Pahankanuwa Sermon #135

English Translation

Translated from Sinhala

Author: Ven. Katukurunde Nanananda Thero

(Pahankaṇuwa Sinhala Audio Dhamma Sermon No.139)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa

(Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Fully Self-Enlightened One)

Pali Stanza:

Pucchāmi muniṃ pahūtapaññaṃ, buddhaṃ dhammassāmiṃ vītataṇhaṃ;

dvipaduttamaṃ sārathīnaṃ pavaraṃ, kati loke samaṇā, tadingha brūhi ti.

Caturo samaṇā, na pañcam' atthi, te te āvikaromi sakkhiputṭho;

maggajino, maggadesako ca, magge jīvati, yo ca maggadūsī ti.

From:

Sutta Nipāta (Cundasutta)

Dear Listeners,

During the Buddha's time, the word '*Samaṇa*' (ascetic/monk) was used in society as a common term to refer to the Buddha, his disciples, and ordained followers of other sects. The Buddha constantly endeavored to give this word '*Samaṇa*' a meaning that was in alignment with the Dispensation (*Sāsanānulomika*). The invitation made in the two verses we have taken as our theme today is precisely such a request—an invitation for such an analytical definition.

As mentioned in the *Cunda Sutta* of the *Sutta Nipāta*, it was Cunda the smith (*Cunda Kammāraputta*) who made this invitation to define the term *Samaṇa*. You may have heard of this lay disciple, Cunda the smith, as the donor who offered the last alms-food to the Buddha before his *Parinibbāna* (final passing away). When the Buddha was traveling towards Kusinārā for his final passing away, he arrived at the city of Pāvā, accompanied by a large community of monks, and resided in the mango grove belonging to Cunda the smith. Hearing that the Blessed One had arrived at his mango grove, Cunda the smith went to pay homage to him, and the Blessed One

encouraged and inspired him with a Dhamma talk. This Cunda the smith was already a devoted lay disciple who had previously met the Buddha, gained clarity through a Dhamma talk, and become a follower. Thus, with deep faith, Cunda the smith invited the Buddha and the Sangha to his home for the following day's alms-meal. The Blessed One accepted the invitation in silence.

The next day, Cunda the smith returned home and prepared exquisite food and drink. Along with this, it is mentioned that he prepared a substantial amount of *sūkara-maddava*. This term *sūkara-maddava* is a highly debated word in the history of the Dispensation. Although we will not analyze it at length here, we must note that the Commentaries offer three different meanings. The first meaning given is the tender flesh of a boar. The second meaning is a soft rice dish prepared with the five products of the cow—namely, milk, curd, ghee, etc. The third meaning is a certain medicinal preparation known in alchemy by the name *sūkara-maddava*. In any case, let us use the term *sūkara-maddava* for this occasion. Having prepared this *sūkara-maddava* along with various other foods, Cunda the smith announced to the Blessed One that the meal was ready, and the Blessed One arrived there with the community of monks. As soon as he sat down, the Blessed One addressed Cunda the smith: "Cunda, serve me with whatever *sūkara-maddava* you have prepared, and serve the rest of the food to the community of monks."

The intention was that this *sūkara-maddava* should not be given to the other monks. Saying "Yes, Venerable Sir," Cunda served the alms-meal to the Buddha and the Sangha accordingly. After the meal, the Blessed One addressed Cunda and said: "Cunda, if there is any remaining *sūkara-maddava*, dig a pit and bury it in the ground. I do not see anyone in this world, with its devas, māras, and brahmas, who can digest this food if eaten, other than the Tathāgata." Thus he made a special declaration. Cunda then buried the remaining portion as instructed. Next, according to the details in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, we see that after partaking of that food, a severe illness called *lohita-pakkhandikā*—an illness involving the purging of blood—befell the Blessed One. We must remember that prior to this, while the Blessed One was on his final journey, a grave illness had also arisen at the village of Beluva, and Venerable Ānanda was deeply grieved, fearing that the Blessed One would pass away. However, through the power of his determination, the Blessed One suppressed that illness with mindfulness and clear comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*) and energy, determining his life-preparations / Preparations (*jīvita-saṅkhāra*). Therefore, we should understand that it was this suppressed illness that re-emerged here. In any case, this purging occurred. Yet, the Blessed One said to Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, let us go to Kusinārā," and they set out for Kusinārā.

