

*The Biography of the
Venerable Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw U Kawi*

and

His Dhamma Discourses

The Sunlun Way of Meditation

Contents

1. Homage to the Three Gems.
2. Homage to the Teacher, the Founding Venerable Sayadaw of Sunlun Way of Meditation.
3. Preface.
4. The Life Story of the Venerable Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw.
5. Abbreviated notes on the Questions by Ye Lei Sayadaw of Meik-tilar and Answers by Shin Kawi as a novice.
6. Answers to Questions by Ye Lei Sayadaw on the Prophetic Riddles current in those days.
7. Brief Account on Questions by Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw (U May Dawi) of *Pitaka* fame and Answers by Shin Kawi as a novice.
8. The Ordination into the *Sangha* Order and the Sayadaw's first Sermon expressing joy.
9. The arrival of Daw Shwe Yi, the ex-wife, and her request for four favors. U San Tin's request to Sayadaw U Kawi to expound *Paṭipatti Sāsana* (the Practical aspect of Buddha's Teachings)
10. Daw Shwe Yi's offering of a monastic abode for Sayadaw U Kawi's residence at Maung Yin Paw Ravine.
11. Questions by Phet-Pin Ein Sayadaw of *Pitaka* fame and Answers by Sayadaw U Kawi on 10th May, 1925 at A-bya village, Bago township
12. Demarcation of a *Sima* (Ordination Hall) at Nemin-dara Mountaintop of Thaton.
13. Answering the questions asked by Joke-Pin Sayadaw U Tikkha on Seven Stages of Purity (Seven Stages of Visuddhi).
14. Answering for the second time to questions by the Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw and to Sayadaw U Puñña and U Jāgara at Mo-daung village in 1925.
15. Answering the questions posted by the four Sayadaws.
16. Answering the questions by the Venerable Taung-thar Sayadaw U Aggavaṃsa,

(the title holder of ‘Aggamahā Paṇḍita’ and the Head of the Samgha Council) in July, 1930 at Taung-thar. And Sayadaw U Kawi wrote a short manual on his method of *Vipassanā* Practice.

17. Beginning of Sayadaw U Kawi’s residence at Sunlun Chauk Kyaung Monastery (now known as Sunlun Gu-Kyaung).
18. Discourse on *Dhammacakka Sutta* (The Wheel of *Dhamma*).
19. Discourse on Paṭṭhāna
20. Eradication of *Anusaya* (latent defilements) by *Magga* (Path Knowledge)
The Three Worlds (The three *Lokas*)
The Three Insight Knowledge (The three *Ñāṇa*)
The Three kinds of Full Understanding (The three *Pariññā*)
The Three Vaṭṭa (The three Rounds of Rebirths)
The Five Dhammas that ought to be known (the Five *Ñeyya-dhammās*).
21. Answering to questions by U Nu, the ex-Prime Minister of Myanmar, during Sayadaw U Kawi’s first visit to Yangon (Rangoon) in 1948, September.
22. Discourse on the Seven Attributes of the Virtuous.
23. Discourse on Karma (*Kamma*), Mind (*Citta*), Temperature (*Utu*),
Nutriment (*Ahāra*) - the four conditioning factors of Matter.
24. Four Extinctions and Four Livings.
Rings of varying Conviction (*Saddha*).
25. A meeting between Sayadaw U Kawi and Daw Ngwe Bon, an *Anāgāmi*.
26. Supreme Attributes of the *Dhamma*.
27. Sermon on Set-kyar Daung Pagoda
28. Sermon on *Dhamma Vihāra*.
29. Five things that females understand.
30. Discourse on Paṭācārī.
31. Agonized by sons, tormented by daughters-in-laws,
Such is the poor unhappy mother!
32. The Story of Ko Toke Kyee.
33. Discourse on Poke-ma Cetanā (Basket of Volition).
34. Discourse on the Path of Merits (Kuala) and Demerits (Akusala).
35. Method of Vipassanā Meditation as taught by the Venerable Sunlun Gū-kyauṅ Sayadaw.
36. The Story of Bilone Bird, the Oriental Skylark.
37. A Discourse on the ‘Five Enemies.’
38. Discourse on the Cycle of Saṃsāra and its Annihilation.
39. The Venerable U Loka-nātha’s Visit and His Obeisance to Sunlun Sayadaw.

40. The Officiating at Sima Demarcation Ceremony on 22nd March 1952 at Yangon Bout-htaw Sunlun Monastery established by U Tin Pe and Daw Thein Khin.
41. The Parinibbāna of the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw.
42. Than Tha-yar Aye Cetiya - The Pagoda of Saṁsāra Peace.
43. Extract from a sermon by U Loka-nātha.
44. A tale of two friends.
44. Announcement.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahata sammāsambuddhassa

Veneration to the Exalted One, the Homage-Worthy,
the Perfectly Self-Enlightenment

Homage to the Three Gems

To the Buddha

- who shows sentient beings the way to birthlessness, the *Nibbana*,
- who knows the Four *Ariya* (Noble) Truths,
- who protects and teaches those who live in righteousness from falling to the Four miserable Worlds of *Apaya*.

To the *Dhamma*

comprising of the ten noble worthiest *Dhammas*, namely, the four *Maggas* (Paths), four *Phalas* (Fruitions), *Nibbana* and *Pariyatti* (Teachings of the Buddha).

To the *Samgha*

Buddha's true glorious sons who had crossed over to the other side of the *Samsara* with its innumerable rounds of rebirth, the extent of which is even more expanse than the great oceans.

I, a mere conditioned phenomena of mind and matter, pay my deep and revered homage to these three Jewels (*Ratanas*) with my joined palms raised on the forehead.

***Homage to the Teacher, the Venerable Sayadaw U Kawi
the Founding Father of Sunlun Way of Meditation***

To my Teacher, my Mentor,

- who possessed infinite noble attributes,
- famed far and wide through out the country of Myanmar and in foreign lands, even to the highest realms of existence,
- instructing the great importance on '***Touch - Awareness - Mindfulness***' in the method of *Vipassana* Practice he had expounded for *Patipatti Sasana*,
- with great compassion holding *Dhamma* discourses, exhorting day and night, tirelessly for all, layman and *bhikkhu* alike,
- admonishing and guiding his disciples and devotees in the Practice to understand and realize that Self' (*Atta*) is but Concept (*Paññatti*, the verbal connotation), and that 'Non-Self' is the Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha*).

To him, I, a composite phenomena made up of the five *aggregates* (*Khandhas*), that of physical Body (*Rupa*), Sensation (*Vedana*), Perception (*Sanna*), Volitional activities (*Sankhara*), and Consciousness (*Vinnana*), known to be his most devoted disciple, pay my most reverence and humble homage with my joined palms raised on my head, and with my utmost faith in his Morality (*Sila*), Concentration (*Samadhi*) and Wisdom (*Panna*).

Preface

The Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi was born at Sunlun village, Myingyan Township in Myanmar, formerly Burma. In his early years, he worked as an office messenger in a Government Office. Later, in his thirties, his earnings as such was not sufficient to support his family, so he resigned from Government service and went to work in farming. He prospered as a farmer, made charitable acts offering candle lights at the village pagoda where he made noble wishes to be able to devote his life as a *bhikkhu* to propagate *Dhamma*.

Because of a prophetic oracle, and because of his rapidly ascending prosperity in a short period of time (which was taken as an unlucky omen in local custom), he became apprehensive (*Samvega*) of *Samsara*, the unending rounds of births. So he started to practice Insight Meditation (*Vipassana*) diligently and by the end of twelve months' time, his Insight and Wisdom got developed so high, he renounced the layman world leaving behind his wife, children, his property and all kinds of bonds and attachments, entering the Order of *Samgha* as a novice (*Samanera*).

On the eighth day after becoming a novice, he reached the forth and final stage of Enlightenment rid of any defilements (*Asava*), and became an *Arahat*, a true son and disciple of the Buddha.

He was then ordained as a full fledged *bhikkhu* and for thirty one years he preached and guided his many disciples along the Path to *Nibbana* with the unique method of Vipassana Practice to realize the four Noble Truths. And in 1952, on the 17th of May, Saturday, (9th waning day of *Kasone*, 1314 M.E.) at 4:55 p.m., for many, like the glorious sun setting into the west horizon, the most Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw passed away into *Nibbāna*, the bliss supreme domain of the Buddhas, *Paccekabuddhas* and *Ariyas*.

The Venerable U Sobaṇa was the Vice-presiding Abbot of Sunlun Gu Kyaung Monastery, Myingyan. He had looked after the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi who had trusted him with his life. The Venerable U Sobaṇa realized the invaluable teachings of the Sunlun Sayadaw. Knowing the method to be the shortest and most straight foreword of all *Vipassana* Practice, he prepared to make public for all those who are

seriously interested. He put together the teachings in its original format and together with photos and illustrations, he published this biography of the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi.

All the net surplus derived from the sales proceed of this published book are to be solely used for the maintenance of the Than Tha-yar Aye Pagoda where the remains of the Sunlun Sayadaw lies in state, and for the propagation of Sunlun Vipassana Meditation founded by the Venerable Sayadaw. As such, it is seriously hoped that no unauthorized publication of this book will ever takes place.

The Life Story of the Sunlun Gu Kyaung Sayadaw

This detailed Biography of the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi (**Kavi*) was written by the Venerable U Sobaṇa (pronounced U Thaw-bana in Myanmar), the Vice-presiding Sayadaw (*Taik-Oke*) of Sunlun Gu Kyaung Monastery, as told by the Venerable Sayadaw U Kawi himself.

The man who would be Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi had, in his many past lives, fervently aspired to be liberated from *Samsāra* (the innumerable rounds of rebirth), which is like a huge oceanic whirlpool where mind and matter are in continual succession of arising and perishing. He had, in numerous previous lives, done lots of good deeds to achieve that goal. At the time of Kassapa Buddha, the third Buddha of this earth (*Badda kappa, the present world, is blessed by five Buddhas*), he happened to be a parrot.

One day, the parrot (while flying in search of food) saw the Buddha. Though he was an animal, by virtue of his *Pāramī* with inherent intelligence and wisdom, he knew that this resplendent human before him was a unique noble personage.

Wanting to pay homage to the Kassapa Buddha, he flew down to the ground. With his two wings touching on top of his head in reverence, the parrot walked humbly towards the Exalted Buddha, bow down and offered fruits. With great compassion Kassapa Buddha accepted the offering, blessing the parrot with these words, “For this generous charitable deed, whatever your aspiration be, it shall be fulfilled as you so desired.” After saying so, the Buddha walked away.

The parrot gazed after Him in rapture. He was left feeling blissfully happy and immensely gratified, uttering to himself, “O to have offered with fruits I have to such a noble personage is indeed an invaluable deed!” Because the generosity of his offering is of enormous intent (*Cetana Javana*) and because the recipient happened to be the Buddha Himself, it generated enormous positive karma (*Kāmma*), so much so that when the parrot died, he was reborn for many successive lives in the seven realms of the sensual existence (the seven realms of celestial world) with incomparable riches, entourage and attendants at his disposal.

* *Kavi* : Learned person; sage. As the Venerable Sayadaw is famously known in Myanmar as

Sunlun Sayadaw **U Kawi**, his name is written all through out the book as such. The word ‘*Kavi*’ is the *Pali* equivalent.

After spending many glorious lives in the celestial world, he was then reborn as a human who became a very famous professor by the name of Ti-Kicchaka at *Takksila.

(N.B. *Sunlun Sayadaw* once remarked, “Those who had been acquainted with me and had been treated by me when I was the renowned Physician will come to me now. They will follow my guidance and be able to take up the Vipassana practice with the method I had acquired.”)

After passing away, he went into many rounds of rebirth again. During the period of Gotama Buddhā *Sāsanā*, at one life, he was reborn as a human and became the very famous Barr-mei Sayadaw, who was deeply revered by *King Manuha, a great patron of Buddha’s Teachings, who ruled over *Suvaṇṇa Bhummi*, now known as Thaton township in Myanmar.

After this life, he again went into rounds of rebirths. Finally, he was reborn into a family who lived in Sunlun village, south of Myingyan town in Upper Myanmar. His father was called U Thant, and his mother Daw Toke.

At the time of his conception, his father had a vivid dream in which a man with distinctly noble features came to their house asking permission to him, “Please let me stay at your house.” U Thant declined saying, “Oh no, please don’t stay in our house. We are very poor.” But seeing the stranger was not giving up to his repeated refusals, he finally accepted the visitor. The parents regarded the dream as auspicious.

After nine months of pregnancy, in the tenth month, Daw Toke delivered a healthy baby with unique features on the 2nd waxing day of *Tabaung* 1239 M.E., (1878), Sasana Era 2421, Monday, at just before four o’clock in the morning. Because of auspicious omens, the baby was named “Maung Kyaw Din,” meaning ‘famed one’ at his naming ceremony with the traditional washing of the baby’s hair.

The couple had three children altogether, Ma Thinn, a girl, Ko Kyaw Din (who would later become Sunlun Sayadaw), and Ko Aung Khine, another boy.

Ko Kyaw Din went to school at a monastery in Myingyan where Min Kyaung Sayadaw, the Abbot, looked after him well. But he was very slow in learning and could not progress much in class. So, at the age of fifteen, he dropped off school and

* Takksila : Taxila, name of a northern Indian province.

* King Manuha : ruled over *Suvaṇṇa Bhummi* (now known as Thaton, Myanmar) in the 11th century.

together with his father U Thant, he went to Myingyan and worked as an office boy at the office of the District Deputy Commissioner. Some years later, he married Ma Shwe Yi from his native village. They got four children but three of them died while still very young. Only a son named Ko Kan Nyunt also known as Ko Shane survived.

U Kyaw Din came to realize that there would not be much future prospects working as an office boy. So at the age of thirty, he resigned, went back to his native village to work in his parents' fields and so became a farmer.

One day, he had a conversation with a friend named U San Tin who was said to possess occult powers, and at certain occasions was said to be of service to the *Celestial Guardians of the world acting as medium. While he was talking, all of a sudden, U San Tin blurted out reciting a riddle :-

One thread, two threads ... what a mess!
This old lady **Amei Boke's** bulk of entangled threads.
Who in the world be able to clear up this tangle?
Spinning about with a shuttle on a loom,
Was Ma Khway dressed in a *pondaw*-designed *longyi* with green fringe and checkered blue.
The stump of the ruined pagoda is now radiating with light,
From the '*Kyun-bo*' teak loom, sound boomed and echoed thru' the ten thousand Universe!

He then started to explain the prophetic riddle to U Kyaw Din, "Don't you think the tangled threads become organized on a loom?"

"Yes, of course," U Kyaw Din replied.

"Well 'Ignorance' (*Avijjā*) of sentient beings is even more muddled than the old lady Amei Boke's bulk of entangled threads. And you, U Kyaw Din, is going to clear this up with the use of a shuttle called '**Mindfulness**' (*Sati*). A weaving factory will appear at south of Sunlun village. When it does, you will propagate Buddha's *Dhamma* at a place known as 'Kyun-po-pin Kone' (Kyun-po-pin means teak tree; 'Kone' is a little hilly place). And there will be two teak pillars there. 'The stump of the ruined pagoda is now radiating with light' foretells that the hidden and forgotten era of *Paṭipatti Sāsanā* (the Practice of the Buddha's Teachings), will rise and thrive again."

U Kyaw Din listened and said, "Oh no, don't say such ridiculous things."

"You wait and see," replied U San Tin.

* Celestial Guardians of the world : There are 4 Great Celestial Guardians of *Catu-maharaja Deva* realm (the lowest of the 6 Celestial Realms) who looked after the world.

That year, U Kyaw Din bought another plot of farm land. At the start of the rainy season, he called his wife Daw Shwe Yi and together they went to clear the fields. When they got there, U Kyaw Din told his wife, "Let's grow sesame in our new field this year. If it yields fifty baskets of sesame we'll offer a thousand lights at the village pagoda." Daw Shwe Yi agreed saying, "Never mind fifty baskets. If we get forty baskets, we'll do the offering." U Kyaw Din then confirmed, "Okay, let's promise each other then. But this time, let's not include music in the procession as is the custom. If young ladies in the procession get their jewelry stolen in the rowdy crowd, we'd be responsible. Let's make it simple."

Soon afterwards, they sowed sesame seeds in their newly acquired field. Young plants sprouted up at the beginning of the rainy season but wilted and almost died because of scarce rain. However, the plants survived and flourished when the rains came. Other people's sesame fields were destroyed but not those of U Kyaw Din. In fact, his fields yielded exactly forty baskets of sesame. No more, no less.

Daw Shwe Yi suggested, "Let's press it into sesame oil and as promised, we'll offer nine viss for the pagoda (where the thousand lights will be offered) and nine *viss for the *Samgha*." U Kyaw Din asked, "How many *bhikkhus* are we inviting?" to which his wife replied, "We'll invite four *bhikkhus* and offer two viss of oil to each, then set aside the remaining viss to cook for the guests' food." "Alright then, let's offer it that way," agreed U Kyaw Din.

So on the full-moon day of *Tha-din Gyut* (which marked the end of Rains Retreat Period) in 1281 M.E., which was on the 8th of October in the year 1919, they made light offering at the pagoda situated at south east of the village. At the congregation, *bhikkhus* recited *Paritta* and delivered a sermon after which they shared merits with the Libation Ceremony by pouring consecrated water. When night fell, they lighted up a thousand little lamps filled with oil. Daw Shwe Yi was kept busy entertaining guests in the traditional way with *betels, cheroots and pickled tea leaves.

U Kyaw Din went nearer to the pagoda to have a closer look at the burning lights of lamps. He watched the tips of wicks turning black, the flickering flames, and the oil boiling. While watching, the scene moved him so much that he trembled, with goose pimples appearing all over his body. He wondered, "What could be the matter with me? This is truly unusual. I'm sure if I make a wish now, it will certainly be fulfilled."

* viss : A measure for weight used in Myanmar.

* Betel : A climbing pepper whose leaves are chewed together with certain herbs and cracked betel nut, used especially by southern Asians.

All of a sudden, he felt a desperate desire to become a *bhikkhu*. So he wished fervently, “Please may I become a *bhikkhu*. On becoming a *bhikkhu*, may I be able to preach and teach Buddha’s *Dhamma*. And like me, may sentient beings understand and practice *Dhamma* according to what I preach and teach.”

After making the wish, he became worried thinking, “How am I going to teach *Dhamma* when I become a *bhikkhu* as I’m not a learned person?” But believing that somehow his aspirations would be fulfilled, he felt very satisfied and happy to have made his wish.

[*Sunlun Sayadaw later recounted, “At that time, I was so uneducated and had no knowledge to have wished for various supreme aspirations like Sammā-Sambodhi (Perfect Self-Enlightenment) or Paccekabodhi (Silent Buddha), or for Aggasāvaka, (Chief Ariya Disciples of Buddha) or Mahāsāvaka (Great Ariya Disciple). Unlike other people, I just wished short to the point, simply for Bhikkhu-hood.]*

That year, he became more and more prosperous. But he began to worry about it as there was a traditional belief that rapid rise in worldly possessions could lead to a person’s death. Even worse, he knew his horoscope at the moment was in planet Saturn, which was said to pave way for that person’s demise. Rather plaintively he wondered, “There is an *epidemic (plague) breaking out around Myingyan. Perhaps I will succumb to this monstrous plague. If I die now, I have only bad karma (*Kāmma*) but no merits, none whatsoever, to see me through. My prosperity has risen so much this year. Is it an omen of my impending death?”

He continued to worry obsessively of his death. That year in February 1920 (1281 M.E., *Ta-baung*), he had a dream one night. In that dream, he saw a Buddha Image coming into a makeshift *pandal in front of his house. Seeing the Image moving and smiling at him, he told his wife, “Here, hand me that rice bowl. I’m going to offer it myself to the Buddha.” When he took the rice bowl from his wife, the Image declared, “Oh, it’s so annoying. I’m talking to you only this once. I won’t talk to you in future.”

* epidemic : The much feared ‘plague’ epidemic was an annual occurrence in Upper Myanmar during those years.

* Pandal : Pavilion, a decorated covered area for temporary use for special occasions, also known as *man-dut* or *mandapa*.

He then woke up suddenly after this dream with his heart pounding loud and hard. With much trepidation he thought, “I’m sure going to die. It must be because of my imminent death that I dreamed like this.” He panicked and woke up his wife, related his dream and asked for some candles for offering. “Okay, I’ll find some candles for you. But you mustn’t tell about your dream to anyone,” implored his wife.

He took the candles and went off to the village pagoda. There, he met his friend U Chi Dyne who asked, “Why on earth are you here at this hour?” to which he replied, “I came to offer lighted candles to the Buddha at the pagoda because I’m so afraid I’d die.” U Chi Dyne asked his friend’s birth date and year, calculated his astrological charts and said, “According to the horoscope, it says a two-legged being (in astrological terms, it means a human being) would depart from your house,” (which was tantamount to a person’s death).

U Kyaw Din exclaimed, “Oh dear, don’t predict like that. I’m already laded with fear of death.” “Well, it’s not me who did the prediction. It’s your horoscope which is showing the signs,” replied his friend. U Kyaw Din’s terror of dying grew even worse. He begged, “Dear friend, do take me along everyday to those nightly prayer sessions held in the village.” Just then, another friend U San Tin showed up and U Kyaw Din made the same request to him.

Some days later, on a moonlit night, U San Tin came to visit U Kyaw Din. They talked at leisure while lying down on a mat in the front

portion of the house and soon, both drifted into a slumber. Then, U San Tin muttered wearily,

“How pītiful the sentient beings are!

The Three Calamities are here to stay,

Famine, War, Disease! (*Satthantara Kappa, Dubbhikkhantar Kappa, Rogantara Kappa*).

Sentient beings are lost along the way and are being driven into the abyss.

O, how pītiful!”

U Kyaw Din replied back sleepily, “Yes, I know the sentient beings have lost their way and are falling into an abyss. Wish I could find the right path that could lead them out of this mess!”

“Well, actually it’s not that difficult to find the right path. Just wait at the crossroads. Someone who can show the right direction will appear,” answered U San Tin.

U Kyaw Din asked his friend again as he couldn’t quite make out what he meant but there was no response. U Kyaw Din shook him up and asked him again, but U San

Tin was puzzled and didn't remember what he had said. Looking at his frightened friend, he comforted, "Don't be so afraid. You can take refuge in the Three Jewels ... Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sanigha* for peace".

But U Kyaw Din's paranoia over death became uncontrollable. Realizing his obsession was becoming unhealthy and destructive, he confided in his friend, "My obsession is getting out of hand. I'm going to set out to treat my paranoid mind in my own way to get some peace of mind. I'll take cues from my dream ... set up a pandal in front of my house, put a Buddha Image inside for paying homage and start prayer sessions. I'm sure this will bring about my happiness." "Okay, go ahead as you wish if that is what you think will cure your affliction," consoled U San Tin. "Do come early in the morning tomorrow. Let's find some bamboo poles for the pandal," U Kyaw Din reminded his friend,

So at dawn the next morning, they went to look for bamboo poles and just like in the dream, erected a traditional pandal with lattice fencings all around right in front of his house which was located at the corner of crossroads. A Buddha Image was placed at an appropriate place for the invited guests to pay devotions when they come for nightly prayer sessions there.

At dusk, the village elders came and soon, everyone was noisily joining in the lively discussion on *Dhamma* (Buddhist Teachings), what Mind (*Citta*) was and what the Mental Concomitants (*Cetasika*) were. Meanwhile, Daw Shwe Yi was happily entertaining guests with cheroots, betels and tea leave salad in the traditional way.

The first two nights passed without any significant incidents and the religious discussions that took place did not have any effect on U Kyaw Din. On the third night however, U Ba San, the chief clerk at Steel Brothers Mills, a weaving factory, came without being invited and started to talk about *Anāpāna - Vipassanā Practice* (out-breathing and in-breathing exercise to cultivate mental concentration for Insight Meditation) as taught by the renowned Venerable *Ledi Sayadaw.

As soon as he heard the word *Anāpāna*, U Kyaw Din, unlike previous nights, was greatly affected. His whole body became stirred with goose-flesh appearing all over. He thought to himself, "What is happening with me? I'm certain that I'm going to get my salvation through this *Anāpāna*. Well, I waited at the intersection of four roads just

* Venerable Ledi Sayadaw : Known to many scholars of many countries, the Venerable Mahathera Ledi Sayadaw (1846-1923) was one of the most outstanding Buddhist figures of his time. He had written many essays, letters, poems and more than 70 manuals in Myanmar, of which many had been translated into English. Among them was *Vipassana Dipani* (Manual of Insight) which was translated into English by his disciple Sayadaw U Nyana,

like in my dream. This man came here without my invitation; he came here out of his own accord and is now talking about meditation. Did he come here for me? I'm sure I'm going to get *Dhamma* out of it." While thinking away happily, second thoughts came in. "But then, I'm quite illiterate. What if I can't learn the Scriptural Texts. What if their meditation requires learning? I'll be in a fix then. Well, can't help it. Perhaps I'll ask him tomorrow."

When U Ba San came the following night, he was waiting anxiously at the pandal's entrance and asked eagerly, "Oh Chief Clerk Sir, does your meditation needs learning?" to which U Ba San replied, "No, no, higher learning is not a prerequisite. Genuine interest with conviction (*Saddha*) and effort (*Viriya*) are the factors that count." "Then, how shall I practice?" inquired U Kyaw Din. "Well, out-breaths and in-breaths which is *Anāpāna*," replied U Ba San and went inside.

Note : U Kyaw Din's house was situated at the intersection of four road in Sunlun village.

U Kyaw Din was much elated and inspired on hearing these words. He didn't even follow the guest but went off immediately to meditate. He stretched out on the gunny deck chair under the canopy at the side of his house and started murmuring to himself, "Hmm, this is in-breath, hmm, this is out-breath. Hmm, in-breath, hmm, out-breath." He kept on this *Anāpāna* exercise earnestly for days, fully convinced that it would become fruitful.

One day, U Shwe Luk, a neighbor, came for a visit and saw him practicing *Anāpāna*. He remarked, "You need to apply awareness as well." U Kyaw Din didn't understand well, so he asked, "How do I apply awareness?" to which his friend replied, "Just know it. Just keep on knowing it."

"What happened if I apply this awareness?"

"Well, you get merits of course."

"In that case, I'll do it."

From then on, U Kyaw Din tried to keep awareness at his work. He practiced awareness while he was chopping dried corn stems for cattle-feed. "Mm... this is great!" he remarked with satisfaction, chopping with more zeal knowing that he was getting merits while at the same time finishing his daily work even more productively this way. This realization further motivates him to develop the awareness coupled with mindfulness ... 'the abrupt sound when the corn stem broke off ... the awareness ... the mindfulness,' all occurring simultaneously.

Mindfulness was now everywhere, at every action he made. While breathing, he was aware of the touch of air at his nostril tip and he put mindfulness on this awareness. While walking, he was aware of the touch of his soles with the ground and he put mindfulness on this awareness. Then on, he put mindfulness of the touch while ploughing, weeding, digging soil, sowing seeds, drawing water, in fact in all the chores he was doing.

He practiced *Anāpāna Sati* with vigorous mindfulness day and night whenever he had the time, whether he was at home or in the paddy fields. He even went into the forest of Maung Yin Por Ravine at nights to practice with full conviction (*Saddha*) and great effort (*Viriya*). The relentless concentration paid off. He started to see multi-colored lights in his practice ... brown, blue, red, gold, white, dark red, etc. He concluded that because of his relentless practice, he was experiencing the opportunity to pay homage to the sublime hues of the Exalted Buddha's Rays, so he tried even harder on his meditation.

Before long, while meditating one day, there appeared in his vision, a little ball whirling round and round near his face. Getting curious, he shifted his attention on the ball and found it went up every time he concentrated on it. He decided to follow it. It went up, up and eventually he found himself on the clouds. "Oh, my effort is progressing marvelously. I'm now on the clouds!" he enthused with amazement and delight.

The next day while meditating, again, a little ball, the size of a firefly, appeared in his vision, this time with shimmering lights radiating from it. Whenever he focused on it, it went up. Just like yesterday, he followed it up. This time, he found various kinds of spired grand celestial mansions (*Pasada*) on the clouds. He figured he was destined to live there after he died. These visions removed his fear of death. In fact, he felt happy and was much motivated to meditate more.

With successive vigorous meditations, sensations appeared in his body. So he put his mindfulness on the bodily sensations. His *Samādhi* (concentration) grew to great proportions as his practice developed to an advance state. The cognition of 'touch-awareness-mindfulness' was everywhere all day long. When he talked, he now talked only of natural phenomena, i.e., mindfulness of awareness in natural settings. He was not in the same wavelength in conversing with village people, so much so that they begin to say, "U Kyaw Din had gone nuts." U Kyaw Din reflected, "Well, it's good to be seen crazy. Nobody come and talk to me. No one bothers me. And I don't need to speak to anyone at all. How nice! How appropriate for my meditation! I'm now free of social

obligations and can pursue more on my practice without any distraction.” So using this chance of being isolated, he practiced day and night.

With his meditation in advanced progress, he came to notice that people, in fact all beings, were continually in relentless pursuit after sense- objects (*Arammaṇa*) for gratification of sense desires. He was appalled and became fearful of this, so he stayed away from the villagers, rarely talking to them. When he happened to be talking to them, he reminded them to be mindful. He began to acquire supernatural sense of premonition, a by-product of meditation. Out of pity, he would warn some friends of their impending death, “Hey you! Remember to take refuge in Buddha, *Dhamma*, and *Samgha*. You’re going to die in three days,” (or) five days, (or) seven days, etc. People who had been forewarned all met their demise as told.

He told the villagers of his supernatural visions, “I could see other people’s livers, hearts and all their internal organs. When I looked down, I could see Hell (*Niriya*, the Realm of Continuous Suffering) where inhabitants were congested, pushing and pressing like maggots eating away the rotten flesh of a dog’s carcass.” The villagers listened in awe.

Whenever U Kyaw Din foretold something, it happened. So when news of his supernatural power spread, people came to him for advice to trace their lost cattle, or for prescription of herbal medicine and medicinal food for their illnesses and other mundane things. Soon, he realized that it was getting out of hand and that he was fast becoming a shaman. Feeling the need to be alone, he spent most of his time in the forest of Maung Yin Por Ravine to meditate in solitude.

[*Sunlun Sayadaw once commented, “Mundane (supernatural) powers are enormously attractive and appealing. I was so fortunate to have escaped from it and have swum to the other side.”]*

“Touch-awareness-mindfulness’ was applied in continuum at *Anapana* breathing practice. Sensations arise then coming in various forms ... pain, numbness, cold, heat, etc. in his body. He continued putting vigorous mindfulness on these bodily sensations. *Udaya-baya nana* (Insight into the arising and perishing of mind and matter) developed to such an extent that he saw the inside of his body in details, as if looking in the mirror with his body cut open - the heart, the liver, the intestines.

[*Sunlun Sayadaw had made remarks to his disciples on this subject as follows :-*
“The process of ‘arising and perishing phenomena’ (Udaya-baya) of the body can be seen in the liquid form, the solid form or in other various forms. If you kept up the

Vipassanā Practice day and night with mighty conviction (Sadha) and powerful effort (Viriya), you will eventually come to observe and comprehend in striking terms, the phenomena of ‘mind (Citta) - concomitants of mind (Cetasika) - and matter (physical body, Rupa)’ in minute detail ... how the arising (the building up, anabolism) and dissolving (breaking down, catabolism) of the body processes take place. This Insight is known as Udayab-baya ñāna (Knowledge of the arising and perishing of bodily phenomena). The Udaya-baya level of Insight has three categories - the crude, the subtle and the most refined of body-mind processes. You can comprehend these fine matters only if you meditate most diligently.

Note: As it is not appropriate to elaborate more than this on this subject at this stage, further details had not be written _ Author].

(1). After attaining Insight into the arising and dissolving of phenomena, in the year 1920 on the 12th of August, Thursday, (1282 M.E., on the 13th waning day of Waso), around ten o’clock at night, U Kyaw Din attained *Sotāpaññā*, the first Path of Enlightenment.

He continued with his practice but his wife had changed. Instead of being supportive of her husband’s good work, she began to disturb it outright, accusing that it was keeping him from household duties. She would complain furiously and grumble non-stop about it, pushing him off from the bed while he was meditating. Once, she even took off the floor planks one by one until there was none. Nevertheless, U Kyaw Din kept up his practice sitting perfectly still on the beam of the floor.

Seeing she had failed in her effort to prevent her husband from meditating, she put back the planks on to the floor. When U Kyaw Din asked her, “Why did you disturb my meditation so much?” she retorted, “So that you’d beat me up.”

“I would never beat you, dear lady. Do carry on showing me the *Dhamma*” (meaning to test his patience level), responded U Kyaw Din.

“You good-for-nothing man! staying numb all the time like Prince **Temiya* (of *Jataka*). Why don’t you go to the monastery and live there as a monk if you want to meditate so much?” she shouted back angrily.

She continued her mumble and grumble, nagging almost daily, but U Kyaw Din knowing he hadn’t reached his goal, kept up his patience like the aged *Bhikkhu Upaka* (who was renowned for his extraordinary forbearance during the Gotama

* Prince *Temiya* : of *Jataka* story (*Mugapakkhajataka, Khuddaka Nikaya, Suttanta Pitaka*), was famous for keeping absolute silence, without uttering a word since very young because he was afraid to become a king.

Buddhā's time). Once, while he was meditating, she purposely let go of the cow which was tethered to the post, then yelled, "Oh, the cow has gone loose. Quick! Go after it. Do go after it." This cow normally had a very bad temper and would aggressively beset anyone who stood in her way. But this time, it just stood there without attacking anyone. Becoming furious, she walked off stamping her feet in disgust, berating noisily and continued doing all kinds of things to infuriate her husband.

U Kyaw Din meanwhile kept on ignoring his wife's incessant naggings and carried on with his meditation practice with unrelenting determination.

[*Sunlun Sayadaw once recounted to his disciples of his past days :-*

"By virtue of keeping vigorously mindful of the sensations during repeated practice, my patience level gradually increased. When somebody yelled abuse at me, the element of displeasure, dislike (Dosa) comes up in my mind. Of course I dislike it. But mindfulness warned me, 'Oh! This is anger.' So, I put a hold on this emotion. I felt happy when I noticed that I could refrain myself, because in the past I would have slapped that person in the face. It meant that I had improved a lot in forbearance and fortitude.

When I see something beautiful, there arise the element of pleasure, desire (Lobha). But then, I thought, 'Well, this enjoyment of pleasure is just an element of Lobha (greed), the eyes just see the visible object. The beauty of the visible object (Ru'pārammaṇa) is mere Perception (Saññā). What have that got to do with me (to be so pleased about)?'

From then on, when I heard something, I reminded myself that this is merely Perception (Saññā) of sound, an audible object. When I touch something, I understood it to be simply a matter of Perception of a tangible object. When I smell something, I apprehended it as Perception of an olfactory object. With deep mindfulness I could cut off my mind not to react to, nor to have judgment, to the sounds, the touch, the smell, and all the sense-objects, and simply taking everything as it is (with equanimity). This way, I came to understand the workings of the mind with regard to the sense-objects."]

One night, U Kyaw Din fell asleep and dreamt that he was at a railway station. He went to buy a ticket but the station master gave him four. He put all four tickets in his pocket and boarded the train as it was about to depart. Then he woke up. Soon afterwards, he had another dream. In it, he was in a paddy field and saw a bull running towards him. He gave chase and caught it by the tail which broke loose. The tail came off right from the root and was left in his hand. He woke up then. He took these dreams to be good omen which he thought indicated that he was going to break loose from this miserable world in the later part of the Buddha's Teachings (*Sasana*). With great conviction he vowed to himself, "I'm going to strive till the end."

(2) He continued to endeavor and exactly a month later, that same year 1920 on the 11th of September, Saturday, (1282 M.E., on the 13th waning day of *Waso*), at around ten pm, he attained *Sakadāgāmi*, the Second Path of Enlightenment.

[*Later, Sunlun Sayadaw reminisced that attainment of the Second Path was not that much significant. He said it was experienced just as a matter of the inner sensations as he had already treaded and known the track of Supramundane Insight while attaining the First Path.]*

After attaining the first and second Path of *Supramundane Dhamma*, U Kyaw Din's behavior changed as was his understanding of the world. He began to discuss and comment on the laws of nature in a deep and serious philosophical manner. Moreover, when people informed him of someone in the village getting ill, if he said, "Oh, he's going to die," that person certainly died. If he said "No, he won't die," then that person recovered. When his predictions always got right, villagers became afraid to talk to him. He ignored them and got on with his meditation with much more vigor.

(3) One month later, that same year 1920 on the 10th of October, Sunday (1282 M.E., on the 13th waning day of *Taw tha-lin*), at around ten at night, he encountered an excruciatingly painful sensation during his meditation, as if all the nerves in his body were being cut off. He overcame that with intense mindfulness coupled with incredible patience, finally reaching *Anāgāmi*, the Third Path of Enlightenment.

[*Sunlun Sayadaw had once commented,*
"Celibacy becomes absolute and permanent on attaining the Third Path of Enlightenment. The robe of the concerned bhikkhu, or sarong of the concerned man, would have to be washed off. (Complete and absolute expulsion of all semen in the body occurred at reaching Anāgāmi representing absolute uprooting and permanent abolishment of sex and sexual interest). When it was getting nearer to attaining Supramundane Knowledge of the Third Path, both the inner and outer plexus were forcefully shaken and pulled out. You need to struggle vigorously to overcome this severe onslaught of painful sensation. At this point, if you couldn't conquer this, you would fall off. I can appreciate and say 'Sādhu' (Well done!) only if you could prevail over this."

The next day, a thunderbolt struck right in front of him. But he was not shaken at all; in fact he was calm and collected. He found that fear had left him. By and by, after meditating for many a time, he saw acutely the living beings' continual focus and attention on sense objects (*Arammaṇa*). When he saw their avid preoccupation with

sensual things and continual pursuit for gratification of senses with relentless effort, he developed aversion and dread to live among people. The desire to become a *bhikkhu*, to live in seclusion, became intense.

Sunlun Sayadaw reminisced,

“I searched for the enemy within and discovered they were elements of Greed (Lobha), Hatred (Dosa), Delusion (Moha), Conceit (Māna) and the like. On analyzing further, I found that Greed is the prime source among them which gives me the most suffering (Dukkha), so I decided to kill the main foe. And if you ask me how, it is like this:

When you touch something, you are aware of it. Guard this awareness with mindfulness. If you keep on being mindful of the touch, the practice of ‘Touch-Awareness-Mindfulness,’ elements of Greed will gradually decrease in both frequency and intensity. It becomes lesser and lesser, weaker and weaker.

When I sought further to see whether there are any remaining enemies still left behind, I discovered they are the ones closest to me – my wife, my children and my possessions.

*Searching for the cause from the effect (effect/resultants means his wife, children and possessions), I found out that the cause is that I had not settled debts with them all along the whole *Samsāra* (rounds of rebirth). No wonder they kept on giving me trouble. I decided to settle debts with my wife so I called her to ask for forgiveness. I told her like this, “Because of past affinity and karma, you and I happen to meet this life to become husband and wife. From now on, please don’t give me back the debts you owed me. And for my part, I would also like to stop paying back any debts that I might have owed you. Let us break our marital contract in mutual agreement. I will regard you as my own sister and you also look upon me as your own brother. And furthermore, do permit me to become a *bhikkhu*.”*

And do you know how my wife replied back? She said,

“Oh please, you don’t need to settle any debts that you might have owed me. And you don’t need to go anywhere nor become a monk. Do stay at home in a revered room all by yourself and let me look after you well as my elder brother. Like the saying, ‘A head looks graceful only with a chignon on it, so is a woman with a husband.’ One wouldn’t look respectable or graceful without the other. In our society, a woman needs a husband as a protector and guardian. Otherwise, people would take advantage of her. Without a husband at her side, she wouldn’t be taken seriously but is liable to be hassled and harassed.”

And thus Daw Shwe Yi used her feminine wiles to tie down her husband even further. U Kyaw Din was very naive at that time. Lacking general knowledge, he

thought a man could not enter into the Order of *Samgha* without the wife's consent. He was intensely miserable as his wife would not let him become a *bhikkhu*. In despair he wondered, "How can I find a job that is entirely free of defilements for my livelihood? People around me working for their livelihood are involved in some kind of unwholesome deed in one way or the other. As I see it, there are only two ways of faultless living. You either enter *bhikkhu*-hood or live like a crazy man."

He continued thinking of ways, "I can use a gunny bag to dress myself like a mad man. If I cut off two corners for the arms, and make a hole in the middle for the head, it will be perfect for my needs. I will just lie down on it if I want to sleep. For food, I can go begging with a bowl at houses along the street. I'm sure people will take pity on an insane man and give away generously. That way, nobody will give me any trouble and there won't be any hassle for clothing or for food. What a great idea to spend a blameless life!"

Days passed without any solution. Feeling very unhappy, he lost his appetite and became very weak. He thought in despair, "My nature and way of thinking has become vastly different from that of other people. How can I function among them and survive for long? I will eventually die if I have to continue staying like this amongst these people." He tried once more pleading for his wife's consent to let him be a *bhikkhu*, but in vain.

The neighbors, taking great pity on his pathetic state, implored his wife to give in, "Look Daw Shwe Yi, let him do as he pleases. He couldn't eat or sleep. Look how he's gotten so thin that he is all bones and skin now. He will certainly die if he goes on like this." She was still very stubborn. She wouldn't give in. She even retorted like this, "Oh, it's better to let him die than being separated. If he dies, I'll suffer only once. If I give him permission, having to see him as a monk right under my very own eyes and stay as a total stranger will make me unhappy all the time."

More days went by but she was still extremely obdurate, causing great unhappiness to her hapless husband. Seeing him in a skeletal state, more villagers joined in to give repeated pressure on Daw Shwe Yi to let him go. At last she yielded, "Alright, go and be a monk for a couple of weeks." With much elation, U Kyaw Din replied, "Oh dear, sure, sure. If I'm not happy as a *bhikkhu*, I won't wait for a fortnight. I'll come back immediately. But if my **Pāramī* calls for, please let me be a *bhikkhu* for as long as I wish."

* *Parami* : Past perfection; the cumulation of virtues developed and brought to maturity.

Even at the last moment as he was about to leave for the monastery, his wife insisted, “Oh, before you leave, do go and sow the peas in the fields as the land is already been ploughed and ready for sowing.” Figuring it wouldn’t take a long time for this task, he obliged. For the last time, on the 1st of November, 1920 (the 5th waning day of *Thadin-gyut* in 1920 M.E.), he went off to the fields with a pair of oxen. There, he mounted the plough and shouted at the two oxen to start moving. But the oxen did not move. Instead, they kept looking back at him, as if to say something.

U Kyaw Din pondered, “These two oxen had never given me trouble before. They always started moving energetically competing with each other whenever I mounted the plough. I never have to prod at them. Well, even the oxen are forcing me to leave. If I couldn’t be firm and decide for my resolution on my own this time, what a useless fool would I be!”

Reproaching himself thus, he compelled himself to get off the plough, unclasped the harness, took off the yoke and put the plough up leaning against a tree. He then unleashed the two oxen to release them saying, “Well, I’m letting you two off from servitude for good. Go wherever you want. We will depart and never ever meet again, in life or in death.” After setting the oxen free for good, he headed off to U Kyauk Monastery. On the way, he met a friend, Daw Tin, who asked him where he was going. He replied, “I’m going to the monastery to become a *Samanera* (novice).” “In that case, I have a worn-out *Ekacciya* (upper robe of a *bhikkhu*’s attire, also called *Uttara-sanga*). Take it, but don’t let your wife know about it.”

When he reached the monastery, Abbot U Kyauk, also called U Viriya, gave him *Thin-pine* (lower garment of a *bhikkhu*’s robe, also called *Antara-vasaka*) and initiated him into the Order of *Bhikkhu* as a *Samanera* by the name of *Shin Kawi.

Because he became a revered *bhikkhu* (addressed as *Ko Daw in Myanmar*) after leaning (which is termed ‘*daung*’ in Myanmar) the plough (called *Tun*) against a tree, he was also known as ‘*Tun Daung Ko Daw*,’ meaning ‘Revered *Bhikkhu* who left the plough leaning against a tree.

U Kyaw Din made the wish to become a *bhikkhu* in 1919 on 8th October (the full-moon day of *Tha-din Gyut* 1281 M.E.) at the village pagoda after offering lights and he entered into the Order of *Samgha* in 1920 on 1st November (1282 M.E., on the 5th waning day of *Tha-din gyut*). So it took him only a year to have his wish fulfilled.

* **Shin** is used as a prefix for novice and *bhikkhus* alike, like Mr.

As soon as he became a novice, he went to Maung-Yin Por Ravine at the south of Sunlun Village to resume his practice alone. Five days after entering the Order, his friend U Shwe Luk joined him as a novice (*Samanera*) taking the name Shin Vizaya and went to stay with Shin Kawi.

One day, Shin Kawi found a big mushroom near the monastery. When he pulled it off, the big mushroom together with a whole group of many satellite small buds were uprooted from the ground. He interpreted it as a good omen, a token that he would certainly be fully liberated and uprooted from the woeful rounds of birth, the *Samisāra*. He pursued his meditation with relentless vigor vowing with resounding will and determination to seek his goal even if he had to pay for it with his life.

(4) In 1920, on the 9th of November, Tuesday, (1281 M.E., 13th waning day of *Tha-din gyut*), at around 10 p.m., he saw a regal silvery covered walkway (as those in pagodas) during his meditation. Then, he saw a flying chariot making a buzzing sound coming down straight towards him at a high speed from above the sky. He ignored it, focusing his mind only on the mediation process. Suddenly he felt his body becoming very light as if it was being lifted up. He found himself on the chariot. When he looked around, he saw the four Great *Celestial Guardians of the world at the four corners and **Sakka*, the King of the Celestial World himself, on his right side.

