised by wise & noble people. We must know & understand what is valuable as valuable. And must respect to those who are respectable. Must have the Right attitudes. If not will lost the protection & blessing. Ven. Sariputta was an ideal in this respect. The most lovely human being on earth.

(See - The Biography of Ven. Sariputta by Nyanaponika Thera)

Every night Ven. Sariputta paid respect to the direction of his first true teacher Ven. Asajit (Ven. Asajit was the youngest of the pancavaggi who listened to the Discourse of the Turning the Wheel of Dhamma. Sanjaya was actually his first teacher but belonged to a outside sect) & laid down his head towards Ven. Asajit's direction. Some monks misunderstood his behaviour. First time, when he met Ven. Asajit on his almsground admired his noble demeanour & knew that something special about him. Ven. Sariputta requested him for his Teaching. Ven. Asajit gave him a short verse on the teaching of cause & effect. After this short instruction & Sariputta entered the Stream. A Dhamma teaching is, long or short is not important. With short & effective is better. Mostly long teachings & not much effectiveness. In this respect we should contemplate about worldly matters & knowledges which wasting our times & life span. Everything has causes. By stopping the causes & the result will stop.

Craving-tanha is the cause of suffering-dukkha. By destroying craving & dukkha will cease. By entering the Stream Sariputta had strong gratitude & respect on his first true Teacher Ven. Asajit.

For wise & noble people, we have to focus on their noble qualities by respecting & honouring them. If we know & understand more & more Dhamma, our respect to the Three Noble Treasures - Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha are greater. Among monks, paying respect are according to seniority in rains (vassas). Among common people, paying respect are according to older age or to old people (e.g., younger siblings to older siblings.) Sometimes we pay respect to people for their knowledge & moral integrity. There was a jataka story about 3 animals; a small bird, an elephant & a monkey, on the matter of respect. Three of them relied on a great banyan tree. One day they met together & discussed the matter of paying respect to others in accordance to their ages. The elephant mentioned that when he was young he passed through this small banyan tree underneath his stomach. The monkey said that when he was young he used to eat the buds of the banyan tree.

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The small bird told them that when he was young there was no banyan tree at the same spot. Only after he ate the fruits of banyan from another place & excreted it at the same spot & this banyan tree grew out from the seeds of the excreta. Therefore the small bird was the eldest of them. So the day onwards the elephant & the monkey had to pay respect to the bird. (These 3 animals were the past lives of Ven. Sariputta, Maha-moggallana & the bodhisatta).

The most important matter on the subject of respect is our attitudes to one's parents & teachers. More important of the 2 is showing respect & honouring to one's parent. If someone does harm to one's parents, the result of misdeed is heavier than to a teacher. For e.g., someone killed his parents & his teacher. For killing one's parents after death sure for falling into hell existence ⁱⁿ next life. Don't doubt about it. Because it was mentioned by the Buddha himself. From today medias we know some incidents very unpleasant to see, as how some treat their parents. There were more news about killing parents, beating & cursing them & treating them very badly. When I was young never heard or seen these evil & ingratitude actions & behaviours in families. These are the signs of decadence & bad omens for human societies. If these kinds of evil deeds & behaviours going on like this & become a bad culture & leading to the destruction of human beings. Respect, gratitude & honouring to one's parents & teachers are the foundation of goodness to arise. The Buddha himself had high regards about it & praised its qualities. May be this was one of the foundation & important cause for Chinese culture & civilization survived up to this day over 3,000 yrs. Other great culture & civilization were disappeared. With the foundation of goodness of respect, gratitude, honouring & duties to one's parents & teachers develop love, kindness, appreciative joy, considerations for others truly bring happiness, peace ^{and} progress for human beings & societies. This was one of the reason Chinese sages & noble beings paid attention & emphasis ^{on it} as a very important training & education. Another have to be showed respect & gratitude is our teachers. This point is also very weak in nowadays societies. The young & the youth treat their teachers as equal & friends. Sometimes even worse than to a friend & become very rude. They tease their teacher in class room physically or verbally. A student no respect & gratitude to his teacher will never progress in study & goodness. Nowadays many teachers complain about students' difficulty to teach & trash, in the east or in the west. The main reason is we use some modern views, such as - equality, human right, democracy, etc.

is wrong & unwholesome ways. Therefore create problems & difficulties in family life & school. Difficult to teach & train the children & students in the right & wholesome directions. It's like catching a poisonous snake - cobra or viper in the wrong way. Instead of grasping its head we grasp the tail. If we use these sweet views improperly & improper ways increase self centeredness & greed. And it create the negative results. We can see all these problems in politics, economics, societies, etc. It also like a knife - can become a tool for work or to kill people. Therefore the matter of respect or the results of respect is not a small wholesome Dhamma. This quality has to be developed when still young start from family life. Even we don't have respect & concern for our parents & teachers, there will be no hope to others. So the Buddha emphasized it as a protection / blessing.

(22) Humility:

The opposite nature of humility is conceit or pride (māna). Everyone has conceit (māna). It is one of the latent dispositions (ānusaya) & one of the defilements (kilesā). Only in the highest stage of arahatship māna is eradicated. It used to happen people who have fortune, beauty, highly educated, etc. without any of them also can has pride. Some take pride in their youthful qualities, healthy & no disease free from illness, life faculties (jīvitamāna), etc.

The qualities of respect & humility are connected. Someone has conceit (no humility) can't show respect. And without respect means has conceit. Therefore they are supporting to each other. Conceit has the nature of rigidity. A rigid person cannot or will not change their attitudes, opinions or behaviour. So they are difficult to teach or admonish. It is also a cause for downfall & dislike by others. A person has the quality of humility is losing ^{loved} friendly by others. It also increase or develop the wholesome Dhamma to a holy life (brahmavariya Dhamma). The quality of humility is a nature of noble & wise people. In text books, it taught us to behave like a rag for wiping feet or a poisonous snake which fangs are broken or a bull & a broken horns. Ven. Sariputta was a very good example as a humble person. In the Dhammapada there was a story described his great quality of humility. It was the end of a rain retreat (vassa), Ven. Sariputta was about to set out a journey. He was greeting saying good bye to some monks & passed a young bhikkhu ^{passing} without saying anything to him. But his outer robe touched this monk body when he was passing through him. This young monk was hard conceit & wanted Ven. Sariputta to pay attention to him. Therefore bore some grudge against him & approached the Buddha. He complained ^{to} him that Ven. Sariputta had abused him.

The Buddha therefore sent for Sariputta & questioned him about the complain. He answered that how could a monk who steadfastly had ~~sati~~ kept his mind on the body, not apologized to someone a fellow monk after having done something wrong. He was like the earth i no feeling of like or dislike when flowers & rubbish piled on it. He was also like the rag cloth, the beggar, a bull & broken horns, etc. (There were 9 examples).

The-pye-kan Sayedaw gave a natural example. Rice plants when they are young & immature, the stalks are at upright positions. After they are grown up & laden i rice grain, the stalks are bending down &. These are the differences between a fool & a wise or someone has conceit & someone has humility. There was another story about Ven. Sariputta, showed his humility to a 7 yrs old young novice. Once time he was wearing his robe was not very neat & a 7 yrs old young novice saw it. And he informed Sariputta. And then, Sariputta corrected his robe by readjusting it instantly. He asked the novice, was it good enough. Ven. Sariputta & Ven. Rahula (the only son of the Buddha) were high class persons & great wisdom & very humble nature. If a person has conceit & difficulty to has good qualities. A person becomes wiser & more humbler. By knowing more about the faults of the khamkhha (body) one's conceit will be decreased. And then will look for refuge. We can't find it outside. most people are looking for outside that will never find it. Religions were came from the external search & speculations. At last most people die without true refuge. Still alive they encounter a lot of difficulty & problems which they cannot solve or overcome by outside powers. The perfect or true refuge is wisdom (paññā) which is the internal quality of the mind. Everyone has it. Only we need to develop it. Therefore the Buddha, the Dhamma & the Sangha (ariya sangha) are the perfect or true refuge. They represent only one thing - which is perfect wisdom. In general everyone true refuge is the wholesome shammās such as dana, sila, samadhi & paññā. Not the outside powers & sensual pleasures which most people rely on it. These things can deluded our mind & create a lot of problems & sufferings in the world & societies. These unfortunate things are happening around us which we can see in today world. Violence, terrorism, wars in the name of religion & all kinds of pollutions (mind, body & nature) in the name of economics for sensual pleasures & over indulgence. All these miserable things are created by the fools & not the wise. The quality of humility or without conceit is one of the characteristics of great wisdom. Therefore everyone should develop this noble quality. So the Buddha said; humility was the highest protection/blessing.

(23) Contentment:

This quality of contentment is a very important one for today world. Both for lay man & ordained monk. It has profound meaning & message within it. We can only discover them by using the Buddha's Teachings & contemplation. It can also be a great ^{and wide} subject to think about in today human societies. In the English dictionary; contentment is a feeling of quiet happiness & satisfaction. So it has connection to non-greed (alobha). The opposite of discontentment is connection to greed (lobha). Therefore contentment leads to true happiness & peace. Discontentment leads to unhappiness & suffering. The quality of contentment is easily to understand & accept by noble beings, sages & wise. But not to common people or mostly not by power ^{& money} mongers & greedy people (i.e. some politicians & some business men). Even we can say today many world problems have connection to discontentment or lacking of contentment. We are craving for more than we need. Therefore wasting the natural resources, in extravagance, & over indulgence in sensual pleasures. United States of America is a very good examples. They are in great debts to other countries. Not because they are very poor like some African countries, Latin Americans & Asians. But still many people want to imitate them.

most worldly people overlook the importance of contentment & discontentment which effect the families, societies & international levels.

Contentment leads to happiness, peace & harmony. Discontentment leads to unhappiness, disharmony & suffering. For example, in a documentary film, a Chinese bank made a lawsuit to a young man who could not repay his credit card debts & ended up in jail. This was happened for the 2nd time. The first time his father paid for his debts & this time not taking the responsibility. He blamed the bank for knowing his son situation & still loaned him money. In this case we can see the connection between discontentment & greed. Worse than this case was a University student in China used his credit card to borrow money from many different banks. Now this is a very big problem in Banking System of China which came from B.B.C News. These were very similar to U.S Government & its citizens consumed things which more than they need & created a lot of debts. There was also a very sad story about 15 yrs or 16 yrs old youth wanted to possess a smart phone killed his grandma who had deposited some money. Then took her deposited account book, & took the money out to buy the phone. Some young women, including university students are selling their bodies to some rich people for money to satisfy their discontentment. There are a lot to talk about

family & society problems & suffering which connection is discontentment.

It connection to international levels is more in grand scale, its harmfulness brings to human race. Some countries political leaders were still clinging to their powers when the time for them to let go.

If they let it go & go back to normal life still ^{went} could enjoy their high living standards. But most of them didn't & just followed like slaves to the master Discontentment. And then what happened?

Some countries had civil wars & the whole country in chaotic situations, harming, torturing, killing, famine, diseases, war refugees crises around the world, etc. If these people had contentment all the small problems in their countries would be solved. Big problems always start from the small problems. A forest fire starts from a spark, e.g. a burning cigarette butt. Some super powers came in & interfered that even became more harms to the people. For clinging to worldly sensual pleasures & created evil deeds are not worthy of it. The karma debts have to be repaid are very serious.

In economic levels discontent creates mind & body pollutions, & natural pollutions. What are the mind & body pollutions? Human beings become more selfish, greedy, extravagant, indulgence in sensual pleasures, etc. the mind become defiled. To fulfill our greed & make more money we use to the help of science & technology we polluted our foods & all sorts of chemicals. What are the natural pollutions? These are the pollutions of earth, water & air - and all sorts of waste materials, such as industrial waste, consumers' rubbish, etc. With more worldly knowledges, the contemplation on the outcomes of discontentment will never end. But whatever it is; discontentment never bring true happiness & peace to anyone & society. For a human being to survive he only need the basic 4 requisites: clothes, foods, dwelling & medicine. So all the others things are extras. Even the Buddha taught the monks to have contentment in these 4 requisites. To have simple life style, unburdened to the mind & body, just as a bird, whenever it goes, flies its wings as its only burden; so too is contentment to a set of robes (3 set of robes), an alms bowl & foods to provide for hunger (one meal a day). Whenever he goes, takes only his barest necessities along (the other barest necessities are - a water strainer, a razor for shaving, & a string girdle to fasten the lower robe at the waist as a belt). A great disciple of the Buddha, Ven. Mahakasapa was an exemplar for contentment, he had mastered left-over scrap for food, smelly urine for medicine, the foot of a tree for dwelling, cast-off rags for robes.

Why the Buddha always praised contentment & little & encouraged monks to have this quality? Because it leads to happiness & peace; easy to develop the practice & realization. People have contentment more easier to have patience & endurance in difficult times & situations. Intelligent & wise people will appreciate the quality of contentment. Spiritual people, sages & noble beings know it very well by direct experience on contentment. It develops joy, happiness & peace. The forest monks live a simple life style in a forest (pristine forests) also experience it very well. (I have mentioned about this in the Introduction of Dhow Dum forest in The Border area between Thailand & Burma). Lay people also if they live a simple life & contentment sure to have joy, happiness & peace compare to discontent people, who have more problems & suffering in life. Why is that? Strong desire or greed (lobha) is the opposite of contentment! The Buddha mentioned in the 4 Noble Truths, the ^{main} cause of suffering was strong desire (tanha). One of the meanings of dukkha is unsatisfactoriness which equals to discontentment. The Buddha also said that someone had contentment would be happy. It is a noble quality which all noble beings have it. You can't see it in the eyes. Contentment is a kind of fulfillment, an inner one. It nothing to do in outside things, such as wealth, money or sensual objects. The happiness comes from wealth & sensual pleasures are not true happiness. There are some very wealthy people without happiness. If can't use the wealth properly even harmful to oneself. Even the Buddha said that for a fort without any wealth was better than had wealth. It was like an evil person lived shorter life was better than longer life.

It's also very important not to misinterpret contentment wrongly. It is nothing to do in laziness & non-action. Only the fort, greedy & selfish people interpret in this way. Contentment relates to wholesome Dhamma. Discontentment relates to unwholesome Dhamma. For searching knowledge & wisdom ^{should not} has contentment. Have contentment in knowledge & wisdom is not contentment, only laziness & dullness, or a lazy guy & a dillard. So we should not misinterpret or misunderstand the Buddha Teaching wrongly. Interpret & contemplate according to its context. There was a very good jataka story for contemplation on discontentment which leads to negative nature & result. If we observe & study today world situations will see all these points.

The Hanza Jataka: Once time the bodhisatta was born as a human being & has a family & 2 daughters. After he passed away & born as a hanza bird - a type of water bird which had beautiful colour feathers & could fly. It remembered its past life & had compassion on the family of his past. He had golden feathers & every one or

2 months went to them there & gave them a golden feather. So their lives was improved. After sometimes what happened was his former wife became discontent & very greedy to get more instantly. The last time when the bird came & arrested him & plucked all the feathers out. It was cruel & without any consent that all the golden _____ changed into ordinary ones. Therefore the evil wife kept the naked bird in a trap & waiting it for growing back. As soon as the feathers were growing back the golden hanza bird flew away & never came back again. Discontentment or greedy leads to the end of everything good, & becomes zero. Someone becomes very greedy can do all sorts of evil deeds. Bodily action, speech & mind become unwholesome. Can do heavy kammas such as patricide, matricide, tried to kill the Buddha, split the monastic Sangha, etc. We can see these things happened even in the Buddha's time. For egs., the Buddha's cousin Devadatta tried to kill him for power. King Ajatasattu killed his own father King Bimbisara, also for power. Nowadays these things are even worse, in family matters, societies, politics, economics, etc. For power & money can do all sorts of harmful things. Worshipping money is the most popular religion in the world. Measure human development & how much money we make, how much sensual pleasures we can enjoy, etc. Never emphasis or talk about moral issue, virtue & ethic. Therefore human thinking & actions are mostly connection & greed, hatred & delusion. The medias are also educate people in this direction. There is a country measures their progress & development & happiness - This is Bhutan. A country in the Himalayas in Southern Asia & beautiful nature of mountains & forest. Their life style is very simple & close to nature & follow the teachings of the Buddha. Only seeing the beautiful nature is make your mind becomes joyful & peaceful. Bhutanese are right, the real progress & development is happiness & peace - This comes from simple life style, close to nature & contentment & life. Spiritual people, ancient sages & noble beings - mostly forest monks knew the happiness & peace of contentment & direct experiences. And discontentment-greed create human problems, suffering & natural disasters which all of it we can see in today world.

Therefore the Buddha & great compassion taught us ^{that} contentment was the highest blessing / protection.

24 Gratitude:

Katāññutā - gratitude is a very important noble quality which most people neglected or overlook it. Even the Buddha emphasized its noble quality in some suttas. The quality of gratitude connects to the quality of integrity. In the English dictionary integrity has 2 meanings: The quality of being honest & firm in your moral principles; quality of being one united thing - harmony & peace. It also connects to the qualities of Respect, Humility & Contentment, etc. These qualities are in this 7th group of Mamegala Sutta & gratitude. Here & other places the Buddha arranged his Dhamma teaching in a very systematic & profound way. It's no doubt that the Buddha penetrated the whole universe - mind & physical world very profoundly. Even the great genius of science - Albert Einstein penetrated the physical world in a profound way. But still he had family problems (see his biography). Because he was a worshipping & only seen one side of the coin. The Buddha & noble beings had seen both sides. There will be many future dangers, small & great waiting for human beings, if we neglect the importance of the mind & its nature. Because wholesome Shammes are connecting & relating to each other. Unwholesome Shammes are also in this way. We can arrange all the Buddha's Teachings into 3 groups (made by the Buddha himself) - Sila-Precepts (morality, virtue, ethics), Samadhi - Concentration (calmness, tranquility, peacefulness) & Panna (discernment, knowledge, wisdom). It is called 3 trainings or education. But in real practice - the Noble Eight Fold Path arranged in Panna, Sila & Samadhi - Right view, Right thought; Right action, Right speech, Right livelihood; Right mindfulness, Right effort & Right concentration.

These arrangement were made by the Buddha himself, very systematically, profound, in accordance to the real progress & development. First we need intellectual knowledge or panna to follow the teachings & practice, as like any worldly knowledge & learning. Therefore it more like education & religion. Buddhists not accept God idea & its creation; only interest in human beings, nature & natural laws. It more like science. The great difference is scientists only know the physical world, even don't know about themselves. Their mind is more closer to them than the external world.

Only we have the intellectual knowledge on the Teachings can have right view. And follow & right thoughts & thinkings. Human thinks accordingly & their belief systems, ideas & doctrines. After Thinkings follow to actions & speech. And then we do all these action (wholesome or unwholesome) in our daily life to people & in livelihoods. We have to do or create all these actions & mindfulness, effort & focus on it.

Therefore start & right view & whatever follows, become right or wholesome. And start & wrong view & wrong thinking whatever follow will be wrong or unwholesome. The results are positive & negative, happiness & suffering, harmony & disharmony, peace & problems, etc.

We have to acknowledge the gratitude & then repay it kindness & action & speech. In a sutta of Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha mentioned about 2 persons hard to find. He said, "Monks, these 2 people are hard to find in the world. The one who is first to do a kindness. And the one who is grateful for a kindness done & feels obligated to repay it." The first person is someone without any reason good on others & kind to others. The second person is someone who acknowledging & grateful for a kindness done to him. And then feels the obligation to repay it. At least kindly responded & thank you. Even we cannot be like the first person & must have the quality of the 2nd one.

If we are naturally not good on others, at least good on others who have benefited us. Even we should see gratitude as a debt.

~~Some are not only responding & kindness not respond a gratitude & kindness & good action, instead insult & injure their benefactors. These are evil, & nasty people & it will harm themselves greatly.~~ Mahakappa Jataka

Story was a good lesson for these people. It also teach us what are not worthy noble & ignoble beings. Mahakappa was the name of the monkey, & it was the bodhisatta's first life. A brahman was lost in a deep forest & later fell into a deep valley, injured & could not climb up to the top. Mahakappa - the monkey saw him & had compassion to save his life. So he carried the man on his back & brought him to the top.

The monkey was so tired that placed his head on the lap of the brahman took short rest. During the rest, the man wanted to bring monkey meat & had a rest. During the rest, the man wanted to bring monkey meat to his wife at home. So he took a large stone & smacked the monkey head & one blow. The monkey's head was severely injured & blood sprang out & flowed on the whole face & body. The monkey jumped up instantly & said these words surprisingly; "Oh! my God, in this world still has this kind of man exists." And then climbed up instantly to a tree near by & looked at the brahman amazingly. The man then remembered he was still in the deep forest & knew it dangers there & wild beasts, & began to cry pitifully. With sympathy he told the brahman; "Now, I can't close to you anymore. But I still keep my promise to let you out from the forest. Follow my blood drops." The bodhisatta bore his severed pain patiently & jumped from one tree to another & showed the way out. After they came out to the edge of the forest, the monkey watched him from behind until to a short distance, & left.

As soon as the brahman ^{was} out of the bodhisattva's sight, boils & sores appeared from his whole body. It was very painful & unbearable. He didn't dare to go back home & ended up at the city gate & became a street beggar. He lived a very painful & miserable life for a few yrs. One day the king of the country came out to observe the city, & so saw him. He looked like a strange beast (may be similar to the elephant man) & the king asked him what happened to him. After he told his story to him & died. After died & reborn in a hell. This was a miserable outcome of ingratitude & severely injured one's benefactor, who was a noble being. This story was interesting & touching. Ledi Sayadawgyi in his "Uttamapuriśa Dipani", a short treatise on perfection, analyzed the 10 perfections in this remarkable story.

Another very important gratitude we have to repay as a debt is to our parents. In a sutta on Gratitude in the Anguttara Nikāya, the Buddha taught as follow. These are the levels of a person of no integrity & a person ē integrity. A person of no integrity is ungrateful, doesn't acknowledge the help given to him. This ingratitude, this lack of acknowledgement is second nature among rude people. A person of integrity is grateful & acknowledges the help given to him. This gratitude, this acknowledgement is second nature among fine people. There are 2 people who are no easy to repay, your father & mother. Even if you were to carry your mother on one shoulder & your father on the other shoulder for 100 yrs. And were to look after them by anointing, massaging, bathing & rubbing their limbs, & they were to defecate & urinate on your shoulders, you would not in that way repay your parents. Even we were to establish them in absolute sovereignty over this great earth, abounding in the seven treasures still would not in that way repay them (i.e., the status of a universal monarch). Why is that? Father & mother do much for their children. They care for them, nourish them & introduce them to this world. But anyone who rouses his unbelieving parents establishes them in conviction (saddha); rouses his unvirtuous parents establishes them in virtue; rouses his stingy parents establishes in generosity & rouses his foolish parents establishes them in discernment (paññā). To this extent one repay one's parents.

Above, what the Buddha emphasized the important quality of gratitude is not a small matter. Because he was the greatest of all beings in wisdom & mind power, penetrated everything profoundly & clearly. Now, let's contemplate ancient sages & today people how they see the matter of gratitude. First, study, observe & contemplate ancient culture & sages ē gratitude. Here I can do it ē the eastern culture & sages which more or less I have the knowledge. In all the Buddhist countries ē the Buddhist culture & teachings will follow what the Buddha taught. Nowadays the view & practice ē gratitude will be

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changed a lot. influence by western culture & thinkings. This also strongly influence modern Chinese, old or young. Chinese people were from ancient time has teachings & education on moral & ethical standards, disciplines, duties & obligations from family level, society level & government level. It seemed to be these wholesome views & education systems were already existing even before Confucius's time. At family level it includes the relationship between parent & children concern & disciplines, rules, duties, obligations, etc. One of the most important matters is children should have gratitude, respect, proper duties & obligations to the parents. This shao Dao (it seems translate into English as filial piety). is the foundation in family education. These moral or ethical codes are very important for human development. Without mental or mind development, material development is dangerous & harmful as seen in today world.

Why is that? If someone doesn't has any gratitude, respect, duty & obligation to his/her parents will never good to other people.

These moral education & codes of conducts are not only concern in family life, it also related to society & country levels. Family life is like the source of a tree, its root. A healthy & strong root will grow a strong trunk, branches, leaves, flowers & fruits.

Therefore in the ancient time wise emperors, teachers & sages trained & educated crowned princes, government officials & students in these moral & ethical educations & codes of conduct. Some Chinese dynasties were last longer than others because of moral or ethical standards. These were not surprising if someone understands the laws of nature. From wholesome dharma people will get wholesome results.

Nowadays some Chinese politicians & Chinese people influence by outside or foreign views, culture & educations & they look down on their culture, moral & ethical values & standards as superstitions & nonsense. These misunderstandings & interpretations come from ignorance & delusion. They are totally deluded & quite ignorant that these moral & ethical standards, values & codes are in accordance to the natural laws & ways. In Chinese can be said as tien Dao & tien fa or roughly in Chinese the heavenly way & codes of conducts. These are universal in accordance to the law of cause & effect, law of dependent co-arising & law of non conditional relation. Whatever your faiths, views, nationality & culture backgrounds it may be always true. These are not inventions by ancient sages & noble beings like the Buddha. They were only discovered the natural laws which govern nature & beings & not by gods or God.

So some people crazy for power & money is so strong that they don't have any moral standards, values & behaviours. Take unwholesome things & matters as wholesome, & wholesome as rubbish & non-sense. They misconceive poison & medicine; medicine as poison. The sun will never arise from the west, only from the east. Especially influential people (leaders, politicians, economists, business men, etc) have to be very careful & their outlooks & conducts. If they are thinking foolishly & conduct stupidly, the harm they cause themselves & others is very serious. We can see all the harms caused by foolishness & stupidity in the world history. Dynasties & great cultures were wiped out on the earth. To become a decent human being need moral educations & conducts. We are born into human realm must think & behave like a man, & not like animal, ghost & hell being. If we have to change, have to change our mind & conduct. Not the natural law & will never be. If ^{we} were born ^{will} die for sure, & not by God's wishes, but in accordance to the natural laws:

A very well known English historian Arnold Tonypbee who had studied many world languages praised Chinese culture very highly & it philosophical & wisdom language. People who study Chinese letters ^{will} understand what he had said. Some people are asking question like: Is man has any future? Some scholars refer to Chinese civilization & culture as a good example. From the Buddha's teachings this point is true. The up & down of human civilization greatly depend on human moral principles. These are foundations not only as human but also for survival & progress. All these points were mentioned in 2 of the long discourses in the Digha Nikaya; Cakkavatti Sutta & Agaganna Sutta. It seems to be the Chinese knew these things even before the Buddha. This might be one of the main reason when Buddhism came to China & Chinese people were easily accepted as part of their lives & developed it. Now, these 3 teachings: Taoism, Confucianism & Buddhism are inseparable, & not like the other faiths & religions.

To talk about gratitude, Ven. Sariputta was also a good example of integrity. He was grateful & acknowledged the help given to him. It was a second nature to him, & among fine people. The Buddha also supported it. Therefore I have said many times before Ven. Sariputta was the ^{most} loveliest man on the earth. He had many fine qualities we need to learn from him. Sariputta entered the stream (became a sotapanna) was not in the direct teaching of the Buddha. He heard a short verse from Ven. Assajit (Assaji) which run thus:

"ye shamā hetuppa bhava, tesam hetum tathāgata āha, tesānca yo
nirodho, evam vādi māhā samano." The Tathāgata (i.e., Buddha) has
declared the cause & also the cessation of all phenomena which arise
from the cause. This is the teaching held by the great monk.

Therefore Ven. Sariputta always paid respect in the direction where Ven.
Assaji was & went to sleep with his head lying in the same direction.
This was out of gratitude & respect for his teacher. The Buddha also
encouraged the monks to follow his example.

Another story about him was related to Ven. Rādha. Rādha was
an old brahman who stayed in the monastery & helping the small
matters. So the Sangha provided him with foods, clothing & dwelling. He wanted
to become a monk & asked permission from them. Because of his old age
no one wanted to help him. But the Buddha & his supernormal power
knew that he was due for arahatship. So he called all the monks &
asked them, "Was there anyone received Rādha's offering before?" Ven. Sariputta
told the Buddha that Rādha had offered him a spoonful of rice before.

Therefore he asked Ven. Sariputta received him as his disciple & trained him.
Ven. Sariputta ordained him & trained him. Old monk Rādha was easy
to admonish & followed his instruction strictly that within a few days
became an arahat. Here Ven. Sariputta even remembered very clear
Rādha as a laymen offered him a spoonful of rice very long time
ago. This noble quality is comparing to the character of Devadatta was
quite far apart. In the above story Māhakappina the brahman who
smacked the monkey's head was Devadatta's past life. Ven. Rādha was
not an ordinary monk. He was easy to admonish & train, also had
desire to know & learn Dhamma. Because of him there were some
Dhamma recorded in the Samyutta Nikāya as Rādha Samyutta.

He put a lot of questions to the Buddha on Dhamma (over 40 of them)
which the Buddha's answers & inspired others. Therefore he was
foremost in this. He also had a darker side about him before ordained.
He was a family man before & had some children of his own. But
after getting old nobody wanted to look after & care him. Therefore ended up
living at the monastery. Nowadays most societies are similar
situation, more & more people neglect their parents. Some end up on
the street life & others in nursing homes. This kinds of ingratitude
& disrespect create without love, compassion & disconcern for others.
Even we can't have gratitude, respect, love, compassion & concern
for our parents & no need for thinking to others. For the Survival for
the fittest is animal philosophy & not for human. Even by reading
or hearing about noble beings such as ancient sages, great men,

bodhisatta, chief & great disciple of the Buddha & lay people, inspiring & gladness arise. If we put them into practice the results will be greater.

Another important matter to contemplate on gratitude & respect is the natural world surrounds us or the mother Earth. One of the most important thing always need to remind us is we are part of nature. We can never be separated from it. If we are selfishly exploiting or misusing it & just for suicide. Therefore all our thoughts & behaviours related to our great mother Earth, just as to our own mothers. The Buddha & ancient sages already knew this a long time ago. Today science also confirm it & study, observation, experiment & research. (The same as laws of kamma & rebirth. These discoveries by science solve the problem of God). Our earth is quite a beautiful planet in our solar system. All these we can see in many colour photos around the world, if any place ^{was} protected. Even it is quite/beautiful from the outer space.

Any place without destroy or polluted by human-forest, mountain, stream, river, waterfall, flowers, trees have amazing beauty. These things can be felt by people who loves & closes to nature. The four great elements water, earth, fire & air are nourishing our physical bodies day in day out, & all the year round. Our health & survival depend on them. Does anyone say thank you & I love you to our benefactors? For e.g water is the source of life. It has many interesting qualities in it. We are never thinking & concerning about them. Without all these natural resources our human civilization can't survive & develop or progress. Nowadays if we look at nature we do a lot of harm to them out of greed & obsession. All the pollutions we created ^{more} are poisoning the earth. Therefore there are many natural disasters appear by destroying the harmony of nature. Even human beings are in disharmony there will be violence & suffering arise in societies. In nature everything is interconnecting & relative, whether it's animate or inanimate things. Therefore in gratitude & respect we should protect the earth & treat it properly & wisely. With gratitude & respect come love, compassion, concern, harmony, happiness & peace. So let us develop the noble quality of gratitude for the highest protection/blessing to oneself & others.

(2017 was the hottest yr in records. And also many disasters appeared such as heavy rains, hurricanes, forest fire, very high temperature (50°C), earth quakes, etc. And then in United State of America there were many shooting & guns & killed a lot of innocent people, e.g Arizona State. Most of these things were happening in the continent of America. Now, the most important problem to solve is temperature rising. Human mind & behaviours (i.e unwholesome mental states & actions) are the ^{main} causes for all these unfortunate results.)

(25) Hearing The Dhamma on timely occasions:

Some Buddhists may ^{not} take this matter seriously & very important. There are many reasons for listening Dhamma as very important. Nowadays we can include also study & reading the Buddha's Teachings from Pali texts, translations or written by scholars (most importantly by Buddhist scholars, such as monks). One of the factors for realization is listening Dhamma talks. The Buddha also said to the monks, after he passed away the Buddha Dhamma was their teacher. Only by knowing the teachings we can have right views, what are wholesome & not wholesome, what is right or wrong, what is proper or not proper & walk on the right path. In the Buddha's time even some monks & lay people were ^{having realizations while} listening the Dhamma by the Buddha or one of his disciples ^{realized it.} Among the Theravadin Buddhist countries Burmese Buddhists are very fortunate in this matter. Because Burmese monks had the strong tradition of study & practice of the Pali texts. It produces many fine scholar monks & meditation teachers. From the middle of the 20th century up to this day there were some monks who could recite the Whole Tipitaka by hearts. Burmese monks usually give their talks base on the Suttas. So by listening these talks ^{were} like it came from the Buddha directly. Even today there are more lay people studying the Suttas & Abhidhamma directly & teachers.

What time should people listen to Dhamma? It has said differently in the texts. In the Mettagovinda Sutta, it was mentioned every 5 days, & in one Sutta it also said that if someone has time & teacher for giving talk should listen to it. The best time may be someone has stress, unhappy, ⁱⁿsorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair. A very good e.g. was the story of Theti (nun) Patācāra.

Before she ordained; had lost her whole family, husband, 2 sons, parents & 3 brothers. With over sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair, she became nearly mad. And then encountered the Buddha & listened to his powerful Dhamma, overcame her sorrow & entered the stream.

Another interesting story was about the heavenly being (devata) Subrahmā. One time he was enjoying the heavenly pleasures & his 1,000 celestial nymphs ^{nymphs} out door under a flower tree. Even human beings are enjoying lowly & ignoble pleasures to get money & destroy the earth, without unaware the outcome of it. So heavenly beings are more under the power of delusion. 500 hundred nymphs on the tree plucked the flowers & threw it down for the others 500 underneath. They picked it up & made wreaths of flower for Subrahmā. Suddenly the 500 nymphs on the tree died suddenly & disappeared on the spot. They took rebirths in hell. After sometimes no flowers came down & singing,

& they looked up. Not seeing anyone of them Subrahma & his divine eyes looked for them & saw them in hell. The working of law of kamma is inconceivable. Everyone (all living beings) has good & bad kammas carrying them (karmic energy) in the round of existence. All these were waiting for chances to give the results. Now, the time was ripe for these beings. So he checked his future & his supernormal power. And also found out that with after 7 days they would die & fall into hell. Hence, in utter fear, he came to the Buddha seeking consolation. The Buddha gave them a talk & at the end all of them attained the stream entry. The door to hell waiting for them was closed forever. So Buddhists should listen Dhamma talks (including reading & studying) at anytime if they have chances & time. This will increase our knowledge, & become intelligent & wise people. Spiritual people knew this point very well. For e.g. the Chinese sages invented a system of training their students which was called reading texts for 100 times or 1,000 times.. Some modern teachers experimented to these systems & found out that children had bad habits & characters changed to good persons. They also had strong power of attention & intelligence.

