



Gaining of Insight

Ven Bhante Mankadawala Sudassana

Sahāwassa Dassana Sampadāya

Gaining of Insight

Ven Bhante Mānkadawala Suddassana

This is a translation of a rare Dhamma Desana as per the Tripitaka, delivered with valuable and interesting similes by Venerable Mānkadawala Suddassana bhante of the Labunoruwakanda hermitage in Sri Lanka. This sermon was delivered in Sinhalese, in Melbourne, Australia. It helped to resolve difficulties the listeners had in understanding the correct Buddha's Noble Teaching and gaining insight of the ultimate truth.

We hope this translation will help clarify what is meant by 'The Truth' to those investigating it now or will do so in the future, specifically to those who have limited understanding in the Pāli & Sinhala language.

I have endeavoured to translate this Dhamma Desana in simple terms to highlight the meanings with absolute faith and honesty as it was delivered in Sinhalese. A glossary with Pāli & English terms can be found at the end for reader's benefit.

If you find any errors or mistakes, kindly let me know at anurajay@hotmail.com.

Anura Jayawardena
Sydney on 25 Jan 2019

**Namōtassa Bhagavatō Arahātō Sammā Sambuddhassa
Namōtassa Bhagavatō Arahātō Sammā Sambuddhassa
Namōtassa Bhagavatō Arahātō Sammā Sambuddhassa**

***Sahāwassa Dassana Sampadāya
Tayassu Dhammā Jahitā Bhavanti.
Sakkāya Ditti Vichikichchi Tancha
Silabbatanvāpi Yadatthi Kinchi
Chathuhapāye hicha Vippha Muttō
Chachābhi Tānani Abhabbo Katun***

With the gaining of ‘Insight’, ‘three qualities of the Mind’ will be abandoned;

*‘Self-Illusion or Personality View’, ‘Sceptical Doubt’ and
‘Performance of meaningless Rites and Rituals’.*

*A person who abandons the above qualities will be fully freed from
the four woeful states¹³.*

Dear faithful, knowledgeable and kind devotees,

The subject we have chosen today is a well-known verse from the Buddha's discourse '***Rathana Sutta***'. It describes and teaches an amazing and an important phenomenon to devotees who live by the noble Triple Gem. It teaches us how to identify the path, the Dhamma we should follow and who our noble teacher is.

There are some of us who are unwise to think that we are fully into the Dhamma by doing minute activities. This stanza clarifies the type of a person who has the correct understanding of the noble Triple Gem and the fortunate opportunities this person would experience.

The Buddha has declared on many occasions, '*Bhikkhus, if a person establishes a minute confidence or faith in me, such a Bhikkhu would not be born in four woeful states*¹³'. There are many who would take the words literally, and engage in unwholesome activities without much thought or any fear. They boast and declare they have full confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha without realising the gravity of their actions. They live with false confidence that they will never dwell in hells.

We will explore when and where the Buddha used this verse and to what sort of a person it would apply to.

We all know that *King Ajāsatta* was the person who had the highest appreciation for the noble Triple Gem among all worldly beings to date. Even so, because he killed his own father, *King Bimbisara*, he was reborn in hell immediately after his own death.

We have read the story of Queen *Kōsala Mallika*, who had the highest faith for the Buddha but was also born in the animal world for seven days after her own death.

Therefore, we need to realise that the '*faith or confidence*' the Buddha described was not in general terms understood by worldly beings.

'Saddhā' in Buddhist teaching is the '*faith with investigation and reasoning*'.

There are two types of **Saddhā** or Faith.

Akāravati Saddhā¹ or **Sampasādana Saddhā**– Reasoned faith and '**Amulika Saddhā**² or **Sampakkhandana Saddhā**– Rootless or baseless faith.

The Buddha has declared the significance of '*Reasoned Faith*' which is the real faith in his teachings. We need to discuss this a little further because we tend to believe that we have an unshakeable faith in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha even while engaging in some unwholesome actions, and therefore believe that we will not be born in unfortunate states of living. As a result of this misunderstanding, we may not hesitate to commit minor unwholesome activities.

I would like to remind you that both '*faiths*' we have explained above could be honest, but one cannot conclude that they are '*unshakable faiths*'.

We may have developed the faith (**Saddhā**) for the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha not by understanding the Dhamma but from a '*personality belief*¹⁹' and will be a rootless or baseless faith. We

may be prepared to die if someone threatens us with death to change our faith in Buddhism. We have to understand well that it is just a view. There are many who belong to other faiths, also prepared to sacrifice their lives when challenged, as we are. There are many who are willing to die on behalf of their religious leader.

However, this is the '*confidence in the religion*' rather than the unshakeable '*Reasoned Faith*' or **Saddhā** or understanding of Dhamma in their '*minds*'.

If one can declare, without fear, that their religious teacher would be the same teacher in their next birth too, then such a person has faith but on a personality basis rather than on the analytical understanding of the teaching.

When we were small, our parents and relatives showed us pictures of the Buddha and taught us some teachings. They taught us the '*nine qualities*' of the Buddha. Today, we remember those lessons as we look at similar pictures of the Buddha with faith or **Saddhā**, that is a not a reasoned faith but a personality based **Saddhā**.

This is not wrong; however, we have to be a little more analytical and investigative. If we were shown a different person's picture at that time with the same '*nine qualities*' and were told that it was the Buddha, today we would be worshiping a different picture of the Buddha, with faith.

I would like to state that this is an essential process to establish initial devotion among newcomers. However, this is not true devotion or faith. This is the essential initial level of devotion or faith in the Triple Gem, however, after this we need to truly 'see' the Dhamma by analysis and reasoning and only then we will

establish the real '**Akāravati Saddhā** ' or devotion with reasoned faith and confidence in the Buddha.

'Yo Dhammam passati – So man passati'

*'If someone sees the **Dhamma**, that person sees me'* the Buddha had declared.

