

Footprints on the Wonderful Path to Buddhahood



*Compiled from the handwritten autobiography of Most Venerable
Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera*



This book is a translation of the Sinhalese book titled “Asirimat Budumaga Piyasāṭahan”.

First Print: 2019 CE

2563 BE

Can be reprinted with written permission.

Inquiries:

Nā Uyana Forest Monastery.

Pansiyagama

Melsiripura

Sri Lanka 60554

Tel: 0718455332

Email: nauyana@gmail.com

The pdf copy of this book can be downloaded from:

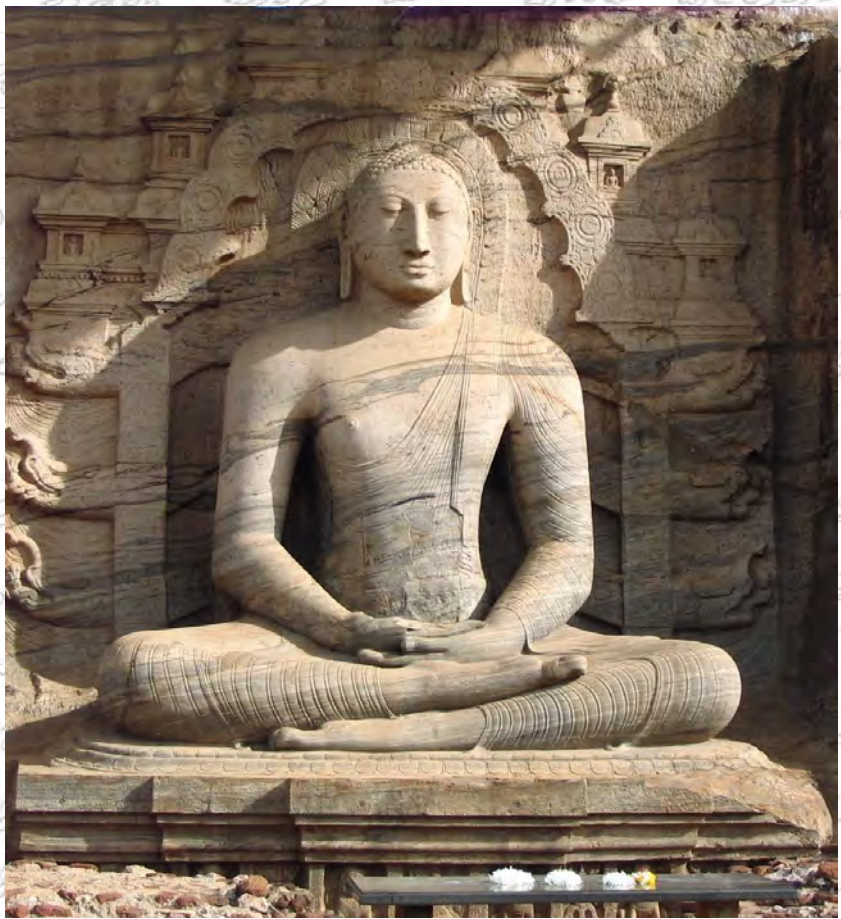
www.ariyamagga.org

www.nauyana.org

www.buddhadipa.tw

www.nauyana.org.tw

Strictly for Free Distribution



Galvihara, Polonnaruwa, Sri Lanka



Offering

May this autobiography:

"FOOTPRINTS ON THE WONDERFUL PATH TO BUDDHAHOOD"

of the Buddhahood Aspirant,

written for the benefit of devotees,

be an offering to the Noble Triple Gem!

බුද්ධත්ත කාරකං ධම්මං
සම්පූරේතං, සුභසංඝං
සුභංචි සම්මං සම්බුද්ධං
සංචරෙය්වි සුභංඝං

"Buddhatta kārake dhamme

Sampūretvā asesato

Ahampi sammā sambuddho

Bhavissāmi anāgate"

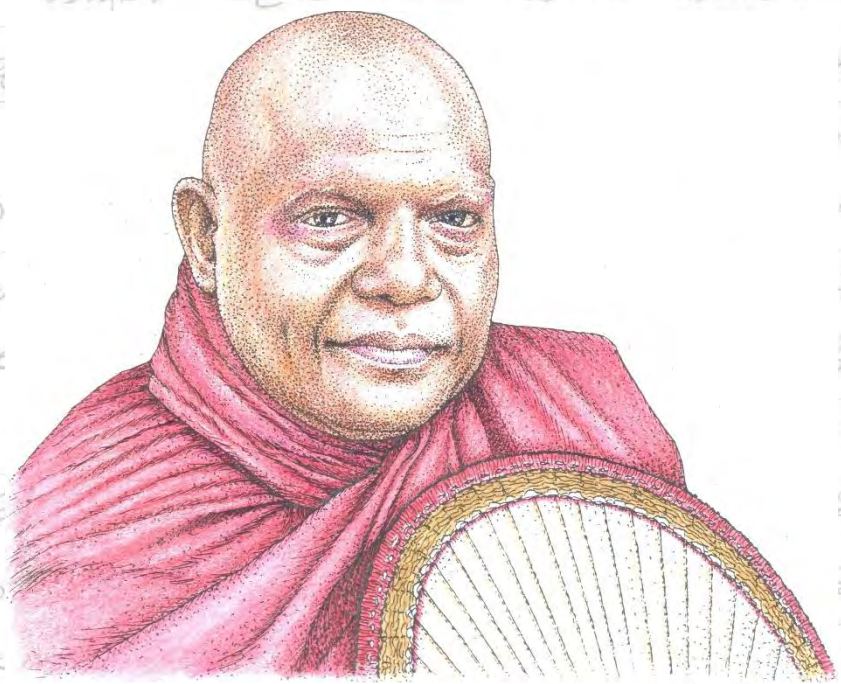
**"I too shall complete all factors
required for Buddhahood**

without omission

and attain Sammāsambodhi in the future"

We also offer this work as a gift to our Great Teacher and
benefactor of all beings:

The Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera!



**Deputy Chief of Śrī Laṅkā Rāmañña Nikāya,
Great Preceptor, Late President and Patron of
Śrī Laṅkā Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā,
Tripiṭakadharācāriya, Mahā Kammaṭṭhānācāriya,
Śrī Jinawaṁsha Nāṇārāma Waṁsāvataṁsha
Sāsanadhaja, Saddharmavāgīśvarācāriya
Buddhahood Aspirant,
Nā Uyane Śrī Ariyadhammābhīdhaṇa Mahāthera**



Preface to the English Translation

We feel very happy to present an English translation of the autobiography of Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera (1939-2016). Mahāthera wrote the main part of the manuscript at the request of one of his lay disciples. The Venerable agreed, but mentioned that it should not be made public during his lifetime. Accordingly, the first Sinhala Language publication of this autobiography was issued at Nā Uyana Forest Monastery on the one year anniversary of his passing away. The original title was: “Asirimat Budumaga Piyasaṭahan.”

There soon arose the wish to have the book translated into other languages. Completing the English translation has required collaboration between a large number of editors, both Sri Lankan and foreign. The book is due to be released on 15th July 2019, in honour of the 60th anniversary of Mahāthera’s bhikkhu ordination. A Chinese translation of the English edition will be released on the same day.

This book contains two parts. The first part is a translation of the autobiographical notes written by Mahāthera himself. He there describes in detail his life, from his youth in rural Sri Lanka to the year 2002, when he was at the height of his Dhamma activities. In the original book the notes were scanned and published directly. In this edition a selection of the original Sinhala Language notes has been watermarked on the English translation for easy identification as Mahāthera’s autobiography. Throughout the book Mahāthera’s words have been presented in a ‘sans-serif’ font (e.g. “My father cultivated rice and other crops”) while the words of editors are presented in the same font as this introduction.

The second part of the book contains a selection of Mahāthera’s notes from his time at Pa Auk Meditation Centre, where he practiced meditation on five different occasions. They contain terse details about his daily routine, the meditation instructions he received and his experiences in meditation. Excerpts from Mahāthera’s Dhamma talks have also been included in this section. These notes are introduced and widely commented on by a knowledgeable Sri Lankan bhikkhu editor. Here we



are given an insight on how Mahāthera practiced meditation under the guidance of Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa.

Working on the translation of this remarkable book, written by such a remarkable Venerable, has given us great energy and inspiration for our own meditation practice. We hope that the reader will receive similar benefit.

The editing team,
Nā Uyana Forest Monastery,
Sri Lanka
July 2019

A Guide to the Diacritics

The Pāli and Sinhala languages contain a number of letters that are normally represented with diacritics when written in the Latin script. For the most part, the diacritics have been limited to those that exist in both languages.

The letter ‘ā’ is pronounced like ‘aw’ in the English word ‘saw’.

The letter ‘ī’ is pronounced like ‘ee’ in the English word ‘see’.

The letter ‘ū’ is pronounced like ‘o’ in the English word ‘who’.

The letter ‘ñ’ is pronounced like ‘ng’ in the English word ‘sing’.

The letter ‘ṇ’ is pronounced like ‘n’ in the English word ‘centre’.

The letter ‘ñ’ is pronounced like ‘nio’ in the English word ‘onion’.

The letter ‘ṭ’ is pronounced like ‘t’ in the English word ‘trap’.

The letter ‘ḍ’ is pronounced like ‘d’ in the English word ‘drop’.

The letter ‘ṁ’ is pronounced like ‘ng’ in the English word ‘rung’.

The letter ‘ś’ is pronounced like ‘sh’ in the English word ‘she’.



Introduction

Our Most Revered Teacher, Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera, was one of the noblest bhikkhus of recent times. At the apex of the Buddhasāsana of Sri Lanka, he illuminated his bhikkhu life in that Buddhasāsana of Sri Lanka through both knowledge of the scriptures and practice of the Buddha's Dhamma. He devoted his entire life to spiritual development and to serving the Buddhasāsana of the world.

Mahāthera spent his life, from early childhood, in accordance with his spiritual aspirations. After ordination he benefitted from association with monks as spiritual friends. He devoted himself to developing pāramī at the highest level—those leading to Buddhahood—and was highly respected and venerated here and abroad as a Bodhisatta in the Sāsana of Gotama the Omniscient Buddha. It has been nearly three years since he took leave of life in the human world and went back to the Brahma realm (as the thirty pāramī necessary for Buddhahood must be fulfilled continuously).

The virtuous child who arrived in the human world from the deva world, after reaching a suitable age, renounced the lay life according to his firm determinations made in previous lives. He went to Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera, who was at Nā Uyana Monastery at the time and ardently undertook his religious training.

He received basic training in the scriptures and practice from Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera and was later entrusted to Most Venerable Kaḍawedduwe Śrī Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera at Galdūwa Śrī Guṇawardana monastery, where he was ordained under the guidance of that Venerable Paṇḍita Mahāthera [Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera] and Most Venerable Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera, as well as other venerable teachers.

He gained a high level of knowledge and experience in the Pāli scriptures, their commentaries, sub-commentaries and other compilations. Scholars of high repute held him as unparalleled in recent times in Sri



Lanka in regard to his knowledge of the Dhamma, a testament to his expertise.

Although the world did not know of his development in meditation, nor his attainments, in many instances people would call him a ‘Venerable Arahāt’ or a ‘Noble One who has achieved path-fruitition’ according to their assessment, based on his external appearance, demeanour, morality and delivery of Dhamma talks.

At the request of a devotee, he recorded certain details of his life and informed his monastic disciples that he was “writing down notes of important events in his life,” asking that they not be published during his lifetime.

Those notes provide hitherto unknown facts and are the only source available to us to get at least a brief view of the meditations he practiced, his meditational experiences, the Dhamma knowledge he accumulated and the impressive vipassanā knowledges he attained.

We shall present as best as we can, first the part entitled “Footprints of the Life Journey of a Buddhist Monk”, which contains biographical information written by Mahāthera himself and a brief description of his meditation practice separately. These notes have recorded extremely rare information regarding his meditation experiences.

We do not have the knowledge to give a complete analysis of the immense virtues and meditation power of Venerable Mahāthera.

May our efforts in compiling this work and the recollection of Mahāthera’s unblemished services to the Sāsana and the world, be a cause for the reader to accumulate merit!

By considering that there can be such a Noble Bodhisatta even in the present age, enabling us to associate with spiritual friends and to follow and emulate such a noble bhikkhu, may great faith in the Triple Gem and spiritual energy be generated in the reader, that he or she might seek liberation without delay!

We offer all of the merit we have accumulated in preparing this book to Mahāthera and firmly wish that it may contribute to his completing all



thirty pāramī over his next 1800 lives and his attainment of Supreme Omniscience!

Disciple monks,
Nā Uyana Forest Monastery
Sri Lanka



Buddha statue at Nā Uyana.

x



Sharing of Merit

The character of one such as our Mahāthera, one of singular virtues, is very rare even to hear of in the world. To learn of the hitherto unknown good deeds and virtues of such a Bodhisatta is for the betterment of the whole world. We accordingly share all the merits accumulated by unveiling and publishing the life story of this outstanding bhikkhu with all those who, with painstaking effort, provided support in various ways according to their abilities. Only a few of them can be mentioned here.

- All the Mahātheras, Theras and novices who offered suggestions and advice in preparing this work
- All devotees who donated financially for the printing
- The artist who designed the image of our Venerable Mahāthera
- The owner of the printing press and his staff

May all those who assisted and donated to this noble task in various ways, as well as all devas and other beings of the world, share in this merit. May it be a cause for them to realize the Dhamma!

Sataṃ samāgamo hotu – yāva Nibbāna pattiya

May we associate with the wise until attaining Nibbāna



Table of Contents

Preface to the English Translation VI

A Guide to the Diacritics VII

Introduction VIII

Sharing of Merit XI

Part I: Footprints of the Life Journey of a Buddhist Monk 1

1. Birth 1

2. Birthplace 4

3. Parents 5

4. Siblings 6

5. Family Lineage and Lay Name 6

6. Learning to Read and Write 7

7. School and Teachers 7

8. Temples Attended 8

9. The Abbot (Nāyaka Thera) of the Temple 8

10. Theras Who Were Relatives 9

11. Eight Precepts: The First Time 10

12. Rains Retreat in the Village Hall 12

13. Dhamma School 12

14. Beloved Mother Passes Away 13

15. Opening of Nā Uyana Monastery 14

16. Abiding by Moral Principles 16

17. Renunciation 18

XII



18. Period of Lay-Renunciation	22
19. Arrival in Śrī Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre	24
20. Ordination in the Buddhasāsana	26
21. Novice Period	27
22. Pūtimutta Bhesajja	30
23. Pūtimutta Āśava Medicine	31
24. Venerable Teachers and Preceptor	32
25. Period of Studies	33
26. Higher Ordination	34
27. Memorizing the Tipiṭaka	37
28. Rains Retreats and Places Visited	38
29. Conducting Meditation Classes	43
30. Dhamma Books Compiled	43
31. Pilgrimages to India	44
32. Visits Abroad	46
33. Special Ceremonies and Celebrations	54
34. Ascetic Practices	59
35. Meditation Objects Developed	59
36. Spiritual Friends	60
37. Male and Female Devotees of Special Assistance	62
38. Positions Held in the Sāsana	69
39. The Practice of Recollecting the Buddha's Qualities	70
40. The Pa Auk Meditation Method	72
41. Reflections on the Four Requisites	76
Reflection on the Robes	76
Reflection on Alms Food	77



Reflection on Lodgings	79
Reflection on Medicines for the Sick	79
Vipassanā on the Four Requisites	80

42. Aspirations	86
------------------------	-----------

43. Signs of Pāramī	97
----------------------------	-----------

Part II: Explanations and Mahāthera's Notes on Meditation **100**

44. Meditation Methods Practiced by Mahāthera	100
--	------------

I. Recollection of the Buddha's Qualities	100
II. Lovingkindness Meditation	101
III. Mahasi Meditation Method and Mindfulness of Breathing	102
IV. Forty Meditation Objects	103
V. The Pa Auk Meditation Method	104

45. The Tranquil Mind	114
------------------------------	------------

46. A Break for a Flittering Mind	117
--	------------

47. Immaterial Sphere Concentration	120
--	------------

48. Qualities of a Bodhisatta	125
--------------------------------------	------------

49. Truth Concealed by the Darkness of Ignorance	128
---	------------

I. Discernment of Materiality	128
II. Discernment of Mentality	130

50. Mahāthera's Mindfulness	134
------------------------------------	------------

51. Mindfulness in the Final Moments	137
---	------------

52. The Reliable Path amid the Unreliable	138
--	------------

I. Investigation of the Saṃsāric Life-Continuum	139
II. Investigation of Past Lives	140
III. Future Lives in Saṃsāra and the End of Mentality-Materiality	141
IV. Dependent Origination: Past Lives	141
V. Dependent Origination: Future Lives	145
VI. An Explanation: Past Lives	145
VII. An Explanation: Future Lives	148

53. Meditation in the Early Stages	149
---	------------

54. Analysis of Volitional Formations	150
--	------------



55. Vipassanā in 40 Ways	152
56. Venerable Mahāthera's Daily Routine	154
57. Seven Ways for Mentality-Materiality	161
I. Seven Ways for Materiality	161
II. Seven Ways for Mentality	162
58. Repulsiveness Meditation	165
59. Obstacles to Meditation	166
60. Seeing the Arising and Passing Away	167
I. Arising	170
II. Passing Away	172
III. Arising and Passing Away	172
61. Discernment of Dissolution	173
62. Equanimity Regarding Formations	176
63. Fourteen Ways of Mastery	178
64. The Extraordinary Uniqueness of Mahāthera	179
65. Unsurpassable Guide	181
66. The Path to Buddhahood	188
67. Our Honour, Respect and Wishes	199
68. Pāli Blessing	200



Part I: Footprints of the Life Journey of a Buddhist Monk

The Autobiography of Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera

1. Birth

Buddist Era: 2482, the month of Vesākha, seventh day of the waxing moon.

Common Era: Monday, 24th April 1939.

The birth of a Bodhisatta¹, one who is fulfilling pāramī on a long journey through saṃsāra in order to attain supreme enlightenment, is truly special among all types of birth. It marks one step of a continuous journey from life to life, accumulating pāramī with strong determination and assisting other beings in their wholesome deeds until the Bodhisatta's own final goal is reached.

The Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera is on such a journey to fulfill his noble aspirations, accumulating pāramī in meritorious lives. In his immediate previous birth he was he was fulfilling pāramī as a virtuous deva.

On one occasion, Mahāthera recounted an important event that his father experienced while assisting with maintenance work at the great Ruwanweli stupa in Anurādhapura.

"There was maintenance work at Ruwanweli stupa, Anurādhapura, in 1938 and our father stayed there for seven days assisting with the repair work during the day and during the night chanting the qualities of Lord Buddha while lighting oil lamps around the stupa. Towards dawn on the seventh day, he fell asleep for a short while and 'received an

¹ One who aspires to become a self-awakened Buddha.



important message,' he told me. 'Please go home now. You will get a son of great merit,' was the message. My birth occurred on 24 April, 1939 because of parents who had great virtue."

The message about his birth is like a prophecy. On another occasion Bhante recalled:

"I was in a higher realm, wasn't I? Why did I come here? I must return to where I came from. I must become a bhikkhu, so that I can go back."

Such thoughts occurred to Bhante many times when he was still a small child. Perhaps these thoughts arose because he had the ability to recall a previous life in a higher world, similar to Prince Temiya of the Jātaka story². It is also one of the special abilities of Bodhisattas. These wonderful events indicate that his was indeed a very rare and gifted birth.

Many beings of the world benefit from such a sacred birth and countless beings will be able to practice the Noble Dhamma as a result of our Mahāthera's wonderful meritorious journey in saṃsāra.



² JA 538: Mūga Pakkha Jātaka.



ප්‍රථම ඥාතිය.

වයඹ පලාතේ කුරුණෑගල දිශාවේ
මුහළ වීනොට කෝරළේ, තිටියාල පන්නප්පුණි
(කළුලන් කඩවල වනයේ) යාපහුරා ආරාමයේ,
තෙල්පින්නගම ප්‍රඥ්‍යෝය කොට්ඨාශයේ,
පන්නයගල ග්‍රාම සේන වනයේ (විට පෙර
කුඩාතොල) මුඩිතාචින්නේ ගම.

වයඹ පලාතේ කුරුණෑගල දිශාවේ
වයඹ පලාතේ කොළේ දිශාවේ අතර
දිසා සීමාව මුලින්, අප්‍රගල - අච්ඡන්ද්‍ර නම් මු
ගම් පොළට සීමාව මු මුලින් පිහිටියේ
කුඩාතොල නම් මු අප්‍ර පන්නප්පුණියේ
බැවින්න, ගම්පහ මුලා මුලින්, මුලින් පිහිටියේ
කුඩාතොල අප්‍ර කළුලන් නම් මුලින් පිහිටියේ
තේ ගම නම් නාමයට පත් වී ඇත.

විවිධ යන ප්‍රකාර ගමන්ගමන්
හොඳිමුතු වේ යනේ නිව නගරයක්
වෙත යනට සලකාපුනි 5. ක් පමණ
පවත් යුතුම නිවසකි.

"[My] birthplace [was] Imihāminne Gama ..."



2. Birthplace

[My] birthplace [was] Imihāminne Gama, previously known as Kuḍāpola, in Pansiyagama Village Officer Area, Yāpahuwa Electoral District, Polpitiyagama Divisional Secretary Area, Hiriyāla Hathpattu (Kaeralan Kadawala Wasama), Ihala Othota Korale, Kurunegala District, North Western Province.

Two land boundaries (*ima*), first the district boundary between Kurunegala District of North Western Province and Mātale District of Central Prov and second between the two villages of Āndāgala and Aluthwewa, were in our village named Kuḍāpola. The village headman of our birth village was referred to as 'Imihā Mudiyanse.' Later, the village of Kuḍāpola came to be referred to as Imihāminne Gama³.

Villagers walked about five miles to the nearest town because there was no drivable road to the village. The temple and the school in Nilagama were a two mile walk from our village. The villagers were religious. They lived on agriculture, cultivating with much effort and sweat. They valued unity, good morals, respect for elders, attending to parents, and fear of sin, and they maintained their self-respect.

Six highly esteemed monks who had ordained from this village to the Asgiriya Chapter of the Siyam Mahā Nikāya were residing in temples in Rangiridambulla (Talakiriya Gama), Valakumbura Makulemada, Pethigepitiya (Anurāgala), and Nilannoruwa.

During the period of the ancient kingdom of Kandy there was a relation of ours, a noble monk named Kuḍāpola Thera, from this village. Venerable Imihaminnegama Guṇaratana Nāyaka Thera, Indajoti Nāyaka Thera, Sumaṅgala Nāyaka Thera, Ñāṇaratana Nāyaka Thera and Dhammajoti Nāyaka Thera were all relatives of ours and were an honour to the village.

³ The village of Imihāmin.



When we⁴ were small there were only about 30 houses in this village and there were four family lineages: Disānāyaka, Wijekone, Minuwangamuwa and Iriyagolla. It is remarkable that there was no one in this village who was deaf, dumb, blind, mad, mentally retarded, crippled or disabled in any such way.

The village has gradually transformed since then. At present it has a junior school, a temple, a monastery named Sudugala Aranya and drivable roads. It covers a large land area and has hundreds of families. There are university graduates as well as some senior officers in government living there. It is our heartfelt kind blessing that village, which is moving towards worldly wealth, soon progress economically, in terms of mental and physical health, ethically and morally, have victory in this world and the next and become a virtuous village, like the village of Dharmapāla⁵, on the path to Nibbāna.

3. Parents

D.M. Kalubandāra Disānāyaka Nilame [was] my father⁶ and father to [my] seven brothers and sisters. [Our] mother [was] M.G. Punchimenike. They had many good qualities, were well respected by everyone in the village and were the fortunate parents of myself and my siblings—all eight of us.

My father cultivated rice and other crops, [and] had a cattle farm and simple businesses. The villagers trusted and had a high regard for him as a doctor of traditional medicine and also as a spiritual friend who took the lead in Buddhist religious activities and who was highly devoted to and lived by Buddhist principles.

⁴ The pronoun ‘we’ is used here as a humble way for Mahāthero to refer to himself.

⁵ JA 447: Mahā Dhammapāla Jātaka.

⁶ The words that Mahāthero uses for his father and for his other relatives and teachers are very respectful terms. It is difficult to convey this in English, but it should be borne in mind by the reader.



My mother seemed like a noble disciple who had achieved stream-entry⁷ in a recent life. She was well respected by the villagers, residents of neighbouring villages, led an exemplary virtuous life and was a spiritual friend to them. She was the mother of eight fortunate children and was healthy throughout her life of about 40 years. At the end of her life, she bowed at the feet of her mother and asked for forgiveness for any transgression, bowed at the feet of my father and asked for forgiveness for any transgression, then uttered the words of wisdom “Anicce, dukkhe, saṃsāre⁸” mindfully three times and closed her eyes due to a sudden ailment⁹, like a true noble one who had achieved stream-entry.

4. Siblings

The virtuous parents whose names were given above had eight children:

1. Mr. M.B. Disānāyaka (Justice of the Peace)
2. Mrs. D.M. Lokumenike Disānāyaka
3. Mr. D.B. Disānāyaka
4. Mr. M.B. Disānāyaka (Ven. Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Thera)
5. Mr. R.B. Disānāyaka
6. Mrs. D.M. Mutumenike Disānāyaka
7. Mr. U.B. Disānāyaka
8. Mrs. D.M. Dingirimenike Disānāyaka

Of these eight, the fourth is me.

5. Family Lineage and Lay Name

I heard from my father that the family lineage descends from Disānāyaka Mahādikāram, who lived when King Parākramabāhu IV was reigning in Kurunegala. I heard further that the Kurunegala Reservoir

⁷ The first stage of enlightenment.

⁸ The round of repeated births and deaths is impermanent and unsatisfactory.

⁹ See Chapter 14.



that supplied water to Kurunegala town was constructed by that Disānāyaka Mahādikāram. My lay name is the fourth in the above list of children.

6. Learning to Read and Write

I remember that thoughts like these came into my young mind in early childhood, because of memories of a previous life in a heavenly realm: *Didn't I live in a higher realm? Why did I come here? I must go there again. I must become a monk if I am to go back.* I remember that such thoughts entered the mind many times.

When I was about three years old, at an auspicious time, father, wearing white according to tradition, a book having been placed on the altar along with oil lamps and flowers that had been offered, was preparing to teach the first letters of the alphabet to the youngest of my elder brothers, D.B. Disānāyaka; I stepped forward before that brother and straightaway read the letters. My parents and everyone else present were surprised at seeing this and greatly pleased, they kindly blessed me. I was admitted to school one year after this elder brother.

7. School and Teachers

Āndāgala village is one mile from our village and Nilagama is about another mile from there. Our school and Nilagiri Rajamahā Vihāra were together on the same land. This was the only school for six villages and our village was the furthest away. It was a co-educational school with about 300 students. There were only two teachers, both male, for the whole school when I was admitted. They were Mr. U.B. Wijekone of Mādipola, principal and Mr. U.B. Disānāyaka of Mātale, vice-principal. Within about 2-3 years about five more teachers were appointed to the school.

The first two teachers helped me like one of their own children the entire time until I left school. This was because I was considered the



most disciplined and courteous and also the most proficient in studies. I was the first in the class on all term tests and knew the studies in my class and the studies of the next higher class. As a result I was promoted from class 3 directly to class 5.

On days when the principal or other teacher was not present for a class, I was assigned to teach that class. Both the teachers and the students had genuine confidence in me regarding the lessons and discipline.

8. Temples Attended

Nīlagiri Rajamahā Vihāra, located in the same compound as Nilagama school, is a sacred historic temple built by King Vaṭṭagāmini Abhaya. The historic Buddha shrine, Dhamma talk hall and cave kuṭi¹⁰ are all located in one large cave facing east, formed in a large rock standing on a hill, with the Nilagama reservoir in the background. Dwellings for the monks and the sacred Bodhi tree are in the lower compound. The statues and drawings of Nīlagiri Rajamahā Vihāra were designed and drawn by the Nilagama sculptors and artists who designed and drew those of Rangiri Dambulla Rajamahā Vihāra.

9. The Abbot (Nāyaka Thera) of the Temple

The incumbent of Nīlagiri Rajamahā Vihāra was the Most Venerable Nikula Dhammapāla Thera. He [was] a disciple of the popular Dhamma teacher Venerable Silvatgala Nāyaka Thera, who was old at the time and lived in the old temple in Silvatgala. Venerable Nikula Dhammapāla Thera showed genuine kindness towards our village and especially towards us—probably because we were related to several highly respected monks from our village. The ancient granite statue in Nīlagiri Rajamahā Vihāra is the statue that had been in the cave of the (2000 year old) Sudugala monastery in our village.

¹⁰ A kuṭi is a dwelling, usually one room, for monks.



Even though our village was far away from the school and the temple, children of our village had the habit of arriving quite early the morning. Some days we would meet the Venerable Nāyaka Thera as we walked across the temple compound. The Venerable Nāyaka Thera would call to us and teach us stanzas in a harmonious voice and also how to worship. Some days he visited the school and gave the five precepts, advised us and taught us how to correctly chant the stanzas aloud.

10. Theras Who Were Relatives

Venerable Guṇaratana Thera (abbot of Petigepitiya Temple in Kandy, having earlier sat as Nāyaka Thera of Rangiridambulu Vihāra for some time), Nāṇaratana Thera (abbot of Anurāgala Temple), Venerable Dhammajoti Thera of the same temple, Indajoti Nāyaka Thera of Makulemada, Sumaṅgala Nāyaka Thera (abbot of Talakiriyāwa Temple), abbot of the Nillannoruwa temple, Kuḍāpola Nāyaka Thera of the Kandy period: these Nāyaka Theras of the Shyāmopāli lineage, who were well known for their ability to preach Dhamma, are our relatives from our village who left the household life.

Venerable Nāyaka Thera of Nillannoruwa stayed in our house for one day when we were very small. The following morning after taking a meal that was prepared by our mother, he addressed her in an extremely kind tone as he was getting ready to leave: "Our temple has this much tea land, that much rubber land, this many paddy fields. We must ordain a child from our family to look after these. Therefore, can you give one of your children for ordination?" Our mother promptly replied, "My children cannot be given away to end up in hell!"

The Venerable was speechless.

This incident, which occurred when I was very small, left a deep impression and has remained in my mind. Even though the determination to ordain arose in early childhood, I kept that idea quiet,



not being hasty due to [having heard] the above exchange and got on with studying until the right time.

11. Eight Precepts: The First Time

The Independence Celebration of Sri Lanka took place on 4th February 1948, at a time when I was continuing my studies with enthusiasm and quite happily took part in religious activities such as dāna¹¹, listening to Dhamma talks and performing various kinds of religious veneration, all organized by our virtuous parents and elders. As the result of publicity given by the government, temples and schools, special religious activities, such as observing eight precepts, were organized throughout the country by Buddhists of every village for the Poson¹² full moon day of 1948.

In our school too, as instructed by the teachers, those who wished to do so undertook the eight precepts. Father had been regularly observing the eight precepts from well before that and he also joined. I too had a strong desire to observe the eight precepts and informed mother with great happiness, because our maternal grandmother had been observing the eight precepts on all four poya days¹³ for a long time.

I, being nine years old, was bathed in the early morning, donned the white sil¹⁴ clothing and, together with the elders, took the eight precepts administered by my father at the Bodhi tree compound and made offerings to and venerated the Buddha. Our grandmother gave me a beautiful string of beads, a rosary and said: "Son, use this to chant the 'Iti'pi so Bhagavā' stanza."

¹¹ Offering food to monks.

¹² Poson is a month in the Buddhist lunar calendar. The arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka is celebrated on the full moon day of Poson.

¹³ The full moon, the new moon and the two half-moons.

¹⁴ 'Sil' means moral precepts, but also one's own particular moral qualities.



[I] accepted the advice and meditated eagerly, reciting the nine qualities of the Buddha.

In the early morning the qualities of the Buddha were recited, later in the morning there were offerings to the Buddha and chanting; after the midday meal [I] went with the sil group to Nilagama Mahā Vihāra. The custom of the village sil group was to take the precepts at the Bodhi tree, eat the midday meal there and in the afternoon go to the temple and spend the entire night without sleeping. In the morning [they would] venerate the Buddha, give up the eight precepts, pay homage to and take leave of the Venerable Thera¹⁵ of the temple and return to the village.

At night, a senior devotee in the group would chant the Dhamma book 'Pūjāwaliya' in the graceful old traditional way from evening through the night, because no instructions on meditation were given those days. Night is spent sleeplessly on sil day, as they say that sil-thieves will steal your sil. But it did not appear that anyone knew who the sil-thieves were. I was also instructed to keep up, being told that sleep is one of the sil-thieves and was offered drinks such as coffee and coriander. I did so with great happiness and great faith [in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha].

The thought came into my mind to get the Pūjāwaliya book and recite the Dhamma as I could read such a book even at that time, but did not ask for it because it would not have been given to me, being the youngest devotee in the group. While listening intently to the Dhamma talk, my mind fell into a strange state, as if in samādhi concentration and I had a wonderful and clear vision of myself transformed into a beautiful Buddha statue, seated against a large wooden pillar of the Dhamma talk hall, delivering a discourse facing east. I consider this memorable event to be an indication of the path of my attainment of Nibbāna.

¹⁵ A respectful term for a monk.



The vice-principal of our school, along with another group, offered cool drinks, betel and other gilānpasa¹⁶ to devotees the same evening. Our teacher was very happy regarding the way I observed sil and he offered gilānpasa to me with much affection, as if I was his own child. But I was not given betel, because [our] teachers had instructed that students should not chew betel. From that day onward [I] ardently observed the eight precepts on full moon days whenever free. Some students invited me: "Come back to us as a learned teacher." I replied, "No, I will not become a teacher, I will become a bhikkhu!"

12. Rains Retreat in the Village Hall

The Village Development Society had arranged to invite a Venerable Thera to spend the rainy season in the village hall. Attending to the Saṅgha was in our hands because our father was chairman of the society. Reverend Vehera Nāṇaratana Thera thus spent two rainy season retreats in the village hall.

Venerable Thera showed us how to make tags, loops and fasteners for bhikkhu robes, how to make brooms and towels, to cut and stitch bhikkhu robes and other skills besides. Venerable Thera also taught how to worship, to chant Dhamma verses and other customs when we were about nine or ten years of age. The venerable left for Devahuva-Bulanawewa temple at the end of the rains retreats.

13. Dhamma School

A Dhamma School was established for small children and ran for some time at the same village hall. Our father, together with two other elders, taught us 'Nampotha', 'Magul-lakuna', 'Buddha-Gajjaya', 'Sakas-Kaḍaya' and similar books. After that, on Sundays, Dhamma discussions were held in the hall. Those also were attended with enthusiasm and the intention to learn new things. There was a Dhamma talk, followed by a

¹⁶ 'Gilānpasa' means support for the sick. These are items that are allowed to be consumed the afternoon for those who are keeping eight precepts.



question and answer session. Dhamma subjects well worth remembering came up for discussion. One stanza was learnt at that time that is remembered today:

***Hadayataru koṭhara kuṭiṛe –
Kodha kuṇḍali na jātu bahikātabbo
Aritu titikkhā mantena
Avipphandattaṃ upanetaṭṭaṃ***

Meaning: One must never take out the poisonous snake named 'anger' that lives in the hollow of a tree called 'heart'. If it wakes up by any chance, it must be held in check and kept down firmly using the mantra called 'patience'.

This stanza, found in 'Attanagaluvaṃsa Pāli', is advice given by Venerable Nanda Mahāthera to Prince Siri Saṅgabo. Stanzas such as this remain firmly in mind because patience is a virtue I practice ardently.

14. Beloved Mother Passes Away

School vacation in April 1952 was longer than one month. I turned 13 years old. A series of strange thoughts entered my mind, even though it was the enjoyable period of the traditional New Year: *Our mother and father love us dearly and we love them the same way. If mother or father passes away while I am alive, it will hurt me badly. Better that I die before them.*

Such thoughts entered the mind frequently. At that time I, my father, my two elder brothers and my two younger brothers spent the day in a house on a coconut plantation and visited our home, where mother lived, only for meals.

Mother would get up every day about 4:00 in the early morning and prepare food for the family. On Friday, 2nd May 1952 she had also gotten up before dawn, prepared food and sent it to father and us.



Suddenly we received a message at about nine in the morning: "Mother has fallen ill! Come home quickly."

Meanwhile, mother begged pardon with her head on the feet of grandmother, who was quite old and took leave of her saying, "Mother, please pardon me for any misdeeds." She did the same at the feet of father as soon as he arrived.

Then, lying in bed, she addressed our eldest brother. Two or three times, she struggled to say: "My beloved son, please look after your brothers and sisters well." Immediately afterwards she said: "Anicce, dukkhe, saṃsāre!" three times and closed her eyes, showing clearly that she was very mindful even at her final moment.

Though mother's death was unbearable to us young children, we recovered somewhat after father advised us according to the Dhamma and were able to continue our studies.

15. Opening of Nā Uyana Monastery

Nā Uyana Monastery was opened on 23rd July 1954 as a branch monastery of the Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṃsthā of the Śrī Laṅkā Rāmañña Nikāya. The Saṃsthā was established on 18th June 1951, at the initiative of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera—who had the qualities of a Bodhisatta—and under the direction and advice of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Ñāṇārāma Mahāthera.

The only monastery in Wayamba (North Western) Province at that time was Ruwangirikanda. Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera visited the historic Bambaragala monastery with financial assistance from a doctor of traditional medicine, Mr. Pahalawalawwe Mutubanda of Alutwewa and under the direction of the well-respected teacher of vipassanā¹⁷ meditation, Venerable Mātale Silarakkhita Thera (abbot of

¹⁷ A kind of meditation where experience is examined in different ways in order to develop wisdom.



Ruwangirikanda Monastery). Mr. M.P. Amarasingha of Halmillawewa was informed of this visit and conducted Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera to Nā Uyana.

Nā Uyana Monastery was an oasis for Arahats in ancient times after the great arahat Mihindu¹⁸ established Buddhasāsana in Sri Lanka. Nā Uyana has giant ironwood trees, plenty of shade, water sources, rock-overhang kuṭis and is more than a mile away from the village. It is a restful environment, a monastery. Because of these qualities, the rock-overhang kuṭis were reconstructed and Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera was invited to stay there. The venerable arrived at



Cave Kuṭi, Nā Uyana

¹⁸ Pāli: Mahinda.