Now, the incident related to the two verses we have taken as our theme today actually took place at Cunda's alms-hall. But let us return to the alms-hall later. Let us walk a little way behind the Blessed One, because on the way, the Blessed One made certain statements regarding this *sūkara-maddava*. On this occasion, it is mentioned in the narratives that along with the Blessed One, Venerable Ānanda and another monk

named Venerable Cundaka went as attendants. The long journey from Pāvā to Kusinārā with the community of monks is not a distance to be taken lightly. Yet, he made the journey. As they drew near to Kusinārā, they approached a river named Kakutthā. By the time they reached it, the Blessed One was extremely ill. Stepping aside, he went to the foot of a tree and said to Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, I am very tired. Fold my outer robe in four and spread it out." Then, sitting there, the Blessed One said: "Ānanda, I am thirsty. Bring me some water." Venerable Ānanda replied: "Venerable Sir, five hundred carts have just crossed and made the stream muddy and turbid. Further ahead is a river with clear, clean water. The Blessed One can drink water there." But for a second time, the Blessed One said: "Ānanda, bring me some water. I am thirsty." Venerable Ānanda repeated his reply. The Blessed One made the request for a third time. As a disciple, when the Blessed One made a request for the third time, it could not be refused. Therefore, when Venerable Ānanda took the bowl and went to the stream, the muddy water had miraculously become completely settled, clear, and pure. Ānanda thought: "This is a great wonder, a marvelous thing! Due to the psychic power of the Blessed One, this muddy water has become clear." He then brought the water and offered it to the Blessed One. The Blessed One drank the water and set out again.

Next, we hear of them reaching the Kakutthā river itself and entering a nearby mango grove. There, the Blessed One addressed Venerable Cundaka—we must not confuse him with Cunda the smith, as there were many individuals named Cunda. He told Venerable Cundaka: "Fold my robe in four and spread it out. I wish to lie down." The Blessed One then lay down there in the lion's posture (*sīha-seyyā*) for a short while. After waking, he said to Venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, perhaps some might say to Cunda the smith after my passing away—by then, the Blessed One had already declared that he would pass away that night in Kusinārā—'The Blessed One passed away after consuming your last meal.' This might cause him remorse and regret. They might generate worry in him, saying: 'This is your misfortune, this is something you did wrongly. The Blessed One passed away after consuming the meal you offered.' If anyone speaks thus, Ānanda, you must tell him: 'No, no. The Blessed One has declared: "It is a great gain (*suladdhaṃ*) for you, it is well gained by you, that you were able to offer the final alms-meal to the Blessed One."'"

Then, the Buddha explained the benefits of that final alms-meal. The alms-meal that helped the Tathāgata attain supreme Enlightenment—which you all know as the milk-rice offered by Sujātā—and this final meal are of equal fruit and equal result. He declared it as a natural law (*dhammatā*) that the final meal after consuming which the Tathāgata passes away into final extinguishment / extinction (*parinibbāna*) carries the same fruit, same result, and same great benefit as the meal after consuming which he attained supreme Enlightenment. The Buddha instructed: "Ānanda, if anyone blames Cunda the smith, tell him that you heard this directly from the Blessed One."

Indeed, this matter has been a subject of controversy, and our main topic is still ahead. However, in brief, we must consider that for various reasons, the explanation regarding boar's meat is the one most popular among many. But we can also think of it in this way: when mentioning it by name, the sutta does not say 'boar's meat' (*sūkara-maṃsa*), but uses a different name. It says that 'along with other foods, a *sūkara-maddava* was also prepared.' Therefore, we may consider that since the Buddha was gravely ill at the time, Cunda the smith might have prepared and offered some kind of medicinal rejuvenator (*rasāyana*). Then one might ask, "If he ate it, why did this purging occur?" Due to the previously suppressed illness, if there was bad blood, it might have been purged. The Commentary explains this further, as if to dispel any blame from Cunda the smith. The Commentary explains that the illness was not caused by that food. Rather, whatever that food might have been, eating it gave the Blessed One the strength to walk such a great distance. Therefore, one should not think that it caused his final passing away / final extinguishment (*parinibbāna*).

In any case, we can understand that rather than an offering of boar's meat, such a food was prepared with the intention of providing comfort to the Blessed One in his illness. Through the strength gained from it, a purging occurred which helped ease his physical discomfort. This is merely a general view.

Let us now turn to the section relevant to our main topic. These two verses are recorded in the Dhamma text known as the *Sutta Nipāta*, not in the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*. The Commentary to the *Sutta Nipāta* gives the following background story. This Cunda the smith was a goldsmith—a very wealthy creator and merchant of gold jewelry. Because of his great faith, when offering this alms-meal, he had served the food and curries in golden vessels to the community of monks. Some monks, arising doubts regarding the use of golden vessels, did not use them. However, some monks did use them. They must have eaten from their own bowls, but those special items were offered in golden vessels.