Today, our present initial faith in the Triple Gem is very valuable. However, we should not conclude that we have absolute faith. We need to establish our real faith after '*seeing*' and understanding the Dhamma. Therefore, if the faith we have is on a *personality belief*¹⁹ basis but not after '*analytical seeing*' or '*developing insight*', it is wrong to believe that we will not be born in hells after death.

We have a long journey to travel; the verse I selected today for discussion is to clarify this '*real*' faith with investigation and reasoning.

***Sahāwassa Dassana Sampadāya
Tayassu Dhamma Jahitā Bhavanti
Sakkāya Ditti Vichikichchi Tancha
Silabbatanvāpi Yadatthi Kinchi
Chathuhapāye hicha Vippha Muttō
Chachābhi Tānani Abhabbo Katun***

With the gaining of the insight (***Sahāwassa Dassana Sampadāya***), three qualities of the mind will be abandoned (***Tayassu Dhamma Jahitā Bhavanti***), this does not mean that first we can eliminate these three qualities and then gain insight, rather, it must be the other way around, we must have insight in Dhamma first.

•

Namely, the three qualities are;

‘Self-Illusion’ or ‘personality belief’¹⁹ (**Sakkāya Ditti**)

‘Doubt in the Buddha’s teachings (**Vichikichchi Tancha**) and

‘Performance of meaningless Rites and Rituals’ (**Silabbatanvāpi Yadatthi Kinchi**).

A person, who develops such insight, will not be born in the ‘four woeful states’¹³ (**Chathuhapāye hicha Vippha Muttō**) and this person will never ever commit any of the “six grave unwholesome acts” (**Chachābhi Tānani Abhabbo Katun**). These are; matricide, patricide, murder of an Arahant, shedding the Buddha’s blood, causing a division in the sangha, and permanent pernicious false beliefs.

We need to discuss this more.

What is ‘**sakkāya ditti**’ self-illusion or personality belief¹⁹. First, we can try to understand it and then how we can get rid of ‘self-illusion’.

We can try to understand and eliminate the doubts about the Buddha’s teachings and the disciples or ‘Sangha’. We may also have doubts about our previous births, future births and the present birth. We may still have doubts on the teachings on the ‘Dependent origination’ (**Paticca Samuppāda**). We may think that we have no doubts on any of these and can try to find many different ways to eliminate doubts and come to a final decision with the wrong understanding such as ‘I do not have any doubts’ in our minds.

We have explained that there is a sign to show the doubtlessness.

That is called a philosophy or a ‘view’. ‘**Sahā assa Dassana**’ is the correct phrase, it is meant to be an ‘understanding through a

particular view', and (it is written '**Sahāwassa Dassana**' due to ease of pronunciation.

The Buddha has shown us that with a '*specific view*', how the doubts we have on above matters will be resolved. We have to understand this particular view and also how to gain that view. The Buddha used various methodologies to explain this '*specific view*' to the world at large, which has different understandings of life as well as the world.

We need to remember that this is not a teaching we understand by '*wishing*' nor does it '*occur within us automatically*', e.g. by worshipping or by honouring or treating **Dhamma** well.

It is a realisation, insight or a view for the wise through their own mind and life.

It does not matter if this teaching or the view is not honoured by offering flowers, light or incense, although it is an essential respectful way of worshipping.

View or insight of the **Dhamma** cannot be achieved after death. It has to be seen at the '*present moment or now*'; this philosophy does not have restrictions on religion, class, cast or nationality. It is open to all.

We know about the philosophies of Krishnamurthy, Sigmund Freud or Socrates. We do not worship them or offer flowers but know that their teachings are complex too.

Mr Krishnamurthy was a philosopher who lived in India during 1980s. He showed us one way to observe our lives.

Mr Krishnamurthy's younger brother died when he was very young. His mother sobbed and cried during the entire funeral. After some time had elapsed, Krishnamurthy was travelling somewhere with his mother when they came across another funeral procession. There were many in the procession who were crying and walking behind the casket. Krishnamurthy looked at his mother. She was not crying at all. He thought for some time and realised that his mother's crying at his young brother's funeral was due to holding his brother close to her heart or as a result of ownership. He realised that his mother's sadness or sorrow was due to holding his brother as 'part of 'me' or 'mine'. Krishnamurthy was nine years old at that time; his philosophical thinking started that day.

He says that we look at anything with thoughts that already exist in our minds. Anything we have not come across before will automatically be inserted into our minds and knowledge.

Whenever we meet that object or incident again, those thoughts and knowledge stored in the mind will arise immediately. We always see the old mental advertences whenever we come across anything related to this object or incident. The sad or unhappy mental reflections of the past will always keep us in those perspectives. This happens because we see things through our minds, our preserved mental formations will come up at any time a related incident or object appears. Mental formations in our sad past and related thoughts will ferment in a similar situation again and again.

There are various complex philosophies in the world that describe the unhappiness in lives in detail, but the important fact is to know the '*process and the path*' we follow. Mr Krishnamurthy says that to remain '*silent*' is the beginning of wisdom. His advice is not to have any reactions or responses, but to have equanimity.

The Buddha's teaching is different and the above is **not** what the Buddha taught.

It is impossible for anyone who is not a '**Sammā Sambuddha**²²', to show the correct path. People who do not know the correct teachings of the Buddha would tend to think that Mr Krishnamurthy was teaching Buddhist philosophy. If we know all the philosophies in the world then we might also not get misled however this is not practical.

We know the two reasons for '**Dukkha**' or '*unsatisfactoriness*';

- One is '*desire or craving*' (**Pali - tanhā**) and
- The second one is '*conceptual proliferation*' (**Pali - papañca**).

Now, we have to understand the correct '*path*' to find the reason for unhappiness. If the path we take is wrong, then whatever we are taught becomes useless. We cannot reach the destination we were expecting to reach.