Time limit is not a main point. The time someone needs it is more important. As shown above, the nun Patacāri & Subrahma devata. But more listening is better, & it will decrease our mental pollutions. By watching some of the medias such as movies, T.V programmes, video computer games quite harmful to people. If they include a lot of violence, sex, etc. which are pollutants for our minds. It was liked a bulb light in a kitchen at the cooking place everyday contacts to the dirty air & oil & smoke. After sometimes it becomes dirtier, clouded & not bright anymore. Why is that? Because we use our six senses in a unwholesome ways! It was also liked eating unhealthy foods for everyday, such as junk foods, foods connecting to pesticides, foods & chemicals inside, etc. Then our health degenerate & end up to sickness, pains & deaths. Our mind is liked a clear water or bright mirror. With it we can see things clearly & penetrate them. With the dirty one you can't do it. There are some higher beings the rūpa-brhma gods (beings & the material jhanic power) seemed to be used only 3 senses eye, ear & mind doors. These are very useful & important for them. They can meet the Buddhas & arahats to listen to their talk & easily get attainments. But human beings are not like this. They prefer to see & listen a lot of medias & pollutants such as

sex, violence, useless chattering, etc. Even some children are not escaping from these pollutants. Because some comic books, cartoons, video games, books included these things in it. Medias have the great power of educations. Therefore we should not use it foolishly & stupidly. And should not take the media education as lightly. Today a lot of social problems have a lot of connection to them.

The benefits of listening Dhamma are: 1. Hearing things never heard before 2. Have clear knowledge 3. Overcoming doubts 4. Have right views 5. One's mind grows serene. These are the 5 rewards in listening to the Dhamma.

1. One hears what one has not heard before

most people's knowledge are very limited. But Buddha were exception. Even a Buddha taught a handful of them only liked a few leaves in his hand, compared to many leaves in a forest. In a sutta he said that his knowledge was liked many leaves in a forest, but taught only liked a handful of leaves in his hand. Even these handful of teaching we know very little, not complete & superficial. Many of them were never heard before & make out the lists there are many. The most important one was the Four Noble Truths with its details in many suttas. Some knowledges we know very little about it & not completed & superficial. For e.g. rebirth, other faiths know it as reincarnation. Some even not accept this view. The Buddha described it as round of existences, & in it 31 realms of existence.

2. One clarifies what one has heard before

These are also ^{can} give many examples for them. Most people think we are created by God & the creation. The Buddha taught the round of existence of all living beings & the law of Dependent Co-arising (Paticcasamuppada). Most people believe there is a permanent self, a soul or God exist. They also heard many faiths teach about them. When they read Buddhism or listen Dhamma on the doctrine of anatta-not-self which they never heard before, even not in this life, but for many lives of existence. Because only the Buddha & Paccekabuddhas could discover it & only could teach by the Buddha. Therefore it's not surprising that nobody can teach about it.

3. One gets rid of doubt

Overcoming of doubt is very important for whatever we are studying or doing. Because this is one of the hindrances. The meaning of doubt are: have feeling of uncertainty, Is it true or possible?, probably not true or possible, might not be true or might not be exist. So it has the power of obstructing to our progress in doing something & knowledge.

If someone has doubt on wrong views & practices is a little better. But if someone has doubt on right views & practices & incline into wrong views & practices, then it is dangerous. In Buddhist spiritual practice overcoming doubt is very important. This is one of the foundation knowledge & insight ^{of ripassana} in practice. The other is the foundation knowledge & insight of the mind & material phenomena, or right view. With the analytical knowledge of mind & body, the view of a being, a person, a soul /self is disappeared. Then, reduce the affection & hate (like or dislike) to someone. Overcoming doubt is the discernment of the conditions of mind & body. In the world the differences of faiths or religions appear is not knowing the causes of phenomena. For e.g., the doctrine of creator & creation. The causes of phenomena are so deep & profound that people are following the ways of easy thinking. The Buddha not accepted ^{the first cause of} or root cause. The most easiest way of thinking is ^{the doctrine of} causless - ahetuka-vada. Both of them are extreme views.

Here I want to present a story of a person who had got rid of doubt. This man was born into a Muslim family. At young his father forced him to study & learn Koran Text & a teacher. He has the nature of curiosity & inquiry mind & intelligent. He never accepted things without clear understanding & direct experience. Later he fell in love & a Christian & studied Old & New Bible. Later he became a teacher in Philosophy Department & studied all the eastern & western philosophy & doctrines. After sometimes he had the duty to write a book on Buddhist Ethics to teach the philosophy students. He did not has a good knowledge in Buddhism, except mentioned in the Philosophy books. So he made a thorough research & study on Buddhism for the Buddhist ethics text. Even later he wrote a book on Religions, included 11 faiths. From his knowledge about religions, he preferred Buddhism to others.

The reason behind was it more logical & profound than others. The most important point was Buddhism cleared away many of his doubt, ^{on} the Creator & the creation as it was not a truth. But still at that time not became a Buddhist yet. He still had doubt on the doctrines on rebirth. & ~~the laws of kamma~~. The reason was he could not prove it or had direct experience. Luckily, later he could prove it as a truth. And then became a Buddhist at the age of 50.

Later he went to a 10 days ripassana retreat & had direct understanding of the 4 Noble Truths & become a Buddhist monk. This was the ending of all of ^{his} search for truth. Doubt on his father's faith led to search for the truth, & in the Buddha's teaching led to the end of doubting. all doubts.

4. One's views are made straight:

If one has wrong views & by listening Dhamma, clearing doubt & wrong views. So one's views are made straight or right. There are 8 causes for wrong views to arise. The 2 main causes are: 1. Listening wrong teachings 2. Unwise attention (ayoniso manasikara). The opposites are also true, if someone has listening the right teachings will have right views & wise or right or proper attention. With wise attention & wrong views are overcome. There was an interesting discourse in the Anguttara Nikaya. It was Aramadanta Sutta & the name of a brahman.

He asked the Buddha about the reasons for disputes & arguments. He _____ in general & the Buddha also answered in general.

Only the Buddha & arahats overcome them. The causes are still exist that people have disputes & arguments. With different views that people are disputing & arguing. Therefore we must find out the causes for them to arise. The Buddha's Teachings were searching for the main causes. There are 2 causes: the original & nearest causes. The 4 Noble Truths ^{are} also in this way. These are internal & external causes. Cannot find out the internal causes cannot solve the disputes. There are 2 groups of disputed people; the householders & religious group. Their fundamental internal causes are different.

In one of Mahakaccayana's discourses, the internal cause for householders for dispute is kamaragabilesa - the defilement of sensual lust. These are the desirous objects of the 5 sense objects - form, sound, smell, taste & touch. Sensuality is the main cause & there are also other causes. Sensual lust sinks someone down. People are controlled & governed by lust & sensuality, that in disputes & arguments. Out of craving or desire that many disputes are arising. If we study the present situations around the world, this is very clear.

Religious people are disputing & arguing for different views, doctrines, ideas & outlooks. Overcome or transcend sensual lust & views are the Buddha & arahats only.

5. One's mind grows serene

Buddhists who listen Dhamma talks & mindfulness or Pali Chanting know this experience directly. Wholesome Dhamma has wholesome result, & unwholesome Dhamma has unwholesome result. Therefore we should not overlook the effect of sound on one's own mind. Even nature is sensitive about it. So we have to be very careful about medias. Seeing & watching all these rubbish pollute our mind. Now, scientists & many researchers & experiments have found it.

Recently, a very funny thing happened. In America, at a music concert, surely it was nothing to do with classical music. Violent music & youths & they were singing & shouting violently. Suddenly 16 yrs old girl fell down & sent her to a hospital & saved her life. Her lung could not work properly because of the over shouting. Luckily she was saved.

The Mahayanists even use sound & spiritual music to calm their mind. In the Pali Suttas there were many stories & incidents, monks & lay people by listening to the Dhamma gave by the Buddha & had realization. Why these people could achieve the results? We know that the Buddhist training is sila, samadhi & panna. (precepts, concentration & discernment or wisdom). During the talks their precepts were pure. Concentrating on the Dhamma & their mind became calm & peaceful. Their mind was not concentrating on the sensual objects like today man. With the calm & peaceful mind & contemplation led to realization.

The nun Patācāra was overcome by sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair & nearly mad. After hearing the Buddha's teaching her mind became calm & serene. And then continued to give her a special teaching that she was established in the fruit of stream-entry.

Ālavaka was the most violent & fearsome ogre (yakkha). He was so angry & the Buddha that even threatened to split the Buddha's heart & grabbed him by the feet & hustled him across the Ganges River.

Even this very violent & fearsome being after listened to the Dhamma & his mind became calm & serene & also established in the fruit of stream-entry. So hearing & listening Dhamma is very important matter for Buddhists. Even an important practice in cultivation of the mind. Listening very often & contemplation. It not only accumulate Dhamma knowledge & contemplation ^{but also} increase our ^{intelligence} intelligent & discernment. With a lot of Dhamma knowledge & practice, we can solve many problems in daily life when it need.

In a sutta in Anguttara Nikaya, 2 brahmins were talking about the Dhamma of the Buddha. One brahmin explained to the other brahmin ^{the qualities of} on the Buddha Dhamma & similes.

1. After listening the Dhamma of the Samana Gautama (i.e. Buddha) & could not listen to the other Shamas anymore (i.e. the teachings of other teachers). As an example, after eating a very delicious food in full stomach & could not eat other foods anymore.

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2. The Dhamma of the Gautama Whichever part of the Dhamma one had listened, it would give the delicious flavour. (i.e., it was good in the beginning, in the middle & in the end). As an example, it was liked a honey ball whichever part had been bitten, it gave the delicious flavour.
3. The Buddha Dhamma had ~~the~~^{was} fragrant smell & liked a sandalwood & any part of it would give the sweet smell.
4. Buddha Gautama was liked a medical doctor & his Dhamma could cure the mental diseases (kilesa roga, defilements of the mind). The Mahayana medicine Buddha could be come from this idea.
5. Someone travelling under a very hot sun & with the burning heat, tiredness & hunger. ~~had then~~^{Actor} encountered a lotus pond, & released him from burning heat, tiredness & hunger. The Dhamma freed someone from the heat of defilements.

So the power of Dhamma is unlimited & the best medicine for all ills of the world. Whether it is about the body or the mind, in family problems or social problems, political or economical problems. Most Buddhists may be never thought that they are the most fortunate & luckiest beings in the world. Because of their past great merits they encounter the Buddha Dhamma in this life. The Buddha had mentioned very clear that to get a human birth, encounter the Dhamma, had interest, understood & practised accordingly ~~as~~^{most} accordingly deas the most difficult matter in the world. But of us take it as easy & never take it as a priceless treasure. And foolishly & stupidly wasting our chances, time & energy in trivial matters & things. There was an interesting sutta about the 4 best things in the world. The devas or gods were looking for the answers of the 4 best things for 12 years. They were also looking for the answer of the highest blessing for 12 years as here. A monk who had supernormal power wanted to know the ending of the 4 great elements. So he went to the heaven to ask for ~~his~~^{the} answer. From the lower realms to higher realms of heaven of the Brahma god & no one could answer him. Therefore he had to come down & ask the Buddha for the answer. All these profound questions except the Buddha no one could answer them. The Four Great Kings of the heaven (Catummaharajika deva) asked Sakka, the King of the 33 Gods & he could not answer them. So they all came to the Buddha for their answers.

All These 4 Things are connecting & Dhamma.

1. What is the best gift in the world?

If we are talking about gifts there are many kinds & for many reasons. As Buddhists, we give or offer the 4 requisites to the monks. Dana is giving & has 2 meanings; the gifts & the mental state of giving, volition, or things & action. There is a very special kind of gifts which most people overlook or neglected. This is pañña dana - the gift of knowledge. Gift of things & gift of knowledge (especially here is the Buddha Dhamma) which one is the best? Dhamma gift is the best one.

The Buddha's answer to the devas was: "Subhadrañcañca Dhammāñcañca jineti - The gift of Dhamma is greater than all other gifts."

The devas satisfied & the answer. The commentary explained it as followed. Why the Buddhists make dana? There are many reasons for this wholesome action. For some this is the second nature for them carry & them from their past lives. For most Buddhists they develop this wholesome Dhamma from the teaching of law of Karma. The basic reason for Dhamma gift is greater than others is leading to realization of Nibbana. One of the factors for Realization of Nibbana is listening Dhamma talks. (exception of the Buddha & Pacceka-buddhas). Therefore the gift of Dhamma is the best gift.

In this discourse we are talking about from the point of gift receiver & not the giver. The giver also has its benefit. material gifts are for this life only & most of them, are short life span, e.g. giving foods. Gift of Dhamma leads to ending of dukkha. Therefore gift of Dhamma is incomparable to other gifts.

→ A long time ago in the first half of 20th century, an Italian American chemist received a gift of Dhamma from a friend for Christmas. This book was the English translation of "Dhammapada". After reading it & he became a Buddhist. Giving up his job & wealth & went to Burma & ordained there. His monk name was Ven. Lokanatha or known in Burma as Italian monk U Lokanatha. After some years in monkhood he walked on foot a long the silk road from Asia to pass the middle east to U.S.A. He determined to follow the Bodhisatta Path (to become a future Buddha). One time he went to pay homage to the famous Ven. Webu Sayadaw & asked him directly; "Ven. Sayadaw, are you an arahat?" Ven. Sayadaw's response was; "I have no courage to become a bodhisatta!" Sayadaw U Lokanatha passed away in Burma in 1966. (40 yrs in Burm)

2. What is the best flavour?

(130) (120)

There are 9 kinds of flavours. (a) Flavour comes from funny things or people are amusing & make you smile or laugh. (b) Flavour comes from affection (c) Flavour comes from sympathy (garubrasa) (d) Flavour comes from violence; people like to watch violent movies, & people commit terrors can be came from this flavour, such as terrorism. (e) Flavour comes from courageous acts (f) Flavour comes from loathsomeness (g) — — — amazement (h) Flavour comes from fright (ghost story) (i) All other feelings.

"The flavour of Dhamma is greater than all other flavours - Sabbarasam shammarasam jinati." Why is that? There are no real peace & happiness behind all the other flavours. In the end these are not good. It cannot last long & become complicated.

3. What is the best ^{pleasure or enjoyment} happiness of the mind?

There are many things which people are looking for ^{pleasure} happiness.

Some are family members, wealth, sense objects, etc. People are always looking for ^{pleasure} happiness & no contentment. This is human nature.

After they get what they want & happy & joy & it for some periods. Later they become bored & then. So they are changing object to object, matter to matter & never satisfy & it. From discontentment & dissatisfaction come human problems & suffering. Heavenly beings also have this kind of things situation. The Buddha's answer was; "Sabbarasam shammarasam jinati" - The pleasure of Dhamma is better than all other pleasures" Worldly pleasures are not peaceful & calm, even lead to problems & suffering. Dhamma pleasure or enjoyment is peaceful & calm & true happiness. Therefore yogis & noble beings who have jhanas & fruits use to stay in these peaceful states.

Even the pleasure comes from study & contemplate the Buddha Dhamma leads to joy & happiness which excel the sensual pleasure.

4. What is the best destruction?

The destruction of craving/greed (tanha) or dukkha is the best.

Therefore the Buddha's answer was; "Tanhakkayo sabbadukkham jinati - The destruction of craving or all dukkha is the best."

The destruction of craving or all dukkha is the highest stage of realization which is arahatta magga & phala - the path & fruit of arahantship. Therefore the arahatta magga & phala is the destruction of craving/tanha - tanhakkayo. With the destruction of craving a free from all kinds of dukkha. Because craving is the source of all dukkha. We cannot destroy dukkha directly.

So craving is the cause & dukkha is the result. Cut off the connection between them. With the destruction of tanhā & dukkha is ended. But human beings are afraid of the destruction of tanhā. So they are searching & fighting for wealth, power & pleasure & each others. With human conflicts all the society problems & sufferings arise. Nowadays these problems & sufferings are worse than before. With the power of science & technologies the destruction is greater. Now we are at the critical point. The Buddha taught & urged us for the destruction of craving. Human beings instead of listening to the Buddha, & become the followers of Mara - the Evil One / Tanhā & develop & increase its qualities. All these 4 questions were searching & discussing for the answers for 12 yrs. At last they found the answers from the Blessed One.

The power of Dhamma was so great that even the Buddha took the Dhamma as his teacher. Without a teacher is dangerous & many problems & sufferings are waiting each one of us from now & for the future. Therefore hearing the Dhamma on timely occasions is the highest blessing / protection. Even listen quite often is the best way. We should use our leisure time in it. If we listening to Tanhā very often & take it as our teacher & will sink to the bottom of ocean floor & can never come out from it up to the surface again. This is the power of tanhā. If we take Dhamma as our teacher, we rise up higher & higher & transcend the world & free forever. Listening Dhamma is truly a highest protection & blessing. Here I want to make some suggestion to people, especially Buddhists. It is also very important to other faiths according to their own teaching. Because terrorists & terrorism arise has some connection to the misunderstanding & interpretation problems. Some years ago the Ven. Nyanaponika Thera mentioned the following point in one of his essays. He said that in the past some Sri Lanka families were teaching their children after they came back from works & schools in the evening before the meal. Another thing is some mothers or fathers near bed time tell their young children to Buddhist stories, such as jatakas stories about the Bodhisatta - the Great Being. There are nearly 550 stories which described the Buddha's past lives developed the 10 perfections as Bodhisatta. Each perfection has 3 levels; normal, middle & higher or highest levels. At least every human being should has the normal level of perfection, & can be called as true human.

Some might think cultivate the paramis is for oneself. It is for both, for oneself & others, giving, services & sacrifices for all living beings. Selfishness & self-centeredness bring problems & suffering to oneself & others. Nearly All the Buddha's teachings were about human beings & societies. Therefore teaching the children in Buddhist stories is an important education for them. So listening Dhamma is not only for grown up Buddhists but to all groups.

(26) + (27) Patience, compliance,

(28) Seeing contemplatives;

(29) Discussing the Dhamma on timely occasions,

This is the highest protection/blessing.

(26) Patience:

Patience is in Pali called khanti. In English, if you are patient, you are able to stay calm & not get annoyed. But this English meaning is not complete. The Buddha's teaching on patience was not only to unpleasant things & matters also to pleasant things & matters. So has connection to equanimity (upekkha). The Buddha praised this quality highly. With the following all explanations & we'll find it why? There are 10 perfections (paramis) for the candidate of a Buddha to be (i.e. bodhisatta). One of them is patience (khanti). Each of the perfections has 3 levels. These are basic, middle & highest levels. Sumedha hermit after he got the prediction from the Desinkara Buddha & went to a quiet place & contemplated on the 10 perfections one by one. Khanti parami was the number 6th one. It was like the earth whatever good or bad things discarded in it, it did not has any reaction of love & hate. So it is the mental factor of non-hatred (adosa). Silas, samadhi & pañña can be possible only to patience. All the wholesome dharmas can progress to patience.

In the Anguttara Nikaya, there was a sutta mentioned some of the power. The power of wise, sages & noble beings was patience.

Ledi Sayadaw mentioned about Khanti Parami in the following way, in his "Uttamapuriya Dipati". Patience has 2 kinds; patience to living beings; & patience to unpleasant phenomena, such as heat & cold, etc. So the Buddha taught on patience in many things. The main point is in the world, if we encounter internal & external phenomena not let these things soil our mind, without complaining & facial expression. And just doing our tasks of merits & welfare without affect them to a clear & determined mind.

Ledi Sayadaw continued to explain the perfection of equanimity (upekkha parami). Upekkha means; not taking pleasure & affection to people who praise, respect & offer things to oneself. or ~~someone who blame, doing wrong & harm~~
 Or not displeasure & hate to people who blame, doing wrong, harm & fame to oneself. Does not has these double minds on these two person's mean upekkha. With the stableness of khanti & upekkha paramis, the others paramis can progress smoothly. It was like children born from the mother's womb look-after^{ed} or protected by the parents would grow up. If not looked after^{or protected} by them & would die there. Therefore patience is like the mother & upekkha is like the father. Some Buddhists they formulated 6 perfections which not includes upekkha. May be they were confused to the equanimity of the 4 Divine Abidings (Brahmavihara Dhamma). With the 2 qualities of patience & equanimity & develop while some actions smoothly. The wholesome actions which look-after^{ed} or protected by the perfection of renunciation (nekhamma parami) can become perfected actions or perfected wholesome actions. Without the protection of nekhamma parami & taking pleasure in the wholesome results & not become the perfected merits. These kinds of merit are bound to becoming.
 It was like the children who were looking after by parents but without protecting by doctor & medicines. They were getting sick by foods & drinks. Trees can be grown up & developed by soil & water.
 So patience is like the soil & equanimity is water. The equanimity comes from the Brahmavihara Dhammas is a little different from the perfection of equanimity. Brahmavihara upekkha not concern for the welfare of beings. Upekkha parami concerns for the welfare of all without any distinction good or bad to oneself.

Ledi Sayadaw continued the 10 perfections to the example of Mahakappina Jataka story. Explained one by one of them in this story. For patience & equanimity as follow:

The monkey (i.e., bodhisatta) head was smacked by the evil brahman & a stone. Blood streamed out to severe pain. But the monkey bore the pain & not concerned for the pain & suffering. Without soiled his mind to complaining & anger. His mind was in normal & clear state. This was khanti parami. If the monkey did not have patience, & with the severe pain & everything was spoiled. Even the monkey helping to save his life is a lot of difficulty & effort & did not has any disappointment & anger was upekkha parami. At that time if he has anger & disappointment in the brahman would spoil his goodness.

Tipitaka Dhara Ven. Sayadaw gave a talk on human strength & mentioned about patience (He was the 2nd or 5th one who could recite the 3 pitakas by heart.) Patience is the foundation of Dhamma of sila, Samadhi & pāṭiṇī. Only ī khanti & has progress. ~~win or lost~~ Winning or not winning, good or bad has to be patient ī them. With patience is a noble quality.

Even dāna-giving is connecting ī patience. It is giving up & sacrificing. Patience is strength & make someone noble & outstanding.

There are 5 benefits of patience; 1. Love by people 2. calm & without dangers 3 free from the faults of anger 4. die ī a clear mind 5. good rebirth (sugati).

Patience & right exertion (samma-viriya) can destroy the mental heat (i.e., kilesa heat). It can burn out kilesa—that defilements & called tapa-austerity. The source of metta (loving friendliness) is patience. Anger (adosa) has 3 stages; killing, disturbing, & happening in the mind. And the results are; short life span, has illnesses & look ugly. Non-anger (addosa) also has 3 kinds; doing merits always ī non-anger, non-hatred comes from patience, & non-hatred comes from metta bhavana (meditation on loving kindness). With mindfulness is the way of living alone. And metta is the way of living ī others. Bodhisatta wanted to develop the perfection of patience had to take rebirths mostly in the human world.

If he had the chances to take rebirths in heavenly & brahma god worlds ī merits & jhanas, & never stayed there very long. With resolution (adhitthana) & came down to human world for rebirth. Human world was the best place for fulfilling the 10 perfections.

— — — is — — — doing all kinds of wholesomeness. We must sacrifice the human body ī Dhamma. Calmness of mind relates to patience. It means complete ī sila & Samadhi. With patience, & sila & samadhi develop.

In the Buddharaga of Dhammapada, Ven. Ananda raised the question to the Buddha on the Fundamental Instructions to the monks by the past Buddhas. The Buddha answered ī 3 verses & one of them was including patience.

Verse 184 : Khanti parami tapo titikkha,
nibbānāni paramam vadānti budhā;
na hi pabbajito patūpaghāti,
na saṁnāsi hoti param vihetthayanto.

- ❖ The best training in austerity is patience,
- ❖ Nibbāna is the Supreme," said the Buddhas;
- A monk does not harm others,
- One who harms others is not a monk."

Therefore patience is the cause of progress & nobility in worldly & supramundane matters. Patience is not reacting to any bad thing someone has done to oneself. So it is a quality difficult to practice. This is a Dhamma leads to peace & happiness to oneself & others.

Therefore The Buddha said that patience & forbearance was the noblest practice. In the Anguttara Nikaya the Buddha mentioned the 5 results of patience. I have already mentioned before. But also there are the 5 faults if one does not have patience. These are; hate by others; has dangers; & many faults arise in this present & future lives; a bad dying; & after death, not has a good destination, i.e. the woeful planes of existence. In the world people encounter problems are the same. The differences are in the ways to deal & problems, & to solve them. Because of ignorance & foolishness small problems become bigger & worse. We can see all these things in each country & international levels, as examples: Syria Civil War, Israel & Palestine Problem, terrorists & terrorism, etc.. We cannot achieve peace, harmony & happiness if the ways of tit for tat, aggression, violence, hatred, ill-will, etc. The many ways to solve problems are wholesome Dhammas.. The most basic one is wholesome education, patience & forbearance, tolerance, love, sympathy, compassion, kindness, concern for others, etc. Interference by some super powers also made things worse & destroyed the involved countries & citizens. They exploited the situations for political or economical purposes.

In the Samyutta Nikaya, there is a sutta called "Vipacitti / or Patience"? There the Buddha mentioned the teaching of Sakka (king of the 33 gods) to Matali (the charioteer). It was about the qualities of patience which all people should follow it. This discourse is especially important for politicians & political leaders to deal in conflicts. Sakka was not an ordinary Deva king. He was an intelligent, wise & a noble being & asked some important questions to the Buddha. His teaching on patience was as follow. Once in the past the devas & asuras were in battle. In that battle, the devas won & the asuras were defeated. The Tavatimsa devas bound Vipacitti by his 4 limbs & neck brought him to Sakka in the Sudhamma assembly hall. When Sakka was entering & leaving the hall, Vipacitti, abused & reviled him in rude & harsh words. Matali the charioteer saw this & said to Sakka.

Did Sakka from fear & weakness, endure Vepacitti patiently by listening to his harsh words? Sakka replied That he was neither through fear nor weakness & patient ī the asura. He was a wise person & should not engage in combat ī a foot.

Mātali continued that if no one would keep the fools in check & They would express their anger even more. So the wise should restrain the fool ī extreme punishment urgently. Then Sakka responded wisely. In his view the only way to check the fool was when one's enemy was angry & not responded him. Instead one maintained one's peace mindfully.

Mātali said to Sakka that this way of dealing ī enemy was faulty. Because by practicing patient endurance at that time the enemy would think; "He endures me out of fear." Then the fool would press harm you more. At last Sakka taught Mātali the qualities of patience & the outcomes of anger.

Whether or not someone think; "He endures me out of fear." For one's own good nothing is better than patience. When someone has strength & should patiently endure a weakling. It is the supreme patience. The weak person also must be patient. The strength most people think ~~was~~ is not the real strength. But the strength of the fools. Guarded by Dhamma that a person is strong. And no one can reproach him. Respond anger & anger make things worse for oneself. Not respond anger & anger & one wins a battle hard to win. Someone should practise for the welfare of both, for himself & others. If the enemy is in anger & one should maintain his peace & mindfulness. In these ways someone solves the problem for both, his own & others. If people take him as a fool, then they are unskilled in Dhamma.

The quality of patience & forbearance are not only difficult to practise & develop but also difficult to appreciate them. Most people want to react instantly without tolerance. This is not surprising, because in the world there are more fools than wise. Not understanding the Dhamma we do not know how to deal ī problems properly & rightly. There are 2 kinds of enemy or foe; i.e internal & external.

The internal enemies are more dangerous & harmful than the external ones. Even the external ones come from the internal ones. This is not difficult to see. External pollutions are the outcome of internal pollutions of the mind, i.e greed, hatred, delusion, etc. External enemies only can harm us this life. But the internal ones not only this life, but many lives to come. Therefore patience, forbearance, tolerance are stopping the inner enemies to create dangers & problems for us.

The Buddha also said in the Dhammapada Verse 103: A man may conquer a million enemies in battles, but one who conquer himself is the greatest of all conquerors.

Even one defeats one's enemy & reaction, the outcome is not benefit for both. The looser suffers in this life & the winner has enemies. (see the Palestinian & Israelis conflicts - the process is never end, because of impatience, tit for tat policies.). The looser suffers in this life & the winner has to bear his unwholesome karmic results in the future. There is also the looser has a strong grudge towards the winner which will follow to ^{which} samsara for a long time to come. This is evidence in the strong grudges(hatred & ill-will) Devadatta had towards the Buddha started from a long distant past.

The strength of the fools are not real strength. The power of patience, forbearance & tolerance are the real ^{only with} Non-hatred only can & non-violence only can overcome hatred & violence, & solve the problems & make peace. There is a saying that ^{was} the quality of patience could realize Nibbana. This is on spiritual matter. This is true, because patience is the foundation of sila, Samadhi & panna. In the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha instructed the monks in the 10 Dharmas as protectors, & one of them was patience. The Buddha usually taught the monks to have patience & the following things; heat, cold, weather, hunger & thirst, bitten by insects, criticism by others, unpleasant feelings of the physical body, etc. Therefore patience is a protector & the power of strength to overcome mundane matters & to overcome spiritual difficulties in spiritual endeavour. We can see this in the lives of political leaders such as, Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King & Nelson Mandela. The bodhisatta cultivate the perfection of patience to the highest level we can read in the jataka stories, such as - Kshantivadi Hermit & Prince Temiya Jatakas. These stories make the Buddhist readers awe-inspiring & hair raising phenomena & will never forget them.

In the Kshantivadi Hermit story, the bodhisatta was a hermit & taught the Doctrine of Patience. The evil king was the past life of Devadatta who had the strong grudge towards the bodhisatta from one of his past lives. Now he had the chance to torture the bodhisatta to test his patience. He cut off his limbs one by one to test his patience, from nose, ears, arms & legs. The bodhisatta bore all these physical sufferings & patience, forbearance, endurance & tolerance & still declared his Doctrine of Patience. At last because of the nobility & greatness of the bodhisatta & the wilness of the king, the earth opened up &

swallowed him to hell realm. Prince Temiya Story was very remarkable. In this bodhisatta story we can read the perfections of resolution (cāshīthana), patience (khanti) & renunciation (nekkhamma). His patience & endurance to all the difficult tests were awe-inspiring. It seems to me except a highly developed bodhisatta could bear & succeed them.

Even though most Buddhists cannot imitate the bodhisatta to the higher levels, at least should cultivate the basic levels. If we imitate & learn from the popular worldlings such as tycoons, politicians, actors, actresses, pop singers, etc. & just increase our defilements or polluted our minds. Therefore let us cultivate patience for peace to oneself & others in daily life. Here we have to remember that we have to be patient to not only unpleasant things & matters, but also to pleasant things & matters. The best known Mahagandhayone Sayadawgyi U Janakabhivamsa had this saying: Someone has patience to good & bad worldly conditions is an outstanding one. The worldly conditions are the 8 loka dhammas; gain/loss, status/disgrace, censure/praise, pleasure/pain. Indeed, the quality of patience is the highest blessing/protection.

22. Compliance/Obedience:

The Pali word *savacassata* is compliance or obedience. There was another — in the Metta Sutta is *suvacca* - easy to instruct. They are very close relationship. Only obedient people are easy to instruct & easy to talk to them. This quality is also very important for one's own progress in the right direction of mundane & supramundane welfare. Therefore obedience & easy to instruct are connecting to wholesome things & matters. With unwholesome things & matters are ignorant & stupid, & not these qualities. All these we can see in the cases of Devadatta (the Buddha's cousin) & Prince Ajatasattu. Devadatta was not compliant & heeding to the Buddha's admonitions that at last came to destruction & ruin. Prince Ajatasattu was following Devadatta's evil advice & killed his own father King Bimbisara & missed the chance of realization of Dhamma. A humble person is not proud or conceited & easy to teach. We can see these in the cases of novice Rahula (the Buddha's son) & the old monk Radha. Ven. Webu Sayadawgyi was the most venerable monk in Burma. In many of his Dhamma talks mentioned *savacassata* - compliance very often as a quality in practice. That is paying heed to teachers, sages, wise & noble ones to follow their advices & instructions. That is very true. We do not have this quality that most of us still roaming in the Saṁsāra of sufferings.

Compliance or obedience is very important in societies. This quality has to be started from the family life & schools. Obedient & easy to teach children & students are loved by their parents & teachers. Therefore these children are progressing in life, because follow in the right directions. Nowadays the situations are different. We allow too much freedom to children & students. Now children are difficult to teach & admonish. Instead parents & teachers are in compliance to their desire & views. Now we heard a lot of complaints from parents & teachers about these things. Why these things happen nowadays & not before? Because children & youths have a lot of freedom of rein as they can do what they think & like. Parents & teachers are not their parents & teachers. And they themselves become parents & teachers, & not as children & students. They are influenced by many kinds of media. Actually medias are their parents & teachers & their educational departments.

More than half a century ago, Mogok Sayadawgyi mentioned a very important point of Dhamma to U Tun Tin. (At that time a young man & one of the frequent listener of his talks). These words were also a prediction on science & technology to mankind. Sayadawgyi started teaching in meditation practice after the 2nd World War, i.e 1945. His talks were not recorded until 1954. Only in 1955 onwards had proper recordings & it was invaluable Dhamma treasures for Buddhists. Once he mentioned to U Tun Tin as follow; "My Tun Tin!, With the progress of science & can record the voices/sounds. If we can use it properly/rightly lead to attain Nibbāna. If we use it wrongly & go into the Woks(^{hell}_{Capital} woks),["] Sayadaw's prediction becomes evident nowadays. The problems are not lie Σ science & technology but Σ human mind or ^{saying} rightly the defiled mind. And fake progress are leading by greed & delusion which are the cause of sufferings. Now we see it all the society problems & natural problems as the outcomes. Most people do not see the whole picture of anything & matter. And also they see things & matters superficially & very short sighted views. They are carrying away by defilements. But the Buddha & noble beings ^{were} quite different. They saw/see the whole picture & deep into the core & extended to the future. If we study & research of the suttas, These were not teaching us the present life only, also for the future to come, even extended to the saṃsāra. Scientists, politicians & economists, can be intelligent & stupid but not wise. Therefore intelligence & wisdom are different things. Wise person is also intelligent.