He concluded that these high Celestial *Devas* had come to protect him because he was about to attain higher Supramundane Insight. So he did not shift his lotus position but remained firmly focused on the meditation process. At last, he attained the fourth and the highest of the Enlightened Paths and thus became an *Arahat*.

He wound up his meditation and looked around. The Celestial King, the four Celestial Guardians and the chariot had disappeared. After his final attainment of the fourth Path Knowledge, he came to possess the power of supernatural eye. He could see right through the Universe, from the uppermost *Brahma* Realm above to the lowest Realm of Hell (*Avici*). Then, he saw the Celestial King (*Sakka*) and the four Guardian Celestials returning back to the Celestial World calling out to their subjects in

* Four Great Celestial Guardians of the World (*Catu-lokapala Devas*) : They are Dhatarattha, Virupakkha, Virulhaka and Kuvera. They reside in the realm of Catu-maharajika and guard the world.

* *Sakka* : The 'King of Celestials (*Devas*).’ He is the lord of the Celestial Realm of *Tavatimsa*.

resounding voices extolling and urging, “An *Arahat* has now arisen in the human world! Do go and pay homage!”

He saw in his vision many beings closest to him. Then he saw spirits of the earth, spirits of trees and many resplendent Celestials (*Devas*) from different realms, from the lowly spirits to the Highest *Brahmas* in groups by groups in endless array, coming to pay him homage.

Watching all these beings, he was able to observe and comprehend in full detail the existence of the three External World (external *Loka*) and the three Internal World (internal *Loka*).

- He came to understand the three **External** mundane World (external *Loka*) as :-
- The Animate World (*Satta Loka*) ... the world of all living beings.
 - Then, the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*) ... the World of Karmic Formations/Forces (volitional activities) that is conditioning the living beings.
 - And thirdly, the Inanimate World (*Okāsa Loka*), which forms the habitat, the base of all living beings.

And he found and comprehended in minute detail the three **Internal** World (internal *Loka*).

- The Animate World, (*Satta Loka*) as the phenomena of ‘Mind - Concomitants of Mind - and Matter’ in a continual flux of arising and perishing.
- Then, the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*) as the conditioning factors (volitional activities, the karmic formations or forces) responsible for the arising and passing away of ‘Mind - Concomitants of Mind - and Matter.’
- And the Inanimate World (*Okāsa Loka*) which forms the base of all these phenomena.

Then he came to understand and appreciate deeply the (nine) noble *attributes of the Buddha, the (six) attributes of *Dhamma* (The Teachings) and (nine) attributes of *Samgha* (The Order). He looked back and analyzed his own Paths in stages. Upon nearing *Sottapana*, the first Path of Enlightenment, this was how he experienced the Path-Knowledge:

‘This is Matter (*Rupa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

* See glossary - Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Samgha* for their attributes.

These are Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble (*Ariya*) Truths is called *Sottāpaññā Magga*, the Path-Knowledge of the Stream Winner, the first Path of Enlightenment, *Sottāpaññā Phala*, the Fruition of the Stream Winner Knowledge.

For the second time,

This is Matter (*Rupa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

These are Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble (*Ariya*) Truths is called *Sakadāgāmi Magga*, the Path Knowledge of the Once-Returner, the second Path of Enlightenment, and *Sakadāgāmi Phala*, the Fruition of the Once-Returner Knowledge.

For the third time,

This is Matter (*Rupa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

These are Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble (*Ariya*) Truths is the attainment of *Anāgāmi Magga*, the Path Knowledge of the Non-Returner, the third Path of Enlightenment, and *Anāgāmi Phala*, the Fruition of the Non-Returner Knowledge.

For the fourth time,

‘This is Matter (*Rupa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).
This is Consciousness (*Citta*).
These are Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).
This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).
This is the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*)
This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble (*Ariya*) Truths is the attainment of *Arahatta Magga*, the Path Knowledge of the *Arahat*, the forth and final Path of Enlightenment, and *Arahatta Phala*, the Fruition of the *Arahatta* Knowledge

That was how Shin Kawi made a detailed retrospection (*Paccavekkhaṇā*) of each of the Paths he had attained after which he remained in a state of bliss, a kind which only *Ariyas* could experience.

Shin Kawi looked back at his previous lives in the light of ‘Cause and Effect (Resultant)’ principle. He found that in most existences, he had been born into animal world. The number as human existence were very few in fact. As the lives of his past existences were so numerous and endless, he wanted to know why in this life he came to attain the highest of the Path-Knowledge, so he expressed a solemn resolution made on asseveration of truth (*Adhiṭṭhāna*) to know the cause of this effect. He found it was the resultant of the wish he had made after offering fruits to the *Kassapa* Buddha, the third Buddha of this earth (*Badda kappa*), as a parrot.

About three months after Shin Kawi became a novice, Ye Lei Sayadaw of Meik-tila town had a dream one night. In it, he saw two white elephants entering the monastery from flying up in the sky. Soon after, U Pyo Tha from Myingyan and U Ba San, the chief clerk of the Steel Brothers’ Company paid a visit to Ye Lei Sayadaw. They informed him that two very extraordinary novices had appeared near Sunlun village, at Maung Yin Paw Chauk Ravine and that they had become *Ariya* (noble ones), but that they did not seem to be learned. Ye Lei Sayadaw remarked that if those two *Sameras* are *Ariyas*, they would surely know the facts of *Paññatti* (Conventional Truth), the *Paramattha* (Ultimate Truth), and the Law of Nature. He asked them to invite the two novices.

When Shin Kawi and Shin Vizaya arrived at the monastery, he inquired and questioned in detail about the meditative processes they had gone through. Finally, he was convinced and concluded that Shin Kawi had indeed accomplished the ‘Task as

Bhikkhu’, i.e. becoming an *Arahat*, the final goal of a *bhikkhu*. He then went on to ask as follows :-

***Abbreviated notes on the Questions by Ye Lei Sayadaw and
Answers by Shin Kawi***

- Q. In the three spheres of existences, who is the builder of the house?
A. Craving (*Taṇhā*) is the builder, Venerable Sir.
- Q. What is the seed-germ of the Volitional Activities (*Saṅkhāra*) of these three spheres?
A. Ignorance (*Avijjā*) is the seed-germ, Venerable Sir.
- Q. Is it due to meritorious deeds (*Kusala*), or demeritorious deeds (*Akusala*), that a being become a human?
A. It is due to both meritorious deeds (*Kusala*) and demeritorious deeds (*Akusala*) that a being become a human.
- Q. Would you say (take) meritorious deeds (*Kusala*) (as) pleasantness/happiness (*Sukha*) or (as) unpleasantness/suffering (*Dukkha*)?
A. Meritorious deeds are said to be pleasantness/happiness (*Sukha*), but in actual truth they are unpleasantness/suffering (*Dukkha*) (*because they also contribute to the rounds of birth, Saṃsāra, leading to suffering*).
- Q. Are there Human happiness (*Sukha*) and Celestial happiness (*Sukha*) in true terms?
A. In mundane conditioned world (*Saṅkhata*), there are Human happiness (*Sukha*) and Celestial happiness (*Sukha*). In terms of Ultimate Nature (*Paramattha*), there aren’t.
- Q. Are there who suffer in Hell (*Nirīya* realms) and who enjoy in Heaven (*Deva* realms)?
A. In terms of Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*), there aren’t.
- Q. In the mundane conditioned world (*Loka*), there are two kinds of sentient beings - those who suffer (pain) and those who enjoy (pleasures). Which kind would you say is truly in existence?
A. Both of them are truly in existence, Venerable Sir.
- Q. What would you call these two kinds?

A. Both are called Mind (*Nāma*), and Matter (*Rupa*).

Q. In the mundane conditioned world (*Loka*), are there killers and the killed?

A. Yes, there are, Venerable Sir.

Q. In what way would you say they are?

A. They are in fact Mind (*Nāma*), and Matter (*Rupa*)?

Q. Is it true that those who kill go to Hell (*Niriya*)?

A. Yes it's true, Venerable Sir.

Q. If it is true, in what sense do you mean by that?

A. Mind (*Nāma*), and Matter (*Rupa*). These two make one go to Hell (*Niriya*). And also, these two keep one from going to Hell, as well as strive to reach *Nibbāna*.

Q. In the world, there is a belief in which there are killers and the killed. And another belief in which there are no killers and none that is killed. Which one is the right view (*Samma-ditthi*) and which is the wrong view (*Micchā-diṭṭhi*)?

A. Apart from belief in Mind and Matter (*Nāma and Rupa*), both are of wrong views, Venerable Sir.

Q. What would you believe in to have the right view (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*)?

A. To acknowledge and accept the existence of Mind and Matter (*Nāma and Rūpa*) is to have the right view, Venerable Sir.

Q. Can someone who doesn't understand the nature of Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*) fulfill the ten Perfections (*Pārami*)?

A. No he cannot, Venerable Sir.

Q. There are two kinds of Truth - Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*) and Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha*). If one only knows Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*), can he obtain Supramundane Path Knowledge (*Magga ñāṇa*)?

A. No he cannot, Venerable Sir.

Q. Which would you call is the real Truth - Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*) or Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha*)?

A. Only Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha*) can be called the real Truth.

Q. Of the two views, *Micchā-diṭṭhi* (wrong view) and *Sammā-diṭṭhi* (right view), when will you say that one has the right view (*Sammā-diṭṭhi*)?

- A. From the time you discard **diṭṭhi* (wrong views) and **Vicikiccha* (skeptical doubts), you come to hold the right view (**Sammā-diṭṭhi*).

Ye Lei Sayadaw acknowledged Shin Kawi's answers praising him, "Well said! very good indeed. Knowledge of Reality of this nature is highly profound. They are extremely deep and difficult to understand and yet you had answered well to my satisfaction. From now on, we would like to practice the method you had discovered. Moreover, we would like you to introduce it to our lay devotees so as the door to *Apāya*, the four Nether Worlds, would be forever closed for them (if and when they attain *Sotapanna*, the first Path of Enlightenment). Do stay with us at our monastery for Rains Retreat Period (**Vassa-vasa*) of this year." Shin Kawi accepted with joy, "Very well, Venerable Sir. I'm so glad of your invitation as I'm looking for a mentor for proper guidance to study the Buddhist Scriptures."

Shin Kawi's Contemplation on the ten **Kasiṇas*

Ye Lei Sayadaw advised Shin Kawi to practice meditation on the ten *Kasiṇas* (objects of meditation). Shin Kawi asked the Sayadaw about the procedures. Under the Sayadaw's specific guidance, Shin Kawi followed the instructions meticulously on each and every *Kasiṇa*. He practiced the ten *Kasiṇas* one by one, related his experience and findings to Ye Lei Sayadaw who then checked them out. In just one day, Shin Kawi had mastered all ten.

The following night, Shin Kawi heard a voice from the spiritual world asking a question in Pāḷi, "*Ñāṇa-dassanamī vividhamī*." Shin Kawi answered, "*Ñāṇa* means knowledge, and *vividhamī* is various, diverse or many." The spirit acknowledged his answer saying, "Well done, well done! (*sadhu, sadhu!*)" and disappeared. In the morning,

* *Diṭṭhi* : See Glossary for details.

* *Vicikiccha* : Sceptical doubt; uncertainty. Being skeptical and uncertain as to whether the Buddha is really enlightened, whether the *Dhamma* is really the Truth, and whether the *Samgha* are truly noble. One overcomes *Vicikiccha* on becoming a *Sotapanna* (*Stream-winner*).

* *Sammā-diṭṭhi* : the right view, the right understanding, the firm belief in karma, *kamma*, (i.e., one's actions and the result thereof). It also means comprehending the four noble *Ariya* Truths.

* *Vassa-vasa* : Rains Retreat Period. Observing the Rains Retreat Period; Confining oneself to a specific monastic dwelling for the three month rainy period (season).

* *Kasiṇa* : Meditation device to produce and develop concentration of mind and attain mental absorptions (*Jhāna*).

Shin Kawi related the incident to Ye Lei Sayadaw. “You answered right, Shin Kawi,” remarked the Sayadaw.

Some nights later, Shin Kawi heard a voice in Pāli saying, “Renounce your life!” which in effect meant urging him to die (Renounce *Āyu Sañ Khāra!*). Shin Kawi replied firmly, “No, I will not!” The voice disappeared then. The next morning, he related the occurrence to Ye Lei Sayadaw who asked, “Did you say yes to what they requested?” “No, Venerable Sir, I didn’t,” replied Shin Kawi. “Don’t accept or agree to what they say. They won’t back off yet. *Maras* (evil spirits) will come back again. Do be careful,” warned Ye Lei Sayadaw.

Within a few nights, a spiritual being appeared in person requesting Shin Kawi, “Please do not teach the Four Noble (*Ariya*) Truths.” “Yes, I will!” replied Shin Kawi. “Aren’t you listening to what I’m saying?” insisted the spirit to pay heed to his demand. Sensing the spirit’s anger, Shin Kawi decided to send *Odissa metta* (loving kindness that is directed to a specific person). When Shin Kawi asked, “Don’t you receive my loving kindness?” he replied, “Yes, I do, Venerable Sir,” and retreated into the darkness moaning sadly, “Alas! many beings are going to gain emancipation by *Dhamma!*”

The next morning, upon hearing the episode, Ye Lei Sayadaw told him to follow the tracks of the spirit. He contemplated and found the spirit who had asked him to renounce his life and who then implored him not to preach the Four Noble Truths. Shin Kawi related his findings to Ye Lei Sayadaw, “I found the spirit was only a minion of the *Mara*. *Mara* himself had become a good person now.” A few days later, two spirits in the form of young damsels wearing red flowers in their hair came to see Shin Kawi in the deep of the night. They left the monastery only when Shin Kawi rebuked, “What task have you got to do here?”

Wanting to test Shin Kawi’s mental powers, Ye Lei Sayadaw asked him whether there would be any patron in future who would repair the old Shwe Myin Tin Pagoda (later gilded with gold) situated on the east bank of Meik ti-lar Lake. At that time, the colonial British military stationed at Meik ti-lar town, had used the upper part of the Pagoda as a signaling post with mirrors, lights, radio signals, etc. and hence the deterioration. Shin Kawi used his contemplative powers and said, “Yes, a forthcoming patron will repair the pagoda.” Ye Lei Sayadaw inquired further, “Will that person be a *bhikkhu* or a layman?” Shin Kawi again used his supernormal mental powers and answered that it would be a layman, describing his house in detail, even to the design of the clothes he was wearing at that moment while walking in front of his house. Ye Lei Sayadaw sent someone to check out the man and his particulars including his name

and made a record. Some years later, he found that man was the person who happened to be the patron taking the lead in the renovation of the Pagoda.

Note : The patron was U Kyaw Zaw and his wife Daw Htay of Meik ti-lar.

Answers to Questions by Ye Lei Sayadaw on the Prophetic Riddles current in those days

The following are the conversations in which Ye Lei Sayadaw asked Shin Kawi of the prophetic riddles current in those days.

Ye Lei Sayadaw asked, : “Do you see that Great Meik ti-lar Lake over there?”

U Kawi replied, : “Yes I do, Venerable Sir.”

Ye Lei Sayadaw continued, : “Four reservoirs have now formed from that Great Lake.

And there is a prophetic riddle going around town. It goes like this -

‘In the vicinity of Meik ti-lar,

Four reservoirs have formed from the Great Lake.

*Eighty thousand and more of Alchemists (*Vijja) will surface.*

Anybody who wish to have a gain,

Work on your furnace (pho).’

How do you interpret this prophetic riddle?”

U Kawi asked back, : “How would you make out the ‘Alchemist’ (*Vijja*) and how would you interpret the ‘furnace?’

Ye Lei Sayadaw answered, : “Well, Alchemists (*Vijja*) are of course those striving for perfection in occult matters on medicine, magical talisman, mercury, mantras, etc. And ‘*pho*’ is meant by those furnace and *crucibles they use in their working ground.”

U Kawi offered his own revelation : “Venerable Sir, by *Vijja*, it means *Ariya Vijja*, one who had attained Path Knowledge. ‘*Pho*’ (the furnace) is meant for *Anāpāna* (in-breath and out-breath), the working ground to acquire *Vijja* (Supramundane Path Knowledge.”

* *Vijja* : It has two meanings -

1. Alchemist (those chiefly concerned with occult efforts to transmute base metals, like lead, into gold).

2. Supramundane (*Vipassana*, Insight) Knowledge; understanding the Truth).

* crucibles : a heat-resistant container in which material can be subjected to great heat.

Ye Li Sayadaw acknowledged U Kawi's interpretation, : "Yes, yes, you are right U Kawi, you are right. We are a bit off track on this aspect."

From that day on, after admitting his waywardness, he abandoned his amulets for occult use, furnace and all things connected with alchemy for good, and started to practice *Anāpāna*, the mindfulness on the touch of out-breath and in-breath.

Ye Lei Sayadaw discussed further with U Kawi on more prophetic riddles circulating in town -

Ye Lei Sayadaw said, : *'Time is now over 2000 years,
Like the market about to close.
Hurry and buy for yourself,
If not, there won't be any left,
When time reaches 5000.'*

How would you interpret this riddle?

U Kawi explained his own interpretation, : "The time of *Sāsana* (Buddha's Teachings) has now passed 2000 years. It is like a market about to close. Time has now come into the **Vimutti* era, the era for Emancipation (*Nibbana*) through *Vipassana* Practice. That is why, if people strive for Insight Development, they would have the opportunity to achieve higher Insight Wisdom (*Panna*) in accordance with their *Parami** (past perfections, the cumulation of virtues developed and brought to maturity).

Ye Lei Sayadaw continued, : "There is also another prophetic riddle going around. How would you make out on this? It goes like this :-

'From Inn-Khan to Nget-Kya,

* The period in which Sasana (Buddha's Teachings) would prevail is 5000 years after Buddha passed into *Nibbana* (as foretold by the Buddha). There are 4 eras during the 2500 years followed by another 4. Each era roughly lasts around 500 years. They are in this order:

1. *Vimutti* era (era when practice of *Vipassana*, Insight Meditation is prevalent)
2. *Samatha* era(era when practice of *Samatha*, mind concentration for *Jhana,absorption* is prevalent)
3. *Sīla* era (era when practice of Morality is prevalent)
4. *Sutta* era (era when learning of *Pali* Scriptures is prevalent)
5. *Dana* era (era when practice of charity is prevalent).

From *Nget-Kya* to *Ledi*,

From *Ledi* to *Tun-Sin*.’

[It roughly translated like this:--

When the reservoir dries up, the birds come.

When the birds come, the fields are settled.

When the fields are settled, one comes down from the plough.]

U Kawi elucidated his version, : “First there appeared *Inn-Khan* Sayadaw (*Inn-Khan* means ‘reservoir *drying up*’) who became very well known. Then he was followed by *Nget-Twin* Sayadaw (*Nget-Kya* means ‘*birds come*’) who was also widely known. Then came the famous (world renowned) *Ledi* Sayadaw (*Ledi* means ‘*fields are settled*’). The last one, *Tun-Sin* is meant for me. *Tun* (plough), *Sin* (coming down) ... meaning ‘coming down from the plough.’

I had entered the Order of *Samgha* immediately after coming down from the plough, so some people called me *Tun-Taung* monk, or *Tun-Tone* monk, attaching me to the plough (*Tun*). Well, you can call me whatever name you like and make out whatever you may. Coming down from the plough (*Tun-Sin*) would definitely clear away the dirt (meaning for people to clear away defilements and obtain Enlightenment).

Ye Li Sayadaw remarked in appreciation, : “Yes, yes, that is very sensible and natural.”

Shin Kawi then made a request to Ye Lei Sayadaw, “Venerable Sir, I don’t want to practice the *Kasiṇas* anymore (as it is for power of mind through concentration of mind). Otherwise, if people start coming to seek my advice for their lost cattle, lost person and the like, I would soon become a shaman.”

Ye Lei Sayadaw had made a pact with his friend Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw (U May Dawi), that whoever happened to attain the higher stages of *Dhamma* (Supramundane Insight) would inform the other. Ye Lei Sayadaw wrote a letter to his good friend who lived in Naung Lunt village, Yeme-thin township, that although he himself had not obtained Supramundane Knowledge, he had discovered a highly unique novice (*Samanera*) who had attained it, and to come quickly to see for himself at his monastery in Meik ti-lar.

Upon his arrival at Ye Lei monastery, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw took a look at Shin Kawi. He was not impressed and said so to his friend referring a saying in Myanmar, ‘When **sulei* shrubs arrive, the clearing for thrashing gets destroyed.

* *sulei* : is a kind of very small shrub with seeds having 3 or 4 thorns each. They grow very close to the ground. Because of their many thorns, the cleared ground for thrashing rice grains becomes destroyed.

When a *bhikkhu* who's been married arrives, the monastery gets destroyed.'

But Ye Lei Sayadaw replied, "Oh, do reserve your criticism before investigating Shin Kawi."

When Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw was about to ask questions, Shin Kawi made a request, "Please Venerable Sir, I would like to say something before you ask me. There are two different matters. One is *Lokiya* - those concerned with Mundane and the other is *Lokuttara* - those concerned with Supramundane, the Nibbāna. If you are asking on Mundane matters (*Lokiya*), please confine your questions within Mundane boundary and not cross over to Supramundane. Likewise, when asking on Supramundane (*Lokuttara*), please don't cross over to *Lokiya*. I have no inclination to answer if you ask with the two subject matters mixed up."

Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw thought Shin Kawi's statement was arrogant. He then proceeded to ask him solely on Supramundane (*Lokuttara*) matters the first day, and Mundane (*Lokiya*) matters only on the second day.

Brief Account on Questions by Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw and Answers by Shin Kawi

Q. Shin Kawi, tell me the five constituents of Mundane **Jhāna*.

* *Jhāna* : *Jhana* is a state of willful concentration or absorption on an object. Absorption is the ability of the mind to be concentrated on a single mental or physical object. *Nivarana* (hindrances to development of mind) and other demeritorious actions are destroyed through mental absorption.

The words *Samatha*, *Samādhi* and *Jhāna* are mostly used synonymously. They all mean Concentration of Mind. *Jhāna* is both a system of mental training and a process of transcending the lower states of consciousness to higher states of consciousness.

The five constituents of *Jhāna* (factors which give rise to mental absorption) are:-

1. *Vitakka* : initial application of the mind that directs it towards the object.
2. *Vicara* : sustained application of the mind that examines the object again and again.
3. *Piti* : delightful satisfaction, joy or pleasurable interest in the object.
4. *Suka* : bliss.
5. *Ekaggata* : one-pointedness of the mind.

Vitakka, *Vicara*, *Piti*, *Suka*, *Ekaggata* are *Cetasikas* (concomitants of mind) that can influence the mind to be fixed on an object. They can be developed and strengthened by *Samatha-bhavana* (*tranquility-meditation*) which is actually a form of mental training.

It should be noted that the five *Rupa-jhanas* differ from one another in the number of Jhana-factors (constituents), whereas the four *Arupa-jhanas* differ from one another in the objects of meditation.

A. Venerable Sayadaw, I wouldn't know how to describe the constituents of *Jhāna* that you mentioned. Please let me tell the way I know it.

“Very well then, you may say as you deem fit,” approved Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw, so Shin Kawi continued his answer thus,

“Venerable Sir, what you meant to say is about the *Kasiṇa* (object of meditation). First, you put your attention on the object of meditation.

Then you contemplate on it.

Tingling of skin like goose-pimples appear on the body and you tremble.

Then, there is bliss.

Then, you felt deep calmness.

Q. What, what, what did you say? Say it again.

A. Say, here is the *Kasiṇa* (object of meditation).

You focus your mind on the object of meditation.

Then you contemplate on it.

Creeping of skin like goose-flesh form on your body and you tremble.

Then, there is bliss.

This is followed by deep calmness.

That is all. You may name them or call them whatever you wish.

Q. Yes, that's right. Let me see -

- Fixing the mind on to the *Kasiṇa* is *Vitakka*.

(Vitakka is initiation of thought; the function of directing the mind towards the object of thought, here kasina disc).

- Concentrating and contemplating is *Vicarā*.

(Vicarā is sustained application of the mind to reproduce the kasina disc image in the mind and retaining it - Retention of image).

- Creeping of skin like goose-flesh appearing on the body followed by trembling is *Pīti*.

(Pīti is delightful satisfaction, pleasurable interest in the object of thought, zest. The thrill of joy that causes the flesh to creep).

- Occurrence of bliss is *Sukha*.

(Sukha is deep tranquility with great joy).

- The one-pointedness of mind which follows is *Ekaggata*.

(Sukha is replaced and purified by equanimity, known as Upekkha, and mindfulness.)

Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw said, “Alright, alright. I agree with you. Now continue with the subject on *Jhāna*.”

So, Shin Kawi continued his description of *Jhāna* one by one till the fifth *Jhāna*.

Q. Wait a minute, in ***Ākāsānañcā-yatana Jhāna*** (the *Jhāna* of Infinite Space), what do you contemplate on? Is it on Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*, Concept) or on Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*)?

A. You contemplate on Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*, Concept) as its object of meditation.

[***Ākāsānañcā-yatana Jhāna*** (the *Jhāna* of the Infinity of Space), *is the first of the four Immaterial Jhāna (Arūpa Jhāna) and to develop it, one has to contemplate on the Infinite Space (which is a conventional truth, Paññatti, Concept) as the object of meditation after coming out from the fifth Rupa Jhana.]*

Q. What about in ***Viññāṇañcā-yatana Jhāna*** (the *Jhāna* of Infinite Consciousness)? Do you contemplate on Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*, Concept) or Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*)?

A. You contemplate on Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*) as its object of meditation.

[***Viññāṇañcā-yatana Jhāna*** *is the second of the four Immaterial Jhāna (Arūpa Jhāna) and to develop it, one has to contemplate on Infinite Consciousness, Ākāsānañcā-yatana Kusala Citta (which is an Ultimate Reality, Paramattha) as the object of meditation, after one’s subtle clinging (nikanti) for the first Arupa Jhana disappears.]*

Q. Then in ***Ākiñcaṇ-ñāyatana Jhāna*** (the *Jhāna* of Nothingness), what do you contemplate on - Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*) or Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*)?

A. You contemplate on Conventional Truth (*Paññatti*, Concept) as its object of meditation.

[***Ākiñcaṇ-ñāyatana Jhāna*** *is the third of the four Immaterial Jhāna (Arūpa Jhāna) and to develop it, one has to contemplate on Nothingness, the object of meditation, (i.e. on the non-existence of Ākāsānañcā-yatana Kusala Citta. Nothingness is a conventional truth, Paññatti, Concept). You meditate thus after transcending from the second Arupa Jhana.]*

Q. How about the ***Neva-saññā-nāsaññā-yatana Jhāna***? On what do you contemplate - Concept (*Paññatti*) or Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*)?

A. You contemplate on Ultimate Reality (*Paramattha*) as its object of meditation.

[***Neva-saññā-nāsaññā-yatana Jhāna*** (the *Jhāna* of neither perception nor non-perception) *is the fourth of the four Immaterial Jhāna (Arūpa Jhāna) and to attain it, one has to contemplate on the third Arūpa Jhāna Consciousness, the object of meditation, i.e. on ‘Ākiñcaṇ-ñāyatana Kusala Citta’. In Neva-saññā-nāsaññā-yatana Jhana, Consciousness is so subtle and refined that one cannot definitely say whether*

there is a Consciousness (perception) or not. Consciousness is no longer noticeable at the stage of this Jhana.]

Q. When you are transcending from ***Ākāśānañcāyatana Jhāna to Viññāṇañcāyatana Jhāna*** do you contemplate on the lower *Jhana* or higher *Jhana* as the object of meditation?

[i.e. transcending from the first (*Jhāna of Infinite Space*) to the second (*Jhāna of Infinite Consciousness*) of the four Immaterial *Jhāna*].

A. You contemplate on the lower *Jhana* to transcend to the higher *Jhana*.

?? [*Viññāṇañcāyatana Jhāna* is the second of the four Immaterial *Jhāna* (*Arūpa Jhāna*) and to develop it, one has to contemplate on Infinite Consciousness, *Ākāśānañcāyatana Kusala Citta* (which is an Ultimate Reality, *Paramattha*) as the object of meditation, after one's subtle clinging (*nikanti*) for the first *Arupa Jhana* disappears.]

Q. Oh no, how could it be? How could you contemplate below to transcend higher?

A. Yes Sir, you have to contemplate below. Please let me give you an example. Let's say, there is a pit of excrements over there which you don't want to fall into. Being anxious of not falling into it, you watch it and climb upwards to get away from it.

Only then, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw was satisfied.

Sunlun Sayadaw later recounted,

"The Sayadaws did not question further on that subject. Had they done so, I was ready to clarify on certain points. In the Pali Text, it was stated that in Arūpa Sphere (the Non-material Existence), 'No Concept (Paññatti) is there (Natthibo).' And it also stated that you contemplate on Concept (Paññatti) in the Arūpa Jhānas.

If they were to ask, "How are you going to contemplate on any Concepts (Paññatti) where there is nothing?

I would have answered, "You can contemplate on the Concept (as the object of meditation) which is not there.'

And should they ask, "How?"

I would have replied, showing them an object, "Look, here is an object. You see it right?" Then, I would hide it and ask them again, "Is there any object now? No, there isn't. Though there isn't any object now, you can think of that object you have seen, and can reflect and contemplate on it. Try it and you find you can contemplate on it, right? That is how you contemplate on thought-object, Concept (Paññatti) which is absent?"

For two whole days, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw (U May Dawi) conducted his questioning and checked back Shin Kawi's answers on subjects relating to both *Lokiya* (Mundane matters) and *Lokuttara* (Supramundane matters). Ye Lei Sayadaw then told Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw, "Well, it was because of my previous promise to you that I had sent for you and arranged this meeting. If you are satisfied with the answers you may accept them, and if not, you may disregard them." He also added that if he had finished his questioning to Shin Kawi, he could return to his own monastery.

Sayadaw U May Dawi did not make anything but went back to his own monastery at Naung Lunt on the third day. Once he got there, he looked up various *Pāḷi* Texts for three whole days and found Shin Kawi's answers to be in accordance with them. He then sounded the hollow trunk hung at the monastery (a traditional practice of monasteries for signaling) to summon all the *bhikkhus* studying at the monastery. Relating to them of what he had learned about the *Dhamma* from Shin Kawi, he urged them to take up the meditation method as discovered by Shin Kawi.

Meanwhile, Ye Lei Sayadaw advised Shin Kawi to get ordained into the rank of full-fledged bhikkhu-hood (*Upasampadā*), as the latter was still a novice then. But Shin Kawi declined saying, "Venerable Sir, I'm not a learned monk, I couldn't learn the Buddhist Scriptures and have no inclination to do so. Furthermore, I don't know the *Vinaya* Disciplinary Rules (*which in fact is a very big subject on its own*). I prefer to contemplate and practice *Dhamma* (meditation) which I have discovered."

But Ye Lei Sayadaw insisted, "There is no need to learn the *Vinaya* Disciplinary Rules. You just listen and follow what we instruct you. If a novice of your stature were to be ordained to become a full fledged monk (*bikkhu*), that would have a profound impact on *Sāsana* even by carrying out simple service like officiating in ordination for a new *bhikkhu* into the Order (*Upasampada*) or in the Demarcation of a *Sīmā* (*Ordination Hall*).

Due to Ye Lei Sayadaw's persuasion, Shin Kawi acceded and on the 4th April 1921 (12th waning day of *Ta-baung*, 1282 M.E), Monday at 4:09 p.m., the *Ordination Ceremony was carried out for Shin Kawi and Shin Vizaya in *Khaṇḍa* Sima (Ordination Hall) of Ye Lei Monastery in Meik ti-lar town.

At the Ordination Ceremony, Hin Yan-kan Sayadaw acted as *Upajjhāya-cariya* (Preceptor Superior or Chairman of the Assembly). Ye Lei Sayadaw, Nyaung Lunt

* When *bhikkhus* are ordained, the date and exact period of time of the Ordination Ceremony are noted down officially.

Sayadaw and over ten other *bhikkhus* participated as **Kammavācā* Readers. U Paw, a broker from Meik ti-lar, and his wife Daw Kyee Nyo were the lay sponsors of U Kawi.

[*Shin Kawi together with his friend Shin Vizaya were at last ordained into the Order of Saṅgha. Shin Kawi from then on became known as Sayadaw U Kawi.]*

* *Kammavācā* : Mandatory reading of sacred *Pali* Texts in Ordination Ceremony (*Upasampada*) for validation; authorized words of ritual from the prescribed book of Compendium written on palm leaves, or on lacquered papers, usually enclosed within beautifully ornamented silk wrappers and gilded covers.

The First Sermon by Sayadaw U Kawi expressing joy

After being ordained into the Order of *Samgha*, Sayadaw U Kawi stayed at Ye Lei Monastery in Meik-tilar for about a year. In 1921 (M.E. 1283), he went back for a visit to Sunlun village, his native place at Myingyan.

There, the villagers, wanting to find out how U Kawi conducted his monkhood, made a request, “Venerable U Kawi, please honor us with a sermon together with the customary recitation of **Paritta* and reading of **Kammavaca* protection verses.” U Kawi accepted their request and pondered, “Well, it wouldn’t be difficult for me to recite the *Parittas* and read *Kammavaca* as it would be done together with other *bhikkhus* in a group (as was the traditional practice). But delivering the sermon has to be administered alone and I haven’t prepared anything. I wonder what I should talk about.” While trying to think of something, an idea came up when he saw village girls came in, each marking her own water pot filled with auspicious flowers, and placing it at the designated area for blessing. “I shall deliver my sermon based on these water pots to be *blessed by *Paritta* verses,” decided Sayadaw U Kawi.

So he started up his sermon :-

“In all living beings, there are **Kusala* (merits) and **Akusala* (demerits). When *Kusala* shows its meritorious resultants, they kept smiling with satisfaction as everything is going their way. But when *Akusala* appears and displays its demeritorious resultants, they grimace with disdain. For example - do you see that big lake over there?”

“Yes we do, Venerable Sir,” replied the congregation.

* *Paritta and Kammavaca* verses are traditionally recited for protection by *bhikkhus* and layman alike.

Paritta : Protective verses which guard off evil and which provide protection from evil influences.

* *Kammavaca* : Verbal formalization of an act. Formulas proclaimed by the Buddha for saying in conducting certain monastic proceedings

* Blessed water : It is a culture of people in Myanmar to drink water blessed by Venerable Sayadaws to clear out impurities from the body, like the holy water of Christians.

* *Kusala* : Morally wholesome; meritorious deeds that give good resultants.

* *Akusala* : Immoral; demeritorious; unwholesome deeds that give bad resultants.

“Do you think it’s good for the people here if that lake’s embankment break away (flooding the surrounding area)?

“Of course not, Venerable Sir,” replied the gathered audience.

“Will it be good if there is a hole in it?”

“Of course not, Venerable Sir.”

“If that is so, let’s repair the lake’s damaged part. Let’s mend the breach in the lake’s embankment. Let’s raise the embankment in order to raise the lake’s water level. Let the lake (*Kan, Kamma*) be in superb condition.

Likewise, a living being’s *Karma* (*Kan, Kamma*) is like a lake. If *Akusala* (demeritorious karma resultants) appear to give trouble, it is like a breached lake causing damage. It is like a hole appearing in the lake’s embankment resulting in destruction. So let’s repair and raise the lake’s embankment; let’s mend the breach; let’s improve our *karma*. How do we improve it?

Well, there are many ways. We listen to discourses on *Dhamma* and protective *Parittas*; we pay ceremonial homage to the *Nine Buddhas* (traditional way of group recitation of stanzas and reverence to the Nine Buddhas done at night time); we build little stupas for homage, build support to sacred Banyan trees (by propping with bamboo poles to the main sagging branches to provide proper shade), repair or build small bridges in public passageways or paths (for public convenience), offering food to *Samghas*, etc., etc.

By these wholesome meritorious deeds (*Kusala Kamma*), we are strengthening, enhancing and improving our own *karma*. It would be like repairing the broken reservoir. With deep faith and conviction, if we take refuge in true Buddha, true *Dhamma* and true *Samgha* (Order of *Bhikkhus*), ninety-six kinds of illnesses (traditional way of expressing various kinds of diseases) could be allayed or cured and prosperity would thrive too.

But be careful not to take refuge in the wrong places. I must tell you how I used to take shelter in the wrong sanctuary before.

Buddham Saranam Gacchamī I take refuge in Buddha

Dhammam Saranam Gacchamī I take refuge in Dhamma

Samgham Saranam Gacchamī I take refuge in Samgha.

To take refuge in the ‘Three Jewels of Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Samgha*’ is a well known statement in the Teachings of the Buddha but I had ignored it. Instead, I went to embrace misguided refuge in my son, my daughter and my spouse. Because of that, do you know what vanished? The Three Sacred Jewels of Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Samgha* faded out and vanished from my life.

* *Kan, Kamma* : In Myanmar, *Kan* has two meanings; one is *kamma, karma*, and another is lake.

I'm telling you about my own erroneous refuge, not of other people's. Now, let me tell you about how I got it all wrong. Naturally, I had wanted very much to provide and adorn my children with jewelry and the like, and so tried hard to get money out of other people's pockets with all means. The more I got things for my kids, the merrier I felt, thinking I was being very smart, so happy and proud was I going to village fairs and festivals and to pagodas for paying homage with my children dressed in beautiful attire and jewelry. You wouldn't know how exuberantly happy, arrogant and boastful I had been then.

To fulfill all those obligations to my family, I did things which I detested doing. Those were the days when I had to get up very early in the mornings and worked in the fields not caring to be afraid of snakes and scorpions. I had to plough the paddy fields without wanting to. Do you know why? It was because I happened to take wrong refuge in attachment (to my family) and desire for sense pleasures (*Rāga*). I had to harvest rice crops without wanting to. I had to harvest corn crops without wanting to. Do you know why? It was because I had taken wrong refuge in attachment and craving for sense pleasures."

[When Sayadaw U Kawi saw the wife and daughter of the Village Chief in the audience, he remembered the Village Chief's orders which he had to follow like all other villagers as obligatory duty. So he continued his sermon like this :-]

"I had to make village fencing with thorny branches without wanting to. I had to put up with sentry duty at the sentry post without wanting to. When I heard the resonant beating of the gong from the Village Chief's house summoning us, I would go there without wanting to. All these village duties, I had done with much reluctance. Do you know why? It was all because I was a slave to sensual desires and attachments and had enshrined them as my refuge.

Well, I'm relating my mistakes, you know, not of other people's. Let my mistakes be a lesson to you all. And do you know why I took the wrong refuge? It was because of Ignorance, (Ignorance, *Avijja*, to see the True nature of things). That is why :-

Because of ignorance, you desire, crave.

Because of your craving, you cling.

Because of your clinging and obsession, you make effort to do things to get what you want.

Because of those efforts and deeds, you get what you crave.

And when you do get it, you end up with sufferings.

Ignorance is *Avijjha*,
Craving is *Taṇhā*
Clinging (obsession) is *Upādāna*,
Making effort and doing the deeds (volitional acts) is *Sankhara*,
Getting it is life (*Bhava*, existence).

Ignorance (*Avijjhā*) and Craving (*Taṇhā*) - when these two get combined, the result is rebirth (*Jāti*). And when you get rebirth (*Jāti*), what follows is Suffering (*Dukkha*) from Round of rebirth. Well, I'm telling about my sufferings, not of other people's. I suffered, because *Sanna* (Perception) had deluded me all along.

Sañña (Perception) covers up the truth you see. This fraudulent, delusive nature of *Sañña* (Perception) must be done away to reveal the real Truth. If not, there will always be doubts about the true nature of things.

The Exalted Buddha had exhorted about *Anicca* (Impermanence). But *Sañña* (*wrong* Perception, wrong idea) has distorted and misled us ordinary worldlings (*Puthujjana*) into believing in *Nicca* (Permanence).

The Exalted Buddha had preached of *Dukkha* (Unpleasantness, Suffering). But *Sañña* (Perception) has deluded us and has convinced us the *wrong* concept of *Sukha* (Pleasantness).

The Exalted Buddha had expounded *Anatta* (Selflessness). But *Sañña* (Perception) has cleverly projected the *wrong* notion of *Atta* (Self) for us to believe in.

The Exalted Buddha had taught of *Asubha* (Loathsomeness, Repulsiveness) but *Sañña* (Perception) has subtly deceived us and has given the *wrong* illusion of *Subha* (Beautifulness) for us to hold as true.

Continually mesmerized by the ingenious pretence, lies and deception of *Sañña* (*wrong* Perception), living beings are bearing *Dukkha* (Unpleasantness and Sufferings) without even realizing it.

The Buddha had exhorted that this illusive deceptive nature of *Sañña* (Perception) could be sorted out with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Saṭipatṭhāna*).

And this is how it is done :-

- Mindfulness of Body (*Kāyā-nupassanā Saṭipatṭhāna*) reveals the wrong perception of beautifulness (*Subha*).
- Mindfulness of Sensation (*Vedanā-nupassanā Saṭipatṭhāna*) clears away the wrong perception of happiness (*Sukha*).
- Mindfulness of Mind/Consciousness (*Cittā-nupassanā Saṭipatṭhāna*) expose the wrong perception of permanence (*Nicca*) and,

- Mindfulness on the Nature of Mind-Matter Phenomena (*Dhammā-nupassanā Saṭipatṭhāna*) unveil the wrong perception of ‘Self’ (*Atta*).

When your body is in contact with something (*Phassa*, contact of tactile object with body sense-door), you are aware of the touch. As long as you are mindful (*Sati*), heedful (*Appamāda*) of that awareness of touch, you are equipped with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. This is how it is :-

- Mindfulness of the body-touch (*Phassa*) alone, i.e. the bare awareness of the touch, is experiencing the Mindfulness of the Body (*Kāya-nupassanā*);
- When there is touch (*Phassa*), there arises sensation, feeling (*Vedana*). Mindfulness of that feel, the sensation of touch, is Mindfulness of Sensation (*Vedanā-nupassanā*).
- Mindfulness solely on the thought of being aware of that touch sensation is Mindfulness of Consciousness (*Citta-nupassanā*).
- As your mind is so concentrated and pure, free of the five hindrances (**Nīvaraṇa*), you are mindful of taking the elements of body-mind phenomena just as they are without any thought or emotion whatsoever, with complete equanimity. That is Mindfulness of the nature of Body-Mind Phenomena (*Dhammā-nupassana*).

When you practice these Four Foundations of Mindfulness over and over again, they will clear out your skeptical doubts and erroneous views.

You come to know Impermanence as real Impermanence (*Anissa*), Unpleasantness as real Unpleasantness (*Dukkha*), Selflessness as real Selflessness (*Annatta*), Loathsomeness as real Loathsomeness (*Asubha*).

In days before, I used to be so proud, boastful, vain and conceited. I tried to think of ways and means of getting money from other people’s pockets. And when I got it, I thought I was so smart and bright. These conceited thoughts with false sense of vanity were all because of Delusion, Ignorance (*Avijjā*) which was pushing me down to the four nether worlds (**Apāya*).

* *Nīvaraṇa* : 5 Hindrances to the development of mind to discern clearly the Truth, namely,

1. Sensual Desire (*Kāmacchanda*)
2. Ill-will (*Byāpāda*)
3. Sloth and Torpor (*Thīna-middha*)
4. Restlessness and Worry (*Uddhacca-kukkucca*)
5. Sceptical Doubts (*Vicikicchā*)

* *Apāya* : Four miserable realms or worlds.

After repeated *Vipassana* practice, I came to realize that I wasn't heading in the right direction. So I decided to change ways. I resolved not to depend on the son, nor the daughter, nor even the wife with whom I had shared my life. Then, to whom shall I depend on?

Buddhami Saranam gacchāmi : I take refuge in the Buddha.

Dhammamī Saranam gacchāmi : I take refuge in the *Dhamma*.

Samīghamī Saranam gacchāmi : I take refuge in *the Samīgha*.

Because of my refuge in these Three Jewels - Buddha, *Dhamma*, and *Samīgha*, I no longer need to plough the paddy fields, nor to harvest the crops of rice and corn. No more making the village fencing. The resounding beating of the gong from the Village Chief's house can be heard booming in continuity summoning for assembly. They may strike the gong till it is broken, but I will not go, never ever again.

[*N.B. sentry - It is a culture of Myanmar especially in villages, rural towns and even in suburban city districts for men to take turns for sentry duty at sentry posts during night time to watch out for fire, thieves, etc.]*

Now that I am a *bhikkhu*, the sanctuary of *Sasana* has provided me with so much peace and tranquility.

There is no fear anymore of the grain warehouse being caught fire.

There is nobody now who owns me, scolds me or nags me.

There is nobody who grumbles or criticizes me.

Nobody who wails or whines, nor one who fusses around.

The more I think about it, the more I appreciate living as a *bhikkhu*, free from agitation and disturbance, from hassles and suffering - so much peace, so much tranquility - the extinction of all suffering, the final curtain certainly will be *Nibbāna*."

That was how Sayadaw U Kawi concluded his first sermon.

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1. Hell; realm of continuous suffering (*Niraya*)
 2. Realm of animals (*Tiricchana*)
 3. Realm of famished spirits (*Petas*)
 4. Realm of demons (*Asuraka*)

The arrival of Daw Shwe Yi, the ex-wife, and her request for four favors.