Nā Uyana monastery on 23rd July 1954. A mild climate, similar to the upcountry of the island, the thick jungle inhabited by elephants and bears, springs with cool water and streams, make Nā Uyana Monastery ideal for noble yogis who seek solitude.

16. Abiding by Moral Principles

Our father, who normally observed sil on the four poya days, had a great opportunity with the opening of Nā Uyana Monastery. In addition to observing sil on the four poya days, he observed sil one day before and one day after both the full moon and the new moon and also for three days during Sinhala New Year. He learned methods of meditation from the Venerable Theras in the monastery and practiced with much enthusiasm. Seeing this, a remarkable desire arose in us also for the practice of the Dhamma.

One day Venerable Rājākīya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Ñāṇārāma Mahāthera, Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera and Venerable Jalthara Dhammika Thera rested at the Bodhi tree compound in our village on their way to Bambaragaswewa to deliver Dhamma talks. We paid homage to them and offered gilānpasa. That was the first time we saw forest monks. The following day, on their way back to Nā Uyana after delivering their Dhamma talks, they stopped in our village and the Venerable Mahāthera delivered a Dhamma talk in the village hall.

On another occasion, seven monks led by Venerable Rājākīya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinawamsa Thera were returning from a Dhamma talk in Bambaragaswewa. That day too, we offered gilānpasa in the village hall. In the evening we went with a group to listen to a Dhamma talk on 'Pahārāda Sutta' by Venerable Kaḍawedduwe Mahāthera and a Dhamma talk based on the stanza beginning "Patirūpa desa vāso'ca" from Mahā Maṅgala Sutta, by Venerable Meegahatenne Mettānanda Thera.



On the 1948 Posaon full moon day, at the age of nine, [I] observed the uposatha¹⁹ precepts for the first time. In connection with Nā Uyana Monastery it was possible to continue this practice. Our father [would meditate] for about two hours at home and [would] often [read] Dhamma books, such as the ‘Visuddhimagga’, ‘Abhidhammacandrikāwa’, ‘Upāsaka Janālanakāraya’, ‘Vidarshanā Bhāvana Mārgaya’, ‘Chaturārya Satya’ and ‘Paṭicca Samuppāda’ and [would explain] these to devotees who [came] for Dhamma discussions. After listening to these discussions and reading these books a great desire arose in my mind, especially to practice the meditation methods of the ‘Visuddhimagga’, probably because of past experience with these meditations and the present association with spiritual friends.

[I] made use of books issued by the Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā that father received from Nā Uyana monastery. [I] practiced the lotus posture on my own according to the instructions in the booklet ‘The Path of Meditation’ by Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nānārāma Mahāthera. I was able to remain seated and meditate in the lotus posture for about 30 minutes after practicing for a short period of time.

There was a lesson on lovingkindness meditation in a booklet by Venerable Vaturagama Atulavaṁsa Thera. [I] memorized it because the method of radiating lovingkindness in the ten directions was clearly explained there in Pāli, following the ‘Visuddhimagga’. Each day after dinner [I] sat in bed in lotus posture, undertook the layperson’s eight precepts, chanted Karaniya Metta Sutta and after that read slowly the sutta on pervading lovingkindness in the ten directions in detail before sleeping.

All sense of body was lost within a few minutes; the mind was so quiet and it felt as if floating in the sky. There was a delightful feeling

¹⁹ There are four ‘uposatha’ days in a month: the full moon, the new moon, and the two quarters.



and a cool light. This lasted until the end of the meditation session. At the end [I] would offer merit with the stanza "Ākāsaṭṭhā'ca bhummaṭṭhā..." and then go to sleep. The alarm clock was set to ring at 5:00 in the morning, but awakening would occur just before the alarm started to ring. It would happen naturally. It would be a dreamless sleep and [I] would wake up with the limbs still in the same position, fresh and alert as if emerging from a state of concentration. The entire next day would be spent delightfully. Stanzas and protective suttas would be chanted while doing the daily chores with immense happiness. Such wonderful results followed every day from practicing lovingkindness meditation at night and the days were spent without any sort of illness such as cold or fever.

If such good results could be experienced from lovingkindness meditation without proper knowledge of the meaning of the Pāli, [I] thought, how much more benefit could be derived if it were possible to spend one's whole life practicing meditation in a monastery as a monk? Therefore, every day after the lovingkindness meditation session, merits were offered to the devas with the "Ākāsaṭṭhā'ca bhummaṭṭhā" stanza and with the following determination: *May I get the opportunity and a suitable place to fulfill the noble practice of a monk.*

17. Renunciation

While leading a life following religious practices, with a composed mind, [I] considered numerous times in this way:

Can I abide by bhikkhu practices, living in the forest, away from my father?

Yes, I can.

Can I abide by bhikkhu practices living in the forest, away from my brothers and sisters?

Yes, I can.



Can I abide by bhikkhu practices living in the forest, away from my village, relatives and all other things that I am entitled to?

Yes, I can.

Can I develop bhikkhu practices living in the forest, on one meal or eating only leaves of forest trees and creepers?

Yes, I can.

Can I develop bhikkhu practices living in the forest, assisting Saṅgha by preparing firewood, water and by performing other duties?

Yes, I can.

Can I develop proper bhikkhu practices while associating with people of various sorts of ideas and not be led astray by them?

Yes, I can.

Can I live as a bhikkhu and meditate throughout life in spite of whatever difficulties arise, without returning home?

Yes, I can.

Even though such determinations were made and the days went by happily and elatedly, I did not share these thoughts with anyone by word or deed so that no objection would be raised by anyone and no one would obstruct my path.

The year 2500, Buddhist Era²⁰. Buddhists were celebrating 2500 years of Buddhism. There was a great revival of interest in the religion. Various religious activities were organized and conducted with great faith and enthusiasm all over the Buddhist world.

The chief devotee of Nā Uyana Monastery, Mr. M.P. Amarasingha, had selected three children, aged 10, 11 and 12 years and entrusted them to the Venerable Mahāthera of Nā Uyana Monastery. Their heads

²⁰ 1956 CE.



were shaved and they wore clothes dyed a dull brown colour and observed the ten precepts. One day on their way to Nāgolla monastery, while passing through our village they were invited to our home and offered drinks as gilanpasa. It was the 25th of October 1956.

I was overjoyed at seeing these young children who were observing the ten precepts and spent the rest of the day planning my departure from lay life—a firm determination arose in me to follow through with my renunciation without further delay.

Soon after lunch the following day, the 26th, I bowed at the feet of father and asked, “Father, can you come with me to Nā Uyana monastery today, if you have no other journey?”

“Why son, why go to Nā Uyana today?”

“Father, I want to become a bhikkhu.” After a minute he replied with a big smile on his face, “Alright”. Then I said, “This very day we should go”. Then he asked me, “Son why do you want to go today?”

“My brothers would say no, wouldn’t they?”

“No. I will take care of that. Son, we will take offerings of food and go tomorrow morning to the monastery.”

This reply was thrilling. The success of my plan was assured.

On October 27th 1956, after getting ready early in the morning and paying respect to all the relatives older than [me], [I] received their blessings and set out from the village on the journey to Nibbāna, elatedly recollecting virtues of the Triple Gem and wiping away the tears of joy that were dripping from my eyes.

An unforgettable moment of [our] life, joy and happiness spontaneously overflows every time this occasion of lay-renunciation is recalled.

A few family friends from Āndāgala village accompanied us, carrying offerings to Nā Uyana monastery. [We] entered the long cave



kuṭi called 'elephant cave' where Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera lived and after completing our offerings and paying respect, father held my two hands, offered me to Venerable Thera's virtuous hands and said: "Bhante, this is my son. I entrust him to the Buddhasāsa in your presence. Please accept him, teach and train him and ordain him."

The following morning my father came to the monastery with a large group of relatives carrying food for Saṅgha and after finishing some religious activities, about 12 noon called me aside and made a certain invitation, being a wise and honest father. "Son, if you came here to ordain because of a hasty decision, then after some time your mind could change. If you return home later for whatever reason, it is a shame on us. If such is the case then let us return home this very day."

He spoke these words to inquire into my thinking. This was because I did not indicate my thoughts of ordaining in any way until the last moment, although I had conducted myself and practiced for a long time as if I were ordained.

At the end of father's wise words, I brought my two palms together out of respect and said in all honesty, "Father, I did not come on this journey expecting to ever return home."

Upon hearing these words, my father pressed his palms together and held them above his head in salutation, saying, "Sādhu! Sādhu!" This generated energy, determination and willpower in me. He was a true spiritual friend of a father. May he be able to achieve Noble Buddhahood in the future!

That afternoon my white clothes were dyed with a dye prepared by boiling the bark of the velan tree²¹ and my head was shaved.

29th October 1956. [I] put on the dyed sil clothes and recited the ten precepts. That afternoon, the three small upāsakas²² at Nā Uyana,

²¹ This produces a muddy colour.

²² Lay devotees.



wearing the dyed clothes, had returned from Nāgolla monastery with the chief devotee. In the presence of the group, Venerable Nāyaka Thera held a glass containing a bundle of small rolled pieces of paper in front of me and asked me to pick a piece. A rolled piece of paper was opened and the word 'Maitri' was written on it. I was called Maitri²³ Upāsaka from then on, during the period of observing ten precepts. As [I] had done a lot of lovingkindness meditation at home, [I] gladly accepted my new name.

On 30th October 1956, after the morning meal, Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Mahāthera went from Nā Uyana to Vigoda with the chief devotee, Mr. M.P. Amarasingha and the four of us, after giving suggestions for preparation of the midday meal. This visit had been planned ahead of time for Venerable Thera to get Ayurvedic medical treatment in his own village. That day the midday meal was offered at the house of Venerable Thera's mother. Relatives of the Venerable had constructed three makeshift kuṭis for us on a coconut plantation named 'Vilegedarawatta'.

18. Period of Lay-Renunciation

Leaving the worldly life with firm determination, observing ten precepts and training in a land distant from home, all these happened in accord with the Dhamma. The calm and quiet surroundings of Vilegedarawatta, the clean air blowing across the paddy field in the fore and association with a spiritual friend, Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera, greatly facilitated the training for the four of us.

The day [would] begin at 3:50 in the morning. [We would] wake up, wash and at 4:00 practice hatha yoga and sitting meditation. From 5:00 to 6:00 [we would] worship the Buddha and chant protective suttas and for 15 minutes practice meditation in the lotus posture. Chores around the monastery were done from 6:00 to 7:00 and after receiving

²³ Pāli: Mettā.



the morning's alms, the first portion would be offered to the Buddha, then the morning meal would be taken and monastery chores, such as cleaning, attended to. [We would] study from 8:00 to 9:00, wash and bathe from 9:00 to 10:00 and go on alms round from 10:00 to 11:00. [We would then] return to our kuṭis at 11:00, make offerings to the Buddha, have the midday meal and [again] attend to monastery chores.

[We would] complete the duties and protective chants by 12:00 and meditate for 15 minutes in lotus posture. After that, we would deliver the Dhamma talk, the same way it was delivered by Venerable Thera immediately after the meal. [We would] then lay out all the mats and pillows from the kuṭis in the sun, clean the kuṭis and study from 1:00 to 4:00. [We] had to memorize one lesson a day from each of 'Pāli Pathamanjariya' and 'Pāli Bhāṣhāvataranaya'.

On some days in the evening [I] received explanations from the retired principal Mrs. Hemalatā Karuṇaratna²⁴ regarding 'Catu Bhānavāra'²⁵. From 4:00 to 5:00, walking meditation; 5:00 to 6:00 monastery duties; 6:00 to 7:00, veneration of the Buddha and chanting, then 15 minutes of meditation in lotus posture. [We] increased the duration of sitting from 15 minutes, by five minutes each week, until meditation on the breath could be maintained in the seated posture from 7:00 to 8:00. Studies continued from 8:00 to 9:00 and then [it was] resting [time]. The day's activities were recorded in a diary during this time.

After practicing mindfulness of breathing meditation continuously for about two months, deep concentration developed. Concentration was attained in both walking meditation and sitting meditation. Training according to the Mahasi meditation method was also done. Strong concentration was attained in that way as well. Sometimes awareness of the body [disappeared] and the mind [became] subtle as

²⁴ Mahāthero's aunt, from Doranegoda.

²⁵ A book of protective chants.



a droplet of water, seeming to rise up to the end of the solar system. The continuous basic training of those four months according to that schedule was unforgettable and became a solid foundation, like a basis for success in Dhamma.

During this period I was trained to deliver a Dhamma talk for the donors at meal time lasting 15 to 20 minutes and a long Dhamma talk of one hour. [I also] developed a basic knowledge of the Pāli language, trained to sit one hour of meditation in lotus posture, [practice] about one hour walking meditation and [learned to fulfill] all monastic duties.

On 15th January 1957, in the evening of the Duruthu full moon day, [I] delivered a Dhamma talk of one full hour to devotees on the four foundations of mindfulness. On the Navam full moon day of February, [I] delivered another Dhamma talk of similar length at Mattegoda to devotees who were observing eight precepts. Listeners appreciated both of these Dhamma talks and offered their blessings. [I] spent the four month training period delightfully, in good health and with much enthusiasm and determination.

The method of worshipping the Buddha as practiced at Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā, how to chant protective suttas, the four guardian meditations, reflection on the four requisites, methods of caring for and respecting²⁶, ethics and good conduct, how to wear the robes, how to dye robes, how to wash robes and fulfill other monastic duties were all learned as well .

19. Arrival in Śrī Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre

Most Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera had to participate in a pilgrimage to Śrī Pāda at the request of relatives in the village. Before that an application for ordination was obtained from me in writing the third week of February and mailed to Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera.

²⁶ The Buddha, elders, teachers, etc.



[Vigoda Bhante's] pilgrimage to Śrī Pāda and the departure [of the four lay-renunciants] to the Śrī Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama main branch in the south of the island were set for 2nd March 1957. Early morning that day, Venerable Thera gave instructions and advice and blessed us very kind-heartedly. The midday meal was arranged in the house of a relative of Venerable Thera, Mr. Wijesingha, known as Ārachchi Mahāṭā, who lived on the neighbouring land. He greatly helped us, having a lot of faith in us, during the entire four months of our stay.

After the midday meal, a Dhamma talk was given regarding the good deeds of the donors and then we shared merits and went to the closest railway station (Bemmulla) with Mr. M.P. Amarasingha and the three small upāsakas. We reached the Maradāna railway station in Colombo by train and took the Ruhunu Kumari express train bound for Mātara in the south, finally arriving in Ambalangoda. [We] walked along the rail track from there, reaching Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Meditation Centre about 6:00 in the evening. After venerating the Buddha in the evening, we paid homage to Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera and Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera and retired. The Mahātheras, impressed by our behavior and manner of address, said: "These young individuals are suitable for ordination this very day."

Subsequently, on 3rd March, Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Thera of Nāthagāṇe Monastery arrived at Galdūwa together with an elderly upāsaka due for ordination. There was also a middle-aged upāsaka at Galdūwa whom Venerable Paṇḍita Piyadassi Thera of Balapitiya Mahākarāwa Pahathamulla had brought for ordination. In addition to the programme at Galdūwa, we followed without fail the daily schedule to which we were accustomed. All three Venerable Theras had agreed unanimously to hold an ordination ceremony on 27th March.



20. Ordination in the Buddhasāsana

Our kind-hearted father had prepared all requisites of a Buddhist monk according to the advice of Venerable Kananke Mudita Thera of Nāgolla monastery, had dyed the robes as necessary and brought them to Galdūwa. The ordination ceremony was held at the auspicious time of 8:30 am, Wednesday 27th March 1957, an event that will be recollected throughout [my] life with sublime joy.

Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera occupied the preceptor's seat and Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Pahatamale Piyadassi Mahāthera and Most Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Mahāthera were seated in that order. Most Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera and Most Venerable Kananke Mudita Thera were seated with the resident bhikkhus.

My father, my eldest brother (Mr. M.B. Disānāyaka, Justice of the Peace), Mr. M.P. Amarasingha and uncle (Mr. D.M. Abasingbanda) were present on my behalf. The chief female devotee of the monastery (Mrs. Samalin Wickramaratna Senānāyaka) and other devotees were also present.

After an initial introduction by Most Venerable Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Preceptor Mahopadyāya Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera tied the belts around each of the three of us with his noble hands, then assigned meditation objects and established us in the ten precepts of a novice. [I] was filled with great joy at that time and maintained strong faith, keen mindfulness and especially strong determination. The eldest upāsaka from Nāthagane was admitted to the Saṅgha under the name 'Ven. Māṇiyaṃgama Saddhāsāra' and the second from Balapitiya under the name 'Ven. Mahākaraṇa Saddhāvimala'.

The name 'Ven. Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma' was agreed upon for me. 'Nā Uyane' was assigned at my request. The reason was that the noble

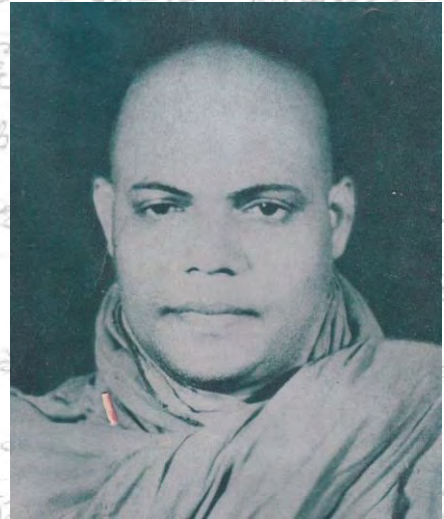


enlightened ones of ancient times had also used their place of residence as part of their names. Another reason was that there were already about six bhikkhus with the name of our village living in temples of the Asgiriya Chapter of the Siyam Mahā Nikāya and it was considered that the name of the monastery was more appropriate for me because I was ordained at a forest monastery. The name 'Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma' was finally decided at Nāthagāṇe by Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Vimalavaṃsa Thera after having discussed this with me.

21. Novice Period

The two years, three months and eighteen days from 27th March 1957 to 15th July 1959 represents my period as a novice. Two days after ordination, Venerable Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera, after midday worship, asked me: "Would this little novice like to go with me to Nāthagāṇe?"

"I would like to go if Venerable Paṇḍita Mahāthera gives permission," I replied.



The two Mahātheras had discussed the issue and I was given permission to go to Nāthagāṇe. On 30th March 1957 five bhikkhus, including me and an attendant devotee, set out from Galdūwa in a bus. We arrived in Colombo and took the midday meal, which had been brought from Galdūwa, at The Buddhist Centre there. From there we set off to Kurunegala, arriving at Nāthagāṇe Monastery at about six in the evening. I was assigned a small cave kuṭi above the cave kuṭi used for meals.



At that time there were only eight cave kuṭis at Nāthagāṇe, including the cave kuṭi used for meals and the one used as a shrine room. Of these eight, the 'ennoru' kuṭi was farthest away.

[Our schedule] continued at Nāthagāṇe:

3:50 am	Wake up. Sitting meditation.
5:30 am	Veneration and [chanting] protective suttas, meditation.
6:15 am	Monastic duties.
7:00 am	Morning meal.
8:00 am	Studies.
10:00 am	Alms round, bathing.
11:00 am	Midday meal.
12:00 pm	Midday worship and chanting.
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Studying explanations, reciting lessons to the venerable teacher, reading, writing and studies.
5:00 pm	Monastic duties.
7:30 pm to 9:30 pm	Sitting meditation in kuṭi. (During the night, one session of sitting meditation lasting two hours, recollections of the Buddha's qualities were practiced from memory as given in the Sinhala translation of the 'Visuddhimagga').
10:00 pm	Rest.

The 'Satara Bhaṇavara', 'Satipaṭṭhāna Sutrāya', 'Sūtrasaṃgrahaya', 'Dhammapadaya', 'Kāyavirati Gāṭāpota', 'Abhidhammartha Saṃgrahaya' and 'Bālāvatāraya' were completed and memorized at Nāthagāṇe. [I] spent a full six months in the 'ennoru' kuṭi, which was considered a difficult stay. From time to time [I] practiced the austerities of eating at



only one sitting a day²⁷, eating only from the alms bowl and no other container²⁸ and that of not assuming the posture of lying down²⁹.

My father took me to Nā Uyana and arranged for treatment over the course of three months because of a stomach ailment that was contracted at Nāthagāṇe. [At Nā Uyana] I was made to take medicine of gallnut fermented in cow urine³⁰. My father prepared this medicine and gave it to me occasionally for about eight or ten years. It cured illnesses and provided significant relief.

[I] spent time with Venerable Sumanasena Thera and Venerable Saraṇatissa Thera while at Nā Uyana. [I] also spent time with Venerable Uttaravaṃsa Thera who visited Nā Uyana for a few days and from him learned the meaning of the chapters in the 'Abhidhammarthasaṃgrahaya' up to the chapter entitled 'Prakirṇaka'. [I] memorized the Bhikkhu Pātimokkha³¹ in one week. I was advised by this Venerable to recollect the repulsiveness of the 32 parts of the body daily, in order to observe the celibate life purely. I continue to observe it to this day.

During the time I observed ten precepts, Venerable Bodhirakkhita Thera advised [me to contemplate] thus:

"You die. The corpse bloats up and becomes a dull blue. Maggots crawl out of the mouth, nose, ears and other orifices. The corpse putrefies and pus oozes out. Various animals, birds and insects gnaw the flesh and bones. Any remaining flesh, tendons and veins decompose; an unbearable stench fills the surroundings. The corpse gets dismembered, bones get strewn here and there and finally, they too decay and become

²⁷ Ekāsanikaṅga.

²⁸ Pattapiṇḍikaṅga.

²⁹ Nesajjikaṅga.

³⁰ Pūtimutta bhesajja.

³¹ The main set of rules for monks.



part of the soil. Likewise, look in this way at every man and woman that you like."

Similarly, I was thus advised to recollect death, the danger associated with the body, its repulsiveness, its impermanent, suffering and non-self nature and its vain and empty character. [I] followed this advice and observe celibacy to this day.

22. Pūtimutta Bhesajja

Recipe

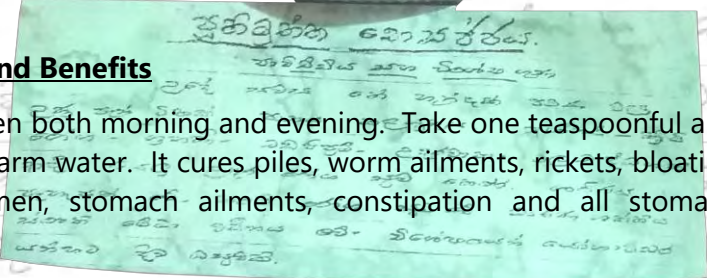
Gallnut, without seeds	1lb.
Cow Urine	1 neli (1½ bottles)
Epsom Salts	2 kalang (about 2gm)
Cane Sugar	½ lb
Ghee	¾ bottle
Bee Honey	¼ bottle

Preparation

Collect cow urine (not buffalo) in the early morning, filter it and pour it into a vessel. Immerse the gall and let stand for 24 hours. Take out the pieces of gall and dry in the sun. Immerse in cow urine again and dry in the sun the next day. Repeat this for a few days until all the cow urine has dried, then dry the gallnut in the sun, pound it to a powder, filter it, mix it with the Epsom salts, sugar, honey and ghee and store.

Dosage and Benefits

To be taken both morning and evening. Take one teaspoonful and drink a little warm water. It cures piles, worm ailments, rickets, bloating of the abdomen, stomach ailments, constipation and all stomach





related illnesses and skin disease. It improves skin quality, memory, recall and develops wisdom; a heavenly medicine, especially for yogis.

The quantities in the recipe can be increased or decreased according to the proportions given above.

The method of preparing pūtimutta āsava³² is also given below, because it is a heavenly medicine for all stomach illnesses, poisons and even for snake venom.

23. Pūtimutta Āsava Medicine

Recipe

Gallnut (with seeds) 1lb.

Cow Urine 6 bottles (4 neli)

Epsom Salts 2 kalang (about 2gm)

Preparation

Collect cow urine (not buffalo) in the early morning, filter it and pour it into a clay pot. Wash the gallnuts and add them to the cow urine together with the Epsom salts. Cover the top of the pot with a clean cloth and tie it closed. Cover it again with the lower part of an areca nut branch, then cover it with clay to make it airtight.

Dig a large enough pit in the ground in a place that will not get wet, keep three stones at its base for a hearth and place the clay pot on the stones without allowing it to touch the sides or bottom of the pit. Close the pit with wooden planks, cover it well with soil and leave it for three months. After the three months, filter the medicine.

Dosage

In case of indigestion, stomach bloating, stomach ache, or snake bite, take it like other arishta³³; twice a day (morning and evening) is

³² An Ayurvedic fermented liquid medicine.



sufficient. Not suitable to be taken regularly. It is a heavenly medicine for stomach illnesses. Very useful for yogis.

24. Venerable Teachers and Preceptor

At the time of novice ordination, Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera was preceptor and Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinawaṃsa Mahāthera was teacher.

At higher ordination, Most Venerable Vidarshanācāriya Maḍawala Dhammatilaka Mahāthera, abbot of Nimalawa, was appointed preceptor. Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera, Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinawaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalawaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Munagama Sirisumana Mahāthera and Most Venerable Devagoda Maṅgalasiri Mahāthera were appointed as reciters at the ordination.

During my period of studies, in addition to the venerable teachers listed above, Most Venerable Rerukāṇe Candavimalā Mahāthera and Most Venerable Devinuwara Nāṇāvāsa Mahāthera were also appointed as teachers.

With regard to meditation teachers, Most Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera was meditation teacher during my ten precepts period and the following acted as teachers thereafter:

- Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera
- Venerable Vidarshanācāriya Mātale Śrī Sīlarakkhita Mahāthera of Ruwangiri
- Venerable Vidarshanācāriya Maḍawala Dhammatilaka Mahāthera of Nimalawa

³³ An Ayurvedic fermented liquid medicine.



- Venerable Jaṭila Thera at Mahasi Meditation Centre in Myanmar
- Venerable Kuṇḍalābhivaṃsa Thera at Saddhammaramsi Yeiktha
- At Mawlamyine Pa Auk Cittalapabbata Monastery, Most Venerable Agga Mahā Kammaṭṭhānācāriya Pa Auk Sayadaw Āciṇṇa helped me greatly

May all the venerable Mahātheras who helped me so immensely as teachers and preceptors attain Noble Buddhahood!

25. Period of Studies

During my time keeping ten precepts as a lay-renunciant (prior to novice ordination) at the hermitage in Vilegedarawatta, [I] received basic training from Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera, as mentioned earlier. As a novice at Nāthagāṇe Monastery and Asoka monastery, [I] learned the Sinhala language, Pāli grammar, Pāli vocabulary, the Sanskrit language (including 'Candas-alamkāra'), moral precepts and discipline, 'Prātimoksha-Kaṅkhāvitaranī', 'Prātimoksha Varṇaṇāva', 'Sikhavalanda', 'Sikhavalanda Vinisa', Saṅgi books of the Sutta Piṭaka and also bhikkhu skills such as preparing of robes, tying and binding coir brooms and ekel brooms³⁴ and book binding from Venerable Geṭamāṇe Paṇḍita Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Thera.

At Puhulwella Rohana Śrī Yogāśrama Meditation Centre, [I] received further training in Pāli grammar, Pāli vocabulary, Vinaya Piṭaka and Sutta Piṭaka from Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera and Most Venerable Devagoda Maṅgalasiri Thera and, in particular, memorized the two books 'Pārājika Pāli' and 'Pācittiya Pāli'.

I learned 'Rūpasiddhi', 'Kaccāyana Vyākaraṇa', the matrix named 'Mukhamattadīpaṇi', 'Mahāmoggallāna Vyākaraṇaya'³⁵ and the

³⁴Traditional brooms used for sweeping inside and outside.

³⁵These are Pāli grammar books.



Abhidhamma Piṭaka from Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera at Sirimangala Yogāśrama, at Danavukanda and Mellagala Yogārāma Centres. The remaining three books of Vinaya Piṭaka, namely 'Mahāvagga Pāli', 'Cullavagga Pāli' and 'Parivāra Pāli' were memorized. The 'Dhammasaṅgānī Prakaraṇaya' of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka was also memorized.

At Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre, Sinhala, Pāli, the Sutta Piṭaka and the Vinaya Piṭaka were studied in a special course under Most Venerable Geṭamāṇne Paṇḍita Vimalavaṃsa Thera and Most Venerable Devagoḍa Maṅgalasiri Thera. The 'Vibhaṅga', 'Dhātukathā', 'Puggalapaññatti and the 'Kathāvatthu Prakaraṇa' were also memorized. Again at Danuvukanda and Gotama Tapovanaya, the 'Yamaka Prakaraṇa' and 'Paṭṭhāna Mahāprakaraṇa' were memorized under Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera.

While staying at Gotama Tapovanaya, the 'Abhidharma Paramārtha Swarūpa Bhedaniya' were studied and clarifications regarding various other difficult areas in Abhidhamma were received from Most Venerable Rerukāṇe Candavimala Mahāthera at Pokunuwita Śrī Vinayālankāra Ārāmaya. [I] received special training in the Abhidhamma texts 'Abhidharma Mātrikā Swarūpa', 'Dhātu Kathā Swarūpa' and 'Yamaka Swarūpa' from Most Venerable Devinuwara Nāṇāvāsa Mahā Nāyaka Mahāthera of Mahāvisuddhārāma-Dematagoḍa in Colombo.

While learning Burmese from Most Venerable Nāṇinda, a Burmese Thera, [I] studied the translations of many Burmese books while staying at Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekaśrāma Kahagolla in Diyatalawa.

26. Higher Ordination

[My] teacher, Venerable Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera and I went from Nāthagāṇe to Asoka Monastery in Ranwala on 2nd March 1958 on a special invitation.



A higher ordination ceremony at Nimalawa Monastery had been planned in haste for 25th November 1958 at the request of D.D. Senānāyaka Muhandiram Ralahamy, the chief devotee of Nimalawa Monastery. By that time I had completed all the training required for higher ordination.

One day [my] teacher, Venerable Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera, asked me: "Does Ariyadhamma āvuso³⁶ want higher ordination quickly?"

"Bhante, I have no need to get higher ordination quickly. I will accept any day that the Venerable Mahātheras decide." I replied.

"Sādhu! Sādhu! An excellent answer. If there is a strong desire, that itself is suffering," he said.

I understood it to mean that Mahāthera agreed with my words for a special reason. The higher ordination of 25th November took place as scheduled.

Venerable Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera did not participate in this hurriedly prepared ordination ceremony; instead, the Venerable proposed a higher ordination ceremony especially for me at Asoka Monastery. A sīma hall³⁷ surrounded by water was constructed in Kuḍā Oya in Ranwala, with the full approval of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera.

Devotees of Ranwala Asoka Monastery had, with great devotion, prepared a square sīma hall with such enthusiasm it was as if they had inherited a massive treasure of merit. There was continuous rain that Esala month and Kuḍā Oya and Mahā Oya were both overflowing, but during the few days of the worthy higher ordination ceremony the rains ceased and the sky was clear, indicating that devas were also showing their support.

³⁶ This is the term used for a senior monk to address a junior monk. 'Bhante' is the term a junior monk uses to address a senior monk.

³⁷ An area where official acts of the Saṅgha can be carried out.



On 15th July 1959, the greater Saṅgha was conducted from Asoka monastery to Ranwala Kuḍā Oya in a large procession and higher ordination took place in a grand and worthy way, generating an unforgettable mental strength and determination in me that resonated hundreds and thousands of times.

Twenty-seven higher ordained bhikkhus assembled in the sīma hall for the worthy ceremony and there were five novices due for higher ordination. The five aspirants were:

1. Venerable Bulathsinhala Dhammavimala
2. Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma
3. Venerable Kodāgoda Jinānanda
4. Venerable Deraniyagala Meghiya
5. Venerable Ahaṅgama Vinīta



Mahāthera with Most Ven. Kaḍavedduwe Jinavaṃsa Bhante



The three bhikkhus to be ordained in the first set, including me, were ordained at 3:50 pm. The preceptor was Most Venerable Vidarshanācārya Madawala Dhammatilaka Mahāthera.

Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera, Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Mahāthera, Most Venerable Munagama Sirisumana Mahāthera and Most Venerable Devagoda Maṅgalasiri Mahāthera were appointed reciters at the ordination. This took place in the year 2503 BE Esala month, on the 11th day of the waxing moon (a Wednesday), 15th July 1959 CE.

27. Memorizing the Tipiṭaka

The books of the Sutta Piṭaka were memorized in sections at Ranwala Asoka Monastery. Memorization of the Vinaya Piṭaka started in August 1960 at Puhulwella Śrī Rohana Meditation Centre and was finished on 2nd March 1962. That day the book 'Vinayaṭṭhakathāva' was received as a gift. Memorization of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka started on 6th March 1962 and all seven books were completed in August 1963. Looking back now unlimited Dhamma joy arises, because it was while learning the Dhamma-Vinaya and attending to all duties according to the timetable that the memorization was done, only during the very limited time available.

One day a novice monk made such a request by letter: "Bhante, please give the learning medicine to me too."

I wrote a reply: "I do not know of a medicine for mental retention, but this is the treatment that I use. Wake up early in the morning at 3:50 and practice mindfulness of breathing from 4:00 to 5:00 in the seated posture. Complete all work during the day with mindfulness. Please take this medicine that I myself use."



28. Rains Retreats and Places Visited

[I] spent my first rains retreat at Nāthagāṇe Monastery as a novice. [My] second rains as a novice and first year after higher ordination were spent at Ranwala Asoka Monastery. At end of December 1959, Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera left for Rambapokuna monastery in Nikaweratiya on a special invitation. He gave me some advice and then, on the kind instructions of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera, it was arranged for me to visit Rohana Meditation Centre in Puhulwella. Accordingly, I left Asoka Monastery of Ranwala on 7th January 1960 for Nā Uyana, then left Nā Uyana and went to Śrī Rohana Meditation Centre in Puhulwella, Mātara, in the South of the island on the ninth. [My] second Rains Retreat was spent under the guidance of Venerable Kaḍawedduwe Mahāthera together with assistance from Venerable Devagoda Maṅgalasiri Mahāthera. During this time at Śrī Rohana, a memorable meritorious celebration was held at the main branch—Nimalawa Monastery—to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Śrī Kalyāṇi Yogāśrama Saṃsthā.

Establishing a sīma boundary, as well as novice and higher ordination ceremonies, took place on 16th, 17th and 18th of July 1961, at Nimalawa. Bhikkhus who had completed Memorizing the Tipiṭaka were awarded honours and gifts were offered in appreciation. As I had memorized the twofold Vibhaṅga of the Vinaya Piṭaka by that time, [I] received the 'Vibhaṅgācariya' award and a double-robe of fine cloth as a gift of appreciation. At the end of the 1962 rains, I presented that robe as a Kaṭhina³⁸ offering at Weweldeniya Monastery.

The venerable abbot of Ruwangirikanda arrived on 17th July 1961 to participate in a vinayakamma³⁹. I was assigned a seat next to his in

³⁸ A ceremony at the end of the rains retreat where a robe, or robe-cloth is donated to the monks.

³⁹ A legal act of the Saṅgha.



the large cave at Nimalawa. Before going to sleep, he mentioned a wonderful event in the course of giving me meditation advice.

Soon after his higher ordination, while at the temple, Bhante practiced meditation each night and made the wish: *May I find a suitably peaceful place for meditation and undertaking virtuous deeds!* One night he saw a forest hermitage in a dream. There was an ancient line of steps, a cave kuṭi, a statue of the Buddha, a symbol of a hand on a rock and a banyan tree. All these were seen in the dream, but he could not find out where it was located or how to get there.

From then on he was on the lookout for such a place for three years, visiting monasteries and sacred places in such areas as Anurādhapura, Mātale, Kandy and Kurunegala, searching according to those marks he had seen in the dream, but without success. During this time he stayed about two weeks at a sacred ancient site referred to by the villagers as 'Vihāra Hinna'. One morning as they set out on alms round towards the village, a handsome middle-aged upāsaka clad in white approached him, bowed, stood to one side and said: "I came to see the venerable bhikkhus here. How long will the venerables stay here? I would also like to know about the meditation the bhikkhus are practicing."

Bhante replied, "The two of us will stay here two weeks and then go elsewhere. We practice mindfulness, mindfulness of breathing, mindfulness of the body, lovingkindness as well as other kinds of meditation."

Then the upāsaka said, "Bhantes, during the Buddha's time, the yogi received the meditation subject that was suitable for him from the Buddha himself. The power of the Buddha's virtues is alive even today! If the stanza, "Iti'pi so bhagavā..." is recited 100,000 times within 21 days, the Buddha will appear in front of you. Then you should request a suitable object and develop that meditation," and left in the direction of the forest. There was no time to find out who he was.



The two venerable bhikkhus described the appearance of that upāsaka to the villagers, but they replied that there was no such person in their village or in the neighbouring villages. The venerables then concluded that the deva might have had some noble attainment and had therefore come in the guise of an upāsaka to help them.

Not many days after that, he found the monastery that he had seen in the dream. It was Ruwangirikanda Monastery, near Nārammala.

Bhante and several others started to chant the "Iti'pi so" stanza 100,000 times in 21 days. Bhante could not complete the target because he had a lot of other work, but five others, bhikkhus and upāsakas, kept up the chanting. When they had completed about 75,000 to 80,000 rounds, an image of the Buddha appeared as if alive. They were overwhelmed with faith and bowed to the ground immediately, forgetting to ask for meditation objects. The image of the Buddha disappeared. If a yogi asks for a meditation object while maintaining his concentration then he will receive it.

This information, given by the abbot of Ruwangirikanda while staying at the large cave in Nimalawa, is repeated here for the benefit of the many who may read this record.

[I] left Śrī Rohana Meditation Centre in Puhulwella on 27th July 1961, for Danawukanda Sirisumaṅgala Meditation Centre on the kind advice of my venerable teacher, Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera, to be placed under the guidance of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Ñāṇārāma Mahāthera. Accordingly, my third rains retreat after higher ordination was spent at Danawukanda. I came to Mellagala with Mahāthera after the rains, spent a few weeks there, then went back to Danawukanda and finally to Galdūwa on 25th March 1962.

On the three days of 27th and 30th March and 1st April, there were a series of meritorious ceremonies at Galdūwa, Nimalawa and Mahiyangana to commemorate the anniversary of the birth of my venerable teacher, Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera. [I]



subsequently stayed at Galdūwa that year. [My] fourth rains was spent at Galdūwa main branch.