Mr Krishnamurthy says that 'silence' is the beginning of wisdom and to stay without thinking.

The Buddha taught us '*Wise reflection*' or '**Yōnisō manasikāra**³¹' is the beginning of wisdom. It is comparable to '*dawn which signals the sunrise*'. According to the Buddha's teachings, wise reflection or the '**Yōnisō manasikāra**³¹' is the preamble in the process to end the '*unsatisfactoriness*' in life, it is the dawn that signals the sunrise of the final liberation or '**Arahant-hood**³'.

Krishnamurthy never asked people to follow him but there are millions around him. Similarly, Buddhist teachings are also a philosophy or a view, one should not only try to understand it by just reading about it. I did the same and wasted my time.

Lord Buddha has delivered an extremely fine and an ultimate teaching and a path that includes tens and thousands of deeper values.

Buddhist teachings are there to grasp through wisdom (**Pannā**¹⁸) once someone develops insight and '*Right View*' through the teachings of the Buddha, he or she would realise that Buddhist teaching is incomparable.

Now, we will try to see how we can develop this path.

If we can eliminate; self-illusion, doubt and performance of meaningless rites and rituals, then our attempt to eliminate unsatisfactoriness of our '**Samsara**²³' is mostly done.

Once, the Buddha was standing in front of the Himalayan Mountain and picked seven small stones which looked like *mung beans*. He asked the monks; '*Oh monks! Which is bigger, the Himalayan Mountain in front of you or these seven stones?*' The Bhikkhus replied that the seven stones are extremely small compared to the Himalayan Mountains.

Then the Buddha replied; '*Oh Bhikkhus, the one who has developed the right view and attained the status of the 'Stream Enterer' state (**Sotāpanna**²⁸) have suffering as big as these seven small stones remaining. The amount of unsatisfactoriness or the suffering he relinquishes would be similar to the size of the Himalayan Mountains*'.

We can also come to this stage if we are wise. It cannot be achieved by wishing or acquiring it from someone else. We have to attain it ourselves through insight or wisdom developed through our lives.

We can try to understand this teaching according to a particular method. The Buddha had the ability to communicate his message in different ways in order to suit the different personalities around him. I do not have such ability but I will try to explain the teaching the best way I myself have understood it.

Lord Buddha's first discourse; '*Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion*' (***Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta***) shows that;

'Yam kimchi Samudaya Dhammam; Sabbaththam Nirōdha Dammam';

'Virajam Weetamalam Dhammacakkum Udapādi';

If any result or an effect in the world occurs due to arisen conditions; then when those arisen conditions end, the result or effect also ends. When the above is realised well; 'There the Eye of the Dhamma will be born, that is devout of all defilements'

This was one of the ways the Buddha had explained it.

On a different occasion ***Arahant Assaji*** was questioned by the wanderer, ***Upatissa***, (who later became ***Ven Arahant Sāriputta***, one of the two chief disciples) on the philosophy of his teacher;

Ven Assaji replied;

***Ye Dhamma Hetuppabhava,
Thesam hetum Thathagatō āha;
Thesancha so nirodhō,
Evam vādi mahāsamanō.***

This discourse summarises the entire Buddhist teachings.

Now we have to see this teaching through the wisdom we may have developed. The Buddha has taught us the way to see this phenomenon and this is the best way we can learn and understand it.

If there is a result or an effect due to an arisen condition, when the arisen condition ends, the result or the effect will also end.

‘Ye Dhamma Hetuppabhava’

We have to understand the deep meaning in this phrase the Buddha has taught us. If any natural phenomenon is happening due to an arisen condition when the arisen condition ends the result also ends, without any residuals.

We already know that everything that rises will fall. However, the way the Buddha saw this phenomenon was different to the way we see or understand in general worldly affairs.

It is not that simple.

According to the cause and effect theories, the seed is the cause for the tree. The tree is the result and the seed is the cause. This is the theory of cause and effect. The Buddha’s teaching is not this. It would be wrong to apply this explanation to the Buddha’s teachings.

If we take another worldly explanation of the cause and effect theory, the father is the cause for the son. Again, that son becomes a father and will be the cause for another son. The question we have is, if the father (cause) dies, would the son (effect) die too? That does not happen. Therefore, we cannot take this general cause and effect explanation to apply to the Buddha’s teachings.

The Buddha has taught us a cause and effect process that is applicable to the '*Five clinging aggregates*¹⁷' (***pancha upādāna skandha***) which is not just the average cause and effect process we see and understand in our day to day living.

If we cut a tree, and burn all the branches, leaves and the trunk, it will create ash. So the tree that was raised ended up as ash. This is an example of worldly impermanence. It is easy for anyone to understand that everything which arises within the world will fall away or die to give rise to something else, such as ash.

The Buddha's explanation is not such an easy process to understand.

Yan kimchi samudaya Dhammam
Sabbaththam nirodha Dhammam

We need to look deeper to understand what his teachings meant; it cannot be understood through the worldly affairs of birth and death which results in another birth, or some other worldly phenomenon.

Let us look at another example.

Imagine we take some raw clay and mix it with water to be malleable to make a pot.

Then, we change our plan; decide to remix this raw clay pot again to make a pan.

We change our minds again and remix the clay pan again to make a jug.

By revisiting this process we can see that we created a pot; then the pot was reconstituted to create a pan; then the pan was reconstituted again to create a jug.

What we see here is how *something changing, dying or falling away leads to another thing being born*’.

According to the Buddha’s explanation; **‘Sabbaththam nirodha Dhammam’** when something dies, there cannot be anything born from it or coming to existence. What we always see in world is a result falling away and creating another result. What we saw in the above example was the dismantling and reconstitution of the pot, gave rise to the pan. This is not what is meant by the Buddha’s teaching.