Soon after he entered the Order, his wife Daw Shwe Yi came and beg him to disrobe, to become a layman again. She wooed and wailed and wept so much that Ye Lei Sayadaw remarked even he himself became almost tearful from her sad wailing. No matter how much his wife lamented, U Kawi would not be persuaded. Finally, realizing that it was to be in vain, Daw Shwe Yi backed off asking only four promises as a favor :-

1. To let her be the patron of a *bhikkhu's* four *requisites for U Kawi.
2. To deliver sermons and admonitions if and when she requested.
3. To come back and reside in their native Sunlun village when she could afford to build a monastic abode for him.
4. To let her live as she pleased.

*U San Tin's request to Sayadaw U Kawi to expound
Paṭipatti Sāsana (the Practice of Dhamma)*

In the year 1922 (M.E. 1284), U San Tin came to Meik-tilar to pay a visit to his friend at Ye Lei Monastery. He remarked, "Sayadaw U Kawi, do you remember that prophetic rhyme I recited to you some time ago when you were still a layman?"

One thread, two threads ... what a mess!

This old lady **Amei Boke's** bulk of entangled threads.

Who in the world be able to clear up this tangle?

Spinning about with a shuttle on a loom,

Was Ma Khway dressed in a *pondaw*-designed *longyi* with green fringe and checkered blue.

The stump of the ruined pagoda is now radiating with light,

From the '*Kyun-bo*' teak loom, sound boomed and echoed thru' the ten thousand Universe!

Now, it has come true just as the rhyme had prophesied. There is a cotton weaving factory (representing a loom) now at the south of Sunlun village. That is why, starting from this year, the time has now arrived for you to expound *Paṭipatti*

* 4 requisites of a *bhikkhu* : They are allowed by the Buddha for *bhikkhus'* use.

1. robes

3. monastery/monastic abode

2. alms-food

4. medicines and medicinal requisites.

Sāsanā (*Vipassana*, the Practice of *Dhamma*). For that purpose, I humbly request you come back and reside at our Sunlun village. If you decide to come, I shall talk over with Daw Shwe Yi to build a monastic abode for your residence, after which I too shall enter the Order.” U Kawi accepted the offer solemnly.

After getting the solemn promise, U San Tin went back to Sunlun village and told Daw Shwe Yi to start building a monastic abode. Meanwhile, he himself got ordained as a *bhikkhu* and waited at the Maung_Yin Paw Chauk Ravine after dispatching Daw Shwe Yi to Meik-tilar with the invitation.

(There were teak trees around the vicinity of the monastery. Of the two ‘Kun’ pillars, one represented a *bhikkhu* from Kun-gyan-gon and another from Kun-site.)

***Daw Shwe Yi’s offering of a monastic abode for Sayadaw
U Kawi’s residence at Maung Yin Paw Ravine.***

Daw Shwe Yi came to Meik-tilar where Sayadaw U Kawi was staying. She invited him to return to their native Sunlun village and reside at the new monastic abode she had built for him.

That year 1922 in June (M.E. 1284), at the start of Waso (*Vasso*), the Rains Retreat period, Sayadaw U Kawi departed from Ye Lei Monastery and came back to reside in the new monastery at Maung Yin Paw Ravine which is situated at east of Sunlun village. Through out the three months of Rains Retreat Period, to disseminate *Paṭipatti Sāsanā* (*Vipassana* Practicē for Insight Knowledge), he taught the people there on how to build, nurture, develop and perfect *Samādhi* (mind concentration) by *Anāpāna Kammaṭṭhāna* (in-breathing and out-breathing method), thereby helping them to practice, improve and eventually advance to attain the highest level of Insight Knowledge.

*Abbreviated Record on Questions by Phet-Pin Ein Sayadaw and
Answers by Sayadaw U Kawi
on 10th May, 1925 (4th waning day of Kason, 1287 M.E)
at A-bya village, Bago township*

Q. When the eye (*Cakkhu*) and visual object (*Rūpārammaṇa*) come into contact, does the eye go to visual object or does visual object comes to the eye?

A. The eye does not go to the visual object nor the visual object goes to the eye.

Q. Then, how does one see?

A. Because of the property of eye-sensitivity elements (*Cakkhu-pasāda*), one sees.

Q. In that case, the visual object goes to the eye-sensitivity elements, right?

A. No, it doesn't Venerable Sir. For example, when one looks at the sun, there is this bright illuminating light due to the property of the sun, making one winks from discomfort. The sun doesn't go into the eyes, nor the eyes into the sun.

Q. Very well then. Now, tell me about *Nibbāna*.

A. Please Sir, let me tell you this way -

Venerable Sir, say, a **yogi* takes up *Vipassana* practice and meditates diligently. In time, he realizes the arising and perishing of the elements of 'mind - concomitants of mind- and matter' in his body to be extremely unpleasant and becomes genuinely weary of all these. Upon looking for the cause of this suffering, he finds the culprit to be Craving (*Taṇhā*). Path-Knowledge (*Magga-nana*) arises immediately on discovery of this Truth, eliminating Craving (*Taṇhā*), whereupon the chain of 'cause and effect (resultant)' is abolished.

The state of arising and perishing (of the elements of mind-body phenomena) taking place prior to the elimination by Path-Knowledge is

Sañkhata (Conditioned). The state immediately after the decisive elimination when the chain of 'cause and effect' is cut off totally, nothing takes place, having had the 'cause' abolished, there isn't any arising of its 'effect' (resultant), i.e., no arising and perishing of the elements. This is *Asañkhata*, *Nibbāna* (Unconditioned).

* *Yogi* : one who meditates for Insight Knowledge.

Q. In the *Nibbāna* you had just described, are there lights and colors like the sun and the moon?

A. No, there aren't, Venerable Sir.

Q. Then, tell me - what is *Nibbāna* like?

A. There isn't any to tell, Venerable Sir.

Q. In that case, does it mean *Nibbāna* doesn't exist?

A. *Nibbāna* does exist, Venerable Sir.

Q. There are four Ultimate Realities/Ultimate Truths (**Paramattha*), namely, Consciousness (*Citta*), mental Concomitants (*Cetasika*), matter (*Rūpa*) and extinction of Craving (*Nibbāna*), aren't there?

A. Yes there are, Venerable Sir.

Q. Tell me about those Ultimate Realities (*Paramattha*).

A. Venerable Sir, if you ask me about Ultimate Realities (*Paramattha*), there aren't any to tell (as there are no words to describe them). I, U Kawi, simply would have to sit here with folded arms (and remain silent).

Q. Wait a minute. Can you say, for example, that this block of gold will turn into lead just by saying that this gold is lead?

A. No, the gold won't turn into lead, Venerable Sir.

But the process of understanding the meaning of the Ultimate Realities/Truths (*Paramattha*) is so deep and subtle that they cannot be shown or scrutinized by physical evidence like *Paññatti* (Conventional Truths, Conceptuals). The Ultimate Cessation of mind (*Nama*) and matter (*Rupa*) in the recurring phenomena of 'arising (*Upadana*) - momentary existence (*Thiti*) - disintegrating (*Bhanga*)' (known as *Upad-Thi-Bin in short form*). That is what is called *Nibbāna*.

* *Paramattha* : Truth in the Ultimate sense; absolute Truth.

The *Abhidhamma* lists 4 *Paramattha dhammas*, namely,

1. *Citta* (consciousness)
2. *Cetasika* (concomitants of mind)
3. *Rupa* (matter)
4. *Nibbana*.

Q. Tell me about the development of ten levels of Insight Knowledge (*Vipassanā-ñāṇa*).

A. Take for example - a *yogī* practices *Anāpāna* (the practice of mindfulness on the touch of out-breath and in-breath) to build up *Samādhi* (mind concentration). When a certain level of concentration has been built up, he starts to practice mindfulness on the sensation (*Vedana-nupassana*). At first, he takes the sensation with conceptualization, perceptive notion (*Saññā*), i.e. pain as pain, *my* pain. But gradually, after much practice, he comes to discern the true phenomenon of *Dhamma* - the arising and perishing of sensation (which occurs at the intersection of mind and matter) in its real nature (without the sense of ‘*Self*’). He begins to feel dread and disgust (of the bodily phenomena, of the arising and perishing; and thence of the mundane world).

Q. The ten levels of Insight Knowledge (*Vipassanā-ñāṇa*) have to be practiced and developed level by level, isn’t that so?

A. Only if you want to, Venerable Sir. It is up to your choice.

Q. How are you going to achieve if not level by level?

A. Just by practicing the **Sammasana-ñāṇa* (the first level of the ten), that is, by observing and mindful of the sensations, Insight is acquired with regards to the arising and perishing of elements of sensations, followed by weariness, dread and disgust (of life itself).

Phet-Pin Ein Sayadaw commented, “Wait a minute, yes -

- the observing of sensation elements (i.e. contemplating on the three characteristics of life, namely Impermanence (*Anicca*), Suffering (*Dukkha*) and Non-self (*Anatta*) by observing on mind and matter) is *Sammasana-ñāṇa* (Level I).
- the understanding of arising and disintegrating nature of these mind-body elements (Conditioned things) is *Udayabbaya-ñāṇa* (Level II).
- the knowledge of the incessant dissolving nature of the bodily phenomena is

* *Sammasana-ñāṇa* : *Sammasana* level is the causative position, meaning you have to work at it. The other successive Insight levels just follow suit eventually. They are the resultant effects of the observation of your bodily sensation during *Vipassana* (Insight Meditation). The yogi has to tread the same path starting from the practice of *Sammasana* - the mindful observing of mind-matter phenomenon., when he work up for advanced levels.

Bhanga-nana (Level III).

[*As you meditate, the arising and perishing of mind and matter (nama and rupa) become very fast, so much so that you see only the perishing but not the arising.*]

- Becoming afraid (because you begin to see the faults, the troublesome effects, the unsatisfactoriness) of all these bodily(*Nama-Rupa*) phenomena is *Bhayā-nāṇa* (Level IV).
- Becoming dread and disgust of all these is *Ādīnava-nāṇa* (Level V).
Yes, yes. I'm coming to see the point. You are right, you are right.

Q. U Kawi, in this world, in conventional terms (as *Paññatti*), there are **Sotāpaññā* **Sakadāgāmi*, **Anāgāmi* and **Arahanta*, aren't there?

A. Yes there are, Venerable Sir.

Q. Do these *Ariyas* progress straight away from *Sotāpaññā* to *Sakadāgāmi* to *Anāgāmi* and finally to *Arahanta*?

A. No they don't, Venerable Sir.

Q. Then how do they progress from stage to stage? Do tell me the process of their advancement.

A. For example, a yogi meditates and practices from the *Sammasana-nāṇa* level (i.e. mindfully observing the sensation). He endeavors and transcends from level to level until he reaches the tenth level. He is then said to be a *Sotāpaññā* in conventional terms (*Pannatti*).

Then again, he continues practicing, starting from the *Sammasana-nāṇa* level (i.e. watching the true phenomenon of mind and matter mindfully). He proceeds from level to level till he progressed to the tenth level of Insight Knowledge'. He is then called *Sakadāgāmi*.

* *Sotāpaññā* : Stream-Winner / Stream-enterer; One who has entered the stream of *Ariya* Paths by attaining the Path-Knowledge (Enlightenment) for the first time..

* *Sakadāgāmi* : Once-Returner. One who has attained the Path-Knowledge (Enlightenment) for the second time.

* *Anāgāmi* : Non-Returner. One who has attained the Path-Knowledge (Enlightenment) for the third time.

* *Arahanta* / *Arahat* : The pure one who has destroyed all defilements of the mind. One who has attained the Path-Knowledge (Enlightenment) for the fourth time.

He still has to start back again on the *Sammasana-ñāṇa* level (observing and being mindful of the elements of mind-matter phenomena) and on completion of the tenth level, he is said to have become *Anāgāmi*.

Then, for the last time, he starts again meditating at the *Sammasana-ñāṇa* level (mindful watching of the elements of bodily sensation). Advancing from level to level, he reaches the tenth level, where he finally attains the stage of *Arahatship* - the ultimate goal, and is then conventionally called an *Arahant*.

[No further record would be made because of excessive mundane usage of description.]

Demarcation of a Sima (Ordination Hall) at Nemin-dara Mountaintop, Thaton city

For the propagation of *Sāsanā*, the devotees of Thaton had wanted to establish a **Sima*, an Ordination Hall, on the Nemin-dara Mountaintop. For that purpose, they cordially invited a Venerable Sayadaw renowned for his morality and serenity to conduct the process. Soon after arriving at the monastery which was situated at the foot of the mountain, he gave instructions to the *bhikkhus* in his entourage and to the local devotees to prepare all that was necessary for the *Sima*. Rock pillars for boundary demarcation of the *Sīmā* together with bamboo and timber to be used were collected and sent to the mountaintop.

The next morning, much to everybody's surprise and dismay, all the things they had carried on their backs to the mountaintop were found at the foot of the mountain. The Venerable Sayadaw reassured the devotees that there need not be any apprehension and once again, all the materials were dispatched to the mountaintop. This time, he instructed some people to sleep there as sentry. But the next early morning, the rock pillars and the building materials together with the people who slept nearby to watch over, were mysteriously found at the foot of the mountain, just like the previous night.

These unearthly incidents provoked fear and apprehension among the devotees, so much so that nobody dared to go near the mountain. But the leading Sayadaw attempted to pursue the daunting task for one more time. Nevertheless, there were so many hindrances and obstacles put up by the spirits of the Mountain that in the end, he could not take any more. He was forced to flee back home in a hurry but unfortunately died on the way. Thus, further attempts to establish a *Sima* at the Nemin-dara Mountaintop was abolished due to enormous impediment.

Soon afterward, U Khanti (of Mandalay Hill), the famed hermit, paid a visit to Thaton. There, the people requested him to conduct the consternating task of establishing a *Sīmā* at the Mountaintop. U Khanti accepted and advised, "Very well, I will take care of the building itself. But for the task of 'Demarcation of *Sīmā*,' it can only be done by *bhikkhus* and as a hermit I cannot take that responsibility. You should seek the help of Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw (U May-dawi) explaining the situation here." Taking

* *Sima* : Ordination Hall; demarcated area.

The boundaries of a piece of land and the ordination hall, in which *bhikkhus* are ordained and monastic precepts heard, are demarcated by an assembly of *bhikkhus* reciting the prescribed texts, *Kammavaca*. Both the site and the building are known as '*Sima*, Demarcated area.'

U Khanti's advice, the devotees went to Nyaung Lunt to approach for the Sayadaw's help.

Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw did not accept the invitation immediately. He dispatched some of his disciples to Sayadaw U Kawi at Maung Yin Por Ravine telling him to come as soon as possible. After the messengers explained the situation, Sayadaw U Kawi contemplated the task he was asked to undertake by making asseveration of truth (*Adhiṭṭhāna*). His friend U San Tin (who was also versed in supernatural powers) foretold like this, "Are you looking back at the past? Do go and see the things you had done before on that mountain. There is a little mound at the Sunday corner (north-east corner) of the precincts. Start preparations from there and you will succeed."

When Sayadaw U Kawi arrived, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw asked him whether he should accept the request to demarcate the *Sīmā*. Sayadaw U Kawi told him to do so and so he accepted the invitation and had a date fixed for the operations. Then, he said, "U Kawi, I have accepted the offer. When we get there, you'll be in charge for organizing everything for the Demarcation of Sima at the Mountaintop. Start preparing now. And do let me know of anything you need. I'll see to it that you get everything." U Kawi replied that he would need lots of special pennants (little triangular flags with lace border which are traditionally used for offering at pagodas). Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw asked, "What are they for?" to which Sayadaw U Kawi replied, "I want to give them as presents (to the spirits of the mountain)." "Now, I understand. Alright, I'll have lots of pennants done." Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw then added, "U Kawi, you will have to read **Kammavāca* at the ceremony." "Venerable Sir, if that is the case, you must teach me," replied U Kawi.

Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw personally taught him the way to pronounce precisely and recite the words of the *Kammavāca* with accurate and proper intonation. When Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw finished the reading, U Kawi held the *Kammavāca* script and recited exactly as Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw had done. He then said, "Venerable Sir, please correct me now if you are not satisfied with my recitation. Don't scold me later in front of the audience there if something goes wrong." "If you recite like this, it's good enough," remarked Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw with satisfaction.

* *Kammavāca* : Verbal formalization of an act. Certain Verses (formula) proclaimed by the Buddha for reciting in conducting certain monastic proceedings. It has to be recited with accurate pronunciation and intonation.

Some senior disciples of Nyaung Lunt Monastery were not happy that U Kawi was to be included in the entourage for the occasion. They appealed to Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw saying, “Venerable Sir, please don’t include in U Kawi in the party for the trip. He’s not educated and he had been married before. He might make us lose face at the ceremony (if he read the *kammavāca* improperly).” Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw ignored their protests replying, “Well, each one has his own way of seeing things.”

In 1923 March (M.E 1284, *Ta-baung*), the devotees of Thaton chartered a private train carriage for the Sayadaws and their entourage. Altogether seven famed and learned Venerable Sayadaws were in the party. They were:

1. Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw U Medhavi
2. Meik-tilar Ye Lei Sayadaw
3. Joke-pin Sayadaw U Tikkha
4. Sayadaw U Kavinda of Nyaung Lunt Monastery
5. Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi of Maung Yin Por Ravine Monastery
6. U Vijaya from Maung-Yin-Por-Ravine Monastery
7. U Kosalla of Sunlun

After passing by Bago city, while the train was going at a high speed, a strange monk suddenly hopped up from the ground and hold on to their carriage from outside. The Venerable Sayadaws told him, “This whole carriage is hired as a private compartment. You must go somewhere else.”

But the monk retorted, “Oh, private or not, I couldn’t care less.” So saying, he barged into the carriage through the window. Once inside, he stared at the Sayadaws and declared mockingly, “Hmm... so, you’re all going to Sihala (Sri Lanka) as missionaries to propagate *Sāsana* like *Shin Mahinda did, oh-no-no, to Thaton I mean, ..Bravo! Bravo!”

Thus shouting, he rattled a little wooden bell that he had brought along and said, “Look, look at this bell, there isn’t any clapper inside. It’s hollow.” Then pointing with

* Shin Mahinda : He was the son of the famed King Asoka of India. He entered the Order of Samgha and later became an Arahat. King Asoka sent his son Mahinda and his daughter Samghamitta (who also became an Arahat) as Buddhist missionaries to Sri Lanka (formerly Sihala, Ceylon) in the Year 236 Buddhist Era.

He gave them the southern branch of the Bodhi Tree, where Gotama Buddha attained Supreme Enlightenment, which they planted in Sri Lanka. King Asoka ruled the northern part of India about 2000 years after Buddha’s *Pari-nibbana*. Due to King Asoka’s missionary efforts, Buddhism became the first world religion in history.

his fore-finger to each of the seven Venerable Sayadaws, he counted, “one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and with me altogether eight.”

He inquired, “Where do you all come from?” to which the Sayadaws replied, “We came from Nyaung Lunt.” “Is it Nyaung-Chin or Nyaung-kyat? Well, must be Bodhi-Nyaung.” After these nonsensical remarks, he jumped out of the speeding train before anyone could stop him.

Sayadaw U Kawi told Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw of his interpretation of the peculiar incident, “Venerable Sir, this bogus monk had mentioned about a bell but without a clapper. It denotes that there will be a hindrance at the *Sima* Demarcation Ceremony by a *bhikkhu* but the hindrance won’t be successful as the bell without a clapper cannot make any sound.” Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw replied, “I don’t think any *bhikkhu* will put up any impediment as the work is of service to the Order of *Samgha*.” U Kawi remarked, “Well, just wait and see if you don’t believe me, Venerable Sir. The impediment will be by a *bhikkhu*. But the Demarcation of *Sima* will be accomplished.”

On arrival at the railway station of Thaton, the Venerable Sayadaws and their entourage were enthusiastically welcomed by a huge crowd led by the high government officials such as U Po Sa and U Kyaw Dun together with other patrons and devotees of the town. The Venerable Sayadaws were then driven in a motorcade to the monastery at the foot of Nemin-dhara Mountain.

As soon as dusk fell, Sayadaw U Kawi collected the candles donated by devotees and went up the mountain. On reaching the top, he lit up the whole mountain with candles and set up the pennants he had brought all over the place. He then called upon the Guardian Spirits of the mountain, “O, Guardians of Nemin-dhara Mountain ... I give you these candles and decorated pennants. You may offer them in paying homage to the Buddha that you so worship. I give you all these. Do take and make your offering.” He then stood at the Sunday (north-east) corner of the precincts, prepared (*Parikamma*) his mind to start contemplating on *Dhamma* and meditated on loving kindness (*Mettā bhāvanā*) disseminating it to the spirits of the mountain together with all beings.

[Sayadaw U Kawi later recounted of the Guardian Spirits of the Nei-meindhara Mountain. He said gave a discourse in Thaton where lots of people attended. In that audience, the last one to come and pay homage was King Manuha of Thaton dressed in royal regalia. In that past life, Sayadaw U Kawi happened to be Barme Sayadaw, the King’s highly respected mentor.]

Some *bhikkhus* reported to Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw criticizing that U Kawi had been conducting only mundane things which were inappropriate. Sayadaw U Kawi explained to Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw,

“Venerable Sir, say for example, if the government forcefully confiscate your monastery compound exercising their power and authority, and drive you away. You may leave because you can’t fight them back, but would you like it?”

“Of course not,” replied Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw.

“But then, if they came to you, cordially requesting you to move temporarily to some other place, saying they need the place for some urgent important matters, adding that you may return to your own monastery after everything had been done and settled. You will be satisfied then, won’t you?”

“In that way, of course I’ll be satisfied,” agreed Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw.

Everybody then understood and was rest assured upon hearing Sayadaw U Kawi’s explanation.

Having witnessed so many dangerous hurdles in the past, the devotees watched nearby with much apprehension of the Venerable Sayadaws’ proceedings. But then, to their amazement and delight, they found that unlike before, the rock pillars, bamboo, timber and all materials for boundary demarcation of the Sima that were sent up the mountain were not brought back. They had stayed in place. They found that even a toilet for the *bhikkhus* had been built at the mountain base without any hitches. They talked among themselves with joy and boosted morale, “Hurrah! now, anything can be done at the mountaintop. There won’t be any opposition. The haunted mountain is now free of poltergeists’ works. This is indeed wonderful.”

On the day the area within the demarcated boundaries were to be ceremonially cleared for the **Sima*, the *Samgha* held a congregation at a specific time chosen by Sayadaw U Kawi. There, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw put the *Kammavāca* Text into Sayadaw U Kawi’s hands telling him,

“U Kawi, will you please read the *Kammavāca* first?”

Sayadaw U Kawi recited the *Kammavāca* with clear resonant voice and the right intonation as required with no fault at all. After Sayadaw U Kawi’s reading, Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw told his senior disciples to repeat the *Kammavāca* but they read with

* *Sima* : It is a prescribed procedure to ceremonially clear and prepare the land for the *Sima* by reciting ritualistic specific verses of the *Pali* Text for the occasion to validate the act)

mistakes for which they were duly reproached, “See, see what you’ve done. Back at our monastery, you had protested not to bring along the uneducated *bhikkhu* with no knowledge of the *Pali* Text lest he brought shame in front of the assembly. Now, you couldn’t even recite like the *bhikkhu* you had criticized.”

The proceeding of *Kammavāca* reading was completed by Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw followed by Ye Lei Sayadaw. Finally the task of *Thein-note* (Preparatory Ritual for clearing the site of *Śīmā*) was successfully carried out and officially effected after which the demarcation pillars for the *Śīmā* were sent to the mountaintop.

The next day, just before the ceremony of *Sīma* Demarcation started, a certain *bhikkhu* came in and asked, “Venerable Sirs, what type of *Sīma* are you going to declare?” to which Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw answered, “As regional type (*Nei-thein*).”

The *bhikkhu* tried to raise objections on the procedure as improper, vaguely stating this and that. Joke-pin Sayadaw U Tikka, one of the elderly Venerable Sayadaws intervened firmly, “All right, all right, if you think the procedure is not a proper one, do show us appropriate reasons and evidence in accordance with the *Pitika* Text. We on our side, are willing to let you see tenable statements with reference to the Text if you so desire. Do you want to see them?” Only then, the *bhikkhu* left.

Demarcation of the *Śīmā* was to be done in regional type, and in accordance to the protocol, consent was obtained from all *bhikkhus* living in the proposed region of the *Sīma*, and certain *bhikkhus* in the region were invited to participate in the ritual. After all these preparations had been done, at ten o’clock that night, the chosen auspicious hour, they strike the big brass bells and beat the hollow trunks (traditionally used at monasteries) as a way of signaling and notifying the Guardian Spirits of the locality. At last, the Demarcation Ceremony started.

Late that night, Sayadaw U Kawi contemplated with his meditative supernormal powers to find out whether the operation had been successful. He discovered that a certain *bhikkhu* from another region had been in the proposed demarcated zone of *Sīma* without giving his consent. He saw and heard in his vision, the conversation between that *bhikkhu* and another one. Realizing that the Official Demarcation of the *Sīma* was not successful, he informed what he saw and heard to Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw relating the conversation between the two *bhikkhus*; he said the *bhikkhu* from another region was saying to the other, “You know, their declaration of *Sīma* Demarcation was not successful. While they were carrying out the official ritual, I was within their region of the circumscribed zone for the *Sīma* at a particular time and at a particular place without giving my consent. So their Demarcation of the *Sīma* had failed.”

Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw gave orders to search for those two *bhikkhus*. When they were found, he interrogated them and it was confirmed the Demarcation had been nullified as one *bhikkhu* from another region had been in the confined zone while conducting the official demarcation.

The next day, the Venerable Sayadaws asked lay devotees as well as government officials for their help in soliciting consent from all *bhikkhus* living in the proposed demarcated region. After obtaining the required consent from all *bhikkhus* living in the demarcated region, they proceeded the rituals as before. At last, the formidable task of officially demarcating the *Sima* was accomplished. The demarcation pillars were then erected at the boundaries of the *Simā*.

The people were so happy with the profound success of Demarcation of the *Simā* that many devotees danced and sang with ebullience. One high government official named U Kyaw Dun became so overwhelmed with joy that he swept up Sayadaw U Kawi carrying him on his shoulders and shouting at the top of his voice, “Here is the true Arahāt! Here is the real Arahāt!”

The next day, at the assembly for discourses, Sayadaw U Kawi was cordially requested to give a sermon. He did so recounting his first sermon which comprised of the many sufferings he had encountered in his life. He then continued referring several hardships of the local audience many of whom have to endure for their livelihood by picking durian and plucking mangosteen fruits in the orchards. It deeply struck their hearts, so much so that even the kids took heart to his discourse, singing in a rhyme this way,

“Have to pick the durians thou’ you don’t want to,
Have to pluck the mangosteens thou’ you don’t want to,
And do you know why?
'cause of your wrong refuge in attachment and desire.”

The memorable rhyme was remembered in Thaton for many years to come.

One night, Sayadaw U Kawi heard someone calling out, “U Kawi, U Kawi.” He went downstairs and saw an unfamiliar *bhikkhu* who asked him, “Follow me over there.” For a moment, he thought to himself, “This *bhikkhu* is a total stranger. But if I don’t follow him he’ll get into trouble. If I do, I shall encounter hardship. Well, I’d rather be the one who suffer.” So, he walked behind following that *bhikkhu* who took him a long way into the dark jungle. When they got far deep into the woods, the *bhikkhu* turned

around and said, “That’s enough Venerable Sir, you may return now. I’ll get you back to the monastery.”

U Kawi replied, “Oh, never mind, I will return on my own.”

He trekked back in pitch darkness working out his way alone but arrived back to the monastery much sooner and easier than the earlier trip.

[Note: The objective of the *bhikkhu’s* expedition was to test Sayadaw U Kawi’s composure and serenity in facing adversity. He wanted to find out whether Sayadaw U Kawi would get frightened and lose his poise in the night of the deep jungle.]

Sayadaw U Kawi’s fame began to spread far and wide. One Sayadaw from Kha-Ywe village of Thaton township came to see him. Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw cautioned Sayadaw U Kawi, “This Sayadaw had studied and practiced *Samatha* extensively and believed himself to be a tip-top expert on *Lokiya* powers (mundane occult powers). You’d better find out the extent of his ability.”

On meeting him, Sayadaw U Kawi asked him on how he started his preliminary procedure (*Parikamma*) for practice of *Samatha* (*tranquility meditation*). Kha Ywe Sayadaw described his practice with preliminary work (*Parikamma*) of how initially, one had to contemplate on a *Kasiṇa* object for acquired image (*Uggaha-nimitta*), and went on to describe things he had learnt on the subject matter together with his varied views.

Sayadaw U Kawi asked, “You’ve mentioned just now something related to a betel-box. Would you kindly tell me Venerable Sir, how many betel leaves are there in this *betel-box?”

Kha Ywe Sayadaw admitted that his mental powers could no longer follow or penetrate that much. Sayadaw U Kawi then told him accurately how many betel leaves there were in the box.

In return, Ka Ywe Sayadaw asked Sayadaw U Kawi of the preliminary procedures (*Parikamma*) and the meditation method to which the latter explained everything in detail.

Kha Ywe Sayadaw then commented, “You are still young, strive more to advance further in the future. As for myself, I’m getting old and afflicted with residual effects of stroke. I can’t concentrate anymore to such an extent.”

* Betel-box : It is a culture of Myanmar especially in villages where betel-nut boxes are used for entertaining guests and monks alike. In it are betel leaves, betel nuts, a cracker to crack them into pieces, some herbs for flavoring, and calcium paste. The contents are rolled in the leaf before chewing.

He went on, “Long time ago, U Uttama, U Tiloka from Thit-cha Taung and I went into the forest to contemplate in search of *Dhamma*. We had decided then to return only if we could deliver *Dhamma* to the people from the sky (staying aloft in the sky with the use of supernatural powers). But instead of accomplishing that goal, we met with so many difficulties that we had to abandon our plan and came back home.

Note : Sayadaw U Uttama, after parting the company of his two friends, Sayadaw U Tiloka of Thit-cha Taung and Kha Ywe Sayadaw, came to inquire and had learnt Sayadaw U Kawi’s Vipassana method before Kha Ywe Sayadaw came. So Sayadaw U Kawi already knew the history of the three Sayadaws. In fact, while U Uttama was meditating under Sayadaw U Kawi’s guidance he had composed a poem describing the relative easiness for the ladies in search of *Dhamma* as compared to men and *bhikkhus* who possessed high ego and conceit. The poem was as follows:-

‘Great oxen with their large humps and formidable horns,
Couldn’t draw unloaded carts up the hill.
Cows on the other hand, with no horns nor humps,
slender hoofs and frail,
weighted down with goods on carts they pull.
Even so, they hold firm and mightily struggle their way.’

Likewise, he meant, female yogis who meditated generally did not harbor any doubts nor have much query, but simply follow the teacher’s instructions with faith, fervor and zeal. And hence, found the *Dhamma* sooner. On the other hand, *bhikkhus* and men who meditated in search of *Dhamma*, being learnt and knowledgeable to some extent, tended to have sceptical doubts, comparing and contrasting, wavering and wondering on the method being taught and on *Dhamma* (i.e., the meditative findings in practice) with what they had learned. That was why, for them, it was more difficult and took a longer time to reach the goal.

After completion of *Sima* Demarcation at Nemin-dhara Mountaintop, the seven Venerable Sayadaws took the train for the return journey from Thaton. On the way back, Sayadaw U Kawi remarked to Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw on the incident that happened during the earlier trip. “I had foretold on the incident of that strange monk who hopped into the train, you know the one who looked more like a hermit than a *bhikkhu*. It was obvious, wasn’t it, that hindrance was put up by a *bhikkhu* but it was not effective, just as the wooden bell he carried couldn’t make any sound as it was without a clapper. In the end, it was a resounding success like I had predicted.”

“Yes, yes, U Kawi, how right you were!” conceded Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw.

*Seven Stages of Purity (Seven Stages of *Visuddhi)*

Joke-Pin Sayadaw (renowned for his expert knowledge of *Pali* Text, the *Pitaka*) asked U Kawi to discern the Seven Stages of Purity (*Visuddhi*). U Kawi replied, “I don’t know how to tell the Purity Stages that you know (in the conventional way). If I may, I would like to explain the way I understand it.”

“Go ahead, go ahead,” approved Joke-Pin Sayadaw.

The following was how U Kawi explained ...

“The *yogī* who meditates, first pays obeisance to the Exalted Buddha, disseminates his loving kindness (*Mettā*) and shares his merits to all sentient beings. He then offers himself (body and mind) to the Buddha for the period of meditation. He does not set the time but meditates as long as he can.

Closing his eyes, he practices *Anāpāna-sati*, i.e. mindfulness on the touch of out-breath and in-breath air, to develop his concentration (*Samādhi*) until it reaches a considerable level and by which time bodily sensations like heat, cold, numbness, pain, etc. may have risen. Thereupon, he shifts his concentrated mind to observe these sensations. For the duration of time that he is mindful on whatever sensation that has appeared in his body, his eyes are not looking here and there; he is not talking nor listening, nor eating, nor smelling; his hands and feet are not moving as well; in fact, his whole body is calm and collected. Thus the sense faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body are in restraint. All five faculties (five *Indriyas*) of sense-bases are pure, which means the morality is pure. This is called (1st) **Purity of Morality (*Sīla Visuddhi*)**.

And because his mind is totally focused and fixed on bodily sensations (the object of meditation) without any thoughts whatsoever, it is pure. The mind is in a state of purity. This is called (2nd) **Purity of Mind (*Citta Visuddhi*)**.

At this point, his morality is pure and his mind is pure. By virtue of the purity and clarity of morality and mind, he is able to see clearly the true nature of phenomena (of life), i.e. of mind (*Nama*) and matter (*Rupa*). This is how he sees it ...

While observing and being meticulously mindful of the sensations, he finds the elements of body-mind phenomena in continual motion, like fire-sparks emitting from his body pores, like sparks seen when flint is stricken on a flint-stone (a primitive way of making fire), appearing and dissolving with no knowledge or sense of ‘self.’ Upon this Insight, he realizes that in Reality, he has no legs, nor arms nor body, nor head. The sense (perception) of the body (the notion of ‘I,’ ‘self,’ me, mine) is naught; there is only these continual processes of body-mind phenomena. By discarding the wrong concept of

* *Visuddhi* : Purity or purification.

the body, the ‘self,’ he obtains the right view and this is called (3rd) **Purity of view (*Diṭṭi Visuddhi*)**.

Because of this Insight, he realizes how true and real the *Dhamma* is and develops unswerving faith than ever before in Buddha and His Teachings, without any doubts whatsoever. This purity by overcoming sceptical doubts is called (4th) **Purity by transcending doubts (*Kaṅkhāvitarāṇa Visuddhi*)** [doubts with regard to Impermanence (*Anicca*), Unpleasantness (*Dukkha*), Non-self (*Anatta*), the three characteristics (*Ti-lakkhaṇa*) of body-mind phenomena.]

Having found this Insight Knowledge which has led to wholehearted conviction and faith, he feels joyous. This rapture (*Pīṭi*) leads to the appearance of a wondrous illuminating light in his practice. His mind gets attracted to this illumination and so goes to cling to it because the extraordinary experience was so tranquil and peaceful with all the bodily sensations blotted out. This is one of the *ten imperfections/dangers of **Vipassanā Upakkilesa* and he is immersed in it. After a time, he ponders and realizes that he’s off track (that this unusual experience is not the true attainment of Path but merely a milestone along the way and that he shouldn’t remain attached to it. In fact, the experience of illumination, **Nikanti*, is due to *Samādhi*). So he makes an effort to detach his mind from the tranquil aura of illumination and pulls his attention back on to the bodily sensations again to proceed along the right Path. By taking this right decision, he attains the purity of discriminating between what is the right Path and what is not. This is called (5th) **Purity of Knowledge and Insight in discerning what is the right Path and what is not (*Maggāmagga-ñāṇadassana Visuddhi*)**.

Redirecting his attention back to the body, he finds bodily sensations to be much pronounced (perhaps becoming excruciating). At first, he couldn’t get his mind (consciousness) totally fixed on the sensations (the object of meditation) nor could he get his effort (*Javana*) of concentration tally with the degree of sensation. The mind sometimes overshoots its target and sometimes it falls short of it; it is not in balance yet.

* *Vipassanā Upakkilesa* : Dangers/traps/imperfections of *Vipassanā*:. These states of mind do not indicate attainment. They are ten in number. They are just mere milestones along the path to *Nibbāna*. One may get wrong conclusion that one has attained one of the stages by these encounters. See Glossary for details.

* *Nikanti* : Attachment to unusual events, such as illumination occurring in *Vipassanā* which is accompanied by *Pīṭi*, *Passaddhi*, *Sukha* and *Obhāsa*.

Then, he raises his effort (**Javana*) to a considerable level and gradually lowers it, all the while the mind meticulously concentrating, observing and penetrating right through the sensation. At one time, they become equally on par, in perfect balance, in a state of equanimity - the effort of concentration and the degree of sensation. This is called (6th) **Purity of Knowledge and Insight of the Path-progress leading to the attainment of *Ariya Magga (Paṭipada-ñāṇa-dassana Visuddhi)*.**

Soon after reaching the perfect balance, with the arising of Purity of Knowledge and Insight, the sensation abruptly ceases, extinguishes, snaps. It has come to an end as clearly as when you pull the trigger of a loaded gun, the shot is fired off with a bang. This is called (7th) **Purity of Knowledge and Insight into the four *Ariya Truths*, i.e. *Magga-nana (Ñāṇa-dassana Visuddhi)*.**

“U Kawi, your exposition of the Seven Stages of Purity (Seven stages of *Visuddhi*) is even better (than the traditional ones),” commented Joke-Pin Sayadaw in appreciation.

End of exposition of the Seven Stages of *Vissudhi*

Questions raised by the Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw to Sayadaw U Kawi

In 1925, on the 20th of August (1287 M.E., on the 3rd waxing day of *Taw tha-lin*), the Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw paid a visit at around 6 p.m (at Mo-daung village). The following is a brief account of questions by the Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw and answers by Sayadaw U Kawi while Sayadaw U Puñña, U Jāgara and some bhikkhus together with lay devotees were attending deferentially to the Venerable Sayadaw.

- (a) The Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw started the conversation, “I had come this evening because there was a mention in the invitation letter that U Kawi would be coming. Otherwise, I would have come only the next morning just before lunch time. You know U Kawi, at my age, it is indeed a burden to travel.
“Yes of course, Venerable Sir,” replied Sayadaw U Kawi.
- (b) “Well, U Puñña, U Jāgara and the rest, go ahead and talk with U Kawi. I’m quite tired right now,” told the Venerable Sayadaw.

* *Javana* : Impulsion; a force that impels; it is a type of consciousness (*Citta*).

They all responded, “Please Venerable Sir, do take a good rest, after which you may ask U Kawi.” But he decided not to rest and started to take up the conversation.

(c) “U Kawi, its not that you and I are total strangers. We had been acquainted with each other before, so there shouldn’t be any formality nor constraint between us. You don’t mind me asking you questions that need to be asked, do you?”

“Venerable Sayadaw, please feel free to admonish as you please to me, your disciple,” replied U Kawi humbly.

(d) “In that case, let’s continue our talk. When I first met you at Abyar village of Bago township, I just raised a few questions there because it was the first time we met, and we both were guests there. Now, I’m going to continue with some more queries.”

And he started with the following questions ...

Q. U Kawi, it’s getting near to *Tha-dīn gyut* (the end of Rains Retreat period). During this Vasso (Rains Retreat period), on what do you attend to?

A. I attend to *Sāsanā* (*Dispensation of the Buddha where His Teachings prevail*).

Q. How do you attend to *Sāsanā*? Regarding the two aspects of *Sāsanā*, *Pariyatti* (learning and teaching the Buddha’s Doctrines) and *Paṭipatti* (practicing the Teachings), on which are you attending and how?

A. Since I’m not well versed in the Pitaka, I couldn’t contribute on that aspect of *Sāsanā*. So on *Paṭipatti*, the Practice, I’m giving my full attention to guide people so that they could develop *Samādhi* (concentration) if they have not; and if they have, to help them get their *Samādhi* matured and guide them to have it fully developed into perfection so that they may accomplish their goals.

Q. Then, this is loving-kindness (*Mettā*).

A. Yes it is, Venerable Sir.

Q. If it is loving-kindness (*Mettā*), then your mind is still remaining within the Mundane (**Lokiya*) boundary as it is contemplating and disseminating loving-kindness on **living* beings which in True terms is a Conceptual notion (*Pannatti*). Do you attend on Supramundane things, the Ultimate Realities (*Lokuttara*)? If so, how?

* *Loki* : that concerned with mundane world.

* Living beings : Although deemed a Conventional Truth (*Sammuti-Sacca*), in Ultimate Terms, it is a Conceptual notion (*Pannatti*).

- A. Yes, I do attend to and contemplate on *Supramundane (*Lokuttara*) as well.
- Q. Why don't you contemplate only on Supramundane (*Lokuttara*)? Why do you engage your attention to Mundane things (*Lokiya*) as well?
- A. I can't afford to contemplate on Supramundane only as the *burden of the body is extremely heavy. It is indeed a necessity to switch from Supramundane to Mundane (to take care of the bodily needs).
- Q. Well, let's put aside the aspect of contemplation on Mundane Concepts (*Lokiya Paññatti*). Tell me, how do you contemplate on Supramundane Ultimate Realities (*Lokuttara Paramattha*)?
- A. I contemplate on what I had seen and comprehended.
- Q. Let's leave aside other references to the *Pitaka*. According to the *Compendium of Abhidhamma (Abhidhamma Sangaha)*, it says:
'*Maggani phalañca Nibbānam Paccavekkhati Paṇḍito*' etc., meaning, **Paccavekkhana* ... looking things back in retrospect, that is reflecting back, right?
- A. Yes, that's true, Venerable Sir.
- Q. In that case, which is more difficult? Contemplating on *Magga-Phala-Nibbāna* (Path-Fruition-*Nibbāna, the Ultimate Realities*) or contemplating on Conceptual things (*Paññatti*, e.g. *Kasiṇa* disc)? Wouldn't the former be more difficult to contemplate on?
- A. As I see it, Venerable Sir, neither is difficult.

* *Lokuttara* : Supramundane or beyond the three spheres of existence.

That which liberates one from mundane existence, namely, the Four Paths, the Four Fruitions, and *Nibbana* (nine aspects).

* Burden of the body - Contemplating on Supramundane things means practicing *Vipassana*, Insight Meditation, where you have to sit cross-legged without moving but with your mind being fully aware of the processes in the body.

For your health and well being, you need to eat, sleep, bathe, walk, etc. so that the body functions well and is maintained at optimum level. That cannot be maintained if one sits cross-legged all through the day and night. That is why, within the mundane boundary, you can do good deeds (*Kusala* deeds) by contemplating on loving-kindness, i.e., sending your loving-kindness.

* *Paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa* : Retrospective Knowledge after *Magga* (Path Consciousness) that made 5 reflections, which are:

1. reflects on the Path (*Magga*).
2. reflects on the Fruition (*Phala*).
3. reflects on the *Nibbāna* he has realized.
4. reflects on the defilements he has annihilated, and
5. reflects on the defilements he has yet to annihilate.

Q. Tell me how you contemplate on **Magga*.

A. For example - a *yogi takes up Vipassana* practice earnestly and proceeds to get highly developed. Approaching the peak, at one time, his mind becomes settled to *Bhavanga Citta* (life-continuum Consciousness; subconscious state of mind). Then, (at **Magga-vithi*), the first three preceding Consciousness/impulsions/*Cittas* (namely, *Parikamma*, *Upacāra*, *Anuloma* which occurs before the arising of *Magga*) remove the latent defilements (*Anusaya*). The following Consciousness/impulsion/*Javana* (namely, *Gotrabhū*) then sees and perceives *Nibbāna*.

Consequently, he sees the continual happening-vanishing processes of ‘mind-concomitants of mind-and matter’ as an agonizing suffering. He looks for the origin of this suffering, and finds the causative factor of ‘mind-concomitants of mind-and matter’ phenomena to be Greed (*Lobha*). It seems like a long time happening recounting to you each and every step now. There, at the time of occurrence, it is very quick. Once you realize the true suffering, it happens in a flash.

“All right, please go on,” remarked Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw in appreciation.

Sayadaw U Kawi continued,

When the Cause (which is *Lobha*, Greed) of Suffering is seen, Path-Knowledge (*Magga-nana*) gets the upper hand and instantly eliminates the cause. This is *Magga*. At that moment, the processes of ‘mind-concomitants of mind-matter’ are thrown into disarray resulting in the cutting-off of ‘Cause and Effect’. And that is *Nibbāna*. Immediately afterwards, *Phala* Consciousness (Fruition of *Magga*) follows.

These are what I had experienced, Venerable Sir.

Q. Wait a moment! when *Magga-nana* arose, did you know conspicuously that it had arisen?

A. No I didn’t, Venerable Sir. I knew it only on looking back in retrospect (*Paccavekkhana*).

Q. Is it true that you recalled and analyzed it only later?

In *Pali Text*, there is a stanza mentioning it with an analogy like this:-

*Yathā Pi Mūle anupaddave daḷe,
Chinnopi rukkho punadeva rūhati.*

* *Magga* : Path-Consciousness; Path leading to *Nibbana*; the *Dhamma* which eliminates the defilements with *Nibbana* as its object.

* *Magga-vithi* : A chain of consciousness or cognitive series arising at *Magga* (Path-Insight).

*Evaṃpi taṇhānusaye anupahate,
Nibbattate dukkhamidaṃ punappunamī.*

[*Dhammapada v338*]

The big tree, if it's main root is still fresh and sturdy, even though its branches and leaves are cut off, will grow again.