Intelligent person, not necessarily wise. Even sometimes they are dangerous. This conclusion is not wrong. Internal & external pollutions of man & nature testified this point.

As already mentioned before wholesome Dhamma has connection to other wholesome dharmas, unwholesome & unwholesome are also the same. A person disobedience, not easy to teach & admonish. It is likely that he also disrespect to others (parents, elders & teachers). Stubborn & follow his own ways. We can see some children & students revert to their parents & teachers, even sometimes insult them in actions. If they grow up in this way their lives will be in down fall for sure. So parents & teachers should instill these qualities in children. Then they will have blessings & protections in their lives, & also to the societies. The following story in the Samyutta Nikaya was good for reflection on this subject.

A Thief of Scent: A certain monk was dwelling in a certain woodland thicket. When he had returned from his alms round & after the meal he had a habit. He used to descent into a pond & sniff the scent of lotus flowers there. The female devata (a deity of the lotus pond) concerned for his welfare (practice) inhabited the woodland thicket concerned his practice, desired his good & to stir up a sense of urgency (satiyoga) in him, & approached him. She reproached him as follow.

The monk sniffed the flower scent of lotus flowers which had not been given. So this was a factor of theft, & became a thief of scent. The monk responded that he did not take it or damaged it. And only sniffed the scent from a distance. So what was the reason to accuse him as a thief of scent. But there were also others who dug up the lotus stalks & damaged the flowers. They had rough behaviours & why did not ^{she} reproach them.

The devata replied that these people were already rough & fierce, & liked a soiled & dirty cloth. So she had nothing to concern for them. But the monk was different. Because he was a person without blemish, & always in quest of purity. Even a small bit of unwholesomeness appeared as big like the cloud.

Then the monk accepted her admonition & thanked her for the advice. And requested her to admonish him again in the future whenever she saw such a deed. The deity reflected that this monk might become negligent & would think a deity was looking after his welfare. Therefore she rejected his request & proposal. & told him that she was not his servant. He ~~had~~^{himself} should know himself what was good for his welfare & the way to a good destination.

The monk in this story was seemed to be a good monk who loved nature & easy to be admonished & compliant. But still lacking of restraint & fragrant flowers. Even it seemed he was attached to it as a habit. For most people taking small matters & things as insignificance.

But for the wise, sage's & noble beings even taken the minor things as important for mental development. If someone can take care of the small things & for serious things are not ^{becoming} problems. Therefore the Buddha warned the monks even to see ^{the slightest} thing as a fault.

Even small problems are more important than the bigger ones.

most of the bigger problems come from the smaller ones.

From nothing becomes something. So most of the human problems or society problems are created by humans' craving & ignorance.

Even unseen beings ~~want~~ want to help good people. This was not the only story in the Nikāyas. Ven. Channa who was ^{prideful} & not easy to admonish & teach, by others monks. He was born to the bodhisatta on the same day & very close to him. So he was very conceited & even not changed his bad behaviours ^{even}, after admonished by the Buddha.

The Buddha, on the night of his parinibbāna, imposed the brahma-punishment on him: he was to be left to his own ways without anyone to teach or correct him. This punishment made his life difficult. So he corrected his conceit & stubbornness & went to see Ven. Ananda for help. Ven. Ananda ^{had} learnt by heart all the discourses of the Buddha that gave him a suitable discourse, & then became an arahat. So we can see how much important the quality of compliance. In the Dhammapada ^{points out} we have to ~~grate~~ be in ^{grate} show gratitude to someone who ~~exposes~~ ^{points out} our faults. We should take it as someone shows us the buried treasures in the earth. That is true because most people cannot easily to recognize one's own mistakes. But easy to see others' faults. Only by knowing one's own mistakes that can has the chance to correct it. The best way is to check own mistakes & faults very often. So it needs mindfulness. To rely on oneself better is better them on others.

In helping or teaching others also need to be careful. Sometimes it can get into troubles. Importance to know the time, the place, the person involves & how to use words. The following jataka story described these points. Once the bodhisatta was a hermit. One day he crossed the river by boat & other passengers. The boatman was a bad tempered man. And he never mentioned the boat fee to passengers beforehand. Only after arrived to the other shore & charged ^{often} his fee the boat fee. This behaviour caused quarrels to the passengers.

This time also happened the same thing, first to the passengers. At last he turned towards the hermit for the fee. The bodhisatta told him he did not have any money. So gave a teaching to him as a fee. The bodhisatta hermit advised the boatman to declare the fee beforehand. And continued to exhort him that should not get angry. The outcome of anger was not good to him, etc. His anger was already arising to the passengers & after what he heard from the hermit made him more angry. So he beat the bodhisatta on the spot. At that time his wife sent him ^{goods for} arrived there. She pushed ^{apart} her husband from the hermit. This foolish man was so angry that turned to his wife & kicked her away. Unfortunately at that time she was pregnant & terminated the pregnancy. He was also arrested & put in jail, because the hermit was the king's teacher. The hermit gave the same teaching to the king & rewarded in a village of 100,000 income tax money. But the bodhisatta rejected the reward.

The qualities of

It is very clear that, compliance & easy to teach & instruct are very important for worldly & spiritual progress. People want to be peaceful & happy in life should develop it. Parents should take this point seriously. And have to train their children to be obedient & respectful. These qualities are ingrained in sages & noble beings. To become a good person ~~it is very~~ it needs this quality. Therefore the parents want their children to progress in life & not to be worried about them should put effort to train them. So the Buddha taught; compliance was the highest blessing/protection.

(28) Seeing contemplatives:

The Pali word for contemplatives is samana & include the ariyas noble beings & yogis practise for overcome defilements. Here include all monks, but also can count sages & wise people. The best samanas to see are arahats & sekhats (one already has realization of the lower stages, i.e still in training for full realization). Seeing contemplatives include asking Dhamma, listening & practicing Dhamma. Seeing noble beings has great effect on someone. Not only at the time of the Buddha, even today someone has strong inclination to Dhamma knows the effects. It makes one's mind peaceful & changes one's life. Most people not sensitive & aware the energies around us either living beings or nature, such as tree, etc. I have some of these experiences before. Once in New Zealand, some monks were invited to a house for paritta chanting. A man over 60 died in a hospital & cancer. Before he died said to his wife that he would come ^{back} & stay to her. It seemed he was attached to her & the properties left behind. Therefore became a ghost there. Three monks & the car driver went there. As soon as I entered the house & sensed a very strong unpleasant & gloomy feeling of the place.

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And then a very strong putrid smell arose in the whole room. It smelled to the end of the chanting. After that it disappeared. After getting out from the house I asked the other four three did they had any smell in the house. Only the senior monk answered as yes. The others two did not aware of it. This was strange indeed. It was quite a strong repulsive smell & they did not smelled it. In New Zealand there are some preserved forest & very big & old trees. By walking in there also feels the energies of the big trees & forests.

There was an old practising monk in Taiwan & an expert in samadhi. He could be in samadhi state for many days. He passed away at the age of 95 in the samadhi state. After over 20 yrs of his passing & went to his place where he used to sit in samadhi. which was a small room & now became a shrine room & his cane chair which he used to sit samadhi. This room pervades & peaceful energy & one can feel it as soon as ^{very often} there.

Seeing contemplatives pervade wholesome energies to one's mind is a blessing. It is also relate to the blessing of associate & the wise. Seeing contemplatives (samana) is the more higher blessing than associate & good & moral people. By associate & good & moral people we can also become one of them. Without become a good & moral person we will never interest to see & associate & contemplatives. By seeing samana we can learn the higher Dhamma from them & follow the path of transcending dukha. There were many stories in the suttas ^{on this point}. Some lay people by seeing the Buddha or one of his disciples their lives were totally changed. Some of them, before had wrong views & wrong teachers. After seeing the Buddha & his disciples had right views & even some had realization of Dhamma.

In the Majjima Nikaya, there was a discourse called Upali Sutta. Upali was a very well known & wealthy lay disciple of Nigantha Nataputta (The Jain Teacher Mahavira). He sent Upali to see the Buddha for the argument on certain aspects of the law of kamma. He thought Upali was so bright that he could defeat the Buddha. Nigantha stressed on the physical & verbal actions being more productive resultant effects. But the Buddha viewed the mental actions (volitions) as the most important factor. The Buddha explained to Upali & examples & converted him. Nataputta was overwhelmed by intense wrath over the loss of his most prominent lay supporter & then later passed away.

Also there are 2 suttas in the Majjima Nikaya, about the wandering ascetic Saccaka; Culasaccaka Sutta & Mahasaccaka Sutta. In the first discourse, he was conceited & his skill in debate & went to see the Buddha for debate. The debate was on the topic of atta(self).

Saccaka took the 5 khandhas (aggregates); body, feeling, perception, volitional formation & consciousness as atta (self). It was the self which enjoyed the fruits of good action & suffered the results of bad action. The Buddha refuted his wrong view as the 5 khandhas were not self (anatta). Because they were subjected to the law of inconstant, suffering & not self (anicca, dukkha & anatta). Therefore these were not under the control of anyone. At last he admitted his defeat. He did not become a follower but invited the Buddha & the monks for next day meals.

In the second discourse, after his debate, he met the Buddha again at sometimes. He asked the Buddha on the cultivation of mind & body. He knew only the wrong practices by other teachers. Then the Buddha explained to him the various practices he himself had followed before & mistakes. At last he found the middle way - the Noble Eight Fold Path without a teacher & led to realization & became a Buddha. Also in the end he did not become a disciple. But these 2 meeting or seeing the Buddha & he carried the potential seed of enlightenment & him. According to the commentary, after the Buddha Dhamma flourished in Sri Lanka, he was born there. Later became a monk & practised & had realization as a arahat.

Another interesting discourse in the Majjima Nikaya is Dog Aesthetic Discourse (Kukkharavatika Sutta). Two naked ascetics, Punna & Seniya - cow & dog practitioners went to see The Buddha. They asked the Buddha about the results of their practices. They held the wrong views of "These practices transcend dukkha or after died had good rebirths. The Buddha told them if they practised like cow & dog, after death became cow & dog. If holding these wrong views would fall into hells. They regretted their behaviours which came from meeting & wrong teachers. Then The Buddha taught them the 4 types of actions; black, white, mixed (black & white) & neither of them (i.e., the Noble Eight Fold Path). At the end of the discourse Punna became a Buddhist. Seniya became a monk & & practice became an arahat. This discourse warning us the consequences of wrong teachings & teachers.

Here I want to present a present day story of an Italian yogi. This came from a Dhamma talk by Ven. M. Agoratansī. Eduardos - an Italian who held a Ph.D degree & was practising mindfulness of breathing ~~for 2 years~~ everyday for 2 years. According to him, he never missed it & sat for 2 hours. Later he went to Burma & looking for a teacher. And then met ^{Ajissi} to the venerable who was living in a forest & developed his own practice. The venerable was a lecturer in Philosophy before & had a wide knowledge on Dhamma. After sometimes under his guidance Eduardos penetrated anatta doctrine & ripassana contemplation.

Worldlings see things & matters superficially & wrong views that take wrong things as right. With different views and have different results. This sutta is interesting & we can learn many things from it. It is also connection & seeing contemplatives. The Buddha mentioned 6 kinds of them. Each kind can divide into 2 kinds.

The Buddha's views & the views of the worldlings.

The 6 noble things are: ① with seeing ② with listening ③ with getting ④ with learning ⑤ with supporting ⑥ with remembering or recollection.

① With Seeing: Dassanava-anuttariya. The unsurpassed sight

With the eyes we can see many things. But there are also things cannot see by the normal eyes. Now, & the help of science & technology create gadgets, televisions, computers, cell phones, etc. can see more things at anytime. What are the things people use to see & watch?

These are depending on interest & necessities. There are useful & proper things to see & watch. There are also harmful & improper things to see & watch & wasting precious times. But usually people want to see harmful & improper things for entertainments & leisured times.

Even there are many accidents when people using the cell phones crossing the roads or during driving cars. People are too addicted to these things that become a habit & they will use it at anytime & anywhere.

It is good to ask question to oneself. If we are seeing & watching these many things (here not only cell phones & all the other things) what do we get, from it? And what are the benefits? It becomes wholesome or unwholesome?

Seeing the Buddha, arahats, noble beings & monks is the best seeing.

There people can get 7 benefits from it. These are for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of dukkha & discontent, for acquiring the true method & for the realization of Nibbana. All these are true values. If we go & see a white elephant or a lovely panda bear in China, just seeing only. And no other benefits to us. There are many worldly phenomena & matters are like this. We waste a lot of money & time for them.

In the Buddha Kassapa's time our bodhisatta (i.e., the past life of Gautama Buddha) was a young brahman named Jotipala. Even though he was born at the time of a Buddha & developed his perfections to become a Buddha was quite mature (already more than 4 incalculable aeons - asankhyeyakappa) still did not want to see the Buddha Kassapa & the monk.

Because he was a brahman & his own view of Brahmanism. Anyhow, his best friend Ghatikara, the potter forced him to see the Buddha. After seeing the Buddha & listening his talk & became a monk.

Sariputta before he met the Buddha & had a wrong teacher Sanjaya. One day he met Ven. Asajita who was on his alms round. Ven. Asajita's serenity, graceful deportment attracted him. So, he approached him & asked about his teacher & the teaching.

At night time interview he presented his experience to the teacher. At the end the teacher said; "I think you come to the end. But don't believe what I say this. You can try out yourself." And then he taught him how to enter into the fruition state. He ^{was succeeded} in the test & continued to develop it in Italy. Then he could do it for many hours. Later he wrote a letter to the venerable & said that now he was teaching ripassane in St. Petersburg, Russia.

There are many things to say about seeing contemplatives, not only on spiritual practice. Sometimes lay people come to see monks for their worldly problems. Monks who are wise & have a lot of knowledge in Dhamma can ^{give} a lot of help. There were many teachings by the Buddha on worldly matters. If we carefully study & research will admire & amaze the great wisdom of the Buddha. No human or any living being (i.e. any heavenly being - deva or brahma god) can surpass him.

many worldly matters & problems which are ^{on} family, society or international levels can be solved in the Buddha's teachings. This is not an exaggeration. Only most people do not know his teachings & not using it. That all the human problems arise in the world. Most human sufferings are unnecessary, except the natural ones - such as ageing, sickness & death. Most human problems & sufferings are mind made. Therefore understanding & penetrating our mind can stop all these unfortunate things happen. Seeing contemplatives, wise, sages & noble beings is not an ordinary or insignificant matter. It is a highest blessing & protection - to oneself & others.

Most human beings are worry & fear about ageing, sickness & death. These unpleasant things are part of nature & can teach us a lot how to live a meaningful life. With proper & wise attention & contemplation can develop our mind & life. From ageing, sickness & death can develop love, compassion, kindness, concern for others. Because we are ^{forgiveness &} in the same situations. When someone is in a situation of terminally ill or dying, good to see the monks or invite them to see the patient or dying person. It can help to alleviate the mental suffering & a good death. In the Suttas the Buddha & some of his great disciples were helping the sick & dying persons whether monks or lay disciples.

There is a sutta in the Anguttara Nikaya called Anuttariya Sutta. The meaning of anuttariya is noble because nothing is better than that. The Buddha taught 6 kinds of them. For e.g., people are looking & choosing for the best things. Sometime the Buddha's views & worldlings are opposite. The Buddha's views were always noble & seeing matters in complete & far reaching. Worldlings not seeing things in longer terms. Therefore they have short sighted views, & concern only the present. Wise, sages & noble beings are seeing things & matters in depth & right views.

At last Ven. Asajita gave him a short instruction on Dhamma & became a stream-winner at the spot.

There was another story about Angulimala, the notorious robber & murderer who killed people for their fingers. The day he met her his mother, he needed only a finger to complete his mission for one thousand fingers. The Buddha knew all these & came in between them. Without seeing the Buddha he was sure to kill his mother for the finger he needed. The Buddha scolded him for killing his own mother. This was a very heavy unwholesome action & would fall into Hell after death. By seeing the Buddha & listening to his teaching, he gave up his evil deeds. Later ordained as a monk & practised became an arahat. Therefore seeing the samanera is the best seeing (Dassanam anuttariya) & the highest blessing (mangalam-uttamam).

For people who do not have the chances for seeing samaneras they need to be very careful how to use the many medias. Because there are many unwholesome things & matters going on. Out of greed & hatred some foolish people using the medias exploit & harm others. Even politicians or some leaders using them to harm opposition. With the help of science to harm people are more easier & great consequences them before.

On Savanānuttariyam

2. With Listening: Dhammasavanam anuttariya. Unsurpassed hearing

We have ears & hear many types of sounds & voices. Most people not using the ears properly or wisely. Therefore there are a lot of noise pollution going on. Even pollution of the ear can be divided into 2; material sound & human voices or words or speech. In modern day noise pollutions are a big problems. Human life is not quite anymore.

There are noises or sound from machines, animals (especially dogs barking) & music, etc. I have no doubt all these noisy & unpleasant sounds harm the physical body if subject too much to them. There were already research or experiment to water to sounds & voices & voices. Noisy, ugly & unwholesome speech made the water crystals very ugly & disgusting. Gentle, sweet, polite & peaceful sound & speech made the water crystals beautiful & majestic. Worse than these pollutions is speech pollution from the medias; televisions, movies, musics, etc. If we use them in an unwholesome ways one creates unwholesome kammas & also polluted the listener's mind.

It harmful to both; the entertainers & the viewers. (& hearing & seeing). There are many ~~harmful ways~~ kinds of harm going on by medias which are using by evil people. It is more quicker & easier to harm people them before. Now you can kill hundred of people in a second.

Most people like to listen musics & singing. They only have temporary pleasure. They want to hear strange things & gossips. Therefore there are a lot of meaningless entertainments in medias. What benefits we get

from them. Do these things can free us from dukkha? Do these things & matters can reduce our defilements? There are a lot of things not helping our many problems & difficulties in life. If we get lost in them even become harmful. Wholesome things & matters are medicines of the mind & become education & unwholesome ones become poisons.

For living beings, especially humans, seeing & listening are very important parts of our lives. How to use them properly & wisely is very important? The rupabrahma gods They use only the eyes & ears. nose, tongue & body sensations are no use for them. Why is that? Because their minds are pure & they only need the eyes to see the Buddha & noble beings & with ears listen to their Dhamma. These 2 factors of seeing contemplatives & listening Dhamma are prerequisites for practising Dhamma, & enlightenment. There were a lot of stories in the suttas mentioned about monks & lay people who met contemplatives & listened Dhamma & their lives were changed enormously. For the Buddha the best or noble listening was on Dhamma - Dhammasava-nana-anuttariya - Dhammasavannuttariyam

3. With Getting or Attaining Things: Labhanuttariyam - Unsurpassed gain

This is a very wide subject to talk about. There are many kinds how human beings want to get or attain. These things are depending on their desire & interest. Some of them are necessary to have & some are not. Some of the things are for pleasure & some are for knowledge. People use money, time & effort to get them. Some of them after attaining it lead to stress, problems & suffering; e.g., money, power. Because people cannot use them properly or wisely. And then by losing or lost them lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair. Nowadays human was crazy to get are money. What for? For indulging in sensual pleasure. People are become more & more discontent. So they do all sorts of things & matters to satisfy their desire & craving. This harm themselves & others, even to nature.

For the Buddha to have or get faith (sawika) was in the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha was the best thing to have or get - labhanuttariya. Faith in the Buddha's Teaching had levels. It can be blind faith, ordinary faith & confident or conviction (the highest level). The Buddha never encouraged the lowest level of blind faith which could be false or true, & could be dangerous & harmful, e.g. some modern cults. Buddhists should have ordinary faith & confident or conviction. Start the Buddha's Teachings & ordinary faith, come from study, research & wise reflection. With this faith can have interest & follow the teachings & practice. By practice & have direct experiences & confirm the truth of the Buddha-Dhamma.

And then will come confident or unshakable true faith. If someone declare himself has true faith & still harming oneself & others only has blind faith or wrong faith, whatever their religious backgrounds. Only someone has intelligent faith & can has interest in the Dhamma. Although faith (saddha) is not included in the Noble Eight Fold Path, it has closed relationship to wisdom or discernment or right view. As spiritual faculties they have to be in balance.

In one of Mogok Sayadaw's talks, he said about faith. [The Buddha answered to some questions put by the fierce spirit Alavaka were:

Through conviction (saddha) one crosses over the flood (i.e., the flood of wrong view - ditthi). Through heedfulness (apamāda - mindful diligence in wholesomeness),^{crosses} the rugged sea. Through persistence one overcomes dukkha. Through discernment, a person is purified.] So the Buddha taught to Alavaka that c conviction closed the doors to woeful planes. This is the faith of a stream-winner (sotapana), or unshakable faith. By faith cross over the flood of wrong view. You must believe that it leads to stream entry (sotapatti magga). Why you do the practice? You do it because believe in the Buddha's words & the teacher's words. If the Buddha & teacher said; you must see impermanence & ^cthe practice will discern it. You discern it because practice & faith. For doing the practice let faith leading you. Another point what the Buddha taught was c heedfulness (mindfulness) could cross over the 4 floods. (i.e from sotapanna to arahat). In the round of existences (samsara) the most miserable places are the 4 woeful planes. The sufferings there are unthinkable. If we get whatever wealth & power will never safe for falling into it. Therefore the Buddha said that faith (saddha) was the best gain attaining - labhanuttariyam

^c 4. With Learning/Training: Sikkhanuttariyam - unsurpassed training.

This is a very interesting & wide subject need to contemplate thoroughly. There are a lot to say on this matters. Human being quite different from other beings is in knowledge. It starts from birth to death. Humans are thirst for knowledge. But does everyone get the right knowledge? So learning, training & knowledge are education. Generally can separate into 2 groups; unwholesome & wholesome knowledges or educations. Even some worldly wholesome knowledge can become unwholesome by misusing it, e.g. pesticide & other chemicals. Only the training & Buddha-Dhamma is perfectly wholesome. At least a human being has a knowledge for livelihood.

For this purpose we have to start school education from young. But most human beings neglect the important of basic education or training, i.e. moral education. Without this fundamental training whatever worldly knowledges may be can lead to problems & sufferings. The world arms, industries in many super powers; U.S, Russia, China, France, etc. based on sciences & technologies. Science, Technology &

economics should be used for the welfare of human race to bring peace, happiness & harmony. Many developed countries use a lot of money, men power, times & earth resources produce weapons of mass destruction to create problems & conflicts around the world. If humans not using than what is the point to produce them. So they have to create problems & conflicts for using it. These leaders & governments create evil karma for themselves to harm others, but they take it as great fortunes. These money can help poor & underdeveloped countries to have a better life. If we cannot solve the poverty in many countries, & civil wars, refugees & economic migrants problems will never stop. These problems have already happened in across Europe. Competition in nuclear arsenals is also a very stupid & crazy thing a human can do. It cannot bring anything good to human race, but only dangers & destruction.

Therefore fundamental knowledge or moral education is extremely important. Without this foundation & family life & society even wholesome knowledge is a problem. So human knowledges are solving poverty & problems & not using it for selfishness, exploitation & harming. Therefore human worldly knowledge has 2 kinds; wholesome & unwholesome. There is also a special knowledge or transcendental knowledge or super-knowledge only came from a Buddha. Even wholesome worldly knowledge using it wrongly, stupidly ^{brings} give a lot of harms. These knowledges are based on craving, greed, ill-will, hatred, delusion, ignorance.

Therefore the Buddha said that all worldly pleasure came from worldly knowledge are low & ignoble. These cannot free one from round of existence (samsara), not free from dukkha, not make the mind calm & peaceful, cannot develop penetrative knowledge, not lead to right knowing, not leading to the goal of Nibbana which known by the ariyas.

Sometimes people are too ignorant & stupid that they study, learn & imitate everything. There was an interesting ghost (petta) story on this point.

Miserable Strange Ghost:

One day Ven. Mahamoggallana came down from the Gijjhakuta hill in Rajagakha. On the way he met a very strange miserable ghost (petta). This petta head was pounding in many iron hammers & fell ^{on} to the ground. And then it became normal again & the ghost got up again. As soon as he got up all the iron hammers fell on his head again. It went on like this for non-stop. So, the Venerable asked him; "Oh! man why are you like a crazy one. Like a deer the whole body is trembling in fear & running to here & there. Indeed you had done evil deed in the past & because of that crying loudly in miserable voice. Who are you?"

Before the hammers appeared again & struck his head he answered to the Ven. as follow; "I am a peta & because of my evil deed I have been fallen into hell before. The result of my evil deed is not finished yet. So I have to continue for the first as a peta. Everyday my suffering is 60,000 iron hammers are falling on my head & ^{breaking it} broken into pieces." The Ven. asked him; "Of the 3 actions, physical, verbal & mental which action did you commit?" Then the peta described his evil deed.

"Ven. Sir, in one of my past lives as a man, I saw a Pacceka Buddha Sunitta. He was in meditation under a tree which near the bank of the Ganges River. At that time I have just learnt my skill of throwing pebbles. For testing my skill I threw pebble on his head & it broke his head & died on the spot. Because of this evil deed, now I was pounding ^{on} hammers ~~to~~ my head the iron hammers are pounding on my head."

This miserable story warning human beings to use their many worldly knowledges properly & wisely. Not all worldly knowledges are good to learn. Especially the knowledge of politic, science & economic are very important & should use them properly & wisely. It can bring peace, happiness & progress to human race. Also it can lead to the destruction of human race. We can see this in today world. Even temperature is rising up to the destructive level, a leader of a super power, out ^{of} selfishness & greedy neglect of the agreement his country had already agreed signed before. Whatever someone's motives are if he done evil deeds himself or asks others to do it, all of them have to bear the results of actions. For e.g., a leader orders to drop a hydrogen bomb on a city. The results of the evil deed not only the pilot drops the bomb, the leader & the scientists who create this matter happens have to bear the evil results.

For a Buddha the best training - sikkhanittatiya was in morality, concentration & discernment - sila, samadhi & panna. It is called supreme training - adisikha. Why is that? Because it gives rise to vision, to knowledge, leads to peace, to direct knowledge (i.e. insight), to enlightenment, to Nibbana. But all worldly knowledges & trainings for craving in indulgence of sensual pleasures lead to sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & the whole mass of sufferings. So the Buddha said, the best & supreme knowledge & training was sila, samadhi & panna.

5. On Supporting: Pārisarīyanuttariyam - Unsurpassed service

There are many ways of supporting & materials to people. Some are doing as a duty & some as profession. The types of people we need to support or helping are the Buddha & the sangha, parents, family members, relatives, elderly people, sick people (patients), etc.

As profession can make ^{money as} a livelihood also, as e.g., doctors, nurses.

For the Buddha, the best supporting was to a Buddha & the sangha.

Why is that? Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha are the best treasures, refuges & blessing & very rare indeed. Only a Buddha arises

Only a few living beings can see the Buddha & Sangha & have the chance to

know the Dhamma. How difficult to has the chance for a Bodhi to arise can be imagined? Our bodhisatta (i.e., Gautama Buddha)

started his perfections (paramis) during the Dipankara Buddha's time.

After the Dipinkara Buddha & Kondanna Buddha arose. The time period between them was one incalculable aeons as antahayakappa

between them was one incalculable *deva* *asambheyyakappa*. After Kondanītā Bodha & Mangala Bodha arose. Between them

was one incalculable among & no other Buddhas. From Anomadassī
Buddha to Raugmuttera Buddha was one incalculable ages & in

Buddha to favourittara Buddha was one incalculable aeon, & no other Buddhas. Buddha Gautama developed his perfections for

4 incalculable aeons & 100,000 aeons. During 3 incalculable aeon

only 6 Buddhas arose. Supporting for others are wholesome acts
and it. But Their qualities are different. In Their results we

2 merits. But their qualities are different. So their results are also. By supporting the Buddha & Sangha we can close to them &

also. by supporting the Buddha & Sangha we can close to them & learn the Dhamma & by following it we live a frugal life & even

can transcend dikkha. Not only good in the beginning (present life),

also good ^{for} next life & sanisara. With the help of The Buddha & Dhamma we can obtain wisdom. All the worldly problems &

the Dhamma we develop wisdom. All the worldly problems & mental suffering come from not supporting the Buddha & Sangha

That we do not have the chances to meet them & learn the Dhamma

So we have wrong teachings & wrong views & based on them doing

A lot of unwholesome action's in mind, speech & physically.

In the world what is more important than quenching dukkha? This can be possible only by the help of Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha.

unparalleled power &
unsurpassed recollection

Anusatānuttarayam

6. On Recollection or Remembering: Anusati-anuttariya.

There are many things & matters human beings recollect & remember them. Because there are many objects connecting the 6 sense-doors, some living beings, material objects & mental objects. Most of them can be ignoble, lowly & not lead to peace & happiness. And not bring benefits to humans.

craving

On Anything & matters, recollect or remembering them & greed, hate, ill-will, etc is unwholesome. There are many examples to give, as e.g. on sensual pleasures & objects; someone ^{on whom} one hates; someone has died, one attached to, etc. We cannot use our memory & recollection blindly & without control. If very often, become a habit & character. Surely unwholesome dharmas never bring happiness & peace. Near death is very important in one life. Dying moment determines one's future rebirth. With a bad memory leads to painful rebirth. With bad recollections defile our mind & increase our defilement. Untrained mind is out of control & running to the past & future things & matters. And then we do not know what the mind is thinking. So carry away by them. We need sati-mindfulness & proper attention. With both & proper attention can develop wisdom. The things & matters themselves are neither bad nor good. It depends on the mind reaction. But still we need to practise sense restraint. Because most human beings latent & thickness of defilements. Kilesa is like a tiger hidden in a bush & waiting for the preys. Without restraint will kill us at anytime.

The Buddha taught us the best recollections are were the following 10 recollections - annasamuttariya. These are:-

(1) Recollection of the Buddha

This is one thing that - when developed & pursued - leads solely to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to stilling, to direct knowledge to self-awareness, to Nibbāna.

(2) Recollection of the Dhamma

This is to Nibbāna.

(3) Recollection of the Saṅga

This is to Nibbāna.

(4) Recollection of virtue

This is to Nibbāna.

(5) Recollection of generosity

This is to Nibbāna.

(6) Recollection of the devas

This is to Nibbāna.

(7) Mindfulness of in & out breathing

This is to Nibbāna.

(8) Mindfulness of death

This is to Nibbāna.

(9) Mindfulness immersed in the body

This is to Nibbāna.

(18) Recollection of Stilling

This is to Nibbāna.

The 10 recollections a set of meditation themes that highlight the positive role, memory & thought play in training the mind. Only 7 of them are actually recollections (anusati). These are; no. ①, ②, ③, ④, ⑤, ⑥ & ⑩. The other 3 are mindfulness practices (sati). The Pali words for mindfulness & recollection are intimately related. (For detailed on these 10 recollections refer to Ajahn Thanissaro Bhikkhu - "A Meditator's Tools"). All these 10 recollections; when developed & pursued, lead solely to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to stilling, to direct knowledge, to self-awareness & to Nibbāna that the best recollections or noble recollections.

Therefore Buddhists should know the best or noble things & matters & choose & follow them. These are lessons for our life. The Buddha laid down the standards to distinguish ignoble or in noble, low or high, bad or good, not benefit or benefit, etc. These were mentioned in the First Discourse of the Buddha - Setting in Motion the Wheel of the Dhamma. The negative things & matters; which are low, vulgar, the ways of worldlings, ignoble, unbeneficial & painful.

The positive things & matters; which give rise to vision, to knowledge, lead to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment & to Nibbāna.

For us the most important standards are things & matters bring benefits, peace & happiness. Nowadays, because of material development or progress there are many things & matters: some are good & some are bad. With self & money centered that, more bad than good. Therefore we should know the Buddha-Dhamma & doing things rightly & wisely.

So seeing contemplatives is important part of Buddhist life. Therefore the Buddha taught that this was the highest protection & blessing in life. At least the benefit of contact & Samanas are can distinguish unwholesome & wholesome dharmas. Nowadays, even some leaders & politicians do not have this quality. Therefore there are a lot of turmoil going on in some countries.

(19) Discussing the Dhamma on timely occasions

Practising meditation is can be started from the 25th blessing of Hearing the Dhamma on timely occasions. One of the factor for realization of Dhamma is listening of Dhamma. Here the blessing is discussing the Dhamma, which has some differences from hearing Dhamma. But they are closely related. Without hearing Dhamma we do not have the knowledge for practice & discuss Dhamma in others. Here both sides discuss what they know & do not know yet. In this way we can part ^{or share} knowledge to each other.

It can increase one's knowledge & progress in practice. Why practising meditation can be said, start from listening Dhamma on timely occasions? According to The Buddha, Dhammasavana - Listening of Dhamma has 5 factors. 1. Listening & attention 2. Taking notes or remembering of it 3. Reflecting on them 4. Understanding of them 5. After understanding of them & put it into practice, i.e. sīla, samadhi & panna.

Discussing of Dhamma has the same 5 benefits of hearing of Dhamma. These are: 1. Hearing things never heard before 2. Have clear knowledge 3. Overcoming doubts 4. Have right views 5. One's mind grows serene. There is no doubt that discussion or dialogue on Dhamma has great benefits. There were many evidences & stories in the suttas. Even non-Buddhists, i.e. outsiders has great benefits & their lives were changed. Before they had wrong views & after dialogue had right views & knew how to live their lives. Some even became monks & realized Dhamma.

Dialogue between faiths are also very important. Especially nowadays more urgently need. The main goal of all faiths is peace, harmony & happiness. The basic foundation is nearly the same, i.e. morality; To become a good human being. Because of misunderstanding & misinterpretation one's own & other faiths create problems & mistrust. There is also conceit - superior syndrome. Because of this defilement some people worship the same God, killing & harming other faiths.

Today human morality is going down very quickly like a thermometer. Faiths dialogue can help to solve the problem of moral degeneration. We can learn from each other & helping each other to solve the society problems. In this respect Buddha-Dhamma can offer a lot.