According to the Commentary, after the alms-giving was over and Cunda the smith had washed his hands and was preparing to listen to the Dhamma sermon, he saw a certain corrupt monk take one of the golden vessels and slip it into his shoulder bag along with his keys. Although he saw this, due to his deep faith and wisdom, Cunda the smith thought: "If I expose this theft now, it will bring great disrepute to the Blessed One and the virtuous community of monks. Furthermore, it will give sectarian heretics an opportunity to attack the Dispensation." Thinking thus, he did not speak out, but a doubt arose in him: "Are such individuals also *Samaṇas*?" It is said that in order to dispel this doubt, he went to the Blessed One in the evening and asked this question, which led to this sutta discourse.

Now let us come to the meaning of the verses. Let us see what the meaning of these verses is. *Pucchāmi muniṃ pahūtapaññaṃ*... There is a characteristic in the ancient verses of the *Sutta Nipāta* where, in dialogue-form suttas, the name of the speaker is

included within the verses. We usually put that at the end, saying "so-and-so said this." Here, it appears after the first line. Thus: *Pucchāmi muniṃ pahūtapaññaṃ iti Cundo kammāraputto*. The phrase *iti Cundo kammāraputto* is a phrase inserted by the Council-compiling monks (*saṅgītīkaraka*) to show that it is Cunda the smith who speaks. What did he ask? "I ask the Sage of deep wisdom—*pahūtapaññā* means the Blessed One of vast and great wisdom—the Sage." Then follow several epithets of the Buddha: "The Buddha, the Lord of Dhamma (*dhammassāmiṃ*), the one free from craving / thirst (*vītataṇhaṃ*), supreme among bipeds (*dvipaduttamaṃ*), the excellent charioteer (*sārathīnaṃ pavaraṃ*). I ask this question of the Buddha." Then he presents the question: *Kati loke samaṇā tadingha brūhi?* "How many kinds of *Samaṇas* are there in the world? Please be kind enough to explain this to me." Thus Cunda presented his question in that verse.

Here is the first verse of reply given by the Blessed One: *Caturo samaṇā na pañcamotī Cundāti bhagavā*. Here too, the words *Cundāti bhagavā* were inserted by the Council-compiling Venerable Ones to indicate that the Blessed One is replying. The first line states: *Caturo samaṇā na pañcamotī*—"There are four kinds of *Samaṇas*, Cunda, there is no fifth." Thus the Blessed One replies. *Te te āvikaromi sakkhipuṭṭho*—"Asked by you in my presence, I shall make them clear to you." Then he names the four: *Maggajino, maggadesako ca, magge jīvati yo ca, maggadūsī'tī*. The first is *Maggajina* (Conqueror of the Path). The second *Samaṇa* is *Maggadesaka* (Teacher of the Path). The third *Samaṇa* is *Maggajīvī*—one who lives on the Path (*magge jīvati*). The fourth *Samaṇa* is *Maggadūsī* (Defiler of the Path). Both *magge jīvati* and *maggajīvī* are used in the same sense there.

In the subsequent verses, the Blessed One analyzes these four. Although we will not go through each verse, we will explain their general meaning here. It is easy to understand the term *Maggajina*. The Blessed One expresses this regarding himself. Everyone knows that it was the Blessed One who discovered this path to Nibbāna, after the Dispensation of the previous Buddhas had disappeared. In some places, it is compared to a path to a city that had been overgrown and lost in the wilderness for a long time, which was rediscovered by the Buddha. In that sense, the path to Nibbāna—the Noble Eightfold Path, the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment—was first uncovered by the Blessed One. That is the *Maggajina*. Thus, the general idea of that verse is that the Blessed One, the Buddha, is the *Maggajina*—the one who has conquered the Path, the one who has discovered the Path.

The second *Samaṇa* is the *Maggadesī* / *Maggadesako* (Teacher of the Path). Regarding this *Samaṇa*, it is said: *paramaṃ paramaṃti ñatvā loke*—"having directly realized the supreme Nibbāna in this world as the supreme." It refers to the Arahant who then teaches and analyzes that Dhamma. As you have heard, such an Arahant utilizes the analytical powers (*paṭisambhidā*) to make the Dhamma understood by others and to dispel their doubts regarding the Dhamma. Such a monk is the *Maggadesī*—that is, the Arahant. Having fully realized it, the second

Samaṇa, the *Maggadesī* or *Maggadesako*, fearlessly explains these Dhamma matters.

The third is the *Maggajīvī* (One who lives on the Path). This means one who trains correctly, with restraint and mindfulness, on the well-taught path of Dhamma—one who practices on the path of Dhamma. You may have heard of the two terms *Sekha* and *Asekha* when speaking of noble disciples (*Ariya-puggala*). *Asekha* refers to the Arahants who have completed their training. *Sekha* refers to the other noble disciples, from the Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) up to the Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), who are still training. First, the Buddha was mentioned. Second, the Arahant was mentioned. Third, it refers to those *Sekha* monks—the noble ones from Stream-entry to Non-returning who are still training on the path, practicing the true way. In addition, the *Kalyāṇa-puthujjana* (noble worldling)—the monk who, though not yet having realized the paths and fruits, is fully accomplished in virtue and principles and follows the good path—is also included in this third category.