[I] went back to Danawukanda in December 1962 and engaged in meditation practice from April 1963 to the end of May at Mellagala. [I] went together with Venerable Mahāthera on 7th July 1963 to Gotama Tapovanaya in Kalapaluwāwa for the rains retreat. [My] fifth rains was spent at Gotama Tapovanaya. [I] left Tapovanaya on 24th July 1964 and accompanied the Venerable Burmese Bhikkhu Nāninda Thera to Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya in Kahagolla, Diyatalāwa, in the up-country. [My] sixth rains was spent in Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya.

[I] returned to Tapovanaya again on 6th December 1964 and left on 12th July 1965 for Tripiṭaka Dharmāyanaya in Koggala. The purpose was to assist Venerable Geṭamāne Mahāthera and train novices there. [My] seventh rains was spent in Tripiṭaka Dharmāyanaya.

[I] came back to Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya on 6th December 1965 and spent my eighth rains there, teaching two or three bhikkhus.

[I] left Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya on 22nd March 1967 and arrived in Daluggala Temple, Rambukkana. On 25th March [I] arrived at Galdūwa Śrī Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre with my Venerable Teacher, Kaḍawedduwe Mahāthera and engaged in training activities. [My] ninth and tenth rains were spent in Galdūwa main branch.

[I] followed the ascetic practices and practiced meditation at Ruwangirikanda Monastery from 24th July 1969 up to December that year. My eleventh rains was spent at Ruwangirikanda. [I] came back to Galdūwa and had to go to Śrī Nāṇārāma Vivekāshramaya for my twelfth rains. From December 1970 to the end of January 1971 [I] stayed at Central Hospital in Colombo and attended on Venerable Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera, who was ill and then went to Galdūwa. From there onward, six rains retreats were spent at Galdūwa itself.

From 17th May 1977 until 8th December [I] stayed at the Buddhist Teacher Training Institute, Mirigama and conducted meditation

programmes for teachers receiving training there. [My] nineteenth rains was spent at Buddhist Teacher Training Institute, Mirigama.

[I] conducted a meditation programme at the Teacher Training Institute from January to April 1978 and then went to Galdūwa. Eighteen rains up to 1995 were spent at Galdūwa. Two rains, 1996 and 1997, were spent at Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Mawlamyine, Myanmar. [I] spent the 1998 rains again in Galdūwa and the two Rains of 1999 and 2000 at Nā Uyana Monastery. The 2001 rains was again spent at Pa Auk Cittalapabbata Monastery in Mawlamyine, Myanmar.

[I] spent the period from 20th April to 25th June 1967 at Deraniyagala Shailagiri Yogāśrama in order to get traditional Sinhala medical treatment.



[I] stayed at Mītirigala Nissaraṇa Vanaya, Mītirigala Śrī Nāṇārāma Dharmāyatana, Nimalawa Monastery and Devagolla Monastery in Kandy from time to time for special Sāsana activities. [I] also stayed



several times at Mellagala Monastery with Venerable Mātara Śrī Nānārāma Mahāthera. [I] practiced the Mahasi meditation method there continuously over the months of April and May 1963.

29. Conducting Meditation Classes

While engaged in training activities at Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre, [I] conducted meditation classes for students according to the ‘Visuddhimagga’.

[I] conducted a three-month training course at the Buddhist Teacher Training Institute, Mirigama, for Buddhist teachers (both male and female) three times and once conducted a two-week special meditation class (during the rains of 1977-78). This was at the invitation of the Buddhist Advisory Council of the Ministry of Education, headed by Venerable Maḍiḥe Paññāsīha Thera. The programme included detailed instructions on the four protective meditations and mindfulness of breathing. [I] conducted a meditation programme in Koggala Tripiṭaka Dharmayātanaya once a month for four years, starting from 1982. [I] conducted a meditation class at the special invitation of the Government Services Buddhist Association once a month for four years, from 6th June 1984. It included the four protective meditations, 21 foundations of mindfulness meditations and the 40 meditation objects—detailed vipassanā [instructions] according to the ‘Visuddhimagga’ and the Abhidhamma. This programme was conducted for 18 years (up to 2002). [I] conducted a meditation programme once a month at the Galle Municipal Council Hall at the invitation of the Chief Government Agent of Galle, Mr. Percy Abeysingha, for ten years (1987 to 1997).

30. Dhamma Books Compiled

A booklet titled ‘Amāṃpiḍu’ was compiled at Gotama Tapovanaya at the request of Venerable Vaṅgisa Thera. A booklet titled ‘Shānti Prārtanāya’ was prepared on the basis of the ‘Karaṇiya Metta Sutta’ at the invitation of Mr. Sumana Karuṇaratna.



[I] translated the book 'Yamakawācanā Mārgaya' from Burmese at the request of retired Chief Justice, Mr. Pārinda Ranasingha. At the request of the Government Services Buddhist Society in Colombo, [I] prepared a series of books: 'Meditation on the Qualities of the Buddha', 'Meditation on Qualities of the Dhamma', 'Meditation on Qualities of the Saṅgha', 'Lovingkindness', 'Contemplation of Repulsiveness', 'Contemplation of Death', 'The Establishments of Mindfulness', 'The 40 Meditation Objects', 'Vipassanā Meditation', 'Abhidhamma Meditation 1', 'Abhidhamma Meditation 2', 'Abhidhamma Meditation 3'.

[I] also prepared the book 'A Critical Approach to the Debate on Intermediate Existence' at the request of retired Chief Justice Mr. Parinda Ranasingha. Many other dhamma books were also compiled. All these books were prepared in response to special requests and were offered as gifts of Dhamma.

31. Pilgrimages to India

Venerable Geṭamāṇne Mahāthera, Venerable Mawatagama Mahāthera, Venerable Vinīta Thera, myself and Mr. Mudalige were sponsored by the virtuous Mr. Albert Edirisingha to join the pilgrimage group of Mr. Nimal Nānāyakkāra and paid homage at the sacred places in India for the first time from 26th February to 24th March 1981.

The second time was from 3rd to 24th February 1995. [I] paid homage at the sacred places, with eight of our Saṅgha and our party of lay devotees. This pilgrimage was sponsored by Mrs. S.M. Hemā Premadāsa Meniyo⁴⁰ and organized by Mr. Surawira of Kelaniya.

Four of us bhikkhus and 23 of our helpful lay devotees paid homage at the sacred sites in India for the third time with the Hemās Company from 10th to 22nd November 1995. The trip was sponsored by Mr. B.S. Perera Kalumahatmayā of Homāgama.

⁴⁰ 'Meniyo' means 'mother', and is a respectful term of address for an older Buddhist woman.



On 7th May 1999, [I] visited India with the brothers Mr. Supun Perera and Mr. Hemantha Kumara, paid homage at the sacred footprints at Saccabanda and visited Apollo hospital in Madras to chant paritta⁴¹ for Mrs. Hemā Premadāsa Meniyo, who was receiving treatment there.

From 21st February to 17th March 2000, [I] paid homage at the sacred places in India for the fourth time, with the financial support of Mrs. Shriya Karuṇadāsa Meniyo and a group of our own devotees.

During the ten days from 20th February to 2nd March 2001, [I] went on pilgrimage to India for the fifth time, with financial support from Mr. Upāli Senarath and Mr. H.G. Āriyaratna, with 23 of our own devotees and paid homage at the sacred places. Visiting the Rishikesh Yogi Āshram and the city of Kathmandu in Nepal during the fourth pilgrimage (February 21st, 2000) constituted an additional journey.

On all five pilgrimages to India venerating the sacred sites, the giving of precepts, chanting, giving meditation advice, delivering Dhamma talks, recollecting the qualities of the Buddha and such activities were conducted under my leadership. The Buddha was venerated and Dhamma talks were delivered even while traveling by bus.

[I] chanted the seventy-three knowledges of the Buddha at the compound of the sacred Bodhi tree in Bodhgaya on two occasions. During the fifth visit (2001), [I] participated in a meditation session of one hour with a group of meditators numbering around 1500, [followers of] Sri Nārāyaṇ Goenkā.

When conducting meditation classes in Sri Lanka, delivering Dhamma talks and during paritta chanting, [I] most often started by mentally recalling the compound of the sacred Bodhi tree, [visualizing] paying homage with forehead placed on the seat sanctified by the

⁴¹ Suttas that have a protective effect when chanted.

Buddha and circumambulating the Bodhi tree three times. This recollection generates much energy and bestows blessings. Focus mentally on the presence of the Buddha seated at the original Bodhi tree, rays of seven colours emanating from his body.

32. Visits Abroad

At the invitation of the Burmese bhikkhu Venerable Ñāṇinda Thera and with travel costs covered by Mrs. S.M. Hema Premadāsa Meniyo, [I] visited Thailand and Myanmar on pilgrimage from 16th December 1991 to 25th January 1992, together with five bhikkhus and five lay devotees. Five days were spent in Thailand. In Myanmar [we] stayed at Pashchimārama in the capital, Rangoon and venerated many sacred places such as Rangoon, Pegu, Mandalay, Amarapura, Sagayin Mumva, Bagāṃ, Puppha and Oila. [We] meditated for ten days at Saddhammaraṃsi Yeikthā Meditation Centre in Rangoon.



At the gate of Wat Pah Nanachat, Thailand



From 28th July to 12th August 1993, [I] visited Myanmar for the second time to introduce our disciple bhikkhus to the meditation centre and to entrust them to Takshilā. Venerable Meetalawe Vinīta Thera, Venerable Saṅghasubhadra Thera and the retired principal of Mahinda College, Mr. Guṇasekara, accompanied us on the journey. All expenses were borne by Mr. N.G.P. Paṇḍitaratna. [I] received full assistance from Mr. Chānaka Silva and official assistance from Mr. Ganegoda Ārachchi. [I] settled seven bhikkhus at Mahasi Meditation Centre, three bhikkhus at Paṇḍitarāma and meditated at Mahasi Centre for nine days. It was possible to admit five bhikkhus to Kabād Takshilā in December 1993. The other two monks who visited Myanmar with me meditated for seven and nine months.

[I] visited the cities of Brisbane and Sydney in Australia from 1st to 22nd March 1994 accompanied by Mr. V.L.N. Liyanage at the invitation and sponsorship of Mrs. Guṇaratna Meniyo of Brisbane. [I] delivered memorial Dhamma talks and performed religious services for the entire three weeks.

After the two pilgrimages to India in February and November 1995, on 27th December of that year, six bhikkhus left for Myanmar with me as the head. This was with two objectives. The first was to bring back to Sri Lanka four of our disciple bhikkhus who had received two months of training at Kabād Takshilā. Expenses for those four bhikkhus and the other two bhikkhus (including me) were met by Mr. N.G.P. Paṇḍitaratna. The second objective was to participate in meditation at the Mahasi main centre and at Pa Auk main centre in Mawlamyine for about three months.

Venerable Galle Saṅghasubhadra Thera, one of the three bhikkhus who accompanied me to Myanmar in 1993, visited many meditation centres in Myanmar and on return to Sri Lanka, the description he gave of Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Mawlamyine gave rise to the wholesome desire in me to go there someday.



He explained that travel to Mawlamyine was very difficult. Malarial fever occurred frequently in that area. It was more than 200 miles from the capital, Rangoon. Meditation was practiced entirely as given in the 'Visuddhimagga'. There were many bhikkhus and lay people who had attained the eight fine-material and immaterial concentrative attainments, as well as path-fruit. The venerable meditation master was extremely disciplined, used only properly prepared robes and bowls, [did] not handle money and [seemed] especially compatible with our principles, so I was strongly attracted to that meditation centre.

After entering Myanmar [for the second time], ten of us, including our disciples, left Rangoon on a special bus at six in the morning on 2nd January 1996 and in the evening took the bus across the great Mawlamyine river on a ship, arrived at Pa Auk Meditation Centre and paid homage to the Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw.

Meeting Venerable Udugampola Dhammaramsi Thera, who had come there in May 1995 on our own advice and Venerable Ataragalle Sankicca Thera, who went there later, was very helpful for us to adjust to the conditions at Pa Auk Meditation Centre. We also met six foreign bhikkhus who had come there from Sri Lanka.

The following morning all ten of us went before the venerable meditation teacher, paid our respects and received meditation instructions for mindfulness of breathing. Scheduled times for sitting meditation [were]: 4:00 am to 5:30 am, 7:00 am to 8:30 am, 12:00 noon to 1:30 pm, 2:15pm to 4:00 pm and 5:15pm to 7:00 pm. The remaining time [was] for bathing, the morning and midday meals, walking meditation and other [daily activities] and the period 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm [had to] be kept occupied.

January 4th was Duruthu full moon day. [I] fell ill after the morning meal because of the oily food. [I] recovered somewhat after medical treatment, but fell seriously ill again. The doctor advised the organizing devotees and vegetarian food without oil was brought to the kuṭi itself on the instructions of the venerable meditation master. After about



three weeks of therapy, [I] recovered fully and it was possible to engage in meditation again. Later, within two or three weeks, [I completed] the four fine-material jhānas⁴², based on the repulsiveness of the 32 parts of the body attained first jhāna in 32 ways, completed the four white-skeleton kasiṇa fine-material jhānas and lovingkindness jhāna in 528 ways.

A group of our bhikkhus from Sri Lanka were to go on a pilgrimage with us in Myanmar and I had to return to Sri Lanka in March, so therefore we paid homage to and took leave of Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw and left for Rangoon on 11th February. But because of the strong urge to meditate and the extremely kind words "come again" of the Venerable Sayadaw, [I] firmly decided to return to Pa Auk the same year.

[I] paid homage at the sacred places with our group of bhikkhus who came from Sri Lanka to Myanmar on 11th February, spent about two weeks at Mahasi Meditation Centre and returned to Sri Lanka on 8th March.

[I] completed the annual higher ordination ceremony and other religious activities, paid homage to and received blessings from my venerable teacher and left Sri Lanka with Venerable Hidogama Sirivimala Thera on 27th July 1996. [I] came to Pa Auk Meditation Centre for the second time. A new kuṭi with extensive facilities, built recently, had been set aside [for my use].

Venerable Sirivimala Thera and the Burmese devotee, Mr. Sunsuwe, attended to all my needs. [I] was able to develop all the meditation objects successfully without falling ill up to the 20th of December.

Starting with mindfulness of breathing, the repulsiveness of the 32 parts of the body, the white skeleton, the four sublime abidings, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, the ten corpse meditations,

⁴² 'Jhāna' is a deep meditative state



recollection of death, the ten kasiṇas, the immaterial jhānas and eight attainments, [I] developed all the samatha⁴³ meditation objects and developed vipassanā meditation, starting from contemplating the four elements up to the knowledge of equanimity towards formations, successfully.

[I] made preparations for five Burmese bhikkhus led by Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw, two ten-precept nuns, two important lay devotees and one lay attendant (a group of ten in total) to visit Sri Lanka. This was done through the assistance of Sri Lankan devotees, both male and female.

Suitable accommodations, pilgrimages, medical treatment and other necessities of the group during the period 27th January to 15th March 1997 were arranged in the best possible way. Meditation programmes following the Pa Auk meditation system were held at Galdūwa and Mītirigala Dharmāyanaya on the occasion of this visit. It was a victory to have arranged for Venerable Aggañña Mahāthera to stay at Mītirigala Dharmāyanaya.

[I] visited Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar for the third time on 10th July 1997, accompanied by Venerable Sirivimala Thera. All facilities were provided in Myanmar as in the previous year. On this occasion as well, all of the samatha meditation objects were developed [and for those objects where such is possible] to the level of the eight attainments. The series of vipassanā knowledges were developed up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations and [I also] practiced the fourteen ways of concentrative mastery according to the 'Visuddhimagga'.

⁴³ Tranquility meditation.



All three times, it was an unforgettable and wonderful [experience] to receive assistance from Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw, who visited my kuṭi with great compassion to give [me] meditation instructions. On the uposatha days, chanting the Pātimokkha was mostly assigned to me. The foreign bhikkhus and Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw invited us to do so out of appreciation for our pronunciation of Pāli. When performing higher ordinations, the first reading of the act of higher ordination was also entrusted to us. [We] returned to Sri Lanka on 25th October.



From left to right: Ven. Aṅgulamuwe Ariyananda Mahāthera, Ven. Sayadaw Aggañña of Myanmar, [??] and Most Ven. Nā Uyane Mahāthera



[I] visited Malaysia from 19th November to 14th December 1999 with Venerable Āṅgulgamuwe Ariyananda Thera and Venerable Kandedgedara Vimaladhamma Thera at the invitation of Venerable Vajiradhamma Thera of Malaysia. This was in order to establish a sīma boundary and to participate in a kaṭhina ceremony and a higher ordination ceremony at Bhaddekaratta Meditation Centre, close to Batu Pahat, in Johor district. After these were finished, [I] delivered special Dhamma talks in cities such as Penang, Ipoh and in Sabah district Koṭakinabalu, Sandakan, Makhalahadhā, Tawāwu, Kundasan and then in Singapore, returning to Sri Lanka on 14th December.

The Malaysian Venerable Vajiradhamma Thera stayed at Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar and then returned to Sri Lanka. There he meditated at Mītirigala Śrī Nāṇārāma Dharmāyanaya and Nā Uyana monastery and was able to develop his meditation. He has established a meditation centre in his own country and is conducting meditation programmes there. He [arranged] for a group of three of our bhikkhus to go there and conduct the kaṭhina ceremony and deliver Dhamma talks once a year.

[I] visited Oman and Dubai with Venerable Pahalavitiyala Janānanda Thera, to deliver Dhamma talks during the 12 days from 15th to 27th May 2000. This was at the invitation of Mr. Somabandu Koḍikāra, principal of Sri Lanka Vidyālaya. It was sponsored by the Buddhist society of that school.

During the same visit, [I] delivered several Dhamma talks on two days in Dubai at the special invitation of Mr. Kamal Paraṇavitāna and returned to Sri Lanka on the 27th.

From 9th to 27th November 2000 [I], together with Venerable Ariyananda Thera, visited Singapore, where Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw was receiving treatment for a serious illness. [The trip] was sponsored by Mr. Yon Yi.



It gave us much relief and great happiness that Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw recovered after a meritorious deed: 12 days of paritta chanting. On the same journey [we] visited Bhaddekaratta Monastery (Batu Pahat), the city of Malacca, held a meditation programme in Penang and delivered Dhamma talks there and returned to Sri Lanka on 27th November.

[I] visited Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar again on 15th July, 2001 together with Hidogama Sirivimala Thera. This was because of the very kind invitation extended by Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw while staying in Singapore, his special letter of invitation sent from Taiwan and also because I required some rest. Venerable Silavimala Thera of Nāgalakanda Monastery in Minneriya, his brother Mr. Podiratna Jayakody and Mr. Siriwardana Kalumahatā of Mīgaleva, joined us on their own initiative.

A newly built kuṭi was provided on the Cittalapabbata Monastery premises of Pa Auk Meditation Centre. Even though [I] had a 'wind' ailment⁴⁴ when leaving Sri Lanka [I] developed all the samatha meditation objects, the eight concentrative attainments and attained to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations very quickly through vipassanā meditation, just as before.

While developing the 14 ways of concentrative mastery, it became necessary to return to Sri Lanka. Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw paid special attention to us. The duties of reciting the Pātimokkha on the uposatha days as well as reciting the pavāraṇa⁴⁵ were assigned to us. In all novice and higher ordinations, the position of preceptor was given to us. In the presence of 200 to 300 monks, Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw, Venerable Kuṇḍadāna Thera and Venerable Candima Thera received a daḥhikamma⁴⁶ from us in front of 200 or 300 bhikkhus. [He]

⁴⁴ This is an Ayurvedic medical diagnosis.

⁴⁵ The ceremony at the end of the rainy season.

⁴⁶ This is a ceremony to strengthen the quality of one's higher ordination, in case there had been some kind of shortcoming during the original ordination procedure.



provided protection for us by displaying notices requesting silence in the vicinity of the resident kuṭi occupied by me. [He] also arranged to take us by airplane from Mawlamyine to Rangoon in order to make our journey comfortable. [He] invited us very kindly to come again to Pa Auk Meditation Centre.

33. Special Ceremonies and Celebrations

[I] participated in the major celebration organized for the birth anniversary of Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera on 1st April each year from 1960 to the present and blessed him. In the beginning, it was held in Puhulwella, Kiriwehera, Nimalawa and at the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy; from 1976 onwards it was held at the Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre.

Every year a special celebration is also held on 27th March, the day I ordained. Originally it was only at the place where I was staying and from 1962 [it was held] each year uninterruptedly at Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre. From 1975, these two meritorious activities were combined into a series of extensive programmes lasting seven days: 26th March to 1st April. All material offerings made to me during the year are donated to the Saṅgha as a whole on 27th March, with the aspiration that I might be able to practice the noble life of a bhikkhu until the attainment of Nibbāna.

[I] participated in a ceremony held in December 1961 at Galdūwa, Danawukanda and Mellagala, with special offerings made to the Saṅgha to bless Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Ñāṇārāma Mahāthera upon his reaching 60 years of age.

[I] participated in the memorable ceremony at Nimalawa on the 16th, 17th and 18th of July 1961 to mark the tenth anniversary of the Yogāśrama Saṃsthā.



[I] chanted for about three hours at the 'Seventy-Three Knowledges' event, at Gotama Tapovanaya, on Vesak Full Moon day of 1964. [I] chanted the relevant Pāli verses at the 'Twenty-Four Vivaraṇa' ceremonial offering at Puhulwella in 1966. [I] participated in the offering of the new vihāra at Nāthagāṇe in 1967. [I] participated in a memorable ceremony during 16th, 17th and 18th of June 1972 at the four sacred places in Anurādhapura on the twentieth anniversary of Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā, mainly to help with the arrangements. [I] held a 'seventy-three knowledges' offering ceremony at the sacred Bodhi tree together with chanting. [I] prepared a twenty-year commemorative book for the event.

On completion of twenty-five years of the Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā, [I] organized and implemented a seven-day meditation offering of Dhamma practice at every monastery of the Saṁsthā, 18th June 1976.

[I] organized a ceremony together with a three-day conference of the greater Saṅgha (16th, 17th and 18th July 1978) for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the performance of the first higher ordinations of the Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṁsthā.

[I] also prepared a book chronicling the history of the Yogāśrama. [I] prepared and arranged to print awards certificates for Theras, Mahātheras and junior monks released from dependence, the rules and regulations of the Yogāśrama. [I] compiled a chanting book for veneration of the Buddha that included basic teachings to be given to novices.

[I] participated in all the higher ordinations of the Sri Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama from 1961. [I] organized the higher ordination ceremonies from the year 1968, because the post of secretary was entrusted to me.

Meditation classes were conducted at the Buddhist Teacher Training Institute in Mīrigama and a book entitled 'Meditation' was



prepared based on that meditation course. It has subsequently been printed many times.

A series of Dhamma talks on the 'seventy-three knowledges' was started by Most Venerable Rājakīya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Ñāṇārāma Mahāthera in 1963 during the rains retreat. They had been delivered for one hour each Sunday at Tapovanaya and had stalled. They were resumed from 'Nirodha Samāpatti Ñāṇa (number 34) and every Sunday [I] delivered the Dhamma talks successfully to the completion of all the knowledges.

[I] conducted veneration and chanting of the 'seventy-three knowledges' at Galdūwa, Dharmodaya Pirivena in Wellawatte, Tapovanaya, Thūpārāmaya, twice at the great Ruwanweli stupa compound, at Kelani Temple and twice at sacred Bodhi tree of Bodhgaya, India.

[I] attended on my venerable preceptor when he was seriously ill and hospitalized in the years 1970, 1974, 1991 and 1992.

[I] attended on venerable Kaḍawedduwe Mahāthera when he was seriously ill and hospitalized in the years 1989 and 1998.

In the years 1987 and 1991, [I] arranged medical treatment for my father, who was seriously ill and conducted two major activities to make merit by arranging for about 35 bhikkhus to visit his home, which cured him completely. [I] ordained father for two months from 28th September 1992 and attended to him in the Dhamma kuṭi that I myself occupied. [I] nursed him for a few days prior to his passing away in December 1993.

[I] conducted a great activity as a gift of the Dhamma, providing training in vipassanā meditation including 40 meditation objects. It was arranged by the Government Buddhist Society monthly for 18 years, mostly at the auditorium of the Colombo Public Library, starting from 6th June 1984.



[I] lead devotional chanting and delivered Dhamma talks on Paṭṭhāna⁴⁷, at 'The Great, Incomparable Meritorious Ceremony' organized by Mr. K.B. Bandāranāyaka and supported by the donations of businessman Mr. Akman and many other devotees, at the great Ruwanweli stupa, on 28th February 1993.

[I] delivered Dhamma talks and bestowed blessings, to recognize special gifts and donations made to hospitals in Kurunegala, Wāriyapola, Nikaweratiya, Ānamaḍuwa, Migalewa, Eppāwala, the Rehabilitation Hospital in Rāgama, Kandy, Welimaḍa and Colombo. [I] arranged for the donation of a ventilator worth 800, 000 Sri Lankan rupees for the Intensive Care Unit of Kurunegala Base Hospital on 4th October 1994.

[I] restructured the meditation centre on Kachcheri Road for renewed functioning, at the request of Mrs. Shrāwasthi Hamine of Kurunegala and arranged conduct of a meditation programme under leadership of the venerable abbot of Nāthagāṇe. This programme started in 1975 and is functioning still, having been improved from time to time.

[I] organized construction of a home for invalids, which was a deficiency at Nimalawa Monastery, with financial assistance from Mrs. Alahakon Meniyo of Colombo and arranged its donation in 1986. [I] also arranged for the construction and donation of a walking meditation path in 1991 at the same place.

Nimalawa Monastery faced difficulties for 40 years due to lack of a suitable water supply system. A major meritorious act was performed by installing water tanks and supply pipelines, with financial assistance from Mr. Munasingha of Ratmalāna and implemented by Mr. Sunil Seneviratna of Kalutara.

⁴⁷ 'Paṭṭhāna' is the seventh book of the Abhidhamma.



[I] arranged for Mr. N.G.P. Paṇḍitaratna to construct and donate seven cave kuṭīs in Tammenna Tapobhumi of Nimalawa for the benefit of yogis and offered it to Saṅgha.

During 1992-1993, [I] obtained the special approval of President R. Premadāsa and through the assistance of Mr. Gāmini Athukorāla, Minister and Mr. Jaṭila Perera, Secretary the total land area of four square miles that had been allocated in 1965 for Nimalawa Monastery was declared a sanctuary.

The hazardous path from Puhulwella Śrī Yogāśrama Centre to the temple was transformed into an easy to use path with steps through the financial assistance of Mr. M.D.S. Perera Kalumahatā of Homāgama and was offered on 2nd August 1992.

Again at the same monastery [I] arranged to build a two-storey hall with seats at a cost of more than 700,000 Rupees. Donations were from Mrs. S.M. Hema Premadāsa Meniyo and Mr. Upāli Senarat Premadāsa and it was offered to the greater Saṅgha in July 1995.

At Nā Uyana Monastery, [I] arranged for construction of a meal hall that was offered to Saṅgha in 199 and a two-storey meditation hall that was completed and offered to the greater Saṅgha on 27th May 1999. Financial assistance was provided by a large number of donors.

[I] arranged for replacement of a hip bone for Venerable Koṭikāpola Vāchinda Thera of Budugallena in Buttala, on the advice of doctors, at a cost of eighty-thousand rupees. Financial assistance came from Mr. N.G.P. Paṇḍitaratna and other donors.

[I] planted Bodhi trees in Kahagolla Śrī Nāṇārāma Retreat in Diyatalāwa, Śrī Nāṇārāma Tripitaka Dharmāyatana in Mītrigala, Śrī Nāṇārāma Tripitaka Dharmāyatana in Koggala, Rajavangala monastery in Opātha and Aharagala monastery in Dellawa. [I] also arranged for a Bodhi tree at the entrance to Nā Uyana Monastery.



On 7th July 1982, [I] donated my blood and helped cure the venerable abbot of Ruwangiriya, who was seriously ill in a private hospital in Karudugashandiya. [I] also donated blood to the blood bank on a birthday at Galdūwa with the wish that Venerable Paṇḍita Mahāthera be cured.

34. Ascetic Practices

[I] observed the following as a novice:

Eating only at a single sitting per day.

Eating only from the alms bowl.

Not assuming the posture of lying down, even at night.

After higher ordination, [I] observed ten of the thirteen ascetic practices, excepting: living at the root of a tree, living in the open and living in a cemetery.

[I] followed those ten practices from time to time and observed the following continuously:

Wearing only discarded robes.⁴⁸

Being satisfied with whatever dwelling that has been assigned.⁴⁹

35. Meditation Objects Developed

[I] practiced recollection of the qualities of the Buddha and lovingkindness as a student before ordination. During my period as a lay-renunciant, [I] practiced mindfulness of breathing and the Mahasi meditation method. After novice ordination, [I] developed recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, recollection of the qualities of the Dhamma and recollection of the qualities of the Saṅgha, lovingkindness, repulsiveness, recollection of death, mindfulness of

⁴⁸ Paṇsukūlikāṅga.

⁴⁹ Yathāsanthatikāṅga.



breathing and the Mahasi method of meditation. [I] made it a practice to meditate on the repulsiveness of the 32 parts of the body every day. After higher ordination, as a new monk I spent more time developing the Mahasi meditation method. Following that, as a monk of middling seniority [I] developed all the samatha practices, excepting the immaterial jhānas. [I] also taught others and developed these further as a Thera and Mahāthera.

Thirty-eight years after higher ordination, when dwelling at Pa Auk Meditation Centre, [I] developed mindfulness of breathing, the 32 parts of the body, white-skeleton kasiṇa, the four sublime abodes, the repulsiveness of ten sorts of corpses, the ten kasiṇas and the four [jhānas] of the immaterial sphere to the highest level of absorption. [I] developed recollection of the qualities of the Buddha and recollection of death up to access concentration.

[I] mastered vipassanā meditation, starting from four elements meditation up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations in complete detail, without any omission, strictly according to the 'Visuddhimagga'.

[I] also developed in complete detail the 21 meditation objects given in the 'Mahāsatipatṭhāna Sutta'.

36. Spiritual Friends

Before ordination, my parents, brothers and sisters, village elders and school teachers were indeed my spiritual friends. Venerable monks in temples, my relatives and the abbot of Nilagama Temple were noble spiritual friends to me.

Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Thera of Nā Uyana Monastery was indeed a spiritual friend during my period as a lay-renunciant.

As a bhikkhu, it was my great fortune to have the association of such spiritual friends as:



- Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Vidarshanācāriya Medawala Dhammatilaka Mahāthera
- Venerable Vidarshanācāriya Mātale Śrī Sīlarakkhita Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Paṇḍitacāriya Bembiye Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Tripiṭākacāriya Munagama Srisumana Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Devagoda Maṅgalasiri Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Kehelpannala Sumana Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Miniwangamuwe Nāgita Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Rerukāne Candavimala Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Devinuwara Nāṇāvāsa Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Madihe Pañṇāsīha Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Vajirārāmaye Piyadassi Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Paṇḍita Aturugiriye Nāṇavimala Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Vidyāvishārada Paṇḍita Induruwe Uttarānanda Mahāthera

- Most Venerable Paṇḍita Baṭuwiṭa Nandārāma Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Pottevela Paññāsāra Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Māvatagama Guṇānanda Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Mahakumbukwewa Uttaravamsa Mahāthera
- Most Venerable Attanagalle Sambodhi Mahāthera

I was incredibly fortunate to be able to associate with such remarkable spiritual friends.



37. Male and Female Devotees of Special Assistance

Mr. M.P. Amarasingha, Chief Devotee of Nā Uyana Monastery was of special help during my period as a lay-renunciant. While at Vigoda, Mr. Ārachchi of Vilegedarawatta and the retired school principal Mrs. Hemalata of Doranegoda were very helpful.

As a novice at Nāthagāṇe, Mr. Premachandra Piyasena, at Ranwala Asoka Monastery, Mr. P.D. Amarasingha Podiappuhamy, at Puhulwella, Mr. Samaratunga of Bothuragoda, Mr. Kandu of Pānaduwa (now Venerable Pānaduwa Khemānanda Thera).



At Danawukanda, Mr. and Mrs. Bosath Ranamuni of Danawukanda and the doctor of traditional medicine, Mr. B.S. Alwis.

In Mellagala, Mr. Lewke Bandāra, Mr. Atugala, a doctor of traditional medicine of Aemunugalle.

At Gotama Tapovanaya, Mr. and Mrs. Sumana Karuṇāratna, Mr. W.L. Dābare, Mrs. Bāasūriya and Mrs. Rūpasingha.

At Koggala, Mr. Abraham Silva (later Venerable Dodanduwe Sāsanasobhana Thera).

At Śrī Nāṇārāma Retreat in Kahagolla, Mr. Arsakulasūriya Renda, Mr. P.G. Guṇawardhana of Diyatalāwa Army Camp, Mr. and Mrs. E.D. Guṇasekara of Diyatalāwa.

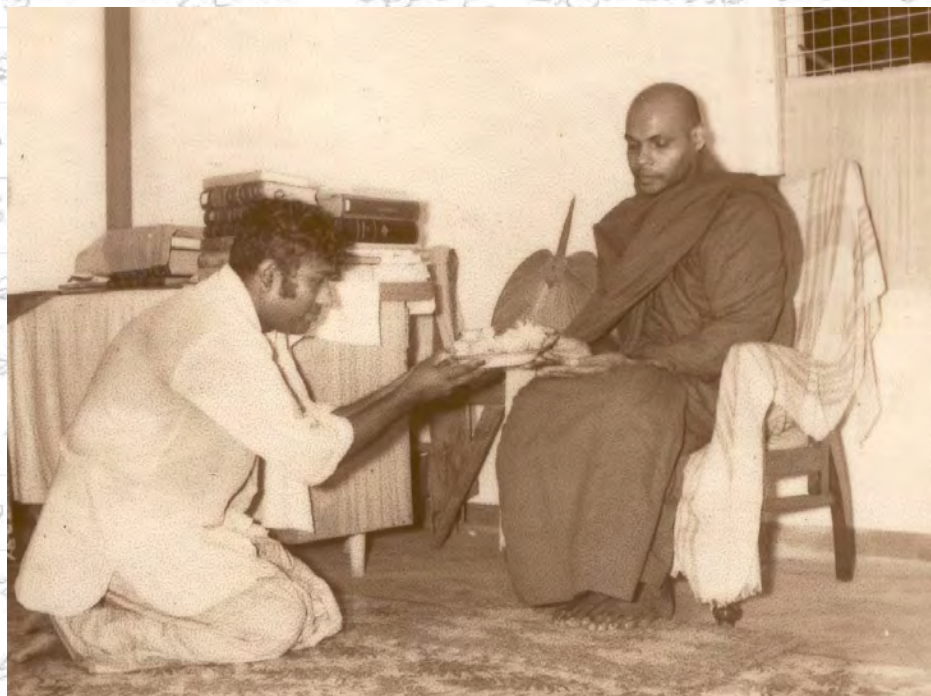
At Galdūwa Guṇawardhana Yogāśrama Centre, Mr. Sumana Karuṇaratna and Mrs. Janette Karuṇaratna, Mr. Nelson Senānāyaka, Mr. Wilson Wijewardane, Mr. and Mrs. Milton Guṇasekara.

Mrs. K.K. de Silva, Valentine School teacher, Mr. Āriyadāsa Vītāna, clerk, Mr. K.A. Piyasena. Mr. Savumadāsa, doctor of traditional medicine, the doctor of Belideniya and Mrs. Karuṇaratna of Elpitiya.

Mr. Bandula Rājapaksa and Mrs. Champa Rājapaksa of Balapitiya, Mr. D.M. Guṇaratna, retired principal of Kalutara, Mr. Sunil Seneviratna of Kalutara, engineer.

Doctor of traditional medicine, Mr. Amarasena Jayasingha, B.R. Disānāyaka hāmumahatā, Mr. Sirisena Silva, Mr. Guṇasekara, retired principal of Mahinda College and Mrs. [Guṇasekara], Mr. Jayasingha Executive Officer of Higher Education (now Venerable Māpalagama Ariyasiha Thera).

Mr. M.A. de Silva, retired principal, Mr. G. Jāgoda, retired principal and Mrs. [Jāgoda], Mr. Don Peter, Assistant Superintendent of Police and Mrs. Wīrasekara.



Mahāthera receiving an offering in the early days.



Barefoot with traditional leaf umbrellas.




Top photo: With Ven. Pa Auk Sayadaw and attendant.

Bottom photo: At Nā Uyana Monastery.







Mr. and Mrs. Katgodārachchi, Āriyapāla, gurun'nānse⁵⁰ and his wife.

Mrs. S.M. Hemā Premadāsa Meniyo of Colombo, Mr. and Mrs. J.G. Upāli Senarat Premadāsa, Mr. H.G. Āriyaratna and Mrs. Chandra Āriyaratna, Mrs. Grace Guṇaratna.

Mrs. Swarnā Abeguṇawardana, Mr. Anura Abeguṇawardana, Mr. U.S. Mudalige, Mr. Albert Edirisingha (now Venerable Devamitta Thera).

Government Agent Mr. Percy Abeysingha, Mrs. Chandrikā Abeysingha and sons Mr. Janaka Abeysingha and Mr. Chandima Abeysingha.

Mr. and Mrs. KaruṇaNāyaka. Mr. Dharmasekara Perera, Doctor Keerthi Guṇasekara, Doctor Indunil Wijewīra, Doctor Parākrama Disānāyaka, Doctor Lalith Wijeratna, Doctor Rohana Hattotuwa and Mrs. Chandrikā Hattotuwa.

Mr. R.P.C. Rājapaksa, Mr. and Mrs. L.H.L. Haradāsa and sons and daughters.

Mr. Pubudu Ranjith Wirasingha and his mother. Mr. N.G.P. Panditharathna, Mr. U.N. Guṇasekara, Mr. Amarapāli Tilakaratna, Sil Meniyo Paññāsīli, Mr. Alfred Perera and family, Mrs. Ayomā Wickramasingha.

Mr. Percy Silva and Mrs. [Silva]. Engineer Mr. Vidāna Pathirana and Mrs. [Pathirana]. Mr. B.A. Dayānanda and Mrs. [Dayānanda]. Mrs. Indrāni Bodaragama, Chief Justice Pārinda Ranasingha and party.

Mr. M.D.S. Perera Kalumahātmayā and family, Mr. P.S. Kotalāwala, doctor of traditional medicine, Mr. Y.B. Akman, businessman.

Mr. Maitri Sirimāna and Mrs. [Sirimāna]. Mr. Mitra Wettamuny and Mrs. Kānthi Wettamuny.

⁵⁰Medicine man, but it is a respected position in Sri Lanka.