Likewise, Greed-Craving (*Lobha-Taṇhā*), having the ability to root again and again in oneself, as long as it is not eliminated by *Magga-nana* (Path-Insight), there will be ceaseless misery for many lives to come in rounds of *Samisāra* (birth, ageing and death). And this is an inevitable certainty.

Okay, according to the stanza of *Pitaka* (*Pali* Text) mentioned above, *Magga* eliminates Greed (*Lobha*). That's clear enough. But in doing so, does *Magga* have company or associates for support, like in mundane world, a general would not be alone but be accompanied by his army, in going to war to fight his enemies? Or does *Supramundane Magga* eliminates Greed (*Lobha*) alone?

A. It does have company for support, Venerable Sir.

Q. What are they? Tell me.

A. For example, a yogī strenuously and relentlessly meditates *Vipassana* to achieve *Nibbāna*. Upon nearing the highest point, the three preliminary consciousness (i.e., *Parikamma*, *Upacāra* and *Anuloma Citta*s) remove latent mental defilements (*Anusaya*) completely. At that point, the mind becomes very pure, void of defilements. By virtue of this purity, the mind (Consciousness/*Citta*) comes to see *Nibbāna* in a flash. With this observance on *Nibbāna* (i.e. awareness by **Gotrabhū Consciousness* of Nibbana), *Magga-Citta* (Path Consciousness) appears, leans and using the observation of *Nibbāna* as support (as its object of contemplation/meditation) kills off *Lobha* (Greed).

Q. Well said on *Magga*, U Kawi. These are extremely deep and utterly subtle areas. For us, we can relate and tell only in theoretical terms known from books. And you had said of **Phala-Consciousness* (Fruition) immediately following *Magga-Consciousness*? How did you feel at that moment?

A. I didn't know quite clearly about it at that moment.

* *Phala* : Path-result. Fruition that immediately follows the Path (*Magga*).

It denotes those moments of Supramundane consciousness (*Citta*) which flash forth immediately after the moment of Path Consciousness (*Magga*) and which, till the attainment of the next higher path, may during the practice of Vipassana meditation, still recur, usually at will, for innumerable times. If thus repeated, they are known as *Phala-samapatti* (Dwelling in the attainment of Fruition).

- Q. The *Phala-Consciousness* (Fruition) occurring immediately after *Magga* (*Path-Consciousness*) is known as *Anantarika-Phala*. This occurs only about two, three times (at each Path-process, i.e. at each Path of Enlightenment) and as mind movement is extremely fast, one couldn't possibly observe the details of these *Phalas* distinctly. Well then, when you make retrospection (*Paccavek-khana*) on *Magga*, what did you discover?
- A. Let's say a yogī attains *Sotāpaññā-Magga* (Stream-Winner Knowledge). On contemplating back the processes in retrospect, he simply knew that he had acquired *Sotāpaññā-Magga*.
- Q. When you contemplate for *Phala*, what is the object of your meditation? And when your mind dwell in the state of *Phala*, how do you feel?
- A. You just recall and contemplate on the breakup point of 'Cause and Effect' that you have experienced during the emergence of *Magga-Consciousness*. Your mind would then immediately goes into the state of *Phala-Consciousness*. There, you remain immersed and totally absorbed in absolute tranquility and peace, dwelling in the Fruition.

Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw commented, "This dwelling in *Phala-Consciousness* after contemplating for it is called *Valañjana-Phala*. Only with this *Phala* you can experience the Fruition distinctly and vividly. These aspects are exceedingly subtle and refined. Well, I'm quite tired out now. I shall go and take a rest." Concluding thus, he went upstairs.

U Dhammika, one of the senior *bhikkhus* in the audience, was not satisfied at all with Sayadaw U Kawi's statement that *Nibbāna* is the companion of *Magga-nana*. So he followed the Venerable Sayadaw to argue his point. But for Sayadaw U Puñña, U Jāgara and the rest of the *bhikkhus* together with the gathered lay devotees, they stayed back talking among themselves on how much they were convinced and had greatly appreciated the answers by Sayadaw U Kawi to Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw's queries.

Questions raised by U Dhammika to the Venerable Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw

- Q. Venerable Sir, I couldn't agree with Sayadaw U Kawi's answer that *Nibbāna* is the lone companion/associate of *Magga-nana* at the time when *Magga-nana* eliminates *lobha* (Greed-Craving), the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*). As I understand it, at that moment of *Magga-vīthi* (chain of consciousness at arising of *Magga-nana*), the Four

Ariya (Noble) Truths also arises simultaneously. Hence, not only is *Nibbāna*, but *Dukkha Sacca* (the Truth of Suffering) and *Samudaya Sacca* (the Truth of Origin of Suffering) should also be regarded as *Magga's* companions.

- A. No, U Dhammika, you are wrong. The Pali Text says, '*Maggo dukkha saccam pajānāti*' (*Magga-nana knows Dukkha Sacca discriminately*). According to this statement, *Magga* (*Magga-nana*, Path-Insight Knowledge) -
- enables you to fully understand and comprehend the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Saccā*),
 - eradicates (Craving) the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*),
 - cultivates and enhances the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Saccā*) and,
 - propels you to realize *Nibbāna*, the state beyond the Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Saccā*).

These are the capabilities, the functions (*Kicca*) of *Magga-nana* (Path-Knowledge). They are not companions.

- Q. Then, according to the statements found in the *Pariññā vāra* of *Yamaka, Abhidhammā Pitaka*, the three **Pariññā* (Full Understanding) which are,
- *Nāta-pariññā* (*full understanding of mind and matter, their characteristics and their causal nature*),
 - *Tīraṇa-pariññā* (*full understanding that investigates the Cause of Suffering, Dukkha*),
 - *Pahāna-pariññā* (*full understanding with dispelling knowledge, leading to the abandonment of Craving for the five aggregates of existence, i.e., Nama-Rupa*).

They occur at the same time as *Magga-nana*.

Shouldn't they be called companions of *Magga*?

- A. No, you cannot label them as such just because they occur together. Here, 'companion' means one depending on another.
- Q. If one has to depend on another to be called 'companion,' what about the 36 mental concomitants (*Cetasikas*) that occur together with *Magga*? Shouldn't they be called companions as it has been said, '*Cittena niyuttamī Cetasikamī*.'
- A. No, these 36 mental concomitants (*Cetasikas*) are still not companions of *Magga*. They are just concomitants - merely occurring together (*Saha carī karīna*). For *Magga-nana* to eradicate *Samudaya Saccā* (*Truth of the Cause of Dukkha, Suffering, i.e. Craving*), these 36 mental concomitants (*Cetasikas*) cannot provide enough strength to really depend or lean on for the arising of *Magga* (Path-Insight). And thus cannot be called companions.

Q. Venerable Sir, in that case, please discern to me on the subject of *Magga's* companion/associate so that I can understand thoroughly and be fully convinced.

A. You see, this is what happens at that moment of **Magga-vīthi* -

**Manodvāravajjana-Citta* (mind-door advertence, i.e. the consciousness that gives attention on an object) arises while you are being mindful of sensation in your *Vipassana* practice.

Then, the three preparatory Consciousness (*Javanas/Cittas*), namely, *Parikamma*, *Upacāra*, *Anuloma*, which are also termed as *Saṅkhārupekkha-nanā* (Equanimity Knowledge), effectively eradicate all mental defilements (*Anusaya kilesa*). This purity of mind helps transcend it to *Gotrabhū* (the Consciousness immediately before entering the Noble Path to become *Ariya*, the Noble one) which sees *Nibbāna* in a flash.

Gotrabhū Consciousness points out and shows you *Nibbāna* as if to say, “Here is *Nibbāna!*” Observing, following, leaning and depending on this illuminating perception of *Nibbāna* shown by *Gotrabhū* Consciousness, at an instant, *Magga-nana* (Path-Consciousness) appears like a lightning flash cutting off *Anusaya* (latent defilements), enabling one to cross the line from the state of a worldling (*Puthujjana*) to that of an *Ariya* (Noble one).

Yes U Dhammika, U Kawi's description is very exact. These are profoundly subtle and refined areas.

* *Magga-vīthi* : A chain of consciousness or cognitive series arising at *Magga* (Path-Insight). There are 4 preparatory Impulsions (*Javana/Consciousness/Citta/thought-moment/Vinnana-kicca*) arising immediately before entering the Path (*Magga*, arising of Path Knowledge). They are:

1. *Parikama* : Preparation of *Magga*; *Parikamma Citta* prepares the way for the arising of Path-Insight Knowledge (*Magga*) and Fruition (*Phala*).
2. *Upacara* : Proximity of *Magga* (Approaching *Magga*); *Upacara Citta* is moving in the neighbourhood of *Magga* and is approaching it.
3. *Anuloma* : Adaptation or connection; *Anuloma Citta* harmonizes the lower *Cittas* (Consciousness) with the upper (higher) *Cittas*, i.e. it is making adaptation between the preceding preparatory states and the succeeding ones. It is the third of the 4 moments of Impulsions (*Javana*) that flash up before the arising of *Magga Citta* (Path-Consciousness).
4. *Gotrabhu* : Maturity thought-moment immediately preceding the entrance into the Path (*Magga*). *Gotrabhu Citta* takes *Nibbana*, and not *Tī-lakkhana*, as its object (of meditation). This *Citta* (Consciousness) cuts the worldling (*Puthujjana*)-lineage to form the Noble (*Ariya*)-lineage.

- *Manodvāravajjana-Citta* : Mind-door advertent Consciousness; the consciousness that gives attention on an object; determines the sense-impression whether it is good or bad. We are aware of the object roughly at this stage.

**Questions posted by the following four Sayadaws from various townships
to Myingyan Sayadaw U Kawi**

1. U Narada (1) from Nga myar-gyi
2. U Sāsana from Nga myar-gyi
3. U Narada (3) from Sa meik-kon
4. U Narinda from Myit-tha

The above four learned Sayadaws from the mentioned townships discussed among themselves, made a pact and came to put up questions to U Kawi amidst a gathered audience. The following are their questions and Sayadaw U Kawi's answers:

U Sāsana : U Kawi, have you studied the Pali Text (*Pitaka*) before?

U Kawi : No I haven't, Venerable Sir.

U Sāsana : In that case, you wouldn't know how to practice *Vipassana* (Insight Meditation) having no knowledge of *Sīla-Vissudhi* (Purity of Moralily) or *Citta-Vissudhi* (Purity of Mind).

U Kawi : For me, if my teachers say, "This isn't befitting," I wouldn't even touch that with my hand (meaning, he obeyed the Vinaya Rules very carefully), Venerable Sir.

U Narada (1) : 'Āvāsoca kulumī Lābho,
Gaṇo kammañca Pañcamani.
Addhānamī ñāti Ābādho,
Ganto Iddhīti te dasa'

stated the Pāli Text. Do you stay away from the ten
**Pāḷibodhas* (obstacles)?

U Kawi : I started meditating *Vipassana* as a layman. Then, I became a novice (*Samenera*). Soon after that, I went to stay with Ye Lei Sayadaw and Nyaung Lunt Sayadaw learning Vinaya (the Rules for *Bikkhus*) under their guidance and instructions, meanwhile holding my practice. Before long, I was ordained as a full-fledged *bhikkhu*, Venerable Sir.

* *Pāḷibodha* : Obstacles (if they come to impede or obstruct their *Vipassana* work) to the *bhikkhus* who are in strict practice of meditation. They are 10 in no., namely:

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. a crowded monastery | 6. pupils |
| 2. traveling | 7. repairs in the monastery |
| 3. relatives | 8. sickness |
| 4. association with families | 9. study |
| 5. gifts | 10. magical power (<i>Abhiññāṇa</i>) |

U Sāsana : Then, if you haven't studied the *Pali* Text (*Pitaka*), how could you practice *Vipassanā* meditation in a proper and correct way?

U Kawi : I followed my teachers' instructions.

U Narada (1): Oh, in Gotama Buddha's time, there were many who attained Enlightenment, but not all of them were learned in *Pitaka*, were they? The essential thing is to practice the right method.

U Narada (3): What we have heard is that you are very much reputed to be an *Arahat*. But if you told people of your lack of learning in *Pitaka*, some *bhikkhus* and lay devotees might be led to think that *Ariya* stages could be attained without any knowledge of *Pitaka*, and that it's a waste of time to study the Buddha's Teachings.

If nobody studies (*Pitaka*), *Pariyatti Sāsana* (Learning Aspect of Buddha's Doctrines) will disintegrate. If that happens, *Paṭipatti* (Practical Aspect of Buddha's Doctrines) and *Paṭivedha Sāsana* (Full Realization of Buddha's Doctrines) will follow suit. If you are a true *Arahat* like we've heard, you shouldn't admit your lack of learning. Perhaps, tell it in an indirect way. If *Sāsana* suffers, the *Ariyas* (Noble ones) should feel more aggrieved than ordinary persons (*Puthujjana*), shouldn't they?

U Kawi : I just stated that I'm not learned because it is so. I paid tribute and offered robes and other requisites to the learned *bhikkhus* to encourage their teaching tasks.

U Narada (1): Now, now, you asked him whether he is a learned *bhikkhu* and do you expect him to lie when he isn't?

U Narada (3): Do listen to what he has to say. Let him continue.

U Narada (1): Oh, are you implying the three aspects of *Sāsana* will be at stake just because U Kawi admitted honestly his lack of learning?

U Narada (3): Do stay aside, U Narada. Tell your opinion on this matter later. Let me continue with the questioning to Myingyan *Bhikkhu* (U Kawi).

U Narada (1): But then, what you are doing is not proper or right.

As you know very well, during the Gotama Buddha's time, there were two friends who entered the Order of *Samgha*. One became an *Arahat* while the other pursued to study the three *Pitaka* Texts and became an expert in that field. The latter thought wrongly of his friend's reluctance to study the *Pitaka*, thinking he was being lazy and wayward so he planned to reproach him by asking problematic questions. When the Buddha knew about it, and knowing that *bhikkhu* would reap very bad karma should he carry out his untoward verbal attack on the *Arahat*, He appeared and asked the questions that the learned *bhikkhu* had intended to ask. The *Arahat* answered all correctly. (In the end, the friend realized his mistake and asked for forgiveness).

So you see, if one is on the right Path and had achieved goals, nobody could match the *Arahats'* accurate knowledge of the way of *Vipassanā Practice*.

U Narada (3): Don't interrupt me U Narada! Do let me ask the Myingyan *Bhikkhu*

(U Kawi). Now, for the sake of propagation and perpetuation of the three aspects of *Sāsanā*, you should think of some round-about way in telling people of your lack of Scriptural knowledge.

U Kawi : I just stated the truth, Venerable Sir.

U Narada (3): You should study you know. Don't you think it will be more effective and more beneficial for *Sāsanā* if you were to preach *Dhamma* after you have learned the *Pitaka*?

U Kawi : Venerable Sir, I am convinced that my lack of ability to study is due to my *Vipāka* (result of past bad deeds, bad karma). In any case, I have no inclination to learn and I don't think I will be able to do so.

U Narada (3): Okay, fine, it's due to your *Vipāka*. But what about **Cūḷa Panthaka* Thera? As soon as he attained *Arahatship*, in spite of his *Vipāka* (*Kamma-resultant*), he instantly knew all the *Pitaka* Texts which he

* *Cūḷa Panthaka Thera* : He was born a dullard due to his bad deed. In a previous existence, he had made fun of a *bhikkhu* who was very dull. He could not even memorize one verse in four months. He was given a clean piece of cloth by the Buddha to simply rub and contemplate on, and ultimately attained *Arahatship* with *Paṭisambhidāpatta*.

couldn't learn at all before. Likewise, if you claim to be an *Arahat*, you should know the *Pitaka*.

U Narada 1 : *Cūḷa Panthaka* was a **Paṭisambhidāpatta*-Arahat endowed with unique knowledge. But do you know what Sayadaw U Kawi is? Even among *Ariyas*, the lower level *Ariyas* cannot gauge the endowments of the higher ones. And do you want to imply that *Arahats* have no *Vipāka*?

U Narada (3): Okay, okay, you are right, but U Kawi should consider again to study the Pali Scriptures.

While still persuading U Kawi to take up studies, it began to rain and so they all went inside and up the monastery abode.

The Continuation of Questioning inside the Monastery abode

U Sāsana : U Kawi, why don't you practice for *Abbhīññāṇa* (supernormal psychic powers) before you start preaching *Dhamma*?

Kawi : I don't think I will obtain it, Venerable Sir.

U Narada (3): Which is more difficult to achieve? Mundane (*Loki*) or Supramundane (*Lokuttara*)?

U Kawi : Mundane (*Loki*) is more difficult, Venerable Sir.

U Sāsana : Wouldn't Mundane (*Loki*) be much easier to pursue after attaining Supramundane (*Lokuttara*)?

U Kawi : I don't have any inclination to do so, Venerable Sir.

U Narada (3): How many *bhikkhus* (as disciples) have you now?

U Kawi : There are fifteen, Venerable Sir.

Paṭisambhidāpatta-Arahat : An *Arahat* who possesses the four *Sambhidās*, i.e., the 4 kinds of analytical insight; discriminating knowledge; they are:

1. Analytical knowledge into the meanings and consequences of things - *Atta patisambhidha*;
2. Analytical knowledge into the nature of the Doctrine and the *Pali* language in which it exists and the origin of things - *Dhamma patisambhidha*;
3. Analytical insight into the language, the grammar and the syntax of the language' *Nirutti patisambhidha*;
4. Analytical insight into the nature of the above three knowledge - *Patibhana patisambhidha*.

- U Narada (3): If you are, as we've heard, an *Arahat*, do you still have attachment (*Samiyojana*) to your disciples?
- U Kawi : It is not me who is attached to them. They came to stay with me of their own accord. I cannot say no to the *bhikkhus* who want to follow me.
- U Narada (1): Well, well, there were thousands of *bhikkhus* who followed the Buddha. Does that mean the Buddha had attachment to these disciples?
- U Narada (3): U Narada, you are so annoying!
- U Narada (1): I'm not the one who is annoying. It's you people who are not doing right.

Further Questioning after Lunch

- U Narada (3): U Kawi, tell us about your method of meditation process.
- U Kawi : He related his experience of meditation from the days as a layman till he attained *Magga*.
- U Narada (3): Didn't you contemplate for Retrospection (*Paccavek-khaṇā*) after *Magga*?
- U Kawi : Yes, I did, Venerable Sir.
- U Narada (3): Do tell us the manner (*ākāra*) of your contemplation on *Magga* (Path), *Phala* (Fruition) and *Nibbāna*.
- U Kawi : I felt great joy in contemplating on *Magga* (Path), *Phala* (Fruition) and *Nibbāna*, Venerable Sir.
- U Narada (3): Carry on.
- U Kawi : I had already told you, Venerable Sir.
- U Narada (3): Come on, do carry on.
- U Kawi : I had already related to my mentor Sayadaws, Venerable Sir.
- U Narada (3): I don't want to look for the elephant's footprints after I have already found the elephant (meaning he wanted to hear directly from the person who had experienced and entered the Path and not from other people).
- U Kawi : Contemplation on *Magga* (Path), *Phala* (Fruition) and *Nibbāna* was a truly delightful experience. It is only natural for a yogī to reflect and be satisfied and guard off the defilements he has already got rid of.

U Narada (3): Our *Bodhisatta* (the Gotama Buddha in one of his reincarnations) as a sage was a worldling (*Puthujjhāna*, not an *Ariya* yet). As an ordinary lay person, he could restraint anger (*Dosa*) truly well. So just by claiming you could put restraint (on defilements), we wouldn't be convinced (that you are an *Arahat*).

U Narada (1): But *Pāramīs* (cumulative past perfections of virtues) of each and every individual are not the same. You are just telling off whatever you think.

U Narada (3): What right have you got to say that?

U Narada (1): What kind of *bhikkhu* are you?

U Narada (3): Well, I wouldn't know.

Phet-pin Ein Sayadaw intervened : Now, now, don't quarrel. On making Reflection of *Magga* (*Paccavek-khaṇā*), an *Ariya* hasn't any to describe the manner (*Ākāra*) in attaining *Magga*. He just knows he has attained *Magga*.

Discussion between 'Aggamahā Paṇḍita' Taung-thar Sayadaw and U Kawi

[*The Venerable Taung-thar Sayadaw U Aggavamisa was renowned for his knowledge of Tipiṭaka (the Buddhist Scriptures). He had been honored with the title *'Aggamahā Paṇḍita' by the Council of State in recognition of his expertise and knowledge of the Pali Text.]*

* *Aggamahā Paṇḍita* : It is a highly esteemed title of honor meaning 'Great Chief Authority' given by the Government of Myanmar to a specially learned *bhikkhu*.

For a *bhikkhu* to obtain such a title, he should:

1. be well versed in the *Pali* Canonical Texts,
2. be continuously teaching these Texts,
3. be well-known as being learned in these Texts,
4. have had a minimum of 20 years as a *bhikkhu*, and
5. be unblemished in the observance of *Vinaya* (Disciplinary Rules of the Order of *Samgha*).

In the evening of 8th July, 1930 (the 14th waxing day of Waso, 1292 M.E.), the Venerable Taung-thar Sayadaw U Aggavanisa, while residing at the forest abode monastery of Taung-thar, met Sayadaw U Kawi. After exchanging words of greetings, for the sake of advancement and propagation of *Sāsanā*, he made formal enquiries to U Kawi on his method of *Vipassanā* Practice. The following is the abbreviated record of the interview: -

Q. U Kawi, are you happy?

A. Yes Venerable Sir, I am happy.

Q. I've been hearing about you with so much delight and rejoice, and have been wanting to see you. I'm so very glad now that I've met you.

A. We've heard of your famed knowledge in *Pariyatti* (Learning aspect of Buddha's Doctrines) though we haven't met. I am also very glad to have the opportunity to meet you now, Venerable Sir.

Taung-thar Sayadaw made a request to U Kawi to describe the method of *Vipassanā* practice. After obtaining the permission of his wish to relate on the aspects of *Vipassana* meditation, U Kawi described everything on the subject as if he was giving a discourse to his disciples, beginning from *Parikani* (preparation before meditation), *Anāpāna sati* (mindfulness on out-breathing and in-breathing to cultivate mental concentration) till the Enlightenment state at *Magga*.

Q. How do you proceed after obtaining *Magga*?

A. You have to start again from **Sammasana-ñāṇa* level again and proceed as before.

U Kawi explained in detail on it.

The following are the abbreviated record on remarks made by Taung-thar Sayadaw after listening to Sayadaw U Kawi and the events that took place after the meeting:

1. He remarked, "U Kawi, the method you have been practicing is the shortest and the simplest."

2. He admitted, "The method I have been practicing is so wide and expansive that it would be very difficult to achieve higher levels of Insight Knowledge."

* *Sammasana-ñāṇa* : It is the first of the ten Insight levels in *Vipassanā* meditation. It is the mindful observation of sensation to realize and appreciate the 3 characteristics of *Nāma-Rūpa* (mind-matter) which are *Anicca* (impermanence), *Dukkha* (unpleasantness) and *Anatta* (selflessness).

3. He acknowledged, “I really appreciate and am convinced in U Kawi’s method of *Vipassana* Practice.”
4. After acknowledging thus, he added, “I’ve been searching for the shortest, the simplest and the most effective way to obtain *Magga-nana*. Now that I’ve found it, I’m truly grateful to you, U Kawi. It has been such a beneficial and propitious incident to have met you.”

Events after the meeting:

5. After the discussion and expressing his compliments, the Venerable Taung-thar Sayadaw himself escorted Sayadaw U Kawi to the guests’ building before going back to his own abode.
6. On the 9th of July, 1930 (the Full Moon Day of Waso, 1292 M.E.), at seven in the morning, after having breakfast at Taung-tha Sayadaw’s abode, U Kawi recounted again on his meditation method while Taung-thar Sayadaw listened and expressed his appreciation again. Taung-thar Sayadaw then admonished on the subject to his lay devotees present at the time, of the importance of having proper guidance from one who had mastered the way. He referred a story from *Visudhi Magga* about Tipiṭaka Cūlanāga Thera, though an expert in *Tipiṭaka* and well versed in *Majjhimanikāya Pāli* Text, nonetheless as he wasn’t familiar with *Dhamma* practice, he had to learn the method of *Vipassanā* from Mahādhamma-rakkhita Thera. Taung-thar Sayadaw commended that U Kawi’s method is truly valuable. A short while later, Sayadaw U Kawi returned to the guests’ abode.
7. That same day after lunch, Taung-thar Sayadaw conducted an Ordination Ceremony (*Upasampadā*, bestowal of *bhikkhu*-hood on newcomers into the Order) after which he made a request to Myingyan Sayadaw U Kawi to deliver a discourse. Sayadaw U Kawi obliged by delivering a discourse on *Dhammacakka* (Buddha’s Doctrine on The Wheel of Truth) highlighting the cyclical nature of *Sanisāra* (rounds of birth) and the way to cut off this cycle. Among the gathered audience was U Sa, the principal of the Government-subsided school of Taung-thar and a prominent patron of *Sanigha*, together with some other lay devotees.
8. When the time came for Sayadaw U Kawi to go back to Zalun Monastery where he was staying as a guest, he went to pay obeisance to Taung-thar Sayadaw. The latter made a request to him to write and send a short manual on his meditation technique as he would like to follow the instructions and practice it.

9. Sayadaw U Kawi obliged. He wrote a concise essay on the method of *Vipassanā* meditation and sent it to *Aggamahā Paṇḍita* Taung-tha Sayadaw U Aggavanisa on the 13th of July, 1930, Sunday (the 4th waning day of *Waso*, in 1292 ME). In his correspondence, he expressed that there were two courses with regards to the Wheel of *Samisāra*, one that incites the turning of the Wheel of *Samisāra* (rounds of birth), and another that helps to break it. And that one had to strive only for the course that tried to cut off *Samisāra*.

This was what Sayadaw U Kawi had written -

“In trying to stop the turning of the Wheel of *Samisāra*, the yogi has to wait, guard and cut off at the door, ‘door’ meaning the ‘body-door’ (physical touch). Out of the five sense-doors, the body-door is much more conspicuous and tangible for a yogī to comprehend, contemplate and analyze than the others like ‘eye-door,’ etc.

Contemplating at the body-door would easily help the yogī to develop *Nāma-rūpa Pariccheda-ñāṇa*, i.e., the penetrating knowledge of the distinction between mind (*Nama*) and matter (*Rupa*).

The yogī has to guard and cut off at the other sense-doors like eye-door, etc. but the processes at those doors are extremely subtle for the sluggish intuition of the yogī to grasp fully and apprehend the Insight Knowledge of distinguishing between mind and matter and thus contact (**Phassa*) at body-door was chosen.

At the body-door, when the body touches an object, there is ‘touch’ sense at contact (*Phassa*), upon which consciousness (awareness) of touch is generated. You simply have to be mindful on that ‘touch’ (sensation) and awareness of that touch.

At the body-door, when touch occurs, there is Contact (*Phassa*) between sense-organ, (body), and sense-object (tactile object). From Contact (*Phassa*), there arises Sensation (*Vedanā*). On that Sensation (*Vedanā*), you have to apply vigilant **Mindfulness** before Sensation gives rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*), Clinging (*Upādāna*), becoming (*Bhava*, existence), etc., etc.

In dealing with Sensation (*Vedanā*), there are two kinds -
Vedanā Saññā (Sensation with Conceptual notion) and,
Vedanā Paññā (Sensation with Insight knowledge).

* *Phassa* : Sense-impression, contact, touch-sense. (i.e. contact between sense-object and corresponding sense-base/door and consciousness).

Vedanā Saññā deals with contemplation on concepts, forms, symbols, objects, and all that are given names, the conventional usual way of perceiving things.

Vedanā Paññā deals with contemplation on *Paramattha*, the ‘real,’ the Ultimate Realities, perceiving with Insight Knowledge.

In *Vipassana* meditation, you need to transcend from contemplating as *Vedanā Saññā* (Sensation with Conceptual notion) to contemplating as *Vedanā Paññā* (Sensation with Insight knowledge). Only then, **Udayabbaya-nana* (2nd level of Insight Knowledge) becomes clearer, sharper and purer. Still, you go on guarding the ‘body-door’ (sensation) with intense mindfulness.

With repeated practice, mindfulness will get established and there will be mind-door advertence Consciousness (*Mano-dvāra-vajjana*) after which **Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa* (the 9th level of Insight Knowledge) will arise. This is the level where you are able to observe *Vedanā* (Sensation) as elements of mind-body phenomena in a completely detached manner with no sense of ‘self’, no notion of ‘I,’ and having no mental reaction whatsoever - a state of perfect, lucid equanimity (*Tatra majjhatata*).

The three mental impulsions/*Javana* (*Parikamma - Upacāra - Anuloma*) of *Saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa* spurs you on to purify the mind even further, driving off all mental defilements. The resultant purification helps transcend the mind (Consciousness) to *Gotrabhū*, the highest of the ten *Vipassana* Insight Knowledge levels immediately before *Magga-nana* (Path-Insight).

The *Gotrabhū* Consciousness sees what *Nibbāna* is like, and this perceived vision of *Nibbāna* by *Gotrabhū* inspires you with enormous strength propelling you forwards, and leaning on this vision of *Nibbāna*, *Magga-nana* (Path-Insight) arises and cuts off all latent defilements (*Anusaya*). This is ‘*Magga*’ - the Path - where you cross the line permanently from being a mundane worldling (*Puthujjana*) to that of *Sotāpaññā* (the one that has entered the stream of the *Ariya* Path).”

* *Udayabbaya-nana* : Insight knowledge that can investigate the arising and perishing away of conditioned things, i.e., mind and matter (*Nama* and *Rupa*).

* *Saṅkharupekkha-ñāṇa* : The ‘Equanimity-Knowledge’ with regard to the Formations of mind-matter phenomena. It is the 9th Insight level. At this stage, you are totally composed, neither glad nor sad in perceiving the six sense- objects; you feel neither pain nor pleasure. The one-pointedness of your intense mindfulness enables you to observe *Vedana* (Sensation) be it mild or very strong without reacting, without judgement. Your mind is in complete equanimity with regard to the processes of mind-matter phenomena.

***Beginning of Sayadaw U Kawi's residence at Sunlun Chauk Kyaung
(now known as Sunlun Gu-Kyaung)***

At the end of the Buddhist Lent, on the 24th October, 1923 (the Full-moon day of *Tha-din gyut* in 1285), Sayadaw U Kawi handed over his monastery (at Maung Yin Par Ravine) together with all his devotees to his friend *Bhikkhu* U Vizaya. On the 25th October, 1923 (one day after the full moon day of *Tha-din gyut* in 1285), he went to reside in solitude near the bank of Sunlun brook under a big Sha tree with only a bamboo couch to sleep on. When U Bo, a man from Nat-nyun village saw him living in such austerity, he built and donated a two-room monastic abode and a toilet. He himself later became a *bhikkhu* known as U Indriya.

From then on, the place was initially known as Sunlun Chauk Kyaung (Chauk means ravine because it was near the ravines; Kyaung is monastery). Later on, it came to be known as Sunlun Gu Kyaung (Sunlun Cave Monastery, Gu means cave) when more and more meditation caves became established at the monastery.

To this day, the monastery where the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw U Kawi had resided is still known as the Sunlun Gu Kyaung (Sunlun Cave Monastery). The monastery, with the meditation caves where yogīs meditate, is a pleasant place filled with refreshing serenity and tranquility welcoming all visitors from far and near.

*Discourse on *Dhammacakka (The Wheel of Dhamma)*

Lay Devotees,

Do you wish to have happiness?

[“Yes, of course, we wish to have happiness,” answered the gathered audience.]

Well, if you wish to have happiness, you should not love yourself and you should not love other people. *Love eventually leads to suffering. Love is just a cover name for attachment (*Samaduya*) which only brings about suffering.

[“But we still want to love although you tell us not to,” replied the audience.]

You may argue that you still want to love although I admonish you not to. You love because of ignorance (*Avijjā*). If you know the Truth by shedding Ignorance, you won't love, or get attached to, or crave for anyone or anything. That is why, Because of Ignorance (*Avijjā*), you desire, you crave, and Because of craving (*Taṇhā*), you get obsessed and cling to what you want.

And because of obsessive clinging (*Upādāna*), you pursue to get what you crave for (*Bhava*, existence).

And because of this pursuance, you get it (*Jāti*, rebirth).

And when you do get it (*Jāti*), you suffer the consequences (*Dukkha*).

So, if you want to ‘love’ and get attached, be prepared for the worst.

Ignorance of the Truth is called *Avijjā*. Desire or Craving is *Taṇhā*. When Ignorance (*Avijjā*) and Craving (*Taṇhā*) combine to make a cause, the resultant is birth (*Jāti*) which eventually leads to countless distress (*i.e. ageing, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, grief, despair*), so don't complain.

Well - if you know the Truth (after dispelling Ignorance), you won't crave or have any desire.

Dhammacakka : *Dhammacakka pavattana Sutta*, The Wheel of the Truth, is the very first sermon ‘set rolling’ (expounded) by the Buddha to the five ascetics on the full moon day of *Waso* (about May) in the year 103 Maha Era (588 B.C.), in Migadavana forest (a sanctuary for deer), at Isipatana (Modern Sarnath) near Benares, India. It consists of the two extremes to be avoided by *bhikkhus* (namely, Indulgence in sensual pleasures, *Kamasukhallikha-nuyoga*, and Self-mortification, *Attakilamatha-nuyoga*), the Middle Path (The Eightfold Noble Path) to be followed and the Four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) to be realized.

After hearing that sermon, *Kondanna*, one of the ascetics and eighteen crores of *Devas* and *Bhramas* became *Sotapannas* (Stream-winners).

*Love : Love here stands for attachment with personal affection (*Pema*) or carnal love/sensual lust (*Rāga*) as opposed to *Mettā* (loving kindness) which is a great virtue having sincere unconditional wish for the good and welfare to others, with a benevolent attitude.

* *Jati* - *Jara* - *Byadhi* - *Marana* - *Soka* - *Parideva* - *Dukkha* - *Domanasa* - *Upayasa* : Birth leading to ageing, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, grief and despair.

Because you don't crave, you don't pursue.
And because you don't pursue, you don't get any.
And if you don't get any, there is peace and happiness.

Even the Exalted Buddha, let alone the worldly devotees here, only when He sat down on the golden *Aparājita* throne of victory under the *Bodhi* Tree on the bank of *Neranjara* River and contemplated deep enough on his own body did He saw the Truth through Perfect Self Enlightenment. After the Eye of *Dhamma* opened to reveal the Ultimate Truth of Universe (*Loka*), the existence in this world, He declared the first pean of joy (*Udāna*)

“O Universe! Now, I know what you are.
Thro' many a birth in existence wandered I,
Seeking, but not finding, the builder of this dwelling.
Living in various houses built by Craving (*Taṇhā*),
calling them as Men, Celestials, Beings,
not knowing who the builder of the house is.
Now, I know the Truth about you, O Universe!”

How His *Dhamma*-Eye saw and knew was like this:

He saw the continual processes of arising and perishing nature of the three factors of life, namely, ‘Mind (*Citta*) - Concomitants of mind (*Cetasika*) - and Matter (*Rūpa*)’ in fleeting succession. These are Beings and their world is the ‘World of Living Beings/Animate World’ (*Satta Loka*).

Then there are (the sum total of) conditioning factors (Karmic-formations) with the conditioned mental and physical phenomena, known as the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*, World of Karmic Formations).

The Sphere they all dwell in, which forms their habitat, is the ‘World of Space/Inanimate World’ (*Okāsa Loka*).

These are the ‘Three Internal World - the World Within.’

As for the External World, the sum of all living beings are collectively known as ‘World of Beings/Animate World’ (*Satta Lokka*).

The conditioned world consisting of (the sum of all) conditioning factors (karmic-formations) with the conditioned mental and physical phenomena is the ‘World of *Sankhara*’ (*Saṅkhāra Loka*).

The Sphere they all dwell in, forming their habitat, is called the ‘World of Space/Inanimate World’ (*Okāsa Loka*).

These are the ‘Three External World - the World outside.’

Upon knowing the truth about the whole world, the Exalted Buddha boldly declared thus,

‘Craving (*Taṇhā*) ... all the various houses that you have built ...
The house as Human, the house as Celestial ...
I had destroyed them all.
O Builder of the House! You are now seen.
You shall build no house again.
All the rafters of Craving (*Taṇhā*) have been broken,
and the ridge-poles shattered.
Demolished are the walls of Ignorance (*Avijjā*).
Destroyed are the nails of Doubts (*Sakaya-ditti*).’

Because the Buddha had seen the Truth, known the Truth, He did not crave for existence anymore.

Because He had no Craving (for further existence), He did not pursue (nor did any karmic deeds that would result in rebirths).

Because He did not pursue, He did not get any (further rebirths).

And because He did not get anymore rebirths (hence no more subsequent sufferings), He attained Ultimate Peace (*Nibbāna*), the Unconditioned State.

Thus, the Buddha, after his *Pari-nibbāna* (realizing Nibbāna by passing away), He was not born again because He genuinely and truly did not want anymore rounds of birth.

Did he get anymore birth (Jati)?

[“No, he didn’t, Venerable Sir,” replied the audience.]

The Exalted Buddha gave His first sermon on the Truth He had just discovered, famously known as ‘*Dhammacakka pavattana Sutta*’ to the five ascetics in Migadavana Forest, the Deer Park, at Isipatana near Benares. The essence of the sermon in *Pāḷi* was,

“*Cakkhumī Udapādī* (*Vision arose*),
Ñānamī Udapādī (*Knowledge arose*),
Paññā Udapādī (*Wisdom arose*),
Vijjā Udapādī (*Higher Knowledge arose*),
Āloko Udapādī (*Light arose*).”

Say supposing, if *Shin Koṇḍañña, one of the five ascetics, were to ask what the first phrase ‘*Cakkhumī Udapādī*’ was. It meant, “The Opening of Eye of *Dhamma* which

* Shin *Koṇḍañña* : was the first ascetic of the five, who attained Enlightenment after hearing the Buddha’s first sermon.

could see the Truth.” If he were to ask again, “What is meant by the Eye of *Dhamma* seeing the Truth?” It meant,

‘Appiyehi sampayogo dukkho (To be associated with those you do not love is Suffering),
Piyehi vippayogo dukkho (To be separated from those you love is Suffering),
Yanī picchamī na labhati, tamī pi Dukkhamī.’ (Not to get what one desires is Suffering).

The in-depth meaning of the verse *‘Appiyehi sampayogo dukkho’* was like this:

“The Eye of *Dhamma* makes you see the three Realities, namely, ‘Mind (*Citta*) - Concomitants of mind (Cetasika) - and Matter (*Rūpa*)’ in the continual unpleasant process of *birth* (*Jāti*), *decay* (*Jarā*) and *death* (*Maraṇa*). Upon discovering this, when *birth* (*Jāti*) occurs, do you want *decay* (ageing, *Jarā*) and *death* (*Maraṇa*) to follow? Of course not. Although you do not love or wish to be associated with it, you cannot help it. You do not know when this inseparable union of *‘birth-decay-death’* phenomenon had started. The obvious Truth is, since time immemorial of *Samsara*, *birth* inevitably proceed to *decay* and *death* whether you love it or not.

And hence, Buddha had admonished the verse,
‘Appiyehi Sampayogo dukkho,’ meaning,
‘To be associated with one you do not love is Suffering.’

He came to discern unequivocally that *birth* and *decay* (the arising and perishing away) phenomena of these three Realities of life (Mind-Concomitants of mind-Matter) are in fact True Suffering.

Acknowledging the ‘Truth of Suffering’ (*Dukkha Sacca*), He searched for the root-cause of this Suffering. And He found that Greed-Craving (*Lobha-taṇhā*) which is the seat of Attachment (*Samaduya*), to be the root of all miseries. Hence, He sees the ‘Truth of the Origin of Suffering’ (*Samaduya Sacca*).

Discovering the root-cause, the more powerful one (Insight versus Attachment) tries to get the upper hand. Meanwhile, these three Ultimate Realities, ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter,’ are staying closely bound together. They are clinging to one other steadfastly, hating to be parted from one another. Their desire to be always together, their fear to be separated from one another are understandable as they have been in inseparable union since infinity. And hence Buddha had said,

‘Piyehi vippayogo dukkho’ meaning,
‘To be separated from one you love is Suffering.’

Having found the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samaduya Sacca*), you wish fervently to be liberated from this Suffering (*Dukkha*) but in vain. This unfulfilled wish makes you miserable. That is why the Exalted Buddha had admonished the verse,

‘*Yamī picchamī na labhati, tamī pi Dukkhamī*’ meaning,
‘Not to get what one desires is Suffering.’

This firmly bound attachment among these three elements, ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter’ is known as ‘*Sakkāya Ditthi*’ (Wrong View with respect to mind-body phenomena; Illusion of ‘Self’)

Elimination of Greed-Craving (*Lobha-taṇhā*), the Origin of Suffering, by *Magga* (Path-Insight) is the ‘Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering’ (*Magga Sacca*).

This elimination by *Magga* results in disarray of the tightly-knitted bond of the three fundamental elements (Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter) into shattered fragments leading to the cessation of the cycle of ‘Cause and Effect.’ And that is *Nirodha* ... the ‘Truth of Cessation of Suffering’ (*Nirodha Sacca*).

By virtue of the Vision (Eye of *Dhamma*), there arises the full understanding of the four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*), namely, ...

1. the Truth of Suffering (*Dukka Sacca*)
2. the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*)
3. the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*)
4. the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

That is why the Buddha had stated, ‘*Cakkhumī Udapādī*’ meaning ‘Vision arose’.

That is how the ‘Eye of *Dhamma*’ open which enables to see things in their Ultimate Reality, and discern fully well the Truth. And this understanding and knowledge of the Truth is what Buddha had declared as,
‘*Ñānamī Udapādī*’ meaning, ‘Knowledge arose.’

As the Eye of *Dhamma* opens up, sees the Truth and understands the phenomena in its true form, the Wisdom (*Paññā*) comprehends and analyzes the Truth as such ...

This is Matter (*Rūpa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

This is Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samadaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) is called *Sotāpatti Magga* (Stream-Winner Knowledge, the first stage), and *Sotāpatti Phala*, its Fruition.

For the second time,

This is Matter (*Rūpa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

This is Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samaduya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) is called *Sakadāgāmi Magga* (Once-Returner Knowledge, the second stage), and *Sakadāgāmi Phala*, its Fruition.

For the third time,

This is Matter (*Rūpa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

This is Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samaduya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) is called *Anāgāmi Magga* (Non-Returner Knowledge, the third stage), and *Anāgāmi Phala*, its Fruition.

For the fourth time,

This is Matter (*Rūpa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).
This is Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).
This is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samaduya Sacca*).
This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).
This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) is called *Arahatta Magga* (Arahat Knowledge, the fourth and final stage), and *Arahatta Phala*, its Fruition.

Wisdom (*Paññā*) comprehends and analyzes the following as well ...

This is the Animate World (*Satta Loka*, the World of Sentient Beings).
This is the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*, the World of *Karma*-formations).
This is the Inanimate World (*Okāsa Loka*, the world which forms the base, the habitat of all sentient beings).
This is the three Internal World (Internal *Loka*)
This is the three External World (External *Loka*).

This is how *Paññā* (Wisdom) discerns and analyzes. And hence Buddha had said, ‘*Paññā Udapādi*’ meaning, ‘Wisdom arose.’

The Eye of *Dhamma* (Vision) opens up letting you see things in its real nature so you come to understand the Truth. Understanding the Truth, *Paññā* analyzes and discern further by the *Light of Dhamma* whereby Higher Knowledge arose. And because of this Buddha had admonished, ‘*Vijjā Udapādi*’ meaning, ‘Higher Knowledge arose.’

The *Dhamma* Eyes open to let you see the Truth. As you see the Truth, you know the Truth. As you know the Truth, Knowledge (*Paññā*) discerns on the Flash of Enlightenment. And Knowledge makes judgement in the Universe (? Inner Universe?) . That is why Buddha had admonished
‘*Āloko Udapādi*’ meaning, ‘Light arose.’

The *Dhamma* Eyes open and see the Truth and understand the Truth. Knowledge discerns and make judgement on the light of Enlightenment in the World (*Loka*). Hence Buddha had admonished :

“*Cakkhumī Udapādī* (*Vision arose*),
Ñānamī Udapādī (*Knowledge arose*),
Paññā Udapādi (*Wisdom arose*),”

*Vijjā Udapādī (Higher Knowledge arose),
Āloko Udapādī (Light arose)."*

Discourse on Paṭṭhāna

[A discourse on *Paṭṭhāna* (Conditional Relations) was delivered in ‘question and answer’ manner on request by Thakhin Nu (U Nu) Ex-Prime Minister of Myanmar.]

Sunlun : Thakhin Nu ... when you were in Yangon, you had heard of Sunlun Gu-kyaung Sayadaw U Kawi presiding in Myingyan, hadn't you?

Nu : Yes Venerable Sir, I had heard.

Sunlun : That is *Hetu*, the root-cause called *Hetu-paccayā* (Root Condition). Then, your thought extended, ‘Well, I shall go and see the Sayadaw there.’ Isn't it so?

Nu : Yes it is, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : That is the thought taking hold of you (i.e., the process of the mind going over and attaching itself to an object, here, mind-object/thought). It is called **Object Condition** (*Arammaṇa paccayā*).

Then you thought, ‘Whatever come may, whatever happens, I must go to see the Sunlun Sayadaw.’ This determined thought, which serves as the Object Condition (**Arammaṇa*), impels and draws your body to come here, so you are now meeting me. This is because *Arammaṇa* (here, thought/mind-object, serves as the Cause) conditions the predominance factor, dominating your mind to move and propels the body (resulting in Effect) to come here. And that is known as **Predominance Condition** (**Adhipati paccayā*).

