Pahankanuwa Sermon #163

English Translation

Translated from Sinhala

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(Pahankaṇuwa Sinhala Audio Dhamma Sermon No.125)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa

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

Pali Stanza:

"Na vāyameyya sabbattha, nāññassa puriso siyā;

Nāññaṃ nissāya jīveyya, dhammena na vaṇijaṃ care."

From:

Udāna 6.4: Paṭhamanānātitthiya Sutta

Dear Listeners,

The Buddha, the Teacher of the Three Worlds, reminds us that wisdom (*paññā*) must be utilized to firmly establish faith (*saddhā*) in the correct manner. Faith that is not backed by wisdom can even become blind faith or mere devotion. That is why the Buddha reminds us to always be vigilant about this. Today, we hope to present a sutta discourse that highlights the importance of this matter. The Udāna verse we chose as our theme today was delivered by the Buddha while he was residing in the Eastern Monastery (*Pūrvārāma*) in Sāvatthi. One day, the Blessed One arose from his evening meditation, stepped outside the gate of the Eastern Monastery, and stood there in seclusion. At that moment, King Pasenadi of Kosala approached, paid homage to the Buddha, and sat to one side. Just then, seven matted-hair ascetics (*jaṭilas*), seven Jain ascetics (*nigaṇṭhas*), seven naked ascetics (*acelakas*), seven single-robe ascetics (*ekasāṭakas*), and seven wanderers (*paribbājakas*) walked past that place with long hair, body hair, and nails, carrying loads of monastic requisites.

Upon seeing this, King Kosala immediately got up from where the Buddha was, turned in that direction, clasped his hands in reverence, and declared his name three times, saying, "Venerable sirs, I am King Pasenadi of Kosala." After they had departed, he returned, paid homage to the Buddha, sat down to one side, and said, "Blessed One, if there are any Arahants in this world, or those who have entered the path to Arahantship, these are among them." Then the Buddha said, "Great King, for a layman like you, who enjoys sensual pleasures, lives with wife and children, uses

Kāsi silk, perfumes, garlands, and unguents, and handles gold, silver, and money, it is difficult to know who are Arahants and who have entered the path to Arahantship."

Next, the Buddha presents four principles for recognizing individuals in the world. He states four extremely important points there. "Great King, it is through living together that a person's virtue (*sīla*) is to be understood." The word used there is *saṃvāsa* (living together). *Saṃvāsena sīlaṃ veditabbaṃ*. It is through living together that one can understand another's virtue. And that too, not in a short time, but over a long period; not by being inattentive, but through proper attention; not by one without wisdom, but by one with wisdom. That means one can understand someone's virtue through association. And that association is not for a brief moment, but for a long time. Not mere association, but reflecting deeply, applying the mind properly. Next, having the wisdom to understand it. That is the basic idea. In the same way, the Buddha declares three other matters. Conversation, talking—the word used there is *saṃvohāra*. Through trade/social intercourse/conversation, a person's purity is to be known. And that too, as mentioned before, not in a short time, but over a long period; not by being inattentive, but by being attentive; not by one without wisdom, but by one with wisdom. That is the second point.

Likewise, he states the third point as *thāma*—the strength to endure something in times of adversity, which is referred to as strength of fortitude and effort. One's firm, unshakeable nature to stand ground during severe crises is understood in times of adversity. *Āpadāsu thāmo veditabbo*. And that too, not in a short time, but over a long period; not by being inattentive, but by being attentive; not by one without wisdom, but by one with wisdom. That too can be understood. The fourth point: it is through discussion that a person's wisdom is to be understood. *Sākacchāya paññā veditabbā*. Wisdom can be understood through discussion. And that too, not in a short time, but over a long period; not by being inattentive, but by being attentive; not by one without wisdom, but by one with wisdom. When these four principles, which can be used as golden rules, were declared, King Kosala said, "Marvelous, Venerable Sir, wonderful, Venerable Sir!" and gave an illustration to show the truth of the Buddha's words. Only a short passage is mentioned there, and some interpret it in various ways. It is a matter that has been subject to some debate.