Fourth, the *Maggadūsī* (Defiler of the Path) is shown—the one who corrupts the path. Here, the character of this *Maggadūsī* monk, who lives with the outward appearance of disciplined monks—taking on the guise of a monk or an Arahant—is described in several words. *Pakkhandī* means one who intrudes into the midst of the Sangha, pushing himself forward based on his seniority or possessions. This is how the Commentary explains it. Next, *Kuladūsako*—one who corrupts families, meaning he engages in activities that corrupt the faith of lay devotees. Then, his physical and verbal behavior is rough and unruly. Another word used is *Palāpo*. The word *Palāpa* refers to the chaff or empty husks found among grains of paddy. Looking from the outside, one might be deceived into thinking there is a grain of rice inside, but there is none. *Palāpa* means empty, hollow.

The Blessed One uses many such words there. They are called *Samaṇa-patirūpaka*—those who behave in the guise of a monk. Such a person is a *Maggadūsī*—he defiles the path.

Having shown these four, the Blessed One then states another important point. An intelligent noble disciple (*Ariya-sāvaka*) who is a householder or master of a house, having correctly understood these four, recognizes them and thinks: *sabbe nekātādiso'ti*—"Not all are alike." Thinking thus, he does not lose his faith. How can one equate the corrupt with the pure, the defiled with the undefiled? In this way, the Blessed One concluded the sermon to dispel the doubt of Cunda the smith.

In connection with this, let us consider a few more points. Here, we must speak particularly about that term *Samaṇa*. As we mentioned earlier, because the social term *Samaṇa* was used for the Buddha and the Sangha, the Buddha had to show and make known to the world: "The concept of *Samaṇa* we present is not the one that has existed so far." You may have heard that in the *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta*, the Buddha made a lion's roar at the very beginning of the discourse, addressing the monks: *Idheva samaṇo, idha dutiyo samaṇo, idha tatiyo samaṇo, idha catuttho samaṇo,*

suññā parappavādā samaṇehi aññehitī. The Buddha made an extraordinary lion's roar there: "Only in this Dispensation is there the first *Samaṇa* (Stream-enterer). Only here is the second *Samaṇa* (Once-returner), the third *Samaṇa* (Non-returner), and the fourth *Samaṇa* (Arahant). Other dispensations are empty of true *Samaṇas*." He instructed the monks to roar this lion's roar fearlessly against other sectarian views (*parappavāda*).

Along with this, regarding the word *Samaṇa*, the Buddha spoke in another sutta in a way that penetrates the heart of the monks: "Monks, I say that those ascetics and brahmins who do not understand gratification (*assāda*) as gratification, danger (*ādīnava*) as danger, and escape (*nissaraṇa*) as escape in this world, are not truly ascetics and brahmins. They have not understood the true meaning of being an ascetic or a brahmin." This shows that understanding gratification as gratification, danger as danger, and escape as escape in the world, and directly realizing it, is the true task of a *Samaṇa*.

When speaking of this task of a *Samaṇa*, another similar sutta comes to mind. On one occasion, the Blessed One said: "Monks, what are the *samaṇa-karaṇīyāni*—the duties of a *Samaṇa*, the tasks of a *Samaṇa*?" Various people in the world might point to various duties. But the Blessed One pointed to those things that support the state of a *Samaṇa*. What are they? *Sīla* (Virtue), *Samādhi* (Concentration), and *Paññā* (Wisdom). In that sutta, the three terms used are *Adhisīla* (Higher Virtue), *Adhicitta* (Higher Mind/Concentration), and *Adhipaññā* (Higher Wisdom).

You may have heard of these. *Adhisīla* is that noble virtue which supports the realization of the paths and fruits. *Adhicitta* is concentration (*samādhi*). *Adhipaññā* is insight, the wisdom of meditation (*vipassanā-paññā*). The Blessed One declared that there are three tasks belonging to a *Samaṇa*. What are they? Training in higher virtue. For this, there must be a strong desire—the term *tibba chanda* is used there. Sometimes we have to use words that might be misunderstood, but *tibba chanda* means an intense desire, a sharp intention. A true *Samaṇa* must generate an intense desire for the training of higher virtue (*adhisīla-sikkhā*). Similarly, he must generate an intense desire for the training of higher mind (*adhicitta-sikkhā*)—concentration. He must generate an intense desire for higher wisdom (*adhipaññā-sikkhā*). This is what belongs to the monks. Having shown this, the Blessed One then gave a simile that contains a wonderful, subtle irony. "Monks, sometimes a donkey follows behind a herd of cows, crying: 'I too am a cow! I too am a cow!'" The Pali phrase used by the Buddha there is *aham-api amhā, aham-api amhā*. The Buddha used these words to sound like the braying of a donkey, yet they are not meaningless words. *Ahaṃ* means 'I', and *amhā* is the plural verb "we are" (meaning "I too am among them"). Saying *aham-api amhā, aham-api amhā*, this donkey follows right behind the herd of cows, meaning "I too am one of you, I too am one of you."