Nu : Yes, Venerable Sir.

* *Arammaṇa* : Sense-objects (i.e. visible-object, sound, smell, taste, tangible object, mind-object.)

These 6 sense-objects give support to (condition) *Cittas* and *Cetasikas* to enable them to arise.

* *Adhipati* : Supreme, predominance. The predominant factor conditions its associates (*Cittas* and *Cetasikas*) to accomplish the goal set by it.

* *Paccaya* : means ‘Cause or Condition.’ It is something on which something else, the so-called ‘conditioned thing’ (*Paccayuppana*), is dependent, and without which the latter cannot be.

Sunlun : The reason why you wanted to come and see me here (the mind-object/the thought wanting to see the Sayadaw) is ... you had met me before (in your past existence), so this past incident of having met before caused/conditioned the desire to meet me now, and hence this present meeting; and this will also cause/condition the meeting between you and me in the future. Because you desire to meet me, you are meeting me now, and you will meet me again in the future.

Have you eaten pork meat before?

Nu : Yes I have, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : Well, because you have eaten pork meat before, you want to eat it now. And because you desire to eat it, you eat it now and you will eat it again in future.

Have you eaten dog meat before?

Nu : No Venerable Sir, I haven't.

Sunlun : That is because you had not eaten dog meat before, you have no desire to eat it now. And because you don't want to eat it, you do not eat it now and you are not likely to eat it in future too.

The same as well ... because you had listened to this kind of *Dhamma* in the past, you want to listen to it now. And because you want to listen to it now, you are listening to it and you will listen to it in the future as well. That covers and connects the Conditionality and Casual Relations of,

Proximity Condition (*Anantara paccayā*) and

Contiguity (Immediacy) Condition (*Samanantara paccayā*)

Co-nascence (Co-arising) Condition (*Sahajāta paccayā*)

Mutuality Condition (Condition by way of Mutuality) (*Aññamañña paccayā*).

Nu : That is true, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : Now that you are here, I tell you to pay homage to the Buddha, send loving-kindness (*Mettā*), share your merits, offer yourself (body and mind) to the Buddha, then, keep your mind at the nostril tip. As you breathe in and out, you will be aware of the air touching that area, and you have to be mindful of that awareness of touch of air at the nostril. All these are the Causal Relations of,

Dependence (Support) Condition (*Nissaya paccayā*)

Strong (Powerful) Dependence Condition (*Upanissaya paccayā*).

Nu : Yes, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : While meditating, do the eyes look around here and there?

Nu : No, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : The ears, do they listen to anything?

Nu : No, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : The nose, does it smell anything?

Nu : No, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : The tongue, does it desire to taste anything?

Nu : No, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : The body, does it want to go here and there?

Nu : No, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : Well in that case, the faculties of all senses (5 *Inders*) ... the eye faculty (*Cakkhundre*), ear faculty (*Sotindre*), nose faculty (*Ghānindre*), tongue faculty (*Jivhindre*), body faculty (*Kāyindre*). They are all well guarded and in restraint, aren't they?

Nu : Yes they are, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : That is called **Faculty Condition** (*Indriya paccayā*).

When you practice frequently to be mindful of the awareness of touch of air at your nostril tip, there arises the qualities of *Jhāna* (mental absorption/absorptive concentration, meaning the mind is fixed on an object with concentration resulting in pure clear state of mind). *Jhāna* actually means the burning up of impurities of mind, the destruction of mental defilements. (The process of practice brings about, become the cause/condition for *Jhāna*). That is **Jhāna Condition** (*Jhāna pacaccayā*).

Nu : Very well, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : When I tell you to be mindful of the awareness of sensation in your body, say heat in your body; the heat sensation and the awareness of it will extinguish together (eventually). If it is cold sensation, just be mindful of the awareness of that cold sensation; the cold sensation and the awareness of it will terminate together (eventually). This whole process is the cause/condition for the cultivation and development of the Path (*Magga*) in search of Truth, hence called **Path Condition** (*Magga paccayā*).

Nu : Yes, Venerable Sir.

Sunlun : When you strive strenuously and diligently for many a time along the Path, your concentration (*Samādhi*) becomes more and more powerful resulting in sharpness of *Udayabbaya-ñāṇa* which is ‘Insight Knowledge pertaining to the contemplation of arising and dissolving away of conditioned things (mind-matter).’ This Insight Knowledge will cause/condition to let you to realize and acknowledge the elements that are truly present, and elements that do not exist in Reality but are absent.

The elements that are truly present are ‘Mind (*Citta*), Concomitants of mind (*Cetasika*), Matter (*Rūpa*), *Nibbāna*,’... the four Ultimate Realities (*Paramattha*). The elements that do not exist in Reality but absent are, ‘my leg, my hand, my head, those pertaining to I, me, mine ... ‘Self’ (*Atta*). And so these are in the causal nature of,

Presence Condition (*Atthi paccayā*) and

Absence Condition (*Natthi paccayā*).

This Insight Knowledge will also cause/condition to let you comprehend and acknowledge the element of Disappearance (Disappearance of Mind, Concomitants of mind and Matter), that which is Unconditioned; and the element of Non-Disappearance (Non-Disappearance of Mind, Concomitants of mind and Matter), that which is Conditioned.

The element of Disappearance/Unconditioned is *Asañkhata-dhātu* ... *Nibbāna*, that which is not conditioned (by Conditioning factors, *see footnote*). And that is Disappearance Condition (*Vigata-paccayā*).

The element of Non-Disappearance/Conditioned is **Sañkhata-dhātu*, i.e., all conditioned phenomena (*Nāma-Rūpa*, mind-matter).

And that is Non Disappearance Condition (*Avigata-paccayā*).

Note : Only the essentials (those related to *Vipassana* practice) are written for the discourse on *Paṭṭhāna*.

* *Sañkhata-dhātu* : All Conditioned phenomena (*Nāma-Rūpa*, mind-matter)

Rūpa (matter) is conditioned by 4 factors, namely:

1. Volitional action (*Kamma*),
2. Mind (*Citta*),
3. Climate/temperature (*Utu*) and
4. Nutriment (*Ahāra*).

Nāma (mind) is conditioned by 3 factors, namely:

1. *Phassa-cetasika* - mental concomitants of touch/contact; contact with sense object such as sight, sound, etc. (*Phassa Ahāra*)
2. *Cetanā-cetasika* - mental concomitant of volitions; volitional activity; (*Mano Sañcetanā Ahāra*)
3. birth-linking or rebirth consciousness (*Viññāṇa Ahāra*).

N.B.

[Paṭṭhāna : is said to be the most profound, subtle and abstruse part of the *Abhidhamma-Piṭaka* of Buddha's Teachings. It is the subject that deals with the absolute analysis of the four Ultimate Realities (Mind, Concomitants of mind, Matter and *Nibbana*) as the Conditioning states (Causes, *Paccaya*), Conditioned states (Effects, *Paccayuppanna*) and Conditioning forces (*Paccaya satti*) with reference to the 24 conditions (such as *Root Condition, Hetu*).

In essence, what the Buddha had taught in *Paṭṭhāna* are those mind and matter states which arise and disintegrate at every instant without a break in the continuity of the so-called animate and inanimate things. Patthana not only describes the cause and effect but also explains how the cause conditions the effect to rise.

In fact, *Paṭṭhāna* is a vast source of Buddhist knowledge and it contains everything necessary to show forth the way to *Nibbāna*. In its absolute sense, *Paṭṭhāna* is 'Conditional Relations,' i.e., the relations between the Conditioning States (Cause, *Paccaya-Dhamma*) and the Conditioned States (Effect, *Paccayuppanna-Dhamma*) by means of the Conditioning forces (*Paccaya satti*, the force of the condition that makes the Cause relate to the Effect by its specific functions of 'production' (*Janaka*), 'support' (*Upatthambaka*) and maintenance (*Anupalana*). The Effect never fails to arise when the Cause is established. In fact, *Paṭṭhāna* is a vast source of Buddhist knowledge and it contains everything necessary to show forth the way to *Nibbāna*.

Eradication of Anusaya (latent defilements) by Magga (Path Knowledge)
Sayadaw U Kawi answers to questions by devotees

Q. Venerable Sir, tell us how *Magga* (Path Knowledge) get rid of **Anusaya* (inherent defilements).

A. Devotees, there are *Dhammas*

- that can perceive,
- that should be perceived,
- that can realize,
- that should be realized,
- that can eradicate,
- that should be eradicated,
- that brings about Cessation.

When a yogī diligently strives for *Nibbāna* through *Vipassanā* (Insight Meditation), at one time, he comes to see vividly the phenomena of the three factors of life ... ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter’ in truly conspicuous terms. When he perceives that, he comes to realize how enormously unpleasant (*Dukkha*) these three *Dhammas* are. On searching for the root-cause of this Suffering (*Dukkha*), he finds, with absolute certainty, the culprit to be Craving-Greed (*Lobha-Tanha*), the seat of Attachment (*Samaduya*). The very instant this true realization occurs, *Magga* (Path-Knowledge) that sees the ‘Truth of Origin of Suffering’ eradicates *Anusaya* (inherent latent defilements) in totality.

The *Dhamma* that can perceive (this true phenomena of ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-Matter-and *Nibbāna*’) is known as the ‘*Dhamma-Eye*’ ... the Truth-seeing Eye.

The *Dhamma* that should be perceived are ... the four *Ariya Sacca* (the Four Noble Truths).

The *Dhamma* that can realize *Nāṇa*, Insight Knowledge.

The *Dhamma* that should be realized are ... *Ariya-Sacca*, the Four Noble Truths.

* *Anusaya* : Proclivities; untoward latent, dormant defilements that have not yet been eradicated by *Magga* (Path-Knowledge). As such, they have the tendency to lying latent in sentient beings, ready to come to the surface as real defilements at an opportune moment when there is contact with one of the six sense-objects. They are 7 in no.

1. Sensuous Greed (*Kāma rāga*)
2. Grudge (*Paṭigha*)
3. Wrong Belief (*Diṭṭhi*)
4. Sceptical Doubts (*Vicikicchā*)
5. Conceit (*Māna*)
6. Craving for Continued Existence (*Bhava rāga*)
7. Ignorance (*Avijjā*).

The *Dhamma* that can eradicate (*Anusaya*, latent defilements) is *Magga*(Path-Knowledge).
The *Dhamma* that should be eradicated is *Samaduya* (Greed, Craving, Attachment).
The *Dhamma* that brings about Cessation (of Suffering) is... **Nirodha*(Cessation of *Dukkha*).

The Three Worlds (The Three Lokas)

Understanding and perceiving the phenomena of ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-Matter’ is in fact knowing the ‘World of Sentient Beings/the Animate World’ (*Satta Loka*).

Understanding the conditioning factors and the conditioned mental and physical phenomena is knowing the ‘World of *Saṅkhāra*’ (**Saṅkhāra Loka*/World of Karmic Formations/the Conditioned World).

Understanding the Sphere/Space that all sentient beings and things depend on and dwell in, is knowing the ‘World of Space/the Inanimate World’ (*Okāsa Loka*).

[*These three Worlds are interwoven and interpenetrating as one is inseparable from the others.*]

**Nirodha* : Cessation of Suffering.

Nirodha-samāpatti : This refers to the temporary suspension/cessation of breathing and movement, the cessation of the flow of stream of consciousness, volition and mental formations for a certain length of time while being absorbed in cessation. An *Arahat* can, by will power, temporarily arrest the ordinary flow of consciousness for up to 7 days, in which state, all mental activities cease although there exist heat and life, devoid of any breathing. During this state, he is immune from danger.

Nirodha means cessation, and *Samāpatti* is attainment. This is the period during which the Buddhas, *Paccekabuddhas* and *Arahats* experience *Nibbānic* bliss while still living in this world. It is because the *Nāma-Rūpa* (mind and body) is so burdensome that they feel relieved even temporarily by the suspension/cessation of all consciousness and mental activity. [Their joyful utterance (*Udāna*) on it is *Susukham vata* (wonderfully peaceful).]

* *Sankhara Loka* : The sum of all Karma-Formations, i.e. the sum total of all volitional activities of Minds (*Cetanā-cetasika*) that influence and condition the bodily actions (*Kāya*), words (*Vacī*) and thoughts (*Citta/mano*), and consequently determining, shaping and conditioning the karma (*Kamma*) of sentient beings are collectively known as the World of *Karma*-Formations/the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*).

The Three Insight Knowledge (The Three Ñāṇa)

(The Insight Knowledge at the realization of each of the Four Noble Truths in three phases)

1. The Insight Knowledge that perceives the true phenomenon of ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind- and Matter’ is called **Sacca-ñāṇa* (Clear Knowledge of the absolute nature of each the Four Noble Truths).
2. The Path-Knowledge gained through the performance required for each Noble Truth, the function of *Magga* is known as **Kicca-ñāṇa* (Knowledge about what is to be done, Knowledge of the Function).
3. The Path-Knowledge that removes the latent defilements (*Anusaya*) with the resultant ending of ‘Cause and Effect’ chain is known as **Kata-ñāṇa* (Knowledge of the fact that it has been done, Knowledge of the Accomplishment, Knowledge of the completion of the performance required for each Noble Truth).

The Three kinds of Full Understanding (The Three *Pariññā)

1. **Ñāta Pariññā* - is the full understanding that discerns accurately the three factors of life ... ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter’ in its true state.
2. **Tīraṇa Pariññā* - is the full understanding, full comprehension, analytical knowledge that investigates the cause of Suffering (*Dukkha*).
3. **Pahāna Pariññā* - is the full understanding, exact knowledge when *Magga* overcomes and abandon the inherent defilements (*Anusaya*).

* Sacca : Truth
* Kicca : Function
* Kata : accomplished

The Three * *Vaṭṭa* (The Three Rounds of Rebirths)

1. *Kilesa-vaṭṭa* (Round of Defilements)

The sum entity of ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-Matter’ (*Citta-Cetasika-rūpa*) in round of rebirths is known as Round of Defilements (*Kilesa-vatta*).

2. *Kamma-vaṭṭa* (Round of Karma/Volitional actions)

The sum entity of wholesome meritorious deeds (*Kusala*) and unwholesome demeritorious deeds (*Akusāla*) in round of rebirths is known as Round of Karma (*Kamma-vaṭṭa*).

3. *Vipāka-vaṭṭa* (Round of *Kamma*-Resultants)

The sum entity of resultants of Karma/*Kamma*-formations (*Jati, jara, byadhi, marana, soka, parideva, dukkha, domanasa, upayasa ... rebirth resulting in decay, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, grief, despair*) in round of rebirths is known as Round of *Kamma*-Resultants (*Vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

The Five Dhammas that ought to be known and understood *The five Ñeyyadhamis*

The following are the five *Ñeyyadhamis* (*Ñeyya-Dhammas*), the five *Dhammas* that ought to be known and understood :-

1. * *Saṅkhara* - the *Kamma*-Formations (karma-formations) that condition/group together ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter.’ Dependent on *Saṅkhara*, Consciousness arises.
2. *Vikāra* - the processes of arising and disintegrating away of these three ultimate realities in continuous succession.

* *Vaṭṭa* : Round of existence, rebirths; literally means going round and round like the rotation of a wheel.

* *Saṅkhara* : *Sankhara* as (volitional) *Kamma*-Formations, i.e. meritorious or demeritorious volitions(*Cetana*) manifested as actions of body, speech or mind, (*Kaya, Vaci* or *Mano*); it forms the 2nd link of the Law of Dependent Origination (*Paticca-samuppada*).

3. *Lakkhaṇa Rupa* - the four primary essentials of matter; i.e. the elements of earth, water, heat, air, (*Pathavi, Apo, Tejo and Vayo dhatu*).
4. *Nibbāna* - is the element of *Nibbāna*.
5. *Paññatti* - the conceptualization, the name-calling, the verbal connotation, such as this is matter, this is mind, these are concomitants of mind.

***Some random records of questions on Buddhist Doctrine and Practice
raised by U Nu (Thakhin Nu), the ex-Prime Minister of Myanmar,
member of the Burma Buddha Sasana Nuggaha Association of Myanmar, and
answers by the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw***

In the year 1948, 2nd September, Thursday, 8 p.m. (M.E. 1310 14th waning day of Wagaung)

- Q. Where in this body do 1500 **Kilesas* (mental defilements) lie latent, Venerable Sir?
A. If you want to find out, try to understand *Jāti* (birth). They lie latent at **Jāti*.
- Q. How do I understand *Jāti* (birth), Venerable Sir?
A. There are the four primary elements of matter (*Maha-bhuta*) - earth, water, fire and air (*Pathavī, Apo, Tejo, Vāyo Dhātu*). You know about it, right? These four primary elements are put together, shaped and conditioned by Kārmic Forces/Formations (*Saṅkhara, Saṅkhara Khandha*) thereby arise the Consciousness (*Vinnana* **Khandha*),

* 1500 *Kilesas* : Defilements. See details in Glossary.

* *Jāti* : Birth; the coming into existence of physical and mental phenomena, the conception, the arising in new form, the appearance of the aggregates (*Khandha*). Birth arises due to past action (*Kamma, karma*).

* *Khandha* : Aggregates; mass; heap; The 5 aggregates of mind-matter (*Nama-Rupa*) are :

1. *Rupa khandha* : the aggregate of form (corporeality, body).
The four primary elements and corporeality dependent on them constitute the aggregate of corporeality.
2. *Vedana khandha* : the aggregate of sensation/feeling; the feeling (sensation) group.
3. *Sanna Khandha* : the aggregate of perception; the perception group.
Perception of various sense-objects, such as visible objects, sounds, etc., by the six sense senses constitute the aggregate of perception.
4. *Sankhara khandha* : the aggregate of volitional activities; the group of mental formations; Apart from Sensation and Perception, the remaining 50 mental concomitants such as contact (*Phassa*), constitute the aggregate of volitional activity.
5. *Vinnana khandha* : the aggregate of consciousness; the consciousness group.
All kinds of consciousness which cognize the sense-objects form the aggregate of consciousness.

Sensation (feeling through sense-organs, *Vedana Khandha*) and Perception (*Sanna Khandha*). And that is *Jāti* (birth). Try to apprehend that *Jāti* and you will come to understand.

Q. Please discern on *Nibbāna*, Venerable Sir.

A. If you want to know about *Nibbāna*, try to find out the dissolving aspect/instant (of mind-matter phenomena, i.e., *Bhaṅga/Bin-zun*).

Q. How do I find out *Bhaṅga* (the dissolving aspect/instant), Venerable Sir?

A. When a meditator (*yogi*) repeatedly contemplates on his body with vigilant mindfulness (*Sati*), in due course, after establishing intense mental concentration (*Samādhi*), he comes to perceive clearly the three fundamentals of life in very minute details. He finds the phenomena of these three ‘Mind-Concomitants of mind-and Matter’ are intolerably painful and unpleasant.

He looks further for the origin of this Suffering and discovers the cause to be *Lobha* (the emotive entity comprising of Greed, Craving, and the like) which bound down to *Samudaya* (attachment). Upon realization of this, *Magga* (Path Knowledge) arises and exterminates the inherent mental defilements (*Anusaya*).

In a flash, the continually occurring processes of ‘arising - standstill (for a nano-second) - vanishing,’ the so called chain of ‘genetic (arising) instant - existing instant - dissolving instant’ * (*uppāda-ṭhiti-bhaṅga*) is cut off and ceases to function. That Truth of Cessation (of ‘Cause and Effect’) is what I meant by *Bin-zun* (the terminal of *Bhaṅga* aspect), and that is what you have to find out.

End of Queries on *Nibbāna*

* *Uppāda-ṭhiti-bhaṅga* : genetic(arising) instant - existing instant - dissolving instant.

The life-time or duration of a *Citta* (one consciousness-moment) is measured by 3 short instants (*Khanas*) of the distinct features in the arising and dissolving away of a *Citta*. These are :

1. *Uppā* : the genetic/arising instant
2. *Ṭhiti* : the existing instant
3. *Bhaṅga* : the dissolving instant

Cittas (flow of consciousness) arise and dissolve in a person at a tremendous rate. The life-time of a *Citta-khana* (one consciousness-moment) is less than one-thousand billionth of a second, an inconceivably short duration.

Random Notes of Questions and Answers on Consciousness/Awareness

- Q. Venerable Sir, you had said when there is a touch (*Phassa*) to your body (or at any sense door), you are aware of it. Does ‘awareness’ (of touch/sense-impressions) occur by itself or does it need combination with other factors?
- A. ‘Awareness’ occurs only when combined with some other factors.
- Q. What would they be, Venerable Sir?
- A. ‘*Vedanā* (Sensation) - *Saññā* (Perception) - *Vinñāṇa* (Consciousness). Only when these three elements are jointly present, ‘awareness’ occurs.
- Q. Is there any factor that group them together, Venerable Sir?
- A. Yes, there is.
- Q. If so, please tell us, Venerable Sir.
- A. ‘*Vedanā* (Sensation) - *Saññā* (Perception) - *Vinñāṇa* (Consciousness). These three aggregates (*Khandhas*) of Mind are rounded up by Karmic Forces/Formations (*Saṅkhāra*) to be at the sense-doors formed by the four primary elements (*Mahabhuta*), namely, earth, fire, air and water. Thus, Consciousness (of touch at sense-doors, *Phassa*), Perception (*Saññā*) and Feeling/Sensation (*Vedanā*) occur. And that is ‘awareness’.

End of Queries on Consciousness/Awareness

Sunlun Sayadaw’s explanation on the riddles popular at that time

- Q. ‘*The four trees in human world*
Pour cold water to get them perish
Pour warm water to let them flourish.’
- Please discern on this popular riddle, Venerable Sir.
- A. Regarding ‘*The four trees in human world*’ -
You have heard of the three worlds - World of Humans, World of *Devas* (celestials) and World of *Brahma* (higher celestials), haven’t you?
[*Yes I have, Venerable Sir.]*
In which world have you heard the Buddha appeared?
[*Only in the Human World, Venerable Sir.]*

Yes, the numbers of Buddhas that had attained Perfect Enlightenment are innumerable ... more than the number of sand grains on the banks of 'River Ganges' in India. They all attained Perfect Enlightenment (*Samma-sambhodhi*) only through understanding the Four Noble Truths (*Ariya sacca*) and hence, *'The four trees in human world.'*

'Pour cold water to get them perish'

That means the cool peaceful water of *Magga* (i.e. The Noble Eightfold Path, when diligently practiced), will get Suffering (*Dukkha*) to perish.

'Pour warm water to let them flourish'

It means the hot inflammatory water of Defilements, i.e., Greed, (*Lobha*), Hatred (*Dosa*) and Delusion (*Moha*) will let Suffering to flourish.

Q. *'Three thousand forests but no wood
Mid-river but no water
Six brothers but no sister.'*

Please clarify on this popular saying, Venerable Sir.

A. *'Three forest but no wood'*

The Buddha and noble ones (*Ariyas*) live in the three worlds of Sensuous Sphere, Fine-material Sphere, and Immaterial Sphere (*Kāma, Rūpa, and Arūpa Lokas*) which represent the three thousand forests. But they do not have any more Defilements (*Kilesa*) which serve as fuel in worldlings (*Puthujjana*) to burn (in *Samsara*). The 'wood' (fire-wood) which is fuel represents Defilements. And so, the saying, *'Three thousand forests but no wood.'*

'Mid-river but no water'

The minds of the worldlings are like water of the river-flow, continually flowing and attaching on sense-objects, forever looking for sensual gratification. But Buddha and *Ariyas* do not have mind-flow for sensual gratification anymore. Hence, *'Mid-river but no water.'*

'Six brothers but no sister'

Buddha and *Ariyas*, though they still have six sense-doors (doors of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind), they no longer dwell on sense-objects (*Arammaṇa*) for sensual gratification anymore and therefore, figuratively speaking, *'Six brothers but no sister.'*

Q. *'Legs stretched out even before you sit
Sun-rays arise before dawn
Rice cooked even before you cook
Already eaten before it's cooked
Sarong sewn before you have weaved
Worn even before it's stitched.'*

Do tell us what the answer is to this riddle, Venerable Sir.

A: They all point out *Vitakka* (thought/ conception of thought). They signify the incredible swiftness, the high volatility and fastness of thoughts.

Q. Venerable Sir, at every Buddha's epoch, the number of sentient beings that became enlightened and passed into *Nibbāna* were said to be 20 **Asankheyya*, 800 million and a hundred thousand. If that were so, were the number of remaining sentient beings reduced? Or were they not reduced, Venerable Sir?

A: Just as you asked ...

Were the number of remaining sentient beings reduced? Yes, they were.

Were they not reduced? No, they were not.

Q. How were they reduced? And how were they not reduced?
Kindly explain to us, Venerable Sir.

A. When I say, 'the number of living beings were reduced,' it means, for example, there were ten people in your house. If five went away, only five were left. So, there were a reduction of five people as living beings.

When I say, 'the number of living beings were not reduced,' it means, in terms of Ultimate Truth ... the entities of 'Mind (*Citta*), Concomitants of mind (*Cetasika*), Matter (*Rūpa*), *Nibbāna*' ... all these four Ultimate Realities (*Paramattha*) ... they were not reduced.

End of Queries on *Abhidhamma*

* *Asankheyya* : Incalculable; innumerable; uncountable.

Asankheyya is unit followed by 140 ciphers (zeros).

Some Notes on Disciplinary Rules (Vinaya) for Bhikkhus

Q. If a *bikkhu* were to inflict himself to bleed, will that be a contravention of the Disciplinary Rules (*Vinaya*)? Will that act be branded as a *Dukkaṭa* offence (minor offence) by that *bhikkhu*?

A. Yes, it will.

Q. Then, why during the Buddha's time, a certain *bhikkhu* cut his throat with a knife, and by contemplating on the (pain) sensation (*Vedanā*), he ultimately attained *Arahatship* and died of the wound.

Could that *bhikkhu* attain *Arahatship* in spite of his infringement in *Vinaya* Rules?

A. Yes, it's true he attained *Magga-Phala*. It was because he didn't commit *Dukkaṭa* Offence.

Q. The *Vinaya* Rules stated that a *bhikkhu* commits *Dukkaṭa* offence if bleeding occurs from self-inflicted injury. In this case, not even was there bleeding, he even died from the self-inflicted injury. Then wasn't he guilty of the *Dukkata* offence?

A. No, he wasn't guilty of the *Dukkata* offence?

Let me give you an example. Look, if you hadn't set any regulation or before you say, 'Don't touch that property,' and I did touch it. Would I be at fault?

["No, you wouldn't be at fault, Venerable Sir?]

"If I were to touch it after you had set up a regulation that the property shouldn't be touched, would I be at fault?

["Yes Venerable Sir, you would be at fault."]

Likewise it's the same with the *bhikkhu* afore-mentioned. It's true he was free from fault. And it was also true that he attained *Magga-Phala*.

["Gladly satisfied with your clarification, Venerable Sir."]

End of Queries on *Vinaya*

Query on Sutta

Q Please may I ask you one question, Venerable Sir?

In the Sutta Mahā Vāgga Pāḷi (of the *Dīgha Nikaya*) on *Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta* - it was said there were distribution of Buddha's Relics (by *Brahmana Dona*). It was said this *Sutta* was also spoken by the Buddha.

Then was the distribution of the Relics done before the Buddha's *Pari-Nibbāna* or who actually did the distribution?

A 'E Vamī me Sutani,' Thus I have heardWho had spoken those words? (regarding the distribution of the Buddha's Relics).

(meaning the *Suttas* always started with the person relating 'E Vamī me Sutani,' Thus I have heard of... the discourse told to me by the Buddha and this does not have this statement 'E Vamī me Sutani,' Thus I have heard of ...).

[I understand now and is satisfied with the answer, Venerable Sir.]

End of Query on Sutta

Five Dhammas that Bhikkhus ought to know

Q. Venerable Sir, please tell us the five *Dhamma* that *Bhikkhus* ought to know.

A. They are:

1. Aspiration
2. Cultivation
3. Dedication
4. Contemplation
5. Culmination

1. Aspiration - means a *bhikkhu* should aspire for peace (*Sukha*).
2. Cultivation - means a *bhikkhu* should cultivate for (Higher) Knowledge (*Paññā*).
3. Dedication - means a *bhikkhu* should dedicate himself to nurture and develop the Threefold Training (*Sikha*) - Morality, Concentration and Knowledge (*Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā*).
4. Contemplation - means a *bhikkhu* should contemplate to be free from worry (*Kukkucca*) and desire (*Lobha*) and be contented.
5. Culmination - means a *bhikkhu* should culminate at *Nibbāna*, the ultimate goal of a *bhikkhu*.

These are the five *Dhammas* that *bhikkhus* ought to know.

Discourse on the Seven Attributes of the Virtuous

Once upon a time, there lived a king in Korabya Kingdom who was very fond of gambling with dice. One day, Vimala Devī, Queen of Bhogavatī (Dragons' Kingdom) happened to develop an intense craving to eat the heart of Vidhūra, the wise counselor of King of Korabya.

When the Queen's daughter, Princess Irandhatī, residing in her palace, heard of her mother's intolerable craving, she thought to herself, "I must save my mother from her irrepressible craving. How could she die having a daughter like me! I must certainly do something." So she went to her mother and declared, "Dear Queen Mother, you must be rest assured. Please do not worry, I will certainly bring you the heart of Vidhūra."

The Princess then set off to the top of Mount Yugandhara. There, she started to sing melodious songs while swaying from a swing. When Puṇṇaka, a powerful *ogre, who happened to be strolling nearby heard the dulcet singing, he immediately became enraptured. Like the saying 'body follows the mind,' Puṇṇaka traced the sweet singing and saw Irandhatī. As soon as he saw the princess, he was entranced with her pristine beauty and became ravished with uncontrollable desire. He approached to inquire what the Princess was looking for and confessed his love for her.

"If you can fulfill my wish, I will do whatever you want," was the Princess's reply.

"Alright, just tell me what you want and I will carry out," said the bewitched ogre.

"I desire to have the heart of Vidhūra, the counselor to the King of Korabya. If I can have it, I will fulfill your desire; if not, I would not." Puṇṇaka promised to obtain what the princess wanted and set off on his journey.

Puṇṇaka the ogre, thought to himself, "I should not go by myself. I must bring along my ruby and my horse." With his supernatural power, the demon transformed himself into a human form - a young lad by the name of Kañcana. Without wasting any time, he rode his horse right to the front of the palace gate of Korabya and asked permission for the King's audience to the palace guard who took him to His Majesty. Once there the King asked, "Why did you come here?"

"I came because I want to play dice with Your Majesty, Sir."

"What have you got to gamble if you want to play with me," asked the King.

* Ogre : A monster of fairy tales and folklore that feeds on human beings; a demon.

“I have my ruby and my horse,” replied Kañcana.

“How much are they worth then?”

“The magnificent ruby is worth more than two kingdoms.”

“What about the horse?”

“Do watch how I ride my horse, Your Majesty.” Saying so, young Kañcana mounted the imposing stallion holding the glittering ruby in one hand and began to ride with a lightening speed. It looked like a flaming torch was being brandished in continuous motion, the speeding stallion and the flashing ruby presenting as one.

The King was decidedly pleased with the fabulous exhibition and thought, “Yes, the ruby is a real gem and so is the horse! I’ve never seen anything like this before. I’m sure they are here because they are meant for me and I’m certain to win.” With great satisfaction, the King picked up the dice and said, “Very well then, let’s start the game.”

Just before the game started, Kañcana negotiated, “Your Majesty, if I lose, I will give you the ruby and the horse. But if you lose, what will you give me?”

“Well apart from my life and my queen, I will give you everything I possess,” promised the King.

In the first round, they gamble for the ruby as trophy. The King won due to the help of the Lady Celestial, the Guardian of the Royal Umbrella. So the King was offered the ruby. “How dare ... is there any enemy around?” wondered Kañcana angrily. Being a powerful demon, Kañcana looked at every direction, north, south, east, west, up and down, seeking his enemy and found the celestial lady.

“How dare you hinder my game! Who do you think I am? Go get out far far away,” raged the ogre with an angry stare. Lady Celestial had to fled.

The game continued and this time young Kañcana won twice, so he said triumphantly, “Your Majesty, we played dice. I lost only once but you lost twice. Now, you have to give me what I want.”

The King replied in dejection, “You may take away all my riches in the treasure chamber ... my gems, jewelry, including my country and all the things that I possess.” But Kañcana refused to take them.

“Then, what do you want?” asked the King in puzzlement.

“Your Majesty, I only want Vidhūra, your wise counselor.”

“But I don’t possess him,” replied the King.

“Yes, you do,” persisted Kañcana.

“No, I don’t,” insisted the King.

“Well in that case, shall we ask Vidhūra in front of the palace audience? If he said the King owned him, will you surrender him to me?”

The King had to promise in the affirmative.

Thus, Vidhūra was summoned to the palace court to be questioned in front of the courtiers and the palace audience. While the King was desperately trying in vain to signal Vidhūra to say that the King didn’t own him, Kañcana made a request to the King that he would like to talk to Vidhūra. On getting the permission, Kañcana asked,

“Vidhūra, what do you aspire to?”

“I aspire to be a Buddha,” replied Vidhūra.

“Oh in that case, you are a virtuous man. A virtuous man does not lie. He speaks the truth.”

“That’s true, I do not lie. I will speak the truth.”

“Alright, in that case, who owns you?”

“I am one of the ten kinds of slaves of His Majesty, so the King owns me.”

“Very well, ladies and gentlemen, you all heard what Vidhūra said, didn’t you? He said the King owns him. So, Your Majesty, you must hand over Vidhūra to me,” declared Kañcana.

The King begged Kañcana to postpone the handover for seven years. “No, I can’t. I have urgent matters,” refused Kañcana.

“Then, please delay it for seven months,” pleaded the King.

“No, I can’t,” insisted Kañcana.

“In that case, do wait for seven days only.”

“Well, if it is for just seven days, I suppose I shall have to hold off,” agreed Kañcana reluctantly.

When the King got Kañcana’s consent, he summoned his counselor, “Vidhūra, you must listen to my command. On the 7th day counting from today, you will have to follow Kañcana.” So saying, the King turned away sadly.

Upon hearing the King’s command, Vidhūra muttered to himself wearily, “Oh, King Korabya, how can your intelligence be so low! It will be a disgrace if other kingdoms hear about it. I’m afraid people will certainly denounce him for giving up such a wise person like me to the enemy. He couldn’t see through that Kañcana is an ogre and not a human. See how his heels are abnormally short; he doesn’t blink and he

doesn't cast any shadows. My King isn't smart enough to detect these peculiar characteristics of an ogre. I don't mind following the enemy but it's going to be a shame if people criticize him for his foolishness."

Dejected and reflecting thus, he returned home taking Kañcana with him. There, Vidhūra called up his family and relatives and delivered a discourse on 'Mindfulness' elaborating clearly on 'touch-awareness-mindfulness' like this:

"Be mindful while walking,
Be mindful while eating,
Be mindful while sitting,
Be mindful on sleeping.

'Be mindful while walking' means, when you walk, there will be touch of the soles with the ground. You will be aware of the touch. Be mindful of that touch.

'Be mindful while eating' means, when the hand touches food, you will be aware of the touch. Be mindful of that touch. Take food with mindfulness, eat with mindfulness, chew with mindfulness, swallow with mindfulness.

'Be mindful while sitting' means, when you sit, your body will touch the floor. You will be aware of that touch. Guard that awareness with mindfulness.

'Be mindful on sleeping' means, before you go to sleep, you pay obeisance to the Buddha, take the Precepts (*Sīla*), send loving kindness (*Mettā*) and share your merits to all beings, offer yourself to the Buddha and make your wish like this, 'Vidhūra, the wise counselor and master of our house has been taken away by the enemy. May he be released soon.' Then, before you fall asleep, while breathing, there will be touch of air at the nostril tip with the flow of out-breath and in-breath. You will be aware of the touch. Do be mindful of that touch. In all the various things you do, try to be mindful."

While Vidhūra was delivering his instructions on 'Mindfulness' to his family, Kañcana was having a tug-of-war in his heart. He was thinking, "Oh, Vidhūra certainly is a virtuous person. I will surely be committing a grave crime if I kill him. But if I don't, I won't get the hand of my love Irandhatī. Well, let's see - I won't kill him myself; better let my horse do the job."

As he couldn't overcome the temptation of passion anymore, he pulled down Vidhūra from his podium, bound his hands and feet with ropes, tugged him hard and tied him up at the horse's tail and declared, "Vidhūra, I'm going to ride very fast

dragging you at my horse's tail. Just pray for yourself." So saying, he rode at a rapid speed up a mountain which was one *yojana high.

But the guardian spirits of the mountain and the forests gave protection to Vidhūra so that he didn't suffer any hardship, not even a headache. After a while of rough riding, Kañcana himself as well as the horse were out of breath, so he reined in the horse, looked back and asked, "Vidhūra, are you still alive?"

"Yes, I am still very much alive," replied Vidhūra.

"Do you keep any amulets, charm or talisman to ward off death?"

"No, I don't."

"Then, do you possess any supernatural powers or magical wizardry?"

"No, I don't."

"Then, what have you got?"

"Well, I possess the seven attributes of a virtuous man," answered Vidhūra.

Not satisfied, Kañcana rode with lightning speed again. But Vidhūra was still alive. Then, he rode one more time. And another time. Even with three attempts on his life, Vidhūra survived. Seeing that, Kañcana thought to himself, "Well, Vidhūra said he didn't possess any amulets or talisman nor did he know of any supernatural means or ways. But he did say he has the seven attributes of a virtuous person. If he couldn't be killed by the stallion, I will frighten him to death."

Plotting thus, he reined in his horse and dismounted. He then released Vidhūra from the horse's tail, pushed him to the tip of a deep abyss and threatened,

"Vidhūra, I'm going to push you down into this deep abyss."

"Kañcana, don't try to frighten me. I'm not afraid," replied Vidhūra calmly.

"Oh, he knew I'm just trying to frighten him off," thought Kañcana.

Next, he transformed himself into a mammoth ogre pretending to smash Vidhūra's head with a big bludgeon. Again, Vidhūra spoke without fear, "Kañcana, don't try to scare me. I'm not scared."

"He knew it's me again," thought Kañcana, so he transformed himself into a huge dragon coiling Vidhūra's body seven times ready to strike the counselor's head. Vidhūra again replied serenely that he wasn't afraid.

* *Yojana* : A unit of distance variously estimated as a distance between 7 to 12 miles.

Kañcana realized that Vidhūra knew it was him, so he transfigured yet again into a enormous elephant, lifted up Vidhūra with its trunk, threw him to the ground under the hoof and pretended to tramp over him.

Vidhūra still replied with composure, “Kañcana, I have no fear. Don’t try to frighten me off. You had presented yourself as a human with an assumed name of Kañcana although you are not. I knew you are a powerful ogre named Puṇṇaka, who possesses supernormal power of transforming into many bodies.”

Kañcana was surprised that Vidhūra knew of his true identity. “Wait a minute! You said you don’t possess any amulets or talisman, and you don’t know of any supernatural means (*Vijādhūra*). But you did say you have seven attributes of a virtuous person. Do tell me about these attributes,” requested Kañcana in frustration.

Vidhūra admonished, “Young Kañcana, you have no Morality (*Sīla*), no Concentration (*Samādhi*) nor Wisdom (*Paññā*) because you are blinded by Ignorance (*Avijjā*) due to your uncontrollable desire for Princess Irandhati. The more your Ignorance, the more your enamour for the princess’ beauty is, the more you sink into the whirlpool of Craving and lust (*Raga*). Because of this, I cannot advocate you on the virtuous man’s seven attributes. But whoever, with due respect and humble request, put me on a higher place to listen from below, sitting with bent knees, then I will reveal my knowledge. But for you, I cannot.”

“Very well, if that is the case, do sit on this little mound,” relented Kañcana spreading the garment he had brought along for Vidhūra to sit on and he himself sat on the lower ground with bent knees to listen with respect.

Only then, Vidhūra gave his discourse:

“These are the seven attributes of a virtuous person -

1. Conviction (faith born out of Conviction, *Saddhā*)
2. Morality (*Sīla*)
3. Knowledge (*Suta*)
4. Generosity (*Cāga*)
5. Wisdom, Insight (*Paññā*)
6. Shame to do evil (Moral Shame, *Hiri*)
7. Fear to do evil (Moral Dread, *Ottappa*).”

But young Kañcana couldn’t grasp hold of the meaning so he requested, “I don’t understand even the first one, *Saddhā* (faith), let alone all seven. You must clarify to me what *Saddha* is about.” So, Vidhūra continued,

Saddhā

“Saddhā means faith born out of conviction in karma, i.e. one’s past deeds and their resultants.

When you tied me up at the horse’s tail and rode like hell, after a while, both you and your horse were out of breath, so you reined in and stopped to ask me whether I am still alive, didn’t you? What did I say then? I had answered that I wasn’t dead yet. Well, I have faith and conviction in karma (*Kamma*), its cause and effect. You may try to kill me but if my karma still allows, I wouldn’t die. But one day, even though you don’t kill me, I will certainly die.

A person with no wisdom (*Paññā*) do not know the *Dhamma* that birth ensues ageing, disease and death. That is why they quarrel and fight. They do not and could not search for ways and means to get peace. For that reason, they will still harbor and continue the animosity in future too.

But a person with wisdom (*Paññā*) knows the natural law, the *Dhamma* of ‘birth, ageing, disease and death’ (*Jati, Jara, Byadhi, Marana*), so they do not fight or make confrontation at present and in future. They find ways to make peace because they understand well the outcome of enmity and that eventually he will inevitably go through ageing, disease and death.

Once there is birth, there will be misery of ageing, misery of disease and misery of death. I believe and am fully convinced of the *Dhamma* of ‘birth, ageing, disease and death’ and to the natural law of karma. And that is what is meant by *Saddha*.

Tell me about *Sīla* (Moral Conduct)

Sīla means to be free from Moral Misconduct.

When you roughened me up while tying me to the horse’s tail, binding my legs and arms with ropes and about to ride violently, did I say anything bad to you, any bad verbal deed? I kept silent. What of my physical action? Did I push you with my hands? Did I try to run away? As you very well knew, I didn’t push you nor did I ran away. Nor did I have any bad thoughts against you. At that time, I didn’t commit any unwholesome act either physically, verbally or mentally. That restraint in physical, verbal and mental actions is *Sīla*.

Tell me about *Suta* (Knowledge)

Suta means being knowledgeable and being well acquainted with Dhamma.

When you were riding me to death, you heard the horse's gallops, didn't you? But for me, I heard the galloping only every now and then as I was only listening to the sound of *Dhamma*. What I was hearing was, 'There will be old age, there will be disease, there will be death.' And that is *Suta*.

Tell me about *Cāga* (Generosity)

Cāga means Generosity.

Well, ever since I was old enough to know, I had relinquished my body, no matter whoever lashes out at me verbally, hurt me or even kill me. And that is *Cāga*.

Pañña (Wisdom) - Tell me about it.

Pañña means Wisdom.

After riding ferociously with me at the horse's tail, you stopped, unleashed the ropes and threatened to shove me down the deep abyss. At that time, what did I say? I said "Kañcana, don't try to frighten me. I'm not afraid." That is Wisdom.

And then, you transformed yourself into a vicious ogre pretending to hit me with a huge bludgeon. What did I say? I said "Kañcana, don't threaten me. I have no fear." That is Wisdom.

Next, you assumed the form of a huge dragon entwining me seven times threatening me to attack my heard. What did I say? I said the same thing. That is Wisdom.

Then again, you transfigured yourself into a gigantic elephant, picked up me with your trunk and threw me down under your hoof and threaten to trample me. What did I say? I said "Kañcana, don't try to scare me. I have no fear." That is Wisdom.

Kañcana, although you claimed yourself as a young lad with an assumed name of Kañcana, I knew you to be a powerful ogre Puṇṇaka who possesses supernatural power that can transfigure himself into various forms of beings. There are only you and me in this big forest. Every time your mind changed, there was transfiguration of your physical appearance. Of course I noticed that very well. And that too is *Pañña* (Wisdom).

Hiri (Moral Shame) - Tell me about it.

Hiri means Moral Shame to do evil.

You hurled me down the podium in front of my assembled family and friends, inflicted severe pain and torment me physically before you rode off with me tied up at the horse's tail. It is shameful to commit these heinous crimes in public. But I just kept

silent. It's you who had no shame to do evil. You have no Morality (*Sīla*) no Concentration (*Samādī*) and no Wisdom (*Paññā*). That is why you dare to commit all these defilements (*Akusala*) in public. For me, I wouldn't dare do these immoral deeds. I'd be very much ashamed. And that is *Hiri*, shame to do evil.

Ottappa (Moral Dread) - tell me about it.

Ottappa means Moral Dread, fear to do evil.

After a ferocious horse-ride with me at the tail, you threatened to push me into the ravenous abyss. What did I say then? I said “Kañcana, don't try to menace me, I'm not afraid. In fact, the inherent trait of fear is Craving (*Taṇhā*). In fact, you are the slave of Craving, the son of Craving, you are just doing what Craving manipulated you to do. Because you are under the devious spell of Craving and Conceit (*Māna*), you follow the command of these two evil forces in harassing me, in tormenting me whether it was to tie up my hands or feet or to roughen me up. You did all these cruel defilements because of your uncontrollable thirst, desire and craving for Princess Irandhatī. Your attachment, obsession and clinging ... all there are features of Craving.