Dialogue between world leaders, politicians are also very important for their countries stability & the world. Out of greed & selfishness some leaders & politicians only make their countries great & not concern for others. They have ill-will & capitalist syndrome of growth, profits & competition. Greedy, ill-will, envy, ~~avarice~~ avarice, exploitation, etc. will never bring harmony, peace & happiness to one's own country & the world. Look at today world situations & we know the outcomes of unwholesome dhamma. Human cannot solve the worldly problems & confrontation & competition, & will never bring harmony, peace & happiness to oneself & others. Because greed, ill-will, delusion are the root of all suffering. Why should politicians & economists destroy themselves & the world just for sensual pleasures? The price for sensual pleasures is far more greater than a momentary pleasure. You have to pay ^{we for our} evil deeds in hell, as animals & ghosts. These are indescribable sufferings just only for sensual pleasures.

Dhamma discussion & dialogue are mostly practising by elderly Buddhists. It has a long tradition by Burmese Buddhists who have some Abhidhamma knowledge. They are arguing on some Abhidhamma Doctrines. Tha-pye-kan Sayadaw said that youth & young people also should practise it. He said, we should arrange Dhamma discussion for them. We can say it is a kind of Dhamma education. It is like the Chinese culture & moral standards. Some Chinese Dynasties followed them prosper & last longer. All the worldly problems & sufferings can be related to the not knowing the Buddha-Dhamma & not practising it. There is no one understanding & penetrating the human mind & its nature, ^{better & more} completely them, the Buddha. The suttas testified this point. For 45 years he was wandering & staying on the earth to teach every kind & type of human beings. Sometimes heavenly beings came down to ask him questions to clear about their doubts. Arranging Dhamma discussing among the youth can have great benefits for them. With the knowledge of Dhamma which represent intelligence & wisdom, they will know what is right & wrong, beneficial & not beneficial, proper & not proper, etc. They can also have the power of how to feel & solve the problems & difficulties in their life. Dhamma discussing is one of the causes of progress in wisdom. We can see this important point in some suttas. In Dhamma dialogue & discussing should not make arguments & criticism criticisms. Instead it should be exchanged knowledge & learnt from each other. Regarding to listen Dhamma talks, there are some differences.

In listening Dhamma, some of them one we already know. It is also we cannot know more than in the talks. If have doubts cannot solve the problems. Therefore it is very important to have questions & answers sessions after the talks. This practice is quite common in the west, but in Burma does not has this kind of tradition. So Burmese teachers should give the opportunity to Dhamma listeners, to enrich their knowledge & solve their doubts. Here I want to present the benefit of Dhamma discussing or dialogue from a sutta.

Discourse on Khemaka: Khemaka Sutta.

A number of elder monks were dwelling at Kosambi in Gacosita's Park. Now on that occasion Ven. Khemaka was living at Jujube Tree Park, sick & gravely ill. He was at that time ^{an} aranagami (had the 3rd stage of enlightenment). In an evening these monks emerged from their practice & asked Ven. Dasaka (may be the youngest monk) to visit Ven. Khemaka, & asked him about his illness. Ven. Khemaka told Ven. Dasaka that his illness was not better & strong painful feeling (vedana) increased. And then Ven. Dasaka returned & reported the news to the elder monks.

The elder monks ^{for} the 2nd time sent back Ven. Dāsaka to ask Ven. Khemaka again. There were the 5 aggregates (khandhas), i.e. form, feeling, perception, volitional formation & consciousness. These were subjecting to clinging.

They wanted to ask Ven. Khemaka was, did he regard anything as self or as belonging to self among these 5 aggregates subject to clinging.

Ven. Khemaka's answer was, he did not regard anything as self or as belonging to self among these 5 aggregates. And then, Ven. Dāsaka returned back & reported the answer.

The elder monks ^{for} the 3rd time sent back Ven. Dāsaka to ask Ven. Khemaka again. If he was not clinging to any of the 5 aggregates as self or belonging to self, then he was an arahant, one who taints (asavas) were destroyed. Ven. Khemaka answered that even though he did not take any of the 5 aggregates as self or belonging to self, he was not an arahant yet, one who taints were destroyed. But the notion of "I am" had not yet vanished in him in relation to the 5 aggregates. And he did not regard anything among them as "This I am".

(According to Mogok Sayadawgyi, Ven. Khemaka was only an aranami, he did not take each of the aggregate as self or belonging to self. But he had not yet eradicated ignorance-avijja which sustained a residual conceit & desire "I am" in relation to the 5 aggregates.) And then, Ven. Dāsaka returned back & reported the answer.

The elder monks after they heard the answer, still not clear what Ven. Khemaka had said before. So they sent back Ven. Dāsaka to ask for the 4th time; did he speak of form-rupakkhanda as "I am" or apart from form, as "I am"? The other aggregates also in the same manner. Therefore Ven. Dāsaka returned & asked the question.

Then, Ven. Khemaka was leaning on his staff & Ven. Dāsaka went to see the elders.

He explained to the elders that he did not take form as "I am" or apart from form as "I am"? The other aggregates also in the same way. But he still held the whole 5 aggregates as "I am", instead of each of them as "I am". He gave a simile for this point. There were the scents of blue, red & white lotus. Did the scents belong to petals, or the stalks or to the pistils? The right answer was the scent belonged to the flower. In the same way he did not take any of the 5 khandhas as "I am", but to the whole 5 aggregates as "I am".

He continued to explain for them. Even though, a noble disciple had abandoned the 5 lower fetters (i.e., anagamini, fetters are called Samyojana). There are 10 fetters: 1. identity view, 2. doubt, 3. the distorted grasp of rules & vows, 4. sensual desire, 5. ill-will, 6. lust for form, 7. lust for formless, 8. conceit, 9. restlessness, 10. ignorance. Anagami had eradicated the first 5 fetters.)

, still in relation to the 5 aggregates subjected to clinging, there lingered in him a residual conceit "I am", a desire "I am", an underlying tendency "I am" that had not yet been uprooted. So the yogi ^{had} dwelt to contemplate the rise & fall in the 5 aggregates subjected to clinging & the residual conceit & the underlying tendency "I am", came to be uprooted.

Ven. Khemaka explained it in a simile. A cloth had become soiled & stained. And gave it to a laundryman. He would scour it evenly in cleaning salt, lye, or cowdung. And then rinsed it in clean water. Even though the cloth became pure & clean, still had the residual smell of cleaning salt, lye or cowdung. So had to put it in a sweet scented casket & all the residual smell of salt, lye or cowdung had vanished. At the end Ven. Khemaka & all the 60 monks became arahants. Because, at the same time of discussing Dhamma they contemplated their khandhas. There were some points interesting to contemplate. According to Mogok Sayadawgyi; the first time Ven. Dasaika went to see Ven. Khemaka, all of the elders were worldlings. After the 2nd time they were once-returners (sakadagamins), because each time they got the answers from Ven. Khemaka & practised accordingly. After the 3rd time they did not very clear about Ven. Khemaka's answer. Therefore at the 4th time he himself went to them & explained Dhamma. At the end all of them finished the practice.

In his commentary on the Mangala Sutta, The-pye-gon Sayadaw gave the Mahagosinha Sutta - the Great Gosinga Wood Discourse for the Dhamma Discussing. (from Majjima Nikaya).

Mahagosinha Sutta:

At one time, the Buddha & some of his chief & great disciples stayed in the Gosinga Sal Wood. Then in an evening, Ven. Mahāmoggallāna, Mahākassapa, Anuruddha, Revata & Ananda went together to Ven. Sāriputta for his talk. After they arrived there instead of giving his Dhamma talk, first he asked Ven. Ananda the following question.

The Gosinga forest was beautiful & peaceful at night. The sal trees were in full blooms. The fragrant scent of the flowers diffused in the night. The question was what kind of monk could grace the Gosinga forest. Each of the monks followed gave or offered their own views accordingly to their outstanding or foremost qualities:

Ven. Ananda's Answer: In this matter, a monk who had heard a great deal, retained & accumulated the Dhamma. He remembered them, recited them fluently, reflected on them & penetratingly comprehended them in wisdom. That monk taught people (monks, nuns, lay men & lay women) for the uprooting of latent defilements (kilesa). Such a monk could grace the Gosinga sal wood.

Ven. Revata's Answer (Sariputta's youngest brother): In this matter, a monk who delighted in solitary seclusion, enjoyed seclusion, strived constantly for tranquility, endowed in insight & devoted to practice in secluded places. Such a monk could grace the Gosinga sal forest.

Ven. Anuruddha's Answer: In this matter, a monk who could survey a thousand world systems celestial or divine eye which was extremely clear, far more surpassed ^{in the} telescopes of the scientists. Such a monk could grace Gosinga sal forest.

Ven. Mahakassapa's Answer: He was older than the Buddha in age. Because of his background before ordained & austere practices in the holy life, the Buddha took him very highly & praised him a lot. He was the only monk who the Buddha exchanged robes & him. After the Buddha passed away preserved his Dhamma for original & pure from ^{the} contaminations. Today Buddhists owed him a lot for his effort.

In this matter, a monk who practised the austerity of forest-dwelling & praised the virtues of it. Taking only food received on the alms round & — — — — . Wearing discarded pieces of cloth & — — — — . Keeping only 3 robes for wear & — — — — . Who was of few desire & praised the virtues of having only few desire. — — — — contented & praised the virtues — contentment. Who sought seclusion, stayed a-loof from people, strived energetically in practice, completely endowed in morality, concentration & wisdom, attained liberation & endowed in the reflective knowledge of that liberation. Such a monk could grace the Gosinga sal wood.

Ven. Mahamoggallana's Answer: In this matter, there were 2 monks discussing the higher Dhamma. Each asked the other question & each answered questions put by the other without difficulty, as among Dhamma discussions between Ven. Sariputta & Ven. Mahakotthita. Such a monk could grace the Gosinga sal forest. After he had given his answer & Ven. Mahamoggallana asked Ven. Sariputta of his own view on this matter.

Ven. Sariputta's Answer: In this case, a monk who had mastery over his mind that whatever attainment (there are 2 attainments) i.e. absorptions-jhanas & fruition states-phalas) he wished to enter for at anytime he could do it quite easily. Such a monk could grace the Gosinga sal wood.

All of them had different answers, but the Taste of Dhamma was only one. They answered them from their own characters & preferences. They wanted to know how the Buddha responded them. So they went to see the Blessed One. The Buddha said, ^{that} all of them answered properly & praised them. All answers were well spoken & justified. And then, the Buddha gave his view on this matter.

The Buddha's Answer: In this case, the monk returned from the round of alms-food & had finished his alms-meal. Now then, sat down in crossed legs to practise mindfulness in meditation, satipatthana bhavana & the determination that he would not get up from sitting until his mind was freed from the clinging of defilements-kilesa. This monk could grace the Gosinga sal forest.

All these kinds of monks mentioned in this sutta still exist into this day. Thank to the monks who preserved the Dhamma & practices supported by the laity in Buddhist countries such as Burma & Thailand. Burma continues to produce monks like Ven. Ananda who can recite the Tipitaka by heart. Thai forest tradition still produce monks like Ven. Mahākassapa. Burma continues to produce excellent scholars monks & meditation teachers. So monks & laity alike can learn the Dhamma & practices & many meditation centers continue to arise. These meditation centers give the cherries for anyone who wants to practice to end dukkha in this life which the Buddha emphasized in his answer. Even we can say all the human problems & sufferings come from not knowing the Dhamma & not practising it. So for every human being nothing is more important than study & practise the Dhamma. Listening & discussing of Dhamma on timely occasions are pre-requisites for it. So the Buddha said that, discussing the Dhamma on timely occasions was the highest blessing & protection.

(30) + (31) Austerity, celibacy,

(32) Seeing the Noble Truths;

(33) Realizing Nibbana.

This is the highest blessing.

(30) Austerity + (31) Celibacy:

The Pali word tapo or tapa means to extinguish defilements by striving hard. Here translated as austerity. Brahmacariya is celibacy or life of celibacy or holy life. The meanings of tapa & brahmacariya are not much different. According to Tapye-kam Sayadaw, here austerity has to take sila & celibacy as samatha-vipassana (concentration-insight) practices. In Pali text tapa was commenting in many ways; a name for restraint, the ascetic practices (shuntaiga), energy, patience (khanti), brahmacariya, etc. So here to take both austerity & celibacy as sila, samadhi & pañña practices or the noble eight fold path. In this Mangala Sutta, patience (khanti) is ^{also} tapa. The holy life-brahmacariya is the practices of a monk i celibacy & other holy practices.

In life when encounter in dangers & sufferings tapa & brahmavacara or sila, samadhi & panna are true refuges. Other things & matters are not true refuges, for example during sickness & dying. In the Sagathavagga, Devadatta Samyutta, Subrahma Discourse; the Buddha said to the young deva (deity) Subrahma as follow. Not apart from enlightenment (bojjhangas) austerity (tapa), restraint of the sense faculties (indriya samvara) & relinquishing all (sabbanissagga), the Buddha could not see any safety for all living beings. Why the Buddha said these Dhamma to him? There were interesting Dhammas we can learn from this discourse.

Stress of the young deity:

Once the young deity Subrahma & his thousand nymphs went to a flower garden for amusements. 500 nymphs went up to the trees; plucked the flowers & threw it down for the other nymphs under the trees. They made flower wreaths & others. Even they may be singing & dancing & musics. After sometimes passed by the voices in the trees became quiete. Because the nymphs on the trees suddenly expired & were immediately reborn in the Avici hell. Subrahma realized it & checked in his divine eyes & saw them suffered in hell. He examined his own life & saw that he & the other nymphs would die in 7 days. They would encounter the same fate. The young deva in utter fear & came to the Buddha for help. So the Buddha taught him the Dhamma. Perhaps he has acquired a compelling sense of urgency (Samvega) & practice & was established in the fruit of stream-entry.

The Buddha taught 5 natural laws or fixed orders (niyama). These were; 1. utu niyama - fixed order of temperature
 2. bija niyama - fixed order of genetics 3. kamma niyama - fixed order of actions 4. citta niyama - fixed order of the mind 5. Dhamma niyama - fixed order of phenomena. Scientists & psychologists are excepting of kamma niyama, more or less they know the others. Kamma starts the beginning of a being life. It decides the inferior & superior, low & high status of a being. It leads a being to degenerate & progress. It creates suffering & happiness of a being, etc. We can find all these important & valuable teachings only in the Buddha Dhamma.

The Buddha divided the kamma in 4 ways & their functions.

1. Reproductive kamma
2. Supportive kamma
3. Habitual kamma
4. Destructive — .

Here we have to understand destructive kamma (upaghata kamma) in 2 ways; positive & negative. For example, a powerful wholesome kamma destroys the unwholesome kamma. The finger's garland bandit Angulimala had killed a lot of people, when he become an arahant, this heavy wholesome kamma destroyed all the results of unwholesome kamma he had done before. For the destructive negative kamma we can give the example of Devadatta - the Buddha's cousin.

He had jhana & psychic power. But after he had ill-will & persuaded the young prince to kill his father King Bimbisara. And then tried to murder the Buddha & split the sangha. So he lost all his spiritual power & at last fell into Mahāvici hell.

Here the 500 nymphs fell into hell was had connection to their past destructive kamma. The law & working of kamma was one of the inconceivable phenomena. One of the great disadvantages of heavenly realm's are the beings there do not have the chances to cultivate goodness or wholesome merits. They enjoy the wholesome results of their past kammas. Therefore the deities or heavenly beings understand the results or benefits of wholesome karma more than human beings. Because human beings cannot see the results directly like deities. Another important factor ^{is} human beings not only rely on their past kammas but also the present life of their abilities such as right effort & intelligence or wisdom. Right effort & intelligence are more evident than their past kammas for most human beings. Only people who understand the Buddha Dhamma very well no doubt about the important of the results of past kamma. I had heard a Dhamma talk by a Burmese monk on The 3 creators or Gods. He referred them to kamma, effort & wisdom which represented the 3 creators. But most human beings rely or take refuge in outside powers who or which they never seen. Just believe in the prophets or by medium. In the Digha Nikaya, the first discourse mentioned there was: The Nets of Views Discourse. There the Buddha mentioned 62 kinds of wrong views of his time & most of the wrong views were connection to Samatha practices. On the 5 khandhas, the Buddha said that consciousness (*vinnā*) was like a magician. Except the Buddha & arahants all living beings have all the perversions (there are 12) or some of them. The power is not come from outside, but within ourselves. Everyone has the potentiality to transcend things.

The 500 nymphs fell into hell used up all their good past kamma & sensual pleasure in heaven all the time. They did not have the chances to cultivate goodness. So their destructive kamma had the chances to come in so easily. Here another important point to contemplate about is was the utter fear of the young deva went to the Buddha for help. Why he was so frightened & distress? Because he had seen the sufferings of hell & after 7 days he would be there. Some beings are ^{seemingly} very good now, but in their past lives may be not. Therefore all living beings must pay their karmic debts in some ways when time are ripe. In samsara living beings are the slaves of kilesa-defilements. They are doing everything to body, speech & mind for the masters. So we all have these karmic debts to pay for.

There are 2 ways we can pay our karmic debts; i.e. the khamshas (i.e. body & mind) & the noble eight fold path factors (i.e magga or Path Knowledge). With the khamshas & it will never end. Because we'll continue to create kammas in the round of existence. The best & safest ways to pay karmic debts is the Path knowledge or the path factors, which now Subrahma deva was looking for it. Dukkha is our great teacher. Because of dukkha saeca the young deva had acquired a compelling sense of great urgency (strong somvaga) that met the Buddha for help. It is quite natural that beings when they are suffered looking for refuge & help. But how many people have the right search, or know the right ways. Because of very deep ignorance beings in Samsara never find the true refuge. Only the Buddha appeared in the world beings had the chances for it. Even though not many beings had the opportunity for it. The Buddha told him was very clear. He could not help directly not to fall into hell. Buddha only showed the way to transcend distress. Every being has the inner power to transcend it, if he follows in accordance to the Dhamma. Therefore the Buddha taught him; not apart from enlightenment (bojjhangas), austerity (tapa), restraint of the sense faculties (indriya samvara) & relinquishing all (sabbanirodha). This teaching represented the 3 trainings; sila, samadhi & panna. Except that the Buddha could not see any safety for all living beings. Therefore the Buddha said that austerity & celibacy were the highest blessing & protection.

③ Seeing the noble truths:

Seeing & knowing or understanding the 4 Noble Truths is the highest blessing & protection as the Buddha taught. It can be said the most _____ of all others, because it transcends dukkha forever. The others are not transcending dukkha, but create good causes for wandering in the round of existence & supporting beings to have better lives. Before to understand about the 4 Noble Truths, have to understand the others truths. These are; samuti saeca (conventional truth) & paramattha saeca (ultimate truth). For this purpose I will quote from the talk given by Sayadaw Dr. Nandamalabhirava. There are 2 concepts; atthapannatti-concepts-as-meanings, & nama-pannatti-concepts-as-names. Concepts-as-meanings are related to body & form. Concepts-as-names are related to human voices / languages in symbols or letters. There are also concepts which are non-existence, e.g. turtle hairs, rabbit horns, etc. Except the non-existence concepts, other concepts are conventional truth. Ultimate truth has four; matter (rupa), mind or consciousness (citta), mental factors (cetasika) & Nibbana.

The nature of concepts are when the body or form changes & its name also changes, for e.g., cotton to thread to clothes, etc. Analyze them & knowledge & the names disappear, then these are concepts.

As an example, if we taken off each part of a car body, then it is not a car anymore. Objects of ultimate reality are not like this. Even their objects are changed their nature or qualities not change. For e.g., the earth element in the cotton & in the thread are the same, it does not change. The meaning of ultimate reality is unchanging essence.

Concepts are true ^{general} consensus. Ultimate things are true ^{own} nature.

Ledi Sayadawgyi divided the ultimate reality into 2 types;

1. sabbava paramattha - intrinsic reality or ultimate truth (paramattha saccā)
2. ariya paramattha - noble reality or noble truth (ariya saccā).

Even paramattha saccā - natural truth, from the ^{point of} noble truth ^{is} still wrong. From the view point of ultimate reality; if we view analyze & knowledge concepts are wrong. Why the Buddha urged people viewed things & matters & ultimate reality. Because viewing & concepts cannot abandon craving & clinging.

The 3 types of feeling (vedāna); pleasant, painful & neutral feelings (sukha, dukkha & upabheha vedāna) are natural truth. But all of them are truth of unsatisfactoriness (dukkha saccā). The most pleasant jhanic feelings are also dukkha saccā. Because all of them are within the nature of 3 universal characteristic of inconstant, suffering & not-self. These are noble truth. Therefore from the view point of noble truth, natural truth is still wrong for the ariyas.

In the Abhidharma teaching consciousness has 89 types. Combine & jhanic mind of consciousness & become 121 types of mind. Mental factors are 52 types & it rely on the mind. Matters or forms are 28 types.

All the cessation of causes, mind & matter is Nibbana element.

Only all beings arrive to the noble truth & become totally right or perfectly right. So all living beings within these 3 levels of knowledge; the lowest, middle & highest. These are common worldlings (puthujjana), learned disciples of noble beings (suttava ariya savakos) & ariyan (noble beings). This point is very important for Buddhists in names. If we cannot become a learned disciple of noble beings still at the level of common worldling & not a true Buddhist. With the practice & penetrate the 4 Noble Truths will become a noble person or a pure mind. This is the highest or best blessing. There are 2 levels of knowledge of the 4 Noble Truths;

1. Anubodha nāna - Contemplation knowledge & 2. Pativeda nāna - penetrative knowledge. Anu-means contemplate for many times to understand the truth. Pativeda means penetrate thoroughly & no more for knowing.

The Four Noble Truths are the real true all the times and time limits. These are true anywhere & for every being. The Four Noble Truths are very profound & only a Buddha has arisen beings have the chances to know & practise them, except the paccekabuddhas - solitary Buddhas.

The Buddha started his teaching & the 4 Noble Truths in his first discourse The Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta or turning the Wheel of Dhamma. The Blessed One was dwelling at Baranasi in the Deer Park at Isipatana, he delivered this talk to his first 5 disciples - the paticca-vaggi.

Dhamma-cakka - wheel of Dhamma has 2 knowledges in it. These are;

1. The direct penetrative knowledge of the 4 Noble Truths - pativeda nana.
2. The teaching knowledge of the 4 Noble Truths - Sacca desana nana.

Without knowing & direct penetrating the 4 Noble Truths that all living beings are wandering in the round of existence or becoming. The Buddha penetrated the Truths directly by himself (without a teacher) & taught to people. Some people have knowledge, but they can't teach people (e.g.) Paccekabuddhas). The Buddha's pativeda nana arose at Bodhagaya under the Bodhi Tree. He delivered his desana nana at Isipathana.

The Buddha gave talks for 4 reasons. These were; 1. With his own wishes. 2. In accordance & the spiritual faculties of beings 3. Answering the questions 4. Something happened. Here he delivered the discourse for the 2nd reason.

These teachings were never known & never heard before him. We can say it was a new teaching at his time. It was not an easy teaching to convey. To become a Buddha at least it needed 4 incalculable aeons & 10 aeons to fulfilled the perfections (10 paramis). Even in his last life was searching for the truths in a young age & many difficulties (see his autobio in Mahasaccaka Sutta & Atiyapariyesana Sutta, both in Majjima Nikaya).

In the beginning of the discourse, the Buddha said that there were 2 extremes should not be followed by monks. In Pali 2 arayoga; should not be followed & done. In the 2nd time taught about the path should be followed & done. The Buddha always taught 2 things; things should not be done first & things should be done in the end. Because when doing things wrong sometimes difficult to change & the consequences are great. Even not doing right things are better than doing wrong things & matters. In this Mangala Sutta we see this example; not associate & the fools & associate & the wise.

What are the 2 extremes should not be followed?

1. The pursuit of sensual happiness in sensual pleasures.

By pursuing them people have joy & pleasure in short terms & cannot get any knowledge. To enjoy them the price is also great. In the west people are saying - a slogan, "Life is too short, let enjoy yourself" May be consumerism comes to existence from this western philosophy. Extreme economic views & doctrines made the present day world unsustainable in many different ways, morally, socially & environmentally. For money & sensual pleasures human beings can do everything. The price for all these

short or momentary joy & pleasure create a lot of human problems. Nowadays we are talking about quantity & not quality, even including humans. Therefore there are more rubbish, pollutions & immoral human beings. So hedonism is one of the extreme which relates to pleasant feeling & leads to craving (tanha) & the source of dukkha. It is the hindrance for higher or spiritual knowledge. It has 5 faults: hino - which is low; gammo - vulgar or behaviour of common people; pothujjaniko - the way of worldlings or popularism, people are like slaves for their mind; anariyo - ignoble or cannot becomes noble person; anattha - sañchito - unbeneficial or nothing to do; knowledge or Dhamma knowledge. Why the Buddha took sensual pleasures as lowly? Because animals also enjoy & looking for it. Even can see some human beings not better than animals & even can be worse. For e.g., some indigenous people get money support from government become lazy, just eating, drinking (alcohols), sleeping & only for sensual pleasures! Even animals have to search for foods.

2. The pursuit of self-mortification:

The Buddha gave 3 faults for it; dukkha - which is painful; ignoble; and unbeneficial. These self-mortification are still practising in India. Some Christians also have their own self-mortification practices. What about for most common people nowadays? Some people are not for spiritual purpose, but connection & sensual pleasure, such as fame & game. For example; sky diving, scaling very tall-high building, snowy mountain, etc. The results are death, severe injuries, amputations of the bodily parts, etc. If we make a record of human foolishness will never end. Therefore the Buddha said that worldlings were crazy.

3. The middle way - majjhima patipada:

What is the Buddha's middle way? If the way or path is true or right, if necessary need to be sacrificed. It must be beneficial. Some Buddhists misinterpret it as should not practise very hard to tire oneself. The middle way is not a lazy path. How can we get rid of our super thick glue or ignorance & craving in an easy going way? Which is within us inconceivable round of existence as latent tendency (anusaya).

Before the Buddha, man had 2 doctrines (vada); supreme happiness in this life or direct seeing happiness (dittha dhamma - nibbana, indulgence in sensual pleasure in all possible ways; & torturing the physical body). The Buddha's middle way is not sitting on the middle of the fence & doing nothing. If it's necessary happiness should be enjoyed. If necessary for difficult & hardship also has to encounter it. There are some happiness necessary for enjoyment. These higher happiness develop knowledge, as example, all the jhanic happiness or jhana practices or samatha practice. If it's beneficial should go into hardship. If knowledge develop also has to go through it.

This is not one sided-view. The Buddha gave the results of the middle way. These are which gives rise to vision & knowledge (cakkhu karani & nāma karani), which leads to peace, direct knowledge, enlightenment & Nibbāna. The Buddha continued to talk about the Noble Eight Fold Path which was the middle way. These are; combined in the natural eight phenomena, & noble practice. ① Right view - samma-ditthi: This is insight practice & process. Seeing the natural or nature of the mind & body or matter process & its universal characteristics. If not seeing them as man, woman, living being, etc. ② Right intention or thought - samma-sankappa: it supports right view. These 2 factors are leading phenomena of the 8 path factors. The extreme ways are leading by wrong views (miccha-ditthi). In doing things, the views should be right is very important. If not making mistakes & going wrong. The arrangement of the 8 path factors is very meaningful & systematic. The natural phenomena are doing their tasks collectively. After right thought comes right speech ③ Right speech - samma-vaca: after right speech comes right action ④ Right action - samma-kammanto: in thoughts, speech & action we do our jobs in daily life or livelihoods. ⑤ Right livelihood - samma-ajivo: without the foundation of virtue (sīla) cannot attain knowledge. Two feet can stand on the ground the foundation should be stable & solid. In many discourses the Buddha emphasized the important of sīla & its results. Right speech, right action & right livelihood are training in virtue (sīla sikkha).

In a discourse the Buddha taught Mahānāma, his cousin, the benefits of keeping the precepts (sīla) pure. One recollects one's own virtues; untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplutter, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, conducive to concentration (samadhi). At anytime when a disciple of the noble ones is recollecting virtue, his mind is not overcome by passion, aversion & delusion. His mind heads straight & gains joy connected to the Dhamma. In one who is joyful, rapture arises. In one who is rapturous & the body grows calm. One whose body is calm & senses pleasure (sukha). In one sensing pleasure & the mind becomes concentrated.

One's mind & these sīla qualities can endeavour on the meditation practice (both samatha & vipassana). Doing the practice must have right effort ⑥ Right effort - samma-vayāmo: has 4 factors;

1. For the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities, that have not arisen ...
2. For the sake of that have arisen ...
3. For the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have arisen ...
4. for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plentitude, development & elimination of skillful qualities that have arisen.

These 4 aspects of right effort are also termed ① guarding ② abandoning ③ developing & ④ maintaining.

With right effort, doing everything must has right mindfulness. Right mindfulness-samma-sati: It is the most important factor in the practice. The Buddha gave 2 completed mindfulness discourses: Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta in the Dīghanikāya & Satipatthāna Sutta in the Majjhima Nikāya. It seems, these 2 are nearly the same except the first one explained the 4 Noble Truths in more detailed. With right effort & right mindfulness; the mind becomes calm & concentrated which is, ⑧ right concentration - samma-samadhi. With the middle way or Noble Eight Fold Path which give rise to wisdom vision, knowledge, which lead to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbana.

In this discourse The Buddha taught the 5 monks on Samatha & Vipassana in gist. In other discourses The Buddha taught in details. Why The Buddha not taught the monks in details? Because they were spiritually very matured & no need for detailed explanations.

And then the Buddha continued the 4 Noble Truths one by one.

① This is the noble truth of dukkha: (suffering, unsatisfactoriness, stress, etc.) Birth, ageing, illness & death are dukkha.

Union with what is displeasing & separation from what is pleasing are dukkha. Not to get what one wants is dukkha. The Buddha started in the coarser ones. In brief, the 5 khandhas (mind & matter) subject to clinging are dukkha.

This last dukkha can be known only in insight knowledges or practice.

The other dukkha can be appreciated by contemplation, & easy to understand.

② The noble truth of the origin of dukkha: is craving (tanha).

It leads to renewed existence, accompanied by delight & lust, seeking delight here & there. These cravings are for sensual pleasure, for existence (bhava-tanha) & for extermination (vibhava-tanha). In this sutta mentioned only tanha. Other sutta the whole process of Dependent Arising.

③ The noble truth of the cessation of dukkha: only tanha. Other sutta the whole

It is the remainderless fading away or cessation of craving (tanha).

The giving up & relinquishing of tanha, & freedom from tanha.

Dukkha is the cause of tanha. Therefore without tanha is without dukkha.

Khandhas are dukkha. So without tanha, dukkha & khandhas is Nibbana.

④ The noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of dukkha:

This is the Noble Eight Fold Path.

The Buddha continued to talk about the realization of the 4 Noble Truths in the middle way, the noble 8 fold path. Here we need objects of meditation.

Mahāsatipatthāna Sutta comes in. Samatha & Vipassana practices are mentioned here. People interest should study this very important discourse.

For Vipassana practice, the objects for contemplation are the 5 khandhas; body, feeling, perception, consciousness & mental formations, in gist mind & matter. Satipatthāna discourse mentioned 4 objects; 1. Contemplation of the body 2. Contemplation of the feeling 3. Contemplation of the mind &

4. Contemplation of the mind objects. What do we see & penetrate?

The Buddha taught about his own realization of the 4 Noble Truths.

1. Dukkha-nānam - knowledge of dukkha 2. Dukkha-samdaye-nānam - Knowledge about the cause of dukkha 3. Dukkha-nirodhe-nānam - knowledge of the cessation of dukkha.

4. Dukkha-nirodhe-patipada-nānam - knowledge to the way of cessation of dukkha. All these are right views. The first knowledge is seeing the mind & matter natural process as dukkha. The meaning of dukkha is; duk - disgusting, dissatisfaction; kha - nothing exists as one thinks, useless, empty.

The 5 khandhas have these nature. The 2nd knowledge is knowing why dukkha arises? The 3rd knowledge is knowing the place of ending dukkha. The 4th knowledge is knowing the way to the ending of dukkha. These are the very high levels of right views. The 4 Noble Truths demonstrate the process of ripassana practice. With the 8 factors discern dukkha & working ī dukkha & discerning it. The end result is abandoning the cause of dukkha & realizing of the ending of dukkha.

With the path consciousness arises & at the same time penetrate the 4 Noble Truths. Is it possible? For example, if we lit a candle light, ī the light appears & at the same time darkness disappears, the wick & the oil also burn out. The Buddha continued to talk ~~he knew it by himself~~

~~He penetrated dukkha by himself, & not from others. The 4 Noble Truths have 4 aspects; Dukkha has to be penetrated; the origin of dukkha is to be abandoned; the cessation of dukkha is to be realized; & the way leading to the cessation of dukkha is to be developed. The Awakened One~~

The Buddha proclaimed himself as an ~~Buddha~~ only Awakened One only when thoroughly penetrated the 4 Noble Truths in its 3-phases & 12 aspects.

The 3 phases are; 1. the knowledge of each truth - (Saccanāna). For e.g., this is the noble truth of dukkha; 2. the knowledge of the task to be accomplished ī each truth - (�rūpanāna). For e.g., the noble truth of dukkha is to be fully understood; 3. the knowledge of accomplishment ī each truth - (katānāne). For e.g., the noble truth of dukkha has been fully understood.

In simple words, the 3 phases are; study, practice & realization.

Three phases apply to the 4 truths become 12 aspects or modes.

The Buddha ended this discourse ī the following words;

"Unshakable is the liberation of my mind. This is my last birth."

There is no more renewed existence (i.e, has to be taken rebirth again)" Later Buddhists formulated new idea of liberated beings "could come back again & again for others. During the discourse, among the 5 monks, the oldest monk Kondanna became a Sotapanna - stream entry.

Establishing of Mindfulness: Satipatthāna

Satipatthāna Sutta is the direct path to realization of the 4 Noble Truths. Therefore Buddhists should know this important sutta for the practice. Want to know more detailed on this sutta can read & study the book by Ven. Analayo, Satipatthāna - The Direct Path to Realization, an excellent book on this sutta. Here I present a general outline from the Dhamma talks by Sayadaw Dr. Nanda mālārthivam sa.

Introduction:

exact
What is satipatthāna? To know the meaning of this word is valuable. By separating becomes 2 words; sati + patthāna or sati + upatthāna. Satipatthāna was used by commentary & satipatthāna was in the suttas. Satipatthāna is mindfulness stay \in the object or presence of mindfulness. Satipatthāna is mindfulness has to stay \in the 4 objects. Sayādān translated satipatthāna as establishing of mindfulness.