In Kurunegala, Swarnā Guṇaratna Meniyo, Mr. Rex Guṇasekara and Mrs. [Guṇasekara]. Doctor Tudor Fernando, Doctor Wimalaratna, Doctor Mahipāla Kottagoda.

Suguṇa Sil Meniyo and party, Mr. Sirisena of New Pharmacy and Mrs. [Sirisena]. Mr. D. R. Yahampath and family, Elsy Guṇasiri Meniyo and family.

Mrs. Shrāwasti Hāmine and family, Mr. Prematilaka Bandāra and Mrs. Kumāri [Bandāra].

Chairman, Mr. Rājapaksa, family members of Spectra Industries, Mr. Kottayāwatta, doctor of traditional medicine and family.

Mr. Sisil Paṇḍita of Japan, K.W.D. Guṇaratna Meniyo of Australia, Mrs. Nayanā Action of England, Mr. and Mrs. Kannangara of Sydney.

Mrs. Malkānti Seneviratna and Mr. Channa Seneviratna of New Zealand.

Mr. and Mrs. P.L.N. Liyanage of Mount Lavinia, Mrs. E.D. Liyanage Meniyo of Nugegoda, Mrs. Pushpikā Liyanage, teacher.

Mrs. Kamalā Atukorala and family, Mr. and Mrs. Hemsiri Wijeratna, Mr. Nihal Rājapaksa, Mr. and Mrs. Jayasingha, owners of Ruhunu Cable Company.

Mrs. D.J. Alahakon and family.

[Here we] specially mention a large group of these and other spiritual friends.

38. Positions Held in the Sāsana

Secretary of Buddhasāsana Academic Council and Secretary of Buddhasāsana Judiciary Council in the year 1966⁵¹. Joint Secretary and Information Secretary of the ten-member Additional Committee of Śrī

⁵¹ These positions are within the Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama.



Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama that was formed on 4th July 1968. [I] continue to hold these positions to date. Post of Secretary General has been assigned since 1998. Chief Authority for Nissaraṇa Vanaya from 1992.

39. The Practice of Recollecting the Buddha's Qualities

The method of meditation on the qualities of the Buddha was memorized in detail from the Sinhala translation of the 'Visuddhimagga' (by Mātara Paṇḍita Dhammavaṃsa Mahāthera), at home, before ordination. [I] delightedly made much use of it daily from 7:30 to 9:30 at night at Nāthagāṇe Monastery during sitting meditation. [I] gained special benefits from it as well.

On 4th February 1960, Venerable Paṇḍita Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṃsa Mahāthera and several of our honourable senior monks left on a pilgrimage to India. Mahāthera returned to Sri Lanka in the first week of March. He gave me a rosary made of sandalwood beads from Bodhgaya in India and instructed me: "Bhikkhu Ariyadhamma: Load the "Iti'pi so" stanza onto this rosary 100,000 times. It will give you good health and the strength to perform religious activities of the Sāsana."

During this time, staying at Śrī Rohana Yogāśrama in Puhulwella, studying the Vinaya Piṭaka and making full use of the day without break, [I] started to load the qualities of the Buddha 100,000 times, as instructed.

Reciting verbally alone 300 to 400 times a day, [I] completed the 100,000 rounds of the Buddha's qualities around 12th July 1964. On the 24th of that same month, Venerable Paṇḍita Geṭamāṇne Śrī Vimalavaṃsa Thera gave me as a prize a casket containing a sacred relic of the Buddha. Since then, [I] have mentally recited the qualities of the Buddha 100,000 times each year.

[I] completed 100,000 rounds of the qualities of the Triple Gem with the three stanzas "Iti'pi so...", "Svākkhāto..." and "Supaṭipanno..." in a year and a half, starting from 1969.



At the time of the 1971 terrorist crisis, [I] completed the stanza "Sabba pāpassa akaraṇaṃ..." 200,000 times and blessed the country. Again regarding the "Iti'pi so" stanza, by 10th January 1973 [I] had completed chanting it one million times. Venerable Baddhiye Mahāthera, who was at Galdūwa at the time, gave such an instruction: "From now on, load 'Ratana Sutta' 100,000 times."

Upon hearing that instruction, [I] completed Ratana Sutta 137 times in a single day. Late that night a deva said in a dream: "Bhante, please continue to go on the path on which you were going. Bhante, you can go without difficulty to where you wanted to go by going on that same path."

[I] informed this matter to the venerable Thera the following morning, got permission and started to practice the "Iti'pi so" stanza again. By 10th September 1975 it had been completed four million times. That night such a dream occurred towards dawn: a brahma rāja⁵² clad in white came to a sacred temple where I was. A group of people brought a patient who had been possessed by a spirit. The brahma rāja saw this and said to me: "Bhante can cure a patient such as this simply by recollecting the 'Iti'pi so' stanza." I accepted his words and kept silent. Then he said, "Does Bhante know when Bhante's determined wish will be realized?" When I said I did not know, the brahma rāja said, "One thousand eight hundred," and disappeared. I woke up at that point. There was no time to think or ask for more details.

[I] continued practicing the "Iti'pi so" stanza without break. On some days, when another lakh⁵³ of recitations were completed, wonderful things were seen in dreams towards dawn.

By 20th February 2002, the "Iti'pi so" stanza had been completed 73.5 million times. I will continue to practice it because all meditation

⁵² A kind of celestial being.

⁵³ One hundred thousand. In Sri Lanka large numbers are often counted in 'lakhs'.



practices were expounded by the Omniscient Buddha and a person who recollects the qualities of the Buddha gains the strength and protection to develop any meditation subject properly and correctly, to the extent he wishes, without getting lost on the way.

40. The Pa Auk Meditation Method

Through reading the 'Visuddhimagga', 'Vibhaṅgappakaraṇa', the 'Paṭisambidhāmagga' and the commentaries, I had acquired knowledge of the samatha and vipassanā meditation methods and developed a great determination to apply these methods correctly while engaged in other work. The news of the Pa Auk meditation method offered a great opportunity to realize these expectations.

Buddhists of Sri Lanka have a great fear of kasaṇa jhāna and other absorptions and consequently practice only bare vipassanā meditation. It was crystal clear [at that time] that purification of mind, namely access concentration and the attainment of the eight absorptions (four fine-material and four immaterial), is the base for vipassanā, because it makes the mind capable of penetrating phenomena with ease. What is required is the correct guidance of a teacher, but teachers who can provide such guidance are indeed rare.

The meditation centre, situated between the two cities Mawlamyine and Mudone, in Myanmar, the 'Land of Gold', has picturesque mountains, is about two miles from the nearest village and is well known as Pa Auk Cittalapabbata Monastery. The series of meditation objects taught by Most Venerable Aggamahākammaṭṭhānācāriya⁵⁴ Sayadaw U Āciṇṇa (Pa Auk Sayadaw), who advises hundreds and thousands of bhikkhus and lay yogis in samatha and vipassanā meditation objects leading to jhāna and the attainment of path-fruit, is known as the Pa Auk meditation method.

⁵⁴ 'Aggamahākammaṭṭhānācāriya' is the highest title given to a meditation teacher in Myanmar.



Yogis who have cleansed their minds thoroughly with regard to morality are advised to start with mindfulness of breathing meditation, to progress through the 'parikamma nimitta', 'uggaha nimitta' and 'paṭibhāga nimitta'⁵⁵ and develop fine-material jhāna. In some cases yogis are advised to develop the five fine-material jhānas. After mastering these jhānas in five ways, they are to use the light of the paṭibhāga nimitta to contemplate the repulsiveness of each of the 32 parts of the body, such as head-hair and body-hair and develop each of the 32 to the level of first jhāna.

They are then advised to use the light of that paṭibhāga nimitta and direct the mind to one's own skeleton and focus on the skull, taking its white colour as an object. Next, they direct the mind to the skulls of others and develop white kasiṇa through all the fine-material jhānas. They then master the white kasiṇa jhānas [in five ways] and using that light, develop jhāna based on lovingkindness in 528 ways, jhāna based on compassion in 132 ways, jhāna based on sympathetic joy in 132 ways, jhāna based on equanimity in 132 ways. Thereafter, they develop access concentration by recollecting the qualities of the Buddha, the ten corpse meditations up to first jhāna (such as the bloated corpse, etc.) and recollection of death up to access concentration.

The blue kasiṇa is developed based on head-hair, yellow kasiṇa on bile and fat, red kasiṇa on blood and flesh, each taken internally and externally. All the colour kasiṇa jhānas as well as the remaining kasiṇa jhānas—namely the earth, water, fire, wind, light and limited space kasiṇas [are then developed].

⁵⁵ These are three stages that yogis pass through when practicing samatha meditation. Each of the 'parikamma nimitta', 'uggaha nimitta' and 'paṭibhāga nimitta' are mentally perceived lights, differing in stability, appearance and luminosity.



After that, nine kasiṇas, excluding limited space, are further developed by removing the paṭibhāga nimitta⁵⁶ to develop the base of boundless space. The consciousness that cognizes boundless space is then taken as a meditation object itself in order to attain the sphere of boundless consciousness. Contemplating that there is nothing there, the yogi attains to the sphere of nothingness jhāna. As soon as this level is attained, the yogi contemplates that consciousness and reaches the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; following this, each of these jhānas must be mastered [in five ways].

Either on completion of: fourth jhāna based on white kasiṇa, the recollection of the Buddha's qualities, lovingkindness, the repulsiveness of both the living body and of the corpse and the recollection of death, or in the case of those who have exerted effort, upon completion of the eight concentrative attainments, yogis change to vipassanā meditation, starting with contemplation of the four elements, then discerning materiality both internally and externally, then fine-materiality, then the immaterial states and finally discerning the fine-material and immaterial together.

After the fine-material and immaterial states have been discerned successively and after the yogis have understood clearly, they have to discern dependent origination according to the method of the five aggregates and further discern it according to the method of mentality-materiality (the 'first method'). They must discern and comprehend roughly four or five past and future lives. After that, they are advised to explore mentality-materiality in terms of characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause. They are advised to start vipassanā meditation again by comprehending in terms of groups⁵⁷ and after the great vipassanā method of 'forty ways', they discern according to seven ways for materiality and seven ways for mentality,

⁵⁶ Mahāthera is here summarizing meditation techniques that are explained in detail in the 'Visuddhimagga'.

⁵⁷ Pāli: Sammasana.



followed by the series of vipassanā knowledges of the arising and passing away, of dissolution and various others. Yogis must experience and comprehend these very clearly. For those who have at least some knowledge of Abhidhamma this method of vipassanā meditation is delightful. Those who have no knowledge of Abhidhamma will comprehend step by step. This is because there is no vipassanā without Abhidhamma.

For example, repeating the words 'hair is impermanent' is not vipassanā meditation. Hair is a concept. It is only an ultimate reality that can be analyzed by vipassanā according to the three characteristics of all phenomena—impermanence, suffering and non-self.

Hair contains 44 kinds of ultimate materiality and five sorts of small particles. Taking either as 'kalāpa'⁵⁸ or as 'rūpa'⁵⁹ and discerning each such ultimate materiality as impermanent, suffering and non-self is vipassanā meditation. It is therefore necessary to view each ultimate reality separately for vipassanā. The notion of 'person' and 'living-being', views and cognitive distortions will be abandoned through vipassanā.

Vipassanā is the only way to weaken the defilements, to conquer the defilements.

Because the Buddha has stated *samāhito yathā bhūtaṃ passati*,⁶⁰ therefore concentration is the foundation for vipassanā. Thus, both samatha and vipassanā must be practiced.

Even though a large number are practicing vipassanā together with jhāna meditation objects at the aforesaid Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar, we have not heard of anyone who was subject to an unfortunate distortion of his mind or to a mental defect as a result. We therefore write this with the wish that there will be more and more

⁵⁸ As a group.

⁵⁹ As ultimate materiality.

⁶⁰ The concentrated mind sees things as they truly are.



yogis with jhāna, psychic powers and path-fruitions in Sri Lanka, as in ancient times and that all bhikkhus and laity will be inclined to practice this meditation method for the betterment of the Sāsana.

**Bhāvetabbaṃ paniccevaṃ—bhāvanādvaya muttamam
Paṭipatti rasasādaṃ—patthayantena sāsane’ti**

“One who aspires to enjoy the taste of practice in the Buddha’s Dispensation should develop this two-fold meditation, so excellent in the way explained.”

—Abhidhammattha Saṅgha

41. Reflections on the Four Requisites

Reflections on the four requisites of a bhikkhu develops the morality that leads to wisdom. It is also related to vipassanā meditation. The way I reflect in Pāli and Sinhala⁶¹ is as follows.

Reflection on the Robes

*Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso cīvaraṃ paṭisevāmi, yāvadeva sītassa paṭighātāya
unhassa paṭighātāya, ḍaṃsa makasa vātātapa sirimsapa
samphassānaṃ paṭighātāya, yāvadeva hiri kopīna
paṭicchādanattham.*

*Yathā paccayaṃ pavattamānaṃ dhātu mattamev’etaṃ yadidaṃ
cīvaraṃ. Tadupabhuñjako ca puggalo dhātu mattako nissatto nijjivo
suñño. Sabbāni pana imāni cīvarāni ajigucchaniyāni, imaṃ pūti
kāyaṃ patvā ativiya jīgucchaniyāni jāyanti.*

*I shall wear this robe, which belongs to the Noble Ones, the Buddhas,
the Paccekabuddhas and the Arahats, with proper consideration. I use
this robe to ward off cold, to ward off heat, to ward off the touch of flies,*

⁶¹ The Sinhala has been translated to English. Note that the Sinhala contains additions to the Pāli verse.



mosquitoes, sun, rain, wind, venomous snakes and other creatures and especially to cover the shameful parts of the body.

Dependent upon and existing through causes and merely (a combination of various) elements are both this robe and the one who wears it; mere elements, not a being, lifeless, void (of a self/soul). All of these robes are not loathsome (yet), but having come into contact with this putrid body become exceedingly loathsome.

Reflection on Alms Food

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso piṇḍapātaṃ paṭisevāmi. So neva davāya na madāya na maṇḍanāya na vibhūsanāya, yāvadeva imassa kāyassa ṭhitiyā yāpanāya, vihiṃsūparatiyā brahmacariyā nuggahāya, iti purāṇañ'ca vedanaṃ paṭihaṅkhāmi navañ'ca vedanaṃ na uppādessāmi, yātrā ca me bhavissati anavajjatā ca phāsu vihārocā'ti.

Yathā paccayaṃ pavattamānaṃ dhātu mattamev'etaṃ yadidaṃ piṇḍapāto. Tadupabhuñjako ca puggalo dhātu mattako nissatto nijjīvo suñño. Sabbo paṇāyaṃ piṇḍapāto ajigucchaniyo, imaṃ pūti kāyaṃ patvā ativiya jigucchaniyo jāya'ti.

[I] accept, consume, this alms food, which belongs to the Noble Ones, the Buddhas, the Paccekabuddhas and the Arahats, with proper consideration. [I] do not consume it like the villagers for sports, not to build up strength like wrestlers, not to build up parts of the body like prostitutes, not to decorate the body like the king's consorts in a harem. [I] consume it to maintain and sustain the life of the body. [I] consume it to end the pains of hunger, to support the chaste life. By consuming this alms food existing hunger will end, new hunger will not arise, this life will continue comfortably and the food will be used blamelessly. Considering all the aforementioned uses, I accept and consume this alms food.

Dependent upon and existing through causes and merely (a combination of various) elements are both the alms food and the one who partakes of it; mere elements, not a being, lifeless, void (of a



self/soul). All of this alms food is not loathsome (yet), but having come into contact with this putrid body becomes exceedingly loathsome.

This alms food that was delicious before it was consumed, becomes utterly loathsome after mingling with the 32 repulsive parts of the body. It is indeed true that, upon touching with the hand and mixing, it becomes waste-food and is repulsive in the bowl itself. After taking it to the mouth as a lump, chewing it, turning it with tongue, mixing it with saliva and having been brushed against tooth-plaque it becomes loathsome like dog's vomit in the mouth itself. After it slides down the gullet, it drops into the dark, stinking, loathsome latrine-like stomach and mixes with partially digested food, bile, blood, pus and is dissolved by stomach acids, is churned and blended and gets converted to faecal matter.

The stomach and intestines absorb the nutrients, which become head-hair, body-hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, flesh of the heart, liver, diaphragm, intestines, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, synovial fluid, saliva, mucus and urine, the 32 repulsive parts of the body.

This food is the prey of worms in the large and small intestines, collects in the colon and bladder as faeces and urine, changes to waste products, saliva, phlegm, mucus, faeces, urine, sleep, tears, ear wax, tooth plaque, sweat and synovial fluid—it is therefore repulsive.

It is loathsome because although eaten in front of the crowd without fear or shame, when it comes out it is stinking and must be eliminated while hiding in shame. Even if a person eats with joy and delight out of desire for taste, when it comes out reeking, it must be discharged in shame. It is therefore repulsive. It is also repulsive because it enters through one opening and comes out through nine openings. It is repulsive because it turns into stinking, loathsome faeces, urine and other waste products after the lapse of a night or day. [I] accept and consume this alms food like medicine for a wound, like oil for a cart wheel, like



eating the flesh of one's own only child in the desert, not producing any attachments, for the purpose of emancipation.

Reflection on Lodgings

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso senāsanam paṭisevāmi, yāvadeva sītassa paṭighātāya unḥassa paṭighātāya, ḍamśa makasa vātātapa sirimsapa samphassānam paṭighātāya, yāvadeva utu parissaya vinodanam paṭisallānārāmattham.

Yathā paccayaṃ pavattamānaṃ dhātu mattamev'etaṃ yadidaṃ senāsanam. Tadupabhuñjako ca puggalo dhātu mattako nissatto nijjīvo suñño. Sabbāni pana imāni senāsanāni ajigucchaniyāni, imaṃ pūti kāyaṃ patvā ativiya jigucchaniyāni jāyan'ti.

[I] shall use this dwelling, which belongs to the Noble Ones, the Buddhas, the Paccekabuddhas and the Arahats, with proper consideration. [I] use this dwelling to ward off cold, to ward off heat, to ward off the touch of flies and mosquitoes, sun, rain and wind, for protection from venomous snakes and other creatures, for protection from inclement weather and to develop concentration for samatha and vipassanā.

Dependent upon and existing through causes and merely (a combination of various) elements are both this lodging and the one who lives in it; mere elements, not a being, lifeless, void (of a self/soul). All these lodgings are not loathsome (yet), but having come into contact with this putrid body become exceedingly loathsome.

Reflection on Medicines for the Sick

Paṭisaṅkhā yoniso gilāna paccaya bhesajjaparikkhāraṃ paṭisevāmi. So yāvadeva uppannānaṃ veyyābādhikānaṃ vedanānaṃ paṭighātāya abyāpajja paramatāyā'ti.

Yathā paccayaṃ pavattamānaṃ dhātu mattamev'etaṃ yadidaṃ gilāna paccaya bhesajja parikkhāro. Tad' upabhuñjako ca puggalo



dhātu mattako nissatto nijjivo suñño. Sabbo panāyaṃ gilāna paccaya bhesajja parikkhāro ajigucchaniyo, imaṃ pūti kāyaṃ patvā ativiya jigucchaniyo jāya'ti.

I shall accept and make use of these medicines, which belong to the Noble Ones, the Buddhas, the Paccekabuddhas and the Arahats, with proper consideration. I accept and use this medicinal requisite to alleviate sickness and pain that has arisen in the body and to maintain health.

Dependent upon and existing through causes and merely (a combination of various) elements are both this requisite of medicine for treating illness and the one who partakes of it; mere elements, not a being, lifeless, void (of a self/soul). All of this requisite of medicine for treating illness is not loathsome (yet), but having come into contact with this putrid body becomes exceedingly loathsome.

Vipassanā on the Four Requisites

Of the eight sorts of ultimate materiality that compose the four requisites, the earth element has the characteristic of coarseness, the function to support, the manifestation of receiving and its proximate cause is the water, fire and air elements.

The water element has the characteristic of trickling or oozing, its function is to intensify coexisting material states, it is manifested as the cohesion of material phenomena and its proximate cause is the earth, fire and air elements.

The fire element has the characteristic of heat, its function is to mature or ripen other material phenomena and it manifests as a continuous supply of softness. Its proximate cause is the earth, water and air elements.

The air element has the characteristic of motion or pressure, its function is to cause motion in other material phenomena, it is



manifested as bringing forward material phenomena and its proximate cause is the earth, water and fire elements.

Colour has the characteristic of impinging on the eye, its function is to act as the objective field for eye-consciousness and it is manifested as the resort of that too. Its proximate cause is the four great elements: earth, water, fire and air.

Odour has the characteristic of impinging on the nose, its function is to act as the object for nose-consciousness and it is manifested as the resort of that too. Its proximate cause is the four great elements: earth, water, fire and air.

Taste has the characteristic of impinging on the tongue, its function is to act as the object for tongue-consciousness, manifested as the resort of that too. Its proximate cause is the four great elements.

Edible food has the characteristic of nutritive essence, its function is to sustain the physical body, it manifests as fortifying the body and its proximate cause is gross edible food.

The eight pure elements in this set are material, an aggregate of materiality. Colour is a colour base, colour element. Odour is an odour base, an odour element. Taste is a taste base, a taste element. The three elements earth, fire and air elements are a tangible base, the touch element. Water and nutriment element are a dhamma base, dhamma element.

This set of eight pure elements is dependent upon conditions⁶². Each depends on object condition, predominance condition, decisive support condition, disassociation condition, presence condition and non-disappearance condition.

⁶² The following conditions are a technical Abhidhamma analysis. For an explanation the reader can see 'A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma' Editor: Bhikkhu Bodhi, BPS, 1999.



The four great elements depend upon co-nascence condition, mutuality condition and support condition.

Food depends upon nutriment condition. The six elements of colour, odour, taste, earth, fire and air depend upon object and pre-nascence conditions.

The four requisites are used by a mentality-materiality pair, five aggregates, twelve doors, eighteen elements, twelve links of dependent origination and twenty-four dependency conditions.

These ultimate realities, known as mentality-materiality, aggregates, doors, elements, links of dependent origination, twenty-four causes, arise, perish totally, are subject to crumbling, are unstable, quiver, disintegrate, change constantly moment by moment, change for the worse, have no core or essence, are annihilated, die and are therefore impermanent.

They are suffering, the seat of suffering, like chronic diseases which cause ailments, they bring about pain, like an unsightly boil which first swells then matures and pours out pus, like a spike that has pierced the body and hurts and is difficult to remove. They are the result of defilements, cause new defilements and can bring many unforeseen enemies such as ageing, sickness and death. They are a pit of dangers bringing various types of disasters such as floods and earthquakes. They are always followed by loss of different forms. They do not protect from dangers nor have any shelter or refuge. They are like a cunning enemy posing as a friend, a cause of the unwholesome and therefore the root cause of suffering. They are like a pauper with no refuge. They cause latent defilements, are prey of Māras⁶³ and are subject to birth, ageing, sickness and death. They cause sorrow, anxiety, lamentation, despair. They increase the kilesas, craving, views, evil conduct and are therefore unsatisfactory and suffering.

⁶³ See the explanation of the five Māras on page 91.



They do not obey one's wishes, are like an unfriendly stranger, empty and without essence, valueless, not subject to ownership or control and are therefore without self.

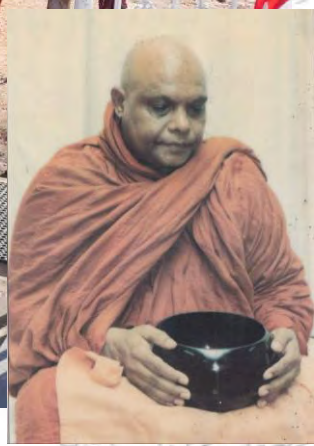
The group of internal and external mentality-materiality, the aggregates, sense doors, elements, twenty-four causes of dependent origination, [all] ultimate phenomena, being impermanent, suffering and without self, tormenting, compounded, are misery and subject to constant change and are therefore definitely the truth of suffering. The preceding craving for existence, which is the cause of the truth of suffering, giving rise to suffering again and again, like cancer, is definitely the truth of the cause of suffering.

Absence of those two, which is the tranquil Nibbāna element, not being dependent upon anything, is complete rest, uncompounded and deathless, is definitely the truth of the end of suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path completely discerns suffering, eradicates the cause of suffering and attains the end of suffering and by virtue of transcending and comprehending reality it is supreme—undoubtedly the truth of the path.

May my entire accumulation of merit lead to the realization of these Four Noble Truths without difficulty. May all those who offered these four requisites also attain the same.

“We see what the Buddha has taught—education, culture, wide knowledge, erudition and great conversance with the Dhamma—can be acquired by a person who applies himself. But we see that for many the part ‘live in accordance with the Dhamma’ is difficult to satisfy. But Venerable Ariyadhamma Anu Nāyaka Thera in particular lived according to this Dhamma.”

—Most Venerable Agga Mahā Paṇḍita, Vinayācāriya, Vinaya Vishārada, Rājakiya Paṇḍita, Nāpāna Pemasiri Abhidhāna, Mahā Nāyaka Thera, Rāmañña Mahā Nikāya





85



42. Aspirations

May the vast accumulation of merit gathered daily lead to my attainment of omniscience. For the purpose of developing pāramī towards this aspiration, may I have the strength in this life to be thorough with the Tipiṭaka, attain the five higher knowledges and eight jhānas, develop vipassanā knowledges up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations and to endeavour towards furtherance of the Buddhasāsana without decline of those Dhamma abilities. May I have the privilege of associating with spiritual friends, a secluded environment, good health and wisdom for that purpose. Let gains, hospitality and rewards, or praise and fame never move my mind, never turn my mind and never make my mind greedy, misled or deluded. May I have the strength to complete the noble aim of the Sāsana, through pure and virtuous intentions.

May I never have to be involved with, or associate with shameless, sinful, unchaste friends. May I always meet with spiritual friends who are disciplined, virtuous, of high morals and righteous. May I be disciplined, moral and honourable. May I have the power to establish shameless persons in virtue and discipline. May my mind never be allured by greed, ruffled by anger, or deluded by ignorance. May covetousness, ill-will, anger, hate, ingratitude, defamation, slander, jealousy, avarice, deceit, trickery, obstinacy, revenge, conceit, lust, misconduct, adherence to views, strong attachments, the inability to let go, the five hindrances, the five obduracies, the five mental bondages, the six roots of dispute and other defilements never arise in me. May I have the strength to maintain right wisdom whatever object enters my mind.

May I especially have the competence to expound the Dhamma, the competence for composition and the strength to live with modesty, sincerity and dispassion, free from defilements. May all my lay and bhikkhu associates become virtuous, righteous and wise, pursuing the qualities of a Buddha and be without enmity. May no one be pained or hurt by any step, posture, form, sound, odour, taste, touch, speech, part of



a word, breath, or even a single thought of mine. May no unwholesome thought arise in me. May only wholesome thoughts arise in all who see, speak or think of me. May whatever defilements in me be expelled with each exhalation and may the noble qualities of the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats be absorbed by me with each inhalation. May I be filled with righteous qualities and wisdom, always guarded by the virtue of the four-fold restraint in all postures. May I be able to overcome the five hindrances, develop the thirty-seven requisites for enlightenment, such as the four foundations of mindfulness. May I especially be a person who is grateful and generous.

Illnesses, ill-fates, calamities, dangers, disasters, acts of enemies, deadly misfortunes, obstacles, evil effects of the nine planets, charms, evil spells, evil bindings, evil eyes, evil tongues, evil sights, evil sounds, losses, condemnations, disrepute, infamy, accusations, insults, blame, shame, abuse, threats: may all these be banished, annihilated like the darkness vanishes under the radiance of the sun. May I receive protection from all sides so that the practices of the Sāsana can be fulfilled.

May the immense power of the twenty-four qualities of the Noble Triple Gem protect me fully at each step, at each in breath and each out breath, each minute and each second. May that power penetrate my skin, flesh, tendons, veins, bones and bone marrow in order to fulfill the work of the Sāsana. With virtuous mind, concentrated mind, a mind of lovingkindness, with the power of the qualities of the Buddha: may I sleep peacefully, wake up peacefully and never see bad dreams. May I receive the well-wishes of devas, the well-wishes of monks, the well-wishes of humans, the well-wishes of non-humans and the protection of the devas.

May dangers, disasters, calamities from kings, thieves, enemies, fire, water, human beings, non-humans, poisons, weapons, animals, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, flies, mosquitoes, sun, rain, wind, snakes and other venomous creatures, air, bile, phlegm, the three defects, lust, anger, delusion, mental impurities, bad results of obstructive kamma and



kamma that severs not cause fear, dread, danger, alarm, cold sweat, harm, distress, calamity, misfortune or disaster, even in a dream and may there be protection so that the work of the Sāsana can be carried out in safety. May I be free of strain in body and mind and have the strength to accumulate pāramī with ease of body and mind.

May I have the mental power, mental determination, tranquillity of mind, concentration of mind, mental effort and mental strength unshaken by the eight worldly dhammas—gain and loss, fame and disgrace, praise and insult, joy and distress—to fulfill the development of the enlightenment factors.

May I have the strength and ability to achieve the ten kasīṇa attainments, the ten attainments regarding repulsiveness, the attainments of mindfulness of breathing, the attainments of mindfulness with regard to the body, the attainments of the sublime abodes, the attainments of immaterial sphere, the ten subjects of access concentration, the fourteen ways of full mastery of mind, the five supernormal powers, all the vipassanā knowledges up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations, reach the summit of these [vipassanā knowledges] and have the strength to fulfill development of the enlightenment factors while supporting the illustrious future of the Buddhasāsana without decline [of these qualities].

Through noble qualities, knowledge, wealth, resources, health, happiness, strength, wisdom, confidence in the Triple Gem, morality, generosity, sacrifice, moral shame and moral dread, erudition, courageous effort, mindfulness and wisdom, jhāna, gratitude, attending to parents in gratitude, the three meritorious actions, the ten bases of meritorious actions, the ten wholesome courses of action, the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four roads to power, the five spiritual faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, the Noble Eightfold Path, the four sublime abodes, the four ways of caring, the ten pāramī of the lower, middling and highest level, the three exertions for the common good, the five great donations,



the dhammas to be practiced⁶⁴, the dhammas of great blessing and all pāramī required for the attainment of Sammāsambuddhahood, may I be able to achieve advancement like the waxing moon.

Like a wish-fulfilling gem, a wish-fulfilling tree, a fortune-bestowing pot, like the full moon, may all righteous aspirations be fully achieved, prosper and advance. As long as this life lasts, may I have the strength, power, determination, effort, safety and blessings of Triple Gem, to perfect the factors of enlightenment in order to conquer this world, conquer the next world, conquer saṃsāra, conquer the defilements and achieve victory over the 'self'. May my mind be like a greatly loving, kind, all-tolerant earth, like a reservoir of lovingkindness, a light of lovingkindness, a great wind of lovingkindness, a river of lovingkindness, an ocean of lovingkindness, a mountain of lovingkindness like Mount Meru, with lovingkindness like boundless space, like a sun of lovingkindness, like a moon of lovingkindness, like a Brahma realm for the four sublime abodes and be a stable base like the earth for the firm establishment of the qualities required for Buddhahood.

May I be able to fulfill pāramī life after life, forever free from birth in the lower worlds, such as hell, from the three annihilations of beings, from the eight evil events, from the five dangers, as long as I am in saṃsāra. May I be free from fear of hunger, thirst, free from being reborn without any wholesome roots, free from being reborn with only two wholesome roots, from being born in the non-percipient realm, or in the immaterial realm, or another solar system and be able to fulfill pāramī.

As long as I am in saṃsāra, may I be forever free from the five heinous actions with immediate destiny, the five evil acts, the ten defilements, from taking intoxicants and liquor, eating fish and meat, association with evil friends, association with the evil and defilements, evil views, evil men, evil women and be able to fulfill pāramī.

⁶⁴ Sixteen are mentioned in the 'Karaṇīya Metta Sutta' (Sn.I.8).



May I forever be totally free from sensuous lust, sensuous desire, sensuous craving, sensuous thirst, sensuous torment and sensuous burning and be able to fulfill the pāramī. May I be able to fulfill pāramī with the mind free from the obstructions of covetousness, ill-will, anger, hate, defamation, slander, jealousy, avarice, deceit, trickery, fraud, obstinacy, revenge, conceit, lust, vengeance, misconduct, adherence to views, strong attachments, inability to let go, the five hindrances, the five obduracies, the five mental bondages, the six roots of dispute and other evil defilements.

May I be able to fulfill the pāramī free from obstruction by the five Māras: Māra as a deity, the defilements Māra, the aggregates Māra, the kammic formations Māra and the Māra of death.

Paṇḍaka⁶⁵, being without gender, being a hermaphrodite, physical disability, blindness, lameness, madness, poor intelligence: may [I] be free from all these sorts of disabilities and be able to fulfill pāramī.

As long as I am in saṃsāra may I not be born as a female, but always be born as a male and be able to fulfill the qualities of a Buddha. May I be born with three wholesome roots, the ability to recollect previous lives and right view. May I be able to associate with righteous men, to hear the true Dhamma, to see things as they truly are, to practice the Dhamma in each life with longevity, health, happiness, power, wisdom, trust in the Triple Gem, morality, sacrifice and knowledge, endowed with moral shame and moral dread, erudition, courageous effort, memory and wisdom, jhāna attainments and gratitude. May I undertake to attend to parents together with the three meritorious actions, the ten bases of meritorious actions, the ten wholesome courses of action, the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four roads to power, the five spiritual faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, the Dhamma of the Noble Eightfold Path, the

⁶⁵ There are various kinds of paṇḍakas, including eunuchs and people who engage in certain types of sexual practices.



four sublime abodes, the four ways of showing favour, the ten perfections of the lower, middling and highest levels, the three exertions for the common good, the five great donations, the dhammas that ought to be practiced, the dhammas of great blessing and with all the pāramī necessary for attainment of Sammāsambuddhahood may I be able to achieve advancement like the waxing moon.

During the future Sāsana of the Omniscient Metteyya Buddha, may I be reborn as a human being in the kingdom of Ketumati and during the first part of life offer the four requisites magnanimously to the Buddhasāsana, then receive lower and higher ordination, with full competence in the Tipiṭaka, with the five higher knowledges and eight attainments and be fortunate enough to receive the 'assurance of certainty' of becoming a Sammāsambuddha in the future.

Until the time of attaining Buddhahood, may I have the merits to meet all Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats who appear in the world, to offer the four requisites ardently, to receive lower and higher ordination in all Buddhasāsanas and to receive the assurance of certainty of becoming a Sammāsambuddha in the future.

Iminā puññakammena — yāva pappomi nibbutiṃ

Tāva saddhādi sampanno — alīna viriyo sadā

As a result of this kamma, until the day of attaining the bliss of Nibbāna, may I always have complete trust in the Triple Gem and energetic effort, without laxity⁶⁶.

Itthi bhāvā vinimmuttēna — atṭha dutṭhakkhaṇehi ca

Bhaveyyāhaṃ appamatto — sattavīsa madehi ca

In all lives may I be always mindful, free from being a female and from the eight evil times when it is not possible to accumulate merit and free from the twenty-seven forms of intoxication.

⁶⁶ The translation is the work of the editors, not Mahāthero himself.



***Na kareyyaṃ na kāreyyaṃ — na cīteyyaṃ kudāci'pi
Pāpakaṃ appamattam'pi — dukkhaṃ vā sabbapāṇinaṃ***
May I never do even the least evil or hurt any living being,
nor cause such, nor wish such.

***Pāpamitte na seveyyaṃ — seveyyaṃ sajjane sadā
Rāgadosādayo dosā — tanubhūtā bhavantu me***

May I not associate with evil friends. May I always
associate with good people. May all my lust, aversion and
other defilements weaken.

***Saheyyaṃ boddhuṃ bodhetuṃ — dhammaṃ Buddhena desitaṃ
Sadā jātissaraṃ ñāṇaṃ — labheyyaṃ jāti jātiyaṃ***

May I be able to understand and be able to make others
understand the Dhamma declared by the Buddhas. In all
births, may I have the ability to see past and future lives.

***Yadāhi loke Metteyyo — sambujjhissati taṃ tadā
Sakkaritvā pūjayitvā — sasaddhammaṃ sasāvakaṃ***

Whatever day the Omniscient Metteyya Buddha appears in
the world, I shall pay homage most ardently to that
omniscient Buddha, the Dhamma gem and the Saṅgha gem.

***Buddhatta kārake dhamme — sampuretvā asesato
Aham'pi sammā sambuddho — bhavissāmi anāgate***

Having completed all the conditions necessary for
Buddhahood without omission, I too shall attain
Sammāsambuddhahood in the future.

***Bhavā bhave saṃsaranto — yāva Nibbāna pattiyā
Jātissaraṇa ñāṇena — tihetu paṭisandhiko***

Wandering in saṃsāra life after life up to the time I realize
Nibbāna, in each such life may I always be born with three
wholesome roots and with the ability to recall past lives.



Uppannuppanna Buddhesu — puretvā sabba pāramī
Dīpaṅkaro viya Sambuddho — bhavitvā loka nāyako

Having fulfilled all pāramī under all Enlightened Buddhas who appear, [I] shall be a world-leader like Dīpaṅkara Buddha.

Saṃsāre saṃsarantānam — sattānaṃ hitamāvahaṃ
Dhammanāvāya tenetvā — tārayissaṃ bhavannavā

I shall help beings carried away in saṃsāra, rescuing them from the ocean of saṃsāra and taking them to the shore in a Dhamma ship.

Buddhoḥaṃ bhodhayissāmi — muttohaṃ mocaye pare
Tinnohaṃ tārayissāmi — saṃsāroghā mahabbhaya

I shall comprehend Four Noble Truths and shall help others comprehend them too. I shall be free of all defilements and suffering and shall help others also to be free of defilements and suffering.

I shall cross the frightful ocean of saṃsāra and shall help others get across the ocean of saṃsāra too.

Of all those who have tamed the self, my master, the Blessed Buddha, is supreme—the most excellent and most noble.

Of all who have sacrificed their lives, of all wise ones who have comprehended the reality of the world, my master, the Blessed Buddha, is supreme—the most excellent and most noble.

May the noble light of wisdom of my master, the Buddha, which astonished all worldly beings and devas, illuminate my mind.

May I also have the fortune to stay in the cool shade of my master, the Buddha, whose heart was cooled by compassion.