"But, monks, that donkey has neither the color of the cows, nor the voice of the cows, nor does it walk in the manner of the cows. Yet it follows behind them braying, 'I too

am a cow! I too am a cow!' In the same way, monks, a certain monk in this Dispensation follows behind the community of monks, saying: 'I too am a monk! I too am a monk!' (*aham-api bhikkhu, aham-api bhikkhu*). Yet, in that monk, there is no intense desire (*tibba chanda*) for the training in higher virtue, no intense desire for the training in higher mind, and no intense desire for the training in higher wisdom." This is how the Buddha presented the sutta. "Therefore, monks, you should train yourselves thus: 'We will generate an intense desire, a strong determination, a powerful aspiration for the undertaking of higher virtue, higher mind, and higher wisdom.'" This teaching also helps us understand the duty of a *Samaṇa*—what the task of a *Samaṇa* is, in the Buddha's own words.

Next, there is another valuable sutta whose very name contains the word *Samaṇa* used in an indirect sense—the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā Sutta*. There too, the Blessed One gives a profound explanation of a *Samaṇa*—what his ultimate goal and his practice should be. It is a very long and deep sutta indeed. We will attempt to present it briefly as fits the occasion. It begins as follows: There was a monastery in Sāvatthī called Mallikārāma. Queen Mallikā had built this hall, Mallikārāma, as a place for various wanderers and sectarians to meet and discuss.

While the Blessed One was residing in Sāvatthī, the wanderer Uggāhamāna, son of Samaṇamaṇḍikā, was living in this Mallikārāma with a large crowd of wanderers. Often, as noted in our books to show the lack of restraint of these wanderers, they would be making a great noise, engaging in various low, worldly talk (*tiracchāna-kathā*). When they saw the Buddha or a monk or a lay disciple approaching, they would quieten one another, saying, "Be quiet, be quiet," to show restraint. On one occasion, there was a very faithful carpenter in Sāvatthī named Pañcakanga—perhaps so called because he constantly used five tools. One afternoon, Pañcakanga the carpenter set out to see the Blessed One. But on the way, he realized: "At this midday hour, the Blessed One and the monks will be resting or in quiet meditation. Therefore, I should go a bit later. In the meantime, I will go to Mallikārāma, meet the wanderers, have a discussion, and then proceed."

When he went there, the crowd was quieted, and the wanderer Uggāhamāna said: "Oh, here is our master carpenter Pañcakanga!"—or whatever they called him at the time. After he sat down, Uggāhamāna expressed his view, as if expecting a response: "If a person does no evil deed with the body, speaks no evil word, thinks no evil thought, and maintains no evil livelihood, I declare him to be a supreme *Samaṇa*, accomplished in the highest wholesome state, one who has reached the supreme state, unvanquished in debate, invincible."

Hearing this, the carpenter Pañcakanga wondered if this was correct. But he did not reply. Neither accepting nor rejecting it, Pañcakanga the carpenter rose, went to the Blessed One, and reported the matter—what the wanderer had said. Then the Blessed One declared: "If what the wanderer Uggāhamāna says is true, then a tiny infant lying on its back would be a supreme *Samaṇa*. For a tiny infant lying on its back does

not even have a concept of 'body', so how can it perform an evil deed with the body, except for mere wriggling?

"Similarly, an infant lying on its back does not even know what a word is, as it cannot yet speak. So how can it speak evil words, except for crying? Crying is the infant's language. Furthermore, an infant lying on its back does not have thoughts that can be called 'intentions', except for smiling without cause. We assume there is some internal intention through that smile, but other than that, the infant has no capacity for conceptual thinking. Fourthly, an infant lying on its back has no other livelihood than drinking its mother's milk. That is its livelihood. Therefore, according to the wanderer Uggāhamāna, a tiny infant lying on its back would be a great *Samaṇa*, invincible in debate!"