Sati has the meaning of mindful of the object $\&$ remembering. So it has 2 meanings; sati stays \in the object $\&$ memory. The first one is concerning \in the present. In the suttas sati was defined as wholesome quality, $\&$ not used in unwholesome matters. Then, what about wrong mindfulness-miccha-sati? This is remembering of unwholesome matter. The Buddha emphasized strongly that sati was always needed. It did not like the other 4 faculties (indriya - spiritual faculty), i.e., conviction, persistence, concentration & discernment. These 4 need to be balanced. In the beginning the Buddha talked about the results of establishing of sati-satipatthāna. This point is very important. Only \in results $\&$ beneficial people have interest to do it. There are also dangers & disadvantages by doing things blindly before consideration.

There are 7 results;

1. For the purification of beings - the practice purify the mental impurities, i.e., defilements. So it leads to happiness & peace.
Different path knowledge purifies ^{forever of} different impurities accordingly, for e.g., the first path knowledge (magganāna) purifies the identity view of the 5 khandhas, non-returner for hatred, anger, ill-will, etc.
2. For the surmounting of sorrow & lamentation - soka & parideva:
Soka means lost something & become sorrow & parideva means crying & sorrow. With the practice, surmount these negative mental states. (Here are 2 results)
3. For the disappearance of dukkha & discontent (dukkha & domanassa).
Here dukkha means bodily dukkha & domanassa means mental dukkha, both mean bodily & mental sufferings. What are the differences between soka & domanassa? They are nearly the same meaning, but differences in aspects. Domanassa is something happening in the mind & become discontent. Both of them are the feelings of dosa nature. If dukkha arises & follows \in domanassa.
(Here are 2 results)
4. For acquiring the true method:

With the practice arrives on the main road to Nibbana.

It is not easy to arrive on the main road for realization.

There are many reasons for it & only Buddhist's know why?

5. For the Realization of Nibbāna:

These results were the guarantee gave by the Buddha.

And then the Buddha continued the 4 Satipatthāna in general.

1. Contemplate the body as the body & not other ways. This is differentiating the object. Sati needs to see thing as it really is. If it is the body, then it is the body. Nupassi is contemplating. With the contemplating, samadhi & pañña including. The factors include are: atapi - practising very hard or perseverance or diligent; sampajāna - clearly knowing, has the knowledge of knowing the situation of the mind & satipa - must has sati.

Natural phenomena are working together. In the contemplation must has these 3 factors. There are 3 functional factors - karaka magganga; right view, right thought, right effort, right mindfulness & right concentration. They are working together. What are they moving away? or overcoming? The hindrances - nivaranas are overcome. They defiled the mind & blocking the knowledge to arise. Wholesome mental states cannot arise.

Here the Buddha was taken out 2 hindrances; desires (abhiijha) & discontent (domanassa). Abhiijha here is thinking on objects & greed (lobha). This is not the mental action of abhiijha which mentioned in the 10 unwholesome ^{desirable &} feelings. The usages have different meanings. Here is thinking about pleasant objects. With undesirable & unpleasant objects domanassa arise. Contemplating & atapi, sampajāna & sati. These hindrances cannot arise, or like or dislike cannot arise.

Contemplating feelings, minds & shammes are also in the same way. In the introduction of the satipatthāna sutta the Buddha gave the general outline.

The reason behind the 4 objects of satipatthāna is relating to the abandoning of 12 perversions or distortions (vipallāsa). With the body contemplation to see the body nature of not beauty or unattractiveness (asubha). To see the feelings as dukkha. To see the mind as inconstant (anicca). And to see the shammes as not-self (anatta). ^{and then} With distortions knowledge will not arise.

In Buddhist meditation, there are 2 ways to Nibbāna; start from samatha practice to insight & start & insight (samatha yanika & ripassana yanika). Among yogis there are 3 characters; wisdom, craving & view. These can be divided into weak & strong characters.

Weak in wisdom - Contemplation on the body
 Strong - — " " " " " " feeling] This is for samatha yanika

Weak in wisdom - contemplation on the mind
 Strong - — " " " " " " shammes] For ripassana yanika

Yogis & weak craving (tanhā) contemplate the body.	— — strong — —	— — feelings.
	— — weak view	— — mind.
	— — strong —	— — dhammas.

In one of the suttas in Anguttara Nikāya, mentioned the important points in the practice. First abandoning the hindrances, & one of the satipatthāna practice & develop the enlightenment factors will realize Nibbāna. There are 2 ways of abandoning the hindrances; with samatha practice & direct satipattha practice. The realizations of the yogis are only slow & quick results. Here Sayadaw made a remark on the commentaries. He said that the commentaries' ^{at} expositions were the works of teachers who had experiences. And not only just purely scholarly works.

1. Contemplation of The body: Body Contemplations: Kāyānupassanā:

Anupassanā means contemplate for many times until penetrate the Dhamma. In these body contemplations practice & the 14 types of objects. And divided into 6 parts. 1. Mindfulness of Breathing 2. Postures & Activities (2 parts) 3. Anatomical parts & Elements (2 parts) 4. Nine Contemplations ^{of} the Corpse ⁱⁿ Decay.

Contemplation or meditation is exercising the mind & the objects of meditation. Let mindfulness stays in the object. First, the Buddha taught mindfulness of Breathing. Here in & out breaths are objects. Sati only takes the object, & nāna (knowledge) knows the object. Both of them are working together.

Next body contemplation is The Four Postures; sitting, walking, standing & lying down. The body cannot survive without changing. With the changing of postures that it can survive longer. But for most people not aware of the changes, because lack of mindfulness or awareness. They are doing things habitually & the mind is at other places. These are connections & the big postures, & actions. There are also other small activities. These exercises are in the mindfulness & clear knowing (sati-sampajāna) or mindfulness & clear knowledge (sati-sampajāna). The instructions for clear knowing are; going forward & returning; looking ahead & looking away; flexing & extending the limbs; wearing clothes & carrying things; eating, drinking & tasting; defecating & urinating; walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking & keeping silent.

The next 2 exercises are Anatomical Parts & Elements: Contemplating the anatomical constitution of the body; direct mindfulness to an analysis of the body's parts. It listed various anatomical parts, organs & fluids.

Review this same body up from the soles of the feet down from the top of the hair, enclosed by skin, as full of many kinds of impurity.

There are: head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, bowel, mesentery, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil of the joints & urine (can include the brain)

There is a sutta in the Sutta Nipata called Vajji Vijaya Sutta - Victory on Delusion, where a thorough investigation of the body leads from its outer anatomical parts to its inner organ & liquids. The aim of the contemplation described is to reduce one's attachment to the body.

The sutta itself was a good contemplation on this subject. With the development of medical science, nowadays it is easy to visualise the outer & inner organs. Some people donated their bodies for this purpose.

There is a method called plasticination of the bodily parts for study.

The next exercise is on Elements; where the body is analysed into its 4 elementary qualities. The instruction for this contemplation is; He reviews this same body, however it is placed, however disposed as ~~constitu~~ consisting of elements. In this body there are the earth, the water, the fire & the air elements. Contemplation of the 4 elements has the potential leads to a penetrative realization of the insubstantial & selfless nature of the body or material reality.

Nine Contemplations of the Corpse in Decay:

These are the contemplations of the corpse in 9 stages of changing or decay. So it involve some degree of visualization & reflection. The yogi has to compare his own body & what he would see in a charnel ground. As though he were to see a corpse thrown aside in a charnel ground - ① one, two or 3 days dead, bloated, livid & oozing matter

② being devoured by crows, hawks, vultures, dogs, jackals, various kinds of worms - ③ a skeleton & flesh & blood, held together & sinews - ④ a fleshless skeleton smeared & blood, held together & sinews -

⑤ disconnected bones scattered in all directions ⑥ bones bleached white, the colour of shells - ⑦ bones heaped up, more than a year old -

⑧ bones rotten & crumbling to dust - ⑨ a skeleton without flesh & blood held together & sinews - (move this ⑨ to the place above at ⑤)

This body too is of the same nature. It will be like that & it is not exempt from that fate.

These practices highlight 2 things; the repulsive nature of the body as revealed during the stages of decomposition & death is inescapable destiny for all human beings or living beings.

In all these body contemplations, Sayadaw talked about Mindfulness of Breathing more than others. So here I will present only anāpānasati.

Mindfulness of Breathing:

In practice we need diligent (atapi). Effort (viriya) has 2 kinds; bodily & mental efforts (karika viriya & cetasika viriya). Mental effort is more important of the 2. Continuous effort & seriousness, mind energy & perseverance. Clearly knowing (sampanñāno) - always reflecting what one's is doing & always ^{has} ~~not~~ aware of the mind states. This is the balancing in the practice. Protecting the practice is mindfulness (sati). Samadhi (concentration) & pañña (discernment) are also included.

Atapi is right effort (samma-viriya); sampanñāno is right view (samma-ditthi) & sati is right mindfulness (samma-sati). Natural phenomena are doing its own jobs. They are not mixed-up. For e.g. the eye is doing the job of the eye, the ear also doing the job of the ear, when we watch a video. The ⁵ path factors (karaka magganga) are working together. Sila - ethical conducts (precepts) has been unbroken during the practice. After the first path knowledge it becomes 8 path factors. Ethical conducts become natural sila.

Sitagu Sayadaw U Ñānissara delivered many talks on the Anāpānasati Sutta. People interest ^{in details} should listen to these talks.

For sitting meditation, using a quiet place to sit. The sutta mentioned under a tree or near a tree (rūkkhamula), an empty room or place (suññagaram). Sitting crossed legs & straight back (in relaxed way) Sati is taking the meditation object. Mindful of the breaths at the touching point. This was from the commentary. In the sutta only mentioned - established mindfulness in front of him. The touching point of the breath can be at the tip of the nostril or upper lip, depend on each person.

① Mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out

② with the development of stage ①.....

The yogi knows the long in-breath & out-breath, short in-breath & short out-breath. The progression from knowing longer breaths to shorter breaths reflects the fact that the breath naturally becomes

— & finer in the continued practice.

③ He trains thus: I shall breathe in experiencing the whole body,
— — — — — out — — — — —

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In this stage must know the whole body. Here Sayadaw said that some had wrong interpretation & translation. By observing the whole physical body was not *anāpānasati* - mindfulness of the breathing. Knowing the whole in-breath & out-breath, from the beginning, middle & the end at the touching point (i.e., at the nostril or upper lip). At stage ② the yogi did not know like this. The commentary interpretation was right. According to Sayadaw, traditional interpretations were starting even from the time of the Buddha. By observing the whole ^{physical} body & the object is changed (not the breathing anymore).

④ He trains thus: I shall breathe in calming the bodily formation,
— — — — — out — — —
Here also calming the breath. When the practice is developing, the in & out breaths become refined. And then both of them disappear.
In this sutta the Buddha taught the first tetrad (4 stages) only. It is for the beginner yogis. In the *Anāpānasati Sutta*, the Buddha taught 16 stages - the 4 tetrads. The other 12 stages are for yogis who had developed jhanas (absorption states).

After the above 4 stages, the Buddha continued to teach; He abides contemplating the body internally; externally & both. According to the commentary; internal & external bodies were one's own & others. This is possible for yogis who has developed jhanas. These things were mentioned in Pha-Auk Sayadaw's teachings & his yogis' experiences. (Other ways of explanations see Ven. Analayo's book on *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*). Here Sayadaw proposed his idea on this point. External body was in & out breaths. Internal body was the mind knowing the breaths. With progress in the practice can know the contemplating mind & another mind. In this way wrong view falls away on the object & the mind. In the *Visuddhimaggā* - mentioned contemplating the object & the knowing mind. When you are practising alone how can you contemplate others. In the sub-commentary; by contemplating on others even could not develop samadhi.

With the continued practice & progress, discerning of the nature of arising & passing away, culminates in a comprehensive vision of impermanence. To regard all phenomena as impermanent leads to knowledge & understanding. Insight into the impermanence of the 5 khandhas is right view & then leads directly to realization. Natural phenomena are & the arising & there is cessation. Therefore dhammas are not existing by themselves. They exist only by conditions.

Mere awareness & clinging to nothing: Mahasi Sayadaw wrote in his book. By knowing in this way there was only body existing & no thought of person or being. So tanha & ditthi could not enter the mind. Except knowing the body & not clinging to other thoughts. To observe objectively, without getting lost, associations & reactions. Freedom from identification enables one to regard any aspect of experience as a mere phenomenon. And then free from any type of self-image & attachment. Clingings are falling away. The practice of anapanasati comes to succeed. Other body contemplations also have to practise in this way. (Sayadaw explained very short & general for each of the contemplations).

2. Contemplation of Feelings: Vedanamupassana

or contact ī

Feelings arise in all minds. When the mind meets an object & has an experience. Mind exists & feeling. It feels the taste of the object. This experience is feeling. Perception (satiñā) is noting the object & feeling (vedana) feels it. Feelings are 3 types; good, bad, neither good nor bad or neutral feelings. Vedanamupassana is contemplating the ^{or experience} feeling _{of the mind}. Happy & unhappy are talking about vedana.

In some meditation centres, talking about the to contemplate the expire until the feelings are expired or to overcome vedana. Could it be expired? With the mind exists & vedana also exists. Even very short period of mind (i.e., tadanga) has feeling (vedana), for e.g - the Path mind (magga-citta).

It experiences Nibbāna as happiness. (Here to overcome vedana means to overcome dukkha vedana in the contemplation. It is possible by practice). Mental factors (cetasika) are the movements of the mind.

So as a function they are one. Therefore using them as mind (citta). There are 52 types of mental factors (cetasikas). From there the Buddha took out feelings (vedana) as a particular contemplation. In the Digha Nikāya, Sakka-paññā Sutta, the Buddha also taught Sakka - the Deva king on vedana contemplation.

There are also ^{suttas in the} Vedanasamyutta connection ī vedana.

The Buddha could not talk all ^{about} vedana in one sitting.

He taught them accordingly ī each person & necessity.

Why establishing mindfulness (sati)? Only sati takes the object that paññā can know it. Sati cannot know & paññā also cannot take the object. They are working together.

In the contemplation of feelings; 1. continuous contemplation and, 2. to know about feelings rightly or correctly. To know its intrinsic nature & universal & characteristics of anicca, dukkha & anatta.

About the 5 khandhas (mind & body), the Buddha taught 2 types; ordinary khandhas or natural khandhas & clinging khandhas (upadanakkhandha). They are not the same. Clinging khandhas mean, viewing the natural khandhas & wrong view & craving (ditthi & tanha). These upadanakkhandas are the objects of insight meditation. The Buddha taught them for vipassana to cure wrong views & thinkings. In the Bahuvadaniya Sutta, the Buddha taught about many feelings. Feelings can be analyzed into 3 kinds according to their nature; pleasant (sukha), unpleasant (dukkha) & neutral (upekkha) feelings. Firstly, contemplating to see them in the khandha, observe & sati. Can be divided into 5 types & sense faculties; These are - ① pleasant bodily feeling (kayika-sukha), ② unpleasant bodily feeling (kayika-dukkha), ③ pleasant mental feeling (cetasika-sukha) ④ unpleasant mental feeling (cetasika-dukkha) & ⑤ neutral feeling. Pleasant & unpleasant mental feelings are also called - somarass vedana & domanassa vedana. Feelings arise in the body effect the mind, and vice versa.

What are their differences? Both of them are connecting to the mind.

Pleasant feeling (sukha vedana) arises in the body & pleasant mental feeling (somanassa vedana) arises in the mind. It appears in the body & the mind. It is body origin & effecting the mind. Mental feelings (cetasika vedana) only arise in the mind & not relate to the body directly. It can appear by itself, e.g., smiling. But it can also effect the body. Worldlings (puthujjana) & noble beings (ariyas) are quite different in reaction to feelings.

When the body pains & the mind of the worldling also pains. But noble beings are different, if the body pains & the mind not pains. Without the awareness of feelings, the mind is affecting by greed (lobha) & anger (dosha). If these are happening a lot & it has acceleration. And becoming strong & stable as latent tendency (anusaya). It latent in the mind as defilements. If have these kinds of experience again desire & lust arise (kamataaga). These things are happened because of latent defilements. Therefore anusaya can be said as future defilements. If the causes are there & it can arise.

It means, someone has this kind of experience again, this mental state will arise again. If we see something become greedy or angry & if we see it again will arise again. Therefore we have to be mindful or aware of them. No awareness of feelings & not reflect or contemplate them; they are coming again & again. Greed & anger are becoming stronger. Then, we are ^{can-} not liberate from the round of existence (samsara).

It was like a ball rolling among 3 feelings (kicking by suttā vedanā & fall into hell, by suttā vedanā become ghosts & by upakkhe vedanā become animals). In the teaching of Dependent Arising (paticcasamuppada) the Buddha taught that feeling (vedanā) conditions craving (tanhā). Why the Buddha not said or mentioned it as anger? Because craving or desire is happening more than anger. For e.g., poor people want to be rich & rich people wanting more & more. Only tanhās are coming. Not knowing about neutral feelings (upakkhe vedanā) & ignorance (avijja) or delusion (moha) comes in.

It is very important to understand about the 5 khandhas thoroughly by contemplation. The physical body & feelings (kaya & vedanā) are very interesting subjects. For human beings the 5 khandhas are working together in daily life & cannot be separated. Human beings are looking after the body the whole time like a slave. These all are conditioned dukkha & without end. Even wasting our precious times in sleep also for the body. We are busy every day for the survival of the body. Even we are treating him like a loyal slave; it has no sympathy & gratitude to us. Oppressing & tormenting in old age, sickness & death. Conditioned dukkha connecting to the body are very great indeed. If we understand the conditioned dukkha binds to the physical body; we can be dispassionate to it & easily let go of it.

Feelings are too important in human life that we can even say busy for feelings. It is very closely related to the body & the mind. It effect both we try to get what we like in any cost. And then dispel any thing that we do not like. get rid of any thing that we do not like. Feelings have a lot of influence on human beings, cannot deny about it. Look what is happening in today world. There are many problems & sufferings going on in the world. For pleasant feeling or sensual pleasures human beings try in any mean to make money without any control. All sorts of pollution's problems going on in societies, natural environments & the earth. For unpleasant feeling or ill-will or hatred that killing & harming a lot of innocent human beings by wars & terrorism. Human life is not safe any more. There are always dangers always waiting for us. If man can control feelings or the master of feelings the world is a better place to live.

In the contemplation of feeling; when feeling a pleasant feeling, he knows "I feel a pleasant feeling" with mindfulness (sati) that knowing about it. With unpleasant & neutral feelings also in the same way to know them when they are arising as; "I feel an unpleasant feeling & a neutral feeling, etc."

In the first part of the instruction, the Buddha taught the 3 basic kinds of feelings; pleasant, unpleasant & neutral. Because by themselves can lead to realization. In the *satipatthāna Sutta*, after mentioned these 3 basic feelings was followed by an additional subdivision of feeling into worldly (*sāmisa*) & unworldly (*nirāmisa*). Therefore totally 9 kinds of feelings has to be contemplated, whenever & whatever type of feeling arising. If we ask the question; "Who is feeling the vedana?",

The answer is vedana feels it. Except vedana no feeler there. Just only natural phenomena or natural process. Sense object (*ārammaṇa*) contamets (*phassa*) & sense base (*vatthu*) that has feeling to feel or mind arises. There are only causes & effects phenomena exist. Only natural phenomena are arising? This is right view. Vedana arises & vedana feels it. Vedana is very important for us. Because it leads to craving (*tanhā*). And then tanha leads to suffering (*dukkha*). With tanha arises & dukkha will arise. If we cannot deal with feelings & cannot escape dukkha. Because of human beings have strong attachment to vedana that there are a lot of human problems & sufferings exist in the world. It was like a fish craving for the bait & swallowed it that died painfully. Also it was like a drop of honey on the edge of razor blade who ever licking it would suffer painfully. Even we can say human beings are fighting each other for vedana.

After knowing about the intrinsic nature of feelings; come; "He abides contemplating feelings internally, externally, & both." Vedana in oneself & others are the same kinds of vedana. With continued practice & discerning the 3 universal characteristics of vedana; inconstant, dukkha & not-self. First, knowing the arising & passing away of feelings.

Mindfulness (*sati*) is always keeping up with feelings. That knowledge (*nyāya*) develops. With the insight knowledges, wrong view & craving (*ditthi/tanhā*) not arise. After sometimes clinging to feelings fall away. And then the mind becomes free (*vimokkha*).

3. Contemplation of the mind: Cittanupassanā

In daily life the minds are arising continuously by knowing the sense objects (*ārammanas*). Starting from the rebirth consciousness, the mind depends on sense objects & mind base (*ārammanas* & *vatthu*) & arising continuously. To be aware of them it need practice. We are talking about the mind very often. For e.g. I am angry; but we cannot reflect its nature. The mind changed too fast that the Buddha himself mentioned about the difficulty of comparison for it. Therefore we cannot know it in normal mindfulness (*sati*).

We cannot know about this mind & the same mind. Only can know it in the later mind (another mind). Without knowing & mistakes can come in & clinging & attachment. It is natural that without knowing rightly & problems follow on. In a sutta in Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha said that people no Dhamma knowledge took the mind as stable & always existed. But if they took the body in this way was better. Because it existed for the whole life. Viewing the mind in this way was not proper.

The Buddha gave the following simile. A monkey in the forest was moving among the branches of a big tree by roaming through a forest grabbed hold of one branch, let that go & grabbed another, & then let that go & grabbed another, etc. In the same way mind or consciousness arises as one thing & ceases, & then follows by another, by day & by night. Contemplation of the mind is to know the nature of the mind by observing & mindfulness (sati). Let us study the nature of the mind.

In the texts, which described mind as sometimes included mental factors (cetasika). In the Satipatthana sutta was not talking about the mental factors. Here it referred to the knowing nature of the sense objects. Sometimes mind referred to samadhi (concentration). The mind was governing the world referred to mental factors. In this sutta, the mind is knowing the objects which are arising from the 6 sense doors. It is not including of feelings, perceptions & mental formations.

Natural phenomenon has its own individual characteristic. Here the mind is knowing the objects only. So here the individual characteristic of the mind is knowing. In nature there are 2 characteristics;

① individual characteristic (sabhaava lakshana), not relate to others & belong to itself & ② universal characteristic (samaanā lakshana).

In vipassana practice, has to start at individual characteristic. Without starting from here & contemplate impermanence is not really knowing. It will be only know by thinking. Only seeing the real impermanence becomes vipassana. This will only see discern the ultimate reality. Thinkings may be right or maybe not.

Right thinking can be a support for the practice. But not knowing the ultimate reality directly. Mind or mental phenomena are bending or inclining towards the sense objects. This is its individual characteristics. The mind can take the objects from far away. Even a lot of ordinary Buddhists take this point wrongly as mind can travel very far away. This is similar to the soul oratta. Two kinds of mind cannot arise together & only one by one. The place of the mind is the heart base or mind base (Heart base was by the commentary & mind base was by the Buddha. In Pali, hadaya & vattha) mind base is not really existing there. But it is arising there.

This point was known by experienced meditators. As an example, the sounds of a guitar are not in the music instrument. The sounds are arising only by plucking or strumming ē the fingers.

The nature of the mind is inclining towards the sense objects. Vedana is feeling the object ē the mind. The mind touches ē the sense object is the nature of contact (phassa). Usually we are talking about knowing. The mind is knowing the sense objects. For e.g. This flower is beautiful. It is too hot. This is talking about contact (phassa), & not about the mind. we are talking about the external objects. Forgetting the mind & talking about the objects. In the contemplation of the mind, the Buddha told us to aware or mindful of the mind. The mind also mixed ē the mental factors. All minds are knowing the objects that they are only one nature. Here the Buddha distinguished the minds related to its situations.

It can be 16 types. Not necessary everyone has 16 types. The Buddha mentioned it in general. Here, the 16 types of mind & other places were not the same; for e.g. in the Abhidhamma Sangaha - Comprehensive manual of Abhidhamma. For contemplation purpose the Buddha divided it into 16 types. It is like separated the cows & their colours. But all of them are cows. In the same case all mind's nature is only knowing. The instruction was; "He knows a lustful mind as a lustful mind, etc.. " If we contemplate only greed or lust, then becomes contemplation of dhammas. But in real contemplation, & the discrimination of "Is it the body or the feeling?", then miss the point. Not necessary to discriminate in this way. You will ^{be caught} catch in an object of contemplation. In the satisapattana, the Buddha taught the possible 4 types of object in vipassanā practice (body, feeling, mind & dhamma). We cannot say, I will contemplate only mind, only feeling, etc. Whatever it is arising, only need to know the arising phenomenon there.

Contemplation of the body is existing as form(rūpa) & not mixing ē others. But feeling (vedana), mind (consciousness) & dhammas are mixing up together. So unnecessary to discriminate them. In Visuddhimagga Text & mahasi Sayadaw ^{were instructed} instructing to contemplate whatever was arising. In the beginning it is difficult to contemplate all of them. With practice & it becomes easier.

16 states of mind are mundane & not include supramundane. They are 8 categories can be subdivided into 2 sets. These 2 sets are ordinary states of mind & higher states of mind. The first set includes unwholesome & wholesome ordinary states of mind. The 2nd set is concerned ē the presence or absence higher states of mind.

Eight categories of ordinary states of mind:

1. lustful (sarāga)
2. without lust (visarāga)
3. angry (sadoṣa)
4. — anger (visadoṣa)
5. deluded (samohā)
6. — delusion (visamohā)
7. contracted or sloth-&-torpor (saṅkhitta)
8. distracted (vikkhitta)

Eight categories of higher states of mind:

9. great or jhanic mind (mahaggata)
10. mind without jhanas (amahaggata)
11. unsurpassable or immaterial jhanas (anuttara)
12. surpassable or material jhanas (sa-uttara). Here the unsurpassable not include supramundane. Anuttara & sa-uttara also higher & ordinary wholesome mental states.
13. concentrated or samadhi mind (samahitta)
14. without samadhi (a-samahitta)
15. liberated (vimutta)
16. without liberated (avimutta)

Here Samyakśaṇa referred to the liberated mind state is with insight knowledge. For e.g. by seeing anica (inconstant) liberate from nica (permanent).

And then as a 2nd stage; "He abides contemplating the mind internally, externally & them both." All are the same nature. With the practice, the contemplation sticks to the mind & knowing about it. With the development, discerning the arising & passing away in regard to the mind. Mindfulness that there is a mind is established in him to the extent necessary for bare knowledge. And then free from wrong view & craving (sītthi & tanhā), becomes independent not clinging anything in the world. The mind is free.

4. Contemplation of the Dhammas: Dhammappassana

Condensed the 4 satipaṭṭhāna objects only has mind & body. Contemplation of the body is called rūpariṇgaṇa - discernments of the body. Contemplation of the feelings & mind are called nāma-pariṇgaṇa - discernments of the mind. Combined the body & the mind contemplations become dhammappassana. In the contemplation of the body - the contemplation is on the real material phenomena. They are arising by causes & conditions. They are originating from kamma, consciousness, temperature & nutriment (kamma, citta, utu, ahara). Some material phenomena are not by causes, the outcomes of the real material phenomena. They are called non-concrete matters (anipphanna rūpa), as on e.g., the space element. There are 28 matters; 18 are concrete & 10 non-concrete matters. In contemplation of matters, only contemplate the 18 concrete matters, e.g. the 4 great elements. In contemplation of the mind, only contemplate the mundane mind & their mental states. Because they create the suffering of round of existence.

Among the 5 path factors (contemplating mind), sati & nyam (paññā) are the main important factors. Because sati takes the object & nyam contemplates. The meaning of dhamma is quite extensive. Therefore define it meaning accordingly & its function. If not can be confused. If taking dhamma as nature, then it includes everything, even Nibbāna. The main meaning of dhamma is not a being & not a soul (nisatta & nijiva). Combine & others have to understand as has its own nature. So it includes all. Contemplation of dhammas is in 5 sections.

1. The hindrances (nivarana)
2. The aggregates (khandhas)
3. The sense-spheres (āyatana)
4. The awakening factors (bojjhangas)
5. The Four Noble Truths (the 4 ariyasacca)

Why the Buddha only divided these 5 dhammas? Dhamma is extensive & these only are important. In the world it is very important to distinguish what is important & what is not or unimportant. Most human beings are wasting their precious times & energies in unimportant things & matters. This point is very important to take care, reflect & act in our daily lives accordingly.

1. The 5 Hindrances: The 5 Nivaranas

The 5 hindrances are; (1) sensual desire (kāmacchanda), (2) aversion (byāpāda), (3) sloth & torpor (thīna-midha), (4) restlessness & worry (uddhacca-kukkucca) & (5) doubt (vicicchā).

In the practice of samatha or vipassanā to remove them far away is very important. If not, the practice cannot progress. Even wholesome dhammas cannot arise. These hindrances are the causes for defilement of the mind. It weaken knowledge. Even it can defile the purified mind (e.g., some yogis lost their samadhi, had been developed).

For each hindrance the yogi has to know them in 5 points.

(1) Sensual desire:

(a) There is sensual desire in me (b) There is no sensual desire in me. Contemplate & checking the hindrance. This is not only arising now, but also happen very often. Some ask, this is practice or not. Sayadaw said ^{that} this is contemplation. If we do not reflect & check, how do we know it exists or not. With the knowledge we can correct it. This point is very important. Usually people are thinking about what things they have or not have? (e.g., money, power, fame...etc.) So people are always thinking with defilements (kilesa).

(c) He knows how unarisen sensual desire can arise or why it happens? Have to find out the causes. Why it was happened, the Buddha not mentioned it here? But he taught in other suttas. For e.g., lust arises because of wrong attention ^{on purpose} on the beauty of the object. Therefore defilement arises & increases, the problem has been arisen.

(d) How arisen sensual desire can be removed?

It happens & how to remove it? Can be removed just by contemplating the unattractiveness of the object (asubha).

(e) How a future arising of the removed sensual desire can be prevented?

The others hindrances are also contemplate in these ways.

If we can find out the answers & try to remove them.

And then contemplating shammas internally, externally & both.

Seeing the arising & passing away in shammas, etc.

2. The aggregates : the Khandhas

The yogi contemplating shammas in terms of the 5 aggregates of clinging, in the following ways. The Buddha taught 3 ways;

(1) Body aggregate (rupakkhandha)

(a) Such is material form - knowing its nature

(b) — — its arising

(c) — — — passing away

The other 4 khandhas of (2) feeling, (3) cognition (4) volitions & (5) Consciousness also in the same way for contemplations.

3. Sense-spheres : Ayatanas

The yogi contemplating shammas in terms of the 6 internal & external sense-spheres, in the following ways. With the contacts of the 6 internal sense-spheres (eye, ear, nose, tongue, body & mind) & the 6 external — — (forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles & mind objects) consciousness arise. It is not necessary every contact & fetter (samyojana) arises. If it is arising, then find out the causes.

There are 10 fettters; belief in a substantial & permanent self, doubt, dogmatic clinging to particular rules & observances, sensual desire, aversion, craving for fine material existence, craving for immaterial existence, conceit, restlessness & ignorance.

The Buddha's instruction:

"He knows the eye, he knows forms, & he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both, & he also knows how an arisen fetter can arise, how an arisen fetter can be removed, & how a future arising of the removed fetter can be prevented."

The other internal & external sense-spheres also know in this way. The instruction can be put into simple terms. 1. With the contact of sense doors & sense objects, mind consciousness arise, etc. 2. fettters can be arisen 3. Why it happens? 4. How to remove it? 5. What to do for removing it? has to be done.

And then contemplating dhammas internally, externally & both. Seeing the arising & passing away in dhammas, etc.

4. The awakening factors: Bojjhangas

The mental qualities that provide the conditions conducive to awakening. Just as rivers incline & flow towards the ocean, they incline towards Nibbāna. There are 7 bojjhangas;

- (1) Mindfulness (sati)
- (2) investigation of dhammas (dhamma-vicaya)
- (3) energy (viriya)
- (4) joy (piti)
- (5) tranquility (passaddhi)
- (6) concentration (samadhi)
- (7) equanimity (upekkhā).

Why the Buddha taught the bojjhangas?

As a human being, it is very important to know about the unwholesome dhammas. So that we cannot fall into it.

Also as a human, it is very important to know about the wholesome dhammas. So that we can develop it. If we observe the world today & know how important these points are (e.g., political conflicts, society problems, immorality, all sorts of pollutions, etc.)

If we know our mind by checking & observing, it becomes clear that what should be done & what should not be done, what is proper & what is not proper, what is beneficial & what is not beneficial, etc.

The instruction for awakening factors are:

"If mindfulness (sati) is present in the yogi, he knows that mindfulness awakening factor in him. If mindfulness not present in him & knows that also. The yogi knows how the unarisen mindfulness factor can arise. And how the arisen mindfulness factor can be perfected by development."⁹¹

The above instruction can be mentioned simple.

Contemplate for, 1. I have sati 2. I don't have sati 3. How to make it arises? 4. How to develop it?

The other 6 awakening factors are also practice in these ways. After that contemplating dhammas internally, externally & both. Discerning the nature of arising & passing away in dhammas, etc.

5. The Four Noble Truths: The 4 Ariyasacca

The final exercise among the satipatthāna contemplations is the 4 noble truths. The instruction is:

The yogi knows as it really is; This is dukkha, This is the arising of dukkha, This is the cessation of dukkha & This is the way leading to the cessation of dukkha."

The 4 noble truths has been explained quite details before. Therefore give only a rough idea. In his first sermon / discourse, the penetration of the truths had 3 levels each; study, practice & realization. Only we have the knowledge on the teaching that can be practised. With the practice only can has the realization. The Buddha was like a doctor. The 4 noble truths were like; disease (dukkha), virus (craving-tanha), health (Nibbana) & medicine (the path factors).

1. The first truth of dukkha - Dukkha has to be understood.
2. The 2nd — — the cause of dukkha - Its origination has to be abandoned. Craving/tanha has to be abandoned.
3. The 3rd truth of the cessation of dukkha - Its cessation has to be realized. This is the realization of Nibbana or the ending of dukkha.
4. The 4th truth of the way to the cessation of dukkha - The practical path to this realization has to be developed. This is the noble 8 fold path.

Therefore the 4 noble truths is the outcome of the practice.

For the penetration of dukkha thoroughly must do the vipassana practice which is sila, samadhi & panna. With the practice until its end - dukkha - which is the 5 khandhas (mind & body) & the cause - which is craving/tanha, ceased, ^{this} which is the ending of dukkha or Nibbana.