We cannot use the term **‘Sabbaththam nirodha Dhammam’** for the above example.

When a tree is cut down, we see the results as branches, trunk and leaves. When all of these are burnt, the result is ash. This is a common perception of a worldly phenomenon, that is; when our life ends we are reborn to another life. .

We cannot use the term **‘Sabbaththam nirodha Dhammam’** for the above example. This is the incorrect use of the phrase in the above worldly occurrences.

If something arises due to an existing cause and when that existing cause ends without a result arising, this is termed **‘Nibbāna’**.

If there are results arising after their causes end, then this is called **‘transformations’**. When the young age ends we see the old age arising, this is a transformation.

When we talk about rise and fall, birth and death within the conventional world, we are actually talking about transformations. One has to understand the Buddha’s teaching well to realise the

meaning of death or falling away without giving rise to another birth.

We have to understand the Buddha's teaching well and correctly to realise that;

Yan kimchi samudaya Dhammam
Sabbaththam nirodha Dhammam

When the causes end, the results end too, without giving rise to another result. So, there is nothing created, all extinguished, liberated or ***Nibbāna***.

We have to see this philosophy through our own lives. At any moment when our eyes see an object, ears hear a sound, noses smell, tongues feel the tastes, bodies feel the touches, and minds remember thoughts; this means these experiences of the *six sense organs* started without any previous result and only due to immediate causes. When those causes cease, the experiences should also cease without creating something else.

When we say that the world is impermanent and through meditation talk about seeing forms that disintegrate into smaller particles and disappear, what we do not realise is that there is something else (called nothingness) forming when particles disappear. If we understand the Buddha's teaching correctly this does not support the term '***Sabbaththam Nirodha Dhammam***'

The image we see in a mirror will disappear without leaving any remnants when the object or the person in front of the mirror moves away. There is no other image arising once the previous image and the cause for that image moves away.

We have to see a similar phenomenon within our lives.

We need to see this from a different perspective. We have to realise the arising and passing away of '*five clinging aggregates*'¹⁷, (*pancha upādāna skandha*) in our minds.

When we see an object, actually we see the '*clinging aggregate of seeing*' created in the mind. *Clinging aggregate of seeing* was created in the mind due to *three causes*²⁹, they are;

- (a) The object
- (b) The contact between the object and the eyes and
- (c) The arising of the consciousness.

When any of these causes end, what we are seeing comes to an end. It does not exist any longer nor does it give rise to another result. We simply move our eyes to see a different object.

I will take the same example I used before to confirm the difference between the worldly understanding and the above.

We take some raw clay, mix it with water and make a ball of clay. We know that the ball of clay can be turned into a pot and the pot can be re-formed to create a pan. When the pot disappears, a pan was born and so forth we can keep going on with this activity in an endless cycle of creating pots or pans. When one thing ends another thing starts. This is how we generally understand the rise and fall process as a lay person that does not apply to the above '*seeing*' process explained by the Buddha.

We have not understood the meanings of; '*feelings*', '*sensations*', '*volitions*' and '*consciousness*', all of which arise within the mind to make sense of what we really see. We fix our minds into a conceptual process that shows us how the end of something starts

another thing. We are unable to see beyond this worldly concept. We accept that there is a person or an object exists externally and everything we see is within that person or object. We see that there is a pot and when the pot ends there is a pan, but we are unable to see the reality of the clay.

The Buddha has taught us to be inquisitive; we have to think wisely. The Buddha always saw the world wisely. What we saw in the example before was about how the conventional world sees things. That view of the world is not difficult to understand. This worldly view is also in other religions and teachings.

There is no need to sacrifice eyes, head, flesh, blood and suffer for over four million aeons (as the Buddha did) to understand this worldly concept. The Buddha would not have made such a sacrifice if the matter was that simple. We should not be making decisions on what the Buddha said according to our general worldly knowledge that everything is impermanent.

The Buddha was hesitant to teach his realisations to people at the beginning as it is extremely difficult or impossible for an average person without wisdom to realise. The general concept that whatever rises will fall or whatever comes to existence will also die is not what the Buddha taught.

We may have to work hard to understand the deep meaning of the Buddha's teachings. We have to use our wisdom to the highest level to understand his teachings. The teachings have been passed on to us through generations by word of mouth, by the Sangha who learnt it by-heart. Unfortunately, the real meanings have been somewhat changed, a few things were added and some have lost its real meaning over the years.

Now we have no one to help us to understand it, we have to do it ourselves.

“Attāhi Attanō Nathō; Kohi Nāthohi Parosiya”

One indeed is one's own refuge; how can others be a refuge to one

Let us take the example of clay and the pots again.

We go to an anthill, pick some clay into a basket, pound it, grind it and use exact amount of water to ensure that we get the right texture so that the clay does not stick to our hands. Now, we make a pot using that precise mixture of clay. The clay constitutes ‘elements’¹⁴, (***kalāpa***) that are absolutely minute and do not have a shape or form. We can identify the pot with a shape but the clay that made the pot does not have any form or shape because it only has elements. If clay had a shape or form like the pot, we would not have been able to remix the clay to make a pan.

What happens here is that the units of clay grouped themselves in the free space to form a shape, we call a ‘pot’ or grouped differently to form a ‘pan’. As the clay did not have a fixed shape of a pot or a pan, we were able to change it to a shape of a pot or a pan. In this instance, we were able to reconstitute clay because it did not have a distinctive or a definitive shape or form. If the clay had a definitive shape, would we able to create a pot or pan? The answer is ‘no’.

When the clay is organised in a particular form, we see a pot; when the clay is in a different form, we see a pan. With the same clay, we see pots and pans. The clay is not the pot; the pot is also not the clay. When clay particles were arranged in free space to a particular order, it’s called a ‘pot’ and with the same clay we were able to reconstitute it to make a ‘pan’.

We need to see this phenomenon in detail.