Māra's army, which was ten times the weight of the earth, was defeated by my master, the Buddha. May my mind be aroused by that noble power.

My master, the Buddha, offered his entire life for the benefit of all worldly beings and devas. May I too receive that noble gift.

I donate my life to my master, the Buddha, who worked for the benefit of all worldly beings and devas.

May I be free of suffering, free of illnesses and be of good health. May all beings be free of suffering, free of illnesses and be of good health, just as myself.

Let no one hurt another, insult another, or slander another. May everyone cherish the happiness of each and all.

May everyone enjoy the absolutely peaceful, supreme bliss of Nibbāna!

Sādhū! Sādhū! Sādhū!

(Completed 01/03/2002)

[I] write these words at the kind invitation of Mr. Jinadāsa Hettiārachchi of Kaltota Home for Elders.

This set of notes of my life, which is without exaggeration, is a personal testimony. Though there are other important matters not recorded herein, even these were written a little at a time over many days, sometimes with difficulty because of an ailment in the hand. Leave room to write in the future if the need arises.

[I] request all [my] friends not to publish this record during my lifetime. May all who read this record, which is purely a record of merits, acquire all the merit of these various meritorious activities! If there are any who ridicule or make fun of even a record of merit such as this, I radiate lovingkindness for their realization of Nibbāna!

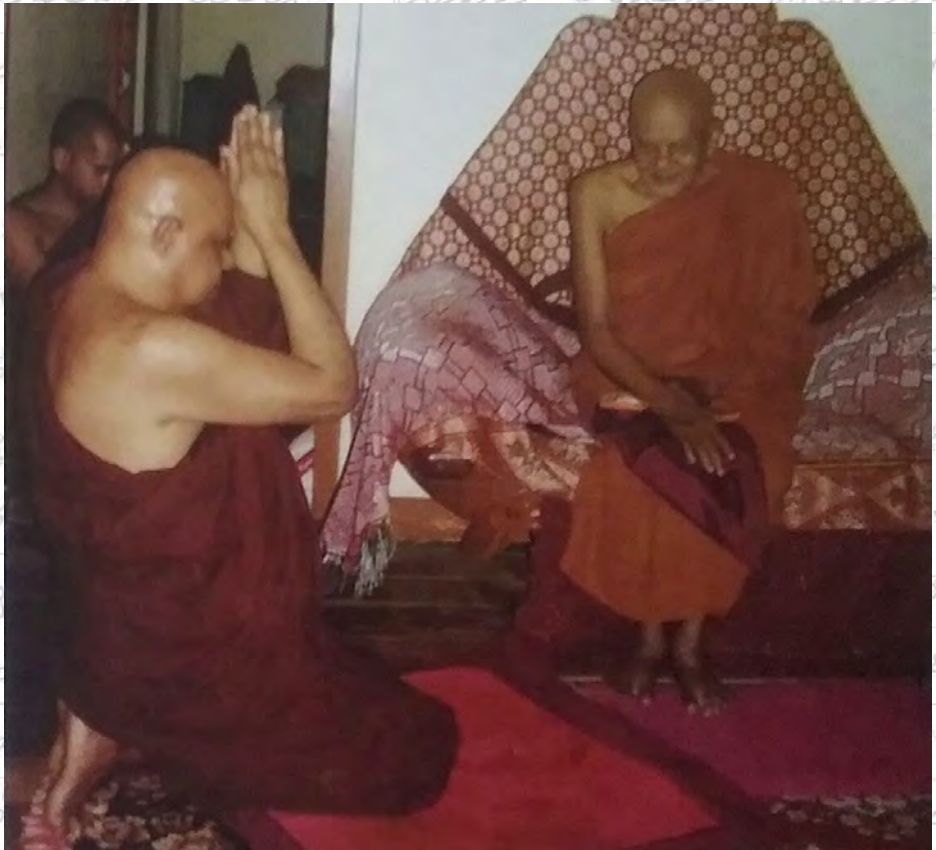


May the virtuous parents who brought me up realize Nibbāna in future!

May my Most Noble Preceptor, mentor and all other worthy Mahātheras realize Nibbāna in the future!

May my monastic colleagues, brothers, sisters and other blood relatives, faithful benefactors, all the deities who protect the world and the Sāsana and all friendly, unfriendly and neutral worldly beings realize the bliss of the great deathless Nibbāna in accord with their aspirations!

**Idaṃ me puñña kammaṃ āsvakkhayāvahaṃ hotu
Sabba dukkhā pamuñcatu**





The handwritten autobiography of our Venerable Nā Uyane Mahāthera, a description of a life journey dedicated to the Sāsana, ends here.

Places where the record is not clear have been clarified for the convenience of the reader and presented in a manner similar to the notes of Venerable Nā Uyane Mahāthera. Handwritten records contain another concise description of his meritorious Sāsana activities during the period from 2002 to 2012, marked ‘New Notes’, within the main notes.

There is also another special set of notes in Mahāthera’s handwriting, regarding the periods in Myanmar when he was practicing the Pa Auk meditation method. These cover five periods during the years 1996, 1997, 2001 and 2010 at Pa Auk Monastery in Myanmar. Meditation was developed to an extremely deep level by our Venerable Mahāthera during these five periods, which include three rains retreats. Excerpts selected from them describing experiences of various sorts of meditation are presented below, together with brief explanations.

The autobiography of our Most Venerable Teacher is an extremely precious gift to us. It is rare even to hear about such a life. This record of the Venerable Mahāthera, made on an invitation, has been of great benefit to the bhikkhus and the laity. The way to make use of the Buddhasāsana and realize its true benefit—attaining Nibbāna—stands out clearly in these records through the life of Mahāthera. Anyone who endeavours diligently can make use of this description of the footsteps of his noble life. Our Venerable Mahāthera has made these valuable records for that very purpose.

As stated above, a description of some of his meditation practices will be presented henceforth. This provides a window to the way Venerable Mahāthera practiced the Pa Auk meditation method and his different experiences. A few noteworthy events we have witnessed over the course of Venerable Mahāthera’s life have also been added.



43. Signs of Pāramī

The Buddha stated that he himself and all other beings have wandered in saṃsāra, the beginning of which cannot be seen, because they did not penetrate the Four Noble Truths and dependent origination. This makes clear the reason for suffering limitless misery for an immeasurably long period. Suffering ends only when those truths are comprehended.

Bodhisattas have endured immense difficulties and suffered physical pain that we cannot even imagine in order to complete the thirty pāramī necessary to realize Buddhahood on their own. Such Exalted Ones are extremely rare in the world and the noble task they perform is dispensing the True Dhamma, that which extinguishes suffering. Having announced the Dhamma to the world, what Buddhas expect is not gifts, offerings or mere worship; no one can prevent such innumerable gifts and offerings, however, because of the immense pāramī Fully Awakened Buddhas have accumulated. What they expect is that beings put this extremely rare Dhamma to practice and end their wandering in saṃsāra as quickly as possible. This is clear from the story of the Venerable Arahat Dhammārāma Mahāthera, as well as from the noble daily routine of the Buddha.

We must practice the Dhamma and live by the Dhamma, with the sole objective of realizing Nibbāna.

Whether born in the world of humans or devas, beings do not necessarily get the opportunity to listen to that Dhamma, let alone practice it. They must also possess sufficient strength of accumulated pāramī. Those who have very strong unwholesome kamma or defilements will not be able to enjoy its fruits, even if they are exposed to the Dhamma. Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera has been developing pāramī with determination for a long time in saṃsāra and his was thus a totally meritorious life—a life filled with the four sublime abodes: lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. His Bodhisatta life was so filled with these that for him there was almost no difference between his own life and that of others.



Such venerable Bodhisattas aspiring for Buddhahood are above others who practice the priceless Dhamma.

- Bodhisattas who long for renunciation see the dangers of the household life, which is preoccupied with gratification of the five senses.
- Bodhisattas who long for a state without greed see the dangers of greed.
- Bodhisattas who long for a state without hatred see the ills of hatred.
- Bodhisattas who long for a state without delusion see the ills of delusion.
- Bodhisattas who long for noble seclusion see the ills of company.
- Bodhisattas who long for liberation see the danger of three kinds of existence⁶⁷ and five kinds of birth⁶⁸.

It is with six such intentions that Bodhisattas traverse saṃsāra, fulfilling their pāramī. Venerable Mahāthera likewise accumulated vast power of pāramī holding these noble intentions.

Formidable training and experience in saṃsāra had given him an unmatched retentive power that amazed everyone who came in contact with or listened to him. He could remember the entirety of the voluminous Tipiṭaka in detail and also had a full understanding of various other related compilations. He was thus an acknowledged authority of recorded Buddhist theory and scriptures. Starting from childhood with observation of the lifetime eight precepts and practicing lovingkindness meditation at home, he continued to develop

⁶⁷ Existence in the sensual sphere (kāma loka), the fine-material sphere (rūpa loka) and the immaterial sphere (arūpa loka).

⁶⁸ Birth in hell (niraya), as an animal (tiracchāna yoni), as a hungry ghost (petti visaya), as a human (manussa loka) or a deva (deva loka).



his pāramī throughout life and showed the world the ‘visible here and now’ quality of the Supreme Dhamma.

The additional descriptions of Venerable Mahāthēra’s training and practice of meditation, taken from his own notes, are presented below.



Aggamahā Kammaṭṭhānācāriya, Venerable
Pa Auk Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa of Myanmar





Part II : Explanations and **Mahāthera's** Notes on Meditation

44. Meditation Methods Practiced by Mahāthera

Mahāthera has explained the meditation methods he practiced. Those explanations follow.

I. Recollection of the Buddha's Qualities

"There are many things to say about meditation, but there isn't sufficient time for that. You know, I was only nine years old when I started observing the precepts. It was the third year at school. At that time my mother's mother taught me to chant the "Iti'pi so" stanza often. I didn't know anything about its meaning. So I started to practice chanting the "Iti'pi so" stanza. She also gave me a rosary and asked me to use it to count the number of times I chanted the stanza. I carry that habit to this day!

"In the second year after higher ordination my preceptor and mentor, the Paṇḍita Thera, visited India on 4th February 1960 with a group of ten senior bhikkhus and he brought back rosaries made of sandalwood for disciples like us. At that time I was just a new higher-ordained bhikkhu engaged in studies at Puhulwella Meditation Centre. Venerable Paṇḍita Thera gave me a sandalwood rosary and said: "Load it with 100,000 recitations of the "Iti'pi so" stanza". By chanting about 300 times a day, I completed 100,000 recitations on 4th July 1964, while simultaneously engaged in studies.

"In 1961 there was a great ceremony at Nimalawa Monastery to commemorate the completion of ten years of the Yogāśrama Saṁsthā. The chief bhikkhu of Ruwangiriya was given the large cave. I was next to him and I asked and learned many valuable things from him. In



particular, I found out how to practice meditation on the “Iti’pi so” stanza.”

II. Lovingkindness Meditation

“After the establishment of Nā Uyana Monastery, we were given books on meditation. A few days before the Buddha Jayanti period⁶⁹, (I) received a book on lovingkindness meditation written by a bhikkhu named Atulavaṃsa Thera. It was in Pāli, describing how to radiate lovingkindness towards all beings in the ten directions. I memorized it.

“I had become used to observing [the uposatha] eight precepts on full moon days at Nā Uyana Monastery, so I firmly vowed to observe the lifetime eight precepts. [I] learned the lotus posture at about 15 years age. It was from a book by Most Venerable Mātara Śrī Nānārāma Mahāthera that I learned it. [I] could stay in lotus posture about half an hour. Each day after dinner, [I] studied and went to sleep in another room. Sitting in lotus posture on the bed in that room, I undertook the lifetime eight precepts, then chanted ‘Karaniya Metta Sutta’ and practiced mettā meditation as described in that book. After ten or 15 minutes of meditation I felt as if I was in the sky. [I] did not at all feel I [was] on the bed. [My] eyes [were] closed, but it [was] like there was moonlight all around.

“After doing all of this, as it was all [I] knew, after about half an hour [I] would sleep. [I] set the alarm clock to ring at 5:00 in the morning, but just when the alarm [was] about to ring, I [would] get up naturally. No limb had changed position, nor had the bedsheet. You know that was the playful and mischievous age. But it was not like that. [I would] spend the next day happily. [I] learned meditation when I was small and just practiced lovingkindness meditation at that time. [I would] chant ‘Karaniya Metta Sutta’ at other times. [I would] chant parittas that I [remembered] from the paritta book. [I would] chant stanzas from the

⁶⁹ Celebrating 2500 after the passing away of the Buddha (his Parinibbāna).



'Dhammapada'. From time to time, [I] read books that father used. He used the 'Visuddhimagga', 'Upāsaka Janālaṅkāraya' and the 'Vidarshanā Bhāvanā Pota'. I read the 'Visuddhimaga' and listening to father's discussions about it, I felt that I could do these things without difficulty. It was during this time that the desire to ordain arose in me, after seeing the benefits of meditation. So the idea that occurred at that time became firm."

III. Mahasi Meditation Method and Mindfulness of Breathing

"After that, [I] turned towards ordination and spent the period as a lay-renunciant in the village of Venerable Bodhirakkhita Thera. [I] practiced the Mahasi method of meditation and mindfulness of breathing there. [I] could maintain mindfulness well. After practicing these two meditation methods, I could maintain a concentrated mind for about one hour. During a one-hour group meditation Venerable Bodhirakkhita Thera [watched] the time. I [opened] my eyes just before Bhante [called] the time. The time [was] right. Bhante [asked] 'how did you look at the time?' I [replied] 'It just occurred to me'.

"I was asked to deliver a Dhamma talk during my period as a lay-renunciant while we were in Vigoda. [I] delivered the Dhamma talk fluidly without shifting posture at all for one hour, to devotees who had gathered in the evening. It was the Duruthu full moon day. Everyone expressed gratitude. On another day, [I] visited Sumanārāma temple in Mattegoda to witness an ordination ceremony and stayed there about two days. I was asked to deliver a Dhamma talk there on a full moon day. [I] delivered the Dhamma talk, maintaining samādhi for one hour.

"So I received training in meditation and had the opportunity to develop mindfulness well. [I] could maintain concentration of mind for one hour. [I] had no idea of jhāna. [I] just maintained concentration. [I did] not feel that the body [existed]; there [was] light. That is all that [was] felt. During studies, [I] practiced this meditation for a long time. It



greatly helped with the studies. Lessons [were] remembered well. Dhamma talks were delivered with eyes closed and mind in samādhi. That is the way it was practiced."

IV. Forty Meditation Objects

"[I] practiced all 40 meditation objects with students at Galdūwa. There was no other association with a teacher. [I] did this by reading the 'Visuddhimagga' and following what was given there as best as I could understand it. That was also a good exercise. [I] did all ten kasiṇas. [I] practiced the Mahasi method for one and a half months under the tutelage of Mātara Śrī Nāṇārāma Mahāthera in 1963 at Mellagala, in a cave called the 'Bread Tree Kuṭi'. [I] meditated for six hours without a break in lotus posture. [I] meditated from 5pm to 11pm continuously without any discomfort. [I felt] as if the mind [would ascend] to the Brahma realms. [I did] not know anything more. The Mahasi method does not address the development of jhāna, as you know.

"However, it was while training this way that I turned to conducting meditation classes. I was assigned the four protective meditations: recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, lovingkindness, repulsiveness, the recollection of death and mindfulness of breathing—to be taught to teachers learning at Mirigama Teacher Training Institute. One day Venerable Madihe Pañṇāsīha Mahāthera visited the class and was full of praise. 'Absolutely correct. This is really the correct method,' he said.

"[I] later taught all the subjects in meditation classes in Colombo as well.

"[My] visit to Myanmar was around this time. At the beginning [I] meditated for about ten days, visiting Mahasi Meditation Centre from time to time. This was, as you know, a method I had practiced before. It was, of course, after visiting Pa Auk Meditation Centre that samatha-vipassanā meditation was developed properly. [I] do not wish to discuss much about the meditation practice of that period. [I] returned after performing those tasks very well."



The above descriptions are an addition to the details recorded in his handwritten autobiography under ‘Meditation Objects Developed’. They concern meditation practices developed from childhood to the time Bhante visited Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar.

It was stated that Venerable Mahāthera practiced meditation very well at Pa Auk Meditation Centre and that he does not wish to say anything more. The meditation experiences that Mahāthera did not describe are presented here in brief, taken from notes he wrote down in Myanmar regarding the Pa Auk meditation method. May the notes given below be of much help and great benefit to worldly beings!

“The meditation method I hold in high regard is the method of vipassanā preceded by samatha practiced at Pa Auk Monastery. Vipassanā preceded by samatha is pleasing and comfortable. You undergo much physical pain when practicing bare vipassanā. This is true for anybody. It is so even for me. Samatha-preceded vipassanā is not like that. Both mind and body become calm in this method and it is therefore easy.”

That is Mahāthera’s view regarding the Pa Auk meditation method.

The Pa Auk meditation method was elucidated by Aggamahā Kammaṭṭhānācāriya, Venerable Sayadaw Āciṇṇa of Myanmar. This method, which was gifted to the world two or three decades ago, spread quickly across the globe, being based on a deep and extensive knowledge of the Tipiṭaka, Pāli commentaries, the ‘Visuddhimagga’ and experience gathered from meditating in the forest for more than twenty years. Our Mahāthera too fully practiced this meditation method. Mahāthera’s description of the method is given below.

V. The Pa Auk Meditation Method

“There Venerable Āciṇṇa Mahāthera of Myanmar gives mindfulness of breathing as the initial meditation object. After the yogi has attained the four jhānas, the 32 repulsive parts of the body are given as meditation



objects. The yogi is made to develop 32 jhānas corresponding to the 32 parts.

"Thereafter, the yogi is given the white skeleton. The yogi brings a skeleton to mind and focuses especially on the skull. Eight to ten skulls of people who are living or are deceased must be brought to mind. After bringing them to mind, the perception of bones must be set aside and attention must be directed to the white colour of the skull or to white-coloured light. This is not difficult for those who have attained jhāna through mindfulness of breathing. These are practiced after emerging from fourth jhāna of mindfulness of breathing. When observed through that light, the 'uggaha nimitta' (the learning sign) and 'paṭibhāga nimitta' (the counterpart sign) appear. Four jhānas are then developed with these objects.

"Next, the yogi turns to lovingkindness jhāna. The yogi is trained to use lovingkindness as a meditation subject—first towards about ten virtuous, friendly, good persons, then towards neutral persons and then towards adversaries. Thereafter, breaking down all barriers, lovingkindness must be pervaded to different areas and jhāna must be developed, starting with the kuṭi occupied by you, then the surrounding village, city, country, world and to the end of the universe. Next, turn to the ten directions⁷⁰. Focus the mind on all twelve types of beings⁷¹ in each of the ten directions. A total of 528 jhānas must be developed.

"After that, the yogi is trained in 132 jhānas based on compassion, 132 jhānas based on sympathetic joy and 132 jhānas based on equanimity, because only a single word is taken for each of these⁷².

⁷⁰ Adding above and below to the eight points of the compass.

⁷¹ The 12 types of beings are given in the 'Paṭisambhidāmagga', and explained in detail in the 'Visuddhimagga'.

⁷² In mettā meditation four aspects are developed (freedom from danger, freedom from mental suffering, freedom from physical suffering, and ease of livelihood), each corresponding to a single Pāli word. Therefore the total number of meditation



"Then the yogi is directed towards the repulsiveness of a corpse. [First the yogi] enters white kasiṇa and recalls to mind a corpse that the yogi has seen and contemplates its ten stages⁷³. After contemplating the ten stages, [the yogi] develops jhāna separately for each.

"Access concentration is developed for recollection of the qualities of the Buddha and recollection of death. There are nine ways to develop access concentration, one for each of the nine qualities recited in recollection of the qualities of the Buddha and there are several kinds of access concentration for recollection of death.

"After completing these, the yogi turns to the other colour kasiṇas. The four fine material jhānas are developed for each of: blue kasiṇa, yellow kasiṇa and red kasiṇa. Later, the earth, water, fire, air, light and limited space kasiṇas are developed. [Physical] signs must be taken [as the object] for each of these. They cannot be created from light. [The perception of] earth [is developed] by looking at a place on the ground or by making a kasiṇa disk⁷⁴. Taking some water into a vessel [the yogi develops the perception of] water. Looking at the light of a lamp [the yogi develops the perception of] fire. [The yogi] then watches something that moves, for example a leaf, and [develops the perception of] air. Looking at a beam of light, for example from a lamp, [the yogi develops the perception of] light. Looking at the sky through a hole, [the yogi develops the perception of] space. After developing the four fine-material jhānas for each of them, [the yogi must] develop the immaterial jhānas for each as well, excepting the limited space kasiṇa.

objects to be developed for lovingkindness is four times that of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, where only one aspect each is developed.

⁷³ The ten stages of decomposition of a corpse are: the bloated, the livid, the festering, the cut-up, the gnawed, the scattered, the hacked and scattered, the bleeding, the worm-infested, and the skeleton.

⁷⁴ A disk covered with clay (for earth kasiṇa), or of the appropriate colour (for the colour kasiṇas), to be used as the initial object of concentration.



"In the case of earth kasina, [the yogi] develops it up to fourth jhāna, abides in fourth jhāna and then considers the disadvantages of the body. This body is subject to many ills. It is subject to many diseases, to injury, to quarrelling and fighting. Various defilements, such as lust, arise because of the body. [The yogi] then become repulsed towards the body as very dangerous, as a perilous disadvantage. Considering the consequences of having a body, [the yogi] considers that immaterial jhānas are without form and are more calm and excellent. Contemplating that the white kasina that was pervaded above, below and all around is [occupying] infinite space, [the yogi] meditates, taking 'infinite space' as the object. When it is developed this way, the equanimity and one-pointedness of jhāna develop into an absorption similar to the fine-material fourth jhāna. [The yogi must] master it. That is the immaterial jhāna of infinite space.

"After mastering that jhāna, [the yogi] focuses on consciousness. Contemplating it as 'boundless consciousness', 'boundless consciousness', the attainment of the sphere of boundless consciousness develops. [The yogi] then attains the second immaterial jhāna, the sphere of boundless consciousness. [The yogi must] master that too.

"After that, there is no beginning or end of consciousness; it has disappeared. Contemplating 'nothing there, nothing there', [the yogi] attains to the third immaterial jhāna, the sphere of nothingness.

"[The yogi must] master that also, then call to mind that this jhāna that is focussed on nothingness is peaceful and excellent. [In this way the yogi] attains to the fourth immaterial jhāna, the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception. [It must be] mastered. All four of these immaterial jhānas are developed for each kasina. The Immaterial jhānas cannot be developed through the limited space kasina. They can be developed through the other nine kasinas.

"Yogis of higher ability are directed to vipassanā meditation after developing all the meditation objects. Some yogis find it difficult to develop the kasina meditations. Such yogis are directed to vipassanā



meditation after the fourth jhāna of mindfulness of breathing or thereabouts. But they are invariably made to develop four subjects, namely: recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, lovingkindness, repulsiveness and recollection of death.

"Supernormal knowledges are of course developed only after developing vipassanā. Yogis are not directed to the supernormal knowledges without developing vipassanā. This is because the supernormal knowledges can cause serious problems. For instance, when the yogi has developed the divine eye, defilements can arise by seeing unnecessary forms. Fear can arise. Dread, lust and other defilements can arise. Only yogis who have developed vipassanā well are allowed to develop supernormal knowledges. Such yogis do not get lost. After all, what is expected is vipassanā, isn't it? [The goal is] to attain path and fruition, not supernormal knowledges. So [the yogi must] set aside any expectation of supernormal knowledges and turn to vipassanā.

"Vipassanā meditation begins with four-elements meditation. The earth, water, fire and air elements are taken first and the mind is directed at their 12 distinctive characteristics one at a time. Later it will be possible to focus on rūpa kalāpas⁷⁵ with eight fundamental characteristics. All these are developed by radiating the light of white kasiṇa.

"Thereafter, [the yogi] discerns the eight sorts of kamma-born rūpa kalāpas and mind-born rūpa kalāpas at the sense bases⁷⁶. [The yogi] discerns the four temperature-born rūpas and the nutriment-born rūpa. After that, the rūpa kalāpas in the 32 parts of the body, such as head hair, body hair, etc. are discerned. All internal rūpa kalāpas must be discerned

⁷⁵ Small particles that compose materiality.

⁷⁶ There are six sense bases: Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The body door is considered as any part of the body where physical sensations can be felt. The mind door—the physical support for consciousness—is located at the base of the heart.



in this way. This is not yet counted as vipassanā meditation. The rūpas are analyzed in preparation for vipassanā.

“Next [the yogi] turns to mental phenomena. If the yogi has attained a certain jhāna, then [he or she should] abide in that jhāna and discern the jhāna factors and all associated mental factors, separating out each. After that, the mental phenomena in each jhāna that has been attained must be discerned. [The yogi] must clearly discern the mental phenomena of the wholesome cognitive processes and the unwholesome cognitive processes that originate from the six doors⁷⁷. The yogi can remember instances of wholesome and unwholesome thoughts that arose based on the mind-door and the other five doors. Separate out the mind and mental factors⁷⁸ in them.

“After completing the discernment of internal mental and material phenomena, [the yogi] focuses on external rūpa kalāpas. [First, focussing on] the robes the yogi is wearing, the mats on which the yogi sits, kuṭis, the items in them, the trees outside and other material forms that are without consciousness, [the yogi] then focuses on rūpa kalāpas connected with consciousness. These are discerned inferentially. Material phenomena in the bodies of animals and men are compared using this method. Then mental phenomena are discerned in the same way.

“After discerning all mentality and materiality, [the yogi] discerns it all separately once again according to characteristic, function,

⁷⁷ According to the Abhidhamma, consciousness does not occur as a continuous stream, rather as a series of processes. Each process consists of a finite number of mind-moments each arising processes and perishing very quickly. The process involved in visual cognition is called an ‘eye-door process’, and the processes are similarly named according to the appropriate sort of cognition involved. Examples of wholesome mental processes are patience and goodwill; examples of unwholesome mental are stinginess and envy.

⁷⁸ The mind is mere awareness; the mental factors are what characterize the particular nature of a mental experience. For example, at seeing a snake, fear might arise. A fearful mind has many characteristics, such as a disagreeable mental feeling and a certain degree of unsteadiness.



manifestation and proximate cause. It's a long process. [It is] necessary to discern factors such as the particular characteristic of each form of mentality and materiality.

"After that, in order to find out whether the yogi has meditated or practiced vipassanā in a previous life, the mind is directed at the past stream of mentality and materiality: the presently arising mentality-materiality, today's [...], yesterday's [...], the day before yesterday's [...], last week's [...], last year's mentality-materiality and so on. [The yogi] proceeds up to the conception of the present life in the mother's womb.

"After discerning the mentality-materiality for all these time periods, [the yogi] enters white kasiṇa fourth jhāna, abides in that jhāna and makes a firm determination: 'may the departure from the previous life, death, be seen'. If it is not discerned in the first attempt, [the yogi must] determine firmly again. The moment of departure will appear. Then [the yogi] searches for the kamma that was the object of the near-death moment. [The yogi must] look at the kamma, sign of kamma, or the sign of destiny of the running mind-moment just preceding the moment of death consciousness.

"Thereafter, [the yogi] discerns past mentality and materiality backwards step by step to the beginning: the rebirth-linking consciousness of that life. The yogi will come across a form of meditation that was developed in a previous life when searching this way. If vipassanā was developed in that life, then [the yogi must] find out whether the meditation subject was the aggregates, the elements, or the sense doors or what it was. Past mentality and materiality are scanned to find out in what way vipassanā was developed. This is not done to develop higher supernormal knowledges. Some yogis look at 30-40 lives. Venerable Āciṇṇa Sayadaw of Myanmar has done so.

"After scanning the past in this manner, [the yogi] turns to the future. The mentality and materiality of today, [...] of tomorrow, mentality and materiality of the day after tomorrow and so on, going forward to the time of death. Then [the yogi] looks at the ending-of-life consciousness



and the rebirth-linking consciousness that follows next. Yogis are advised to go forward many lives into the future. The yogi is then asked to go on with the discernment up to the attainment of Nibbāna. Some cannot get as far as the life when Nibbāna will be attained. It is too far away. If that life is not so far away in the future, it is possible to see that life. After discerning mentality-materiality of the past, future and present, [the yogi] then tries to find out what caused this particular mentality and materiality to appear here.

"The process by which rebirth-linking consciousness arose had five causes: ignorance, craving, clinging, a volitional formation and the power of kamma. This is to be discerned according to dependent origination. Then [the yogi] examines how mentality-materiality, the sense doors, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, birth, ageing and death arose, in that order. Discernment of these sequential causes and effects gives rise to the 'purification knowledge by overcoming doubt'. It is after completing this that the yogi moves on to the 'knowledge of comprehension'.

"Vipassanā in 40 ways is used for this purpose. There are ten aspects of impermanence, 25 aspects of suffering and five aspects of non-self, making a total of 40 characteristics that are attributed to each mentality and each materiality. This meditation will be difficult for a person who has not developed strong concentration through samatha meditation. A person who has the strength of concentration will find it easy. It is necessary to fine-comb, like one head hair after another. It is this knowledge gained by division and dissection that is referred to as 'the knowledge of comprehension'. It is when this is practiced that 'the knowledge of arising and passing away' is realized. The knowledge of arising and passing away must be practiced in 50 ways and must also be developed according to seven ways for materiality and seven ways for mentality. There is the opportunity to acquire 'the knowledge of dissolution' while these are being developed.



"The knowledge of dissolution must be developed in greater detail than earlier. It is developed for each and every materiality and mentality. When this is being practiced, 'the knowledge of danger', 'the knowledge of disenchantment', 'the knowledge of desire for liberation', 'the knowledge of reflective contemplation' and 'the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations' are developed, in that order. These knowledges will be realized even if yogi does not engage in any special meditation to achieve them.

"The yogi who has acquired the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations, whoever he is, abides as if he is in fourth jhāna. [He] enters a strong concentration. That yogi doesn't have to do any more vipassanā meditation. He has completed all the vipassanā knowledges. It is this equanimous state that is referred to as 'equanimity regarding formations'. Those who possess the necessary pāramī continue further and will succeed in attaining path and fruition. Those who do not have such pāramī should develop [their meditation] again and again from the knowledge of arising and passing away. They must develop it many times. It is then that the controlling faculties, powers and factors of enlightenment gain strength. Yogis who have higher aspirations stop at the knowledge of equanimity towards formations. They attain to that knowledge again and again and enjoy the bliss of vipassanā. That is the method taught by Most Venerable Sayadaw Āciṇṇa. Many have benefited from it."

That concludes the description given by Most Venerable Nā Uyane Mahāthera of the meditation method practiced at Pa Auk Meditation Centre.

Mahāthera developed the Pa Auk meditation method quite easily and quickly from the very beginning and he received special praise and blessings from Most Venerable Sayadaw Āciṇṇa of Myanmar. Our Mahāthera developed these meditations so easily because he had accumulated pāramī of great strength, aiming towards Noble Buddhahood, for a very long time in saṃsāra and because of the power of deep Dhamma knowledge and practice developed in his



present life⁷⁹. The practice of this meditation method was given a special position by our Mahāthera. Records kept by Mahāthera of his development and experience of meditation are an invaluable resource for the world. We can understand more than merely this single life of Mahāthera from these facts. They also illustrate his most wonderful journey in saṃsāra and shed light on many other important matters. These invaluable notes will help bhikkhus and lay devotees generate and strengthen their faith and accumulate wholesome kamma through meritorious deeds.

Even though Most Venerable Ariyananda Mahāthera, a disciple of Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera, provided all clarifications and translations from English during meditation interviews in Myanmar, he kept these special experiences of his teacher private until the suitable time, complying with the stated wish of Ariyadhamma Mahāthera.

Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera has recorded in some detail his development of meditation at Pa Auk. The handwritten notes were published in the Sinhala edition of this book; a translation is provided here for the reader of English. These notes, detailing meditation development, experiences and some information regarding how our Venerable Mahāthera developed his pāramī over the course of saṃsāra, are presented from here on. They do not, however, constitute a detailed description of meditation methods.

“Of all the yogis who came from Sri Lanka, the only yogi who developed all meditations that I know, in the same way, is Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Thera”

—Aggamahāpaṇḍita

Aggamahā Kammatthānācāriya

Most Venerable Pa Auk Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa

Pa Auk Meditation Centre

Mawlamyine, Myanmar

⁷⁹ ‘His present life’ refers to his life as Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthero.



45. The Tranquil Mind

A mind that is agitated, restless and wandering about is quite normal to worldly beings. Due to minds are in such states, the truth pointed out by the Great Compassionate Ones cannot be comprehended by them. They cannot see the Truth, cannot understand it.

If, on the other hand, without remaining in excited and agitated states of mind, a disciplined, peaceful, tranquil state of mind can be developed, then it is possible to see the reality of the world and realize knowledge of things as they truly are.

After disciplining body and speech, the most important stretch on the road to Nibbāna is tranquillity of mind. A high level of tranquillity is known as the state of jhāna. When a subject such as the breath is taken as meditation object and attention is placed on it, if practiced again and again concentration (a one-pointedly focused attention) develops. A light referred to as an 'uggaha nimitta' arises in such a concentrated mind. Upon continuing the meditation, this light becomes bright and it is then called the 'paṭibhāga nimitta'. When the mind is trained on the paṭibhāga nimitta, trained well and strong concentration is developed, the hindrances are gradually removed and suppressed. The five hindrances obstruct and prevent entry to the path to Nibbāna and on their removal, first jhāna, which has five jhāna factors, arises. By repeated practice, this jhāna can be mastered and higher-level jhānas, namely second, third and fourth jhāna, are attained.

The founder of the Pa Auk meditation method, Most Venerable Sayadaw Āciṇṇa of Myanmar, explains very clearly how to attain these jhānas.

After attaining the four fine-material jhānas through mindfulness of breathing, the yogi is trained in meditation on the repulsiveness of the 32 parts of the body, white bones, lovingkindness, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, the ten repulsive corpses, recollection of death and ten kasiṇas and to achieve the associated jhānas and strengthen the four jhānas already developed.



Some of what Mahāthera experienced while developing these meditation objects is presented below (taken from his notes).

Day 2, morning 3:00—Awoke and after washing chanted the 'Dhammacakka Sutta'. 3:40—Mindfulness of breathing in sitting posture. Concentration was more delightful than on earlier days. Attained first jhāna. 5:15—Note taking. Morning meal. 6:00—Walking meditation. 6:45—Sitting meditation until 8:30. Reached fourth jhāna directly. Could again attain first jhāna to fourth jhāna in sequence. 8:30—Washed robes and bathed. 9:00—Walking. Buddha's qualities. 9:30—Venerable Sayadaw Nāyaka Thera visited and discussed meditation. Received permission to develop fourth jhāna again and again. 10:00—Writing. 10:30—Midday dāna. 11:30—Walking. 12:00—Veneration of the Buddha. Rest. 1:00—Sitting meditation. 2:15—Sitting meditation till 4:00. Practiced fourth jhāna many times. 4:15—Walking. 5:00 to 7:00—Sitting meditation up to fourth jhāna. 7:00—Writing. Leg massage. 8:45—Walking. Protective Suttas. Finished veneration. 9:30. Retired.

5:00 to 7:00—Sitting meditation. After mindfulness of breathing fourth jhāna, absorptions for 32 parts of the body in forward order. Reverse order internal and external 27 absorptions completed well.

5:15—Sitting meditation. After completing fourth jhāna in mindfulness of breathing, finished bone-based white kasiṇa up to fourth jhāna. Saw a brilliant light and there arose strong faith.

Today mindfulness of breathing meditation, white colour, blue colour, yellow, red. All jhānas were successful. It was possible to radiate the light to infinite worlds from the kuṭi.



5:10—Sitting meditation. Mindfulness of breathing ⁴⁸⁰, white colour 4, blue, yellow, red, earth, water, fire, air, light: 4 each, finished and developed up to fourth jhāna in air kasiṇa for the first time.

5:15—Sitting meditation. Recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. After completing mindfulness of breathing and white kasiṇa, [pervaded] lovingkindness focusing on the temple, village, city, the Land of Gold⁸¹, Sri Lanka, India, this solar system; completed 84 absorptions.

2:10—Sitting meditation. Finished mindfulness of breathing, white colour, developed recollection of the qualities of the Buddha vividly.

Developed the ten meditations on repulsiveness. Attained first jhāna in each. At the end looked at these ten repulsive objects, comparing each with the ten repulsive stages that will be undergone after death using access concentration.

4:00—Sitting meditation, recollections, mindfulness of breathing, white kasiṇa ⁸², attained absorption immediately. Thereafter vividly developed death meditation for all eight subjects according to the 'Visuddhimagga'.

Venerable Mahāthera attained the four fine-material jhānas splendidly because of the pāramī he had developed; he practiced jhāna accordingly for each meditation subject. He has had many special experiences too, but these have been recorded by Mahāthera in the simple way shown above. More details of these meditations are not presented here; some were given in the section 'Meditation Methods

⁸⁰ Four jhānas.

⁸¹ Myanmar.

⁸² Eight attainments.



Practiced by Mahāthera'. More details of this method are available in books detailing the Pa Auk meditation system.

Our Mahāthera attained these fine-material jhānas quite easily, mastered them through further practice and continued to prepare for the development of immaterial jhāna according to the instructions he received.

46. A Break for a Flittering Mind

The mind changes extremely rapidly. Innumerable thoughts arise within even a single second. The mind is, however, occupied with the thoughts that it prefers. We cannot develop the Dhamma through a mind that incessantly runs after objects of its own choosing. We must reduce the activity of this wild, untamed mind and gradually develop a mind that is disciplined, stable and remains with a limited number of objects. It requires great effort, full commitment and continuous practice. The disciplined mind can be made to stay with a selected Dhamma object, a meditation object, for a long time.

We must give endless work to the mind, but not just whatever work the mind likes. We must give it the objects that we want to develop. The untamed mind prefers defilements, there is no doubt. We must get the mind to work unceasingly on an object that opposes the specific defilement that the mind prefers. A suitable meditation object, a Dhamma object, must be developed continuously without any gaps. For instance, the perception of repulsiveness is opposite to lust and lovingkindness is opposite to anger. The mind that previously jumped from one object to another is calmed by again and again placing it on the chosen object. The necessary state of mind comes about gradually. The mind that once ran after thousands of objects slows down and moves between only a few. It stays with our meditation object, a wholesome object. It is such a mind that helps see reality, helps to realize Nibbāna.