Prediction:

Near the end of the satipatthana discourse, the Buddha gave the prediction or guarantee for the yogis who had practised diligently without wavering would have the following results. [change position]
For 7 years could be expected non-returning (anagamin) or final knowledge (arahant). Let alone 7 yrs - 6 yrs - 5 yrs - 4 yrs - 3 yrs - 2 yrs - one year - 7 months - 6 months - 5 months - 4 months - 3 months - 2 months - one month - half a month 8 7 days, one of 2 fruits could be expected for him. These were not exaggerations. Soon Loong Sayadaw (the Burmese monk (1877-1952) had his final realization within 4 months (i.e. from the beginning of the practice to the final realization, 4 paths & fruits. The year was 1920)

This section on the 32nd highest blessing of seeing the noble truths is the most important of all the blessings. It has is connecting to the whole Buddhist practices to end dukkha. Therefore I want to present more on this section. Actually; 30th blessing-austerity, 31st blessing-celibacy, 32nd blessing-seeing noble truths & the 33rd — realizing Nibbana are connecting to practices.

Satipatthana practice for everyone:

The following Dhamma notes are from the Dhamma talk given by the Ven. Dr. Nandamalaarbhivamsa.

Without practicing Satipatthana cannot realize paths & fruits (magga & phala). There were evidences about this in some suttas.

Nalanda Sutta (from Satipatthanasamyutta) & maha-parinibbana Sutta have mentioned this point. Ven. Sariputta answered to the Buddha was:

Every Buddha before had abandoned the hindrances & samadhi practice, concentrated on the satipatthana practices & developed the awakening factors (bojjhangas) became Buddha. The Buddha confirmed his answer.

Ven. Ananda also mentioned the same thing: abandoning the hindrances, contemplations of satipatthana & developing the awakening factors became noble beings. Some writers wrote that: "With satipatthana cutting off wrong view (ditthi) or craving (tanha)? All the Buddha Dhammas are cutting off all defilements (kilesas). The differences are only more or less problem amount of ^{The abandoning of} defilement abandoning.

For e.g., the stream winner (i.e sotapanna) has cut off all wrong views & some amount of greed, anger & delusion. Some amount of greed, anger & delusion here means, these defilements which can send a being to the woeful planes of existence.

Ven. Sariputta asked Ven. Anuruddha that in what extent a yogi could be called a trainee (sekha) (someone realized ^{anyone at} the lower stages before arahantship). Ven. Anuruddha said that someone had developed some parts of satipatthana was called a trainee (still in training). And after fully developed it called one beyond training (asekha - an arahant). In the Sala Sutta (from Satipatthanasamyutta), the Buddha asked the novices & young monks to practice satipatthana. What was the reason? For understanding the nature of body, feelings, mind & dhammas. Practising to know about them as really it (yathabutā). For becoming someone by beyond training (asekha) had to practise to the point of fully understanding. After becoming an arahant also had to practise satipatthana. For what reason? For peaceful abiding in fruition state (phala samapatti).

In the Anguttara Nikaya, there was a section called Satipatthana Vagga. It has 10 suttas. There the Buddha mentioned the reasons for practising satipatthana.

1. For not breaking the 5 precepts (pancasila).
2. To abandon the 5 hindrances. (panca-nivarana).
3. Therefore to remove all unwholesome dhammas is satipatthana practice.
4. Sensual objects are binding the mind. To remove them or stay away from them, has to practise satipatthana.

4. To cut off the lower 5 fetters (samyojanas); i.e., identity view, doubt, clinging to particulars rules & observances, sensual desire & aversion. This refers to become an anagamin (non-returner). These 5 lower fetters send beings to take rebirth in sensual realms.
5. To be free from the 5 destinations (gati); i.e., hells, animals, hungry ghosts (peta), humans & deities. Also called the 31 realms of existence. This refers to become an arahant.
6. For abandoning of the 5 kinds of selfishness (macchariya) or avarice (These are: i dwelling place, connections i relatives & supporters, on fortune & wealth, on beauty & fame & i Dhamma)
7. To cut off the 5 higher fetters (i.e., desire for becoming material jhanic gods, & immaterial jhanic gods, conceit, restlessness & ignorance). This refers to become an arahant.
8. To move away the barriers of the mind (cetokhila); such as doubts on in the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha & the practice, hate & aversion to one's companions in practice, etc. With all these barriers in the mind & practice not going smoothly.
9. There are shackles of the mind (cettorinibandha); such as sensual objects, one's body, physical forms, material jhanic existences etc. People have sila or practising sila for desiring of them. Therefore these are shackles for the mind to be free. For removing them have to practise satipatthana.
10. For extinguishing of bodily dukkha, mental dukkha, sorrow & lamentation.

Practicing satipatthana for these 10 points are connecting i the 7 results mentioned in the introduction & the end of the Satipatthana Sutta; i.e., for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of dukkha & discontent, for acquiring the true method & for the realization of Nibbāna.

A yogi without a teacher's guidance for practice, it is very important to has some knowledge about the practice. Therefore, here includes a general idea of the process & progress of the stages of practice-path of purity or purification. There are 7 stages; purity in terms of virtue (sila), mind (citta), view (ditthi), the overcoming of doubt or perplexity (vicikicchā), knowledge & vision of what is & what is not the path, knowledge & vision of the way, & knowledge & vision. These 7 purities cover all 3 parts of the 3-fold training in virtue, concentration & discernment (sila, samadhi & paññā).

There was a discourse in the Majjima Nikāya called Ratha-vinīta Sutta Relay Chariots. In there Ven. Sariputta & Ven. Punna spoke of this list of 7 purities. Here I give a general outline of this subject from the notes of talks by Sayadaw Dr. Nandamalabhirama. People want to know more details should read the Visudhimagga - Path of Purity by Buddhagosa.

1. Sila-visuddhi: Purity in Virtue or Purification of verbal & body actions

Nibbāna element is free from all defilements or impurities. So it is called purity-visuddhi. The practice to realize this purity is the path - i.e. the noble 8-fold path (magga). Nibbāna nature is intrinsic purity. Therefore to arrive there these 7 processes has to be in purity. So there are 7 stages for it. To purify the unwholesome shannas which defile the virtues (sila). Bodily & verbal unwholesome actions become purified is purity in virtues (sila-visuddhi). Some defilements (kilesa) have to purify ī virtues. It is purifying ī sila or purification by sila (there are mistaking as purification of sila). Sila itself is already purified. What are called virtues? There are quite a few ^{kinds} of them such as 5 precepts, 8 precepts, 10 precepts, etc. Mental volition ^{motivates} force oneself to abstain from related unwholesome shannas, is sila. Not only volition, the function of abstaining itself is also sila. As an e.g. encounter a situation for tea lying lie, but not commit it. Controlling ^{oneself} from doing unwholesome things is also sila. Restraint is a virtue & called samvara sila. Restraint of the senses is preventing the unwholesome shannas coming in. This is practicing ī sati (mindfulness). Always staying ī mindfulness. Most people think abstaining from doing wrongs is sila. This is virati sila. All volitional motivations are sila. It need to understand the foundation of sila. So that can look after it. For e.g. in the 5 precepts, the first one is abstain from taking life. Knowing that much is not enough. It must like a fence stops the cows to come in. undertaking the practice of virtues or other things, cannot do it in a relaxed way. It must do ī great effort (atapi) or ardent (ardent). For ^{different} reasons & causes people are stopping their undertaking of sila. This is limited sila. There are levels of sila; such as give up one's life for sila or protecting one's sila ī life, trainee's sila (sotapanna, once-returner & non-returner) & asekha's sila (the arahant). Virtues (sila) is the root of wisdom (paññā).

There are shannas enriching the stability of sila.

These are; indriya samvara sila - restraining of the senses, this is the exercising ī sati. Connection ī the mind; right livelihood (samma-ajiva);

reflection on the 4 requisites, i.e., robes, food, dwelling & medicine (also may be other things); tolerating such as cold, heat, hunger, thirst, touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, reptiles, ill-spoken, etc., avoiding things & matters which can effect sila, etc..

Therefore sila is like the root of a tree. Very important for mundane & supramundane matters. Sila can be easily spoiled.

To make it strong & stable needs the power of samadhi to support it. This is the 2nd stage of purity.

2. Citta-visuddhi: Purity in mind

This is referred to samatha or samadhi (concentration) practices. Sila only can ignite the bodily & verbal unwholesome actions & not the mind. If the mind is not strong enough or in purity & easily to break the precepts. The most important point for samadhi is it supports for discernments (pañña or knowledge). The Buddha said; "Samahito yathabhūtam pājanati" - Someone has samadhi seeing things as really is" Therefore sila & samadhi, the 2 strong roots of a tree to grow. In many suttas the Buddha referred to right concentration ~~as were~~ (the 4 material jhanas (arūpa-jhana)). This was a common process mentioned in the suttas. There was another way for right samadhi, this was pañña based samadhi.

So c. momentary concentration samadhi (khanika samadhi) also can develop knowledge. What are the differences between samatha based & ripassana based samadhi? Samatha based samadhi is pleasant abiding, last longer & comfort in practice. The commentary gave an example of crossing a river. Samatha based samadhi is like crossing a river by boat & ripassana based samadhi like swimming across the river. Both will arrive to the other shore. Some people doubt about the power of ripassana based samadhi (i.e khanika samadhi) can lead to realization. There were evidences among yogis of the past & present day yogis experiences. Every path a fruit has the jhanic power of samadhi. Citta-visuddhi has 3 kinds of samadhi; khanika-samadhi (momentary concentration), upacārasamadhi (access concentration) & appanāsamadhi (absorption concentration).

After the stage of purity in mind comes the 5 stages of purity in knowledges (pañña-visuddhi); These are; purity in view (ditthi), the overcoming of doubt (vicikicchā), knowledge of & vision of what is & what is not the path, knowledge & vision of the way and knowledge & vision (Nānādassana-visuddhi). We can develop these 5 stages of purities only in the Buddha Dhamma. So how much fortunate we are.

3. Dīttivisuddhi: Purity in view

Insight practice (Vipassanā) is directly referring to wisdom or knowledge (paññā). There are 2 basic knowledges for vipassanā practice. These are: the discernment of mind & matter (nāmarūpa pariggaha nyan) & the discernment of the conditions of mind & matter (paccaya-pariggaha nyan). In purities, it referred to dīttivisuddhi & kamkhāvitaraṇavisuddhi (No. 3 & 4 visuddhis). For these 2 basic insight knowledges or purities in view & overcoming doubt, the yogis need to do 2 things. 1. Study or soil of knowledge or field of knowledge (paññā-bhumi) 2. Developing or exercising (Nāna-pariseyya) For doing the practice rightly has to do the study. The yogis need to study about the 5 khandhas (aggregates), ayatanas (sense bases), dhatus (elements), indriyas (faculties), the 4 noble truths & dependent co-arising (paticcasamuppada). To have this learning knowledge (suttamaya paññā) need to study many times. After learning & developing or exercising them by practice.

The Pali word dītti meaning is view. In the suttas using by itself usually means wrong view. Right view is adding samma in front of dītti, i.e., samma-dītti. Wrong views are many; the main one is identity view (sakkaya-dītti). Other wrong views extended from it. So here purity in view is purified this identity view. Where this identity view is sticking? It is sticking in the 5 khandhas. Take the 5 khandhas (body, feeling, perception, volitions & consciousness) as I/me & mine. Therefore also can take each one of the khandhas as me & mine. There are 20 types of identity view obtained by positing a self in the 4 given ways in relation to the 5 khandhas. Some examples as: 1. regards form as self 2. self as possessing form 3. form as in self 4. self as in form..... 17. regards consciousness as self 18. self as possessing consciousness 19. consciousness as in self 20. self as in consciousness. There is a very common wrong view take the mind as self situated in form (the body), as a jewel is in a casket. When a person dies & its mind not dies. After death it leaves behind the body & takes a new body, as changing a new clothes. Even some Buddhists believe in this way (no need to say other faiths). It is a soul existed Theory & view. People life is obsessed by the notion: I am form, form is mine. As they are living & living obsessed by these notions & when any one of the khandhas changes & alters, & these there arise in them sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair.

Identity view is one of the first 3 fetters (samyojanas) to be eradicated by the first path (sotapatti magga). This is the most important fetter has to be eradicated first. With this self view or selfishness beings easily commit unwholesomeness & heavy evil kammas. Wrong view is related to ignorance (avijja) or delusion (moha). Right view is related to knowledge (vijja) or non-delusion (amoha). Ignorance & craving (tanha) are the 2 basic causes for dukkha or the round of existence (samsara).

Identity view is ingrained in the coarsest ignorance & craving. With this fetter latent in the heart (mind) the other higher paths of realization are impossible. The most terrible dangers & sufferings it can bring to living beings are the 4 woeful planes of existence (abayas).

Therefore the Buddha strongly urging people to eradicate the first 3 fetters (samyojanas) urgently in the 2 discourses: The Clothes & The hundred spears (from Saccasamyutta). If one's clothes or head were ablaze what should be done about it? It is sure that everyone will extinguish the fire instantly. But eradicate the identity view is more important than the fire burning your body. With this you will only die once for this life. If carrying the wrong view in you & will die again & again. Worse than is born in hells, as animals & hungry ghosts for uncountable times. Because these are our frequent homes. Now most of us are only a short visit to here.

Suppose someone in a life span of hundred yrs & could live up to it. And then someone comes to him & say; "Everyday in the morning I'll strike you in a hundred spears, also in at noon & evening times. In this way I'll strike you for 100 yrs. After 100 yrs have passed you'll realize the Dhamma." The Buddha told the monks that it was fitting for someone intent on his/her good to accept the offer.

The reason behind is the round of existence (samsara) is without discoverable beginning & the first point cannot be discerned of blows by spears & swords for each living being. (Later Buddhist philosophers postulated some theories on the beginning of samsara & the first point of it & neglected the Buddha's words).

After study & learning for the field of knowledge on khandhas, ayatana, dhatus, etc. & for developing knowledge to exercise or practise them. Here the satipatthana practice comes in. For purification of view to arise must contemplate repeatedly again & again, until the wrong thinking of me & mine disappear. Only in this way become purity in view. Self view (atta ditthi) & identity view (sakkaya ditthi) are the same. They are different only in words.

In the Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga), it suggested the yogis to contemplate the mind first & then matter (rupa). It is more easier for him because in samadhi power easy to discern the mind. For vipassana yanika yogi must contemplate the matter first. There are many yogis do not have the clear distinction between concept (paññatti) & ultimate reality (paramattha). A venerable Sayadaw mentioned this in his encountered in Mahasi Sayadaw. At that time Mahasi Sayadaw who was reading a book on meditation. He said to the Sayadaw that in that book a yogi talked was contemplating his body, his head disappeared & became particles. And then the yogi took it as insight practice (vipassana). Mahasi Sayadaw asked the Sayadaw as; it was a concept or an ultimate reality? The Sayadaw answered it as a concept.

Mahasi Sayadaw agreed in him. And then he said that many yogis had samadhi, but it did not become insight of reality (vipassana paramattha).

In the time of the Buddha & even now Samatha practices were existed. These yogis could not overcome or transcend concepts.

Only the Buddha aware that vipassana practice came into existence.

In these 7 purifications; purification of knowledge has 5 stages.

It starts from purification of view (ditthivisuddhi) to purification of knowledge & vision (Nāmadassana-visuddhi); i.e stage 3 to 7 phenomena. According to the suttas, Yathabhūta Nāna - The Knowledge of, as it really is the discernment of mind & matter (Nāmarūpa-paricayaka nyom).

This was taught by the Buddha in the Discourse of the Characteristic of not-self or nonself (Anattalakkhana Sutta).

An internationally well known scholar monk said that some scholars took the Visuddhimagga text book as not talked by the Buddha. He said that it was wrong (speculation), because it was based on the Buddha's teachings. People should not criticize blindly. If their speculations were true must point out the discrepancies between them. If we ask these people how many commentaries ^{commentarial} ~~had many~~ they have. Even some of them were text books had been studied by them. Even some of them were self learning the Pali & suttas by themselves without a teacher.

Ven. Buddhaghosa had written details on the purification by knowledge or panna-sarira (body of knowledge) in his Visuddhimagga text book. These were not his own ideas. It was based on the old Pali text books handed down from the old generations & he studied & took notes of them & produced this very important commentary on practice. Understanding about mind & matter is not enough yet. Also have to know about the causes & conditions for them. If not all the wrong reasons & speculations will be in the wrong directions.

For some examples: mind & matter are created by God or it happened without causes or by the past causes, etc.. All these wrong views will ~~let one~~ ^{different} stray away from the right direction. There are many causes & conditions. For e.g. the past & the present causes & conditions, supporting & producing causes & conditions from the surroundings, etc. must know or understand the different causes & conditions from different angles. Only one cause is not complete (Some Buddhists had this idea). Knowing the causes & conditions thoroughly is paccayapariyagaha nyan - discernment of the conditions of mind & matter. With this knowledge & do not have any doubts in: Did I exist in the past? or Will I become again in the future? Why I am here in the present?

As an e.g. trees were existed in the past by the causes of soil, water & sun light, etc. In the present & future also in this way. Knowing the causes & conditions clearly, is kamkhavitarana visuddhi - purification by overcoming doubt. The level of knowledge increase

Continuing to the insight contemplation & similar fake dharmas of knowledge arise, or encounter. Because of Samadhi power some of the phenomena are look-like path & fruit. So yogis can take it as attainments. Yogis cannot distinguish between the real & the fake. Then making the wrong conclusion & judgement. For e.g. the body light comes out. Because of Samadhi the body disappears & only the mind exists. The whole body & mind become tranquil. It is similar to the path that the yogi thinks it as attainment. And then stray away from the path. If a train strays away from the line & will be overturned. And then cannot go forwards. If the yogi can distinguish between the fake & the real is purification of path & not-path (maggāmagga nānādassana-visuddhi). This is the 5th purity.

If the yogi is on the right direction & to the practice knowledge develops step by step. That is ^{the} purification of the way (patipadā nānādassana-visuddhi). This is the 6th purity. From ditti-visuddhi to patipadā-nānādassana-visuddhi are the 4 purification processes by insight. When arriving to the climax there is an attainment which is not by producing. This is the purification by knowledge & vision (Nānādassana-visuddhi). This is the 7th purity. This Pali words is different from the others 5th & 6th purifications & without prefixes, such as maggāmagga & patipadā. The yogi knows that he is on the right direction is the purification of the way. If he continues forwards will arrive to the ending & which is the goal. This is knowledge & vision or knowing & seeing (Nāna & dassana). What the yogi knows & sees?

(185) (195) Here not included the prefix words what were the knowing & seeing?

Knowing is function, & seeing is power. There not including the prefix-words what see know & see. In the *pañcavāññadassana*, knowing & seeing the process of the path. *Nānādassana* here is knowing & seeing the 4 noble truths. It is also called Dhamma Eye - Dhamma Cakkhu. In the Buddha's First Discourse (Turning the Wheel of Dhamma); the descriptions were, cakkhūn udapādi - nānam udapādi, etc (There arose in me vision, knowledge, etc.) was referred to the 7th purity or this level. This is knowing & seeing the 4 noble truths. With the developing of the truth of the path will know the truth of dukkha. With the knowledge of dukkha can abandon the truth of the cause (samudaya) & see the cessation of the dukkha. It happen at the same time. With one functioning & finishing 4 tasks. Using of one description; knowing & seeing Nibbāna. Therefore *nānādassana* is not *vipassanā* knowledge & referring to path & fruit (maggā & phala). We can say these are the results.

How long it take the yogi to get the attainment? Nobody can say exactly. It depends on each person. As examples; Tipitaka master mahā Siva practised for 30 yrs. Ven. Anuruddha i Samatha practice attained divine eye. And then continued insight not attained this knowledge & vision. After i the help of Ven. Sariputta & realized it. Attainments are not our concerns. It was like planting a fruit tree. Flowers & fruits appear were the work of the tree. Doing the practice is only our concern. When the time is ripe it will appear.

For the spiritual faculties to be matured, & must always do the practice. It was like a wiping cloth. Only washed it for one time & never again then it became dirtier & dirtier. If we practise always, it will be in the progress. It was also like washing the clothes & bathing. If not even we cannot bear our own smells. The mind is also in the same way. Only then the mind can be purified. From the purification of view (the 3rd) to knowledge & vision (the 7th purity) which mentioned above are in general.

For the practice, firstly have to study & learn the Buddha-Dhamma text in books or Dhamma talks. Practise under a learned experienced teacher is better. If have doubts & not clear about the Dhamma & practice should ask the teacher. In this way will get the knowledge by learning & listening (suttamaya nyāya). After this start & the practice of purity in sila & mind (samadhi). With the purity in virtue & mind, & develop the insight practice (*vipassanā*). Some think these processes were Ven. Budhagosa's ideas. In the Ratha-vinita Sutta, questions & answers between Ven. Sariputta & Ven. Punna were about these 7 purifications.

It was also sure that not all of the Buddha's teachings could be recorded. Only some of them or majority of them. Forty five years of teaching could be a lot more. If we can accept that the Buddha was the most busiest person in the world. From where have to start the purification of view. The objects of insight practice are; the 5 aggregates, the 12 sense bases & the 18 elements. These can be divided into 2 groups of yogi; samatha-yanika (samatha based yogi) & ripassana-yanika (insight-based yogi). If the yogi is samatha-yanika starts the contemplation of the mind & then later & matter (rūpa). If ripassana-yanika starts & matter. These were the instructions in the Visuddhimagga. It was handed down by the old generation of teachers. A teaching is right or wrong cannot only confirm by records. Also have to take the accounts of experiences & results. It is necessary to pay more attention on the important points for contemplation. Starting from the matter is more easier, because it is prominent.

In the Great Elephant Footprint Simile Discourse / mahāhatthipadopama Sutta (from Majjima Nikāya), Ven. Sariputta taught the monks on practice was including the 4 great elements; earth (pathavī), light or water (āpo), fire (tejo), wind (vayo) properties & including the space (ākāsa) property or element. In the sutta, the venerable started & the 4 noble truths which, like the footprint of an elephant, encompassed all the other animals' footprints. And all the skillful qualities were included in the 4 noble truths. Started & the 4 great elements as contemplation (including space element). And then Dependent co-arising (Paticcasamuppada). In this sutta we can find about the 5 khandhas, ayatana & 18 dhatus.

In other sutta we found the 6 elements, added & consciousness (viññāna) (e.g., An Analysis of the Properties Discourse, Sutta No. 140, Majjima N.)

In the Great Elephant Footprint Simile, earth element was not referred to the intrinsic nature of hardness, softness, etc. But referred to the bodily parts as hard, solid & sustained by craving (tanha); head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, etc. Both the internal & external earth elements are simply earth elements. That should be seen as it actually is & right discernment. This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self. When one sees it thus as it actually is & right discernment. One becomes disenchanted & makes the mind dispassionate towards the earth element.

Nowadays in Burma most yogis talk about between concepts (paññatti) & ultimate reality (paramattha). The practice must on the paramattha. Here in this sutta the 4 great elements are using by concepts of the body parts. They think that these are not the basic. If the yogis arrive to the level of the arising & passing away of phenomena (vayañchaya nyam), will penetrate the ultimate reality (paramattha).

In the beginning of the practice just talk about the paramattha not get to the point. Some of the 4 great elements meditations by the Buddha is becoming critical. Why the Buddha taught this way?

Human's attach to things are not paramattha dhammas. For e.g., my hairs, my face, etc. I not attach to the hardness, softness, etc of the earth elements. Therefore using concepts to dispel the basic concepts. It can be only fallen away by right seeing (yathabhūta).

whatever internal, belonging to oneself as liquid or watery:

bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, etc. This is called the internal water elements. Both the internal & the external water elements are simply water element. That should be seen as it actually is i right discernment. This is not mine, not me & not my-self. When one sees it thus as it actually is i right discernment, & one becomes disenchanted i the water element & makes the mind dispassionate towards the water element.

The internal fire element in oneself are: by which the body is warmed, aged, & consumed i fever, what is eaten, drunk, chewed & savour gets properly digested or whatever else internal within oneself is fire, fiery. This is called the internal fire element. - - - - -

Whatever internal, belonging to oneself is wind, windy: up going winds, down going winds, winds in the stomach, in the intestines, winds that course through the body, in & out breathing or whatever as internal within oneself is wind, windy. This is called the internal wind element... In this way the yogi contemplate the 4 elements to discern them.

And then the concepts of person or beings disappear.

It was liked cutting a cow into pieces & i the piles of flesh the concept of the cow disappeared.

With the great 4 elements, there are other 4 elements: colour, smell, taste & nutriment. These 8 matters are indivisible. They all are together. If talking about matter always remember these 8 qualities. Example for an external matter, a bread we can analyse the 4 great elements in it. Can see the colour & the eye, its smell can be smelled i nose, can know the taste or flavour, & after eating it the body receives the nutrient (such as protein, vitamins, etc.). Combined together all are 8 matters (rupa). If they are separated not exist anymore. Have to contemplate these nature.

(198) (188)

must do the exercises & the view of a being disappears. The concept falls away; & then penetrate its essence. After the contemplation of matter, & have to know the mind. Using the sense bases (ayatana) & contemplation it becomes more clear. ~~Eye base & object base~~ With the contact of eye & physical form, seeing consciousness arises. This is the arising of the mind (nāma dharmma). The other sense bases also contemplate in this way. Contemplation of the 18 elements are also in this way.

4. Kainkharitata navisuddhi: Purification by overcoming doubt

Kainkha means doubting. Cannot make a decision whether it is right or wrong. The mind becomes tired & uncertain. As an example, like someone is arriving at the cross-roads, ~~& does not know~~ cannot decide which direction has to follow & stopping there. In the same way one's practice cannot make the conclusion & stopping there.

Only & right knowing & seeing overcome the difficulty. Vitaraṇa means overcoming. Overcoming doubt by knowledge (Not by faith).

To get this knowledge, it needs to know the right causes of the mind & matter. Why have doubts? Some are connected to the present & others are not. The present can be known by oneself & not by oneself. There are 2 knowledge; & direct knowledge & inference. Direct knowledge is knowing can be known to the body (i.e., to senses). For e.g., someone never eat durian fruits before. Now if he has the chance to eat one of them, ^{he} knows its taste. The others even he does not eat them, will know its taste & inference. In the same way; this life it happens this way, & so in the past & will be in the future. If overcoming doubt & direct knowing & inferences will get this knowledge. How to do it?

Must try to know the causes thoroughly. This is the discernment or knowledge of the conditions of mind & matter (nāmarūpa paccayaपापिं गाहा न्याम) What are mind & matter? With the eyes, ears, nose, tongue & body-the 5 internal senses & the 5 external sense objects-physical form, sound.....tangible objects are matters. matters cannot take ^{to know} the sense objects. They cannot incline towards the sense objects. matters (rūpa) is so called because it undergoes & imposes alteration owing to adverse physical conditions such as cold & heat, etc. In the Samyutta N., the Buddha defined it as deformed or afflicted by cold, heat, hunger, thirst, flies, mosquitoes, wind, sunburn & other creeping things.

It changes distinctly, it forms & shapes. All these are matters (rūpa). With the contact of sense objects & sense doors, the knowing mind arise. This is roughly defining. This dhamma (mind or phenomenon) inclining towards the objects or facing towards the objects. Therefore it called name (nāma) or mind (mind always co-existing with mental factors - cetasikas). As example, in a quiet night with a bang sound & the mind instantly inclines towards the sound. The mind & the other objects are also in the same way. Therefore knowing about the sense is mind. Alteration, deformation & infliction are matters.

This is full understanding of the known (ñataparinā), one understands the 5 khandhas (mind & matter) in terms of their individual characteristics, etc. Learning knowledge also includes here. We must try to know them directly & knowledge (nyāna). Knowing that except mind & matter nothing exist, becomes dīthivisuddhi. And then continue to investigate why mind & matter arise & how they arise?

If something is happening, have to search for the causes why it arises.

It was like after knowing the type of illness & searching for the causes.

If find out the causes & knowing the causes becomes discernment of conditions (paccaya-pariggaha nyāna). By knowing the conditions why it is that the doubt of why it happens is overcome. All these are knowledge.

^{for} Talking about roughly ~~on~~ matter; the conditions are: kamma, mind, temperature & nutriment (kamma, citta, utu, ahara). From the Abhidhamma teaching we can know it in details. Here is 4 conditions. For an example; why the eye sensitivity (cakkhu-paśāda) arises by kamma. Therefore if the eye ^{be} damaged, cannot restore its vision.

But without of kamma & can restored the vision is the artificial eye, then we have to consider for other conditions. It is not by kamma only. matters which can perform this kind of ability are made by kamma (from eye to physical sensitivities). Mind is very strange indeed. Sound can be arisen by the mind. For e.g. the voice comes out by sadness & the voice comes out by joy are not the same. These voices are produced by the mind, heating by the mind.

The natural sounds from external such as thunder & windy sounds arise by temperature (utu). Sound can be arisen by the mind or temperature (the main factors). The sounds of animals are mind made. What are the causes for the snoring sound during sleep? With nutriment or vitamins the eyes become healthy. All are collectively supporting together for matters. It is similar to a tree to grow there are many conditions. Contemplation & reflection can be taken as meditation.

By doing it will increase knowledge. Not only closing the eyes & sitting. Thinking & reflecting about the world is meditation. Teaching & listening Dhamma talks are also meditation (see Khamaka Sutta of Samyutta-Nikāya). When coming out from the mother's womb a child was very small. With foods or nutriments the body grows up. Eating a lot & it becomes fat. The Buddha had said in a sutta that ī the causes of mind & temperature (citta & utu) foods were lacking of nutrients & human beings had short life span & diseases.

After the contemplation on matter & continue for the mind.

How & Why mind arises? For e.g., seeing consciousness. With the contact of eye & physical object & seeing _____ arises.

The other sense bases also understand in this way. Even do not know many causes, at least to know that much. In suttas the Buddha also mentioned this way. The mind depends on causes to arise. From where it comes out or existing before? None of them are true & it does not hide anywhere. Because of conditions & the effect or result comes to be. Take an e.g.; Is there any fire in the gas lighter? No, there not. It only has the condition for it arising. The mind arises by ^{adding} a condition which makes it arising. It was like a guitar, its sound originally not existed. These 2 knowledges: the disverments of mind & matter & its conditions are very important. These are the foundations of insight knowledges (vipassanā nyāns). Even can be said up to the realization of Nibbāna.

Only people have these 2 knowledges can be called true Buddhists. This fact was mentioned by Ledi Sayadaw in some of his writings. That was true because you ^{can} ~~have~~ not find it in other faiths.

These are also connection ī the Dependent Co-arising Teaching (Paticcasamuppada). Therefore Mogok Sayadawgyi after his practice stopped his own teaching for Abhidhamma to monks & laics. Instead he totally focused on the teachings of practice until his final day. Therefore his Dhamma talks are treasures for yogis. I had translated some of them as "Emptiness, Conditioned & Unconditioned".

Using the above 2 basic knowledges & contemplations, knowledge of comprehension (Samāsaññanam) arises. Have to develop this knowledge. Insight knowledges are starting from this knowledge. The 3rd & 4th purifications, the yogi knows about the natural phenomena & its causes. It is called full understanding of the known (Nāta parinā). After that continue the contemplation of full understanding by scrutinization (Tiraparīnā). Just knowing is not enough, need to be made a final conclusion. For this, have to contemplate ^{success} for many times.

There are 2 ways of contemplation; i.e in group or one by one. One by one method is difficult. So contemplate in group. Contemplate them under the 3 universal characteristics of impermanence, dukha & not-self. It can be contemplated into the past & future time periods. But most people think insight (vipassana) is contemplating the present moment only. It can be possible only at the higher or developed levels. Before that we need to contemplate them in the 3 periods of time - past, present & future. If mindfulness & concentration develop or, & better will discern the present moment. We cannot skip over it. (It is the same as the 4 levels of realization. Have to pass through the 4 levels one by one & practice). Must have the ability to contemplate the past, present & future of the mind & matter in general. As an example, yesterday mind & matter were not existing anymore for today. And today mind & matter also ^{will} not exist for tomorrow, etc. We can contemplate a human life span into 10 yrs in groups (i.e, 10 yrs, 20 yrs, 30 yrs, etc.). This is contemplating the changes in matter or body. We can contemplate the changing of the mind. It is very quick indeed, now this, now that, etc. Not only human beings are changing but also time span. Because of time span changing that man's life span & strength is changing & reducing continuously. Time is consuming living beings & making them disappearing. It takes out all the freshness, youth & strength from them. man cannot conquer time (generally speaking). Birds are dying while flying; mans are dying while planning. Who can consume time?

This is the fully awakened one - arahant. Now I am writing this is at the beginning of the 2018 new year. The 60th yr of 2017 had gone. Most people do not have the sense of urgency (samvega). During new yr they are out of control by getting lost in sensual pleasure of eating, drinking & shouting. What did they achieved during the last 60th yr? If we achieve something wholesome & good, then we should do it better during the new yr. Wasting precious time without any wholesome achievement is foolishness. Wholesome dhammas should be always cultivated at anytime in any place. A couple ^{from} Hong Kongers are welcoming the 2018 new yr at a meditation retreat in Burma. After that they will continue the spiritual journey in at the holy site of Bodhagaya. This is welcoming the new yr & heedfulness. But majority are doing it in heedlessness.

With the development of sati & panna (mindfulness & discernment) arriving to the knowledge of rise & fall of phenomena (nibbaya²). The contemplative mind is sharp enough for the present moment.

The yogi has strong resolution. And then the 10 insight corruptions come in & the yogi can be taken them as realization. Therefore he is stopping there. If he knows These are not representing the end of ^{the} way; then he is & the knowledge & vision of what is & what is not the path (maggimagganānādassana). With the continued contemplation & arriving to the end of the spiritual journey. This is the purification by knowledge & vision (Nānādassana-vistādhi).

5. & 6. Purification of Path & Not-Path: Purification of the Way.

There are not much to talk about the 5th purification of path & not-path. When the yogi arrives to the knowledge of rise & fall of mind & matter (udayabhyaya nyom) the 10 insight corruptions appear. These are; an aura (obhāso), rapture (piti), tranquility (passadhi), resolution (adhimoksha), exertion (paggaha), happiness (sukha), knowledge (ñānam), mindfulness (sati), equanimity (upekkha) & attachment (rakanti). If a yogi gets lost in any one of them & become obstacles to progress. Because the yogi takes it as attainment & stops practicing. In Ven. Sayadaw Punna Nanda's talk on 7 purifications mentioned about them.