This king says, "Venerable Sir, I have spies. Thieves, cunning thieves. But I employ them as spies. They go to a province in disguise, create divisions, and bring about a situation where the king can conquer it. I only enter those provinces after those spies have gone and created that background. I invade those provinces. But those same spies, at a later time, wash off the dust they gathered during those covert operations, bathe well, apply ointments, shave their beards, dress in white garments, and enjoy the five strands of sensual pleasure here and there in the country." This is all the king said. But there is more to think about: because those spies are loyal to the king, serving the king, no matter how much thievery and villainy they committed, they can appear in society like fine gentlemen. It must have been this recollection that made

King Pasenadi say, "What the Blessed One said is true. One cannot understand virtue and such qualities just by seeing them suddenly."

Next, the Buddha uttered a certain verse of solemn utterance (*Udāna gāthā*). That is the *Udāna* verse we highlighted. An *Udāna*, pious devotees, is an utterance of joy. Not always due to mere happiness. Sometimes, if an instruction can be given to the world based on a certain incident, the Buddha utters *Udāna* verses on those occasions too. Because the meaning of those *Udāna* verses is sometimes quite deep, they are not understood immediately. Sometimes they arise in connection with that story. But there is often a meaning in the *Udāna* verse that goes far beyond that. That is the verse we presented as our theme.

Na vāyameyya sabbattha, nāññassa puriso siyā,

Nāññaṃ nissāya jīveyya, dhammena na vāṇijaṃ care.

Let us try to understand these four lines. *Na vāyameyya*: one should not exert effort everywhere. There are places where effort should be exerted, and places where it should not. That is what is indicated here. One should not exert effort everywhere. *Nāññassa siyā*: one should not be another's man. The idea there is that one should not be another's servant, one should not belong to another. *Nāññaṃ nissāya jīveyya*: one should not live dependent on another, subservient to another. The final line: *dhammena na vāṇijaṃ care*: one should not trade in the Dhamma, one should not make the Dhamma a commercial commodity. This is the general meaning if we take it literally.

If we think about each of these in some detail—as we said, verses of this nature have a meaning that extends far deeper than the surface level. In relation to this story, we see that King Kosala had just arrived, paid homage to the Tathāgata, the Fully Enlightened One, and sat down, when those *jaṭilas* and *niganṭhas*, walking in groups of seven, went past and paid respects, and furthermore, he ultimately made a statement suggesting he thought they were Arahants. *Na vāyameyya sabbattha*—King Kosala had the notion that in all places, in every dispensation, there are Arahants. But the Buddha has declared to the monks on certain occasions: "Monks, roar this lion's roar without fear: 'Only here is the first ascetic (*samaṇa*), here is the second ascetic, here is the third ascetic, here is the fourth ascetic. Other dispensations of sectarian teachers are empty of ascetics. There are no ascetics in them.' Roar this lion's roar in this manner." The Buddha declared this to the Saṅgha.

Why is that? The states of the four paths and four fruits—Stream-entry (*Sotāpanna*), Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi*), Non-returning (*Anāgāmi*), and Arahantship—do not exist among other religions. Yet King Kosala, despite associating with the Buddha for so long, thought of all those *jaṭilas*, *niganṭhas*, *acelakas*, and *paribbājakas* as Arahants. Not only in those times, but even today, there is an era where some people, thinking about peaceful coexistence, argue that all religions say the same thing. Thus, even in this first phrase, we have a lot to contemplate. If we explain this according to

the Dhamma, on one occasion the Buddha declared the difference between wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) and right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*).

The Buddha made a very powerful declaration: *"Micchādiṭṭhiparamāhaṃ bhikkhave vajjaṃ vadāmi"*. "Monks, of all the faults in this world, I say wrong view is the greatest." Why did he say so? The Buddha declared this with reasons. This sermon can be considered in detail for that: "Monks, whatever bodily actions (*kāya-kamma*) a person of wrong view performs, they follow that very view; they become wrong actions. Likewise, whatever verbal actions (*vacī-kamma*) or mental actions (*mano-kamma*) they perform, they all follow that very wrong view they have grasped. Not only that, whatever intention (*cetanā*), aspiration (*patthanā*), resolution (*paṇidhi* - goal/aim) they have, and whatever preparations / Preparations / volitional activity (*saṅkhāra*) they accumulate, they all become characterized by wrong view. They all result in undesired, disagreeable, unpleasant, unappealing fruits, in suffering (*dukkha*) fruits." Having declared so, the Buddha then gives a simile. "Just as, monks, if a neem seed (*kohomba*), a bitter-gourd seed (*karavila*), or a bitter-melon seed is placed in moist soil, whatever soil-nutrients or moisture it draws in, they all result in a pungent, bitter taste and fruit. Why is that? Because the seed is bitter. What is the reason, monks? The planted seed is bitter. In the same way, all bodily actions, verbal actions, mental actions, and all those other things that arise from the seed of wrong view go towards the wrong side. The Buddha clearly declared that they have undesirable retributions."