Craving (*Taṇhā*) is conditioned (caused) by feeling/sensation (*Vedanā*) which in turn is, conditioned (caused) by Contact (*Phassa*). That is why, the Buddha had said,

Phassa-paccayā Vedanā : Contact/Touch is the cause of Feeling/Sensation

Vedanā-paccayā Taṇhā : Feeling/Sensation is the cause of Craving

And when you get Craving (*Taṇhā*), then it becomes the cause of the chain processes of Becoming (into Existence, *Bhava*), causing Rebirth (*Jāti*). Whenever there is Rebirth (*Jāti*), it is a frightening dreadful chain process leading to ageing, disease and death together with sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair.

You have no fear, no dread of Rebirth (*Jāti*) because of Ignorance (*Avijja*); that is why you do it. For me, I have fear of Rebirth (*Jāti*), yes, truly I have. And that is *Ottappa*, fear to do evil.

Only then Puṇṇaka acknowledged his misdeeds, “O Vidhūra, how dreadfully wrong I had been. Please forgive me for what I had wronged you, all the physical, the verbal, and the mental wrong deeds, all large and small. Please let me take you back to Korabya, your country. Do mount on my horse.”

“Wait a minute young man, you must tell me the reason why you took me hostage,” said Vidhūra.

Puṇṇaka then explained, “Well, the reason, why I brought you is ... Queen Vimāla Devī of Borgavadi, the Dragons’ Kingdom, had developed an uncontrollable desire to eat your heart, Vidhūra, the King’s Counselor of Korabya. Her daughter Princess Irandhatī had promised me her love in return if I can deliver your heart for her Queen Mother. That is why I had planned to kill you. But now, let it be. I will forgo the Princess’ love. Now, let me take you back to your home country Korabya. Just get on the horse’s back.”

Vidhūra the wise man, pondered and replied thoughtfully, “In that case, you are totally wrong. Because Ignorance (*Avijjā*), in the name of Princess Irandhati, had concealed the knowledge of *Dhamma* in you.

Say supposing, if I had died, Queen Vimāla Devī’s craving wouldn’t have been satisfied. I am a wise man you know. A wise man can work out to fulfill other peoples’ wishes as well as his own.

How we devise is, if you get the Princess’ hand, your wish will be fulfilled. In fact, the true craving of Queen Vimāla Devī is to hear my discourse on *Dhamma*, so her desire will also be fulfilled. In that case the Princess’ wish will also be fulfilled. As for me, after I have expounded my sermon, I will be sent back to my country so my wish will also be fulfilled. Very well then, take me to the Dragons’ Kingdom now.”

That was how Vidhūra, the wise Counselor, worked out for the happiness of everyone concerned.

[Note : For the purpose of easy listening and comprehension, Sunlun Sayadaw had delivered the sermon with simplified names in this story.]

Discourse on Karma, Mind, Temperature, Nutriment
(Discourse on Kamma, Citta, Utu, Ahāra, the four conditioning factors of Matter)

The young lady takes shelter in the shadow of *Ignorance*
Pierced into her is the spike of *Ignorance*
Nailed by her own deeds,
She couldn't take it out.

Karma (*Kamma*)- He's the patriarch
Mind, consciousness (*Citta*) - is the master
Temperature (*Utu*) - is the mason
Nutriment (*Ahāra*) - is the labourer, the coolie.

Say, Mind the master requested the patriarch, Karma, "Oh Karma, please build a house for me."

Karma asks, "Okay, fine. Which city, which village, where? One city has no object to delight your eyes, no sound for your ears, no smell for your nose, nothing for your taste to feast on, and none for your touch. It is indeed a very boring barren city. But another city has all kinds of delightful things for your eyes, ears, nose, hearing and touch. There are plenty of pretty visual objects, a variety of entrancing music and soothing sounds, a multitude of sweet fragrances, various kinds of delicious food to taste, and fascinating things for sensual touch. So where, in which city shall I build your house?"

Mind the master naturally opted for the city with gratification for every sense. But Karma the patriarch cautioned, "Do be warned, you shouldn't stay at this sensual city. It's not good for you."

"In what way?" inquired Mind.

"Well, to tell you the truth, it's a horrible city. There are frequent land slides" explained Karma.

"Never mind land slides. I really love beautiful things" insisted Mind.

"Better not live there, you can get drowned from floods."

"Doesn't matter, I do cherish melodious sounds."

"It's not suitable to live because there are frequent tornados," advised Karma.¹

"I don't care. I adore sweet fragrances so much."

"Oh no, fires occur very often."

“I don’t mind at all. I have great passion for delicious food and sensual touch. So, don’t worry, just go ahead and build the house for me in that sensual city. I’d love to live there,” insisted Mind.

Karma the patriarch then said, “Alright, if that is the case, what if I bury the house under the earth. Would that be fine with you?”

“No, no, I wouldn’t like it. I would be suffocated by the stones and soil.”

“Then I’ll have it submerged in the deep water, okay?”

“No, that wouldn’t do. I’d get drowned.”

“How about throwing it into a tornado’s track; would that do?”

“Oh no, I would be blown away. I wouldn’t like that.”

“Perhaps I’ll have it thrown into the blaze. Would that be fine?”

“Wow, I’d be burnt to death. That would be even worse,” replied Mind.

“Well, in that case, I shall get a quarter of earth, a quarter of water, a quarter of air and a quarter of fire, mix them up well and build a lovely house. Will that be fine with you?” suggested Karma.

“Yes, that will be great. I’d like that very much indeed. Just go ahead and finish it up,” dictated Mind.

But Karma the patriarch thought, “He wants me to build a house but I don’t know how to build it. Better ask my man Mason *Utu*, the temperature man.

“Hey Mason *Utu*, here’s a quarter each of earth, water, air and fire. Mix them up well and build a house for Mind the master,” ordered Karma.

But Mason *Utu* replied, “Fine, I’ll do it but I have to use what Labourer *Ahara*, the nutriment, gives me. If he supplies me with good bricks, I’ll use good bricks. But if he gives me bad, broken or defective ones, I shall have to use those too.”

“Don’t be so talkative. Just do what you have to do,” ordered Karma again. So Mason *Utu*, the temperature man, started constructing a big house with the help of Labourer *Ahara*, the nutriment.

Just like in cities and villages of the mundane world (*Loka*), when building houses, masons have to use whatever bricks they are handed by labourers. If given impaired broken bricks, okay fine, the mason just lay them out and fix them up with cement. When handed nice strong bricks, fine, the mason build a beautiful house plastering them with cement.

Likewise, with good bricks, you get the good house (body) of humans, celestials (*Devas*), higher celestials (*Brahmās*). But with bad bricks, you get the bad house (body) of lower beings like dogs, pigs, and other animals.

Because you wish for a house (body-house), whatever house (body-house) you happen to be in, be it a good one or a bad one, all bodies are made of the four Primary Elements of matter (*Maha-bhuta*). So one day, it will be destroyed by defects in one or more of the four Primary Elements. Sufferings and agonies abound from landslides (defects in earth factor), flooding (imperfections in water element), tornados (faults in wind element), and infernos (flaws in fire element). Haven't you heard or seen all the suffering, the screaming and shouting of terror and despair arising from failures and havoc in the elements of earth, water, wind and fire (with which the body is made up of)?

That is why, the Buddha had exhorted -

'All conditioned phenomena (*Saṅkhāra*), i.e., the mind and body phenomena which are influenced, manipulated and conditioned by these four elements - Karma (*Kamma*), Mind (*Citta*), Temperature (*Utu*), and Nutriment (*Ahāra*), are subject to decay. They are impermanent.'

But most people thought otherwise, leading to their Craving (for further existence). Whatever body-house they came to possess they had suffered and met their tragedies and demise in avalanches (earth defect), deluges (water defect), hurricanes (wind defect), infernos (fire defect). As you had craved for it (rebirth), you have it now, so take the suffering happily. Don't complain, just grin and bear the consequences as this is the result of your wish.

You receive because you ask for it (further existence).

You wouldn't receive if you don't ask for it.

Well, well, the problem is not going to be resolved just by saying 'we don't want it, we don't like it.' You must practice *Vipassana* meditation ardently to gain the essential Insight Knowledge for liberation.

Through Knowledge and realization, you won't crave (for rebirth).

Because you don't crave, you won't receive (rebirth).

Because you don't receive, you won't suffer.

Because you don't suffer, you will have peace.

[The discourse was tape recorded.]

***Ignoring the Truth, Chasing the Illusive
Blind is the unaware Worldling***

If you ask what is meant by ‘Ignoring the Truth,’ it means,

In the territory of Ultimate Realities (*Paramattha*), there exists only ‘mind and matter’ (*Nāma-rūpa*), isn’t that so? Well, instead of trying to contemplate and realize these Ultimate Truths which are there for you to see, the worldlings (**Puthujjana*) only go for the exterior, the Conventional Truths, from the likes of hand, leg, nose, etc. to human, celestial, *brahma*, animal, etc. which are actually name-calling illusive Concepts (*Paññatti*). They are just chasing after those which, in Ultimate sense, are actually not there. And that is,

‘Ignoring the Truth, Chasing the Illusive,
Blind is the unaware worldling.’

***Unpleasantness truly is the norm
Pleasantness will set us all adrift in the sea of Samisāra***

By ‘Unpleasantness is the norm,’ it means, when *yogīs* are practicing *Vipassana* meditation in earnest, excruciating Sensations arise in their bodies. These painful Sensations (*Vedanā*) which they have to deal with are not pleasant at all. Well, this unpleasantness through which the Truth will be revealed is in fact the ‘true and real *Dhamma*.’

When they shift around or change their posture to let their pain bearable, they are in comfort and ease. And because they are feeling comfortable and pleasant, the mind tend to wander to all kinds of things, thinking, planning, scheming, etc. As the mind is just drifting by, the required concentration (*Samadhi*) cannot be built up to acquire Insight Knowledge (*Panna*) and that is why it is said,

‘Unpleasantness truly is the norm
Pleasantness will set us all adrift in the sea of *Samisāra*.’

* *Puthujjana* : Worldling; an ordinary person or being who has not realized the Four Noble Truths; persons with abundance of various mental defilements, as distinct from *Ariyas*, noble ones

Sottāpanna and Sakadāgāmi
Thou' noble, yet to transcend higher
Only at Anāgāmi
does Sexuality depart

It means *Sottāpanna* (the Steam-winner), and *Sakadāgāmi* (the Once-Returner), (those who have reached the first and second Paths of Enlightenment respectively) still indulge in sex and sensuality (*Kāma rāga nusaya*), so literally speaking, they are still dwelling in the alleys of lay houses. Only on reaching *Anāgāmi* (the Non-Returner), the third Path of Enlightenment, that noble person (*Ariya*) discards sex for good in absolute terms. Only then, he becomes completely liberated from alleys of houses that laymen live.

Concepts/Conventional Designations (Paññatti) and Ultimate Realities (Paramattha)

Simply noting the above two as separate entities, one couldn't be considered noble.
Simply noting them as joint entities, one couldn't be considered noble.
Only on realizing and understanding them as such, could one be considered noble.

Four Extinctions and Four Livings

The attainment of *Magga* (Path-Knowledge) occurs only once (for each Path of Enlightenment), and the attainment of *Phala* (Path-result, Fruition) may occur many times.

Sottapati Magga, *Sakadāgāmi Magga*, *Anāgāmi Magga* and *Arahatta Magga* occurred once and only once at each Path of Enlightenment, and thus, the Four *Maggas* (Path-Knowledge of the Four Paths) are regarded as Four Extinctions.

As for *Phala* - it is the result, effect, the fruition of *Magga*. It denotes those moments of Supra-mundane Consciousness which flash forth immediately after the

moment of *Magga*, and which, till the attainment of the next higher Path may still recur innumerable times at will, during the practice of *Vipassanā*.

The *Phala* (Fruition) of *Sotāpatti*, *Sakadāgāmi*, *Anāgāmi* and *Arahatship* can be had when desired in appropriate circumstances during the practice of *Vipassanā*, and so, these Four *Phalas* are deemed as Four Livings.

Rings of varying Conviction (Saddha)

The extent and intensity of *Saddha* (Conviction, Faith) differ to a varying degree in accordance with the level of Insight Knowledge (*Panna*) of a person.

The Conviction and Faith (*Saddha*) of a worldling (*Puthujana*) is unstable and fleeting in nature. It is like adjoined rings, linked only with a touch - meaning, it can break off and be destroyed anytime.

The Conviction and Faith of an *Ariya* (a noble person who had attained at least *Sotāpanna*, the first Path of Enlightenment) is like rings bound and linked with a hook - stable, firm, and enduring.

The Conviction and Faith of the Buddhas are everlasting and constant. Their conviction is like interlocked rings - meaning, it can never break off.

Ascending of Sāsanā

A yogī, who has practiced *Vipassanā* diligently and has attained the *Sotāpatti Magga*, the first Path of Enlightenment, will never revert to a worldling (*Puthujana*) nor will he regress in his Insight Knowledge (*Panna*). He will progressively advance to *Sakadāgāmi* (*Once-returner*), then on to *Anāgāmi* (*Non-Returner*) and finally to *Arahatta*. This advancement is what is known as 'Ascending of *Sāsanā*.'

A meeting between Sayadaw U Kawi and Daw Ngwe Bon

There was a lady named Daw Ngwe Bon, a disciple of Min Gun Sayadaw. She was reputed to have reached *Anāgāmi*, the third Path of Enlightenment. When she heard a certain *bhikkhu* at Maung Yin Por Ravine had accomplished the task of a *bhikkhu* (meaning attainment of *Arahatship*, the culmination point of a *bhikkhu*), she decided to go there to inquire whether it was true or not.

Eager to listen to the questions and answers between their master and the lady, Sayadaw U Kawi's disciples assembled at Maung Yin Por Monastery where the Sayadaw was residing.

When Daw Ngwe Bon came to see him, Sayadaw U Kawi gave a discourse on *Vipassanā* Meditation, from the very beginning of *Parikamma* (the preparation before meditation) till the attainment of *Magga-nana* (Path-Knowledge) in a very natural way. He then continued to give out answers beforehand to all the questions that Daw Ngwe Bon had intended to ask even before she did herself.

Daw Ngwe Bon was deeply impressed and Satisfied. "Venerable Sir, the top priority and emphasis on 'Mindfulness' all along the course of your method of meditation is very realistic, practical and natural." So saying, and becoming overwhelmed, she jumped up clapping her arms, and exclaimed with joy ... "Here is my son! Here truly is my son!" to which Sayadaw U Kawi replied, "You must give a treat if you want me to be your son."

So, the next day, Daw Ngwe Bon offered lunch to all the *bhikkhus* at the monastery, graciously appreciating (*anumor-dana*) and sharing her merits to all in the world before she went back home.

[Later, Sayadaw U Kawi remarked with high regard ...

"I knew she was coming to see me but she didn't come to me immediately. Instead she stayed at one of the huts in the monastery grounds for some time to inquire first. I made adhiṭṭhāna (asseveration of truth, declaration on oath)) to predetermine what questions she intended to ask so I could answer them all before she asked herself. She's a learned person; her questions are intelligent, realistic and philosophical. And she is well composed, dressed, talked and acted like a true lady."]

Supreme Attributes of the Dhamma

The Sunlun Sayadaw gave a discourse on the Supreme Virtues of the *Dhamma* with analogies so as yogīs would be able to comprehend easily ...

“The Exalted Buddha had expounded on the Supreme Attributes of *Dhamma* like this:

- *Sandiṭṭhiko* (It can be seen and realized vividly by oneself if one practices the *Dhamma*)
- *Akāliko* (It yields immediate results to those who practice the *Dhamma*, that of Path-Consciousness/*Magga-citta*, followed immediately by Fruition-consciousness/*Phala-citta*)
- *Ehipassiko* (It is so distinct and pure that it is worthy of inviting others to come and see; meaning, open to anybody’s inspection and scrutiny)
- *Opaneyyiko* (It is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind)
- *Paccattamī Veditabbo Viññūhi* (It can be experienced by the wise individually).

Well, I will clarify. For example, when a yogī meditates strenuously till his mind reaches the state where the four mental impulsions/Consciousness (*Parikamma, Upacāra, Anuloma, Gotrabhū*) which immediately precede *Magga* (Path-Consciousness) arise. At this point, he is said to have understood and possesses the attribute of *Sandiṭṭhiko* of the *Dhamma*, i.e., it can be seen and realized vividly by oneself if one practices the *Dhamma*).

When he realizes the Four Noble Truths (*Ariya Sacca*) for four times, he is said to have understood and possesses the attribute of *Akaliko* of the *Dhamma*, i.e., it yields results of Path-Consciousness (*Magga-citta*) followed immediately by Fruition-Consciousness (*Phala-citta*) without delay.

Viññūhi is Wisdom, likened to the King. *Opaneyyiko* is like the King’s Counselor who is worthy of staying close by the King.

Ehipassiko picks it up and investigates, as if to say “Come, see, have a look. There are more which are even better.” The attribute of *Ehipassika* thus inviting inspection and investigation, it shows you the Four Noble Truths for four times.

Then, *Viññūhi*, the Wisdom (*Paññā*) of the wise, sees clearly, comprehends, analyzes and decides. That is the attribute of *Paccattamī Veditabbo Viññūhi* - directly experienced by the wise (*Ariya*) individually.

How the wise one (*Ariya*) sees clearly, comprehends, analyzes and decides is like this:

This is Matter (*Rūpa*).

This is Mind (*Nāma*).

This is Consciousness (*Citta*).

These are Concomitants of Mind (*Cetasika*).

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya-Sacca*) is called *Sotāpatti Magga*, the first Path of Enlightenment and *Sotāpatti Phala*, its Fruition.

For the second time, *Viññūhi* (Wisdom, *Paññā*) of the wise one sees clearly, comprehends and analyzes this way,

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path leading to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya-Sacca*) is called *Sakadāgami Magga*, the second Path of Enlightenment and *Sakadāgami Phala*, its Fruition.

For the third time, *Viññūhi* (Wisdom, *Paññā*) of the wise one again sees clearly, comprehends and analyzes this way,

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya-Sacca*) is called *Anagami Magga*, the third Path of Enlightenment and *Anagami Phala*, its Fruition.

For the fourth time, *Viññūhi* (Wisdom, *Paññā*) of the wise one again sees clearly, comprehends and analyzes this way,

This is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Sacca*).

This is the Truth of the Path to the end of Suffering (*Magga Sacca*).

This is the Truth of Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Sacca*).

So, this experiencing and discerning these four Noble Truths (*Ariya-Sacca*) is called *Arahatta Magga*, the fourth and final Path of Enlightenment and *Arahatta Phala*, its Fruition.

Viññūhi (Wisdom, *Paññā*) of the wise one sees the following clearly as well:

This is the Animate World (*Satta Loka*) - the World of Sentient Beings.

This is the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*) - the World of *Kamma(Karma)*-formations.

This is the Inanimate World (*Okāsa Loka*) - the World of Space.

[the three internal mundane world (internal *Loka*)]

And this is the Animate World (*Satta Loka*) - the World of Sentient Beings.

This is the Conditioned World (*Saṅkhāra Loka*) - the World of *Kamma(Karma)*-formations.

This is the Inanimate World (*Okāsa Loka*) - the World of Space.

[the three external mundane world (external *Loka*)]

This is how *Viññūhi/Paññā* (Wisdom/Insight Knowledge) of the wise ones (*Ariyas*) experiences, discerns, analyzes, contemplates and reflects.

The yogi sees vividly the three factors of ‘mind - concomitants of mind - matter’ in a continual process of arising and perishing; he realizes that this really unpleasant phenomena is indeed ‘the Truth of Suffering.’ This profound discerning knowledge of mind-matter phenomena, their characteristics and their causal nature with full comprehension is called *Ñāta Pariññā*.

He investigates for the Origin of this Suffering. This profound investigative analytical knowledge with full comprehension of the Origin/Cause is called *Tīraṇa Pariññā*.

Delving into the process for the Cause, he finds it to be Greed-Craving (*Lobha-taṇhā*) ... the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya-Sacca*). At that instant, *Magga-ñāṇa* (Insight pertaining to the Path) appears and abandons Craving. This profound knowledge with full comprehension that abandons Craving (for the five aggregates of existence) is called *Pahāna Pariññā*.

The Insight Knowledge that perceives and understands the true phenomena of ‘mind - concomitants of mind - and matter’ as Suffering (*Dukkha*) is known as *Sacca-ñāṇa*.’

The Insight Knowledge which serves as the function of *Magga* (Path Knowledge) that abandons the inherent defilements (*Anusaya*) such as Craving is known as *Kissa-ñāṇa*.

The Insight Knowledge that perceives that *Magga* (Path Knowledge) has abandoned *Anusaya* (latent inherent defilements like Craving) resulting in the termination of ‘Cause and Effect’ is known as *Kata-ñāṇa*.

The *Dhamma* that sees/perceive (the true phenomena of ‘mind-concomitants of mind-matter’) is the *Dhamma* Eye (*Dhamma cakku*, the Truth-seeing Eye).

The *Dhamma* that should be perceived are *Ariya-Sacca*, the Four Noble Truths.

The *Dhamma* that can realize/understand is *Nāṇa*, Insight Knowledge.

The *Dhamma* that should be realized/understood are ... *Ariya-Sacca*, the Four Noble Truths.

The *Dhamma* that eliminates (*Dukkha*) is *Magga-nana*, Path Knowledge.

The *Dhamma* that should be eliminated/abandoned is *Samadaya*, Greed, Craving, Attachment.

The *Dhamma* that finally becomes extinct/ceased is *Nirodha*, Extinction of Suffering.

Note : The above discourse was recorded.

Sermon on Set-kyar Daung Pagoda

There is a pagoda called ‘Set-kyar Daung’ at north-eastern part of Myingyan. At annual festivals of the pagoda, there were lots of drunkards hanging around drunk with liquor made from toddy palm (which grow in abundance in the region).

At one such festival, a drunkard knotted his long hair into a chignon (a typical hair-do for Myanmar men in those days particularly in villages). He tucked up his *longyi*, a sarong (by pulling it back from between the thighs and tucked up in the loin to wear it like a short pant, a traditional style of wearing sarong when Myanmar men play sports). Holding a bamboo pole in his hand, he mingled in the crowd at the pagoda festival, brushing his shoulder to that of people he encountered, shouting

provocatively, “Searching for the proud one! Searching for the proud one!” to whoever he came across.

Another drunkard heard, got annoyed, and to defy him, he did the same thing; knotted his hair into a chignon, tucked up his sarong (*longyi*) wearing it like a short pant and holding a bigger pole in his hand, he yelled at the first drunkard challenging him, “Here comes the proud one! Here comes the proud one!” So saying, he readied himself to slam his shoulder against the first drunkard. At that, the first drunkard stared into the latter’s face and muttered meekly, “I shun the proud one! I shun the proud one!” and went away.

Well, our disciples here are like the first drunkard of that pagoda festival. Before they met proud ones, they were calling out, “Searching for the proud one! Searching for the proud one!” But when they did meet one who declared, “Here comes the proud one!” they shied away saying, “I shun the proud one! I shun the proud one!”

When you happened to be in the period of Kassapa Buddha’s Dispensation (*Sāsana*), like the first drunkard’s meek statement, “I shun the proud one! I shun the proud one!” you had shunned His Teachings and the Path to *Nibbāna*. Instead, like he said, “Searching for the proud one! Searching for the proud one!” you had wished for life in the period of Gotama Buddha’s Dispensation to meet the Buddha. And because of that wish, you are here.

Now that you are in Gotama Buddha’s Dispensation, instead of striving for the Path to *Nibbāna*, you are wondering and wavering away. You are still making wishes like in the past, that you be the first one to meet the coming Arimeteyya (*Metriya*) Buddha for the chance to pay Him homage with five candles and five lotus flowers. That is what is meant by, “Shunning the proud one!”

You had ignored the Path to *Nibbāna* again and again in the past, vainly wishing to meet future Buddhas, immersing yourself in the whirlpool of *Samisāra*. Why don’t you tackle the present ‘here and now’ instead of waiting for the uncertain future? Here, you are in Gotama Buddha’s Dispensation with His Teachings available to you. Like the proverb, ‘Make hay while the sun shines,’ take this great opportunity and work for your liberation employing the five Utmost Powers (*Bala*), namely, your Faith (*Saddha*), Effort (*Vīriya*), Mindfulness (*Sati*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*).

With these five Utmost Powers (*Bala*), in hand, you can overcome and protect yourself from the three scourges ... Greed (*Lobha*), Illwill, (*Dosa*) and Delusion (*Moha*) by taking cover at the nostril tip, that is, by being mindful of your out-breaths and in-breaths (*Anāpāna-Sati*). With this ‘touch-awareness-mindfulness’ *Vipassana* practice, if you put in enough effort and perseverance, in accordance with one’s *Pāramī* (past perfection), you will be able to attain *Sotāpana*, the Streamer Winner, which is the first foothold, till the final Path of *Arahantship*.

From now on, don’t behave like the drunkard of Set-kyar Daung Pagoda Festival who shouted, “I shun the proud one! I shun the proud one!” Don’t shy away but take what is being offered to you at this present moment.

The Soap-Sellers

Let me continue the sermon with the soap-sellers of our Sunlun village. They used to go around the village selling soap, shouting along the way, “Here’s the soap! Here’s the soap!” describing how very effective their soap was, and how it could cleanse off all kinds of dirt. But when you looked at them, their clothes were all dirty.

Well, Disciples of our congregation - do be careful you don’t become like these soap-sellers. It is much more important to cleanse off one’s own dirt first than trying to cleanse other people’s. Rather than trying to be a teacher and preaching other people, it is much more important to get *Dhamma* (Insight Knowledge) for yourself first by meditating studiously on your own. So, don’t ever be like these soap-sellers.

That was how Sunlun Sayadaw frequently admonished his disciples.

Sermon on Dhamma Vihāra

The Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw was asked in what type of person is ‘*Dhamma Vihāra*’ present. He answered in detail with an analogy as follows :-

Let us say that once upon a time, there reigned King Brahmadata in Banares (Veranasi) Kingdom. A rebellion occurred at the border so the King sent his five generals to root it out. Following the King’s command, the generals set out for the journey. When they got nearer to the border they reached a thick forest and saw clouds of dust at the outskirts of the enemy’s territory stirred up by the marching rebels. One of the generals pondered in trepidation, “Oh, look at the extent of dust clouds! The army must be massive.” He got alarmed and cowardly stayed back.

The remaining four generals went ahead. Approaching the enemy, they saw an imposing flag on the front line hoisted by the rebels. On seeing this, one general thought, “Wow! look at the huge flag. Their forces must be formidable.” He got frightened and chickened out.

But the remaining three generals marched on. When the enemy knew of their approach, they raised alarm. “Attention Comrades! The King’s generals are approaching. Surround them! Catch them! Seize them! Attack ...!” and shouted war cries to frighten them off. One general panicked, “Just by listening to the battle cries, I can make out their army to be a mighty one. How can the three of us fight the battle?” Fearing so, he left behind.

And thus, only two generals were left. With might, they boldly moved on to put up a brave fight, killing the rebels left and right. But after waging combat for a while, one general was slashed to death by the rebel leader.

The sole survivor fearlessly pushed on to fight hard and finally killed the rebel leader with a mighty slash. When they saw their leader had fallen, all the rebels ran away in chaos. The heroic general won the battle and went back to his King waving the banner in triumph.

This story had analogies and lessons to be learnt among novices (*Samaneras*) and *bhikkhus* here in our monastery so that they would be on guard against girls whose beauty might disturb your peace of mind.

* *Vihāra* : State of living
Dhamma Vihāra : Living with *Dhamma*

Say, there were news spreading around you of a pretty damsel at a certain place, in a certain town. People said that not only was she ethereally beautiful but she was also from a rich family as well, living in a grand house near the prosperous commercial district of the town. A certain *bhikkhu* might begin to harbor thoughts of marrying her. False hopes arise in him ... like the one who thought of discovering a treasure trove on learning of a treasure map; or like the one who had heard of a herbal brew he thought could cure a certain disease; or like the monk who thought the royal princess he had met would fall for him. Thinking she would be a good catch and feeling certain that he could get her, he left the *Samgha* Order and became a layman. This is like the general who stayed back merely on seeing the dust clouds made by the marching rebels.

But then, say he was able to ignore the desire and continued to stay in the Order. He went into town for alms-round and saw a charming maiden. He was attracted and fell for her, concluding, "Oh, she must be the young lady that people had been talking about. Just as they said... How alluring she is! How enticing her beauty is! I must get her hand for marriage." Firmly confident of winning her, he left the Order. That was similar to the general who chickened out just on seeing the enemy's imposing flag.

Let's say he was not shaken by her beauty and could manage to suppress his feelings. But the young maiden with her bewitching voice started to entice him, "O dear *bhikkhu*, please come to our house everyday for alms food. Please take a rest while I prepare a toast with lots of butter on it. Here is some tea for you. Would you like to take it with a little sugar? You must tell me what you need. Oh, we mustn't let the food gets cold. Do eat it while it is still warm."

Everyday, she would shower her hospitality, coquettishly saying such enchanting words to the beguiled monk. Naturally, he was fascinated and his thoughts were, "Well, well, well, this young lady is undeniably attracted to me. I'm sure she will marry me." So, with full expectation, he disrobed and went back into layman's land. That was like the general who absconded after hearing the enemy's war cry.

Supposing if the *bhikkhu* could still manage to resist the bewitchment full of tempting hospitality. But then, the maiden had another wile up her sleeve. Say one day, she invited him engagingly, "Oh, I've been so busy today I didn't even have time to prepare anything for alms-food. But you must come back around five o'clock this evening." So at five, he set off to the young lady's house covering his head with the robe. Meanwhile, she also was standing by the window looking out for him. When she

saw him coming, she quickly went to the door, opened it up just a little bit, then went to lie down on the couch pretending to be asleep.

The gullible monk pushed the door open and saw the maiden sleeping in a seductive pose. The poor *bhikkhu* was totally captivated and mesmerized - he couldn't even remember to disrobe. He literally fell off from monk-hood straight away no longer able to resist the temptation. That is exactly like the general who was slashed and killed by the rebel leader with one big stroke.

Now, let's say the *bhikkhu* could pull himself away from all these temptations and seduction laid in front of him, cutting off all desires (*Kāma-rāga*) and went back to the monastery in victory. He was like the heroic general who slashed off the rebel leader into pieces and finally won the battle against all odds.

Only in one who could resist temptations and overcome attachment to sensual pleasures/lust (*Kāma-rāga*) can I say *Dhamma Vihāra* exists.

Based upon this, the Venerable Sayadaw frequently admonished his *bhikkhus* at the monastery on the proper procedure in going for alms-round to protect themselves from the dangers and pitfalls of being friendly with female laity.

He used to say, "When you go for alms-round, go from one house to another in subsequent manner, walking and waiting only in front of houses for alms. Don't make the habit of going inside the house, sitting and lingering there. This is conducive for temptations to happen.

Don't crave to be loved. If you love because you want to be loved, you'll suffer for it.

Don't crave for love for you'll get hurt.

Don't crave for popularity for you'll get hit by bombshells literally.

Don't crave for fame for you'll get infamy. Fame comes naturally to those who don't seek for it.

Don't crave for power for you'll get corrupted.

Don't walk over the alms-bowl for you'll get defiled. And don't take that literally, which means physically walking over the alms-bowl. It meant, when somebody offered you simple food like watery vegetable soup, you grimace out of dislike. That is 'walking over the alms-bowl. But when you are offered some delicious meat curry, you smile with satisfaction. And that is also 'walking over the alms bowl. Don't let your likes and dislikes defile your mind.'

When going for alms-round, watch your mind to put restraint on Greed (*Lobha*), Illwill (*Dosa*) and Delusion (*Moha*). With intent vigilance, do watch out to be mindful of your sense-doors (eyes, nose, tongue, ears and body) so that you wouldn't follow the sensual objects and get trapped in sensuality. Try to constrain yourself as much as you possibly can. Do be mindful all along."

[This sermon had been tape-recorded.]

Five things that females understand

1. Her Preference - She prefers (and favor) her kin ... her father, her mother, her sister and her husband.
2. Her Passion - She occupies her time to dress up, make up, wear jewelry; has passion to beautify herself.
3. Her Devotion - Her life is devoted to her children, husband, parents and relatives.
4. Her Contemplation - 'Hope my husband doesn't take a mistress; hope my husband doesn't take a mistress' is how she contemplates.
5. Her Ultimate Wish - To have her husband listens to her, fulfills her wishes and doesn't take any mistress is her Ultimate Wish.

Discourse on Paṭācārī

Young lady-devotees, I'm going to tell you things that you don't like to hear.
Do not want to be pretty.
Do not want to be rich.
Do not want to be famous.
If you are awfully pretty, awfully rich, awfully famous, you will end up with awful lot of problems and sufferings.
And don't indulge your eyes,
nor your ears,

nor your nose,
nor your tongue,
nor your body.

If you indulge and yield to gratify the desire of your five senses, they get spoilt and corrupted. How do they get corrupted? Well, when you indulge in these five senses by letting their respective five sense-doors left unguarded, the result is getting five sets of trouble. I'm sure you all must have known and experienced very well the agony of not getting what you want, the intense dissatisfaction due to unfulfilled needs.

One agony after another,
What has she done to deserve miseries that horrible!
The young lady takes shelter in the shadow of *Ignorance*
Pierced into her is the spike of *Ignorance*
Nailed by her own deeds,
She couldn't take it out.

Well, all of us are victims of our own making, our own deeds. So, just grin and bear it.

During the time of Gotama Buddha, there was a young maiden, a rich man's daughter, by the name of Paṭācārī. Famed for being very rich and very beautiful, she happened to indulge herself and yield to the desire of all the five senses ... her eyes, her ears, her nose, her taste and her body. (She fell in love and eloped with a young attendant of the family and went to live in a village far away from her home in Sāvatti). The indulgence to gratify all senses with the five sense-doors left unguarded led to five kinds of anguish, so much so that she went crazy running around without even caring to clothe herself properly.

Compared to her, the devotees here are far more fortunate, wearing appropriately and talking sensibly. For her, the harrowing incidents she encountered were enough to make her stark mad. Her husband Ko Dasa died of snake bite, her younger son was snatched away by an eagle and her elder son was carried away by the strong current of a stream. Not only was she intensely confounded by these horrible happenings, on reaching her home, she found both her parents and her younger brother were killed when their house collapsed after a violent storm. With six people so close to her heart meeting their demise one after another in a row in such a short period of time, how could she stay sane?

Thinking of the terrible tragedies over and over again, the death of her loved ones in such dire circumstances, pushed her more and more into a frenzy state, driving her into a pathetic lunacy. She couldn't even care that her clothes had torn off and went about the streets almost naked.

Paṭācārī tried to console herself in her own way, “Oh woe is me you crazy girl! Oh you naughty girl! Oh you unlucky girl! So you like perfume and flowers to make you attractive. See how these had gotten a pretty girl like you into this ghastly grief! You made up your face, wore flower-garlands on your head and wrapped up a lovely shawl to make yourself beautiful. See how all these had thrown you into disaster! Now, you are bereft of all your family!”

She wandered aimlessly weeping and mumbling to herself. She couldn't eat or sleep, her insanity getting worse and worse as time went by. “My husband Ko Dasa killed from snake bite! My younger son snatched off by an eagle! My elder son carried away by the current! My parents and my younger brother killed when their house collapsed! They are dead, they are gone. All dead! All gone!” Lamenting thus nonstop, she rambled staggeringly, swaying and reeling from one side to another, wandering from street to street, her heart broken with so much grief and sorrow.

However, fortune turned in her favor. That early morning, the Gotama Buddha, arising from His deep contemplation of Compassion at His monastery, viewed the Universe with his Omniscience as was His daily routine, reflecting, “To whom shall I liberate today?” He saw in His net of Vision, Paṭācārī with sufficient past perfection (*Parami*) to gain Enlightenment that day, as one like a burning coal covered by ashes which could be blown away by His sermon to reveal the fire beneath.

A congregation was being prepared (at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti). He made a solemn oath (*Adhiṭṭhāna*) and willed, “May Paṭācārī come to this congregation. May she be able to listen to My sermon and may she be able to understand and realize fully the *Dhamma*.” He then sent forth His radiance of infinite Loving Kindness (*Metta*) to Paṭācārī and waited for her on the throne. And because of this, Paṭācārī who had been staggering from street to street all over the city, began to walk in the direction of the *Dhamma* Hall.

A wise devotee nearby, seeing her in such a pathetic state and hearing her sorrowful lamentation, advised her with pity, “Oh you poor girl, what grief and sorrow you had met. It must be like a burning fire. See, there is our Buddha giving a sermon. Why don't you go there and listen to His sermon? Perhaps, it may relieve you of some

of your grief.” Paṭācārī, upon hearing the word ‘Buddha’ got incited and suddenly wanted to go to the mentioned place. So she headed towards that direction.

When the congregation at the entrance of the Hall saw her, they shouted her out, “Hey you crazy woman, you don’t know the direction of north or south, nor the east or west. You don’t even know where you are going. Don’t come here. Look at you - you don’t look like other people, you are not wearing a sarong, not even a shawl. Your hairs are all disheveled with no flowers. Don’t come inside the Hall. Go, go away!”

The Buddha then called out to Paṭācārī from the throne, “My daughter Paṭācārī, come to me, come to the front.” Only then, people in the Hall made way for her. Some devotees sitting in the front gave her their shawls to cover herself and wear it as a garment. The Buddha started to address her saying,

“Oh Paṭācārī, you are burning like fire. Why are you burning with sorrow for other people? Why don’t you get sorry for yourself? My daughter Paṭācārī, you are certain to encounter ‘old age, suffering and death.’ Don’t you know that there is old age, suffering, and death?”

“Yes, Venerable Sir, there is old age, suffering and death,” replied Paṭācārī.

The Buddha then asked her, “If there is *Dhamma* of old age, suffering and death, is there *Dhamma* where there is no old age, no suffering nor death?”

“There is, Venerable Sir,” answered Paṭācārī.

“In that case, if there is *Dhamma* of old age, suffering and death, and *Dhamma* of no old age, no suffering nor death, aren’t you afraid of old age, suffering and death?”

“Yes I’m afraid, Venerable Sir.”

“If you are afraid of old age, suffering and death, why don’t you search for the *Dhamma* where there is no old age, suffering and death?”

“Venerable Sir, You said if I’m afraid of old age, suffering and death, I should search for the *Dhamma* where there is no old age, suffering or death. How do I search for it?” asked Paṭācārī.

The Buddha replied, “If you are looking for *Dhamma* where there is no decay, suffering, or death, you must not love other people and you must not love yourself.”

“Even though you admonished not to love, I still love. How could I not help loving? My young son is so sweet with his big eyes and curly lashes and he can prattle away so sweetly. Of course, I couldn’t help loving him,” insisted Paṭācārī.

The Buddha expounded, “When you say you love, it is because you are *ignorant*, it is because you don’t know. If you know (the Truth) you would not love. That is why ...

‘Because of Ignorance (*Avijjā*), there is Craving/ Desire (*Taṇhā*);

Because of Craving (*Taṇhā*), there is Clinging/ Obsession (*Upādāna*);

Because of Obsession (*Upādāna*), you pursue/ act (*Saṅkhāra, volitional actions*);

Because you pursue, act (*Saṅkhāra*), you get what you want (*Bhava, existence*);

And when you get what you want (*Bhava*), you suffer (*Dukkha*).

From the coalition of Ignorance (*Avijjā*) and Craving (*Taṇhā*) you get existence, birth (*Jāti*). And when you get fresh birth (*Jāti*), be prepared to face the inevitable consequences of ageing, sickness, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair, ending in death.

So if you love, don’t complain. Look at you, wandering from street to street, without eating or drinking, your heart totally broken with sorrow, pain, grief, and despair. Do you know why you are in such a miserable state? It is because you had loved Ko Dasa, your husband. Why did you love him? It is because you were ignorant (of Truth). If you hadn’t been ignorant (of Truth), you wouldn’t have loved. And if you hadn’t loved, you wouldn’t have suffered like this.

Look at yourself again, staggering in oblivion around town from one end to another, with no thoughts for food or water. Your shattered spirits couldn’t be mended from bereavement with so much heartache and pain. And do you know why you are in such agony? It is also because of your love and attachment to your sons. And why had you loved them so much? It is because of your Ignorance (of the Real Truth). If you had known (the Truth), you wouldn’t have loved. And if you hadn’t loved, you wouldn’t have suffered so much.

Yes Paṭācārī, you are being deceived and cheated by Perception (*Saññā*). When you said you loved him, it is not because you wanted to love; it is because Perception (*Saññā*) has tricked you, so you love. Do you know how *Saññā* deceives you?

The *Dhamma* (the Truth, Reality) has stated all conditioned things (*Nama-Rupa*) are Impermanent (*Anissa*), but Perception (*Saññā*) had tricked you to believe that they are Permanent (*Nissa*).

The *Dhamma* has enunciated all conditioned things are rooted in *Dukkha*, (Unpleasantness, Suffering) but Perception (*Saññā*) had deluded you to believe in *Sukha* (Pleasantness).

The *Dhamma* has proclaimed all conditioned things as Non-Self (*Anatta*), but Perception (*Saññā*) had led you astray and made you think to take ‘Self’ (*Atta*) as real.

The *Dhamma* has declared of Repulsiveness (of the body) (*Asubha*), but Perception (*Saññā*) had misled you to believe in Beautifulness (*Subha*).

That is why ...

‘Perception (*Saññā*) had covered up and deluded the real underlying Truth of what you see.

Perception (*Saññā*) must be unmasked to reveal the True Nature.

Suffering (*Dukkha*) is all due to deception by Perception (*Saññā*).

Paṭācārī, why don’t you solve this fraud of entangled mess fabricated and molded by Perception (*Saññā*)? admonished the Buddha.

“But how do I go about it to clear up this delusion, Venerable Sir?” Paṭācārī, asked back.

The Buddha answered, “You solve it with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*Satipatthana*) to clear up the delusion. At the nostril tip, which is your body sense-door, there is touch sensation when air of in-breath, out-breath goes in and out. There will be awareness of that touch. Simply by being mindful on that awareness, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness are fulfilled. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness are fulfilled in this way ...

Mindfulness of the ‘touch sense’ at the body-door is known as **Mindfulness of the Body** (*Kāya-nupassanā*). It will do away the wrong Perception of Beautifulness/ Attractiveness, (*Subha-saññā*).

Mindfulness of the bodily sensations whether it be pleasant or not is called **Mindfulness of the Sensation** (*Vedanā-nupassanā*). It will reveal the erroneous Perception of Pleasantness (*Sukha-saññā*).

Mindfulness of the nature of that sensation is known as **Mindfulness of the Mind** (*Citta-nupassana*). It will unmask the false Perception of Permanence (*Nicca*).

Mindfulness of the natural course of mind-matter phenomena with complete equanimity devoid of covetousness (*Abhijjha*), ill-will (*Domanasa*) or of any kind of mental reactions, but just being stark aware of the arising and dissolution of the elements as they are, as it is happening in their own natural course, is known as **Mindfulness of the *Dhammas***. This will clarify the deluded Perception of ‘Self’ (*Attasāññā*).

Yes Paṭācārī, why don’t you contemplate on this Fourfold Mindfulness? Contemplate on the burning grief in your body,” exhorted the Buddha.

Paṭācārī did as told by the Buddha and finally her *Dhamma* eyes opened She exclaimed, “Exalted Buddha now I know. Because I see the light of *Dhamma*, so I know. The people in the congregation had said to me, ‘Oh you crazy woman, you know not where the direction of the south or north, nor the east or west. Don’t come into the assembly. Go away, go away. See, look at yourself, you are not wearing any sarong and you don’t have any shawl for cover. Your hairs are all disheveled with no flowers. Go away, don’t come near us.’

That was what they had said. I know (the Truth) but they didn’t know it yet. I have with me now ... the sarong, the shawl, the flowers. Yes, I understand now. I really do.

They still don’t know yet. You had told me,
‘Perception (*Saññā*) had covered and disguised what you see.
Go unmask and sort out the misconceptions to reveal the Truth.’

.I did as you had taught me. Hence I see the Truth underneath the disguise.”

The Buddha asked her again on purpose for the benefit of the assembled audience although He knew it, “Well Paṭācārī, you had said to Me again and again, ‘I know now.’ What did you know?”

Paṭācārī replied, “I know now that I will, for certain, grow old, decay and meet death. I know now the Truth of old age, decay and death.

And I now understand the six aspects of Right Knowledge (*Vijja-nanā*) and can discriminate between the right and wrong. I can distinguish,

- From erroneous Perception of Permanence (*Nicca-saññā*) to rightful Perception of Impermanence (*Anicca-saññā*).
- From deluded Perception of Pleasantness (*Sukha-saññā*) to rightful Perception of Unpleasantness/Suffering (*Dukkha-saññā*).
- From wrongful Perception of ‘Self’ (*Atta-saññā*) to rightful Perception of ‘Non-Self’ (*Anatta-saññā*).

I have come to understand ...

- The *Dhamma* that eradicates (the Origin of *Dukkha*).
- The *Dhamma* that should be eradicated.
- The *Dhamma* that is Cessation (of *Dukkha*).

- The *Dhamma* that can eradicate (Craving, *Tanha*) is *Magga* (Path-Knowledge).
- The *Dhamma* that should be eradicated is *Samudaya* (Greed, Craving, Attachment, *Tanha*).
- The *Dhamma* that is Cessation (of *Dukkha*) is *Nirodha* (Cessation of Suffering).”

That was how Paṭācārī related her Insight Knowledge (*Nana*) she came to possess.

The Buddha continued, “Paṭācārī, you said you now have the sarong, the shawl, the flowers, didn’t you?”

“Yes I did, Venerable Sir,” replied Paṭācārī.

“Where did you get the sarong?”