These phenomena every yogi must encounter it. Importance is not get lost in these processes. ^{There are no appearing & disappearing body form & particles.} In the insight processes, not including body form & particles. Paramattha Dhammas are arising & passing away. It can discern impermanence (rise & fall) there are no body form, image & sign there.

- Whatever khandha arises, by seeing it arising & passing away, & defilement (kilesa) is purified. The mind becomes clear & bright that
- ① **aura or light** come out from the body. If Samadhi is strong, also has light. If encounter them do not think about them & not taking pleasure in them. If not practice will go down. By not taking interest in them & continue to the impermanent process & overcome the problem.
 - ② **sharp knowledge**: In the beginning of vippassanā practice, it was leading by Samadhi that whatever arose knowing them to concepts. This was satipatthana task. Sometimes if the yogi discerned impermanence, the contemplative mind had 5 path factors (sati, viriya, Samadhi, sammeditthi & Sammasankappa). This time ^{span} was very short. After that Samadhi led the process again. In these ways sometimes led by Samadhi & sometimes became knowledge (discern anicca). And then Sati became strong. Sometimes the mind is clear & sometimes not. When it is clear discern impermanence. If not clear only know the arising phenomena & concepts. This level is still leading by Samadhi. With Samadhi develop step by step & only seeing anicca. This is leaving by discernment (nyom or knowledge). Nyom becomes pure & sharper ^{separately} with the better & sharper knowledge cannot discern anicca processes one by one.

Instead seeing the passing away as a whole. When seeing anicca & the strong power of mind or sharp knowledge & thinking it as attainment. At that time the yogi able to contemplate whatever coarse, middle, refined phenomena without failure. The yogi can take pleasure in it. With the pleasure ryan declines.

(3) Zest (piti): The important point here is whatever encounter the yogi can solve the problem. Whatever type of contemplation we do or try when discerning anicca all phenomena (body, feeling, mind & dhamma) are dhamma arising & dhamma passing away. Only sankhara (all conditioned things or the 5 khandhas) arises & sankhara passing away. With the mind clear & pure, zest appears. And then the yogi can't discern anicca which is covered up by piti. With strong respect on the 3 treasures (triratana - i.e., Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha) piti can arises. With the pervading rapture (pharana piti, which is the piti in jhana attainment) can't see impermanence. Without seeing anicca & the yogi thinks it as the ending of anicca which is Nibbana. At that time ryan goes down. Even some yogis have tears come out. Instantly when rapture arises can contemplate it & no problem arises. If not the yogi takes it as the path knowledge & stops the contemplation.

(4) Tranquility (passaddhi): mind & body become tranquil. Any one of the 10 corruptions can arise to the yogi. It is sure about it. If not encounter any of them the mind still not mature yet. After encounter them & can't solve them will far from Nibbana. Normally people are burning & the fire of defilements such as greed, ill-will, delusion, sorrow, etc. the mind is not peaceful. In the same way the body is oppressing by diseases & pains. But when the yogi discerning anicca & the strong power mind he can bear all the pains & equanimity. When the mind & body become tranquil, the mind falls into one-pointedness (ekaggata). Then the yogi can't hear any external sounds. And no external object disturbs the mind. It is peaceful. At that time anicca disappears & the mind sinks in the tranquility & taken it as path knowledge. Each yogi experiences is not the same. If the yogi can contemplate the arising fake dhamma (i.e. any of the 10 corruptions), then contemplate its anicca. If not neglecting it & continue & one's own contemplation.

(5) Happiness (sukha): From tranquility to progress to the level of happiness. Then the yogi can maintain the posture for a very long time. Without any pain & aching the mind feels happiness. At that time sukha replaces anicca & the yogi misses anicca. Also not contemplate the arising sukha that ryan falls down.

③ Resolution or Faith (Adimokkha):

With the well discerning ^{of} anilea better & better, faith increases: (i.e., in the 3 treasures) The whole body becomes cool & happy. This cool & happiness come from faith covers up anilea. So anilea disappears & taken it as attainment. With faith, if happiness arises not loses sati & contemplates the arising happiness as anilea. Or without paying attention to it & continue ī one's own practice. (There are 2 ways to solve the problems; contemplate the coming in corruptions as anilea or neglect it by contemplating one's own meditation object) Therefore in all these situations sati is very important.

④ Exertion (paggaha or viriya):

With the progress in the practice, the yogi can contemplate without any difficulty ī happiness. So exertion increases & the mind ī high spirit. Everytime put effort in not to miss the point. At that time sinking in exertion & forget anilea. This is taking pleasure in exertion.

⑤ Mindfulness (sati):

At that time (i.e., insight corruptions period) whatever dhamma arises mindfulness always falls on the object & becomes very strong. It is the kind of heedful mindfulness that even in dream not lost sati. If taking pleasure in strong mindfulness & will miss anilea. Therefore whatever dhamma arises without let go of anilea & always alert & sati (i.e., don't change the object, get lost in pleasure)

⑥ Equanimity (upekkha):

Whatever dhamma arises can be contemplated & equanimity. Also can attach to this state & taken as attainment

⑦ Attachment (nikanti):

All the above 9 dharmas; light (obhasa) to equanimity, are not defilements (kilesa). These are significant refined dharmas. These are the signs of progress in practice. Every yogi must encounter them (not all). The problem here is the yogi's attachment or pleasure in them. It is nikanti or tanha. Therefore it can hinder the yogi's practice if they (he) trap by them. So be careful to the refined & subtle experiences ī strong & alert sati.

6. Purification of the Way:

To talk about the purification of the way, we need to know about the 10 insight knowledges. These are:

1. Knowledge of comprehension - Sammasanāñānam

2. — — rise & fall of formations (khandhas) - Udayabbayañānam.

3. Knowledge of the dissolution of formations - bhangañānam.
4. — — dissolving things as fearful - bhayañānam.
5. — — fearful things as dangerous - ādīvarañānam.
6. — — disenchantment & all formations - nibbidāñānam.
7. — — desire for deliverance - mūcītu kamyatāñānam.
8. — — reflecting contemplation - patisankhāñānam.
9. — — equanimity towards formations - sankhāru pekkhāñānam.
10. — — conformity - anulomañānam.

After the 1st & 2nd insight ks of comprehension & rise & fall (overcoming the insight corruptions), the yogi arrives on the right path. It now matures & develops & increased strength & clarity. The mature knowledge of rise & fall to knowledge of equanimity (i.e., the 8 knowledges) are referred to as purification of the way. This is walking on the right way to Nibbana. From here to the end will see Nibbana which is purification of knowledge & vision. Between them is a bridge called knowledge of conformity (10th). Between 6th & 7th purification is a bridge. Why there is a bridge between them? This side & that side are not the same. All the insight knowledges are & conditioned objects (sankhara). Therefore it can be said have the same object (i.e., sankhara). Crossing from 6th to 7th purification the object is changed. These are sankhara objects & without sankhara objects. Sankhara objects are arising by conditions. Therefore impermanence & changing all the times. These are arising & passing away & disappearing. It is stressing dukkha. Can't do anything for it, therefore not-self (anatta). At 6th purification, the yogi has to be practised for maturity, but dealing with unstable phenomena. After crossing to the other side, no more arising & passing away phenomena. If impermanence exists & dukkha exists, if dukkha exists & anatta exists. The bridge which connecting the 2 is knowledge of conformity - anulomañānam or saccavulomikāñānam (also rendered as adaptation). From knowledge of rise & fall to the k of conformity have 9 knowledges. Insight knowledges are at this side & the other side is Nibbana. For arriving to the other side & have to practise from this side. So it is very reasonable & systematic practice. Not an imagination & very practical indeed. But not easy to attain it. Must persevere without giving up the practice. So the Buddha encouraging yogis to have the courage & exertion until the bones & skin dried up without giving up. Some people criticise this as mortification in practice. These are lazy people. If it is the right path, then not mortification. Wrong path without any beneficial result can be gained in this way. Also the Buddha mentioned this way. Only doing things without possibility. What is possible Doing impossible things are wrong & possible things are right.

AT THE TIME OF THE BUDDHA some had attainments easily & some in difficulty. It's dependent on the person. Not only for common people. In the Budhavamsa (History of the Buddhas), even bodhisattas were not the same. Some of them went to the gardens & asked people to leave. Within a short period of practice & became a Buddha. It was very easy going. Not liked the Buddha Gantama, who had difficulties in hard practice. Some Buddhas did not need to go alms round anywhere. Every day received food at the King's palace. What kinds of prayers, paramis & practices had been done before? Everyone will like it. There are 4 kinds of yogis, & their nature of practice & attainment. These are: 1. difficult practice & quick attainment 2. easy practice & slow attainment 3. difficult practice — slow — 4. — — — quick — — — As examples; Maha-moggallana was in the 1st type & Sariputta was in the 4th type.

After the 5th purification of path & not-path, the yogi continues contemplate anicca. The present moment anicca is referred to this level. (i.e., udayabbaya nyan onwards). Not before, the knowledge of comprehension why not seeing or discerning anicca? Because we cannot discern the moment of arising & passing away. For e.g.; in-breath & out-breath, the whole in-breath & the whole out-breath, each of the process between them have spaces or gaps. The feelings (vedana) are also the same, & segments between them. Sounds are also the same nature. The first words of the sound or voice disappears & the 2nd word arises, & its disappearance & the 3rd word arises, etc... It is happening non-stop continuously like a machine gun. If we listen carefully to observation, & there are many-dek-dek-dek-etc between them. When sati & samadhi powers developed will discern them. Movie film is also another good example. With the slow motions can see the movements of the character part by part. The permanent view & thought come in because can't discern anicca & it is covering up by the quick processes. Therefore have to discern the arising & passing away. Should not follow it in anicca, anicca, etc without direct seeing. Knowing the segments between them is discerning the nature of anicca. Why don't we know dukkha? Because of change our postures frequently that don't know dukkha (i.e. the coarser dukkha). Why don't we see not-self (anatta)? Because of seeing the compactness, solidity, shape & form as a whole. For e.g., we can analyze a body & a car, will not see them as an identity & the solidity of them. They are combined in many parts of objects & become a body & a car. There are 4 kinds of compactness; continuity, combination, function & object of compactness. They have one functioning, one object & one combination (that people think them as self (anatta)). & one combination (that people think them as self (anatta)). must able to contemplate each differences & analysis. With the combination that they can move & function.

without it & they cannot take example for a human being. It is only the mind & body process. If we separate the mind & body by themselves only it cannot function & move. It will be a dead body. It was like a puppet, without the strings it can't move. With knowledge or analytical knowledge separate each of them to discern them. The nature of not-self appears. And then can contemplate the 3 universal characteristics. It has to be contemplated in this way. Must able to see in details connecting & the sense objects. What are the differences of anicca, dukkha & anatta? It is changing that or unstable that anicca.

It is oppressing & change that dukkha. There is no me & mine that emptiness (sunna) or not follow one's wishes that not-self (anatta).

The 3 words anicca, dukkha & anatta refer to the 5 khandhas. What are the characteristics referring to? These are referring to their situations. For e.g. arising & passing away is its characteristic or aspect (character or nature). Lakkhana (characteristic) is the sign or mark of the phenomena (dhamma). Seeing lakkhana is seeing anicca. It cannot be separated, but only explain in this way. They are connected. Therefore anicca, dukkha & anatta are the 5 khandhas. Lakkhanas are their aspects (character or nature). Knowing these clearly & the yogi has the knowledge of rise & fall (udayabbaya nyom).

Only seeing them as

If knowledge becomes sharp, even not aware of the arising, with the quickly passing away only seeing them. Only can aware of the disappearing (bhangañanam) or contemplate the dissolution (bhangañupassama nyom). It's arriving to the climax of anicca. As example, the yogi knows the arising & passing away of in-breath & out-breath, & also the later mind knows the contemplative mind. The meaning here is the contemplated object & the contemplative mind, both of them are passing away. If not the yogi will only take the contemplated object as anicca & the contemplative mind as niceca (permanent) (Wrong view can be developed from practice by misinterpretation. Some of the wrong views mentioned in the Brahmajala Sutta & some of the new Buddhists ideas from this kind of misinterpretations) Therefore all the later arising minds also passing away. A dead body & a living body are the same thing. After die or pass away both of them never come back again. It was like all of them jumping into the abyss, & gone forever. Later arising phenomena are so new ones.

The older ones will be never seen again. Seeing in this way becomes fearful of them. Indeed it is "fearful when the khandhas are dissolving. It is the knowledge of dissolving things as fearful (bhayañanam). Only seen their faults & cannot find any good in them. And seeing them as dangerous (cetiñavañanam). And then become disenchanted & them (knowledge of disenchantment in all formations).

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This is in the process of letting go of craving & attachment in life, or purifying them. And then wanting to cast off the burden of dukkha. This is the knowledge of desire for deliverance (mūcītu kamyatā nyom). Then the yogi reflect on how to let go of them. This is the knowledge of reflecting contemplation (patisankhā nyom). And then the mind becomes calm & can observe ē equanimity, without like or dislike. The yogi arrives to the knowledge of equanimity towards formations. (sankharupekkha nyom). Up to this level are different levels of insight knowledges (These are the 6th purification).

Change of lineage (gotrabhū) is nothing to do ē this side & the other side. This is the point between the bridge. But it sees Nibbāna because it has let go of conditioned objects (sankhara arammanas). Therefore it sees Nibbāna. The change-of-lineage consciousness (gotrabhū citta), having Nibbāna as its object occurs, overcoming the lineage of worldling & evolving the lineage of the noble one.

Immediately after this the path of stream-entry arises.

It cut off the fetters of wrong views, doubt, & adherence of rites & ceremonies as realization. The yogi becomes a stream-winner (sotapanna). He has no more ^{than} seven lives of existence to come. He is already on the path (8 factors path) & never return backwards. It means never becomes back a worldling (bhavutnijjana).

With the path knowledge arises, the yogi is fully understanding the truth of dukkha, abandoning the truth of its origin, realizing the truth of its cessation, & developing the truth of the path to its cessation.

This is the yogi seeing the noble truths (4 noble truths) directly.

In this Mangala Sutta the Buddha not referred only to the first stage of enlightenment - the path of stream-entry. All the 4 stages of attainment, i.e., the stream-enterer (sotapanno), the once-returner (sakatāgāmi), the non-returner (anāgāmi) & arahant. But for a stream-enterer the above attainments are not difficult for him anymore like before. He will continue his practice ē the 8 path factors & will stage by stage realize the final Nibbāna - arahantship. Even the first stage of attainment is the great blessing for the yogi because his dukkha is only 7 drops of water if compare to volume of water in the ocean which is dukkha for a worldling. Therefore the Buddha said seeing the noble truths is the highest blessing.

Nowadays Buddhists are encountering the teachings & practices that should endeavour on the noble 8 fold path to see the noble truths by ending dukkha. To embark on the practice it need strong samvega (sense of urgency) for transcending dukkha. For this purpose we must

study & contemplate some of the discourses in the Saccasamyutta - Connected Discourses on The Truths. If we know the faults of not seeing the truths (saccas) which bring dangers & sufferings, etc. & the benefits by seeing the truths which bring peace & happiness, etc. This can be only possible by studying Dhamma & contemplation or reflection. In contemplation we can use the current situations around the world. According to the Buddha now we are in the interim aeon (antarikappa). It is the period of time required for the life span of human beings to rise from 10 yrs to the maximum of many thousands of yrs. And then it falls back to 10 yrs. Nowadays we human beings are in the period of declining which is falling back to 10 yrs life span. Why this happen? It is relating to human moral behaviours or cause & effect phenomena. With immoral behaviours it effecting the nature & human societies. Now we can observe & see all the human problems & suffering around the world. All sorts of pollution, such as air, water, earth & mind pollutions going on & on. The world politics are also not a good sign. A lot of instability & internal wars going on in many parts of the world. All these wars are becoming longer, dangerous & killing a lot of innocent civilian, creating refugee crisis in Europe & Africa. Even we have the United Nations to solve all these problems, but it does not have the power to do it. Because it was exploited & misused powers by some of the Super powers which controlled the Security Council. These people made all the crises more serious & harming a lot of innocent people. If talking about all the worldly problems will never end. And most people ^{are} already know it. Human destructive power is more & more greater because of science & technology developments. Material progress is not a problem. The problem is misusing it.

Some Natural problems are human beings can't escape, such as birth, ageing, sickness & death. But human made problems we can be avoided. To solve human problems have to base on moral virtues as a foundation & not by immoral behaviours. With moral foundation have to develop the mind. Even interim aeon is like a cycle rising & falling in accordance to human behaviours. We can have the chances to change it. It does not mean to change the whole process backwards again. We can make it not degenerates very quickly. Because human destiny is in human mind. Our mind is our own creator & not in external. Every thing happen in accordance to the law of cause & effect. If human beings have moral behaviour & virtues, it will change towards good direction.

Living beings are wandering in the round of existence & uncertainty. Because most of them can't control their minds, usually following the desire of the unwholesome shamas. Also the untrained mind is taking pleasure in unwholesomeness. Therefore the Buddha said that most of living beings frequent homes were the 4 woe^{ful} plane (apāyabhūmi); i.e., 1. hell (niraya) the place of the most intense suffering, 2. the animal kingdom, 3. the sphere of petas (hungry ghosts) & 4. the host of asuras (a group of tormented spirits).

There is an important Dhamma for contemplation to develop Samvega is the 4 meanings of the truth of suffering (dukkha sacca). These are:
 1. Pilarato (oppressive) 2. Sankhatato (conditioning) 3. Santapato (burning)
 2. Viparinamato (change). The 4 meanings are connected. The main meaning is pilarato - oppressive. The 5 khandhas are really oppressive to one who gets it. The 4 meanings of dukkha effect on people can be differently. One of the very extensive dukkha is conditioning dukkha (sankhetato). This conditioning dukkha oppressing beings without any rest. If we observe the animals around us also can discern this terrible dukkha. Most human beings take this dukkha as happiness that even looking & chosing for it. How much stupid indeed?
 It is very important to contemplate on dukkha very often as a practice in our daily life, from ^{the} experiences ^{on thin} - us & others. There is no other dukkha greater than clinging the 5 khandhas. Therefore the Buddha said or emphasized ^{that} he taught only dukkha & the end of dukkha. The past Buddhas were also taught these. In the future to come, all the Buddhas will also teach the same. To penetrate dukkha is more important than anything. Therefore the Buddha said; seeing ^{the} noble truths was the greatest blessing.

(32) Realizing Nibbāna:

The 32nd blessing is seeing the noble truths, & 33rd is realizing Nibbāna. So what are the differences between them. Seeing the noble truths is the 4 Path knowledges. These are; the Path knowledge of a stream winner, the path knowledge of a once-returner, the path knowledge of a non-returner & the path knowledge of an arahant. At the time of thoroughly penetrates the 4 noble truths & path knowledge arises. Realizing Nibbāna is the 4 fructious (phalas). These are; from the stream-winner to arahant. After the path knowledge (magga nāna) follows by fruition. It is without delay - akaliko. According to the conditional relations - patthāna, it is anantara pacayo - proximity condition. This become evident by direct yogi's experience. But some scholars take it as has to wait for sometimes in the future. To acquire proficiency has to develop it for sometimes like jhanas. For other shamas has to wait for sometimes in the future, e.g., the result of dāna.

The attainment of fruition (phala samāpatti) is a meditative attainment. A noble disciple can enter into supramundane absorption (lokuttara jhana) ī Nibbāna as object. To experience the bliss of Nibbāna here & now. The attainment is reached by making the resolution (adhi thana) to attain fruition. And then developing in sequence beginning ī the knowledge of rise & fall-impermanence. In a Dhamma talk by a teacher mentioned about seeing Nibbāna. "It's the real cessation of the khandha ^{& also} of ~~not~~ can be checked. Sitting in front of a Buddha statue & make a resolution. Because after the Path knowledge & come fruitions. Therefore the yogi can enter into fruition state (phala samāpatti). Lord! Let me discern again the cessation of khandha. And makes an hour of resolution & sits there. It starts again from rise & fall (impermanence). But the rise & fall process are not becoming increase or decrease as before (i.e., before the Path knowledge arose in the practice). Discerning (seeing) rise & fall for sometimes & it stops happening. But don't satisfy ī it. Testing for another one & half hours, and then 2 hrs, 3 hrs, etc. by increasing the time span ī resolutions. If, it's real, you'll attain it. If, it's fake, then can't attain it. Even becoming worse. With more testing & ^{become} more significant. The yogi's in & out breaths are cool & the body. People are bitten by mosquitos but not the yogi in fruition. Because of kilesa smell & bite by mosquitos.

Actually life is a very heavy burden, physically or mentally. When people are becoming older & older, sick or near death even become more clearer. Mental burden comes from our daily life welfare & for others. These kinds of mental burden are quite a lot & will never end. Life also has a lot of disturbances & never peaceful. Ven. Sariputta after his enlightenment, even wanted to put down this body as soon as possible. In samsāra he had never had real peace & happiness because of the khandha. He said That even better to carry around the Mount Meru on his back than the khandha. Because when the time comes for the destruction of the world everything is disappeared. But not the khandha burden & dukkha for living beings ^{who} still have kilesas. Therefore for all noble beings (from the Buddha to sotapanna) when they had free time preferred to stay in the fruitions. They can put down their khandha burdens for sometimes accordingly to their levels. In one of mogok Sayadaw's talks on the truth of cessation-nirodha saucha, one is rivekata - the peaceful nature of Nibbāna. Sayadaw said as follow:

• If observing the mind & body & nyan eye, they are in chaos & impermanence. But if observing Nibbāna, it's totally clear without anything. Showing it & the practice it becomes more clearer. For e.g., if we do the contemplation on feeling (vedanānupassana), mind (citta) & dhammas also included. The life span of feeling is only ① & ②. At ① it arises & at ② it disappears.

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Asking to contemplate feeling is giving a designation only. Actually has to contemplate is impermanence. Feeling arises on the body & the contemplative mind in the heart. At the time of contemplation, it's not there. Vipassan has to ^{be} put effort, ^{has} need to think & has to be ^{necessary} mindful. (To discern anicca) Therefore the matter of seeing anicca is ^{it's} need to be worked hard & tiresome. At Nibbana, must answer as ^{it's} not tiresome. At the time of seeing anicca is seeing the chaos. A place without chaos is Nibbana. With more maturity of insight & become more anicca & chaotic. No need to say about seeing Nibbana, if we can't see the chaos of anicca, & even can't speculate about it. After discerning more & more anicca, becoming more wearisome. Only that developing into the knowledge of not wanting it. At the time can make a determination for it as really dukkha, then suddenly it ceases in a blip. With the disappearing of kilesa that anicca disappears. And then the path knowledge seeing the clearing (or emptiness). It's not the mind cutting off kilesas, but the path factors (ie noble 8 fold path). The mind is ~~including~~ included as consciousness condition (sahajatapaccayo). Don't take Nibbana as seeing nothing nothingness. The dying out ^{of} kilesas has the nature of good looking. The nature of well being only ^{attaining} after parinibbana (the passing away of an arahant). Here Sayawdin referred to Kilesa Nibbana & Khemha Nibbana. If we look at the 31 realms of existence, will only find out the chaos of anicca made by kilesa. Nibbana is free from the chaos of kilesa that it has the nature of clearance of things.

Nibbana doesn't have the kind of mind & body we have. If we ask, is it body or mind? Answer it as mind dhamma (nāma-dhamme). It's not the mind of arising & passing away. It was the place for a practising yogi to arrive there. This is the place where the dhamma leading to it. They have to incline towards it. Our mind incline towards the sense objects. For the mind dhamma of Nibbana, others have to incline towards it. For the attainment of cessation (Nirodha-samāpatti), the yogi's mind can inclines towards it for 7 days. (Sayawdin gave a simili for this). In Mandalay Zay-cho Bazaar,

at the center of it is a clock tower. It was like this clock tower, from whichever direction from the car comes ^{came}, had to look at it. In the same way any ^{one} yogi having ^{had} arrived there before ^{couldn't} shun away from it. This is the best of the best. At every free time, noble beings incline towards it. Why is that? To have peace & comfort. It can give peace & comfort that the place of all the happiness. Therefore called it as happiness. Every worldly matter gives dukkha (because of the 3 universal characteristics). But Nibbana has the characteristic of happiness, peace & joy. Nibbana has the body or not? If, it has the body must ^{has} to be changed.

Without the body & how could it be? Without any form & sign, but experience it & happiness! This is still having the khandha (i.e., the yogi still alive) A very significant place. Nibbāna is the holiest. If without dukkha the worldlings must like it. This was the best for the Buddha. Therefore there is nothing better than that.

One of the important things to understand the Buddha-Dhamma is we cannot take the indirect meanings as direct meanings & vice versa. Especially the teaching on Nibbāna is very difficult to understand. Because it is the supramundane Dhamma, which cannot be expressed in language directly. Therefore the Buddha & enlightened beings only could describe it & metaphors or metaphorical terms. So we have to bear in mind this important point. If not & our own ideas & views can create wrong views about Nibbāna. We can see them in the history of Buddhism developed from this point (Even from the Buddha's time to present day). There were 62 kinds of wrong views in the Discourse of Nett of view. Most of them came from practice, & misinterpreted their experiences. Practising & wrong views cannot develop the path.

In Search of Nibbāna: The following extraction is ^{from} a talk by Mogok Sayadaw on Nibbāna. It is interesting for contemplation.

in the khandha (there are 3 noble truths. The physical body or matter (rūpa) is like fuel dukkha sacca (truth of suffering) & perishable. Greed (lobha) is like fire samudaya sacca (the noble truth of the origin of suffering) & also perishable. The noble truth of the way (magga sacca) is also perishable. Therefore we can't rely on them. The Buddha was asking the Rohitassa devata to look for Nibbāna in this ^{two} one armed-length body (or fathom-long body). But only found the perishable dhamma matter (rūpa) is body aggregate. Greed (lobha) & path factors (magganga) are aggregate of mental formation (saṅkharakkhandha). These are not free from the khandha. In this khandha, only found the 3 noble truths. Not included Nibbāna. Can't find Nibbāna. Why? Because Nibbāna is not connecting to the khandha. If included in the khandha, then it will be perished. But the Buddha taught that the 4 noble truths existed in the khandha. Therefore, ^{it is} Nibbāna not mixed-up to the perishable khandha. Then it will exist outside the khandha. Even the khandha perishes, it doesn't. So it is stable Nibbāna (duhuva nibbāna) & happy Nibbāna (sukha nibbāna). Not everyone can see it. Only for someone learns the method from a teacher & then practise will see it. By not wanting the khandha & it ceases, will see it. After that it becomes one own property. If knowing dukkha sacca thoroughly will realize Nibbāna. It doesn't mixed up to dukkha sacca that it must be sukha sacca. Then it will be peaceful only by attaining ^{khandha}. For a practitioner, if not wanting dukkha sacca & in a brief khandha disappears & Nibbāna arises.

There is something leaving behind not connecting to the khandha. It will arise only without this khandha. For the practitioner stays in the imperishable. The reason we do not find Nibbāna is because it is not moving away, thing covered on it. It exists as an external nature. Not as an internal nature (i.e., in the khandha). Nibbāna is very strange Dhamma. By searching outside the khandha also can't find it (i.e., not searching at the right place). For e.g., the story of Rohitassa devata, & the Buddha taught him to find in the khandha. It existed in the father's long body. But it does not exist ^{internal & external} of the khandha (ajhatta & bahiddhā).

Why we don't attain Nibbāna? Because taking affection in the perishable nature of things. For e.g., to one own's khandha, family members, belongings etc. Only you'll attain it by not wanting the perishable things.

Asking you to contemplate impermanence is let you to know about the perishable Dhamma (phenomena). First, has to discern impermanence (anicca). Second, has to disenthall & it. Third, to discern the ending of it.

If you're wanting the perishable things, will only get them. By not wanting will get the imperishable Dhamma. If you find out the perishable & get the trace to Nibbāna. By following to the ending of perishable & will find the imperishable Nibbāna.

At last I want to present the teaching on Nibbāna from Dhamma talks given by Sayadaw Dr. Nandasmarabhidhivamsa. Not a complete translations, only extractions. These are very interesting, most of them are from the Suttas. There were 2 kinds of Dhamma we could find in some of the Suttas. These are; conditioned phenomena (sankhata Dhamma) & unconditioned phenomenon (asankhata Dhamma).

The meaning of sankhata is; san = by causes, khata = the products made by the combination of, combines together = The products made by the combination of causes. Therefore a sankhata means - Dhamma (i.e., Nibbāna) not made by causes. The Buddha using both of them in the Suttas. Using them together was in the Abhidhamma.

This was in the Dhamma-sangani, the first book of " " " " . Sankhata is conditioned phenomena & asankhata is unconditioned phenomenon. Sankhata Dhamma is the 5 aggregates (khandhas).

The whole cosmos is the 5 khandhas. So human being is the same. These were explained in general by the Buddha. The wholesome & unwholesome Dharmas are in the Sankhata. These are the 4 realms; sensuous plane (kāma bhūmi), fine-material plane (rūpabhuñi), immaterial plane (arūpabhuñi) & supramundane (lokuttara lokuttara) i.e., path knowledge consciousness & fruitless consciousness. Free from causes is Nibbāna (asankhata).

In the Asankhatasamyutta (Samyutta Nikāya), the Buddha called asankhata as the cessation of rāga (lust), dosa (hatred) & delusion (moha). Here, confusion can be come in. Because, the cessation of lust, hatred & delusion is also called the Path Knowledge. The " " " them is showing the causes.

The abandonment is defilement (kilesa) & taking the object is Nibbāna. All the path knowledges & frutios (sotappatti magga to arahatta magga) are taking Nibbāna as object. By taking Nibbāna as object & kilesa also ceases. Therefore there are levels of Nibbāna & cessation levels of kilesa.

In the Kosambi Sutta, from sotapanna (stream enterer) to anagamin (non-returner) are only seeing Nibbāna. It was like seeing the water inside the well by going downwards & not touching the water yet. Only the arahant is touching the water & abandoning all kilesa. Can see Nibbāna only in the path knowledge & fruition knowledge. Therefore it is very difficult to see it.

Because everyone is inside the province of sankhata. It can also be guessed by inferring (anumana). In the Tabukhatala Sutta, Ven. Sariputta also said that the cessation of lust, hatred & delusion was Nibbāna.

There are no causes to produce Nibbāna. It doesn't arise by kamma, mind, temperature & foods or sense door & sense object (These are the causes for body & mind). It is not produced by them. Path & fruition consciousness are also in the 5 khandhas. But they are not in the clinging khandha (i.e., upadānakhandha). Clinging khandha is dukkha. Nibbāna is the cessation of clinging khandha (or) dukkha nirodha - the cessation of dukkha.

The cessation of the causes is Nibbāna. Nibbāna is the cessation of both dukkha & saṃudaya (dukkha & its origin - i.e. tanhā). Therefore it can divide in to two as the cessation of cause & result, i.e. kilesa & khandha.

As examples; two elements of Nibbāna: 1. The Nibbāna element in residue (sa-upādisesa nibbhānadhātu) 2. & The Nibbāna element without "Canupādisesa" " "). For these 2 Nibbānas took the example of the Buddha. When the Buddha gained enlightenment at the time of under the Bodhi tree was the first kind of Nibbāna element, i.e. the destruction of kilesas, but the physical body was still there.

At the old age of 80, after he was passed away & there were no more khandhas in the future was the 2nd kind of Nibbāna element.

We can also explain it in 3 rounds of existence (3 vattas). These are: kilesa vatta, kamma vatta & vipaka vatta. They are cause & result connections. Without kilesa & kamma can't function. And without both of them & no khandhas arise. The cessation of them is Nibbāna. Living being is the 5 khandhas. If without khandhas & there is nothing to call about it. But we can't say Nibbāna has nothing.

Khandhas are really exist. But their existence & Nibbana is not the same type. If there is becoming, then also there is no becoming. Without becoming that there are no beginning & ending. Therefore Nibbana has no beginning & ending. With only becoming & will has them.

For an example, if you have a wound & it's painful. After taking treatment & medicine & it's cure & no wound & pain anymore. Therefore the wound & pain disappear is really exist. So Nibbana is this kind of existence. Therefore dukkha exists & dukkha disappears is also exist. If we are thinking about it is craving (tanha), no-one will want it. Because there is no becoming. People are craving for becoming. Therefore they can't desire for the peaceful element of not

"Also in the Kosambi Sutta, the Buddha said; [“]Bhava-nirodho nibbana-nam = The cessation of becoming is Nibbana." Bhava - existence or becoming is the combination of 3 rounds of existence (3 rattas).

These are; wanting (tanha or kilesa), action (kamma) & getting (khandha) = existence or dukkha. So it's the same as - dukkha-nirodho nibbana-nam = The cessation of dukkha is Nibbana. Therefore is The stopping of the causes & the cessation of the effect (result) comes into being.

If we contemplate them & become very profound. These are in gists.

If we understand dukkha & will understand Nibbana. If we know existence (bhava) & we know Nibbana. The Buddha also taught it in details.

Because people could think about it from the points of sankhata. Therefore he gave examples of it had no 4 great elements (maha bhuta rupa), without mind (nama), etc. In ancient India some took the immaterial jhanas (arupa jhanas) as Nibbana. There is ^{neither} coming, ^{nor} going, ^{nor} staying (some Buddhists had these ideas). There are also some in the Udana Pali - The Buddha's Exclamations. One of the suttas, the Buddha said; "There is monks, an unborn (ajatani) - unbecome - unmade - unfabricated.". If there is born, then also there is unborn. If there is becoming, also there is unbecoming, etc ...

Other teachings on Nibbana were; viññānam anidassanam & sabbato pabbham. Viññānam anidassanam is translated by Ajahn Thanissaro as consciousness without feature. The usage of this consciousness is significant. Because except in 2 places in the texts can't find anywhere. These were in the Kevutta Sutta (Digha Nikaya) & Brahmanimantika Sutta (in Majjhima Nikaya). People were interpreting it differently that became mistaken about it. Can know it rightly only by consulting other suttas.

Vinnānam is the knowing mind. The consciousness here was, Nibbāna could be known only & This significant consciousness, & not by others. Avidassanam here was, not like seeing & the eye. It doesn't has the beginning & ending - anantam.

These words - sabbato pabbham was used in many books on Nibbāna differently. In the commentary pabba means port. To Nibbāna there are ways. (as like many ports). These are referring to the 38 ways of meditation (sometimes as 40 types). It can be entered from the many sides. In the slab-commentary, pabbham referred to the Light.