Then he declares the other side. "Likewise, monks, whatever bodily action, verbal action, mental action a person of right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) performs because of that right view, they all follow that very right view. Likewise, whatever intention, aspiration, resolution, and preparations / Preparations / volitional activity (*saṅkhāra*) they generate, they all bring about desired, agreeable, pleasing, pleasant, happy retributions." Then he gives the simile: "Just as when a seed of hill-paddy (*häl*), sugarcane, or grape is placed in moist soil, whatever soil-nutrients or moisture it absorbs or utilizes, they all result in a sweet fruit. Such is the nature of right view. From this, we can understand how one experiences happy retributions."

Next, let us consider the matter of right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) and wrong effort (*micchā-vāyāma*), since it was said *na vāyameyya*—one should not exert effort everywhere. Therefore, before we apply effort, we must know whether this effort is being applied in the right place. Otherwise, no matter how much effort is applied, it is of no use. We have all heard the word *svākkhāta*. It means well-expounded. We refer to the Buddha's Dhamma as well-expounded Dhamma. Regarding other teachings outside of this, the Buddha refers to them as *durakkhāta*—ill-expounded. Next, the Buddha declares: "Monks, in an ill-expounded Dhamma-Vinaya..."—Dhamma-Vinaya, pious devotees, refers to the Dispensation. Someone declares a Dhamma, and at the same time, there is a practice that follows it. Collectively, this can be called Dhamma-Vinaya, or we may take it as the Dispensation. "One who has aroused energy in an ill-expounded Dhamma dwells in suffering (*dukkha*). What is

the reason for that? No matter how much energy they exert, there is no fruit from it; that energy is wasted. Therefore, they dwell in suffering (*dukkha*). In an ill-expounded Dhamma, it is the lazy person (*kusīta*) who dwells happily." The lazy person means the indolent one. There is no work to do. So it was better for them not to make an effort, given their situation. "But regarding the well-expounded Dhamma, it is declared: in a well-expounded Dhamma-Vinaya, the lazy person dwells in suffering (*dukkha*), and the one who has aroused energy (*āraddha-vīriya*) dwells happily." There is the difference. For it is stated in the Dhamma: *āraddhavīriyassa pīti nirāmisā*—to one who has aroused energy in this dispensation, unworldly joy arises immediately. Through that, they proceed to concentration (*samādhi*), and ultimately to the paths and fruits. In this way, too, the difference between right effort and wrong effort is shown.

In an even more striking manner, the Buddha on one occasion illustrated this very point to the Venerable Bhūmija using four similes: that the effort exerted in an ill-expounded Dhamma is futile. It is a somewhat humorous simile. The Buddha presents it in this way: "Monks, if a disciple in a dispensation of eight wrong factors—starting with wrong view, wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, and so on—exerts energy, whether they do so with a wish..." "Wish" means desire. "If someone exerts energy in a wrongly expounded dispensation, or with wrong view, wrong intention, leading to wrong concentration, whether they do so with a wish, without a wish, with and without a wish, or neither with nor without a wish..."—this is analyzed in four ways because it is presented logically. "Even if they do so, there is no fruit whatsoever." To illustrate this, he then declares four similes to Venerable Bhūmija. "Bhūmija, suppose a man seeking oil pours sand into a vat, sprinkles it with water, and squeezes it. Whether he does so with a wish, without a wish, with and without a wish, or neither with nor without a wish, he cannot get oil by squeezing sand. That is a futile effort." This is the first simile.

Next, he gives the second simile: "A man seeking milk goes to a young cow and pulls her by the horn. Whether he does so with a wish, without a wish, with and without a wish, or neither with nor without a wish, no milk comes. Squeezing a cow's horn does not produce milk." Then he gives the third simile: "A man seeking butter pours only water into a churn and keeps churning it with a stick. No matter how much he churns, no butter comes." He gives the fourth simile: "A man seeking fire takes a fire-drill..."—in those days, they had fire-making sticks, known as the upper stick (*uttarāraṇi*). They produced fire by rubbing two sticks together. "He takes the fire-drill and rubs it against a wet, water-logged piece of wood. No matter how much he rubs, no fire comes." These are the similes given for futile effort, the similes for futile exertion.