Then the Blessed One explained how one becomes a true *Samaṇa*. He explained that practice in great detail. If we were to explain all of it, it might be difficult for you to grasp. But I will present the main idea. Principally, the Blessed One says: "I say that one endowed with ten factors is a true *Samaṇa*, one who has reached the supreme state." What are these ten factors? You all know the eight factors of the Noble Eightfold Path: *Sammā-diṭṭhi* (Right View), *Sammā-saṅkappa* (Right Intention), *Sammā-vācā* (Right Speech), *Sammā-kammanta* (Right Action), *Sammā-ājīva* (Right Livelihood), *Sammā-vāyāma* (Right Effort), *Sammā-sati* (Right Mindfulness), and *Sammā-samādhi* (Right Concentration). To these eight, when speaking of an Arahant, two more are added: *dasehi aṅgehi samannāgato arahā hoti*—an Arahant is endowed with ten factors. The other two are *Sammā-ñāṇa* (Right Knowledge) and *Sammā-vimutti* (Right Liberation). After completing the Path, it is through *Sammā-ñāṇa* and *Sammā-vimutti* that the Noble Path is completed.

Although we often speak of the eight factors, for the Arahant, these two are also mentioned: *Sammā-ñāṇa* and *Sammā-vimutti*. "I declare the Arahant who possesses these ten factors to be a true *Samaṇa*," says the Blessed One. In connection with this, another important practical step is revealed. A series of steps of great practical value is mentioned there. The path one travels until reaching that state emphasizes the four kinds of Right Effort (*sammappadhāna*). This is of central importance in the practice. The energy, effort, exertion, and striving (*padhāna*) we apply represent a special capacity within human beings that a small child lacks. The Buddha highlights this as something to be done by a *Samaṇa* until Arahantship is reached—namely, the four Right Efforts (*sammā-vāyāma*). You may have heard this Pali passage:

> *Anuppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ anuppādāya*
>
> *chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*
>
> *Uppannānaṃ pāpakānaṃ akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ pahānāya*
>
> *chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.*

Anuppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ uppādāya

chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.

Uppannānaṃ kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ ṭhitiyā asammosāya bhiyyobhāvāya

chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyaṃ ārabhati cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati.

The essence of these four statements always points to effort, exertion, and energy (*viriya*). It is fourfold. The first energy is applied for restraint (*saṃvara*): one must make an effort to prevent unarisen unwholesome states from arising. The second is abandoning (*pahāna*): one must make an effort to abandon and eliminate the unwholesome states already present within oneself. The third, looking forward to what we wish to achieve, is development (*bhāvanā*): one must exert energy to arouse and bring close unarisen wholesome states. Fourthly, one must make an effort to maintain, protect, and guard (*anurakkhaṇā*) the wholesome states already attained.

To make this clear, we sometimes use a modern analogy. When you travel and see a bridge being built, the first thing they do is pump out the unwanted water using pumps. Next, if it is a flowing river, they block the oncoming water with a dam. They remove the existing water and build a barrier to prevent more water from flowing in. Meanwhile, they bring materials and begin building the bridge or culvert. Having started, they then reinforce the rough structure by pouring concrete. This is what is indicated here. Thus, there is a fourfold aspect to energy, shown in this Dhamma as Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) or the four Right Efforts (*sammappadhāna*). Several highly valuable terms are found here: *chandaṃ janeti* (arouses desire), *vāyamati* (strives), *viriyaṃ ārabhati* (arouses energy), *cittaṃ paggaṇhāti* (exerts the mind), *padahati* (strives resolutely). We mentioned *chanda* (wholesome desire) earlier. The meaning of *chanda* in the Dispensation is the initial thought, desire, or interest to do something. To do anything, we first need the desire or interest to do it. It is difficult to generate this desire, especially regarding wholesome qualities. Generating a desire (*chanda*) for wholesome qualities is very difficult, whereas desire for unwholesome things arises naturally.

Once that desire is generated, the journey proceeds from there: *chandaṃ janeti*—one generates desire. Next, *vāyamati*—one strives. This striving is also synonymous with effort and energy. Yet we see a specific meaning in these terms. Every word of the Buddha has a deep meaning, showing how that striving gradually grows. First, the interest is generated; next, a certain striving is made. We can illustrate this with the simile of moving a boulder. If there is a large boulder blocking our path, the thought first arises: "I must remove this." Next, to see if one can move it, some initial effort must be made. One might place a lever underneath and try to lift it. Through that initial attempt, one's hands and feet gain a certain strength—a striving. This striving implies both the beginning of the work and the basic preparation for it.

After striving, when there is a feeling that it can be done, *viriyaṃ ārabhati*—one arouses energy. Energy (*viriya*) is a powerful word. The Buddha uses terms like "manly strength" (*purisa-thāma*) and "manly energy" (*purisa-viriya*). Unearthing that energetic power, one then applies oneself to the task. When doing so, when applying energy, obstacles must be expected in any task. In the face of those obstacles, some people weaken their minds and give up. But the wise person firmly establishes his mind at that moment; he brings forth his power of determination. After arousing energy (*viriyaṃ ārabhati*), in the face of obstacles, *cittaṃ paggaṇhāti*—he exerts the mind, establishing it firmly, thinking: "I will not give up until this is done."