The two real truths here are the group of clay particles and the free space. When the clay particles group in a particular way, we see a shape, we get a perception and our 'mind' or 'consciousness' creates a form known to it and names it, a 'pot'.

When we start to dismantle the pot, remix the clay and make a pan, the previous perception of the pot disappears, and we now have a different perception of a form named, 'pan'.

There is always regrouping of the '*four primary elements*¹²'. When these primary elements regroup, we change perceptions. A new perception will rise, then that also will disappear with the rise of another perception.

The Buddha explained that, '*denomination is a result of perception*'.

We will take the example of clay again.

We see a particular shape when the original clay stays in its original form. Whether we add water to clay or not and whether it sticks to our hands or not, and when the mixture of clay is arranged in a particular shape in the space element and relative to the space element, we see a particular image of a shape. We name this image of a shape as a 'pot' in our mind.

When this clay arrangement changed, the perception or the image we create in the mind (the pot) disappears or die and no longer exist. With the new rearranged clay mixture, we have a new perception or image in the mind, named 'pan'.

When the arrangement of elements change, the perceptions change, however, when the perceptions change the elements do not change. The group of clay elements arranged in space caused us to see a pot. But the pot we see is not in the clay elements, the clay is also not the pot.

Using flour, we can create bread, string hoppars, dōsa or roti. But string hoppars are not in the elements of flour. We cannot find the picture of flour in the roti’.

Without the knowledge of the functionality of the mind, mental factors or insight, we are trying to see the phenomena of birth and death of an external object. What we really see is a picture created in the mind, and we have no knowledge that the mind and mental factors within us combined to create a picture of an object in our mind and there is no such real object we see exist outside.

When we see a sand mountain, in reality, it is only made up of elements of sand. We see water in a mirage that is due to a deceived eye and mind, which creates the water and tells us there is water.

We saw a ‘pan’ where there was a combination of *only four primary elements* of clay, in reality. We named it a ‘pan’ because there is an object named ‘pan’ already existing in our memory. But there was no ‘pan’ existing in the mind before the arrangement of elements, there was no ‘pan’ existing in the mind after the event of seeing ends, either.

At that moment, the four primary elements combined in a way that caused the object of ‘*pan*’ to be created in our minds. Group of clay particles formed to show a shape, which we, in our minds, named ‘pan’. This ‘pan’ never existed before the clay rearranged. Our eyes

(*cornice in the eye*) did not see a permanent picture of a ‘pan’ existing. Similarly, the picture of the ‘pan’ does not continue to exist in our eyes after we have rearranged the clay to a ‘pot’.

When the immediate cause ends, the result (shape of pan we have seen) also ends. When we move away from this place, there is no ‘pan’ because we created that in our memory through the contact made by the eyes looking at a group of clay. When we changed the clay to a ‘pot’, we stopped seeing a ‘pan’, because there is no pan existing anymore. We are seeing only a memory created in our minds.

***“Yan kimchi samudaya Dhammam
Sabbaththam Nirodha Dhammam “***

When we move away, the causes which lead us to see the ‘pan’ (the clay elements, the sense organ eye and the contact between the eye and clay elements), end. We need to realise these are the factors which cause us to see, but it is the mind that names what we see as a ‘pan’. The decision that it is a ‘pan’ is made by our individual minds and in reality, it does not exist externally.

The Buddha has shown us that in reality, the shape of things we come across do not exist as unique external objects but belong to *Eight Inseparable Elements*²⁵. When the mind grasps these elements, it creates a specific picture of an object in the mind and names it.

There are no atoms called long atoms or square atoms. A group of atoms combines in space to form a particular group that creates an object in our minds and our minds give it the name ‘clay’. However, in absolute reality, there is no such shape or item called clay, it is only created in our minds.

The shapes and objects we come across in the world do not exist externally as we see them, they are results of the six sense organs which come into contact with the six respective sense objects and then give rise to all kinds of objects in our minds, which names them. In other words, we create the world within our minds.

The teachings of the Buddha are on this basis.

There is another fact we need to understand. The group of clay we talked about earlier, contain the '*Four primary elements of Matter*'¹² 'named; *element of extension, element of cohesion, element of heat and element of motion*; and four other derivatives of matter; *colour, odour, taste and nutritive essence*. These eight inseparable elements or '*Shuddashtaka*'²⁵ 'combined in space cannot be separated from each other. They exist in different levels or quantities within each group.

The eye organ can extract the colours of these eight elements grouped to form the so called 'clay' and produce a specific sign. The nose organ is also able to extract the smell of these eight elements grouped to form the so called 'clay' and produce a specific smell. In reality, there are no such signs or smells exist externally.

For example, when we look at the sky in the night, we can see many stars close to each other, sometimes in groups. Although we see them close to each other as shown by our eye, in reality, this is false. The stars are never close to each other, they can be a billion light years apart. What we are shown by the eye is deceiving as it made up the scene.

When we look at an object that is identified in our mind through the '*Eight Inseparable Elements*'²⁵, as colour 'red', one group of '*Eight*

Inseparable Elements' has red colour, the next group of *'Eight Inseparable Elements'* has the red as the dominant colour. But we need to realise that there are so many other *'Eight Inseparable Elements'* that are not red coloured between those two groups. However, the eye chose to pick the two dominant groups of red colour and showed us the whole thing as 'red', ignoring all other colours in between.

When we go to a top floor in a building in Melbourne and look down at the city, we see so many lights that look like an array of lights very close to each other. However, when we go down to the street level and observe, we see that those lights on lamp posts are in fact, far apart.

The eye is capable of deceiving and showing us many stars together, fields of lights, colours of red in some objects etc., but in reality, these are incorrect. So, everything we see, smell, taste, touch and think, fall into incorrect perceptions through our sense organs.