Our Venerable Mahāthera began by following the advice of his grandmother at a very early age. He spent his time chanting the “Iti’pi



so” stanza repeatedly, counting with a rosary. He continued this practice throughout his bhikkhu life. He kept his mind on the Buddha’s qualities as he wished, kept unwanted thoughts from arising and kept the mind away from the things that it was used to. Except when he was meditating, he kept the Buddha’s qualities in mind—whenever he was traveling, or attending to monastic duties and the like. He did not let the mind idle. He recollected the Buddha’s qualities in this way whenever possible, excluding the time he was developing a primary meditation object, was engaged in studies or delivering a Dhamma talk. The mind undergoes a transformation quickly through such practice. The mind becomes stable. The constant flitting from one object to another, the habit of running after defilements, changes. The mind takes a break. It now remains with the wholesome object, the meditation object.

The mind that is disciplined this way holds onto any object it is given, whether it is a samatha object or a vipassanā object. This is the way our Mahāthera progressed on the Dhamma path from his youth. It resulted in several benefits:

- A calm mind.
- Strong confidence in the Triple Gem.
- The ability to develop any meditation subject.
- The widening of his Dhamma knowledge.
- Even details of Dhamma that he did not know would flow into the mind on their own.
- The ability to stay constantly with wholesome objects.
- The ability to maintain mindfulness on the path to Nibbāna.

It is possible to realize many such benefits.

Our Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera practiced recollection of the qualities of the Buddha continuously. He did so throughout his life.



He kept his mind on vipassanā meditation objects much of the time. Any time he had aside from formal meditation was used to recollect the Buddha's qualities. He filled the gaps between formal meditation sessions with the continuous practice of recollecting the qualities of the Buddha. He did not allow any gaps in his practice, whether there was a rosary in his hand or not. That is the way he practiced.

In later days he recorded the number of times the "Iti'pi so" stanza had been chanted. The last count was recorded around the year 2002. By that time he had chanted it 73,500,000 times. That is only the number of times he was able to remember and write down. The actual number could very well be more.

He also recited the three stanzas in homage to the Triple Gem many times, akin to the "Iti'pi so" stanza. He also had several unusual experiences as a result of practicing recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. In some instances, devas have appeared and expressed certain ideas. These episodes were recounted earlier. Mahāthera recalls:

"An incident occurred while I was teaching Abhidhamma to a group of students in 1970. It is a miracle stemming from practicing recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. The origin of the Abhidhamma, as you know, is the Buddha's exposition in Tāvātimsa realm. According to the time on earth, the duration of the Dhamma talk was three months. I asked a question from the student bhikkhus, 'How long were these three months in the deva world?' You know, one day in that world is 100 years on earth, but I had not thought about the answer to the question myself. The students could not answer the question, so as teacher, I had to give the answer. I closed my eyes and recalled the "Iti'pi so" stanza. Strangely, the answer came to mind in a moment as nine minutes⁸³. I gave the answer to the students then and calculated it later. Correct. By that time I had chanted the Buddha's qualities many, many times."

⁸³ According to Sinhalese tradition 1 day = 60 hours,
1 hour = 60 minutes.



Our Venerable Mahāthera has pointed to this as one special incident resulting from the practice of recollecting the qualities of the Buddha and he has had many other wonderful experiences as well.

Incorporating this worthy meditation object in our lives as well is truly beneficial. We must change the habit of the mind to be carried away by unwholesome thoughts. If left untrained, the mind would forever run along with objects that enter through the sense doors, it would search incessantly for useless things, inquire continuously into matters of no value and kill time by indulging in wishful thinking. We must change this habit of the mind, otherwise we will not be able to derive the true benefits of the Buddha's teaching. Even living under the demands work and social responsibilities it is quite possible to make use of this method and obtain useful results.

Even when our Venerable Teacher was ill and lying in a hospital bed, his fingers were moving as if counting on a rosary. This demonstrates that even when the body is feeble, meditation can be active in the mind, if it has been practiced repeatedly. At difficult times such as this, continually developing meditation—long practice of a meditation object—is the means to maintain an alert mind. Hence let us live by the Dhamma. Let us make the Dhamma a part of our life.

47. Immaterial Sphere Concentration

Development of jhāna in the immaterial sphere is founded on the strength of jhāna developed in the fine-material sphere. First, attain fine-material sphere jhāna by meditating on one of the nine kasīṇa objects (excluding the limited space kasīṇa), emerge from that jhāna and bring to mind the dangers of fine-material forms and the advantages of the immaterial sphere absorptions. Then remove the kasīṇa object from the mind and take the concept of 'boundless space' as the meditation object. Develop it to the level of the first immaterial jhāna: the base of boundless space.

After concentration on boundless space is well established, change the focus from boundless space to that very consciousness that is aware of boundless space. That consciousness is itself boundless.



With this object, develop the second immaterial jhāna: the base of boundless consciousness.

As that consciousness doesn't have anything in it, as the next object take the emptiness of that consciousness and develop the third immaterial jhāna: the base of nothingness.

The next step is to take the calmness and pleasantness of the base of nothingness as object and develop the fourth immaterial jhāna: the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

After developing these four immaterial jhānas, the yogi is said to have completed the eight concentrative attainments.

2:15—Finished four jhānas each in mindfulness of breathing, white colour, earth kasiṇa and entered the jhāna of boundless space and the jhāna of boundless consciousness. Achieved these with ease.

2:15—Sitting meditation. Finished four jhānas each in mindfulness of breathing, white colour, earth kasiṇa. Entered all three immaterial jhānas with ease.

2:05—Sitting meditation. Finished three immaterial jhānas after mindfulness of breathing/white colour, earth kasiṇa and attained the fourth immaterial jhāna for the first time.

These are the handwritten notes of our Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera describing his practice of the immaterial sphere jhānas. Because of the luminous jhāna mind of our Mahāthera, after developing four fine-material jhānas and four immaterial sphere jhānas, that is to say the eight attainments, he mastered them by practicing again and again and has made a great contribution to all beings of the world and to the Buddhasāsana.

Attaining these jhānas is extremely rare in the present day. Our minds are being increasingly filled with a wide variety of highly attractive, dangerous and unwholesome objects. The moral standards



of society decline sharply together with the menacing increase of such corrupting objects. The circumstances for practice are constantly degrading, thereby making our progress in Dhamma more and more difficult.

Fifty million of the seventy million people in Sāvatti were Noble Ones in the Buddha's time. Similarly in Sri Lanka, during the time of the ancient kings, there were so many Arahats, so many who attained path-fruit, that it was difficult to say which bhikkhu was an Arahāt and which bhikkhu was not. The present situation has changed completely. Even so, a person who has generated the 'paths to success', namely concentration based on each of wholesome desire, the power of mind, energetic effort and investigation can overcome all hindrances and impediments and progress on the righteous path of Dhamma, even at the present time. The life of our Mahāthera illustrates this fact clearly.

Though Mahāthera had already accumulated a great mass of merit over the course of saṃsāra, he did not obtain these abilities without effort. It was the result of intense dedication from childhood, continuous practice and unremitting application of energy. This will be clear to anyone from his handwritten notes. Mahāthera had the good fortune to obtain valuable results from mindfully developing the Dhamma in this very life, despite the difficulties of the times, demonstrating the 'sandiṭṭhika' quality of the Dhamma—to be seen in this very life. He had the ability to attain and abide in jhāna concentration throughout the day and he lived with a mind totally pure, like a noble deva king or brahma king.

He was able to direct himself not only towards his own aspirations, but also to contribute to the benefit of the world and the happiness of beings. To this end, he devoted his energies—all the power and strength that he had developed—to the longevity of the Sāsana. It demonstrates that if a person has developed the practices taught by the omniscient Buddha, then that strength is not for that person alone. The



strength and quality of that Dhamma power spread to all three worlds⁸⁴; everyone derives benefit from it.

Any attempt to cultivate a tranquil, focused mind, a mind in which hindrances are subdued, is very valuable, even if it cannot be developed to the extent of Mahāthera. Having considered the lives of great individuals like Mahāthera, seeing their good qualities, we should attempt to lead our own minds in a similar direction. It is not for the benefit of Mahāthera or other great ones, but for our own benefit. If a bhikkhu or a layperson practices a suitable meditation object continuously and with full commitment, the concentrated mind gained as a result will bring about changes that can be experienced in this very life.

The true benefit of the Buddha's Dhamma is still further away. This is only a taste of the potential benefits of the noble Dhamma. After seeing the value of a concentrated mind in which the hindrances are dormant, knowing the peace we can enjoy through that we can imagine how much more peaceful and joyous the bliss of Nibbāna will be. This kind of thinking occurred to our Mahāthera as a child and led to his ordination as a bhikkhu, cultivating morality and other superhuman qualities, as well as developing the deep states of concentration which lead to birth in deva and Brahma realms. The concentrated mind of jhāna enabled him to reach the deepest levels of the Dhamma, to enjoy the happiness of the good Dhamma and lead a life of enormous merit.

We too can cultivate a tranquil, concentrated mind that is free of hindrances in place of a defilement-filled, agitated, restless mind by stepping onto the Dhamma path with confidence and energy, abandoning negligence.

⁸⁴ The celestial worlds, the lower worlds, and the human world.





48. Qualities of a Bodhisatta

Bodhisattas are working to fulfill the necessary factors to attain Buddhahood and as a result they enjoy certain advantages in whatever world-sphere they are born: they become leaders, are selected to the topmost positions in the context of an organization, become powerful, have special abilities and high moral qualities. If born in the human world during the time of a Buddha's Sāsana, they ordain, become authorities on the Dhamma and take the lead in propagation and sustenance of the Sāsana.

Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera, also being one of such lofty aspiration, had these Bodhisatta qualities:

- He cultivated the qualities suitable for a bhikkhu—morality, concentration and wisdom—to a high level.
- He was an authority on the Tipiṭaka.
- He progressed on the Dhamma path up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations.
- He fulfilled the ten pāramī to a superior level.
- He rendered extensive services as a spiritual friend towards all four groups of Buddhists⁸⁵. In some instances, when a group of bhikkhus said: “Dear Bhante, may we receive your noble spiritual friendship until the day we realize Nibbāna,” he agreed gently, “It should be so.” We understood it to be the response of a Bodhisatta who was aware of his own strength. It is difficult for a person of lesser stature to make such a statement.
- He provided noble leadership and direction to all.

⁸⁵ Monks, nuns, laymen and laywomen.



- He gave the solution to every problem from the point of view of the Dhamma, conforming to the Tipiṭaka. With knowledge of the Dhamma and understanding of the world, he directed many disciples to the correct and most suitable path.
- In the face of tremendous gain, praise, fame, honour, social status, as well as accusations, insults and obstacles, he was filled with equanimity, staying unshaken like a post planted firmly in the ground.

His was indeed a truly exceptional Bodhisatta life for many reasons. Mahāthera lived his life as one who aspires to attain supreme self-awakening. We have seen him describe the life of the Bodhisattas and the life of Lord Buddha with great respect, trust and eagerness.

Below are some further details regarding Bodhisatta-like qualities of our Mahāthera:

- He was the target of accusations by the unwise on many occasions.
- He received many accolades from esteemed individuals here and abroad, including his own worthy teacher.
- His teacher himself declared that qualities of our Mahāthera are above those of all the other bhikkhus in the Yogāśrama combined.
- He received numerous gifts and praise locally and abroad.
- He was appointed Advisor in the Yogāśrama, even though there were worthy bhikkhus of greater seniority.
- Highly respected and learned bhikkhus such as Madihe Mahā Nāhimi have praised him as the leading meditation teacher in Sri Lanka.
- He was awarded the title of ‘Mahopadyāya’, meaning ‘the great teacher’, appointed ‘Deputy Chief of the Rāmañña Mahā

Nikāya’ and awarded the title ‘Mahā Kammatṭhānācāriya’ by the government of Myanmar.

Our Mahāthera had many gifts and honours bestowed on him and received all of them with equanimity, considering them to be merely the way things are. All these point to the qualities of a true Bodhisatta.

These qualities have made an immense contribution to mankind. Our Venerable Mahāthera continued to accumulate pāramī without break. He never ventured outside the Dhamma. He worked for the advancement of the Sāsana in conformance with the Dhamma through initiative and leadership, being of service to the Sāsana as is the duty of a Bodhisatta. All these factors reveal the Bodhisatta nature of our Mahāthera.

“Our head, too, bows when this Ariyadhamma Bhikkhu approaches to pay homage to us.”

—Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita
Geṭamāṇne Vimalavaṃsa Mahāthera
Chief Bhikkhu
Kurunegala, Māspota
Nāthagana Forest Monastery
Former President of Sri Kalyāṇi
Yogaśrama Saṃsthā





49. Truth Concealed by the Darkness of Ignorance

Looking at the world in terms of human beings, animals and solid objects is, in fact, seeing a picture distorted by the lens of delusion. This view differs altogether from the view of Buddhas. No special knowledge can be gleaned from such a perspective, even if a person were to live for aeons. The person-animal-solid objects view is not the basis for developing the extraordinary way of seeing known as vipassanā in the Buddha's teaching. Realizing, through direct experience, that all persons, animals, solid objects, animate and inanimate and even all concepts are merely mentality and materiality is the only means of developing vipassanā. This special view is essential in order to develop vipassanā.

I. Discernment of Materiality

In truth, all things, animate and inanimate, animal and man, goods and materials are made up of materiality. The smallest possible division of materiality is called pure-eightfold material⁸⁶. It consists of the set of four primary elements—earth, water, fire, air—and four kinds of derived materiality: colour, odour, taste and nutritive essence. There are in total 24 kinds of derived materiality and adding to these the 4 primary elements, there are 28 kinds of materiality. All animals, humans and inanimate objects are made up of these 28 kinds of materiality. New growth of any sort also comes from these kinds of materiality.

What we call 'I' consists of mind and body. The body is a collection of various materials and we must meditate and discern clearly this fact. Having done so, we likewise meditate on the external, discerning materiality in the external world and thus acquire the knowledge of discerning materiality. It is also referred to as 'the

⁸⁶ This is referring to the simplest form of small particle (rūpa kalāpa) that can be found in a material object.



knowledge of delineating materiality'. This knowledge is essential in order to enter the path leading to Nibbāna.

2:15—*Sitting meditation. Mindfulness of breathing, white kasiṇa and elements. Meditated with keen attention; achieved concentration and looked at the elements. The body is not visible, only white is seen. Looked intensely at the four elements in it.*

2:15—*Sitting meditation. Finished mindfulness of breathing, then did elements meditation and discerned all 42 parts in detail. Discerned the four elements and rūpa kalāpas. Developed very well.*

Completed discernment of rūpa today⁸⁷.

Day 10. Meditation objects were successful in all five sitting meditations. Mindfulness of breathing four jhānas, white colour eight attainments. Discernment of internal rūpa completed.

The way our Mahāthera successfully achieved the knowledge of delineating materiality is clear from these notes. It was evident from the unruffled and equanimeous life that our Mahāthera had a wide understanding of the material in his own body, as well as that of the world, through this knowledge. At times of illness he watched what was happening to the body, understood it, was patient and equanimeous and listened to the ideas of his doctors and disciples. It is evident that he treated all such deterioration and changes of the body as merely the natural course of things.

This strength derived from the Dhamma is not peculiar to Venerable Mahāthera alone—anyone can develop meditation and see results. The level of Dhamma strength, correct understanding and

⁸⁷ That is to say, clearly investigated and comprehended each material dhamma separately.



correct comprehension of life and the world differ according to the level of development of the yogi. This is the nature of the Dhamma.

Results cannot be obtained merely by hearing some Dhamma. They can be realized only by correct practice, abiding by the Dhamma and realizing it through direct experience. We have looked at the body through the lens of ignorance, distorted by delusion, for a long time. Our understanding of the body is incorrect. We attend to the body, decorate the body and try to satisfy it in various ways, acting in unwholesome ways in the process. This results in accumulating more and more unwholesome kamma that heaps on top of the sufferings we presently have to experience. If, on the other hand, we turn to the Dhamma and meditate on materiality, we will perceive the reality of the body with proper knowledge. Instead of gathering more defilements, we will try to abandon ownership of the body altogether.

II. Discernment of Mentality

What we call a ‘being’ in the conventional sense is composed of body and mind. The term ‘mentality’ is used to refer to all sorts of psychological experiences, for example: thoughts, bare awareness and emotional charge. Because of the detailed analysis involved, the terms ‘mentality’, ‘mental factors’ and ‘consciousness’ are used in a technical way to describe what is normally just called ‘mind’. Consciousness is that which recognizes sense impressions and cognizes the mental factors that give the character to a thought⁸⁸. A being is nothing other than a stream of changing materiality and mentality, not only in the human realm but in the celestial and lower realms as well⁸⁹. Aside from that, there is nothing else. In addition to

⁸⁸ An example of a mental factor would be anger. In the case of an angry mind, ‘consciousness’ would be the bare awareness, and ‘anger’ would be one of a number of mental factors that define the nature of that particular experience. There are 52 in total.

⁸⁹ Two exceptional cases are: certain classes of beings that are exclusively mental, and the non-percipient beings that have materiality as a base, but have no mental experience throughout their lives.



materiality, understanding the true nature of mental phenomena is the second area of knowledge that is necessary for vipassanā meditation. The reason is that two of the fundamental realities⁹⁰ of the world are consciousness and mental factors. Knowing these fundamental realities is the base for higher knowledges, so we must comprehend mentality correctly.

Discerning mentality involves analysing the individual mental factors that exist in wholesome and unwholesome thoughts. Thoughts that arise based on each of the six sense doors are separately identified and investigated in detail, as is the meditative experience of jhāna. Completing this detailed identification and investigation of mentality is referred to as ‘the knowledge of delineating mentality’.

30th. Commenced discernment of mentality. Completed discernment of mentality today.

Day 12—The five sitting meditations were completed very satisfactorily. Performed and completed discernment of mentality on all fine-material jhānas, recollection of the Buddha, jhānas of ten repulsive corpses, recollection of death and the eight attainments of blue colour kasīṇa.

2:15—Sitting meditation. Attained jhānas of mindfulness of breathing, white colour, lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, skeleton, ten corpses and discerned the associated mentalities for each. 4:40 pm—Walking. Recollection of the qualities of the Buddha.

5:20—Sitting meditation. Entered jhāna from mindfulness of breathing, lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity pervading the ten directions and discerned the associated mentalities.

⁹⁰ Vipassanā meditation is done exclusively on fundamental realities, as opposed to concepts.



After inspecting and comprehending material phenomena and then mental phenomena separately, that is to say after delineating materiality and delineating mentality, the two are to be investigated and comprehended together. This is called ‘delineation of mentality-materiality’, or ‘delineation of material and the immaterial’⁹¹. Materialities and mentalities are investigated and comprehended one by one in a process referred to as ‘analysis of material and the immaterial’⁹²; as it is developed a very wide knowledge is acquired.

5:15—Sitting meditation. Looked at mentality-materiality as delineation of material and the immaterial. Of particular note, strong concentration was achieved.

31st—Received permission to perform delineation of material and the immaterial and analysis of material and the immaterial. Completed all these extremely well today.

Day 15—All five sitting meditations were completed. Finished the delineation of the immaterial for all other materialities⁹³, such as heart-base materiality, wholesome-group cognitive processes, all the unwholesome-group cognitive processes for all six doors, then completed the delineation of mentality-materiality regarding external mentality-materiality. The mind became deeply concentrated when delineating internal and external mentality-materiality of the infinite worlds, ten directions, everywhere.

2:20—Sitting meditation. Internal and external and delineation of material and the immaterial, as well as their analyses were done well.

⁹¹ In this case immaterial refers to the mind, as opposed to matter.

⁹² The purpose of this analysis is to determine that there is no unchanging person, being, or soul. Only a flux of materiality and mentality exist on the ultimate level.

⁹³ Meaning that those kinds of material were first taken as objects of meditation, and then the mentalities that arose at the time of taking them as objects were analysed.



It is clear that our Mahāthera has completed all of the meditation objects easily. A normal mind does not have a proper understanding of mind and body. This is ignorance, also referred to as delusion. The Buddha taught these invaluable meditation objects for the purpose of seeing these mentalities and materialities distinctly, to dispel delusion and to understand things as they truly are. Most Venerable Sayadaw Āciṇṇa of Myanmar has described the method clearly, as it is given in the Tipiṭaka. Our Mahāthera meditated according to this method.

When practicing this meditation, actual mentalities and materialities are investigated using the light of concentration as the base. When what is referred to as ‘body and mind’ by convention is investigated deeply, knowledge is gained of the mentalities and materialities as they truly exist. That knowledge is the knowledge of delineating mentality and materiality.

Beings commit many unwholesome acts and collect much evil, unwholesome kamma, because they do not know this actual situation and thereby fall into misery. If we can acquire this valuable knowledge in this life, on that day we will realize what a serious mistake we make by imagining concepts such as ‘I’, ‘me’ and ‘my’ when there is only a series of mentalities and materialities arising and passing. We will then try to get away from that habit. We become disenchanted with that foolish mindset. We detest it, become detached from it and flee from it. If we develop this mentality-materiality meditation and gain at least some level of knowledge and comprehension, it is of great help for realizing Nibbāna. Knowledge of true nature of mentality-materiality is an important milestone on the path to Nibbāna.

It is clear that such knowledge of Dhamma and such knowledge of meditation contributed greatly to the uniqueness and venerable nature of our Mahāthera, helping him to brighten the Saṅgha of bhikkhus and to dispense the Dhamma in such a profound way as to captivate the minds of beings all over the world.



We too should endeavour to tread that path, to develop such Dhamma knowledge, to gain an understanding of the true nature of things and of life by practicing and acquiring skill in this meditation method.

50. Mahāthera's Mindfulness

Wholesome as well as unwholesome states develop in the mind and they may also remain weak in the mind. Out of the states that arise or become active, continuance and growth of some states are beneficial, while there are others that should be removed and uprooted. There are also mental states that are better held at a certain level of activity, without weakening or strengthening them, in order to derive greater success on the Dhamma path. Mindfulness is the main force necessary to maintain the mental states at the optimum level. Mindfulness must be maintained all the time, every moment, whatever activity we are engaged in. The mental factor of mindfulness is of great help to avoid the mistakes, omissions and unwholesome acts that occur when there is no presence of mind.

Even though they could not see the excellent qualities within him, many were amazed by the mindfulness of our Venerable Mahāthera and seeing merely that much their confidence in Triple Gem was strengthened. They also expressed various reflections on his mindfulness. *“[I] have not seen anyone as mindful as this great Venerable Thera. He must be the last person in this Sāsana with such mindfulness. We may not be able to see another person with such mindfulness.”* These remarks, made by a foreign bhikkhu upon seeing our Mahāthera engaged in walking meditation in Myanmar, are one such example.

Our Mahāthera was keen to practice mindfulness from an early age. Unbroken mindfulness cannot be cultivated in a day. At the beginning, it must be developed gradually, with strong determination and full commitment, without interruption, in order to make it a habit. Even the mindfulness of our Mahāthera that we speak about now was



developed over a period of time. He meditated with great zeal, practiced for a long time, right from the early days of his ordination.

At the time our Venerable Mahāthera was staying in Nāthagāṇe Monastery as a novice, he met a big cobra on the path while he was walking to his kuṭi. Mahāthera walked slowly backwards in order to let the cobra move away from the path, while maintaining mindfulness all the time with the thought: *going backwards, going backwards*. As he was taking steps backwards, he fell down. He kept up his mindfulness even while falling, thinking: *falling, falling*. Mahāthera maintained such a level of mindfulness from the time he started developing it.

He conducted his life according to a timetable in order to improve mindfulness. He recorded his activities daily. He had to recite Tipiṭaka lessons to his teacher. He recited large parts of the Tipiṭaka each day, even though he studied the books for only one hour. Mahāthera had unbelievable power of recall. The factor which contributed to such powerful recall was mindfulness in daily activities.

Strong mindfulness catches whatever object is a potential cause of defilements as soon as it enters the mind. This prevents the arising of defilements, allowing the mind to be directed towards a wholesome object. It is possible to maintain mindfulness each moment and keep the mind all the time occupied with wholesome thoughts, moving continually along the path to Nibbāna. The work schedule of Mahāthera allowed him to keep his mind on wholesome objects without lapse. This was possible because of his extensive practice of mindfulness. In addition to setting an example, our Mahāthera also advised: *"I spend my time on this path of Dhamma practice without gaps. These venerables too must exert effort to use their time without gaps."*

There is another incident that our Mahāthera has spoken about. On one occasion he did not allow even a single unwholesome object enter his mind for an entire rains retreat. That is the power of the Dhamma, the power that comes from practicing Dhamma. Venerable



Mahāthera demonstrated the value of the Dhamma — of practicing the Dhamma — by his own example. Even though there are many special incidents such as this, he would only rarely speak about them and solely to encourage us to improve our application of mindfulness.

Mahāthera himself has stated that memory improves through mindfulness. It is his actual experience. We too can remember well events that occurred while we were mindful. On the other hand, we do not remember much of the times we were not attentive. We can understand further the level of mindfulness of Mahāthera by looking at his memory regarding things that are public knowledge. With regard to his life, Mahāthera could remember everything from infancy, including dates and times, names of people and places. Our Mahāthera has stated on several occasions, *“I can remember the entire time that has elapsed in my life as if it were today. I can recall all of that.”*

What best demonstrates his power of recall is his Dhamma knowledge. Imagine the kind of extraordinary memory capacity that is required to memorize the voluminous Tipiṭaka, the ‘Visuddhimagga’ and numerous other books.

There are some particular abilities that demonstrate his unusual memory. When explaining something from the Tipiṭaka, he could say in which book and what page it could be found in the Pāli commentaries.

One bhikkhu recounts one of his experiences. On one occasion he went to Mahāthera and inquired about some Dhamma matter. Mahāthera explained it in detail and gave the relevant book and page of Pāli commentaries where these points were addressed. *“The suspicion arose that our Mahāthera was using special psychic powers to say these things,”* the Bhikkhu said.

Whether they be activities related to the Sāsana, various meritorious events or names and places that were relevant to his daily activities, Mahāthera was able to recall them to the day. That is because our Mahāthera practiced and applied mindfulness all the time.



As a result, what transpired each moment in his work and other activities he engaged in was retained in memory.

We forget some things. We say, “I am getting old. I cannot remember those things.” But this did not happen to Mahāthera’s mindfulness or to his memory. He had strong mindfulness until the last moment. His memory was similar. Each year he would recall important events. Here are a few examples:

“I arrived in the monastery for ordination on Saturday 27th October 1956.”

“[I] ordained on Wednesday, 27th March 1957.”

“Higher ordination was on Wednesday 15th July 1959.”

“It is 40 years today from my arrival. In terms of months, it is 480. As weeks 2085. As days it is 14 600.”

“As an upāsaka, 150 days. Novice 850. Time of higher ordination, 1000 days from ordination. It is 13,600 days from higher ordination now.”

“The Buddha’s qualities [have been recited] 55,500,000 times.”

Even when he was in Myanmar he would recollect important days, arrange offerings to the Saṅgha and perform other special meritorious activities. His notes on one such day are given above.

One day our Mahāthera had fallen ill suddenly and lost consciousness while traveling to Nimalawa Monastery. On the way from there to Tissamahārāma Hospital Mahāthera regained consciousness and at just that moment he said: *“This is not the road to Nimalawa.”* He had strong mindfulness even at times when he was seriously ill.

51. Mindfulness in the Final Moments

His illnesses worsened and our Mahāthera was admitted to the hospital. He maintained full mindfulness there too and looked upon everything



with equanimity and understanding. In the final stages he possessed presence of mind and addressed the disciples who were at the hospital bed: *"There is no purpose living like this. I intend to give up this body."*

Our Mahāthera had many special qualities in his valuable life. He developed the Dhamma, used and made much of the Dhamma. Among these qualities, if there were a single one that supported all the others, one that was maintained all the time, continuously, without gaps, in all places, maintained as prime among them, then it must be mindfulness.

The mindful life of Mahāthera is indeed a great example for everyone. A mind to which mindfulness has been introduced, a mind that has incorporated mindfulness, established, developed and used mindfulness continuously, will definitely remain on the path to Nibbāna. It keeps the person firmly on that path. It is the quality that is most important for the life of a bhikkhu or layman to catch unwholesome thoughts, to spot them and reduce them and to identify and increase the wholesome. We must treat it as the most important, most useful, most valuable thing in life.

52. The Reliable Path amid the Unreliable

The universe is made up of two inseparable sets of forces, one visible and the other invisible. We could refer to them as animate and inanimate. The earth, sun, moon and stars are visible objects. They exist together with invisible forces, or energies. They cannot exist without such invisible forces. Even the earth spins and in accord with invisible energy. In the same way, the life of an animal or man exists with two such sets of forces. When a new force meets with these factors, a transformation occurs.

As an example, when a new force enters the body of a living being, that body undergoes a transformation. Similarly, if a form of energy or force is introduced to the mind, that mind too transforms. These are called 'causes'. The body changes if it is fed when it needs food. It becomes an energetic body. When the body lacks food, it weakens. It becomes strong again when it is fed. Similarly, when



some energy enters the mind, it becomes strong. Without energy it becomes weak. It becomes strong again when it is given energy. What we need to understand is this process of cause and effect, the fact that phenomena are dependently arisen.


Both the visible and the invisible become strong or weak depending upon various conditions. Dependent origination attempts to understand these conditions, at the level of conceptual as well as ultimate reality. For example, from the perspective of ultimate reality, even the tiniest material particles are subject to this fundamental rule of cause and effect. When a minute particle receives energy from another particle, it becomes strong. When it does not receive any energy, it becomes weak. This law also applies to the shortest mental process. When a single moment of consciousness receives energy from another moment of consciousness it becomes strong. In the absence of such a new mind-moment, the earlier mind-moment becomes weak. All phenomena in the universe are changing according to causes in the same way. The investigation of dependent origination is the way to comprehend this law.

Mahāthera had acquired a clear understanding of mentality and materiality. He had clear knowledge that life, a journey in saṃsāra, is a merely a whirlpool of mentalities and materialities.

Meditation is practiced to discern dependent origination according to the ‘aggregates method’ and the ‘first method’ in order to discover the causes underlying these mentalities and materialities and what sorts of effects arise from various causes. Cause and effect relationships are comprehended by discerning dependent origination over three time periods: past, present and future. The meditator thereby acquires ‘purification by overcoming doubt’. It is necessary to see at least a few past and future lives through meditation in order to clearly comprehend these causes and effects.

I. Investigation of the Saṃsāric Life-Continuum

The Great Bodhisatta realized the truth of saṃsāra at the foot of the Bodhi tree. While meditating to attain perfect enlightenment he



acquired knowledge of the succession of past lives of beings and then gained an understanding of the relationship between the end of one life and the beginning of the next. Finally, by understanding the role of volitional formations in dependent origination he attained perfect self-awakening.

Most Venerable Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa of Myanmar elucidates the method of exploring past lives to meditating yogis and also explains how to use that knowledge to practice vipassanā based on the method of the Great Bodhisatta. It is necessary to look at past, present and future lives through the lens of vipassanā meditation. First, yogis must examine their past lives.

II. Investigation of Past Lives

The yogi proceeds step by step, exploring the series of mentalities and materialities that have arisen in his or her life, starting from the present moment and discerning backwards, all the way to the beginning of the yogi's present life. When looking backwards, the yogi discerns the first moment of consciousness of one life⁹⁴ and the last moment of consciousness of the previous life⁹⁵. In the same way, the yogi investigates a few past lives. Past lives can be looked at in the sequence they arose, or without following their chronological order. Yogis also investigate their meditation experiences in past lives and gain an understanding of relationships between their past lives and the present life. They thus overcome any doubts they have regarding past lives. It can be seen from his notes that our Mahāthēra had the good fortune to gather many unusual and valuable experiences by practicing this way.

⁹⁴ Paṭisandhi citta.

⁹⁵ Cuti citta.



III. Future Lives in Saṃsāra and the End of Mentality-Materiality

Attention is similarly directed to the future. The yogi must also learn about the future according to dependent origination. Doubts about the future are thereby eliminated. It is possible to see the end of mentality-materiality by exploring the mentality-materiality that will arise in the future. The end of mentality-materiality, the realization of Nibbāna, may occur after a few lives or it could be very far away. The yogi may also learn when and in what way mentality-materiality will be extinguished—in what way Nibbāna will be realized. He thus improves his understanding of dependent origination by exploring the wandering of mentality-materiality in saṃsāra through insight into the cause and effect relationships over that period. It is for this purpose that past and future lives are explored.

Our Most Venerable Mahāthera also investigated his past and future lives, in great detail, according to this meditation method. He recorded his miraculous journey through saṃsāra to Buddhahood in a set of notes. Below are the records of what he discerned.

IV. Dependent Origination: Past Lives

7:05—*Sitting meditation. Looked at material-immaterial and internal-external cuti-paṭisandhi*⁹⁶. Saw paṭisandhi very clearly. Paṭisandhi bhavaṅga⁹⁷ mental object was the great Ruwanweli stupa. In the previous life [I] was a deva who protected the pagoda. Name Maitrī. Before that a hermit. Birth in this life is three-rooted and associated with happiness.

2:15—*Sitting meditation. Investigated all past and present causes of paṭisandhi clinging-aggregates of this life, according to the laws of causation.*

⁹⁶ Death and rebirth-linking mind moments.

⁹⁷ Life-continuum consciousness.



9:30—Advice. (Explore mentality-materiality backwards into the past, step by step, then cuti-paṭisandhi and previous lives according to cuti-paṭisandhi and do vipassanā meditation on dependent origination and wholesome and unwholesome cognitive processes of those lives.)

12:45—Sitting meditation. After all attainments of lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, then according to mentality-materiality discerned the paṭisandhi citta—previous life as a deva, before that as a brahma, before that life of a forest hermit in India, through vipassanā meditation. 1:30—Walking. Recollection of the qualities of the Buddha.

7:00—Sitting meditation, mindfulness of breathing, four jhānas and explored previous three lives. Deva, brahma, rāja rishi⁹⁸ of Makhādeva clan, developed four sublime abodes and the perception of impermanence.

5:10—Sitting meditation, mindfulness of breathing, sublime abodes, vipassanā of mentality-materiality. Looking at the sequence of previous lives. Saw deva, brahma, rāja rishi, deva, ordination in the Sāsana of Kassapa Sammāsambuddha and saw that Tripiṭaka Dhamma, jhāna, vipassanā had been developed up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations.

7:00—Sitting meditation. After exploring past lives in sequence, practiced dependent origination vipassanā meditation by dividing, such as into aggregates, of life in which [I] was ordained in the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha.

⁹⁸ A king who renounces the world to become a meditative ascetic.



Day 16. It is Binara full moon day. Early morning in sitting meditation, while practicing vipassanā, was able to see 14 lives up to the life in the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha, saw clearly a saṃsāric journey with the assurance of certainty of Buddhahood from the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha. At that time impermanence became the object, respiration stopped and I stayed for a long time in deep concentration.







V. Dependent Origination: Future Lives

9:30—Advice. (Practice determining⁹⁹ and look at maraṇa-saññā¹⁰⁰, cuti and future paṭisandhi. Look at ignorance and other cause-effect relationships through vipassanā.)

5:15—Sitting meditation. Mindfulness of breathing, divine abodes, mentality-materiality vipassanā and future cuti-paṭisandhi. Using white kasaṇa first jhāna, birth in Mahā Brahma sphere, vipassanā investigation of ignorance and other cause-effect relationships.

9:30—Advice. (Practice vipassanā on mentality-materiality of future lives in sequence up to final life in saṃsāra.)

5:15—Sitting meditation; mindfulness of breathing, divine abodes, mentality-materiality vipassanā of sequence of future lives. Through this, saw ordination in Sāsana of Metteyya Sammāsambuddha and at the end of future 1800 lives, attainment of Sammāsambuddha.

During sitting meditation that morning, while practicing vipassanā on all future lives through dependent origination, with the three characteristics, saw the distant future attainment of Sammāsambuddha in an era where the lifespan is 100,000 years and the extinction of ignorance and other causes; a state of deep concentration resulted.

VI. An Explanation: Past Lives

Investigating past lives while practicing dependent origination, the object of the last thought in Mahāthera's previous life was the great Ruwanweli stupa. As a result of that wholesome object, he was born

⁹⁹ Considering mentality-materiality as non-self.

¹⁰⁰ The sign of death.



in present life with a three-rooted patisandhi associated with happiness. Ruwanweli stupa became the particular object perhaps because he had been overseeing that sacred site as a protective deva named ‘Maitri’ in his previous life.

He was born in a Brahma realm before that life.

Previous to that Brahma life, he had been in India as a rāja rishi of the Makhādeva clan. He had practiced the four sublime abodes and the perception of impermanence in that life as an ascetic.

Before that third past life as a rishi, his fourth past life was again a deva life.

Earlier than that, he had been an ordained bhikkhu in the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha and had developed the noble qualities of a Bhikkhu.

That bhikkhu life was also a worthy ordained life similar to his present life. He had learned and memorized the Tipiṭaka and also developed meditation up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations. This demonstrates that from a distant point in the journey of saṃsāra, Mahāthera had the determined wish, the aspiration, to become a Sammāsambuddha.

Mahāthera saw 14 lives following that life as a bhikkhu in the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha during this investigation. Our Mahāthera’s wondrous journey through saṃsāra is evident from this because he scanned the past going backwards from life to life. He had developed his pāramī ardently in the period from one Buddhasāsana to next Buddhasāsana, for 14 lives.

Our Mahāthera also saw that this part of his the wondrous journey in saṃsāra, with the assurance of certainty of attaining Sammāsambuddha, began from the time he received such assurance at the feet of Dīpaṅkara Buddha, after accumulating the necessary pāramī.

Accordingly, we can see that our Venerable Mahāthera possessed sufficient pāramī at the time of the omniscient Dīpaṅkara Buddha to



have realized Nibbāna, if he had so wished, by listening to a stanza of four lines. Further¹⁰¹:

1. He had acquired the eight jhāna attainments and the five mundane psychic powers by that time.
2. He had fulfilled the eight factors.
3. He possessed noble wishes connected to eight factors.
4. He possessed the four powers to receive the ‘assurance of certainty’.
5. He possessed the four ‘marvellous factors’.
6. He possessed the four ‘grounds of Buddhahood’.
7. He had the ten intentions related to pāramī.
8. He had the six intentions required for fulfilling pāramī.