Only after establishing the mind in this way does one apply striving (*padhāna*). The word *padhāna* is an extremely valuable word in this Dispensation. Though we generally treat it as a synonym for energy, there is a wonderful power of meaning in each of these words. Here, the Buddha is referring to the ultimate effort. We do not normally call this mere striving or energy; it is *mahā-padhāna* (great striving). *Padhāna* here does not mean 'chief' or 'primary' as in the Sinhala language. Though the sound is similar, in Pali it has a different meaning. *Padhāna padahati* means to apply oneself with absolute resolution, even at the risk of one's life. You may have heard of this ultimate effort in relation to the Buddha. When describing his ultimate effort, the Buddha said: "I applied an energy endowed with four factors (*caturanga-samannāgata-viriya*)."

We understand the four factors of the Buddha's determination through the words he used when making that resolution. It is said that at the foot of the Bodhi tree, in his final effort for Enlightenment, he thought: "Gladly would I let only skin (*taco*), sinews (*nahāru*), and bones (*aṭṭhi*) remain in this body; let my flesh and blood (*maṃsa-lohitaṃ*) dry up. As long as I have not attained what can be reached by manly strength, manly energy, and manly progress, there shall be no relaxing of my energy."

Why is this called fourfold? Skin, sinews, and bones are three factors. Flesh and blood make the fourth. Those three remain, while flesh and blood dry up. Based on this, the term "energy endowed with four factors" has come into use. This is the energy of striving (*padhāna*).

In daily life, in your work, businesses, or heavy physical labor, you can understand this when such moments arise. When the mind weakens, if the task is something that must be done, that is when we say *cittaṃ paggaṇhāti padahati*—one exerts the mind and strives resolutely. That is when one bites one's lip, determined to do it even at the cost of one's life, like a man pushing a boulder. If it rolls back, it is dangerous. Not everyone can undertake such a task; that is when others step aside. While others run, fearing they will be crushed, the energetic person says, "No, I will do it," brings forth his energy, firmly establishes his mind, and pushes it over, even if he dies. That is *padhāna—padahati*. These four steps are thus mentioned. From this, we see that

to prevent unarisen unwholesome states from arising, we likewise need desire, striving, energy, firmness of mind, and the ultimate effort (*padhāna*)—an supreme exertion.

Similarly, to abandon the unwholesome, bad things already within us, to prevent new unwholesome states, to avoid them, to eliminate existing bad things, and to gather and bring close good things, we must exert the same kind of energy. Finally, to secure them. For the Buddha said: "I do not praise even the mere standing still (*ṭhiti*) in wholesome states, let alone their decline (*parihāni*)." This means that once this energy has begun, one must maintain it without break until the end is seen. Sometimes, a monk's satisfaction with what he has already attained is pointed out as a shortcoming. Satisfaction is good, but "I do not praise merely arriving at that satisfaction. I praise exerting more and more energy for the things not yet attained."

This shows how serious the task of a *Samaṇa* in this Dispensation is. The wanderer Uggāhamāna considered a person to be a *Samaṇa* merely by not performing evil deeds, not speaking evil words, not thinking evil thoughts, and not leading an evil livelihood—just like a tiny infant lying on its back.

Even today, there are certain views that attract many people. They think: "By merely folding our hands and feet, we can accomplish all of this." It is a common habit among young people to come to us, discuss things, and say: "Well, we do not commit any wrong." That is often their view. Taking it further, some might even consider the state of an infant to be the attainment of the paths and fruits. For the infant is innocent. But the Buddha has pointed out elsewhere—and even here—that the infant's wriggling, crying, smiling, and intense greed for its mother's milk all arise because of the defilements. The Buddha shows that these exist at the level of latency / underlying tendency (*anusaya*) brought from *saṃsāra* (the cycle of rebirth).

This Dispensation's task is a serious one because of the gravity of these underlying tendencies (*anusaya*) and taints (*āsava*) that have existed in our minds for a long time in *saṃsāra*. It is no easy task. Because it is not easy, the Buddha had to use such a large vocabulary to describe this energy—the story of energy. We mentioned how much effort is needed even to build a bridge. You know that work must be done on all four sides, in all four ways. If even one is lacking, the task cannot be accomplished.