Our seeing, identifying and naming of objects are similar to the above. Thousands of clusters of stars are being seen as close to each other. Hundreds of lamp posts in Melbourne are shown as very close to each other from a distance. The functions of seeing as well as the functions of other sense organs are deceiving, as explained above.

The Buddha showed us how external factors initiate us to see but the cause for seeing is within ourselves, due to the combination of *three causes*²⁹. When all or any one of the causes ceases to exist, there cannot be continuous seeing.

‘Ye Dhamma Hetuppabhava’; the causes for seeing is produced within ourselves, the *Eight Inseparable Elements*²⁵ externally support the function of seeing and these Eight Inseparable Elements become *‘nutriment’*¹⁶ factors for the cause of seeing.

When we see a mountain of sand, we are really seeing particles of sand. We see mirage as water where it is only a mirage. Both of these instances are created internally in the mind by the eye consciousness.

What happened in the example of the pot and pan was that the change in arrangement of the clay particles changed the pot to a pan. At each change, the image of a pot and a pan was created in our minds. When the perception changed, the ‘picture named as pot’ ceased to exist and a ‘new picture named pan’ was born. In reality, there was no pot which became a pan or vice-versa. These perceptions are mental creations and the identifications and naming is done by our minds. When the arrangements of *Fundamental Elements*⁹ change, the perceptions created in our mind also change. Mental formations rise and fall within us for each and every change of groupings of *Fundamental Elements*⁹ externally. This is how the function of ‘seeing’ happens. The rise of mind and mental formations are termed as *‘seeing’*. When the ‘seeing’ finishes, the object cannot continue to exist, but our minds will name and deceive us to think that it still exists.

If a person can truly realise that the perceptions of our sense organs; seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching; and the mental formations are actually internal, and that our sensations rise and fall within our minds, then such a person is called ***‘Jalanga samannāgatha upekkhā Arahant’***. Such a person will neither hate nor attach to the things he sees. Such a person has already realised that whatever he sees is created in the mind in that moment and

that these perceptions do not exist externally. This is true to all sensations of seeing, hearing, smelling, touching and tasting activities we experience.

Such a noble person knows that when the *four primary elements*¹² get together in space, our mind creates an object and names it too. He knows that the so-called world is created by our minds. His view is clear now; that when the sensing process ceases, the world created in our minds as existing externally, also ceases internally. Such a person realises that nothing we see exists externally, they are all created in the consciousness due to external factors.

This was a simile to the Buddha's teaching.

'Yankinchi samudaya Dhammam, Sabbaththam Nirodha Dhammam'

The Buddha explained that what we see, feel and know are all created in our minds; they rise and fall immediately with the disappearing of the causes which initiated them. They did not exist externally as we once thought. Due to external factors and our observations through our senses, our minds create these objects. They only exist in our minds and they disappear when the external factors disappear.

When our minds develop into seeing that real 'view', and realise that what we see is only created within our own minds; we will be able to clear our minds by dispelling the wrong beliefs we have.

These wrong beliefs are;

- 'Corporeality'²⁰ has a soul;
- Living beings have souls;
- Feelings have souls attached to them.

This means we will be able to realise the *five aggregates*¹¹ of our body very clearly. When we develop this reality (*called insight*) we will be able to see a *being* as merely a concept created in the mind.

With such an understanding, would we be able to accept such a false perception that a living being is real? Whereas just a combination of *Eight Inseparable Elements*²⁵ grouped in space is the actual reality. Would we accept such a false concept as a living being?

When we clearly see the loosely combined aggregates, the '*Rupa*' or *corporeality*²⁰, we will not be seeing living being or associating with any living beings as we have previously incorrectly understood. This is the initial stage where one would begin to lose the wrong '*personality belief*²¹'.

The instance we begin to observe the reality of the '*Rupa*²⁰', where the mind creations forced us to name it a *human being*, we will gain the wisdom or '*insight*' of seeing.

When we develop wisdom, we see that the clay pot we see in our mind is actually a group of materials combined in the space externally to give us a particular sign internally as a pot in our minds. We begin to realise that;

- A person we see is actually a group of *Eight Inseparable Elements*²⁵.
- Eight Inseparable Elements continue to exist due to *nutriments*¹⁶ they receive.
- Eight Inseparable Elements combine in space which gives rise to a perception (*Sannā*) internally in our minds due to factors of karma, ignorance and desire.
- What we perceive internally in the mind does not exist externally; it is only a group of materials.

Such a person, of course, would use the term *pot* in the conventional world. Such a person will also use the conventional term of a *human being* or *mother, father, sister* etc. but is fully aware of the reality of these perceptions.

A person, who develops such a vision of reality, understands how ignorance creates mental formations and how we wrongly create perceptions of persons and objects and name them in our minds and continue to make decisions based on such mental formations.

The truth in the Buddhist teachings of ‘*Dependent Origination*’ becomes clearer to such a person. The truth of ‘***Avijja paccayā Sankhāra***⁶’ or ‘*ignorance of the reality*’ which creates mental formations, becomes clearer.

When we realise that a so called ‘person’ is a combination of *name and form*¹⁵ and realise that a ‘person’ externally we see is a perception created in the mind for a grouping of *five aggregates* externally, then we have fully grasped the truth. When we understand this process, we begin to see the reality of the world. The person who does not see this reality has ‘***Avijja***⁵’ or ‘not knowing the reality’. Such a person, who does not know the reality, creates mental formations and believes that they exist externally as he sees. The person who has developed insight into what happens has gained the correct view and such a person will not develop ‘*personality belief*’, ‘*meaningless rites & rituals*’ and ‘*sceptical doubts*’.

A person who develops such a correct view will begin to accept, without any doubt, that the Buddha, who understood and taught us this correct phenomenon, is definitely a ‘***Sammā Sambuddha***²²’.

Therefore, we can say that such a person is '**Svākkato**' (well expounded).