She replied, “At the time of *Padumuttara Buddha of long long time ago, He had prophesied, ‘My daughter, when you are reborn during the era of Gotama Buddha, you shall keep the Five Precepts (*Panca Sila*) as firmly as you would wear your sarong.’ Now I keep the Five Precepts as firmly as I wear my sarong.”

“What about the shawl?” asked the Buddha.

“The Exalted Padumuttara Buddha had predetermined, ‘My daughter, when you are reborn during the era of Gotama Buddha, you shall keep the Eight Precepts (*Uposatha Sila*) as you would wrap yourself up with a shawl.’ And now, I keep the Eight Precepts as I would cover myself with a shawl. Other people here may own

* Padumuttara Buddha : the Buddha who underwent austere ascetic practices for seven days to attain Enlightenment under the pine tree and lived for a hundred thousand years.

shawls sequined with diamonds, emeralds and rubies. But they will always have the fear of those shawls being stolen and the burden of washing them. But for my shawl of Eight Precepts - I need not be afraid of having it stolen; it is so cool, peaceful and tranquil to be wrapped around by it.

“And what about the flowers?” asked the Buddha.

“I wear three flowers on my head, Venerable Sir. The Exalted Padumuttara Buddha had foreordained, ‘During the era of Gotama Buddha, my daughter shall wear three flowers.’ That means, I have now full conviction and deep faith in the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*.

Buddhami saranam gacchami I take refuge in Buddha

Dhammam saranam gacchami I take refuge in *Dhamma*

Samigham saranam gacchami I take refuge in *Samigha*

I now wear these three flowers permanently on my head which means I take permanent refuge in the Three Gems.”

The Buddha then encouraged her, “Paṭācārī, that is not sufficient yet to rely on, you must go forth. Carry on, go further on.”

Paṭācārī strove further on her contemplative meditation. She became established in the Path and then on, progressively attained the successive Path-Knowledge in stages and finally reached the *Arahatta-Magga* and *Arahatta-Phala*.

Thereupon, she was able to comprehend fully the following *Dhamma* :

- The *Dhamma* that can perceive and the *Dhamma* should be perceived,
 - The *Dhamma* that can realize and the *Dhamma* should be realized,
 - The *Dhamma* that can eradicate and the *Dhamma* should be eradicated,
 - The *Dhamma* of Cessation.
-
- The *Dhamma* that can perceive (the true phenomena of ‘mind-concomitants of mind-matter-and *Nibbāna*’) is known as the ‘*Dhamma-Eye*’ - the Truth-seeing Eye.
 - The *Dhamma* that should be perceived are *Ariya Sacca* (the Four Noble Truths).
 - The *Dhamma* that can realize is *Nāṇa* (Insight, Higher Knowledge).
 - The *Dhamma* that should be realized are *Ariya Sacca* (the Four Noble Truths).
 - The *Dhamma* that can eradicate (Craving) is *Magga* (Path-Knowledge).
 - The *Dhamma* that should be eradicated is *Samudaya* (Greed, Craving, Attachment, *Tanha*, the Cause of Suffering, *Dukkha*)
 - The *Dhamma* of Cessation is *Nirodha* (Cessation of Suffering, *Dukkha*).

Well, that was how Paṭācārī saw and comprehended.
Because she knew, she didn't crave,
Because she didn't crave, she didn't have any obsession or clinging,
Because she didn't have any obsession or clinging, she didn't pursue (act),
Because she didn't pursue, she didn't get any (rebirth),
And because she didn't get any (rebirth), there was Ultimate Peace.

But for other people -
Because of Ignorance they Crave,
Because of Craving they Cling,
Because of Clinging they Pursue.
Because of Pursuance they get,
Because of getting them, they suffer.

[End of discourse on Paṭācārī]

***Agonized by sons, tormented by daughters-in-laws,
Such is the poor unhappy mother!***

During the time of Gotama Buddha, there lived a young girl named Soṇā in Sāvatti. She was elegant and beautiful, endowed with the five honorable qualities of a lady. And she was from a wealthy family. When she came of age, to fulfill parental duty as was the custom, her parents married her off to a young man of a rich family who were of the same caste and status. The couple, being rich, handsome and young, enjoyed their life to the fullest, bearing no thoughts for the Three Jewels ... Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Samīgha*.

As time went by, they bore ten sons altogether. One day, the husband went to listen to a discourse delivered by the Buddha. He was very much affected by the *Dhamma* and developed a great urge to be liberated from *Samisāra*, the rounds of rebirth. There and then, he asked permission to the Buddha to accept him in the Order of *Samīgha*. As the Buddha knew of his high past-perfection (*Pāramī*) and his noble

aspiration, he was accepted. The rich man was so happy to become a *bhikkhu* he even forgot to inform his wife let alone ask for her consent. He immediately entered the Order.

[*Well, men-devotees ... can you renounce just like that, like the rich man?]*

When Soṇā heard about it, she cried and wailed, “You had said you would never leave me. Now, your words aren’t true any more. Oh how come you deceive me like this! Have I become so old and ugly that you hated me now? Even if you don’t care about me, you should at least have given face to our ten young sons. Oh how could you do this to me!” She kept on crying, couldn’t eat or sleep, wistfully gazing and feeling depressed of being left behind. She was miserable with grief.

After some time like this, Soṇā tried to console herself, “Oh, why are you grieving over someone who had left you as he didn’t love you anymore? Well, if he cared for you, you would care for him. But now he had turned his back on you and had walked away, you should do the same.”

Cheering herself up, she single-handedly raised her ten sons with dignity and pride. By the time she was over sixty, her ten sons were all grown up. One day, she thought to herself, “All my sons are now grown up. They can take care of themselves with integrity for their livelihood. I am getting tired and it is getting more and more stressful looking after the properties and riches. It would be best to divide them into equal parts and give each to my sons. After that, I myself will take sanctuary under the Three Gems.”

She set forth to bequest her ten sons equally, then made a request, “My dear sons, ever since your father left me, I have taken care of all of you till you are matured adults. I am old now and would like to take refuge in the virtues of the Three Gems - the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sanīgha*, and live in peace. I had given all my riches to you sons. From now on, I can survive only with your sustenance. Let me live and eat happily with your support for the rest of my life.”

All her ten sons responded unanimously, “Oh mother, don’t you ever worry about yourself. We are not irresponsible. We know that we can never repay for what you had done for us. It is truly noble in life to look after parents and it would be of no burden at all to look after you with what you had given us. We will take turns to look after you. We promise we will not break our obligation. Just tell us all your needs, mother.” So pledged the ten sons again and again to convince their mother.

The old lady exclaimed with joy showering praise and blessings on her sons, “Here are my sons! Here are my sons! How worthwhile to bear all of you! How grateful and loving you all are, like ten walking canes for support. May you have health and happiness. May you have prosperity with all kinds of richness and live over a hundred years. May you all live happily ever after with your wives and children till you are of old age.”

After settling thus, she started living with her eldest son first. At the beginning, they looked after her well without fail. But after a couple of weeks, their hospitality slackened. They gradually began to treat her with disrespect and later, the daughter-in-law even started asking her to do household chores. Eventually, she began to treat her with outright rudeness and finally telling her surly, “Old woman, why don’t you go and live with your other sons?”

Soṇā thought, “Well, if she doesn’t have any generosity for me, I don’t care. I have my other sons that I can depend on.” And so with great expectation, she went to live with her second son. Just like the first son, in the beginning she was treated well, but when time went by, the son came to believe what the wife told him and so he himself started to treat his mother badly.

The old lady then went from house to house of her younger sons. But she received the same unkind treatment at all the houses. Finally, she moved to her youngest son’s house. There, it was even worse. Her son accused her, “There is always trouble wherever you are. You are always complaining and saying bad things about your daughters-in-law and your sons as well. If you can’t live in harmony with all of them, you are the one to be blamed. You’d better go and live some place else.”

Soṇā the old lady was in real trouble now. She had nowhere to go, no house to live in, and with no money whatsoever. As hardships of various kinds set upon her at old age, she lamented wearily, “Oh, my husband left me, my ungrateful sons have no kindness nor generosity for me, and I have no one to depend on. What a mess of life I’m in! It’s better to die than being fed by my ungrateful sons. Oh what a miserable unlucky old fool I am! So many misfortunes, so much suffering! I am now like the saying, **‘Agonized by sons, tormented by daughters-in-laws; Such is the poor unhappy mother!’** wailed Soṇā with heart-breaking grief and despair, blaming herself for her cruel fate.

But as luck would have it, an idea came up. “If I die just because my sons don’t look after me well, it wouldn’t be a good death. Now, there still lives Gotama Buddha in whom I can take true refuge like my sons’ father. I will follow my husband’s footsteps without any further ado.”

Thus deciding, she went to a monastery for **bikkhunis* and became a *bikkhuni*, a Buddhist nun. There, the young *bikkhunis* didn’t give due respect to her, disparagingly saying that she entered the Order only at old age after a long married life. In fact, they asked her to do menial chores for them ... washing clothes, bailing water and boiling it, even asking her to give them massage. Some *bikkhunis*, though younger, claiming their seniority in the *Bikkhuni* Order, demanded her to pay obeisance to them.

With subservience, Soṇā did all she was asked of without fail. Even while listening to *Dhamma* discourses, she was told to sit at the far end. Being old, her hearing wasn’t good so she tried to sit a little in the front. But the *bikkhunis* scolded her with scowling faces, telling her to sit at the back. She obliged and retreated humbly to the back.

One day, all *bikkhunis* at the monastery were invited for lunch offering in town. They called her up and said, “Old lady, we are all going for lunch offering today. With your poor vision, defective hearing and bent back, you’d better stay back and keep watch at the monastery. Don’t come with us. Draw bath-water, boil some and make sure it is ready for our bath on our return.” So everybody at the monastery except Soṇā went for the lunch offering in town.

Soṇā the old *bikkhuni*, did as she was told. She began to draw water. The well was deep and the water pail was large. She was worn out after carrying several big pailfuls of water.

“One agony after another,

What had I done to deserve miseries that horrible!”

Bemoaning thus, Soṇā carried yet another big pail unsteadily. Tired, exhausted and depleted of strength and energy, she fell down with a thud in the slippery bath-house.

There was pain all over her body from the injury, so she fixed her mind to that pain. Continuing with vigilant effort and relentless mindfulness, she observed the painful

* *bikkhuni* : Buddhist nun.

sensation with patience. Concentration of mind (*Samādhi*) developed in crescendo thereby reaching *Udayabbaya Ñāṇa* (Insight-knowledge with regard to the arising and perishing away of conditioned things, i.e. mind and matter). Then on, *Vedanā Saññā* (Sensation dealt with Conceptualization) became *Vedanā Paññā* (Sensation dealt with Insight Knowledge) when her Concentration (*Samādhi*) heightened further. She began to see clearly and fully the true phenomena of ‘mind - concomitants of mind - matter’ (*Citta-Cetasika-Rūpa*) in continuous building up and breaking down. She eventually attained *Sotāpatti Magga*, the first Path of Enlightenment, and stage by stage, transcended to the level of *Sakadāgami*, *Anāgāmi* and finally to the *Arahatship* endowed with supernormal Higher Physic Powers (*Abinnana*) as was her past aspiration and past-perfection (*Pāramī*). She then entered into the Supramundane Bliss, the Fruition of *Arahatship* (*Phala-samapatti*), without continuing her task of boiling the bath-water as ordered by the *bikkhunis*.

Before long, the *bikkhunis* arrived back and looked for old Soṇā. They didn’t find her at first, then saw her lying in the bath-house. The worldly *bikkhunis* (who hadn’t attained any *Ariya* Paths), pointing fingers at her, accused angrily,

“See, see, you old woman - you are lazy at every task. You don’t want to do anything nor do anything proper. We told you to have boiling water ready for us. Instead, you came and slept here in the bath-house. Now where’s the hot water?”

“Alright, alright, I will boil the water,” Soṇā Theri *Bikkhuni* replied gently, and started to contemplate on *Fire (*Tejo*) *Kasiṇa* and made *Adhiṭṭhāna* (solemn resolution made on asseveration of truth). “May all the water in the tubs of this bath-house be heated to boiling point!” Suddenly, the water began to boil. Watching the boiling water in all the tubs, the worldly *bikkhunis* got frightened and shouted with alarm, “She’s a witch! she’s a witch! Come, look, she’s got the water boiling.” Hearing the commotion and shouting, the senior *bikkhunis* upstairs came down to inquire. They saw and realized fully well that Soṇā Theri had attained *Arahatship*, so they took her and all the *bikkhunis* in the house to the Buddha and related to Him of the incident.

The Exalted Buddha, seated in all splendor amidst the congregation, declared, “My sons and daughters - see for yourself Soṇā Theri who had taken refuge in the Order of *Bikkhuni* only at a ripe old age. In spite of her poor health and ripened age,

* Fire (*Tejo*) *Kasiṇa* : Meditation, with fire as the object of concentration, and when fully accomplished, fire can arise at will.

by virtue of her tenacious Conviction (*Saddha*) and relentless Effort (*Viriya*) she is now an *Arahat* endowed with full supernormal Higher Physic Powers.

O my sons and daughters ... when striving for *Nibbāna*, age is not of prime importance, Effort (*Viriya*) only is the pivotal factor. During the time of Padumuttara Buddha, Soṇā witnessed a *bikkhuni* being conferred upon with the distinguished title of *Āraddha Vīriya* **Etadagga* (Supreme bearer of Energetic Effort) by the Buddha and Soṇā had made a wish aspiring to be honoured like that *bikkhuni* and now her wish has been fulfilled.” After relating the past, the Gotama Buddha conferred on Soṇā Theri *Bikkhuni* with the title of *Āraddha Vīriya Etadagga* in front of the assembly.

Soṇā Theri’s fame spread far and wide. On hearing of the event, her previous husband, already an *Arahat*, and their ten sons, came to see her with much delight. The sons paid obeisance to her begging for her forgiveness having realized their misconduct. Soṇā replied, “I became a nun only because you all neglected me. Have you all taken care of me nicely, I wouldn’t have ventured anywhere from you all but would still be struggling and drowning in *Samāsāra*, the whirl-pool of rounds of birth. Because of you sons, I happened to take refuge in the Three Jewels. I don’t blame you at all, in fact I’m even grateful.”

The sons were happy to get their mother’s forgiveness. They bowed down to pay homage to both parents and requested to let them be their ‘Patron of the *Bhikkhus*’ four material requisites.’ The mother replied, “I am happy and delighted to hear your offer but for a person in the Order, one should not have attachment to anyone for the *Bhikkhus*’ four requisites. A person in the Order has to depend only for his or her alms-bowl and legs for their livelihood, taking alms from whoever is willing to offer. Alright, you may all go now.”

So the husband and ten sons went back to their places respectively.

Only at over the age of sixty, Soṇā entered the Order of *bikkhuni* and by virtue of sheer Effort (*Viriya*), she attained *Arahatship* flanked with supernormal Higher Physic Powers. On hearing this, many old ladies of the time entered the *Bikkhuni* Order as

* *Etadagga* : an honor and title conferred on *bhikkhul bhikkhunī* lay devotee by the Buddha Himself for the most excelled position, the best one in a kind of virtue.

they were highly motivated and convinced that like Soṇā Thera, they could still get Path Enlightenment regardless of old age.

The Sunlun Sayadaw concluded the story like this -

“Well, how about the old ladies here? Don’t you want to become like Soṇā Thera? If so, don’t love yourself, and don’t love other people. Don’t get disheartened just because you are old. Age does not matter. Physical Strength is not a crucial matter as well. Only Faith born out of Conviction (*Saddha*), coupled with Effort/Endeavour (*Viriya*) are the pivotal requirements.

You are so fortunate to be born in the period where the Buddha’s Teachings prevail. Don’t let go of this great opportunity. Do put in effort, time and energy in your *Vipassana* practice. If your children complained and grumbled because they don’t want to feed you or look after you, come to me. I will welcome you with garlands of flowers.

Note : The Sunlun Sayadaw did not give anyone permission to be the ‘Patron of *Bhikkhus*’ four requisites’ during his entire life. He had said that whoever came and made offering to him with *Saddha*, he would acknowledge as such.

The Story of Ko Toke Kyee
Discourse on Treading back to your native village

Devotees,

Do not ever wish to tread back to where you come from. If you wish so, you'll get back to your own native village. Let me tell you a story to illustrate on this.

There was a man named Ko Toke Kyee who lived in Pyay, a town in Middle Myanmar. He was very naive and dull-witted to the point of being foolish. His wife was smart but overbearing. One day, she told him, "Ko Toke Kyee, I have heard that tobacco prices have gone up in *Yangon. You must go there to sell it." "Oh no, not me. I don't even know the way," replied the husband reluctantly. But she insisted, assuring him, "Don't be so foolish. I'll arrange everything to show you the way." She fetched two baskets of tobacco, one big and the other small and hanged them up on a yoke. She then instructed her husband to carry the yoke with the bigger basket placed in front which had been pointed towards Yangon.

"Okay, you just go along this road, follow the big basket and you'll certainly get straight to Yangon. Sell the tobacco there. After that, make sure you go without fail to pay homage to Shwedagon, the famous Pagoda in Yangon."

Ko Toke Kyee tried to remember his wife's instructions and set out for Yangon. After some time, he got tired, so putting down his baskets with the bigger one pointing forward towards Yangon, he took a rest under a shady tree by the roadside. Soon after, he dozed off and fell asleep.

Meanwhile, some travelers passed by, shifting his baskets to make way. But they were shifted in such a way that the two baskets were unintentionally placed in wrong positions, with the bigger basket pointing back towards Pyay, and the smaller basket pointing towards Yangon. When Ko Toke Kyee woke up, he quickly lifted up the yoke and continued on his journey, following the direction of the big basket without realizing the directions had been changed.

After a while, he arrived back to his native place, Pyay. But being impossibly stupid, he thought it was Yangon, the capital. "They say Yangon is a long way away. But it seems very near. I didn't feel tired at all. Oh, look at that famous Shwedagon Pagoda. How come it's so like Shwe San-daw Pagoda of our Pyay," thought Ko Toke Kyee foolishly.

He went into town, and looking around, thought how similar the two cities were, the roads, the trees, even the houses. When he got to the street where he lived, he was

* Yangon : Previously called Rangoon; Capital of Myanmar which is formerly known as Burma.

still thinking stupidly how very familiar the street was. When he got to his house, the night had fallen, so he thought, “Oh, this house is so like mine. Better ask for a night’s lodging.”

Knocking on the door, he asked, “Is anybody in?”

“Yes,” replied the wife.

“Can I stay for the night?” asked Ko Toke Kyee.

The wife recognized her husband’s voice, but knowing how dumb her husband was, pretended to be a stranger and replied, “Oh yes, you can.”

Ko Toke Kyee went inside, put down his baskets and went upstairs, all the while thinking how alike it was with his house.

His wife asked, “Have you had your dinner?” to which he replied, “No, I haven’t.” She prepared dinner after which Ko Toke Kyee sat down to eat thinking how similar too the utensils were to his.

The kids came in and climbed on his shoulders to play like they used to but he remarked foolishly, “Oh, even the kids here are like mine.”

The wife called back the kids, “Leave the visitor alone kids.”

She then went on to ask purposely, “Dear guest, what’s your name?”

“My name is Ko Toke Kyee.

“Where are you from?”

“I came from Pyay.”

“Where are you going?”

“I’ve come to Yangon to sell tobacco.”

At that point, the wife ran out of patience, got up and beat him with her fists as she could no longer suppress her irritation and disgust with his impossible dumbness. Even then, the dim-witted Ko Toke Kyee shouted in defence, “Oh, don’t beat me up. I’m just a visitor.”

The simile of this story is to point out the demeritorious, unwholesome deeds (*Akusala*) and meritorious, wholesome deeds (*Kusala*) represented by the big basket and the small basket respectively.

The sentient beings, for most of the time, have their attention and attraction to demeritorious deeds (*Akusala*) than to meritorious deeds (*Kusala*). If you just follow,

pursue, and be attentive and attracted only to the big basket of demeritorious, unwholesome deeds (*Akusala*) due to your Ignorance, (represented in the story by that of dim-witted Ko Toke Kyee), you will only end up with the resultant effects of those demeritorious deeds, that is, getting back to your native village, the place where you have come from, which are the four miserable worlds (*Apāya*) ... hell, animal world, ghost world and demon world.

[*The moral of this story is the importance of ridding oneself of Ignorance (of the Truth) so that one can discern and not go after the demeritorious, unwholesome deeds (akusala) represented by the big basket.]*

*Discourse on Poke-ma *Cetanā (Basket of Volition)*

Devotees,

Speaking of **baskets** (basket is colloquially called ***'Poke'** in Myanmar), I shall continue the discourse with another story on basket (**Poke**).

You have heard of the exhortation by the Exalted Buddha on the three phases of Volitions (**Cetanā*), haven't you? [*Yes, Venerable Sir.]*

They are:

- *Pubba Cetanā* (volition, intent that arises before the act/deed)
(*the first consonant of Pubba also sounds 'Poke'*)
- *Muñca Cetanā* (volition, intent that arises during the act/deed) and,
- *Apara Cetanā* (volition, intent that arises after the act/deed)

What I had known of and what I'm going to tell you is ...

- ***Poke-ma Cetanā*** (*poke-ma* means 'lifting up the basket' in Myanmar)
- ***Mone-sa Cetanā*** (*mone-sa* means 'feeling of hatred' in Myanmar)
(*Muñca sounds the same as Mone-sa*)

* *Cetanā* : Volition, intent, will.

It is a Mental concomitant (an aspect of mind) of volition; that which motivates action/deed, whether physical, verbal or mental. *Cetanā* is called karma (Kamma) because it is the basic principle (intent) in doing actions whether good or bad. *Cetanā* has 3 phases ... before, during and after an act/deed.

* **Poke** : is a colloquial term commonly used in rural Myanmar, for **basket**; they *are* made of bamboo strips, are used as containers, and come in various sizes.

- *Pa-ya Cetanā* (*pa-ya* means ‘getting what was brought’ in Myanmar).
(*Pa-ya* and *Apara* are in rhyme)

Supposing you ask me what *Poke-ma Cetanā* is ...

Let’s say, in a village, a Novice-Initiation Ceremony known as *Shinpyu* (where a young boy was initiated into the Monastic Order of *Samigha*, as a *Sāṃṇera*, for the first time, with his parents as the chief donor/host of the Ceremony) was held. As is the tradition, the invited guests contributed money to the host who offered meals to the *bhikkhus* and guests. The host started to calculate like this, “I shall invite about a hundred people from town and another two hundred from villages. From townspeople, I should get around eight **pei* to a **kyat* or two from each person, so that would be around a hundred kyats in all of the contribution from the townspeople. From the village-folks, a person would only chip in about eight *peis* to a kyat, so I should get around a hundred kyats.”

Although the function was supposed to be a charitable one, the host had figured out on how much he would get in return from the Ceremony. Then he sent out invitations and prepared meals for three hundred people. As is the rural tradition in villages of Myanmar, he put the cooked rice and curries in big baskets, which is colloquially called ‘*Poke*’ in Myanmar. People came as invited and started to enjoy the meals. Meanwhile, the host also was feeling good surveying the crowded guests, thinking that he would be having a nice bargain. With high expectations, he was happily keeping himself busy lifting up the lid of the rice basket (*Poke*) to check out the food consumed, and glancing at the guests-list and their contributions. Because of repeated lifting of the basket (*Poke* means ‘basket,’ *ma* means ‘lift up’ in Myanmar), I had denoted this unwholesome volition as ‘*Poke-ma Cetana*’ instead of *Pubba Cetana*.

Guests were many, both from the town and the villages. But contrary to the host’s expectations, their contributions were sparse; it was only about four to eight *peis* from each person. He started to reflect grudgingly, “What a shame! For functions of those group from town, I had generously contributed a kyat or two each time. And for occasions of our village-folks, I had chipped in eight *peis* to a kyat at each occasion. Furthermore, I even went to help out in person. Now, when my turn comes, they are so closefisted, contributing only about four to eight *peis* each. Moreover, some even brought along extra people for my Ceremony.” That was how the host started to feel towards the guests who had given only a little, ... dissatisfied, grudge, hatred, illwill. This demeritorious volition is what I called ‘*Mone-sa Cetanā*’ (*Mone-sa* meaning dislike, hatred, illwill in Myanmar) instead of *Muñca Cetanā*.

* *pei* : Small currency change (coins) used at that time in Myanmar.

* *Kyat* : Currency (paper notes) used in Myanmar

Though feelings of dislike and hatred appeared, the host finally gave up, putting a restraint on his untoward thoughts of greed and grudge, and consoled himself with a sigh, “Well, I suppose I will just get what they brought along.” This unwholesome volition is what I called *‘Pa-ya Cetanā* (*Pa-ya*, in Myanmar, means getting what is brought) instead of *Apara Cetanā*.

These are the three kinds of *Cetanā* (Volitions) that I had known of ... *‘Poke-ma Cetanā, Mone-sa Cetanā, and Pa-ya Cetanā.’* I do hope our lay devotees make a note of these three **unwholesome volitions** so that you can try and avoid them.

Discourse on the Path of Merits (Kusala) and Demerits (Akusala)

Devotees, let me continue my discourse on *Kusala* (Merits) and *Akusala* (Demerits)...

It is very important to know clearly about the wholesome meritorious mind (*Kusala citta*) and unwholesome demeritorious mind (*akusala citta*). I shall discern this with an analogy,...

A person on a sand beach in the hot summer is certainly hot, isn't he?

[*Yes, it's hot, Venerable Sir.*]

Compared to him, don't you think someone living in the shade of a house or a building or a tree would be cooler? [*Yes, it would be cooler, Venerable Sir.*]

But wouldn't someone living in the shelter of relatives be even cooler, more peaceful and protected than the shade? [*Yes, indeed, Venerable Sir.*]

Then, how about living in the shelter provided by one's parents? Wouldn't that be much cooler and more secured? [*Yes, it would be much safer, Venerable Sir.*]

Yes indeed, but the sanctuary and refuge provided by the three Gems - Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sanigha*, are far more cooler and much more peaceful when compared to the shelter and shield of one's parents. So, by taking the shelter of these three Gems, you employ the Five Strengths/Powers (*Bala*), namely,

- the power of Faith/Conviction (*Sadhā-Bala*),
- the power of Perseverance/Effort (*Vīriya-Bala*),
- the power of Mindfulness (*Sati-Bala*),
- the power of Concentration (*Samādhi-Bala*) and,

- the power of Insight Knowledge (*Pañña-Bala*).

With these Five Powers (*Bala*) in hand, you take up the Threefold training (*Sikkha*) of Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Insight Knowledge (*Pañña*). When they get fully developed, you come to apprehend the phenomena of ‘mind - concomitants of mind - matter’ (*Citta-Cetasika-Rūpa*) in the endless process of ‘arising and disintegrating.’ You begin to discern that elements which happens here and now are never the same as those which follows, always in a flux, constantly changing from moment to moment. You come to realize and take this nature of Impermanence as unpleasant, unsatisfactory, as Suffering (*Dukkha*).

You search for the true Cause of this Suffering and found it to be Craving (*Taṇhā-Samudaya*). Thereupon, with this realization, *Magga-ñāṇa* (Path-Knowledge) cuts off the inherent mental defilements (*Anusaya*), breaking the chain of ‘Cause and Effect.’ The Cause is broken, thus no more resultant Effect is produced. This is *Nirodha*, Cessation of all Sufferings. Well then, that is the realization of the Four Noble Truths occurring simultaneously (*Ariya-Saccā*), isn’t that so? [*Yes indeed, Venerable Sir.*]

All these are the benefits of your own meritorious thoughts and deeds which neither your parents nor your relatives can provide for you. Only you alone can make these supreme *Dhamma* happen by cultivating and refining your meritorious mind, and by relentlessly developing it with your meditation practice you can attain the first Path of Enlightenment (*Sottapatti Magga*, Stream-winner Knowledge), culminating in the final Path of *Arahatta Magga* (*Arahatship*). All these deeds are known as meritorious *Dhamma* (*Kusala-Dhamma*).

Demeritorious mind (*Akusala Citta*) ... it means thinking of unwholesome, evil wicked things over and over again.

Say supposing, in mundane world, if you kill your enemy by stabbing him with a knife or smashing him with a rod, you can kill him only this life; you cannot follow him to his next life to kill him. But when a thief procreates another thief, literally by way of his eyes, his ears, his tongue, his body, (which means, procreating successive wicked immoral thoughts that arise through the five sense-doors as we are always in contact and fed with the five sense-objects), the chain family of successional offspring-thieves, meaning the repeatitive successive immoral demeritorious mind would certainly lead you to just one terminus - the four miserable realms, the *Apāya*.

The *Manaw-maya Ruby from Mount Vebhūla
[*Continuation of the previous Discourse*]

I've been telling you not to tread back to your native village, the place where you come from (like Ko Toke Kye in the previous story). You should endeavor to reach the top of Mount Vebhūla where there are precious rubies and gems.

To get there is not easy at all. You have to pass through three big forests which are guarded by three *monster-ogres. Those who reach to the top of Mount Vebhūla are indeed very rare. Of those who did get to the mountain, some only picked up worthless flint-stones or gravel instead of searching for valuable gems and rubies. Some passed away their time having fun and be merry along the way singing and whistling before going back to places where they come from. But a few did strive, dig and endeavor until they were able to get the priceless Manaw-maya Ruby of Mount Vebhūla.

The Analogy

Mount Vebhūla represents Buddha's Teaching (*Sāsanā*) which basically and essentially constitutes of Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*), and Insight Knowledge (*Paññā*). The three monster-ogres depict Greed (*Lobha*), Hatred (*Dosa*) and Delusion (*Moha*). The three forests stand for the three Spheres of Sentient Beings' existence, namely, Sensuous Sphere (*Kāma-Loka*), Fine-Material Sphere (*Rūpa-Loka*) and Non-Material Sphere (*Arūpa-Loka*). Those who waste time having fun whistling, singing and dancing away exemplify those fun-loving purposeless people with no worthy objectives heading back to their native village, the place where they come from, i.e. the four miserable realms (*Apāya*). Those who pick up just the flint-stones and gravel typify those people who collect merits with wholesome meritorious deeds that support and generate further rounds of rebirth. Only the priceless Wish-fulfilling Manaw-maya Ruby represents *Nibbāna* where all Sufferings ceased to exist, and which could be attained by arduous diligent *Vipassanā* Practice.

So, while the Practical aspect of Buddha's Teaching (i.e. *Paṭipatti Sāsanā; Vipassanā* Practice) is still thriving and within your reach, take care not to lose this supreme opportunity. Try to overcome the three monster-ogres depicting Greed, Hatred, and Delusion (*Lobha, Dosa* and *Moha*) which govern and direct the three Spheres

* Manaw-maya Ruby : Wish-fulfilling Ruby; the Legendary Ruby which is said to fulfill the wishes of the owner.

* Monster-ogres : Evil ferocious demons who are said to feed on human.

(**Loka*) of Sentient Beings' Existence represented by the three forests which you have to override as well. By utilizing the Five Powers (Faith, Perseverance, Mindfulness, Concentration, Insight) you must endeavor to do your best in *Vipassanā* Practice to reach *Nibbāna*.

Method of Vipassanā Meditation
as taught by the Venerable Sunlun Gū-kyauṅ Sayadaw

Q. Devotees, don't you think it is a suffering to be drifting away in the sea of *Samisāra*?

A. Yes indeed, it truly is a suffering, Venerable Sir.

Q. If you consider it as a suffering, don't you want happiness and peace?

A. Yes of course, Venerable Sir, we would very much like to have happiness and peace.

Q. If you want happiness, you shall have to kill both your mother and father (so to speak). Moreover, you also have to eliminate the two rulers who rule the kingdom as well as the twelve secret agents. For the parents, because they have given and done so much for you, they cannot be finished off with one time. You have to kill four times.

The mother and father mean *Taṇhā* (Craving) and *Māna* (Conceit).

The two rulers stand for -

**Sassata-Diṭṭhi* (Eternalism; the wrong View of Eternity of the Soul; and

**Uccheda-Diṭṭhi* (Annihilationism; the wrong View of Annihilation of the Soul).

* *Loka* : *Loka* here denotes the 3 spheres of existence comprising the whole universe, i.e.

1. the Sensuous World (*Kāma-Loka*), or the world of the 5 senses; it comprises:
 - 1) hells (*Niriyā*)
 - 2) the animal kingdom (*Tiracchāna-yoni*)
 - 3) the ghost-realm (*Peta-Loka*)
 - 4) the demon-world (*Asura-nikaya*),
 - 5) the human world (*Manussa-Loka*) and
 - 6) the 6 lower celestial worlds (*Deva I*)
2. the Fine-material World (*Rūpa-Loka*), corresponding to the 4 fine-material absorptions (*Jhāna* 1-4), The beings in this world still exist the faculties of seeing and hearing, which together with the other sense faculties are temporarily suspended in the 4 Absorptions.
3. the Immaterial-World (*Arūpa-Loka*), corresponding to the 4 Immaterial Absorptions (*Jhāna*, 5-8). Here, the beings have no body/corporeality whatsoever; only the 4 mental groups (*Khandha*) exist.

**Sassata-Diṭṭhi* : Eternalism; View of Eternity of the Soul; the false view which holds that Soul of all sentient beings are eternal after death.

The twelve secret agents represent the twelve **Āyatana*, comprising of six sense-bases (somatic organs, *Ajjhattika*) and the corresponding six sense-objects (external bases, *Bahiddha*).

If you want happiness, you should emulate King Chandagutta (*Chandra Gupta II) famed for his military strategy in defeating the enemy. To begin with, you purge the twelve secret agents (*Āyatanas*, *bases*), dealing with the external six (six sense-objects) first. Here is how to do it.

First, you pay homage to the Buddha, take the Precepts and offer yourself, i.e. your body and mind which are comprised of the five aggregates (*Khandha*) to the Buddha for the duration of your meditation period for the goal of attaining *Nibbāna*.

[Moreover, offer yourself, i.e. your body and mind which are the five aggregates (*Khandha*), to Sunlun Gu-kyaung Sayadaw, the founding father of this Meditation for the time span of your meditation period for attainment of *Nibbāna*.]

Then send out your loving-kindness (*Mettā*) and share your merits with all sentient beings in the thirty one states of *Samisāra*.

Don't fix or limit your duration of practice. Try to meditate as much and as long as you can. Choose a posture that you can maintain for a long time without shifting. The object of your meditation is on the **touch** of in-breath and out-breath through the nostrils. To get your mind focused on that point of **touch of breath** only and not to let it wander elsewhere, close your eyes and breathe strongly, putting in effort so that you would know each and every breath that goes out and comes in at the nostril tip. That way, thoughts, apart from the awareness of touch of breath, would not come in.

When the air touches at the nostril tip (body-door), you are aware of the touch. Put mindfulness on this awareness. These three incidents '**touch-awareness-mindfulness**' should occur simultaneously.

* *Uccheda-Diṭṭhi* : Annihilationism; View of Annihilation of the Soul; the false view which holds that after the present life, there is no further life; that mind-matter processes of a being will be altogether annihilated at death.

* *Āyatana* : Base. The 12 Bases or Sources on which depend the mental processes consist of :

Six internal sense-bases (somatic organs) (<i>Ajjhattika</i>)	Six sense-objects (external bases) (<i>Bahiddha</i>)
1. eye, or visual organ	1. visible object
2. ear, or auditory organ	2. sound, or audible object
3. nose, or olfactory organ	3. odour, or olfactive object
4. tongue or gustatory organ	4. taste, or gustative object
5. body, or tactile organ	5. body-contact, or tactile object
6. mind-base, or consciousness (<i>Manāyatana</i>)	6. mind-object (<i>Dhammāyatana</i>)

* King Chandra Gupta II (375-415) is a famous king of Gupta Dynasty which dominated North Central India in the 4th Century.

While you are meditating this way, your eyes do not look here or there. Your ears do not listen to this or that. Your nose does not smell anything. Your mouth does not want to eat this food or that. Your body does not want to go anywhere. By staying that way, your eye-faculty, ear-faculty, nose-faculty, tongue-faculty and body-faculty, in fact, all five faculties are well guarded. This is true Morality (*Indriya-Samivara Sīla*), i.e. Purity of Morality by virtue of restraining the six sense-faculties. *Indriya* means ‘in control, in restraint.’ And *Samivara* means ‘refraining’ so that the mental defilements, Greed, Hatred and Delusion (*Loba, Dosa* and *Moha*) do not enter your mind. It is extremely difficult to acquire this pure Morality by restraining sense-faculties (*Indriya-Samivara Sīla*) if one is not in the state of meditating process.

With diligent practice on the strong breathing with deep mindfulness, your mind would not wander to things that you normally pay attention to. Instead, the mind stays concentrated and collected at the nostril tip (body-door) taking things as they are. Variegated colors of white, red, yellow, blue, and colors of stars, moon, sun, pearl, etc. or other conceptual objects may appear before you.

Though exceedingly attractive to be immersed in, those objects are not the things that you should focus or follow. You have to get your mind back to your body where the object of meditation is. These are common incidents that a meditator (*yogī*) usually encounter along the course of his practice and do not signify real progress. In fact, they are one of the ten traps/ dangers (**Upakkilesa*) of *Vipassana* practice, as the astonishing, sometimes exhilarating, experience might lead the *yogī* astray into thinking that he had achieved higher spiritual levels.

The state of not letting your mind go anywhere but stay focused only at the nostril tip (body-door), where it is deeply mindful of the awareness of touch, means the six external secret-agents, which portray the six sense-objects (external bases, *Bahiddhra Āyatana*) are said to have been killed off.

After several diligent practice with mindfulness, awareness of various sensations in the body - sensations of heat, cold, cramps, pain, etc. appears. When you are aware of heat sensation, just be mindful of this awareness of heat. The heat sensation and the awareness of this heat sensation will eventually end simultaneously. When you are aware of pain sensation, simply be mindful of the awareness of this pain. If the mind is totally concentrated, the pain and the awareness of this pain will eventually tapers off and disappear simultaneously. The same is true of other each and every individual sensation. The nature of heat sensation does not follow the nature and course of cold sensation,

* *Upakkilesa* : See Glossary

and vice versa. Each has its own distinct individual characteristics and follow its own course.

These sensations may arise in any parts of the body. 'The body' means the body as a whole. You must not note it as separate particular parts like my leg, my arm, etc.

(you should not have connotation of 'me' or 'mine', leg or arm). When a sensation arises, you will be aware of it and you simply keep mindful of that sensation as and when the sensation arises. That state of awareness together with concurrent mindfulness on the sensation is called ****Sammasana ñāna***.

By striving on to practice the mindfulness of bodily sensations again and again, your concentration power (*Samādhi*) develops to such a higher level that you come to see the processes that is happening in the body as they are in their true form, the phenomena of mind and matter in a continual process of changing (*Sansati*). You exert the five powers (*Bala*), which are your supreme strength in Faith (*Saddhā*), Effort (*Vīriya*), Mindfulness (*Sati*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Insight Knowledge (*Paññā*). With these in hand, you try even harder in your attempt, and eventually, your concentration power (*Samādhi*) will escalate even further.

At one time, you may experience a bright illumination in your body, and you may see your own body as if reflected in a mirror. You may vividly see your internal organs functioning, in part or as a whole. You may also see your skin in deterioration, bruised or peeling off, or like blisters erupting, or as if some tiny dots like pearls flaring out, or like rain drops falling.

Meanwhile, with further practice on mindfulness of bodily sensations in the process of arising and vanishing phenomena, concentration power grows even stronger and become solid. When **Udaya-baya ñāna* (Insight concerning the arising and perishing away of conditioned things, i.e. mind and matter) strengthens, **Perception of sensation in Conventional terms (*Vedanā Sañña*) transcends to Perception of sensation in Ultimate terms (*Vedana Panna*)**. There, you experience on your body, sparks in arrays at the skin pores, like fire sparks emitting when flint and flint-stone are stricken. Further more, you come to see the elements of 'mind - concomitants of mind - matter' (*Cīta-Cetasika-Rūpa*) in the process of building up and breaking down in truly conspicuous terms.

* *Sammasana ñāna* : Insight-knowledge of the three characteristics of life, namely, Impermanence(*Anicca*), Suffering (*Dukkha*) and Non-self (*Anatta*) by contemplating on mind and matter.

**Udayabbaya-ñāna* : Insight-knowledge concerning the arising and perishing away of conditioned things, i.e. mind and matter (*Nama* and *Rūpa*).

On reaching this stage, you come to understand that you have in fact, no legs, nor arms nor any bodily parts. In Truth, there are only Ultimate Elements ... mind and matter in their natural phenomena. The perception, the name-calling, the conceptualization such as Man, Woman, Celestial, Brahmin, Human, Animal ... these are all because you have not apprehended the Real. When Insight shows you the Reality, the *yogi* comes to understand the nature's elements in true terms. He felt much assured with his discovery making his conviction and reverence in the Three Gems even more firm and solid. Only at this stage, you get to the point where the six internal secret-agents which represent the six sense-bases (*Ajjhattika*) are killed off. From then on, you discard the false view of Eternalism (*Sassata-Diṭṭhi*) and the false view of Annihilationism (*Uccheda-Diṭṭhi*); but their roots have not been cut off yet.

The state of clear, pure calmness and collectedness while you are contemplating with mindfulness on sensation is Morality (*Sīla*). The one-pointedness of mind leading to the illumination of light is Concentration (*Samādhi*). The analyzing and realization of mind-matter phenomena in its true nature of 'mind-concomitants of mind-matter' is Insight Knowledge (*Paññā*). Thus you are complete with three-fold Training (*Sikkhā*) ... Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Insight (*Paññā*). But at this stage, they are just mundane Morality, mundane Concentration and mundane Insight.

The Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw further explained in terms of Visuddhi

When you are observing sensation with mindfulness, your five sense-faculties (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body) are in control, which means, your morality is pure. That is **Purity of Morality** (*Sīla-Vissudhi*).

Because your mind is totally focused and concentrated on the sensation, the mind is pure. That is **Purity of Mind** (*Citta-Vissudhi*).

Morality is pure, the mind is pure, so you see things as they really are. If you ask, "What do you mean by 'seeing things as they really are'?" it is like this:

You come to see the process of bodily sensations as sparks of fire that appear at the skin-pores, like when flint and flint-stone are stricken. Watching thus, you come to realize that you have, in true fact, no legs nor arms nor body. The body is nowhere to be seen or felt; no sense of 'I'; no connotation of 'me' or 'mine.' This is **Purity of View** (*Diṭṭhi-Visuddhi*).

On having this purity of view, you felt deeply convinced and assured of Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sanigha*. your faith, reverence and conviction become unshakable. The wrong view has been rectified and doubts have been removed. And that is **Purity by Overcoming Doubt** (*Kaṅkhā-vitaraṇa-Visuddhi*.)

With earnest and diligent practice, your Insight-knowledge transcends from

Perception of sensation in conventional terms (*Vedanā Saññā*) to Perception of sensation in Ultimate terms (*Vedanā Paññā*). You come to experience things that you have never experienced before; a bright aura which is strikingly pure, clear, and attractive appears before you together with deep calmness and peace.

This experience is not to be happy about or cherished. Don't get engrossed in it. Attaching and savoring in this fascinating experience is actually getting yourself immersed in the ten perils/dangers (*Upakkilesa*) of *Vipassanā*. You actually have to work very hard in your practice to get to this level. This is just one incident that you will come across in the course of your path progress. The attraction, immersion and attachment in the exuberant colors, the bright aura/illumination, the deep tranquillity and such unusual events is called *Nikanti*.

Sufficient effort (*Javana*) comes forth to abandon these attractions. The mind becoming more stable, firm and steadfast, Advertence at the Mind-door (*Mano-dvāravajjana Citta*) arises, (i.e. your mind-door adverting Consciousness determines the way) and subsequently, you arrive at **Saṅkhā-rupakkha ñāṇa*, i.e. the state of Equanimity, a totally balanced composed state of mind in observing the true nature of mind-matter phenomena which is manifested as the physical and mental sensations, be they hot, cold, painful or pleasant. The feeling of indifference (*uppekhā*) is fostered by the balance of the mind or *equanimity* (*tatra majjhatatā*).

Saṅkhā-rupakkhā ñāṇa is comprised of the three preliminary Impulsions (**Javana*) or conscious moments (*Vipassanā Cittas*). They are namely, **Parikamma* (preparation of

* *Saṅkharupekkha-ñāṇa* : The 'Equanimity-Knowledge with regard to the Formations of mind-matter phenomena. It is the 9th Insight level. At this moment, he is totally composed, not reacting to the sensations in anyway, neither glad nor sad, nor angry or perturbed, or attached in perceiving the six sense-objects. By virtue of the full-awareness and deep mindfulness, he feels neither pain nor pleasure; he can maintain equanimity towards mind-matter and conditioned things even though he is observing the incessant dissolution and the unsatisfactory nature of them.

* *Javana* : Cognitive impulse; flash of apperception; apperception. Impulsion; a force that impels; *Javana* is a series of *Cittas* (consciousness, thought-moments) with full cognition (of the object) occurring at its climax (*Citta-vīthi*).

Magga-vīthi : Chain of consciousness that arises immediately before *Magga*. They are the 4 impulsions (*Javana*):

1. *Parikama* : Preparation of *Magga*
2. *Upacāra* : Proximity of *Magga*
3. *Anuloma* : Adaptation or connection; it harmonizes the lower *Cittas* (Consciousness) with the higher *Cittas*.
4. *Gotrabhū* : Maturity thought-moment immediately preceding the entrance into the Noble (*Ariya*) Path. This *Citta* (Consciousness) cuts the worldly (*Puthujana*)-lineage to form the noble (*Ariya*)-lineage.