Every moment presents itself to us in this way. Various obstacles come in the way of what we attempt to do. Similarly, if Nibbāna is the purification of the mind—if that is the noble goal shown by the Buddha—then on the path leading to it, a massive place is given to Right Effort (*sammappadhāna* / *sammā-vāyāma*). That is the practice; that is the Path. That is why this matter has been introduced here within a discussion on the Path: *Maggajino*. The Blessed One, through that fourfold energy, discovered that path and, in order to declare it to others, attained the state of *Maggajina* (Conqueror of the Path). The second—the Arahant—is the *Maggadesako* (Teacher of the Path), who can fearlessly and clearly explain what the supreme thing in the world is, through his own direct realization, without causing doubt in others. Thirdly, those

Sekha Noble Ones who are walking on the Path, practicing the faultless way of the Dhamma, dwelling in the foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), and making the necessary effort on that path.

Fourthly, we hear of those who have merely the outward appearance of the path, not knowing what the path actually is, yet behaving as if they are on it. Regarding them, the Buddha used a terrifyingly sharp, ironic simile, comparing them to a donkey following a herd of cows. Although the Buddha was deeply compassionate, he expressed a very subtle irony there. He gave the simile of a donkey following a herd of cows, braying *aham-api amhā, aham-api amhā*. We must reflect on what the task of a *Samaṇa* is. What did the Buddha present to the world through his Enlightenment (*Sambodhi*)? It is only then that we truly recognize the Buddha. Why were other ascetics and brahmins waiting for a Buddha to arise? Because they had a problem they could not solve. Those ascetics who had developed the absorptions (*jhāna*) and higher knowledges (*abhiññā*) could see hundreds of thousands of past births. They saw that we have come a long way in this *saṃsāra*. But they saw it just like going from one house to another. Due to the dogma of self-illusion (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), they held a wrong, permanent view of a soul: "I went through such-and-such lives in this way." Beyond that, although they understood to some extent that *saṃsāra* is suffering / unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), they saw no solution to it. It was the Buddha alone who, through the Four Noble Truths, revealed the true nature of the world to the world, through this deep Dhamma of Dependent Arising (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), which no one had understood or presented before.

Within those Four Noble Truths lies this existence. Taken as a whole, "in brief, the five grasping aggregates are suffering / unsatisfactoriness (*saṅkhittena pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā*)"—even if some are unwilling to accept this statement of the Buddha, it is the truth. For the Buddha showed that the continuation of *saṃsāra*, existence in *saṃsāra*, is entirely suffering / unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*). Next, the craving / thirst (*taṇhā*) for this existence—*taṇhā ponobhavikā* (craving that leads to renewed existence). At the moment of death, we pray: "May I get in the next life what I could not get in this life!" There is no satisfaction in craving / thirst (*taṇhā*). Because of that prayer, through those karmic forces, rebirth occurs—this is what the Buddha declared. That is why the Buddha declared that the eradication of that very craving / thirst (*taṇhā*)—the calming of that thirst—is Nibbāna. It is just like extinguishing a fire by removing its fuel. If we put straw or wood into a fire we want to extinguish, the fire only grows.

Similarly, the Buddha saw the efforts of the world to satisfy craving / thirst (*taṇhā*). In order to satisfy craving, all these graspings / holdings (*upādāna*)—all these things they hold onto—become further sheets of flame in which they themselves burn. *Sabbaṃ ādittaṃ*—"All is burning"—is what the Buddha declared regarding this. To his Buddha-vision, he saw that everything was on fire: the eye, the ear, the nose, and so on, were all burning. The extinguishing of that fire is what is declared here. To extinguish the fire, that craving / thirst (*taṇhā*) must be calmed. To calm that

craving, a complete transformation of one's personal identity, one's individual personality, must be made. That transformation is shown as the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path. We speak of the Path at the end of that practice, when it is complete. When the Arahant completes Right Knowledge (*sammā-ñāṇa*) and Right Liberation (*sammā-vimutti*), the ten factors are complete. Then the task—the task of the holy life—is complete.

In this way, let us try to understand the task of a *Samaṇa*. We can then understand whom the Buddha considered a *Samaṇa*, even though the word was used broadly during his time. If you are to protect the Dispensation, you must recognize the Dispensation. We hope you have been able to learn certain Dhamma points through this sermon that will assist you in this. Therefore, without losing your faith, you must develop your faith and strive to walk on this path of Dhamma.

Using the help and support gained from this Dhamma you have heard, the virtue you have kept, and the meditation you have practiced today to the best of your ability, you must strive to bring your meditation to fruition. Before the decline of this Dispensation, you must resolve to realize the noble paths and fruits—Stream-entry, Once-returning, Non-returning, and Arahantship—and realize the supreme, deathless Nibbāna. May all beings, from the lowest hell (*Avīci*) to the highest heaven (*Akaniṭṭhā*), who wish to hear and rejoice in such Dhamma sermons, realize their aspired Enlightenment (*Bodhi*) through this appreciation! With this aspiration, recite these verses.

"*Ettāvatā ca amhehi……*"