If a person understood this clarification, we have no doubt that such a person had practised proper discipline or (**Sīla**) in their continuing births. Such a person will realise that he failed to see the reality in the past, that there were aggregates that combined in space and not objects he see. Such a person believed that there was a living human being, although the combination of the *five aggregates* in space created this wrong perception of a human being called 'I' or 'myself'. A person who sees this reality has no doubt on '*dependent origination*', and understands that not knowing the reality or truth of combining aggregates in space gives a mental impression of a living being existing externally, which is in fact, just imagination.

That person will realise that this wrong understanding can happen in this life as well as in future lives. Then, such a person will have no doubts on '**Paticca Samuppāda**' or the Buddha's teaching of '*dependent origination*'.

A wrong belief or not knowing the reality makes '**Karma**', which creates a group of aggregates combining again and again subject to '*dependent origination*' process. This process will be never ending.

If a person can establish some discipline (**Sīla**) and settle his or her mind to be quiet and focussed (**Samadhi**), this person will be able to see that a living being is a misconception and is merely a group of aggregates combined in space which makes contact with the eye to create a specific object in the mind, falsely perceived to be a person living externally.

Such a person would realise that when any of the *three causes*²⁹ (*the eye, the object and the consciousness*) ends, the so called *living*

being created by the mind, ends too. Such person will try to develop the correct seeing or view that can be achieved by the process of developing *discipline (Sīla)*, *settling the mind (Samādhi)* and *development of wisdom (Paññā)*. Such a person would be able to realise and end the unsatisfactoriness (*Dukkha*) in '*Samsara*'²³.

Such a person would not observe various rituals imitating dogs, goats, bulls' et al to purify the mind to end the unsatisfactoriness of life. Such a person would establish an unshakable confidence in the truth of the noble Triple Gem, realising the truth about life. This person does not need any rituals and will immediately discard such practises that were the creations due to '*personality belief*'¹⁹, '*mere rituals and practises*'²⁶, and '*sceptical doubt*'³⁰.

The Buddha has explained that a person with such development would begin to gain *insight*. Gaining *insight* will not happen simply by hearing *Dhamma*⁷ or learning it by heart. It will happen only after seeing or realising the truth of the teachings.

There are *four requirements* that need to be fulfilled to gain *insight*. These are;

1. *Noble or Spiritual Friendship*,
2. *Listening to Dhamma* (both occur externally),
3. *Wise Attention and*
4. *Living According to Dhamma* (both occur internally).

Living according to Dhamma is *Sīla* and *Samādhi*. This person will gradually develop wise attention (*Paññā*), start thinking of the correct view of the reality and then achieve the above *four requirements*.

Such a person would see and realise that with the correct view, he will be free from the *four woeful states*¹³. Such a person will realise

that the external objects we create and believe in are actually created in our minds. However, due to strong *mental fermentations (Āsava⁴)*, and cravings that flows through the *six doors of perception²⁷*, will suppress a person from this true insight, temporarily. However, he or she, with strong determination and ardent effort again and again will gradually come back to the reality of how the mind works, as clarified before.

When we see a mirage we immediately believe there is water there. Once we have the right understanding we dispel that wrong view, even though our eyes and mind show us water. This happens as our *sense bases²⁷* and perceptions are slowly becoming stronger with the right view. While our sense bases are weak, we will still get angry or pursue with desire to assume the perceptions as real, although we have begun to realise the right view. When we continuously work hard to feed the mind with reality and try to see the correct view, we will gradually develop ‘*non-attachment*’, ‘*non-greed*’ and ‘*non-hatred*’. These developments are all in the mind.

This achievement is not as easy as some might say. It is an extremely difficult state to achieve in the mind and cannot be done by simply repeating stanzas verbally. There is also no point just saying the words, “*because of the eye or any sense organ this suffering happens*” et al.

When we have realised how the mind creates objects and persons through the mere perceptions of external aggregates grouped in space, we have developed wisdom. Such a person cannot cry for a death of a so called living being. It is not that he would not, rather he cannot or is unable due to realising the truth. Such a person cannot be misled or cheated by the mind anymore.

Such a person would realise that every moment is created in our minds and fades away immediately afterwards and do not continue to exist permanently. Eventually, such a person will have no false perceptions on external aggregates; such perceptions would not occur in his mind. Such a person or a being will let go of the aggregates of all external objects and will have nothing to create and grasp through the mind, now or in the future. Then the illusory nature of the self disappears. He or she now transcends all suffering and attains peace. A person with such development is termed 'extinguished'.

We have been grasping external objects in our minds like leeches. We have grasped the seeing, hearing, smells, tastes, touches like a leech and when we move away from the object we take them in our minds (as memories) too. We falsely believe that what we saw, heard, smelt, tasted and touched still permanently exists even after the causes which created the perception and grasping, has ceased. These mental signals and false beliefs will also appear in our moment of death.

When we see the reality in our view, as the Buddha clarified, we realise that what we see ends when we finish seeing, and this applies to all six sense bases. We will still see mirages, but we know that it is an illusion of water created in the mind. We can still live in the society with others who see water through the mirage, we see what they see but we know the reality of that seeing.

When we start living with this reality there is no expectation of a specific future death moment. We begin to live in the present moment where everything we grasp ends or dies immediately afterwards, termed '**Nirodha Sannā**'.

Even at the death bed, there will be no signs to remember or hold onto, this will be the end of the *cycle of rebirth (Samsāra* ²³) and death, as explained by our greatest noble teacher, The Buddha.

When we achieve this status, we are spared from the, *Four Woeful States* ¹³, such a person will have no ability to create paths to go to these four unfortunate states. This is the meaning of **‘Chathuhapaye hicha Vippha Muttō’** – will not be born in four woeful places.

A being who has achieved this state will not commit grave kammās’.