Magga), *Upacāra* (proximity of *Magga*), and *Anuloma* (adaptation or connection; it harmonizes the lower *Cittas*/Consciousness with the higher *Cittas*). These three Impulsions clear off the mental defilements. Thereupon, Gotrabhū Consciousness lets you perceive *Nibbāna*. Following that signal of *Nibbāna* and leaning on and taking support from this vision of *Nibbāna* pointed out by *Gotrabhu*, *Magga-ñāṇa* (Path-Knowledge) arises in a flash and eliminates the latent mental defilements (*Anusaya Kilesā*) totally. [**Magga-vīthi*]

Only with that elimination, one is said to have completely killed the two rulers which stand for the two wrong views ... *Sassata-Diṭṭhi* (Eternalism View) and *Uccheda-Diṭṭhi* (Annihilationism View).

Craving (*Taṇhā*) and Conceit (*Māna*) exert too much impact and influence on a person's life. Having profound effect upon you like parents, these two mental defilements cannot be uprooted at one go. They need four times of killing to be totally eliminated. If you want to do, just go ahead and eliminate them.

Continuation of the Discourse with a story on 'The Tortoise'

Let me continue the discourse with a story. Say, there was a man who had just recovered from an illness. While recuperating, he felt like eating meat but he had no money to buy. One day, while walking along the riverside, he saw a huge tortoise.

'Wow, that's great. I'd better catch this tortoise for my meal,' thought the man with glee. So he walked into the river. As he was still weak in his convalescence, he couldn't put much effort in catching the tortoise. He tried to pull it, but the tortoise resisted and tried to swim away. Hence, the man was being dragged into the river by the tortoise while pulling it. First, he was only up to his ankles in the water, but gradually he was dragged further till the water got to his knees, then to his thighs, then to his chest, until finally, he was deep in the river up to his mouth.

Only then he gave up, letting the tortoise go, saying rather shame-facedly, "Hey you tortoise! I will let you go this once, but you must let me go ten more times when my turn comes."

The story applies to the yogis. When people come to meditate here, we don't want to let you go; we would very much want you to persevere till the very end. But like the man who cannot hold on to the tortoise, we cannot do anything but let you go if you are adamant on abandoning the practice.

Watching people drifting in the sea of *Samisāra*, I couldn't help feeling awfully sorry for them. I try to pull them out from that sea of *Samisāra* if they are within my hand's reach; throwing out ropes or bamboo poles for those farther away for rescue. Even so, if they don't take the trouble to reach out for my hand, or to take hold of the rope or bamboo pole, then it's entirely up to them to deal with their *Kamma*. They'll just have to grin and bear it.

Continuation of the Discourse with a story on 'The Two Friends'

Now, let me end my discourse with another story as a reminder. There were two friends traveling together. Both of them were hard up and becoming hungry but penniless, one friend make a suggestion to the other, "My friend, let's feed each other with our thoughts and eat with our imagination."

"Okay, fine, you treat me first."

So, the other said, "Alright, I'm going to feed you with chicken curry. Here it is, go ahead and eat your heart out!"

"Ah, this is really delectable," remarked his friend.

The friend continued serving with an imagined banquet made up of pork curry, grilled chicken, etc. After a series of dishes, he said, "I'm sure you are full. Now, it's my turn."

"Here comes fried elephant-leg, savor it!" served his friend.

"Hm... this is delicious. Can I have some more?"

"But you still have a lot left. This is fried elephant-leg you know. Finish it first," said his friend.

Like in the story, I'm going to feed you with fried elephant-leg.

"When there is touch, there is awareness. Be mindful of that awareness. If these three components 'Touch-Awareness-Mindfulness' are occurring simultaneously, you are endowed with *Sammasana ñāṇa* [the Insight-knowledge of the three characteristics of life, namely, Impermanence (*Anicca*), Suffering (*Dukkha*) and Non-self (*Anatta*)]. The Buddha and the noble ones (*Ariyas*) always maintain this *Sammasana ñāṇa* Insight with them until they pass into *Parinibbāna*.

Devotees ... my advice to you is, try your best to eat and savor the big delicious piece of meat I'm lavishing out to you all. Don't give any excuses, toothache or whatever, to avoid eating it. It is for your own good. So go ahead and munch it.

*The Story of *Bilone Bird, the Oriental Skylark*

Once upon a time, there lived an Oriental Skylark in a forest. She had a son, a little bird. One day, she told him, "Son, I'm going to look for food. Do listen to what your mother has to say. For your own safety, you must not leave this dried mud-crust formed by an ox's hoof-print." After repeatedly warning her son not to get out from the protected basin, she flew away to search for food. Meanwhile, the little bird got restless and ventured out to play.

A big eagle flew by, saw the little bird, swooped down upon him and carried him away. The little bird, caught in the eagle's claws, said defiantly, "Because I didn't pay heed to my mother's warning, I was preyed upon by this eagle. If only I had taken my mother's advice, I would be safe and sound."

The eagle heard and retorted, "Well, well, how come you could boast like that. What was your mother's advice?"

"My mother repeatedly warned me to stay inside the mud crust of an ox's hoof-print and not to leave there."

"Alright, I will take you back to your place. Let's see whether you can hide from me."

"Okay, just get me back to my place," replied the little bird.

After the eagle had dropped him into the mud crust formed by an ox's hoof-print, the little bird challenged, "Hey you eagle ... can you get me now?" The provoked eagle got angry and flew down in a lightening speed to the ground to swoop upon the little bird but alas, the sharp spike of the mud crust pierced his chest and the eagle died on the spot.

The moral of the story is ... the mother Skylark is like the Faculty of Wisdom, (**Paññidriya Cetasika*). The mud crust formed by the ox's hoof-print is like the body.

* *Bilone* : Name of Oriental Skylark in Myanmar.

* *Paññidriya cetasika* : It is one of the 52 concomitants of mind that has the control over the understanding of things as they really are, i.e., in the light of Impermanence (*Anicca*), Suffering (*Dukkha*) and Not-Self (*Anatta*).

Paññā is wisdom or insight and *Indriya* is the controlling faculty.

The little bird portrays the mind. The eagle represents the five sense-objects namely, visible objects (*Rūpa-rammana*), sounds (*Sadda-rammana*), smells (*Gandha-rammana*), tastes (*Rasa-rammana*) and tangible objects (*Phoṭṭhabba-rammana*) - they are those that eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body feast on.

The simile of the story is - you must heed that contact/touch (*Phassa*) is the condition, the cause, for feeling/sensation to arise.

Phassa Paccaya Vedana - contact is the condition/cause for the arising of feeling/sensation

Vedanā Paccaya Taṇhā - feeling/sensation is the condition/cause for the arising of Craving.

But you must keep *Vedanā Paccaya Vedana* and shouldn't go forward to *Taṇhā* (Craving), i.e. to keep feeling/sensation in check and not to let that be the condition or cause for Craving to arise. Like the little bird in the story, if you venture out for Craving (*Taṇhā*), you will become the eagle's prey. Listen to the mother (*Paññidriya Cetasika*) and follow her advice. Just keep your mind in the body and don't dare venture out to gratify your senses.

A Discourse on the 'Five Enemies'

The devotees ask the Venerable Sayadaw to discern on the 'Five Enemies' and the following was how he interpreted on the subject in his discourse :-

You all know the conventional so called 'Five Enemies' as 'Water, Fire, the Ruler, the Thief and the Hated One,' don't you? [*Yes, Venerable Sir.*]

But these are just external enemies. They can cause you pain only for one life. The 'Five Enemies' that I am going to tell you are internal ones. They cause you pain, distress and misery not only in one life, but all throughout the innumerable existences in the course of *Samisāra* (rounds of birth), day in and day without interruption.

Water - as an enemy means the endless flow of your 'thoughts.'

Mind never ceases to think. Thoughts drifted incessantly from one sense-object to another like the flow of water, giving rise to kammic deeds and resultants (cause and effect) generating the unbroken chain of life cycles (*Samisāra*). Because of its effective powerful hindrance in one's Path to *Nibbāna*, 'thoughts' are regarded as an enemy.

Fire - It is meant by the Fire of Greed, Hatred and Delusion (*Loba, Dosa, Moha*). The burning passion of these emotions are so explosive as to fuel and destroy

sentient beings continuously and relentlessly throughout the *Samisāra*. And hence considered as a formidable enemy.

The Rulers - The Rulers as you know, are those who govern countries and their subjects and who bring justice to anyone who breaks the law. They can impose penalty of varying degrees, from imprisonment to even death sentence according to the crime one commits.

The Rulers that I will expound are these four *Dhammas* which influence and condition the body and mind ...

Karma/volitional deeds (*Kamma*),

Mind (*Citta*),

Temperature (*Utu*) and

Nutriment (*Ahāra*).

These Rulers are extremely just and they act without any bias or prejudice. They are there throughout the whole *Samisāra* ready to inflict harm, sickness or death either individually (e.g. death due to bad karma, or sickness due to improper nutriment, etc.,) or in combination. Sometimes, when either one of *Kamma*, *Citta*, *Utu*, *Ahāra*, or in conjunction act adversely upon one, the suffering is in enormity. That is why they are also reckoned as fearful enemies.

The Thieves - The thieves here are meant by stealing with eyes, stealing with ears, stealing with nose, stealing with tongue, stealing with body and stealing with thoughts (meaning when contact occurs between sense-bases and sense-objects, e.g., eye with visible object, ear with sound, there arises feeling/sensation giving rise to Craving, *Taṇhā*, and so on). These stealing are for gratification of the six-senses, for which a person may go to unbelievable enormous lengths to commit unwholesome evil deeds. As these particular thieves have been with us together for infinite length of *Samisāra*, they must be accounted as treacherous enemies.

That is why I always exhort to avoid the ‘three wants’ ... Avoid wanting to see, wanting to hear, wanting to know ... for if you want to see, if you want to hear, if you want to know, they will propel us to do appalling things and you’ll be immersed in *Samisāra* for a long long time with nowhere in sight of its end.

The Hated Ones - Devotees, do you want to go through ageing (*Jarā*), disease (*Byādhī*) and death (*Marāṇa*)? [*No, we don’t want, Venerable Sir.*]

Well, the truth is, once there is birth (*Jāti*), ageing, disease and death inevitably follow.

Do you love old age, disease and death (*Jarā, Byādhī, Maraṇa*) then?

[*No we don't, Venerable Sir.*]

Well, though you do not love them, once you are born (*Jā'ti*), you have to face and live with them whether you love them or not as you don't know when in the innumerable rounds of birth (*Samisa'ra*) you have been in association with them.

That is why the Buddha had exhorted ... "*Appiyehi Sampayogo Dukkho*," meaning, "To be associated with those you do not love is Suffering."

So, although you do not love or like them, you are being associated with ageing, disease and death (*Jara', Bya'dhi, Maraṇa*). As such, these detested entities are also deemed as direful enemies.

These are what I termed as 'The Five Enemies.'

Discourse on the Cycle of Samisāra and its Annihilation

- (1) Because of Ignorance (*Avijjā*), Craving (*Taṇhā*) arises.
Because of Craving (*Taṇhā*), Clinging/Attachment/Obsession (*Upādāna*) arises.
Because of Clinging/Attachment/Obsession (*Upādāna*), you strive to get it (things, rebirth).
And when you do get it (i.e. rebirth), you suffer from the consequences (*Dukkha*).

- (2) Unpleasantness (*Dukkha*) is the Truth to be discerned.
Pleasantness (*Sukha*) will set you adrift in the sea of *Samisāra*.

Not knowing (the Truth) is Ignorance (*Avijjā*), a Delusion (*Moha*).
Greed/Desire (*Lobha*) is Craving (*Taṇhā*).
Clinging/Attachment/Obsession is *Upādāna*.

Because of Ignorance, you crave for things and higher life and become obsessed with them, wishing and wanting to become a Man, Celestial, Brahmin, or rich man, all striving to get the best of the best worlds.

Because of craving and obsession for riches, for life itself, you aim, you wish, and you tirelessly work for it. And consequently what you get is what you pursue, which is birth (*Jā'ti*) of course.

And once there is birth (*Jā'ti*), you inevitably grow old though you don't like it; you certainly encounter illness, sickness, disease though you abhor it;

you inevitably die one day though you detest it.

Thus, Birth (*Jāti*) is the culprit, the villain, the precursor of all Suffering (*Dukkha*). Birth invariably leads to Suffering. If you wish for birth again, go ahead and be prepared to bear all the consequential Suffering.

Let's say, you tell me, "Oh, we now realize we've gone through sufferings upon sufferings in *Samisāra*. We don't want to suffer anymore." If that is so, this is what I will tell you ...

You must cultivate Morality (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*) and Wisdom (*Paññā*), known as the Three Noble Training (*Sikkha*). Have reverence and total conviction in 'Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Sanīgha*,' the Three Gems, and work for your own liberation from *Samisāra* through diligent practice of *Vipassanā* meditation.

When you meditate, unpleasant sensations appear in the body by virtue of your *Samādhi* (Concentration). You contemplate on them with deep mindfulness and find they are not easy to endure. The fact is,

"Unpleasantness is the Truth to be discerned.

Pleasantness will set you adrift in the sea of *Samisāra*."

Sensations (*Vedanā*) that appear in your body are actually the repercussions of your past deeds, the resultants of your past karma, illustrating the phenomena of 'Cause and Effect.' It is an embodiment of the Noble Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Saccā*). On observing this Truth of Suffering with *Vipassana* Insight (*Paññā*), i.e. being mindful of the unpleasant bodily sensations, you find it very unbearable. So you give up or shift your position to ease off the pain. Unpleasantness disappears thus and pleasantness ensues. But pleasantness (*Sukha*) is not conducive to discover the Truth, so you will not gain true Insight (*Ñāṇa*). For want of Insight, you do not see the Truth as it really is, so there will be rebirths (because you still crave for them). And therefore, you will go on drifting perpetually in the whirlpool of *Samisāra* with untold sufferings in your further existences.

But mobilizing the Five Powers/Strengths (*Bāla*) in hand, you overcome the unpleasant sensations which exemplify the 'Truth of Suffering.' For the first time in *Samisāra*, you come to perceive the body-mind complex, their five aggregates (*Khandhas*), the volitional activities (*Saṅkhāra*), all the *Dhamma*, the Truth, that you have never known or seen before. You come to discern the phenomena of 'mind - concomitants of mind - matter' (*Citta, Cetasika, Rūpa*) in its true form, that processes are happening and passing away, going on their own course, and on which you have no control.

After this experience, you begin to discard gradually, to a certain extent, the wrong views which have been ingrained in you through out the *Samisāra*, thereby getting

some measure of peace of mind. You come to understand then, why *Ariyas* and sages of old had dreaded this dire ocean of *Samsara*. They had earnestly embraced *Vipassana* practice for True Insight and True Peace and had obtained the knowledge of seeing things as they truly are (*Yatha-bhuta nana*). They had abhorred the suffering (*Dukkha*) of *Samsara* and so had abstained from doing things that would act as fuel for perpetuation in *Samsara*. Because they did not crave for further existences, they did not do *kammic* deeds that would result in rebirths. As there were no further karmic causes, there were no further resultant births, and so perfect happiness ensues.

The same goes for us as well. Let us follow their example. Let us emulate and strive for True Insight (*Paññā*) which will empower us to refrain from doing things that will fuel the continuation of life cycles. If only we could comprehend the trueness of misery, wretchedness, unpleasantness of life itself, we would withhold doing any *kammic* deeds that would foster further existences.

If you do not gather anymore of these *kammic* deeds, then there will be no more fresh *Kamma* for more rebirths, and so no more sufferings. Thus everlasting peace and happiness is the final outcome.

It is entirely up to you to choose which path you wish to choose.

- (1) Perception (*Saññā*) camouflage what is seen.
Unveil the Perception, to see what truly lies beneath.
- (2) Perception (*Saññā*) deludes what is seen.
Unless Perception is unraveled, Delusion won't be exposed.

'Perception (*Saññā*) camouflage what is seen' means - when the eyes look at something, they only see what the object is; they don't discern or decide (perceive) whether an object or a person is beautiful and desirable. It is the mind, the Perception part of the mind (*Saññā-khandha*), which is one of the four mental aggregates, that forms a notion that it is so, i.e., perceiving whether an object or a person is beautiful and desirable.

Because the 'Perception' aspect of the mind (*Saññā-khandha*) covers and camouflage the Truth beneath, there arise the attachment, the crave to possess.

When you have attained considerable Insight (*Paññā*), you are able to discern the Real Truth, that this object (which the eyes see) is nothing (but molecules added up), that there is nothing to crave for, nor to get attached. True Insight (*Paññā*) decides ... 'The eyes only see; taking it as beautiful and desirable are what Perception made it up to be.' Because of your ability in seeing things as they really are in its true form, you don't crave for it anymore.

This lack of crave is because you had unveiled and straightened out the wrong Perception (*Saññā*) and hence Delusion was exposed.

The Analogy

In some way, it is like the man who raises poultry.

When a hen lays eggs, he takes those eggs and replaces them with duck's eggs. The naive hen thinks they were hers, so she sits and lays on them for hatching. In time, the young ducklings hatch from the eggs. The mother hen, still thinking (wrongly) they were her chickens, feeds and looks after the ducklings. The ducklings grew up and one day go into the water which is their habitat and swim away as is their nature.

The foster mother hen cannot swim, so she runs about on the river bank, calling out in frustration, "Come back my children! Come back!" But it is in vain. Her despair and grief are all because of wrong perception (of the Truth), putting the confused hen under the spell of 'Delusion' making her think the ducklings are hers and hers alone.

The poultry man is like *Saññā* (Perception). He deceives the hen by taking her eggs and replacing them with duck's eggs.

The hen is like *Loba* (Greed). She is under the Delusion (because of the poultry man's deceit) that the eggs are her children, gets attached and looks after the ducklings not realizing, nor even caring, that it is indeed a tedious burden full of unpleasantness.

The ducklings are like *Paramatta* (Ultimate Reality), the natural phenomena, where sequence of events occur on its own course, over which no one has absolute control.

Even though the heart-broken mother hen calls out dolefully to which she thinks are her kids, the ducklings may or may not come back to her. Like 'Reality,' no one has complete control over them. The mother hen suffers deeply, all because of her inability to unravel the Truth from false.

That is why, Perception (*Sanna*) camouflages and deceives what it really is. If the disguise is not unmasked, the underlying Truth will never be revealed.

So, whenever you see, hear, taste, smell, touch, you employ mindfulness at the 'body-touch' because it is the most tangible. With diligent practice, wrong Perception (*Saññā*) will be exposed and Reality (*Paramattha*) will emerge as you have never known existed.

This Reality is the Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha*), the nature of which is the continual succession of arising and perishing away, the building up and breaking down, (which in scientific terms is known as metabolism ... the anabolism and catabolism). These processes are never the same - **'what happens the instant before is entirely different from the present instant; and so is the present here and now unlike that of the future instant.'** Impermanence, the constant change, is the Truth of nature and you have no control over the law of nature. It takes its own course. It is merely a

phenomena. Once you truly realize the facts in absolute terms, you are enlightened. That is unraveling of the Delusion caused by Perception (*Saññā*).

Then on, with much satisfaction and unshakable faith, these words will become deeply meaningful:

Perception (*Saññā*) disguises what is seen;
Unravel it to see what truly lies beneath.
Eluding the truth, embracing the false,
That's the habit of the blind 'Unenlightened' (*Puthujjana*).

The Venerable U Loka-nātha's Visit and His Obeisance to Sunlun Sayadaw

In the year 1951 (M.E. 1313), the Venerable U Loka-nātha, the famed Buddhist monk of Italian nationality, came to Myanmar from India with the Indian official delegation which had brought the Relics of Shin Sāriputra and Shin Moggallāna, the two Chief Disciples of the Exalted Gotama Buddha. U Loka-nātha came to Myingyan to pay respects to Sunlun Sayadaw with the intention to inquire about the Sayadaw's reputed Arahathship.

U Loka-nātha was so very much taken in on meeting the Sayadaw that he paid obeisance with fivefold manners of contact (*Pañcapatiṭhita*) in reverence. He then supplicated the Venerable Sayadaw to discern him of 'True Buddha, True *Dhamma* and True *Samgha*.'

Sunlun Sayadaw gave a discourse on the subject as follows :-

Our Exalted Buddha was born in *Majjhima Desa* (the Middle Region, in what is now the Indian Continent) over two thousand years ago (in 623 B.C.) as Prince Siddhattha Kumāra. At the age of twenty nine, He renounced his wife, new-born son, parents, palaces, and all his worldly possessions in search of Truth. [He wandered from one forest to another living the life of an ascetic. He studied under, one after another, of the two top Spiritual Ascetic Masters (*Aḷāra* and *Udaka*) of the day but still could not discover what He was looking for. He then set out on his own, searching for the Path to overcome permanently the ills of life.]

Finally, one day, on the eve of the Full Moon Day of **Kasone*, He sat down to meditate cross-legged on **Aparājita Pallanka*, the Throne formed from the grass, under the Bodhi Tree near *Nerañjara* River, resolving to strive for the Ultimate Truth.

* *Kasone* : One of the twelve months in Buddhist calendar; late summer around May.

He steadfastly kept mindfulness of the touch of in-breath, out-breath at the tip of the nostril (*Ānapāna Sati*). With intense concentration (*Samādhi*) thus gained, he contemplated on His whole body, and first saw the illuminating light. Then, he discovered the body-mind phenomena within Him, the arising and perishing of physical and mental elements in a continuously changing manner, discerning Him of the three characteristics of life (*Ti-lakkhaṇa*) ... “Impermanence, Unpleasantness and Selflessness” (*Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta*).

Ignorance was dispelled and Wisdom arose;

Darkness vanished and Light arose;

Doors opened and Enlightenment attained.

If you were to ask where those Cardinal Doors exist, I would say it is located in the head. The Cardinal Doors are the ‘six Sense Doors’ ... the Doors of Eye, Ear, Nose, Tongue, Body, and Mind. This opening of the Six Doors in Him is known as ‘Buddha,’ meaning, the Opening, the Awakening, the Enlightenment.

By virtue of this Enlightenment, He realized the Four Noble Truths (*Ariya-Saccā*) for four times. These Four Noble Truths are in fact called ‘True *Dhamma*.’

Flashes of Path-Insight (*Magga-ñāṇa*) occur at the realization point of the Four Noble Truths. This realization occurs four times, each time followed immediately by Fruition of *Magga* called *Phala*. The *Ariya-Saṃghas*, the Community of *Bhikkhus* who had attained the four *Maggas* and four *Phalas* are collectively called ‘True *Samigha*.’

And this in brief is, what is meant by True Buddha, True *Dhamma*, True *Samigha*.

Sunlun Sayadaw then went on to expound the *Dhammacakka*, the first and foremost sermon delivered by the Buddha. After listening to the discourse, the Venerable U Loka Nātha felt deeply convinced and humbled. He remarked sincerely, “To meet you Venerable Sir, is like meeting my own parents and siblings. Would there be any opportunity for me to see you again?”

“No, you wouldn’t,” replied the Venerable Sayadaw. Venerable U Loka-nātha asked why.

“You are an aspirant for Buddhahood. As such you are a courageous warrior. I’m not brave nor ambitious like you, so you won’t see me again,” replied Sunlun Sayadaw.

[*What Sunlun Sayadaw meant was that he had already attained Arahatsip and hence would pass into Parinibbāna after this life. He would never be reborn again. But for the Venerable U Loka-nātha, as he had aspired for Buddhahood (Sammā Sambuddha),*

**Aparajita pallaṅka* : The jeweled Throne that appeared when the *Bodhisatta* scattered under the Bodhi Tree, the eight handfuls of grass offered by Sotthiya, the grass cutter.

he must fulfill the ten Pāramīs (past perfections) in innumerable life cycles to achieve his goal of attaining Buddhahood.]

The Venerable U Loka-nātha offered a set of three robes (* *Te-cīvaka*) and many other things to the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw and asked, “My parents had died with wrong view. They did not believe in Buddha. By virtue of my meritorious offerings now, can their view and belief be changed into the right one?”

“If you share your good merits to them and if they are aware of it and accept with appreciation they might change their view into the right one,” answered the Venerable Sayadaw. Thereupon, U LokaNātha shared his merits to his parents.

The Venerable Italian *bhikkhu* then paid obeisance to Sunlun Sayadaw and left the monastery.

The Officiation by the Venerable Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw of Sima Demarcation Ceremony at Bout-htaw Sunlun Monastery, Yangon

The Bout-htaw Sunlun Monastery, a branch of Sunlun meditation monastery in Yangon was established after great effort by the close devotees of Sunlun Sayadaw. They were U Tin Pe and Daw Thein Khin, U Aung Myat and Daw Aye Khin. They had laboured hard and they made many courteous invitations to the Venerable Sayadaw to honor their offering and effort by officiating the Demarcation of a new *Sīmā* (Ordination Hall) at the monastery.

The Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw accorded their request and so together with the Venerable U Sobhana, the Vice-Presiding Abbot of Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Monastery, came to Yangon by plane on 22nd March 1952 (12th waning day of *Tabaung*, 1313 ME). They were met at the airport by U Ba Gyan, a retired Cabinet Minister and his wife Daw Mya Kyi who escorted them to the monastery in a specially appointed car.

On 23rd March Monday (14th waning day of *Tabaung*), at 2 p.m., together with twenty four *bhikkhus*, the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw administered the Demarcation of the *Sima* at Bout-htaw Sunlun Monastery.

Preparation of all the necessary things for the *Sīmā* Demarcation Ceremony was carried out in time by Danu-byu Sayadaw U Kusalasami (U Kuthala Thāmi). He was the

* *Te-cīvaka* : A set of monastic apparel; it consists of 3 pieces:

1. an under garment (*Antara-vasaka*)
2. an upper robe (*Uttara-saniga*) and,
3. the great robe of two layers (*Sanighati*).

Abbot of Thiri-mingalar Monastery situated at Goodliff road (now called Saya San Road) in Yangon, and was one of the old pupils and chief disciples of Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw. He promptly and effectively executed all the instructions as assigned and defined by the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw and the Venerable U Sobhana.

While residing at Bout-htaw Sunlun Monastery, many people came to pay respects. For six days, he gave discourses during daytime, and taught and guide the practice of Vipassanā for meditation sessions at dusk.

On invitation by the Honorable Thado Thiri Thu-dhamma Sir U Thwin and U San Thein, the retired Chairman of U.B.A. (Union of Burma Airways), Sunlun Sayadaw paid a visit on 1951 date Friday morning (3rd waxing day of *Tagu*, 1313 M.E.) to the Sāsana Yeik-thar Monastery (now popularly known as Mahāsi Meditation Centre). He gave a sermon to the assembled audience and spent the night there. The next morning, on 1951 Saturday (4th waxing day of late *Tagu*), the Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw returned to Myingyan.

The Parinibbāna

After his return from Yangon, he stayed at Myingyan.

On 17th May 1952, Saturday, (9th waning day of *Kasone*, 1314 M.E.) at about 5p.m., the most Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw passed away into *Nibbāna*.

His remains, in accordance to his wishes, was not cremated nor embalmed at all. It was laid down in the stupa known as *Lwan Ceti* (Pagoda) temporarily.

On 14th February 1953 at twelve noon (2nd waxing day of *Ta-baung*, 1314), the Venerable U Sobhana, now the head of the Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Monastery, organized the transfer of the venerated body of Sunlun Sayadaw to a temporary designated hall in the monastery (*San-Kyaung*) so as disciples and devotees could pay their reverence.

Exactly one year after the *Parinibbāna*, on 9th May 1953 (9th waning day of *Kasone*, 1315 M.E.), at 4.55 p.m., the venerated body relic of Sunlun Sayadaw was finally moved with a magnificent ceremony attended by many, to a permanent location where a pagoda (*Ghandhakuṭi Cetiya*) was being built.

The Venerable Sayadaw U Sobhana worked tirelessly day and night with meticulous organization, thus, the construction of the Pagoda was completed in time. And so, on the birthday of Sunlun Sayadaw of that year of 1954, the 6th of March, (2nd waxing day of *Ta-baung*, 1315 M.E.), together with more than three hundred members of *Samgha*, the Consecration Ceremony (*Anekaja*) of the Pagoda was carried out with glorious splendor and celebrations.

To this day, the venerated body relic of Sunlun Sayadaw still lies in its natural state majestically. It is encased in a glass dome with no need whatsoever of embalment. A subtle fragrance exudes from the body naturally, reminding one of his nobility, sacredness and extraordinariness.

After the *Parinibbāna* of the Venerable Sunlun Gu Kyaung Sayadaw, the Venerable Sayadaw U Sobhana who had been entrusted with the life of the Sunlun Sayadaw himself when he was alive, presided at Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Monastery, Myingyan. He continued to preach and teach the Sunlun Vipassanā Meditation as taught by the Founding Father.

****Than Tha-yar Aye Cetiya - The Pagoda of Saṁsāra Peace***
[Why it was so named]

During a visit by the ex-Prime Minister U Nu to Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Monastery in Myingyan, the Venerable Sayadaw U Sobhana talked at length to U Nu concerning with naming the Pagoda. The following was the details of his talk :-

“While you’re here, I would like to make a proposal to all the gathered devotees with regards to giving an appropriate name to our Pagoda here at the monastery. U Nu... you had built in Yangon, a splendid Pagoda named as *Kaba-Aye *Ceti*, (meaning ‘Pagoda of World Peace’) with five entrances, symbolizing the five Buddhas’ Supreme Enlightenment on this Earth known as *Badda Kappa*, the present world we live in.

Our *Ceti* here has six entrances. You may ask why it is so. The Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw was queried on various Doctrinal matters by many distinguished Sayadaws during his early days in the *Samigha* Order.

They asked him, among many other questions, ...Where does *Paṭicca-Samuppāda* (the Dependent Origination), the Cycle of *Samisāra* lay? Where are the Links (of the process)? How can the process of this Cycle be cut off?

* ‘Than Tha-yar Aye Ceti’ means Saṁsāra Aye Pagoda;
In Myanmar, Than Tha-yar means Saṁsāra; Aye means peace.
* Ceti, *Cetiya* : Pagoda.

Sunlun Sayadaw was born in Sunlun Village. His parents were so poor they could not send him to school for proper education. He had to help tend the cattle. Hence he could not read or write well. The learned Sayadaws knew about it, but nonetheless asked him complicated questions on the Buddhist Scriptures. Well, where there are questions, there must be answers. So Sunlun Sayadaw replied, “Venerable Sirs, if you let me answer the way I would like to, I will answer. If not, I won’t,” to which the Sayadaws replied, “Okay, go ahead,” giving their consent.

This was how he explained:

“*Paṭicca-Samuppāda* (the Dependent Origination), the Cycle of *Samisāra* lies in the Sphere of Beings (*Satta Loka*). The Links (of the chain process of *Paṭicca-Samuppāda*) are at the ‘Door’ and the cut-off (elimination) point is also at the ‘Door.’

Please let me explain ...

The World of Sentient Beings (*Satta Loka*) ... What it means is, when yogis meditate strenuously, their concentration become sharper and powerful, so much so that they are able to comprehend the uninterrupted flux of manifold physical and mental phenomena, which in fact is the continuous building up and breaking down of the three *Dhammas* ... Mind, Concomitants of mind and Matter (scientifically, the anabolism and catabolism of the metabolism process). This arising and perishing away of the three *Dhammas* is the Real World of Sentient Beings (*Satta Loka*).

The Links (of the wheel of *Paṭicca-Samuppāda*) are at the Door ...

By Door, it means the six ‘Sense Doors’ (Sense-bases, *Āyatana*), namely, eye-door, ear-door, nose-door, tongue-door, body-door and mind-door.

The Linkage at the ‘Sense Doors’ serves like this .. When the eye comes into contact with a visual object, if it is a desirable one, there arises in the mind .. Greed, Craving (*Loba, Taṇhā*), which is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*). If it is an undesirable disagreeable object, there arises in the mind, ... Hatred, Dislike (*Dosa*), which is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Saccā*).

Likewise, the ear coming into contact with pleasant sounds gives rise to Greed, Craving (*Loba, Taṇhā*) which is the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*). If it comes into contact with unpleasant sounds, there arises in the mind ... Dislike, Hatred (*Dosa*), which is the Truth of Suffering (*Dukkha Saccā*).

The Buddha had taught the four Noble Truths (*Ariya Saccā*) ...

- the Truth of Suffering (*Dukka Saccā*)
- the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*)
- the Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (*Nirodha Saccā*)

- the Truth of the Path leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*Magga Saccā*).

The Truth of Suffering (*Dukka Saccā*) and the Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*Samudaya Saccā*) are the two *Dhamma* factors that alternately take turns in perpetually controlling, governing and affecting all sentient beings in their lives. And that is *Samisāra*.

The cut-off point (of the chain process of *Paṭicca-Samuppāda*, the Dependent Origination) are also at the 'Sense Doors.' How to cut off the links of the chain Cycle of *Samisāra*, how to annihilate the links of the chain of Suffering is like this ...

When the eye comes into contact with a visual object, the eye merely sees it; it does not know or determine whether it is desirable or not. It is the Perception aggregate of the Mind (*Saññakhandha*) which perceives, determines, connotes, and put a name to it calling it beautiful or ugly, from which sensation (*Vedanā*) occurs, thereof, Desire (*Lobha*) or Dislike (*Dosa*) consequently arises.

When somebody yells abuse at you, the ear merely hears the sounds (which in true science are just vibrating waves in the air). But Perception (*Saññā*) propels you to think that they are to be disliked and so feelings (*Vedanā*) of Anger (*Dosa*) appears. Because of Ignorance (*Avijjā*), you could not see the Reality (*Paramattha*). If you could comprehend the Reality (*Paramattha*) and take sound as mere sound alone, you would realize that the words of abuse are mere Perception (*Saññā*) of the mind, that it has nothing to be angry about. In that manner,

On seeing, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Eye-Door, so that Eye-Contact (*Phassa* between eye, *saḷāyatana*, and visible object, *arammana*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Eye-Door.

On hearing, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Ear-Door so that Ear-Contact (*Phassa* between ear, *saḷāyatana* and audible object, *arammana*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Ear-Door.

On smelling, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Nose-Door, so that Nose-Contact (*Phassa* between nose, *saḷāyatana*, and smell, *arammaṇa*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Nose-Door.

On tasting, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Tongue-Door, so that Tongue-Contact (*Phassa* between tongue, *saḷāyatana*, and taste, *arammana*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Tongue-Door.

On touching, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Body-Door, so that Body-Contact (*Phassa* between body, *saḷāyatana*, and tactile object, *arammaṇa*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Body-Door.

On thinking, apply mindfulness (*Sati*) at the Mind-Door, so that Mind-Contact

(*Phassa* between mind, *saḷāyatana*, and mental object, i.e. thoughts, *arammaṇa*) does not give rise to Craving (*Taṇhā*); and that is cutting off the link at the Mind-Door.

Thus, you must employ deep **MINDFULNESS** (*Sati*) in continuum at every sense-door to be able to cut off the **Links of *Paṭicca-Samuppāda* in the Wheel of Existence** so as **Greed, Hatred and Delusion** (*Loba, Dosa, and Moha*) do not arise from Contact (*Phassa*) at the six Sense-Doors (*Āyatana*).

That is why, you need not go and look far far away for *Samisāra*. It is perpetuating right at your Sense-Doors.

That was how Sulun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw discerned his interpretation of ***Paṭicca-Samuppāda* (Dependent Origination)**.

The Venerable U Sobhana then continued, “Our most Venerable Sunlun Sayadaw had employed ‘MINDFULNESS’ (*Sati*) at one of the six sense-doors (meaning mindfulness on the touch of air at nostril tip, the body-door) thereby had succeeded in stopping the Wheel of Rebirths and miseries of *Samisāra*, and had thus attained Ultimate Peace. So let us name this *Ceti* (stupa, pagoda) which has six entrances, *Samsara-Aye Ceti*, the Pagoda of *Samsara* Peace. This name will be the most appropriate, conveying its intrinsic qualities and in-depth meaning.”

And thus it was named *Samsara-Aye Ceti*, The Pagoda of *Samisara* Peace in accordance to the wishes of the Venerable U Sobhana, the head of Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Monastery of Myingyan.

[NB :

Paṭicca-Samuppāda : Law of Dependent Origination; Law of Dependent Arising; Conditioned Genesis.

It is the Doctrine which teaches that all physical and mental phenomena are conditioned and that the arising of a phenomenon is dependent on a specific cause which itself has arisen on its own specific cause.

It is the Tenet describing the linkage and interdependency between Cause and Effect.

Action takes place through the following links.

1. *Avijjā-paccayā Saṅkhāra*

Dependent on Ignorance (*Avijjā*), there arises volitional activities/karma formations (*Saṅkhāra*).

2. *Saṅkhāra-paccayā Viññānā*

Dependent on volitional activities/karma formations (in the past life), there arises

- rebirth- Consciousness (*Viññāna in the present life*).
3. *Viññāna-paccayā Nāma-rūpa*
Dependent on rebirth Consciousness, there arises mental and physical phenomena / mind and body (*Nāma-rūpa*).
 4. *Nāma-rūpa paccayā Saḷāyatana*
Dependent on mental and physical phenomena/mind-and-body, there arises the six sense-bases (*Saḷāyatana*).
 5. *Saḷāyatana-paccayā Phasso*
Dependent on six sense-bases, there arises Contact (*Phassa, i.e.,* contact between sense-base, sense-object and consciousness).
 6. *Phassa-paccayā Vedanā*
Dependent on Contact, there arises sensation/feeling (*Vedanā*).
 7. *Vedanā-paccayā Taṇhā*
Dependent on feeling, there arises Craving (*Taṇhā*).
 8. *Taṇhā-paccayā Upādānam*
Dependent on Craving, there arises clinging/grasping (*Upādāna*);
 9. *Upādānam-paccayā *Bhavo*
Dependent on clinging, there arises rebirth-producing karma, which gives rise to further existence (i.e., *Kamma Bhava*,) and rebirth-process (*Upapatti-Bhava*).
 10. *Bhava-paccayā Jāti*
Dependent on *Bhava*, rebirth-producing karma (in the present life), there arises rebirth (*Jāti*) (in the future life).
 11. *Jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇam*,
Dependent on rebirth, there arises ageing and death (*Jarā-Maraṇa*); (And with it) Grief (*Soka*); lamentation (*Parideva*); bodily pain (*Dukkha*); distress of mind (*Domanassa*); and agony (*Upāyāsa*) ... they are incidental consequences of rebirth.

Thus arises the whole mass of Suffering again in the future.

Every Ultimate Reality (*Parammattha*) has the characteristics of arising (*Uppāda*), existing (*Thiti*) and dissolving (*Bhaṅga*).

In the Ultimate sense, the arising, existing and dissolving of rebirth-process (*Upapatti-Bhava*) are designated as *Jāti* (Birth), *Jarā* (decay) and *Maraṇa* (death) respectively. Thus, sentient beings are facing rebirth, decay and death at every instant according to *Abhidhamma*.

* *Bhava* : Existence; becoming; life. *Bhava* also is a continual process of arising and passing away of *khandhas* (5 groups of aggregates), i.e., mental and physical phenomena. *Kamma-Bhava* is the active *kamma*-process of becoming, whereas, *Upapatti-Bhava* is the passive *kamma*-resultant process, the so-called 'rebirth-process'.

Conventionally, we think we are born just once, become old as years pass by, and then die just once in this life. The phenomenon that death arises as a consequence of rebirth at every conscious moment is known as '*Khaṇika-maraṇa*.'

The word 'birth' in the language of Relative Truth means birth from a mother's womb. The word 'birth' in the language of Ultimate Truth means something arising that functions in a way conducive to Suffering, which is to say, arising with Ignorance as basic cause.

Paṭicca-Samuppāda is simply the Four Noble Truths given in detail. Instead of starting with the bare brevity that Craving causes Suffering, it analyzes Suffering into eleven stages or conditions. And the same goes for the extinction of Suffering.]

Extract from a sermon by U Loka-nātha

I have heard that there are about fifty *Arahats* in Myanmar. Earnestly wanting to meet them to pay my homage, I traveled throughout Myanmar in search of them. That was how I came to have the opportunity to meet the Venerable Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw of Myingyan.

His discourses and preaching, the way he answered the various queries put up to him, his composure, demeanor and in fact everything about him is so respectful and reverential that I am truly convinced he is an *Arahat* as many people have believed.

Myanmar should be proud in this world to have produced such an extinguished *Arahat* like Sunlun Sayadaw. I am greatly obliged to the Sayadaw and vow to disseminate his virtues wherever I go, here in Myanmar as well as in various countries that I shall visit.

[The above was an extract from a sermon delivered by U Loka-nātha in Myingyan, at Ko-saung Monastery.]

A tale of two friends [from Dhammapada, Yamaka Vagga]

During the time of Gotama Buddha, there were two good friends of noble family living in Sāvattihī, India. After listening to the *Dhamma* expounded by the Exalted Buddha, they saw the shortcomings and frailties of the mundane world, so renounced their home-life and entered into the Order of the *Samgha*.

One dedicated himself to learning the Buddha's Teachings (*Gantha-dhūra*) and the other pursued after *Vipassanā* Practice (*Vipassanā-dhūra*, Insight Meditation).

Many years later, the former, who was very proficient in reciting and preaching the sacred Doctrine, became a great master of *Piṭaka* and the dean of eighteen sects of the Order of *Samgha*.

The other friend, after striving diligently and strenuously, attained *Arahatship*, possessing the four extraordinary discriminative Insight Knowledge (**Paṭisambhidha*). One day, he went to the Jetavana monastery to pay homage to the Exalted Buddha. He then went to see his old friend there.

The master of the *Piṭaka*, not knowing that his friend had already become an *Arahat*, planned to ask him some difficult questions on the *Dhamma*. The Buddha knew of his unkind intention in seeking to ridicule the *Arahat* and the resultant bad karma that would befall on him should he impose unpleasantness to his *Arahat* friend. So, out of compassion, the Buddha visited the two *bhikkhus* and did the questioning himself to prevent the learned *bhikkhu* from deriding his friend.

Firstly He asked the *Arahat bhikkhu* on *Jhānas* (mental absorptions), from the first *Jhāna* to the eightfold **Nirodha Sammāpatti* including the body-mind phenomena.

Paṭisambhidha : Analytical Insight; discriminating knowledge.

Paṭisambhidhapatta-arahat: one who possesses the 4 *Sambhidhas* (Analytical Knowledge), namely,

1. Analytical Knowledge and Insight into the meaning and consequences of things (*Attha-Paṭisambhidha*),
2. Analytical Knowledge and Insight into the nature of the Doctrine, and the *Pāṇi* language in which it exists and the origin of things (*Dhamma-Paṭisambhidha*),
3. Analytical Knowledge and Insight into the language, the grammar and the syntax of the language (*Nirutti-Paṭisambhidha*),
4. Analytical Knowledge and accurate discriminating Insight into the nature of the above three knowledge (*Paṭibhāna-Paṭisambhidha*).

* *Nirodha Samapatti* : Attainment of Cessation.

Temporary suspension of mental activities. An *Arahat* can, by will power, temporarily arrest the ordinary flow of consciousness for up to 7 days, in which state, all mental activities cease although there exist heat and life, devoid of any breathing. During this state, he is immune from danger.

Nirodha means Cessation, and *Sammāpatti* is attainment. This is the period during which the Buddhas, *Paccekabuddhas* and *Arahats* experience *Nibbāna*, the *Nibbanic* bliss while living in this world.

The *Arahat bhikkhu* was able to answer all, having practiced the *Dhamma* till the ultimate end. Then, the Buddha put questions to the Master of *Tipiṭaka* regarding the *Sottāpatti Magga* (the first Path of Enlightenment). But the scholastic master could not answer them as he had not practiced what he had taught.

Thereupon, the Exalted Buddha praised the one who had practiced and realized the *Dhamma*.

The resident *bhikkhus* began to talk about this incident giving various opinions. So the Buddha called up an assembly and discerned the matter to them this way :-

“The learned *bhikkhu* who knew the Teachings a great deal but had not practiced, is like a cowherd (getting only the wages for looking after the cows). The other *bhikkhu*, though he did not know the Doctrine well, having clearly comprehended the essence of it through diligent practice, had annihilated Desire (*Loba*), Illwill (*Dosa*) and Ignorance (*Moha*). His mind, being totally freed from mental defilements and from all fetters and attachments truly reaps the benefits of *Arahatship*. He is like the owner of cows (enjoying the five kinds of produce of the cows).”

Sunlun Sayadaw had once given an analogy like this ...

“Say there are two rich men of equal material wealth, one living in a big city and the other in a village. The one who has practical knowledge of *Vipassanā* as well as learning of the Scriptural Texts is like the rich man of the big city, while the one who has only the knowledge of *Vipassanā* Practice but deficient in learning, is like the rich man of the small village.”

Announcement

The Venerable Abbot Sayadaw U Sobhana had worked hard in publishing and distribution of the discourses and the method of Vipassanā Meditation as taught by the Venerable Sunlun Gu-kyauṅ Sayadaw. He had done the same for the Sayadaw's photos for reverence. With his relentless effort in supervising and organizing, funds thus raised had been used in gilding the Than Tha-yar Aye Pagoda with gold.

To this day, he still personally sees to the maintenance and renovation work of the Pagoda in every way he possibly can. On account of his dedication and devotional work, the Pagoda has been maintained in reverential splendor and the body of Sunlun Gu-Kyaung Sayadaw still lies in state inside the Pagoda as if alive.

To everyone, they are most welcome to come and pay homage here in Myingyan at Sunlun Gu-kyauṅ Cave Monastery.

Sincerely,

the devoted disciple of the most Venerable Sunlun Gu-kyauṅ Sayadaw and the Secretary of all services and affairs,

Maung Nyo