It means Nibbāna has light. The problem is, light is matter (rūpa). If Nibbāna has light, & then it becomes matter. These are metaphorical terms & can't take it directly. Nibbāna doesn't has defilement of delusion (moha - it referred to darkness). So it has the nature of no darkness.

In the Simile of The Vipers Discourse (i.e, Asivisopama Sutta - Saṅyuttanā-samyutta), Nibbāna was referred as the Other Shore. This was also a metaphorical term. Nibbāna has to be taken as the cessation of dukkha & its origin (i.e, khanchas & kilesas). So Nibbāna is the ending of sankhata. It is not changing from sankhata to a sankhata, not a changed element. It was like a wound grows & out & cured. If, it is changing & arising becoming of arising. It is without arises that there is no beginning & nor ending. This was the reason Ven. Sariputta described Nibbāna as the real happiness, because it has no mind & body. The cessation is a presence phenomenon (atthi). we cannot know Nibbāna & the feeling of sankhata by thinking. Human & the thoughts of tanhā (craving) will be always far from Nibbāna. Worldlings don't want Nibbāna, because it has nothing. So they afraid of it. But the Buddha taught Nibbāna in many ways. He asked people for to sit for meditation. Asked them to see the arising & passing away phenomena. Only by seeing dukkha ^{that} & not wanting ~~comes to be~~ ^{it} ~~in Nibbāna that~~. Nibbāna is a sankhata-unconditioned. Therefore we can't the things ^{in Nibbāna} which are conditioned - sankhata. In Nibbāna we cannot find the things which are belonging to the conditioned (sankhata).

In the Jewels discourse (Ratana Sutta), the following verses were very good examples on Nibbāna. These were;

Ended the old, there is no new taking birth.

Dispassioned their minds towards further becoming.

They & no seed, no desire for growth

The enlightened, go out like this flame.
This too: an exquisite treasure in the Sangha.
By this truth may there be well being.

The above verses represented Nibbāna as the cessation of kilesa & khamha or dukkha. Whatever cessation to be, all are not becoming (unbecome). Now, we are encountering the perfect & completed teachings (sāsāra) of the Buddha should make effort in the practice. It needs a lot of sustained effort to realize Nibbāna. The following story was good for contemplation.

~~One monk went to the forest for practice. He came back to the monastery without success.~~ The Buddha knew about it & told him. ~~With his teachings or in his dispensation (sāsāra) there were monks~~ & good reputation in their practices. So why he himself waited the bad reputation of a lazy monk & coming back as giving up his endeavour. He was a diligent person in one of his past lives. In one of their past lives the bodhisatta was the leader of a merchant group. They were travelling in a desert area. It was so hot in day time that they only travelled at night, by following the northern star. One time the guide fell into sleep & the group returned back to their last camping site. Now they were ~~out of earth~~ facing the problem of shortage of water. The bodhisatta found a patch of grasses grown on it. They dug the ground there. At the depth of 60 arms length (180') ~~they found a stone slab slab of rock stone slab slab of rock.~~ They heard the sound of flowing water underneath. Therefore the bodhisatta asked a very strong young man to break up the rock. And then they got the water. ~~for this strong young monk was this present monk.~~ Dhamma & water which one was more valuable? With the attainment of ⁿ he would never die again & peaceful forever.

The 30th blessing to 33rd blessings are about sila, samadhi, panna & Nibbāna. They are connecting to each other and also about the 4 noble truths & the noble 8 fold path. For fulfilling these blessings practise the 4 satipatthāna. This is practising to know about oneself. Whatever happening in the world, whether it is good or bad or neutral, at last ending up in perishing. We are ignorant about ourselves & the natural law & heedlessness. We practise to know & understand the nature of the khamha. People have delusion that take becoming as pleasurable in whatever situation they are in always happy & it. This is craving for becoming (bhava tanhā) & view of eternalism (sassata ditthi). Some are craving for non-becoming (vibhava tanhā) & view of annihilationism. They crave for it without any knowledge about it.

Nibbāna means; Ni - clinging & grasping, bñāna - freedom, liberation. Therefore it means free- or liberation from clinging & grasping. Beings have the strongest attachment to themselves - atta tanha remain natti. Some beings still attach to the dhamma - Dhamma raga or Dhamma nandi. (e.g. non-returner- arahami).

Therefore the qualities of Nibbāna are:

1. Freedom from attachment is Nibbāna.
2. The best real happiness " "
3. Nibbāna is not in the loka (world), but it transcends it. Loka - the world - is khendhas, ayatana, dhatus, . . . all.
4. Nibbāna can be seen in the mind, i.e. in the path & fruition mind. Because mind can't function ~~out~~ objects. Therefore Nibbāna can be known by realization of it. So no need to debate & argue about it. It is wasting time & never reaching to the point.
5. It can be realized in the 4 path knowledges (from sotapatti to arahatta magga's).

There are 2 ways to Nibbāna; i.e samatha yanika & ripassara yanika (based on Samatha & insight respectively). There is nothing more important than ending of dukkha.

Therefore the Buddha taught that the realization of Nibbāna is the highest greatest protection & blessing).

A mind that, when touched by the ways of the world,

(34) Is unshaken;

(35) + (36) + (37) Sorrowless, dust-less, secure,

This is the highest protection & blessing

(34) A mind that, when touched by the ways of the world is unshaken:

The beginning verse - a mind that, when touched by the ways of the world (i.e. the 8 worldly shamas - loka shamma) is ^{also} related to (35),

(36) & (37). Also first, we have to know what are the ways of the world.

These are 8 numbers; as pairs, positive & negative become 4 pairs. Gain/loss, status/disgrace, praise/censure & pleasure/pain.

They are called the failings of the world or 8 worldly conditions (loka shamas). These worldly failings are more common in human beings than other beings, & also a very interesting subject for contemplation.

No one can escape from these 8 worldly conditions. So everyone will encounter them. Not effect the mind by them are only ^{the} Graham. But if practice, wise reflection & contemplation can overcome them without shaken. Most people think only encounter & negative things, loss, disgrace, censure & pain ^{are} as failings. The positive things are also the same, because they have the nature of imperfection & change. Positive things ^{can} lead to negative things. For e.g. & wealth & power can do evil things.

The Buddha taught the ways to dealing & them. These were:

1. Acceptance as these failings of the world are cannot be escaped.
 2. " " " " " " " " the results of one's own actions (kamma)
 3. To understand these worldly conditions & their nature & contemplation to overcome them. This 3rd point is more profound & important.
1. Acceptance of the loka-dhamma as part of human society & inescapable. There are a lot of these " in human life & their differences are only in many forms & magnitude (great or small). These are always exist in the world. As part of human nature like birth, old age, sickness & death, & inescapable. In the second discourse of the Loka-dhamma Sutta (Anguttara Nikaya), the Buddha said; "These are the 8 worldly conditions that spin after the world (i.e. human beings), & the world spins after these 8 worldly conditions." It was like the law of kamma; the past or present life kamma (actions have done) follow & living beings & they also always doing actions. They are doing these things for the future to come. So they are cause & effect relationship. So, living beings cannot separate from kamma that cannot free from the worldly dhamma. Even the Buddha & some of his chief & great disciples could not shun away from them. Once time the Buddha & monks could not get any food that had to eat some coarse foods which were fed for horses. Cūcamānasikha who was a devoted pupil of other faith accused the Buddha ^{of} having affair & her. Even the Buddha sometimes ^{had sickness} suffered & pained.

The story of Ven. Maha-moggallāna, the chief disciple of the Buddha, was been killed by the assassins was also connecting to these worldly dhamma. Once, the Nigantha ascetics planned to kill him. Because they thought diminishing the diminishing of their fame & fortune was related to him. So they hired some assassins to kill him. At last Ven. Maha-moggallāna was caught by the assassins & was beaten up until all his bones were broken.

Nobody frees or escapes from censure. How to deal with censure is also very important? We do not need to pay much attention for the fools who censure us. But we need to listen & pay attention to wise & noble people for their censure. After that to correct & improve ourselves.

Live a life of blamelessness & praise by them. This exhortation came from the Buddha regarding to a lay man Atula upasaka. One time he & some followers went to see Ven. Revata who was usually enjoyed his meditation attainments. So did not give any talk to them. They went to see Ven. Sariputta & told about Ven. Revata. Therefore Ven. Sariputta gave a long talk to them. They also displeased it. And then they went to see Ven. Ananda & reported him the account to Ven. Sariputta. Therefore Ven. Ananda gave them a short talk. Still they displeased the short talk. At last went to see the Buddha. After hearing their report the Buddha said as follow. Censure & praise were not existing only now. Whether keeping silence or talking a lot or talking to consideration still could not free or escape from censure. At last the Buddha said that even he was not immune from it. Another story was, because of the Buddha's excellent teachings, well practice of the Sangha & had a lot of supports from people. This made other faiths censured them out of jealousy. So the Buddha taught the monks that whether living alone or to others in the world would encounter pain & pleasure. This was the way of the world. The important cause was not by others nor oneself, but the outcome of receiving the burdened khandhas (This point is important for contemplation).

2. Acceptance the loka-dhamma as the results of one's own karma (actions).

Usually people blame others for their sufferings, pain & displeasure. Here, we have 2 points to contemplate the outcomes of karma.

These are: the results of the karma & the existence of the khandhas. The results of karma is quite an extensive subject. Beings are always creating many different kinds of karma by bodily, speech & mind. Therefore the results of them are also many varieties. These are related to the worldly dharmas. If we experience & misfortunes better not to blame on others or find faults to others. So one has responsibility for them. If we react to anger or ill-will our situations become worse. With unwise attention (ayoniso) cannot solve or overcome the problem or situation. Have to contemplate wisely or dealing to them skilfully. And then correct oneself. With the unskillful or unwholesome causes will encounter the negative things. And then, if we respond unskillfully & never become better.

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3. To understand the worldly dhammas & its nature i contemplation:

This point is more important than the others. This contemplation came from the 2nd sutta on worldly dhamma in Anguttara Nikaya.

The gist of it as follow: The Failings of the World

These 8 worldly conditions; i.e gain/loss; status/disgrace; censure/praise; & pleasure/pain I spin after the world, & the world spins after these 8 worldly conditions. For an ordinary uninstructed person there arise These 8 worldly dhammas. (i.e asutara puthujano). For a well instructed disciple of the noble ones (i.e suttara ariya savako) there also arise These 8 dhammas. So what are the differences between them?

The differences are:

Gain arises for an ordinary uninstructed person. And he doesn't reflect;

"Gain has arisen for me. It's inconstant (anicca), stressful (dukkha) & subject to change (viparinama). He doesn't discern it as it actually is. (The other dhammas - loss, status..... pain also in this way). His mind remain consumed to the gain, loss etc.

He welcomes the arisen gain & rebels against the arisen loss.

(The other pairs, status/disgrace, etc.... in this way)

As he is thus ^{engaged in} welcoming & rebelling, he is not released from birth, ageing or death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, or despairs.

Now, gain arises for a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones.

He reflects; "Gain has arisen for me. It's anicca, dukkha & ^{consumed} viparinama".

" Discerns it as it actually is. His mind doesn't remain to the gain. (The other dhammas - loss, status, etc... are also in this way.).

He doesn't welcome the arisen gain, or rebel against the arisen loss.

(The other pairs, status /disgrace, etc.. also in this way.)

As he thus abandons welcoming & rebelling, he is released from birth, ageing & death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses & despairs. He is released from suffering (dukkha).

So following the Buddha's instruction, when we encounter the 8 worldly dhamma: gain/loss, status/disgrace, censure/praise & pleasure/pain. We should contemplate them as: These conditions among human beings are impermanent, suffering & subject to change.

People do not know the Buddha's teachings & without practice, the worldly dhamma overwhelm them. With the positive ones (such as gain), lust (raga), craving (tanha), attachment (upadana) overrun their minds. With the negative ones (such as loss), anger (dosav), ill-will, etc overrun their minds. They cannot free or escape from problems & sufferings.

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For someone who knows the Buddha's teachings & practise it, seeing things & reacting in different ways. He understands the differences between positive & negative worldly dharmas (e.g. gain & loss). He also sees their common nature (i.e., anicca, dukkha & viparinama). It is the same in vipassana. Mind & body have their own particular nature (visesa lakkhana) & common nature (samaña lakkhana).

The 34th blessing is unshaken, 35th is sorrowless, 36th is dustless & 37th is secure. These qualities & blessings are referred to one beyond training (asekha - i.e. an arahant). But the others also can overcome them temporary by practice & contemplation.

(35) Sorrowless:

Sorrow in Pali word is called soka. Encounter sorrow things & the mind has ^{displeasure} ~~ways~~ feeling of mental factor is called soka. Everytime soka arises including dosa (hatred). Deep sadness of sorrow is quite common in people of today. Sorrow comes from the lost of one's loved family member, from lost one's fortunes & the fortunes of friends, etc. All these are called soka. Here sorrow (soka) ^{has} connection to loss & pain. Sorrow is totally overcome by the non-returner & arahant. For other only by practice & wise contemplation. First has to know about the sufferings come from soka, ^{so that we} can let go off it. I want to tell a true story of a man encountered to death which created sorrow for him & his family. This story had a lot of some good lessons for us to contemplate. I was living in the eastern coast of Taiwan.

Every new year I paid a visit to see my very old mother only for once. For this purpose I had to stay for a few days in this ~~layman~~ home layman's home. He was a smoker. Last year he had found out that contracted to lung cancer of the second stage. Two or 3 years before I urged him to has a medical check-up for lung cancer. That was not only for once but quite for a few times. He did not take my suggestions & responded lightly as no problem for him. This was one of his first great mistakes. He was a successful business man & dealing to many businesses. Every year during my few days at his home, I always invited him to discuss about Buddhism & practice. But he never came to me, even both had free times. During these few years of our friendship I forced him to discuss on Dhamma. He came for 2 or 3 times only & never stayed very long. But when he came to the eastern coast in his free times to meet us, only came

& paid respect to me. He always discussed & argued about Buddhism & other friends but not & me. So he had very limited knowledge in Buddhism & wrong views which came out from his thoughts. Thinking on business & money are 2 quite different things. Someone had success in business & his brain did not mean he was wise & intelligent. No-one can know about Buddhism very well without a good teacher & study. So when death came & knocked on his door, he was fear & frightened. He had to take treatment & chemotherapy for a year without success. Even he lost his faith on the triple gems for his survival. He took refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha recently to come out from dangers & liked other faiths. Instead of rely on his inner qualities, he turned towards outside power. Instead of using right view for contemplation, he used wrong view. At last had doubt & lost his faith in the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha. Buddha was not a Saviour & also did not has such thing in nature. Two days before he passed away, wanted to see me. I was just came out from the hospital for an operation. And rushed to see him. He passed away next day.

What did he learn from his illness & death we did not know? for me this book came out from the result of his illness. He misused his time, energy & chances for wealth only. Most people may think someone can make a lot of money & success in business is bright, & intelligent & smart. A mind influenced by lust, craving & greed cannot be wise. When illness & death come; money, power & status are becoming useless. After death cannot take anything & them.

A few years ago a monk committed suicide. His old mother out of grief followed him & suicide. Most people are do not want to hear or see old age, sickness & death. They try to stay away from these things as much as possible. We do not benefit anything by running away from these things. These are natural processes, everyone will encounter it. Public big hospitals are very good for studying & observing these things. In the Anguttara Nikaya, there was a discourse by the Buddha for the Five Subjects for Contemplations. These were very important for everyone. There are 5 facts that one should reflect on often.

These are:

1. I am subject to ageing, have not gone beyond ageing.
2. " " " illness, " " " illness.
3. " " " death, " " " death.
4. I will grow different, separate from all that is dear & appealing to me.
5. I am the owner of my action (Kamma), heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, & have my actions as my

- arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that, will I fall heir. The Buddha continued to talk about the reasoning of these reflections.
1. There are beings who ^{are} have intoxication & youth. Because of that they conduct themselves in a bad way, in body, speech & mind. But when they often reflect on that fact, intoxication & youth will either be entirely abandoned or grow weaker.
 2. There are beings who ^{are} have intoxication & health. Because of that they conduct unwholesome way, in body, speech & mind. With the often contemplation, intoxication & health will either be entirely abandoned or grow weaker.
 3. There are beings who are intoxicated & life. Because weaker.
 4. There feel desire & passion for the things they find dear & appealing. Because weaker.
 5. There are beings who conduct themselves in a bad way, in body, speech & mind. With the often reflection, their unwholesome actions will either be entirely abandoned or grow weaker.

There was another discourse connection to death in Anguttara Nikaya. It was called the Fearless Discourse. If we understand why we are fear of death & can deal with it properly & successfully. Without it sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair will arise.

Jannussonin brahman went to see the Buddha, & said to him as follow. "I am of the view & opinion that there is no one who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death." The Buddha responded as it was not totally true. Some of them were afraid or in terror of death, & some were not. In truth majority of living beings are afraid or fear of death. The Buddha gave 4 reasons for each of them.

The person who is afraid or fear of death:

1. Someone who has not abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever & craving for sensuality. Then he comes down & a serious disease. As he is sick, the thought occurs to him as those beloved sensual pleasure will be taken from him, & he will be taken from them. He grieves & is tormented, weeps, beats his breast & grows delirious.
2. Someone who has not abandoned passion, craving for the body. As he is sick then he comes down disease. As he is sick his beloved body will be taken from him, & he will be taken from his body. He grieves grows delirious.
3. Someone who has not done what is good, has not done what is skillful, has not given protection to those in fear, & instead has done what is evil, savage & cruel. There is a ^{bad} destination for him after death. For that he grieves grows delirious.

4. A person in doubt & perplexity, who has not arrived at certainty in regard to the True Dhamma. (This is a worldling who dies in doubt & wrong view.).

From above the 4 reasons, someone who is fear afraid or fear of death is, attach to sensuality, to one's body, done evil things & a worldling dies in doubt & wrong view. So someone who is not afraid or fear of death is the opposite. We have been seen some yogis who die & smile on their faces. Therefore everyone instead of running away from dukkha or unpleasant things, such as old age, sickness & death, should have intimate knowledge about them. Accept them as reality, natural process & learn how to deal with it skillfully. Only by learning & practising we can deal with them successfully to overcome sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief & despair. There was a very interesting jataka story related to death. The Buddha in one of his lives as a bodhisatta was a farmer. His family members were; his wife, his son, his daughter, his daughter-in-law & their maid servant. Once he & his son were working in the field & suddenly the son was bitten by a poisonous snake & died. Therefore the bodhisatta sent a message to his family & asked them to come to the field by bringing meal ^{only} for one person only. The mother knew what happened to her son. After taking his meal they prepared for the funeral. All five of them did not show any sorrow or grief. This made the king of the 33 gods (Sakka) curious about it & came down to the earth disguised as a human being for inquiry. Each of their answer to Sakka were as followed.

1. The bodhisatta (the father): It was like a snake changing its skin. With deep sorrow & crying for the dead one, it brought no benefit to anyone. The dead one also did not know anything for their sorrow & crying. Even the dead body was burnt & fire it did not feel anything about it.

2. The bodhisatta's wife (the mother):

Her son was not invited by them (parents) to come & leave (i.e. by his own kamma to be born & to die). Therefore he came to them by himself & left them by himself.

3. The sister (the bodhisatta's daughter):

Crying & sorrow brought disadvantages. It made others ^{had} worry & concern.

4. The daughter-in-law (the son's wife):

Crying & sorrow for the dead was like a child crying for the moon. Expecting or desiring for something which could not be attained was a kind of foolishness & stupidity.

5. The maid servant:

Crying & sorrow for the dead one was like a pot, after broken apart could never ~~become~~ come back to normal. So it was useless & unprofitable.

If we observe & contemplate what they said, these people were not ordinary ones. Their minds were quite mature & the practice of contemplation on death. So worldlings also can overcome sorrow & practice & contemplation. Sorrow arises by wrong view & wrong thinking. The Buddha gave many ways of Dhamma to deal with kilesa. With regular practice & contemplation the mind will become mature & easily to overcome the worldly Dhamma. With Satipatthana practice also can overcome sorrow & lamentation. In the beginning of the Satipatthana Sutta, the Buddha said; "Monks this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of dukkha & discontent, for acquiring the true method & realization of Nibbana."

Thabye-kan Sayadaw gave the example of Mallika who was the wife of Bandula. At the time when she was serving the monks & foods & receiving the news of her husband & their 30 sons were killed. She continued to serve the monks without emotion. And suddenly a butter pot fell off & broken. Ven. Sariputta saw it & comforted her. Then she showed the letter to the venerable & said that even she was overcome sorrow on the death of the family members. The reason of her sorrowless was come from practice. She was already a stream-winner (Sotapanna).

Here to include 2 stories of the Buddha's 2 females great disciples. They were Theri Patacari & Theri Kisagotami. Both of them were suffered deep sorrow when their beloved one died. After meeting the Buddha overcame their sorrow & Dhamma & practice. And then became unshaken & sorrowless.

Patacari: She had lost her husband & her 2 sons, as well as her parents & 3 brothers. So she was driven to near insanity.

When she met the Buddha, he ^{comforted} her & Dhamma.

She should not has fear, because he could protect & guide her.

Throughout Saṃsāra (the round of existence), the amount of tears she had shed on account of the deaths of the family members was voluminous. Even it was more than the water of the 4 great oceans. The Buddha taught her should not think too much about those who were gone. Then the Buddha spoke the 2 following verses.

Verse 288: Not sons, nor parents & close relatives can protect one assailed by death; indeed nobody can give protection.

Verse 289: Knowing this, the wise restrained by morality should quickly clear the hindrances to the path leading to Nibbāna.

After the discourse Patacārā attained the Path & Fruit as stream winner. Later she became a bhikkhuni. One day she was cleaning her feet in water. As she poured the water for the first time, it flowed only a short distance & disappeared. And then she poured for the 2nd & 3rd time successively & it had the same nature. She came to perceive clearly the 3 stages in the life of beings. The Buddha knew these all. So using his supernormal power from the Jetavana monastery sent forth his radiance & appeared to her. And then said the following verse.

Verse 113: Better than live-a hundred yrs without seeing the arising & passing away of the 5 khandhas is the one who lives a day & discerning of them.

At the end of the discourse Patacārā attained arahantship.

Kisagotami: She was from Sāvatthi & a rich man's daughter.

After she was married & a son was born to her. Unfortunately her son died just as a toddler. She was stricken in sorrow & grief. She carried her dead son's body & went about asking about for medicine to restore her son life. At last she met to the Buddha for help. He asked her to get some mustard seeds from houses where there had been no death. She could not find a single house where death had not been occurred.

As soon as she realized this point, her attachment towards her dead son had changed. She discarded the dead body & went back to see the Buddha.

The Buddha said to her: "Gotami, you thought that you were the only one who lost the son. Death come to all beings. Before their desire are fulfilled death take them away." With this talk she penetrated the inconstant, suffering & not-self nature of the 5 khandhas & entered the stream (Sotapanna).

Later she became a bhikkhuni. One day as she was lighting the lamps & observe observing the flames flaring up & dying out.

The Buddha, through supernormal power, saw her from the monastery, & sent forth his radiance & appeared to her. And continued to ask her to continued contemplation on the impermanent nature of phenomena.

The Buddha spoke the following verse.

Verse 114: Better than living a hundred yrs without seeing the deathless (i.e., Nibbāna) is the one who lives a day & seeing it.

At the end of the discourse Theri Kisagotami attained arahantship.

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Therefore, contemplation on death is a very important meditation subject for everyone to transcend dukkha. If we talk about it from the suttas & stories, there are a lot to say. The weaver girl became a sotapanna before she died & accident was the outcome of this practice. Her father out of grief for her death, later ordained & practised became an arahant. Ven. Yasa in one of his past lives, he was helping to bury & cremated corpses. Because of contemplation on death, in his last life easily to give up all his wealth & pleasures by seeing the women as corpses. And then met the Buddha by listening his talk attained arahantship. Frequent contemplation can lead to love, compassion & concern for others as we share the same nature. And then will not waste our precious lives & time for many useless things & matters. Instead we become heedful & diligent in wholesome dharmas. The Buddha's teachings were always based on right views & right thoughts or thinking. Without it any experience becomes fruitless & even harmful. We can see many doctors & workers were working to corpses. Did death & loathsomeness of the body have any effect for them? mostly no! In the beginning even might be frightened ^{to} them dealing ^{to} corpses. In the long run became a habit & used to them. People doing evil things & wrong views & thoughts even worsen. Battles between drug gangs & terrorists, deaths become their pleasures. Medias on violence become pleasure for a lot of people.

(36) Dustless:

A person mind is dustless. What does it means? Here dust is a metaphorical term & represents greed (lobha), dosa(hatred) & delusion (moha). A ~~mind~~ is dustless mind is free from greed, hatred & " which is a arahant's mind. A mind free from defilements is a dustless mind. There are 10 defilements; greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong views, doubt, sloth, restlessness, shamelessness & fearlessness of wrong doing. The defilements (kilesa) are so called because they afflict & torment the mind. They desite beings by dragging them down to a mentally soiled & depraved condition. There was an interesting story connected to dust. This was the story of Cūlāpanthaka.

Ven. Cūlāpanthaka:

He was a grandson of a banker of Rājagaha. The banker had 2 grandsons, Mahāpanthaka & Cūlāpanthaka. Mahāpanthaka joined the Buddhist order & in course of time became an arahant.

Cūlāpanthaka also followed him & became a monk. He was born as a dullard because of his past kamma. At the time of Kassapa Buddha, he had made fun of a monk who was very dull. This kamma took fruit in this life. Even he could not memorize a verse in 4 months. His brother Māhāpanthaka was very disappointed in him & asked him to leave the order. About that time doctor Jivaka came to the monastery & invited the Buddha & sangha to his house for a meal. Māhāpanthaka was in charge of assigning the monks to meal invitations. So he left out Cūlāpanthaka from the list. When Cūlāpanthaka knew this & decided to leave the order. The Buddha knew all about it & asked him not to leave. He then gave him a white clean piece of cloth for the practice. Instruction him by sitting in front of the Perfumed Chamber (the Buddha's dwelling place) & rubbing the cloth all the time & repeated the words "rajoharanam" which meant taking on impurity. And then to the monks the Buddha went to Jivaka's place.

Meanwhile, Cūlāpanthaka went on rubbing the piece of cloth all the times & repeating the word "rajoharanam" like chanting all the time. This led to samadhi & after sometime the piece of cloth became soiled. Cūlāpanthaka came to realize the impermanent nature of all conditioned phenomena. From the house of doctor Jivaka the Buddha knew about the progress of Cūlāpanthaka's practice. He sent forth his radiance & appeared in front of him. The Buddha gave him the following instruction. "It was not only the piece of cloth was made dirty by the dust, but within oneself also there existed the dusts of passion, ill-will & ignorance (rāga), (dosa) & (moha). Only by removing these dusts of the mind could achieve the goal & attained arahantship."

Cūlāpanthaka got the message & kept on contemplation & in a short time attained arahomship in analytical knowledge. He had ceased to be a dullard & became a dustless person.

There was a more important sutta on taintless or dustless. This was in the Majima Nikāya called Discourse on Taintlessness - Anangana Sutta. It was given by Ven. Sariputta to the monks. This sutta was very important for all to know it & look after the mind not to be tainted or soiled. Ven. Sariputta explained 4 types individual. These are:

- ① & ② persons they have mental taints in their minds but they do not know about it.
- ③ & ④ persons are the opposite, they have mental taints & know about it.

Then, what are the differences bet among them & what happen to them?

- ① A person has mental taints in his mind & does not know about it
 - ② " " " " " " " " " know about it.
 - ③ " " " no mental taint in his mind & does not know about it.
 - ④ " " " " " " " " " know about it.

So, what are the differences & what happen to them?

ven. Sariputta gave the following answers. The first & 3rd persons are inferior because they do not know their situations (i.e ignorant) The 2nd & 4th persons are superior because they know their situations (i.e, wise).

- ① The first person who has mental taints & does not know it. So he will not generate desire, nor make effort & not develop energy to get rid of that taint. He will pass away to a mind to attachment, anger, bewilderment, taints & impurities. Ven. Sariputta gave the example of a bronze bowl. A bronz bowl was brought from a shop & covered to dust & dirt. The owner did not clean it, & unused & discarded in the dust. And then, sometimes later it became more stained & tarnished to dirt.

- ② The 2nd person who has mental taints & know it. So, he will generate desire, make effort & develop energy to get rid of that taint. He will pass away in a mind without attachment, impurities.

It was like a bowl covered in dirt & dust. The owner cleaned it, used it & not discarded in the dust. It became cleaner & stainless.

- ③ The 3rd person who has no mental taints & does not know it. So, he will become attentive to what is pleasant & his mind will be corrupted by attachment. He will pass away in a mind of taints & impurities.

It was like a bowl quite clean & unstained. But it might be left unused & uncleaned by the owner & discarded in the dust. And then, sometimes later it became more stained & tarnished & dirty.

- ④ The 4th person who has no mental taints & know it. So, he will not be attentive to what is pleasant & his mind will not be corrupted by attachment. He will pass away in a mind without taints & impurities. It was liked a bowl quite cleaned & unstained. It might be put into used & cleaned by the owner & not discarded in the dust. It became cleaner & stainless.

Therefore the first & 3rd persons are living their lives in talents & dying in talents. So they are inferior persons. The 2nd & 4th persons are living their lives without talents & dying without talents. So, both of them are superior persons.

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What about today human beings? We can contemplate today world situation & the above standards. Majority of human beings are like the first person, they have taints & impurities but they do not know about it. With today world of many different types of media the minds are more & more tainted & soiled. Most people are using the cell phones or smart phones all the time wherever they are or whatever they are doing. More & more like drug addicts. Very few medias are wholesome, because it do not make money. Business people are also know this point.

Some Buddhist monks & lay people may be like the 2nd person. They know the Buddha's Teachings & follow it.

The innocent children are like the 3rd person. If we observe today world education systems from family life, school life & social life, even government level we do not know & see much about moral education or ethics. Therefore family, school & society what is wholesome or unwholesome. They learn everything from medias. With tainted education, will have the tainted life. With today world & many social & environmental problems we know this point very clear.

The 4th Buddhist noble beings are like the 4th person (i.e. from the stream winner to arahant). For the anagamin & arahant they don't have any interest in worldly matters. They are immune to it.) Nobody is born as a dustless person. It will come out by studying & practising the Buddha's Dhamma. To achieve the highest blessing & protection we should not miss this chance. If not Samsara will never end for us.

37 Secure:

To understand secure or security before; we need to understand what is insecure or insecurity? The Pali word khemam is for secure. Something that is secure is safety or protected from dangers & harms. So insecure is not safe or not protected from dangers & harms. Man has body & mind. For ordinary people the body affects the mind, & vice versa. If we will have the physical body it will never be secure. At least it will never be escaped from ageing, sickness & death. Even the Buddha & other noble beings could not escape from the dangers & harms done by others. Mara - the evil one, Devadatta, Cūcamānarikā, etc. harmed the Buddha by physically & verbally. Mahāmoggallāna was killed by the bandits. Mahakala upasaka - a stream-winner (sotapanna) was beaten to death by people who accused him as the thief.

Why is that? There are many reasons behind it. The most important reason is loka Dhammas are following behind everyone. Every being wants happiness & security. But everyone in the round of existence had done all sorts of kammas. Most beings are cannot control their minds because they do not have the chances to meet the Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha. They do not have the knowledge of the Dhamma & not practice. Majority of people are chasing the worldly Dhamma (loka Dhamma) & at the same time these Dhammas are following or chasing them. It was liked they & the loka Dhammas were playing hide & seek game. Noble beings are not playing hide & seek game & the worldly Dhamma. Only they still have the physical bodies that cannot escape from them.

So here the 37th blessing or protection of security is not the physical body, but the mind. Especially it is the arahant's mind. It is like the other blessings; 34th is unshaken; 35th is sorrowless & 36th & 37th are representing the arahant's mind. Even though, the physical body of the arahant is still not secure, his mind is totally secure. Only by passing away into Nibbana element that Buddha & arahants were totally ~~be~~ secure. Therefore the khandhas are the source of insecurity. So every being to the khandhas will never be in security. There are 4 bonds (yoga) which bind the beings that making them unsafe. These are the causes of suffering for the khandhas. These are: the bond of sensual desire (kāmavayogo), the bond of attachment to existence (bhava-yoga), the bond of wrong views (ditthiyoga) & the bond of ignorance (avijjā-yoga). If combine together become, greed (lobha), wrong views (ditthi) & delusion (moha), the 3 unwholesome mental states. The same defilements (i.e bonds) are also called taints (cāsava) & floods (ogha). The 4 taints; the tint of sensual desire (kāmāsava), the tint of attachment to existence (bhāvāsava), the tint of wrong views (ditthāsava) & the tint of ignorance (avijjāsava). The 4 floods; the floods of sensual desire, attachment to existence, wrong views & ignorance (kāmohgo, bhavohgo, ditthohgo & avijjhohgo) These are called floods (ogha) because they sweep beings away into the ocean of existence. They are also called bonds (yoga) because they yoke beings to suffering & do not allow them to escape.

Therefore, a mind that, when touched by the ways of the world (loka dhamma), is unshaken; sorrowless, dustless & secure is the arahant's mind. All these mind qualities only come by practice. Even ordinary Buddhists who know the Dhamma & practice can develop it into certain levels, so that we can overcome the loka dhamma or reduce their powers which effect our minds.

The Buddha ended his discourse on Blessing or Protection & the following verse:

Everywhere undefeated
when acting in this way,
people go everywhere in well being:
This is their highest blessing & protection.

The Buddha delivered the discourse on Blessings & gave the right answers from the mundane levels to Supramundane level to the deities was quite amazing. Except a Buddha nobody could give this kind of teaching. So, truly he was the teacher of gods & human beings.

I am sure everyone wants blessing & protection. Everyone has to start from oneself first. The Buddha's teaching was on man or mind centred, not on God or gods centred. Therefore all the teachings are practical & applicable. Only we study it & follow it, unwavering. Without develop ^{within} oneself & cannot protect ourselves & others.

Each person to do his duty rightly & problems will be solved.

With right & wise educations only we can solve the human problems from ^{the} family life to, society & government levels to international level. We can help & save human beings only in wholesome education. Not by inventing new things based on greed, hatred & delusion. This is the outcome of today world situations.