‘Chachabhi Tanani Abhabbo Katun’ - Such a person will be free from the *six unwholesome acts or six major wrongdoings*;

1. Matricide,
2. Patricide,
3. Murder of an Arahant,
4. Shedding blood of the Buddha,
5. Causing a division in the Sangha and
6. To move away from the correct Buddha’s teachings and follow another teacher to gain liberation.

A person who would not adhere to all above six wrongdoings is called **‘Dhammānusāri** ^{8’} (*follower of the Dhamma*). Such a person has absolute confidence in the Buddha and his teachings, and will attempt to understand the teachings without following other different teachers.

This is the person the Buddha has declared as “the one who has faith and confidence in me”. Whether we have full confidence in the Buddha or his teachings depends on the guidelines and

instructions we follow exactly as he has delivered and not by praying and worshipping.

When we have confidence and faith (***Saddhā***²⁴) for a person or a teacher, we follow him and his recommended actions. We do not do the activities not recommended by him or her. If we do the opposite to that persons teaching but keep praying and worshipping, there is no faith (***Saddhā***) there.

If someone standing at an intersection advised us to not follow a path as it is dangerous but we choose to ignore the advice and still go on that path, then we are stubborn and are non-followers of that person.

Just assume that we came to an intersection that has two paths, and there are two different people at the intersection who guide us to follow two different paths. Even after listening to both, we will end up following the path guided by the person we trust and believe or have faith and confidence.

Many say one can overcome unsatisfactoriness if we own houses and land, jobs, vehicles, money, wives and children etc. If we do not find these, we will suffer, according such advice. These are personal opinions of individuals and it is up to us to trust and follow those advisors.

The Buddha's advice is that '*desire causes unsatisfactoriness*¹⁰'. The meaning of unsatisfactoriness is not in general sense, only persons who developed wisdom will understand what is meant by *Unsatisfactoriness* by the Buddha.

When we find a way or process to see the right view through wisdom, that will stop creating or igniting '*desire*'. That process

itself will end the unsatisfactoriness of life. This requires application of this right view in every moment of life. The Buddha's advise was not trying to stop desire and let go everything but to live with the knowledge that how we create and name things and how they rise and fall in the mind as minute pictures but we falsely carry them with us as permanent (this includes husbands, wives, children, parents and all).

For your own benefit, may this dhamma discourse help you to select the correct teacher and to follow the correct path to develop wisdom and end the unsatisfactoriness of life, forever.

Sādhū Sādhū Sādhū

Glossary

1. Akāravati Saddhā – Reasoned Faith
2. Amūlikā Saddhā – Rootless or Baseless Faith
3. Arahant hood - The four stages of enlightenment in Theravada Buddhism are the four progressive stages culminating in full enlightenment as an Arahant. These four stages are Sotāpanna, Sakkadāgāmi, Anāgāmi, and Arahant.
4. Āsava – Mental Influxes or Mental Fermentations
5. Avijjā – Not knowing the Reality
6. Avijja paccayā Sankhāra - Not knowing the Reality creates mental formations
7. Dhamma – Teachings of the Buddha, Natural Phenomena, Doctrine; Nature
8. Dhammānusāri - A person who does not commit six unwholesome acts
9. Dhātu - Fundamental Elements
10. Dukkha – Unsatisfactoriness – realised through wisdom
11. Five Aggregates – Materiality, feeling, perception, mental constructions and consciousness
12. Four Primary Elements - The Element of Earth or solidity or the Element of Extension, the Element of Water or cohesion, the Element of Fire or heat, the Element of Wind (air) or motion. (Pathavi, Apō, Tejō, Vāyō).
13. Four Woeful States - Animal world, Ghost world, Demon world and the Hells
14. Kalāpa – Group of Primary Elements or Corporeal Group

15. Name & Form - Nāma Rūpa: Nāma = feeling, perception, mental constructions and consciousness:
Rūpa = Materiality
16. Nutriment - There are four kinds of nutriment which enable living beings to grow and maintain life ; edible food, sense impressions, the food of volition, and the food of consciousness
17. Pancha Upādāna Skandha – Five clinging aggregates created in the mind when a sense organ, the related consciousness and external object momentarily connected to each other.
18. Paññā – Wisdom - Insight or Transcendental Wisdom that has developed through many births and not related to educational qualifications.
19. Personality Belief – Wrong belief that there is a unique or self existing, the reality being the existence of five aggregates¹⁷ grouped in space
20. Rūpa – Corporeality – Physical Form
21. Sakkāya Ditti – Personality Belief – Wrong belief that there is a unique person or self existing, the reality being five aggregates grouped in space
22. Sammā Sambuddha - The highest level of Buddhahood. He attains Enlightenment, by his own efforts, at a time when the teaching does not exist in the world.
23. Samsāra - The beginningless cycle of repeated birth, mundane existence and dying and repeating cycle again
24. Shraddhā – Saddhā - Faith with Investigation and Reasoning

25. Shuddashtaka – Eight Inseparable Elements - Four Primary Elements of Matter plus Four Derivatives of Matter
26. Sīlabbata Parāmāsa - Clinging to mere Rules and Rituals
27. Six Doors of Perception - eye door for visible objects, ear for sound, nose for odour, tongue for taste, body for touch, mind for mental objects. Each door and the related object are called a sense base.
28. Sotāpanna – Stream Enterer – Through development of the mind and removal of three fetters and the person who experiences such liberation is called a Stream Enterer (Sotāpanna). Such a person would be reborn in fortunate states seven times maximum before attaining Arahant hood. The four stages are Sotāpanna, Sakkadāgāmi, Anāgāmi, and Arahant.
29. Three causes of seeing *et al*- (a) the object, (b) the eyes (c) the arising of the consciousness due contact between the eye and the object. This commonly applies to hearing, touching, and thinking as well.
30. Vicikicchā - Sceptical Doubt
31. Yōniso Manasikāra – Wise Attention – to realise how thoughts are originated