Mahāthera’s notes show that these qualities of a great Bodhisatta had taken root within the continuum of mentality-materiality journeying through saṃsāra at the time he saw the Most Noble Sammāsambuddha Dīpaṅkara. Mahāthera lived his present life as such a venerable Bodhisatta, developing meditations to their zenith and leading a life of enormous merit.

He deeply explored cause and effect relationships by separating out factors such as the aggregates of each life, discerning his past lives in sequence. The special strength of Mahāthera can be seen from the description of past lives given after investigating them step by step as merely mentality-materiality. The strength that had been developed numerous times previously in saṃsāra would have supported his extraordinary abilities in the present life. He also practiced vipassanā while exploring causes and effects.

¹⁰¹ These qualities are explained in detail in ‘Pāramitā Prakaraṇaya’, Ven. Rerukāṇe Candavimala (Sinhala edition).



VII. An Explanation: Future Lives

Our Mahāthera practiced material and immaterial jhāna exceptionally well. The last consciousness of his present life will be conditioned by his experience of the first jhāna of white kasīna. As a result of that first jhāna, he will be reborn in the Mahā Brahma realm¹⁰².

Upon discerning the future and investigating sequentially from one life to the next up to the time of the Sāsana of Sammāsambuddha Metteya, he saw that at that time he would live the fortunate life of a bhikkhu in that Sāsana.

By discerning this way all the way to the future time that the stream of mentality-materiality will be extinguished, he saw that this journey of pāramī will end after 1800 future lives, when the life span of humans is a 100,000 years and that he will attain Sammāsambodhi¹⁰³.

He experienced a powerful state of samādhi upon discerning the future extinction of all kilesas in his meditation.

This is the most marvellous event in the whole universe. There is no other more wondrous event. We had learned of the future Sammāsambuddha Metteya from the ‘Anāgatawaṃsa’. It is true there will be more Sammāsambuddhas further into the future. But if we learn today of a description given by a Noble Bodhisatta himself, then isn’t this the first such biography of such a one?

Mahāthera discovered these through the righteous path, by meditating ardently, meditating repeatedly. He discerned cause and effect relationships, seeing all past and future lives clearly. It was done by means of vipassanā meditation. He discerned and could see these because of the merit acquired by him throughout saṃsāra and the immense strength of the thirty pāramī he had amassed.

¹⁰² Beings reborn in this realm have developed first jhāna to the highest extent.

¹⁰³ Meaning he will attain his goal of becoming a fully Self-Awakened Buddha.



This is the truth of the Dhamma. Even Sammāsambuddhas uphold the True Dhamma as their teacher. Dhamma is, therefore, the salvation of everyone. May all beings put into practice the wealth of Dhamma gathered from associating with a Bodhisatta such as Mahāthera until they attain liberation! May they resolve firmly to develop without break and continue on that path until their aspirations are achieved! May these biographical notes of Mahāthera help everyone to fulfil his or her noble wishes!!

53. Meditation in the Early Stages

Our Mahāthera followed the worthy path of meditation practice throughout his life. He maintained an unbroken and powerful inclination towards and liking for meditation that originated even before he ordained. He engaged in it continuously. He has recorded the results he obtained at that early stage in this way:

"A state of deep samādhi resulted from developing mindfulness of breathing continuously for two months. Concentration arose during walking and during sitting meditation. Mahasi meditation was practiced thereafter. That too gave rise to deep samādhi. Sometimes the feeling that body existed disappeared and the mind, like a tiny speck of water, rose up and became as fine as if it had gone to end of the universe."

He made this ability, acquired before ordination, stronger day by day. He developed great benefits from meditation through continuous practice.

Mahāthera had extensive meditative experience in both samatha and vipassanā before practicing the Pa Auk meditation method. One day a bhikkhu reported his progress in meditation: *"Bhante, I look upon objects as material phenomena. Later, when I dissolve their elements into emptiness, I feel lightness in the mind."*



"Well that's good. I do something more. I look at material phenomena and then at the mind and its mental factors. Attend to mental phenomena, those are the mental factors in that object and perform vipassanā. Then those objects become empty," was Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera's reply. He advised the bhikkhu to follow the vipassanā method he himself used in order to develop vipassanā more fully.



These facts, along with his daily conduct, demonstrate that Mahāthera developed samatha and vipassanā meditation from an early stage and conducted his life along the meditation path.

54. Analysis of Volitional Formations

All volitional formations, mentality-materiality and causes and effects are comprehended precisely by repeated analysis according to their characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause in the 'characteristic-function' meditation.



2:25—*Sitting meditation. Vipassanā meditation on all six sense-base materialities, investigating characteristic, function and other factors, both internal and external.*

Early morning, 3:00, awoke. Sitting meditation—vipassanā meditation according to characteristic, function and other factors of wholesome mental processes at the five doors (internal and external).

21st, Friday. All five sessions completed. Investigated characteristic and other properties of internal and external materiality and all wholesome mental factors.

22nd, Saturday. All five sessions completed successfully. All consciousnesses and wholesome and unwholesome mental factors, all factors of dependent origination, were explored by studying characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause.

23rd, Sunday. Five sessions completed satisfactorily. Completed investigation of characteristic, function and other factors.

Venerable Mahāthera investigated characteristic, function and other factors of all internal and external materiality, wholesome and unwholesome mentalities, jhāna mental factors and factors of dependent origination completely. Our Mahāthera also applied vipassanā while rapidly investigating these phenomena, because he had the skill gained from previous extensive practice.

The yogi must possess a clear and incisive comprehension that easily understands all the relevant consciousnesses, concomitant mental factors, materialities, factors of dependent origination and other relevant phenomena. Such understanding develops by analysing and ingraining these phenomena in the mind according to the characteristic and other factors distinct to each of them. Not only that, the sense of



compactness regarding those mentality-materialities, causes, effects and other phenomena disappears when they are comprehended by analysis according to the four properties. The yogi then realizes that what is called ‘earth’ is only this, or what is called ‘water’ is only this, or what is called ‘contact’ is only this, or what is called ‘feeling’ is only this. There is nothing more to those material elements, nothing more to those mentalities; the yogi thus gains understanding of conditioned formations. In this way the yogi understands through direct knowledge that aside from mentality-materiality and causes-effects there is no ‘being’. The yogi further develops vipassanā knowledges by applying vipassanā to mentality-materiality and causes-effects.

This path to Nibbāna is available to us even today. There is no other way than to follow it, follow it repeatedly.

55. Vipassanā in 40 Ways

In this vipassanā technique impermanence, suffering and non-self are divided into 40 sub-characteristics.

07th—Required to apply each of 40 vipassanā characteristics and investigate: all rūpa kalāpas of four kinds of origination¹⁰⁴, 42 parts of the body and associated rūpa kalāpas, all mental phenomena from paṭisandhi mentality-materiality to cuti, wholesome and unwholesome mind-door and five-door cognitive processes, jhāna mental factors according to all jhāna cognitive processes.

30th, Sunday—All five sitting sessions completed very successfully. Strong concentration arose when five aggregates were investigated one by one in terms of the three characteristics through vipassanā in 40 ways.

¹⁰⁴ Kamma, temperature, mind, and nutriment.



1st, Monday—In all five sessions, investigated all mentality-materiality, the aggregates, past, future, present, internal, external, according to vipassanā in 40 ways.

7:15—Sitting meditation. Past, present, future five aggregates of clinging according to vipassanā in 40 ways.

The three universal characteristics, impermanence, suffering and non-self, must be well ingrained in the mind and well understood in order to meditate properly on the three characteristics. The results and benefits of this technique are proportional to the yogi's knowledge of them. Meditation develops properly only if there is great understanding and knowledge. It is total knowledge and understanding of the characteristics of a phenomenon at a given moment that is referred to as realization of Nibbāna. The meditation method of vipassanā in 40 ways strongly ingrains the three characteristics—characteristics that must be extensively practiced on the path to Nibbāna—through various examples, various detailed characteristics, various natures and different ways in which the three can occur.

The total of 40 breaks down to ten aspects of impermanence (having the nature to arise and pass away, having the nature to change part by part, having the nature to change when the supporting conditions change, etc.), 25 aspects of suffering (being like a diseases, being subject to thieves and criminals, being subject to decay, etc.) and five aspects of non-self (not being under volitional control, being empty, etc.) Investigation of the three universal characteristics in 40 ways gives a wide understanding and profound knowledge. The yogi must investigate the three characteristics in each of these 40 ways. When each of 40 ways is applied by means of vipassanā to all mentalities-materialities and causes and effects, strong concentration ensues and knowledge of each of the 40 aspects of the objects investigated also deepens.



Venerable Mahāthera has stated that he practiced vipassanā in 40 ways very well and that strong concentration was experienced in the process.

56. Venerable Mahāthera's Daily Routine

A sound daily routine is a principal factor that contributes to advancement, development and success in worldly and spiritual life. To follow such a routine means to conduct one's life according to an appropriate plan and a fixed timetable. Venerable Bodhisattas who are fulfilling their pāramī in order to attain Sammāsambodhi make it a habit to recollect their pāramī every day. They reflect on to what extent they have fulfilled those pāramī on that particular day and keep themselves entirely devoted to tasks necessary to realizing their noble aspiration, not wasting a single moment. This is the way Bodhisattas make use of their time.

Sammāsambuddhas also conduct their invaluable duties according to a daily routine. Our Gotama Buddha, out of compassion towards his disciples, taught how to carry out daily tasks correctly in order to live a meaningful life. This is described in suttas such as 'Sāmaññaphala Sutta'¹⁰⁵. Śrī Kalyāṇi Yogāśrama Saṁsthā also requires that yogis follow a fully occupied daily routine. It has been expressly set down in its constitution. Another contributing factor to a successful life is a diary. Maintaining a record of daily activities improves mindfulness and also helps verify that the time of each day is used productively.

Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera conducted his life correctly and methodically from childhood in a similar way to his worthy parents and elders. Later, after arriving in the monastery, during his period as a lay-renunciant¹⁰⁶, Mahāthera followed a daily

¹⁰⁵ Dīgha Nikāya II.

¹⁰⁶ Lay-renunciants wear clothes dyed a dull mud colour, observe ten precepts, learn the part of the Dhamma-Vinaya necessary for a novice, and are trained to fulfill various monastery duties.



schedule, trained under Venerable Vigoda Bodhirakkhita Mahāthera and made use of all his time constructively. That daily schedule is shown below.

“Early morning, 3:50—Awoke and [washed] up. 4:00 until 5:00—Practicing sitting posture and meditation. 5:00 until 6:00—Veneration of the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha, parittas followed by 15-minutes meditation in lotus posture to start the day. 6:00 to 7:00—Attended to monastic duties and after morning meal was received, made offerings to the Buddha, then took the morning meal and attended to duties. 8:00 until 9:00—Studied books and 9:00, bathing. 10:00—Alms round. 11:00—Returned to kuṭi, made offerings to the Buddha, midday meal, attended to duties. 12:00—Veneration of the Buddha, then paritta and 15-minutes of meditation in lotus posture. After that we delivered the Dhamma talk that was delivered by Venerable Thera at the time of alms round, precisely the same way. Thereafter warmed mats, pillows and māgal atirili¹⁰⁷ in the sun and finished duties relating to all three kuṭis and 1:00 until 4:00—Reading books. Memorized one lesson from each of the two books ‘Pāli Paṭhamam Jariya’ and ‘Pāli Bhāṣhāvataranaya’ daily.

“On some afternoons asked the meaning of ‘Catu Bhānavāra’ from Retired Principal Mrs. Hemalata Karuṇaratna (aunt of the Venerable Thera from Doranegoda). 4:00 until 5:00—Walking meditation. 5:00 until 6:00—Monastic duties. 6:00 until 7:00—Offerings, vandanā and paritta. 15 minutes sitting meditation. Increased time of lotus posture by five minutes each week. 7:00 until 8:00—Practiced mindfulness of breathing meditation in lotus posture. Night 8:00 to about 9:00—Studying and rest. Maintaining the diary was also done during this time.”

Venerable Mahāthera has recorded that his inner life was illuminated by the knowledge and the worthy practice of the Buddha’s Dhamma that he developed in the course of following a strict daily

¹⁰⁷ Mats made of wide leaves.



schedule, using his time gainfully during his entire period as a lay-renunciant under the spiritual friendship of his noble teacher. Regarding the value of this routine, Mahāthera made this note:

"Sometimes awareness of the body [disappeared] and the mind [became] subtle as a droplet of water, seeming to rise up to the end of the solar system. The continuous basic training of those four months according to that schedule was unforgettable and became a solid foundation, like a basis for success in Dhamma."

Our Mahāthera once stated that, when carrying out daily activities strictly according to a schedule such as this, there was no time even to think of, let alone attend to, any extraneous matter that may come up. A proper daily schedule, an appropriate timetable, greatly helps to build a meaningful life, one devoid of extraneous activities.

Mahāthera continued this practice as a bhikkhu, under worthy teachers, keeping a strict schedule so that his valuable time was utilised fully.

"Early morning 3:50—awoke. Sitting meditation. 5:30—Veneration of the Buddha, paritta, meditation. 6:15—Monastic duties. 7:00—Morning meal. 8:00—Studies. 10:00—Alms round, bathe. 11:00—Midday meal and duties. 12:00—Midday vandanā, paritta. 1:00 until 5:00—Learning the meanings of Pāli Tipiṭaka books, giving lessons to the worthy teacher¹⁰⁸, reading books, writing and other studies. 5:00—Monastic duties. 6:00—Evening veneration of the Buddha, paritta, meditation, Dhamma talk. 7:30 until 9:30—Sitting meditation in kuṭi itself. 10:00—retire. (Developed recollection of the qualities of the Buddha completely, from memory, according to the Sinhala translation of the 'Visuddhimagga' during two hours of the night)."

The next stage was Venerable Mahāthera's period of teaching Dhamma and meditation. That time, too, he had a strict timetable in order to make full use of his time for the benefit of the Sāsana.

¹⁰⁸ Meaning the student recites from memory what has been learnt to the teacher.



"Wake up at 3:30, early morning. Bathing. 4:00—Sitting meditation. 5:00—Veneration of the Buddha, paritta, lovingkindness meditation. 6:00—Duties. 7:00—Morning meal and duties. 8:00—Memorizing and giving lessons to the worthy teacher. 9:30—Alms round. 11:00—Midday meal. 12:00—Veneration of the Buddha, paritta. 12:30—Learning the meanings of Pāli Tipiṭaka books. 1:00—Teaching work. 5:00—Duties. 6:00— Veneration of the Buddha, paritta, meditation (recollection of the qualities of the Buddha), scheduled Dhamma talk, offerings to the Buddha. 7:30—Took gilānpasa. 8:00—Meditation, chanting, reflection on the four requisites. 10:00—Retire."

"After higher ordination, as a new monk I spent more time developing the Mahasi meditation method. Following that, as a monk of middling seniority [I] developed all the samatha practices, excepting the immaterial jhānas. [I] also taught others and developed these further as a Thera and Mahāthera.

"Thirty-eight years after higher ordination, when dwelling at Pa Auk Meditation Centre..."

As recorded by Mahāthera, whether engaged in Sāsana work locally or abroad, in a position of high responsibility or rendering whatever sort of service for others, he always kept to a firm schedule suitable for that period of time. This demonstrates the way he continued the childhood habit of having a daily routine, working strictly according to a timetable and making adjustments to his timetable to suit the current situation.

Mahāthera's daily routine during his stay at Pa Auk Meditation Centre in Myanmar is amazing. Throughout his stay, the entire day was spent in continuous practice. He has written down the timetable for each day. That daily routine is shown below.

"Day 16—Early morning at 3:00 woke up, [washed] up, [chanted] Dhammacakka Sutta. 4:40—Sitting meditation. Mindfulness of



breathing 4¹⁰⁹, fire kasiṇa. 5:00—Duties, writing. 5:30—Morning meal. 6:00—Walking, discussion, notetaking. 6:40—Sitting meditation; mindfulness of breathing, white colour 4; achieved paṭibhāga nimitta in fire kasiṇa. 8:30—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. 9:10—Bathed with warm water. 9:30—Received advice about same fire kasiṇa, that it is possible to get fire kasiṇa nimitta using actual fire seen earlier. 10:00—Writing. 10:30—Midday meal. 11:15—Veneration of the Buddha, rest. 12:20—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. 12:50—Sitting meditation. Mindfulness of breathing 4. White colour 4. 1:30—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha 2:00—Sitting meditation, Mindfulness of breathing 4. White colour 4. Yellow colour 4. Red colour 4. 4:00—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. Completed 54,700,000 repetitions of the “iti’pi so” stanza. 5.10—Sitting meditation, mindfulness of breathing 4. White colour 4. Finished and attained 4 jhāna in fire kasiṇa three times. At end abided in fourth jhāna a few times. 7:00—Duties, notetaking. Took gilanpasa, foot massage, etc. 8:45—Walking, vipassanā, paritta, lovingkindness meditation, etc. 9:30—Retire.”

Venerable Mahāthera set a unique example, carrying out his daily routine from the time he was a lay person to his time as a new bhikkhu, while holding various positions, while shouldering great responsibilities, while rendering various services to others and even when he was ill. He kept to a strict schedule, methodically, heedfully, without wasting time. He gained extensive benefits by continuously conducting his life in such a way and demonstrated the way this contributed to his spiritual achievements.

Conducting daily activities using the correct method, in a proper way, at the required time, is so important, so valuable for a meaningful life. We drift into wrong, unwholesome acts when there isn't any useful work. This happens often. If we have planned and continue to engage in useful wholesome acts, then there won't be time to engage

¹⁰⁹ Meaning he entered the four jhānas for that object.



in such unwholesome deeds. Let us also adopt this valuable habit to make our life good, filled with wholesome work. Let us do it continuously.

සුඛ දුඛයෝ රාහු ආකරයෝ පඤ්ඤා නිදානෝ
 සර නදා ඇඳුනු බද්ධ පරයංකය බැඳු වානී
 ප්‍රාණවර්ණා ආර්ථ ආචරිත ජීව්‍ය සංචාරාදි ගෞ
 කරණීය භේදා දුෂ්ටා කයා ශ්‍රීත් ආරාදනා පරික්ෂා
 දිශාචරණ භේදා භාවිත භාවිත කාමානෙව.
 චිත්ත භේදයන් ඇලවෙයි, තරුණ කාලය
 නොදැන පරාධී ආයෝ භික්ෂුන් දුන්
 භාවිත ආලෝකයන් පණන ප්‍රීතවත් වන්නා
 ඇතිවේ. නොගත පාඩම තවත් වෙළු වෙළු වෙළු.
 ආර්ථය ආකාරයට වැඩවෙයි. ගම්බද ජන
 නිදානෙව. ඇතිවේ 5.00 ට ආදිවේ ජනීය
 වර්ෂාවෙහි තවත් තවත් වෙළු නිදානා
 තවත් තවත් තවත් තවත් ආයෝ භික්ෂු
 නිත්යයන් ආදිවේ කුසලය ආයෝ පණ වන්
 නොදැන නිදාන වග වෙළු නිත්යය ප්‍රාණ ජන
 දුන්වන්ද නොදැන වග වන් තවත් ආදි ආයෝ
 ප්‍රාණවන්ද ආදිවේ තවත්. තවත් ආයෝ
 තවත් තවත් ප්‍රීතයෝ ගත වේ. ගම් බිත්තිය





57. Seven Ways for Mentality-Materiality

I. Seven Ways for Materiality

Defining seven groups of materiality according to certain particular aspects and then practicing vipassanā on the materialities designated in each set is referred to as ‘seven ways for materiality’ vipassanā. Materialities arising in the present life of the yogi are classified as shown below. Vipassanā is to be practiced on each.

1. Materialities from the moment of birth to the moment of death¹¹⁰—throughout the entire life (ādānanikkhepanato).
2. The ceasing of materiality step by step with age (vāyo vuddhatthagāmito).
3. The ceasing of nutriment-produced materiality (āhārato).
4. The ceasing of temperature-produced materiality when it is hot and when it is cold (ututo).
5. The ceasing of kamma-produced materiality (kammato).
6. The ceasing of consciousness-produced materiality (cittato).
7. The ceasing of nature of non-living materiality (dhammatā).

Practicing vipassanā by seeing the materiality that existed at various times and then ceased is called ‘seven ways for materiality’ vipassanā.

1:00—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā on ādānanikkhepanato. 1:30—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. 2:30—Sitting meditation. According to age, practice vipassanā by dividing 100 years into three, ten, 50, 100 stages (vāyo vuddhatthagāmito). 4:00—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. 4:30—Writing. 5:15—Sitting

¹¹⁰ From ‘paṭisandhī citta’ to ‘cuti citta’.



meditation. According to age, vipassanā by dividing 100 years into 200, 400¹¹¹.

02. Tuesday—Sitting meditation, vipassanā was practiced according to seven ways for materiality vipassanā during all five sessions, as ādānanikkhepanato and vāyo vuddhatthagāmito. According to age. Ten years x ten stages, 5 years x 20 stages, 4 x 25, 3 x 33, 2 x 50, 1x 100, also in the three seasons¹¹².

04. Thursday—Vipassanā practiced successfully in all five sessions. After finishing the other materialities in seven ways, performed seven ways for mentality. Finished kalāpato, yamakato, khaṇato and a part of paṭipāṭito.

II. Seven Ways for Mentality

Defining seven groups of mentalities according to certain particular aspects and then practicing vipassanā on the mentalities designated in each set is referred to as ‘seven ways for mentality vipassanā’.

1. Practice seven ways for materiality vipassanā as previously described and then take as object the contact (phasso)¹¹³ and other mentalities that arose and ceased when practicing seven ways for materiality vipassanā, considering them as impermanent, suffering and non-self (kalāpato).
2. Practice seven ways for materiality vipassanā, taking as object the consciousness that investigated materiality in terms of impermanence, suffering and non-self, then practice vipassanā

¹¹¹ Consider one's own lifespan to be a hundred years, divide it into stages of six months and practice Vipassanā on the 200 stages. Divide it into stages of three months and practice vipassanā on the 400 stages.

¹¹² Consider one's own lifespan to be a hundred years, divide it into ten stages of ten years and practice vipassanā on each stage.

¹¹³ Between the mind and its mental factors.



on the consciousness that arose while practicing this second vipassanā stage (yamakato).

3. In the same way, practice vipassanā by taking as object the consciousness that investigated anicca, dukkha and anattā of the previous vipassanā consciousness and continue this way practicing vipassanā on the fourth consciousness by the fifth consciousness (khaṇikato).

4. Continue this way and practice vipassanā all the way to the tenth consciousness taken as object by the eleventh consciousness (paṭipāṭito).

5. Practice vipassanā by investigating as anattā in order to get rid of the wrong view of 'I' that arose during the above vipassanā practice (ditṭhiuggghāṇato).

6. Practice vipassanā by investigating as anicca in the same way as above, in order to remove the conceit that compares one being to another as superior, inferior, or equal (mānasamugghāṇato).

7. Then practice vipassanā investigating as dukkha to get rid of wrong view and conceit. Practice vipassanā for detachment—to get rid of attachment to wrong view and conceit (nikanti-pariyādānato).

Vipassanā is to be practiced in the above seven ways.

"Day 2—Practiced the three characteristics in detail by kalāpato-yamakato methods of seven ways for mentality vipassanā.

Day 3—Practiced the three characteristics by khaṇato in detail and a little of the paṭipāṭito section.

Day 4—Practiced vipassanā by paṭipāṭito in detail.

Day 5—Finished seven ways for mentality completely in the morning¹¹⁴."

¹¹⁴ Finished the three remaining of the seven methods.



It is in this way that materiality is investigated in seven ways and mentality is investigated in seven ways by the power of vipassanā meditation. The yogi endeavours to get rid of wrong view, conceit and craving by practicing vipassanā on mentalities and materialities that arise over the course of a life by grouping them in various ways and meditating repeatedly. Meditating on conditioned formations by separating them into different groups and investigating again and again is a characteristic of the Dhamma. It is useful for the realization of Nibbāna. Not only our Mahāthera, but anyone who pursues the Dhamma path, correctly and with ardent application, will gain very valuable benefits. The level of results can vary. Effort must be continued without attachment even to the benefits that accrue.

“I name Venerable Ariyadhamma Thera as an incomparable bhikkhu who did perfect justice to ‘supaṭipanna’ and the other qualities of the Saṅgha. He was highly knowledgeable, renowned the world over, respected the world over, pursued only the Noble Path to Nibbāna and abided only in it.”

—Venerable Wegama Piyaratana Nāyaka Thera
Great Preceptor
Senior Professor
Sri Lanka Pāli and Buddhist University





58. Repulsiveness Meditation

9:30—Advice. (Meditate according to the three characteristics on mentality-materiality and the five aggregates, for each of the six internal bases, considering three time periods of past, present and future. Develop the 'sign of repulsiveness' by attending to the repulsive aspect of ten corpses, meditate by applying it to your own body, then develop the 'sign of elements'¹¹⁵ and meditate according to the three characteristics. Look at the corpse in terms of elements, then as material generated by temperature and compare it with your own body. Look at the 32 parts of your own body, then of external bodies and practice the three characteristics according to elements. Apply the three characteristics again on ultimate materialities. Consider filthy worms in your own body and external bodies as bad smelling, impure, subject to aging, illness and death and apply the three characteristics to them.)

7:15—Sitting meditation. Practiced vipassanā on internal and external bodies as bad smelling, impure, subject to aging, illness and death. Concentration, joy and tranquillity developed strongly. Saw bodies focused upon with the light as subject to dissolution, existing like heaps of worms; the notion of beings and persons was not there anymore, it had disappeared.

In the Pa Auk meditation method, yogis are directed towards repulsiveness while developing vipassanā. We consider Most Venerable Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa of Myanmar, who has a deep knowledge and understanding of meditation and about yogis, to be the foremost meditation teacher in the world today. This is because of the comprehensiveness of his teaching and his high level of proficiency in meditation.

¹¹⁵ The sense that the body is composed merely of physical elements.



Mahāthera's notes regarding the repulsiveness meditation object that he was given are shown above. He has also shared the experience he had when developing repulsiveness as advised: *"Strong concentration was experienced during meditation on repulsiveness at the end of meditation on the three characteristics."*

Yogis meditate on the repulsiveness of the 32 parts, ten corpses in various states of decay, internally and externally, on living bodies and on dead bodies. There are five ways to attend to this aspect of repulsiveness: as bad smelling, as impure, as subject to aging, illness and death. At this stage repulsiveness as a meditation object is practiced in a more detailed way than during the early stages of the system.

"We do not know whether there is another person like Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Thera in other countries of the world, but there is no other bhikkhu like him in Sri Lanka."

—Venerable Nābirittankadawara
Ñāṇaratana Nāyaka Thera
Dean of Pāli Studies and Senior Professor
Kelani University

59. Obstacles to Meditation

We get excited if there is some obstacle or obstruction while we are doing something good, like meditating, or when we are engaged in some other important task. We react to it. Sometimes we abandon that good deed, meditation, or task, as a result of such obstacles. This is not in conformance with the Dhamma.

Obstacles are common to Bodhisattas who are also fulfilling their pāramī. Our Mahāthera similarly faced obstacles. He suffered from



poor health and illnesses from time to time. It affected his meditation. He has recorded that his daily meditation schedule was affected by difficulties such as these. In some instances he wrote that he could not attain jhāna properly because of fatigue after a long journey. Even in the course of daily life Venerable Mahāthera faced difficulties.

Everything is Dhamma. We have to act according to the realities that face us. Accept them. We cannot go on this journey avoiding difficulties. Rather than give up our good deeds and practices, we must act with energy and determination in the face of such obstacles the way our Venerable Mahāthera did. We can then realize our aspirations.

60. Seeing the Arising and Passing Away

Discerning the arising and passing away of conditioned phenomena is next. This stage is considered a milestone on the path to Nibbāna. Yogis who make it this far have the good fortune to achieve penetrating knowledge and purification of view of what is the right path and what is the wrong path. This is a vital step for the meditator seeking Nibbāna. From here on, the yogi is fully committed; the mind will now be set entirely on continuing practice along the Noble Path that has only been found with great difficulty. The only motivation from here on is to pursue one's work on the direct path to Nibbāna and to do so with understanding, without succumbing to any internal or external obstruction, without distraction.

The knowledge of arising and passing away is developed through incisive discernment and prepares one for entry to the correct path of practice. It is the step necessary to realizing true knowledge and vision of the way to become totally rid of defilements. Further, it has been taught that this knowledge is the basis for attaining path-fruit and that the vipassanā knowledges that occur in sequence begin with this knowledge of arising and passing away. The knowledge of arising and passing away is thus of paramount importance.



There are three phases that all conditioned phenomena must undergo: arising, continuance and passing. During the discernment of arising and passing away, first the origination of conditioned phenomena is investigated in fine detail for some time in order to clearly discern the arising phase. It is also the first aspect of impermanence. In the early stages discerning the continuance phase may be difficult, but that too becomes clear gradually as the meditation is continued.

The second stage of the discernment is the passing away of conditioned phenomena. That too is meditated on for a long time. It is the second aspect of impermanence. In the third stage, the two are taken together and the arising and passing away are discerned together.

The impermanent, suffering, non-self nature of mentality-materiality and the factors of dependent origination are discerned in each of the three stages described above: arising, passing away and arising and passing away.

In this meditation, first the phenomena related to the present life are investigated. The yogi performs vipassanā, seeing arising and passing away in present phenomena. Then past and future phenomena must be investigated as well. In this way arising and passing away is discerned in all three time periods. The transformation of phenomena is also discerned.

These phenomena arise and cease endlessly. The yogi practices vipassanā seeing arising and passing away with proper understanding. It is referred to as seeing in terms of moments. Further, the yogi practices by observing the arising and passing away of phenomena in the present life (which all arise and dissolve due to various conditions), in the same way. In dependent origination, the yogi contemplates the arising and passing away not only of phenomena pertaining to the present life, but also of conditioned phenomena pertaining to past and future lives.

Practicing this way, the yogi comprehends not only successive arising and perishing, but also perishing with no new arising and



alteration followed by perishing. Causes and effects are both seen and their arising and ceasing discerned. This successive arising and ceasing of phenomena is called 'uppāda-nirodha'. After attaining arahat path-fruit, the causes such as ignorance are eradicated. That is when defiled volitional formations cease; from then on these defilements no longer arise in the stream of mentality-materiality. They have ceased completely with no hope of further arising. This is called 'anuppāda nirodha'. The yogi sees this final cessation by discerning future volitional formations all the way to the time of parinibbāna.

The yogi who has developed this knowledge well sees the meditation object sharply and clearly. Sometimes, while observing the arising and passing away of phenomena, the phase continuance disappears. Other times the ending of the object appears clearly, but the beginning and middle are not seen. Sometimes the aspect of the object that is contemplated is very clear. The mind settles well on arising, or on passing away, or both.

When the arising and passing away of phenomena is comprehended well, knowledge about the nature of conditioned things improves, at the same time one's knowledge of the Dhamma also widens.

From the knowledge of the arising of conditioned phenomena, the suffering of birth is understood and from knowing the passing away of phenomena, sufferings such as death are understood. In this way understanding of The Noble Truth of Suffering develops. Through meditation on dependent origination the yogi perceives phenomena as conditioned by various causal relations.

Thus seeing the causes from which phenomena originate, The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering emerges. The yogi sees that effects do not arise when causes, such as ignorance, have ceased at the stage of anuppāda nirodha and thus understands The Noble Truth of the End of Suffering. By actually seeing arising and ceasing of conditioned phenomena, which are causal phenomena and resultant



phenomena, the yogi develops the wisdom of right view regarding The Noble Eightfold Path and comprehends The Noble Truth of the Path Leading to the End of Suffering.

Well-developed knowledge of the arising and passing away of phenomena enables one to comprehend The Four Noble Truths and many aspects of the path of practice. Our Venerable Mahāthera developed this knowledge fully.

I. Arising

9:30—Advice. Look at the arising of: the aggregates of clinging, materiality at the moment of birth, craving, clinging, volitional formations caused by ignorance; materiality at the moment of birth, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness caused by kamma. Look at all six sense doors. Observe also how *kasiṇa jhāna* arises because of causes. Discern also how sense objects cause them. Then look at the arising of the five aggregates of clinging in terms of past causes and momentary causes.

12:50—Sitting meditation. Discerning arising of rebirth-linking consciousnesses according to the five causes.

7.15—Sitting meditation. Discerned arising of five aggregates in the three time periods: present, past and future.

Day 20—Received permission to meditate *vipassanā* on three universal characteristics, internally and externally, on the causes according to the 'first method' of dependent origination and also finished that *vipassanā* section.





II. Passing Away

9:35—Advice. Discern the ending of the aggregates of clinging from the time of birth. Discern how anuppāda nirodha of ignorance, craving, clinging, volitional formations and kamma cause anuppāda nirodha and vipariṇāma nirodha¹¹⁶ of the aggregates, internally, externally and for the three time periods: present, past and future.

5:15—Sitting meditation. Did vipassanā on all the cognitive processes and the cessation of aggregates and for the two time periods: past and future.

Day 21—[Discerned] perishing according to the 'first method' of dependent origination. Received permission to meditate vipassanā on the three characteristics similarly to the previous day. Completed accordingly. Vipassanā concentration was strong in both sessions.

III. Arising and Passing Away

12:40—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā of arising and passing away of aggregates and suffering. 1:30—Walking, recollection of the qualities of the Buddha. 2:20—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā of arising and passing away and suffering characteristic of the aggregates of the six doors from birth. Light, joy and tranquillity arose strongly during vipassanā meditation according to cognitive processes.

7:20—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā meditation of arising and passing away of sense-base materiality, five-door cognitive processes, internal and external, past and future aggregates, applying the characteristic of non-self.

¹¹⁶ Alteration followed by perishing.



Day 07. Sunday—Discerned successfully arising and passing away of past, according to the 'fifth method' and the 'first method' of dependent origination, applying the three universal characteristics.

The way Venerable Mahāthera developed the meditation on the arising and passing away of phenomena is seen from these meditation records. The few notes shown above are examples. Observations such as “concentration, light, joy and tranquillity arose strongly” during various meditation sessions^f indicate that the meditation was very successful. We consider that Mahāthera has developed meditation on the arising and passing away of phenomena to a very high level.

The yogi must act carefully when these abilities and knowledges have been developed. Most Venerable Sayadaw Ācīṇṇa of Myanmar gives necessary instructions in this regard according to the Dhamma. He advises, for instance, not to get attached to the light when it becomes bright, but instead to subject that light also to the scrutiny of vipassanā meditation. He advises looking at both internal and external mind-produced and temperature-produced materiality when the light becomes bright. On other occasions he will advise practicing vipassanā on the consciousness that has been practicing vipassanā.

The yogi thus develops deeply the vipassanā knowledge of the arising and passing away, preventing obstruction of meditation by the various phenomena that occur. Yogis who have developed vipassanā acquire a clear understanding of the right path and the wrong path. When purification of knowledge and vision of the path has been developed, having avoided the wrong path, the yogi will have the good fortune of to move gradually in the direction of knowledge and vision of proper practice.

61. Discernment of Dissolution

Together with the systematic development of the contemplation of arising and passing away the incessant dissolution of conditioned formations becomes more and more prominent, leading to the



development of contemplation of the dissolution of phenomena. This was practiced to some extent during contemplation of the arising and passing away. When that stage has been developed well, or perhaps at some other stage, the attention of the yogi tends to move more and more towards passing away. This is a result of the meditation itself and not so much due to any specific effort of the yogi. The mind gets used to seeing only passing away.

At this point, wisdom, the principal factor on the path to Nibbāna, improves and vipassanā knowledges develop. The yogi contemplates only dissolution out of the three stages of arising, continuance and passing away. It is the final aspect of impermanence.

Seeing constant dissolution is known as ‘the knowledge of dissolution’. After this knowledge, in the higher vipassanā knowledges the yogi sees only the dissolution of formations. It has been written that vipassanā continues based on dissolution, rather than on arising, the continuance of formations, the sign of conditioned phenomena or on causes and effects. Whatever the phenomenon upon which vipassanā is being developed, be it past, future or present, internal or external, mentality-materiality, or cause or effect, the mind sees the stage of dissolution. The yogi sees clearly the incessant dissolution of all formations that are taken as objects of meditation.

During contemplation of dissolution, when the yogi focuses on the disappearance of the object, after some time the mind that is meditating begins to become prominent. At that point the yogi pays attention to the mind that has been practicing vipassanā meditation, that is to say, the mind that knows the objects and continues to perform vipassanā on that knowing mind. While meditating on the dissolution of conditioned phenomena as impermanent, suffering and non-self, the dissolution of the objects appears increasingly quickly. At that point, one should receive appropriate advice and continue to develop further vipassanā knowledges: the knowledge of fear, the knowledge of danger and the knowledge of disenchantment.



2:30—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā on meditating mind, of dissolution of the factors of dependent origination, considering three time periods, internally and externally.

5:15—Sitting meditation. Vipassanā as before. From start to finish, an extremely high level of concentration of mind and light prevailed.

5:15—Sitting meditation. While investigating fourth jhāna as aggregates during contemplation of dissolution, achieved a level of concentration similar to fourth jhāna itself. A concentration of mind and light prevailed for about 25 minutes while watching everything ending in dissolution.

Investigated the mental factors of earth kasiṇa jhāna as boundless. During investigation of the mental factors of fourth jhāna focusing as non-self, there was strong concentration for about half an hour. There was also a strong light. Thoughts arose that all conditioned phenomena are without self and that Nibbāna is the Ultimate Truth.

Day 28—Entered mindfulness of breathing fourth jhāna early morning and then investigated the mental factors of jhāna in sequence. Vipassanā concentration arose strongly, as before. Strong vipassanā concentration occurred in the morning sitting meditation while investigating mental factors of first jhāna itself. At the end of investigating all the jhāna mental factors, all types of beings appeared in the mind in a bright light, in ten thousand solar systems, from the Avīci hell to the end of the universe, in an infinite number of solar systems, extremely rapidly, spontaneously, perceived as non-self. There was strong concentration of mind all the time. Permission has been given to investigate the same way today also. Continued vipassanā meditation in the same way.



13. Sunday—Practiced contemplation of dissolution, past, future, present, internal, external, seven ways for materiality, seven ways for mentality and 40 types of vipassanā, during four sitting meditation sessions. There was strong concentration of mind when practicing vipassanā on the meditating mind, contemplating it as non-self.

Venerable Mahāthera has recorded his development of the contemplation of dissolution as shown above. These descriptions indicate that Venerable Mahāthera had experiences like special lights and concentrated states of mind and that he had developed this meditation in such a way that he acquired special knowledges and abilities.

“I consider Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Thera to be the foremost among meditation teachers in Sri Lanka at the present time”.

—Late Highest Mahā Nāyaka of
Śrī Laṅkā Sama Saṅgha Sabhāwa
Aggamahāpañḍita
Most Venerable Madihe Paññāsīha
Mahāthera

62. Equanimity Regarding Formations

Bodhisattas aspiring to Buddhahood radiate boundless lovingkindness and treat all beings equally. They fulfil their pāramī in order to achieve their noble aspiration to liberate beings from suffering. They develop vipassanā up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations and not beyond, until the time they achieve Sammāsambodhi, because the success of their journey to becoming a Sammāsambuddha is assured. They practice to this level in many



lives through saṃsāra. Our Mahāthera, being a Noble Bodhisatta, developed the practice in the same way.

As shown earlier, our Mahāthera developed his meditation continuously, even after the contemplation of dissolution. The following notes demonstrate the way he developed the next stages of vipassanā knowledge and purification: The knowledge of fear, the knowledge of danger and the knowledge of disenchantment.

"Day 3—Early morning, four attainments in limited space kasīṇa. Investigated jhāna mental factors. Again in the morning, attained first jhāna in light kasīṇa and investigated its jhāna mental factors and while investigating there was vipassanā concentration and strong [knowledge] of the dissolution of objects, for as long as about 45 minutes. Inquired and learned that this stage is the wisdom called, 'Muñcitukamyatā Paṭisaṅkhā Santiṭṭhata Paññā Saṅkhārupekkhāsu Nāṇa'."

The knowledge of equanimity regarding formations by reflecting is the non-attached knowledge that is inclined to let go of all conditioned formations and give up expectations. Characteristics such as 'arising' are also forms of conditioned phenomena. The yogi remains unattached, seeing the dissolution of formations clearly. As the mind desires to let go of conditioned formations, the yogi meditates, seeing the impermanent, suffering and non-self nature in the dissolution of formations. In this way, the yogi is freed of the extreme of fear towards formations.

Not seeing any formation that is worth delighting in or being attached to, the yogi gives up the other extreme of delighting in formations. Because of this understanding of reality, this neutral position, equanimity regarding formations not falling into either extreme grows during development of the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations. Like all Bodhisattas who aspire to attain Sammāsambodhi, our Venerable Mahāthera also developed vipassanā practice up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations repeatedly, but not beyond that. The yogi can attain path-fruit,



Nibbāna, by continuing vipassanā beyond that knowledge, but the target of a Bodhisatta is not attaining Nibbāna immediately.

Venerable Mahāthera looked upon his life as made up of conditioned phenomena and lived with equanimity towards those phenomena. This is an extremely important stage in the journey through saṃsāra. We who have heard this rare and invaluable Dhamma must endeavour with haste to achieve this noble state and to develop methodically from there for the realization of the path and fruit of Nibbāna.

63. Fourteen Ways of Mastery

Achievement of mental strength through samatha meditation enables the acquisition of special powers. The most important and most valuable result is that it makes the development of vipassanā relatively easy.

The fourteen methods of taming the mind can be called a higher stage of samatha meditation. The basis for this meditation is eight out of the ten kasiṇas, excluding the light and limited space kasiṇas. In this meditation, those eight kasiṇas and eight material and immaterial jhānas are mastered in 14 ways. Those eight kasiṇa and eight attainments are mastered by practicing them in forward sequence and then backward sequence, then also taking the first, then the third, the fifth and so on, in each of fourteen ways.

Day 8—Early morning and morning, completed the kasiṇukkantika¹¹⁷ lesson. (Received advice to practice jhānukkantika. Earth kasiṇa in the order 1,3,5,7,2,4,6,8¹¹⁸, then remaining kasiṇas also in the same way.) This evening completed jhānukkantika in four kasiṇas.

¹¹⁷ During this practice kasiṇas are taken skipping the next kasiṇa of the sequence, and the jhānas are attained.

¹¹⁸ Numbers 1-4 are the first to fourth material jhānas, and 5-8 are the four immaterial jhānas.



Day 9—Finished *jhānukkantika* lessons. Received permission to practice the *jhānakasīṇukkantika*¹¹⁹ lesson. (Earth *kaṣiṇa* 1, then fire 3, blue 5, red 7. Then water 2, air 4, yellow 6, white 8. Again earth 2, fire 4, blue 6, red 8. Again water 1, air 3, yellow 5, white 7.) Completed this lesson this evening. Also completed today 59,100,000 repetitions of the “*it’pi so*” stanza in eight days.

With the strength of mental concentration that is developed through these fourteen ways of mastery, the yogi has the ability to attain the five supernormal powers. Even though these higher powers are mundane, the yogi must act intelligently to use them as the basis for attaining the supramundane path, the path to Nibbāna, to understanding. Our Venerable Mahāthera also developed the fourteen ways of mastery. Fourteen ways of taming the mind completely would have helped his highly developed meditation as well.

64. The Extraordinary Uniqueness of Mahāthera

The uniqueness of a person comes from his or her special qualities that cannot be found in others or from possessing qualities superior to those of others. Uniqueness comes in different ways. Our Venerable Mahāthera, our great teacher, was such an outstanding bhikkhu. There was also something special about the singular quality of our Venerable Mahāthera. Often the distinction of a person can be limited to a certain time period or to a particular ability or aspect of life. Our Mahāthera is extraordinary because he stood out from childhood through his entire life, excelling in many different abilities and aspects of life.

The parents of our Mahāthera were unique, his birth was unique, his childhood was unique, his learning, teaching, memory, delivery of Dhamma talks, morality, respect for teachers, concentration, wisdom, knowledge of the scriptures in the Tipiṭaka and other compositions, development of meditation practice, gifts received, generous offerings,

¹¹⁹ First *jhāna* with earth *kaṣiṇa*, then third *jhāna* with fire *kaṣiṇa*, and so on, entering attainments skipping one *kaṣiṇa* and skipping one *jhāna* with each step.



mindfulness, patience, equanimity, compassion and other abilities and attainments were all unique. This distinctiveness was apparent throughout his life. This is the reason he can be said to be extraordinarily unique.

The matchlessness of his journey on the path of practice illustrates this well.

- His practice of meditation originated in early childhood and continued until the end of life, growing in strength and depth of experience and attainments.
- Through sitting meditation, walking meditation and recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, he fully utilised every moment of the day.
- He stayed mindful throughout the whole day.
- He completed the Pa Auk Meditation Course successfully within a short time.
- Most Venerable Sayadaw Ācinnā Sayadaw of Myanmar advised him on meditation quite differently from other yogis, with special interest, because he developed the meditation objects that were assigned with ease, skilfully and very quickly. This fact is clear from the notes of his meditation.
- At times he practiced even more than the assigned meditation subject. In addition to the day's meditation tasks, he practiced recollection of the qualities of the Buddha, reciting the “iti’pi so” stanza 100,000 times every eight days.
- He developed meditation objects to high levels of attainment. He was able to practice and develop many meditation objects to a high level within the two hour sitting meditation session.

In addition to what we know about his meditation experiences, there may be many aspects of his success in meditation that we are not aware of. Mahāthera is unique because he maintained his exertion



throughout his life without slackening. This is only one aspect of his noble life, other aspects of his life as a bhikkhu also stand out.

65. Unsurpassable Guide

If a precious item is produced and offered to the world, it is only if we obtain and use it that we can benefit from its valuable service. This noble Dhamma is similar. Bodhisattas develop innumerable pāramī, with limitless compassion for beings, comprehend the truth and declare reality to the world. If we do not adopt that Dhamma in our lives, if we listen to that noble Dhamma but do not make use of it, we cannot benefit merely because the Bodhisattas comprehended or taught the Dhamma to the world. Our Gotama Buddha knew the real value of the Dhamma and told his disciples, the first 60 noble Arahats, to give this priceless Dhamma to the world:

"Carata bhikkhave cārikam! Bahu jana hitāya bahu jana sukhāya ..."

"Bhikkhus! Go and wander for the welfare of many, for the happiness of many ..."

Our noble teacher, Venerable Nā Uyane Mahāthera, performed an unsurpassed Dhamma service in order to open the eyes of the world sunk in darkness, according to this advice of the Buddha. The Dhamma is not available in the world all the time. The Noble Ones who show that Dhamma path are indeed very rare. When Bodhisattas are born in the human world at the time of a Buddha's Sāsana they become bhikkhus. They contribute to the Sāsana in the highest way. It happens invariably. Our exalted Mahāthera did the same.

He was the best student in class at school. He even taught lessons when there was no teacher in class. When the other children said "Come back to us as a learned teacher", he said "No, I will not come to teach, I will become a bhikkhu," expressing his noble wish. Just as he excelled in school in childhood, he educated himself in Dhamma and provided guidance on the path to a large number of bhikkhus, teaching them the Tipiṭaka and training them in meditation practices.



He gave a Dhamma legacy to the next generation of able bhikkhus in order to preserve and continue the knowledge and practice of the true noble Dhamma for a long time, or until the end of the Sāsana. He passed to them knowledge of the Tipiṭaka and methods of meditation.

He taught monastic duties and procedures, ways of venerating the Buddha, paritta, Vinaya, observance of precepts and demonstrated proper delivery of Dhamma talks and how to read vinayakamma¹²⁰ lines with proper pronunciation. He gave complete guidance through his instructions, teaching, advice and also through example. To the entire Saṅgha he gave the directions necessary for development of a proper bhikkhu life, a life disciplined according to the Vinaya and nourished by knowledge of the Dhamma and the practice of meditation. He helped many to become bhikkhus of high morality with well-developed concentration and wisdom. He helped them to acquire comprehensive knowledge of scriptures and their practice, a clear understanding of the essence of the Dhamma and to establish them in the threefold teaching. This was for the Saṅgha. Such was his contribution to the Sāsana in the way of Bodhisattas.

The purpose was to create a spiritually strong generation of monks for the Sāsana of Gotama Sammāsambudda. It would keep the entire generation of monks on the right path and support the Sāsana over the long term in order to uphold the Dhamma, to build generation after generation of bhikkhus with knowledge of the True Dhamma and its proper practice and thereby the spiritual strength to sustain the Buddhsāsana until the time when it is prophesied to disappear.

Our Venerable Mahāthera provided an immense service to the lay devotees, showing and explaining things in simple terms, helping them to build confidence in Triple Gem, to understand the Dhamma, to abide by the Dhamma and reap the benefits of the Dhamma. To those devotees who were somewhat conversant with Dhamma, he explained samatha and vipassanā meditation, taught them the correct practice to progress in morality, concentration and wisdom. He explained clearly

¹²⁰ See note 39.



the way to gain the threefold happiness within the Buddhasāsana. He taught those staring at the flames of hell the way to find relief through the threefold happiness. He opened for them the gates of the deva world and the human world. He directed them to the path to escape from the four lower worlds forever. In this way, he gave guidance to genuine Buddhist devotees who were interested in Dhamma.

He followed the way of Bodhisattas in their noble services towards laity who have been and will for generations continue to be, devoted to the Dhamma. He arranged many meritorious activities for the benefit of laity. He:

- Organized wonderful large scale ceremonies to venerate the Buddha, such as those at Ruwanweli stupa.
- Delivered Dhamma talks and conducted Dhamma discussions thousands of times in Sri Lanka and abroad.
- Conducted numerous sessions for keeping precepts and meditation.
- Conducted meditation classes, such as those for the Government Services Buddhist Society, for about 28 years.
- Gave novice and higher ordination to hundreds, locally and abroad.
- Gave meditation instructions to numerous yogis.
- Composed a large number of Dhamma and meditation books.

He organized or directly provided many religious services for the laity. Those services were provided to the four groups with total commitment, while fulfilling pāramī for his noble aspiration. That guidance and leadership to bhikkhus and laity is unsurpassed. This contribution is not limited to the present Gotama Buddhasāsana. It has been made many times in the past throughout saṃsāra. It will be done



in the future too. We of the present generation were so fortunate to receive this Dhamma assistance, this guidance, from such a Bodhisatta.

But not resting with that benefit alone, we should pursue the path, tirelessly, undefeated, without giving up, until we reach the summit that we seek, Nibbāna. We must stay on the path that our Mahāthera showed us by his own example. That is the greatest offering we can make to show our gratitude to this worthy Bodhisatta teacher. Our Venerable Mahāthera's aspiration is also this: to liberate beings from the rounds of saṃsāra. May everyone develop the desire for practice, as well as effort, energy and investigation to this end.

"In the Sāsana, I have heard of the one who was foremost in explanation of the Tipiṭaka: the Venerable Arahat Sariputta; foremost in explanation of the Commentaries: Venerable Buddhaghosa Mahāthera; foremost in explanation of sub-commentaries: Venerable Ṭikacāriya from Dimbulāgala. And now I see, in this very life, the one who is foremost in explanation of Tipiṭaka and Commentaries and sub-commentaries: the late Deputy Chief of Śrī Lanka Rāmañña Mahā Nikāya, Head of Śrī Kalyāṇī Yogāśrama Saṃsthā, Great Teacher, Tripiṭaka Vageeswarācāriya, Mahā Kammatṭhānācāriya, Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera."

—Head of Mīrigama Minioluwa Vidyāvāsa Pirivena
Adikaraṇa Nāyaka
Śrī Lanka Rāmañña Mahā Nikāya
Master of Arts, Paṇḍita
Makulewe Vimala Mahāthera

Thus, Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera spent his valuable life virtuously, according to the Dhamma. He strengthened his life through morality, concentration, wisdom and through the three



parts of the Sāsana: knowledge of the Tipiṭaka, Dhamma practice and realization.

Because it was such a valuable life, he was respected by human beings irrespective of race, land or religion and by devas and brahmas. He received numerous gifts and help. Even the body that he discarded received great honour and respect. There were showers of flowers during the funeral procession and the casket was filled with fragrant flowers. It was cremated using sandalwood. His relics are venerated every day. Temples and pagodas were built in his name. Statues were erected.

Only a noble person with great qualities can receive such wonderful devotion and gifts. It is also the noble strength of the Dhamma, the marvellous power of the Dhamma. It is the noble strength acquired by developing a life following the Dhamma, a wonderful life on the path of the Buddha. In order to imbue noble qualities into our lives too, we can conform to, take as an example and learn lessons from the unique life of our Mahāthera.

Even though it is somewhat difficult to make the mind light, calm and concentrated, the way to derive the true value of life is through such improvement of the mind. It is especially so for the life of a bhikkhu. If a bhikkhu is well learned in the scriptures, his life is valuable. If such a bhikkhu also safeguards his basic good qualities at the same time, his life is more valuable. If a bhikkhu, in addition, keeps a high standard of morality, if the bhikkhu practices lovingkindness and has a calm mind, if a bhikkhu develops concentration and jhāna, if a bhikkhu acquires true understanding through knowledge of mentality-materiality, dependent origination and other Dhamma truths, acquires vipassanā knowledges on the path to Nibbāna at least up to the level of the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations, then the greatest strength lies in the life of a bhikkhu who possesses all these qualities. It is a life with the strength of morality, concentration, wisdom, knowledge of Dhamma theory, experience in Dhamma practice and personal realization of the Dhamma.



Our Most Venerable Teacher and Preceptor, Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahā Thera is a Noble Bodhisatta, worthy of great veneration, one of the most outstanding bhikkhus of our generation and recent generations. Born to the human world with tremendous good qualities, with complete morality, brightly shining with internal and external purity, he had a mind unclouded by defilements that was achieved through repeated attainments and perfectly mastered concentration. He was erudite, with profound knowledge of the Dhamma acquired through learning, mental analysis and direct experience through meditation. He was venerated by devas and brahmas and renowned far and wide for the splendour of his morality, concentration and wisdom. Such a worthy bhikkhu is indeed extremely rare. We have presented this brief description of a great life even though we do not have the ability to understand the true stature of such a bhikkhu who lived by and totally devoted to the Dhamma, who performed great service to the Saṅgha and laity.

We present below a glimpse of the future of our Venerable Teacher, to the time when, based on his completed pāramī, he will attain his final goal: Sammāsambodhi. It is hoped that by sharing this information, the reader will incline more and more towards the Dhamma. We offer this merit to that future Sammāsambuddha.

“We got this Bhikkhu Ariyadhamma down from the Brahma realm by inviting him in order to protect Sāsana. I too pay homage to Bhikkhu Ariyadhamma. Ariyadhamma is trying to overtake me too. The illuminating lamp of gems of this Yogāśrama Saṁsthā is Bhikkhu Ariyadhamma.”

—The Great Preceptor
Sri Lanka Rāmañña Mahā Nikāya
Co-founder and Chief
Śrī Kalyāṇi Yogāśrama Saṁsthā
Most Venerable Rājakiya Paṇḍita
Kaḍawedduwe Jinavaṁsa Mahāthera





66. The Path to Buddhahood

They who, with unbounded lovingkindness towards all beings of the world, delay the happiness of liberation, Nibbāna, which they could have easily achieved for themselves much earlier and instead embark upon a long, arduous journey of innumerable aeons to develop pāramī, continuing on in this dreadful and treacherous saṃsāra, having firmly made the heroic determination with immense strength of mind “I too will someday attain Buddhahood,” are marvellous in any era. To meet and associate with such worthy Bodhisattas in admiration of their excellent qualities and to learn from them, is a rare opportunity. Our great teacher Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera is one such worthy Bodhisatta.

We met that great noble monk. We paid homage to and venerated him. We listened to the Dhamma talks he delivered, associated with him and were blessed with his spiritual friendship, a truly good friendship. But sometimes we were not aware of his noble qualities. We derived great Dhamma benefit and accrued an enormous store of merit because of him. That was while knowing only a small fraction of his good qualities. We now know much more about his vast merit and attainments

I. Assurance of Certainty

We are of the view that our great Mahāthera has been developing the factors to become a Buddha for ages past. It is quite possible that he received the ‘assurance of certainty’ that he will attain Supreme Enlightenment from another Buddha long before he received such assurance from the Omniscient Dīpaṅkara Buddha.

Mahāthera explored his past lives during meditation by investigating cause and effect relationships between the birth in one life and the death of the previous life. These meditation experiences were described earlier. He has stated that he saw clearly in a state of deep concentration that he was on an assured journey to Buddhahood



from the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha. The footsteps of the wonderful journey to Buddhahood thus began in the very distant past. According to Mahāthera's own notes he "... saw clearly a saṃsāric journey with the assurance of certainty of Buddhahood from the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha. At that time impermanence became the object, respiration stopped and I stayed for a long time in deep concentration."

He received the assurance of certainty on that occasion, therefore his journey as an assured Bodhisatta began from his meeting with the Self-Awakened Buddha Dīpaṅkara.

II. The Stream of Previous Lives

During the journey of accumulating pāramī throughout saṃsāra, after receiving the assurance of certainty from a Buddha all Bodhisattas continue to develop pāramī with firm determination, without ever slackening, until attaining their exalted goal. Our Mahāthera too continued to develop of pāramī in various sorts of past lives. Even though there is no guarantee that all these lives will be in a higher world, such as the human world or a deva realm, when they are born in such suitable domains they continue to accumulate pāramī. When Mahāthera viewed his past lives during meditation, investigating life after life in sequence, he did so up to the time of the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha, which was very recent compared to the Sāsana of Dīpaṅkara Buddha.

- His most recent past life was as a deva named 'Maitrī'. That being was a guardian of the great Ruwanweli stupa. He thus accumulated pāramī as a deva. The message that his father received while at Ruwanweli stupa, regarding the birth of a son "of great merit" is related to this past life.
- He had been a brahma before becoming the deva at Ruwanweli stupa.
- His third most recent life was as a meditating ascetic. The notes of our Mahāthera show that this life was in India. In



particular, that ascetic life had been as a rāja rishi of the Makhādeva clan.

Before the time of our present Gotama Buddha, while fulfilling pāramī as a Bodhisatta in order to attain Buddhahood, he was born as the first great king of this aeon, Mahā Sammata, when the lifespan of human beings was infinitely long. Later in that life he became a monk, attained jhāna and was reborn in the Brahma realm. That lineage continued and when the appearance and lifespan of humans had deteriorated, Makhādeva, son of King Sagara, became king in the city of Miyulu. The lifespan at that time was about 336,000 years. When King Makhādeva had reigned for 252,000 years, the first grey hair appeared on his head. He then became a monk, led the ascetic life for 84,000 years and was reborn in a Brahma realm. Thereafter that line of kings came to be known as the Makhādeva Lineage.

Just like that first king, 84,000 subsequent kings of that Makhādeva lineage became monks after seeing the first grey hair, developed meditation and were born in a Brahma realm. All those kings had a lifespan of 336,000 years. That is the story of the Makhādeva kings. Our Mahāthera's notes regarding this history are given below.

12:45—Sitting meditation. After all the attainments in lovingkindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, equanimity, directed the mind through mentality-materiality to the previous life in a deva realm and before that in a brahma realm and even before that the ascetic forest-dwelling life in India.

7:00—Sitting meditation. Looked at three previous lives after attaining the four jhānas in mindfulness of breathing. Saw deva, brahma, rāja rishi of Makhādeva lineage. Saw that the four sublime abodes and the perception of non-self were developed.

The term 'rāja rishi' refers to a king who entered the ascetic life after relinquishing his crown. The Makhādeva lineage is the second



royal lineage of this fortunate aeon, after the Mahāsammata lineage. Therefore, if the royal lineage our Mahāthera has stated in the notes is this Makhādeva lineage, then he would have been a king in the Makhādeva lineage who had led the ascetic life and developed meditation after relinquishing his crown. He had developed the four sublime abodes and the perception of impermanence in that life as well. Additionally:

- His fourth past life was also as a deva.
- In the past he led a life of a Bhikkhu during the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha. In that life he learned the Tipiṭaka by heart. He attained jhāna and developed vipassanā up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations.

That is the information regarding his four most recent past lives and the life in the Sāsana of Kassapa Buddha. It is clear that in all those blessed lives he accumulated merit and fulfilled pāramī. We believe that he has almost totally completed the necessary accumulation of pāramī by the present time. Our Mahāthera has also spent the present life in an especially beneficial way as a Bodhisatta.

III. The Bodhisatta that We Met

In the long journey through saṃsāra developing pāramī, we met this Noble Bodhisatta as a bhikkhu at Nā Uyana. Engaged in the religious life from early childhood, ordained as a youth, he was a most worthy bhikkhu who was a reputed scholar of the Tipiṭaka and who had developed the Dhamma—morality, concentration and wisdom—to a very high level. He traversed the life of theory and practice excellently and attained up to the level of the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations in vipassanā meditation.

IV. A New Life in Brahma Realm

Notes of our Mahāthera written during his life show that he is now in the Brahma realm. He was born there by virtue of the first jhāna of



white kasīṇa. It is the result of the powerful merit of that white kasīṇa jhāna that Most Venerable Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera developed in meditation. He now must be a brahma king in the Brahma realm.

V. In the Future Sāsana of Metteyya Buddha

*“Yadāhi loke metteyyo — sambujjhissati taṃ tadā
Sakkaritvā pūjayitvā — sasaddhammaṃ sasāvakaṃ”*

Whatever day the Omniscient Metteyya Buddha appears in the world, [I] shall pay homage most ardently to that omniscient Buddha, the Dhamma gem and the Saṅgha gem.

Mahāthera made the aspiration:

“During the future Sāsana of the omniscient Metteyya Buddha, may I be reborn as a human being in the kingdom of Ketumati and during the first part of life offer the four requisites magnanimously to the Buddhasāsana, then receive lower and higher ordination, with full competence in the Tipiṭaka, with the five supernormal powers and eight attainments and be fortunate enough to receive the ‘assurance of certainty’ of becoming a Sammāsambuddha in the future.”

When investigating his future lives during meditation, our Mahāthera saw clearly that he will be born in the human world during the time of Metteyya Buddha and in that life will ordain, learn the Tipiṭaka and attain up to the knowledge of equanimity regarding formations through vipassanā meditation. After the Parinibbāna of Metteyya Buddha, that ocean of lovingkindness, his Sāsana, too, will flourish for a period and later disappear, in accord with the universal characteristics. By that time many beings possessing sufficient pāramī will have attained the supreme bliss of Nibbāna. That will be the fifth and final Buddhasāsana of this fortunate aeon.



Our Mahāthera will live the life of a bhikkhu during that Sāsana as well, as mentioned earlier and continue his journey in saṃsāra, fulfilling pāramī until he attains Sammāsambodhi.

VI. One Thousand Eight Hundred Future Lives

Our Mahāthera had a dream at dawn soon after completing 4,000,000 repetitions of the “iti’pi so” stanza. A brahma wearing white came to him and asked “Bhante, do you know when your determined wish will be realized?” When our Mahāthera said “I do not know,” the brahma said “One thousand eight hundred” and vanished.

It is also noteworthy that when investigating future mentality-materiality during meditation, when Mahāthera directed his mind to the end of the stream of mentality-materiality he saw that it would end 1800 lives into the future. He recorded: “...the attainment of Sammāsambuddhahood at the end of 1800 lives came into view.”

This indicates that our Mahāthera has 1800 future lives remaining on his journey. He will fulfill pāramī during those lives as well. It is a relatively small number of lives, at least for Bodhisattas who are fulfilling pāramī in order to attain perfect self-awakening.

VII. In a Blessed Aeon

Many aeons will pass by and after the end of a particular aeon marked by the destruction of the universe, the blessed aeon in which our Mahāthera attains Supreme Enlightenment will begin. Our Mahāthera will be born during that aeon as a Noble Bodhisatta.

VIII. In the Tusita Deva Realm

He will have completed all the pāramī necessary to attain Buddhahood by that time and will be born in the Tusita deva realm awaiting the suitable time for his final attainment.



IX. Uproar Announcing the Appearance of a Buddha

One thousand years before the appearance of the new Buddha, a brahma from one of the Pure Abodes will announce to 10,000 solar systems that a Buddha will appear in 1000 years. There will be an uproar following that announcement¹²¹.

X. The Invitation

When 1000 years have lapsed, the devas and brahmas from 10,000 solar systems will visit the Bodhisatta in the Tusita realm and invite him to attain Buddhahood.

XI. The Five Great Investigations

The Bodhisatta in the Tusita realm will scrutinise the world, carefully looking for the suitable time, continent, land, clan, mother and remaining lifespan of the mother. This is the great five-fold scrutiny of all Bodhisattas.

XII. Prior Vision of Supreme Enlightenment

"While listening intently to the Dhamma talk, my mind fell into a strange state as if in samādhi concentration and I had a wonderful and clear vision of myself transformed into a beautiful Buddha statue, seated against a large wooden pillar of the Dhamma talk hall, delivering a discourse facing East. I consider this memorable event to be an indication of the path of my attainment of Nibbāna."

As written by our Mahāthera, he had already seen, while still a child, a vision of himself having attained Sammāsambuddhahood, his enlightened self delivering a Dhamma talk as a Buddha statue. We believe that such thoughts occurred at a very young age, driven by the strength of his merits, displaying this vision in order to motivate him

¹²¹ Pāli: Buddha kolāhala.



from youth towards the noble attainment that will actually be realized in the future.

XIII. Discernment through Vipassanā Knowledge

"...[I] saw the distant future attainment of Sammāsambodhi and the extinction of ignorance and other causes, and a state of deep concentration resulted."

Venerable Mahāthera has recorded that when he directed the mind to the future during meditation, he saw the extinction of mentality-materiality and the realization of Nibbāna. Mentality-materiality became extinct upon the realization of omniscience. Thus, our Mahāthera had both seen his Supreme Enlightenment in a vision and discerned it in meditation.

XIV. Realization of Buddhahood

Having seen mentally the realization of omniscience in the future and after the great five-fold scrutiny, at a time when the lifespan is 100,000 years, the Bodhisatta will appear in the world because his thirty pāramī have been fulfilled.

He will arrived at the Bodhi tree on the noble day, having generated four-factored energy, he will sit in the lotus pose and in the first watch of the night attain the ability to recollect his own past lives. In the middle watch, he will attain the ability to see divine forms. Having discerned dependent origination in forwards and reverse order, he will attain Supreme Buddhahood at dawn, realizing omniscience, beautifying the ten thousand solar systems, being adorned with the ten powers, numerous knowledges and wonderful abilities such as the four masteries.

Having achieved his aspiration to become a Supremely Enlightened One and after uttering the paean of joy "Aneka jāti Saṃsāraṃ...", He will stay for seven weeks in the proximity of the Mahā Bodhi tree while entering upon millions of attainments in a row.



Then he will assist worldly beings out of noble lovingkindness while fulfilling the duties of Buddhahood.

XV. Ministry of Eighty Thousand Years

The lifespan at that time being 100,000 years, he will deliver the Dhamma in the eight-faceted Brahma voice to innumerable beings of the world for about 80,000 years, enabling them to realize the Dhamma. He will thus accomplish the incomparably noble and colossal task he undertook and for which he strived for millions of aeons.

XVI. The End of the Life of Another Buddha

Having benefited the large number of devotees who followed him from the distant past, fulfilling pāramī with various aspirations of their own and countless other beings who were submerged in misery, having given them the three kinds of happiness and thus accomplishing the objective of a Buddha, an objective for which he had strived steadfastly in life after life fraught with great suffering, subject to the miseries of ageing, sickness and death, after completing his lifespan, that Most Noble Buddha will relinquish his life, thus bearing the highest testimony to his teaching, that all compounded things are subject to dissolution. Thus the Blessed One will pass away, attaining Parinibbāna. The earth will tremble, thunder will roll over the heavens, husbands, wives and their children, bhikkhus and deities who are yet not free from passion will grieve, weep and lament in despair.

Homage will be paid to the body of the Blessed One by kings and subjects, by devas and brahmas, with perfumes and flowers and it will be honoured and venerated. A funeral pyre will be built with fragrant woods and the body will be placed in it. After cremation, the relics too will be venerated and many generations will gather merit until the relics themselves disintegrate, as determined by that Blessed One. Thus will end the mission of that unparalleled Most Noble Buddha.



XVII. Dhamma in all Three Time Periods

That is the Dhamma. Having come on an infinitely long journey through saṃsāra and being blessed with the assurance of certainty as a Bodhisatta, appearing in the present time as the Bodhisatta who was our Venerable Teacher and in the future, upon completion of the pāramī of a Bodhisatta, attaining omniscience and Supreme Enlightenment, all these are the same: the Dhamma, the way things are.

XVIII. The Way Mahāthera Exemplified the Dhamma

Mahāthera himself stated that such Bodhisattas attain Buddhahood after completing their pāramī and that a Buddha dispenses the Dhamma; this is all according to the true Dhamma.

"...the Sammāsambuddha enters Parinibbāna like the extinguishing of a lamp that had brightly lit tens of thousands of solar systems. The Arahats too will attain Parinibbāna at the end of their lives and others with path-fruition will enter the higher realms. The remaining worldly beings that have not attained any path-fruition will be born in various worlds according to their kamma. The kingdoms in which the Buddha lived, the parks and ponds, all these will become ruins with time. In the same way, massive objects such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the great Mount Meru, the great oceans and on a smaller scale the houses, vehicles, clothes and ornaments, money and land used by people, all these lives nurtured with food, drink, clothes and ornaments and all animate and inanimate formations arise and cease every moment and are impermanent.

"Beings are oppressed by the constant arising and ceasing of conditioned formations; formations are therefore unsatisfactory, suffering. As they cannot be controlled, they are not ours, they are without self. All conditioned formations are subject to these three characteristics: [this] is the Truth of Suffering. The cause of this suffering, the prior craving for existence, is the Truth of the Cause of Suffering. The extinction of these



two is Nibbāna, referred to as the Truth of the End of Suffering. The Eightfold Path that should be developed to attain that end of suffering is the Truth of the Path Leading to the End of Suffering. Countless Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats have attained Nibbāna, having comprehended these Four Noble Truths, by accumulating the pāramī of generosity, morality and meditation. We honour by thought, word and deed and pay homage to all Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats who have crossed the sea of suffering, extinguished the fire of defilements and attained the bliss of Nibbāna!"

IXX. Only the Dhamma

Whichever way we contact the world through the senses, it is only the Dhamma. We who are on a journey in saṃsāra should understand all phenomena as Dhamma and strive to see them as Dhamma. We all know the way Mahāthera, our great teacher, followed this path.

Mahāthera had education, skills in preaching and writing, intelligence, discipline, obedience, skill in careful listening, high morality, a marvellous memory and the ability to achieve and maintain deep concentration. He received numerous gifts, respect and assistance, reputation, praise, status, qualifications and honour. He also faced blame, insults, calamities, disasters and illnesses. All these are Dhamma. His mind was trained to treat all these as Dhamma. He experienced peace in the face of all these according to the Dhamma. He also showed the world the methods of realizing peace according to the Dhamma. He persuaded others to follow the same path.

XX. Dhamma is the Only Refuge

The Dhamma is the only refuge, the protection for us and for all beings. Wrong views and association with those who hold wrong views give rise to the worst misery in saṃsāra. Mahāthera advised, taught and delivered Dhamma talks, showed us by example and exhorted us in all possible ways to abandon wrong views and make haste to seek refuge in the Dhamma.



67. Our Honour, Respect and Wishes

Let us take refuge in that noble Dhamma, make the Dhamma our protection and support, develop the Dhamma within us, experience the peace of the Dhamma and enjoy the supreme bliss of Nibbāna. Let us pursue the development of the Dhamma diligently.

The suitable respect we can show our Venerable Mahāthera is to engage in practicing the Dhamma without delay. May these details of our Venerable Mahāthera's noble life, of the way he practiced meditation, of his experiences during meditation, all be of help for that purpose. May the merit from his gift of these notes and the enormous merit that accrues to bhikkhus and lay devotees by making use of these notes, by following his teachings, by developing trust in the Triple Gem, by generating energy and developing other wholesome qualities, assist our Mahāthera to achieve his most noble aspiration of becoming a Perfectly Self-Awakened Sammāsambuddha!

We shall always honour and revere by way of thought, word and deed, our great teacher and Bodhisatta: Nā Uyane Ariyadhamma Mahāthera!

May we receive his pardon, his forgiveness, for any fault or mistake on our part by way of thought, word or deed!

The handwritten notes of our Mahāthera, his ideas and views expressed verbally and details of his life recorded herein, are in accordance with the Dhamma. If there is any mistake therein, may the Noble Dhamma forgive us! May we also receive forgiveness from our Venerable Mahāthera!

If the good people, the noble personages, who read this book see any error in this record, may they forgive us and discard it and instead focus on the invaluable qualities of morality, concentration and wisdom of the Noble Bodhisatta. May they make those qualities a support for their practice, to generate energy and develop the path earnestly!

May all beings benefit from the Dhamma!






Wax statue of Mahāthera, Nā Uyana.



68. Pāli Blessing

**Silāḍinekaḡaṇasobhitapuññaṭejo
Sabbesu tīsu piṭakesupi kovido yo
Therāsaḡho Ariyaḡhammayathindaṇātho
Sabbaññaṭaṃ labhatu taṃ paramuttaṃ so**

If there is a worthy Mahāthera, who is adorned by morality and other excellent qualities that are admired by good men, who has the renowned brilliance of merit, who is erudite in the whole Tipiṭaka, may that Most Noble Bhikkhu, Ariyaḡhamma by name, attain Supreme Omniscience!



**Khīṇāsavoti bhuvi patthaṭakittighoso
Jhāṇāḡinekaḡalapūritadhammakāyo
Saddho tisāsanadharo yatipuṇḡavo yo
Sabbaññaṭaṃ labhatu taṃ paramuttaṃ so**

Renowned and glorified the world over as an Arahat, filled with various powers such as jhāna, having total confidence in the Triple Gem, excelling in the threefold Sāsana, namely theory, practice and realization of the Dhamma, may that Most Noble Bhikkhu, by name Ariyaḡhamma, attain Supreme Omniscience!

**Jāṭinaṃatṭhasata ceva saḡassamattaṃ
Gantvāṇa ñāṇapadaṣa ujubhūtamagge
Sambodhiñāṇalabhituṃ niyato supaññaṃ
Sabbaññaṭaṃ labhatu taṃ paramuttaṃ so**

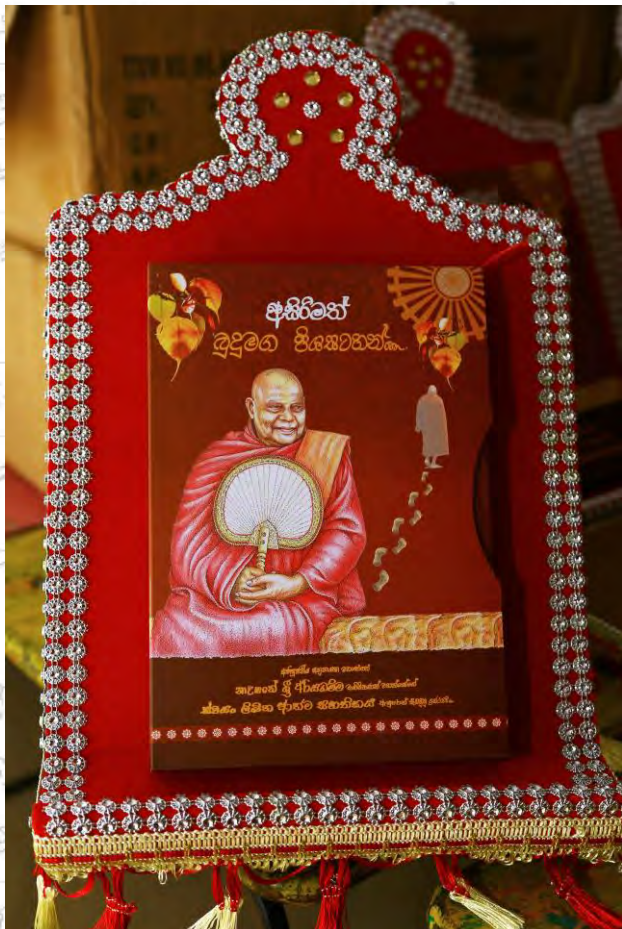
Having journeyed for about 1800 lives in saṃsāra on the unwavering path to Nibbāna, using knowledge as his feet, being of assured certainty of achieving the knowledge of realization, may that Most Noble Bhikkhu, by name Ariyaḡhamma, attain Supreme Omniscience!!!



The cetiya that was offered at the one-year anniversary of Mahāthera's passing. It contains relics of the Buddha, Mahāthera and various sacred objects.



Offering the cetiya and sharing the merits with Mahāthera.



The original autobiography: “Asirimat Budumaga Piyasaṭaḥan”.