Then, regarding the effort of one with right view, the similes given for ascetics and brahmins who possess right view, right intention, and so on—one can easily imagine the opposite side. "A man seeking oil pours sesame seeds into a vat, sprinkles them with water, and squeezes them. Whether he does so with a wish, without a wish, with

and without a wish, or neither with nor without a wish, if he squeezes, oil comes—when sesame seeds are squeezed with water. Next, the second simile can be understood without being told explicitly: from where does a cow's milk come? One must pull the udder, not the horn. If one pulls the udder, whether with a wish or without a wish, milk comes. The third simile: to get butter, one must pour curd, mix it with water, and churn it. The fourth simile: one must rub the fire-drill against a dry piece of wood." Thus, these four similes illustrate this very same point. From this context, we can understand the meaning of the statement, "One should not exert effort everywhere."

Next, why was it said, "One should not be another's man"? Because those cunning thieves, due to their loyalty to the king, commit all those thefts and crimes, and in the end, they bathe well and behave like gentlemen. What aided that behavior was their status as royal officers/men. One should not be subservient to another. One should not be another's man, another's servant. A deep meaning is given there. In the next line, it is said: *nāññaṃ nissāya jīveyya*—one should not live dependent on another. Associating with rulers and kings, one sometimes becomes compelled to perform improper actions. On the other hand, because the king employed those spies, instead of punishing them, he allowed them to roam around the city in that manner. Thus, this highlights the danger of being subservient to another.

The fourth point is somewhat difficult to understand: *dhammena na vāṇijaṃ care*—one should not trade in the Dhamma. The hint obtained from this story is that there were five groups of seven in that crowd: seven *jaṭilas*, seven *nigaṇṭhas*, seven *acelakas*, seven *ekasāṭakas*, and seven *paribbājakas*, walking in single file. There are not many details about the reason for their journey. Perhaps we can imagine that at that time, wealthy merchants and others built halls for various sectarian groups to meet and discuss. On those occasions, gifts and offerings were given to them. We do not know if they were carrying their requisites after receiving such a gift. In any case, this may have been the reason for the Buddha's statement, "One should not trade in the Dhamma." If we contemplate this deeply, we can understand that one should not make the Dhamma a commercial commodity. We can understand this through a discourse the Buddha delivered to Venerable Ānanda regarding a teacher of the Dhamma. The Buddha says, "Ānanda, teaching the Dhamma is no easy matter. A Dhamma teacher should teach the Dhamma having established five qualities within themselves. The Dhamma should be taught with the thought, 'I will speak in a progressive sequence (*anupubbikathaṃ*)'."

You devotees may have heard of progressive discourse (*anupubbikathā*). It consists of talk on giving (*dāna-kathā*), talk on virtue (*sīla-kathā*), talk on heaven (*sagga-kathā*), talk on the danger of sensual pleasures (*kāmānaṃ ādīnava*), and so on. If one only expects personal gain, one might stop at the talk on giving. Instead, it must be done with the intention of leading them all the way to Nibbāna through a progressive discourse. Likewise, *pariyāyadassāvī*—showing the reasons and causes. Not merely talking, but explaining with reasons and causes. Next, *anuddayataṃ*

paṭicca—arousing kindness and compassion towards the listeners. Next, *na āmisantaro*—without expecting material gain, without teaching with the thought, "May I receive such and such requisites from this!" Furthermore, it is said that one should teach without hurting oneself or others (without praising oneself and disparaging others). The Buddha on one occasion told Venerable Ānanda that one should teach the Dhamma after preparing one's mind in these five ways. Likewise, at another time, he declared the difference between an impure Dhamma teaching and a pure Dhamma teaching. An impure Dhamma teaching is explained as follows:

Suppose someone thinks before preaching the Dhamma, "Oh, if only these people would listen to my Dhamma! If only they would be pleased, and out of that pleasure, give me requisites and so forth, how wonderful that would be!" Preaching with such a thought is an impure Dhamma teaching. It is like selling the Dhamma. Next, the pure teaching is declared. What is a pure Dhamma teaching? "This Dhamma is the Blessed One's. It is not mine, it is the Blessed One's Dhamma—well-expounded (*svākkhāta*), visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*), timeless (*akālika*), inviting trial (*ehipassika*), leading onward (*opanayika*), to be personally experienced by the wise (*paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi*). When I preach this Dhamma, let them listen! Having listened, let them understand! Having understood, let them practice!" Preaching with such a reflection on the nature and truth of the Dhamma, and with kindness and compassion towards the listeners, is indeed a pure Dhamma teaching. From these, we can understand why the Buddha declared, *dhammena na vāṇijaṃ care*. It means not giving prominence to material gain. The Buddha has declared to the monks: *"Dhammadāyādā me, bhikkhave, bhavatha, mā āmisadāyādā"*. "Monks, be heirs to my Dhamma, not heirs to material things." Therefore, one must preach the Dhamma with the intention of being heirs to the Dhamma, not with the thought of gaining the material things that the Buddha received. That is what is contained in those matters.

Next, we mentioned that the Buddha declared four principles like golden rules. Let us look at that next. Those four matters are actually not explained or analyzed in this short sutta. But in other suttas that compile Dhamma matters, such as in the Book of Fours in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, the Buddha preached these four matters in detail. Therefore, we have the opportunity to say something more about them than the brief mention made earlier.

There, the Buddha preaches all four of those matters to the monks in general. Regarding the point, *saṃvāsena sīlaṃ veditabbaṃ*: "Monks, why was it said that virtue is to be understood through living together?" If someone associates with another for a long period, and does so with proper attention (reflection) and wisdom, they understand: "This person's virtue is broken, punctured, blotched, and stained. This person is unvirtuous." They understand it thus. Through associating with another over a long period with reflection and wisdom, they understand: "This person possesses an unbroken, pure, and clear virtue." That is how it is stated there. Next, the second point is mentioned: *saṃvohārena soceyyaṃ veditabbaṃ*.

That "purity is to be known through social intercourse/conversation" is explained in more detail. Through speaking with another over a long period, one understands: "This person says one thing to one person, another to two people, something different to three people, and something completely different to many people. There is no purity in this person. Their speech is deceptive. This is a deceptive person, an impure person, without principles." They understand it in this way, through associating and conversing over a long period. Similarly, when observing a good person, one gets to know: "If this person says something, they sincerely abide by it in that very manner." Such is the detail regarding that.

Next, the third point about adversity: "It is in times of adversity that a person's *thāma*—their power of endurance, their fortitude—is to be understood." It is stated that when one is hit by the loss of relatives (*ñāti-vyasana*), loss of wealth (*bhoga-vyasana*), or loss to disease (*roga-vyasana*)... that is, when relatives are lost, pass away, or meet with accidents; when one's wealth and possessions are destroyed by sudden accidents or calamities; or when one faces the calamity of illness. When these arise, this person does not reflect that the world constantly revolves around the eight worldly conditions (*aṭṭha-loka-dhamma*). The world revolves around the eight worldly conditions, and the eight worldly conditions revolve around the world.

Speaking of the eight worldly conditions, the Buddha mentions in several places that these eight worldly conditions consist of gain (*lābha*) and loss (*alābha*), disrepute (*ayasa*) and fame (*yasa*), blame (*nindā*) and praise (*pasaṃsā*), pleasure (*sukha*) and suffering (*dukkha*). *Yasa* and *ayasa* mean having retinue/influence and not having it. Then blame and praise, which everyone knows. Then pleasure and pain/suffering. These four pairs make eight. The Buddha has declared that these eight revolve around the world, and the world revolves around these eight. This is a very unusual saying. Yet this person, instead of realizing that this is the nature of the world, weeps, wails, beats their breast, faints, and falls into such grief. Through this, one can know over a long period of association that this person lacks the quality of fortitude (*thāma*) in times of adversity.

Next, regarding the other person—the good person—when faced with such loss of relatives, disease, or wealth, they reflect wisely: "This is the nature of the eight worldly conditions." Keeping their mind balanced accordingly, they do not fall into weeping, wailing, and fainting. To understand these eight worldly conditions, a simile might be useful, so we will say this: we do not have the ability to give similes like the Buddha. In these times, there is something in children's playgrounds called a Ferris wheel (*kathuru oñchillāva*). Think about a Ferris wheel. Let us say there are seats hanging from eight spokes. Parents go and place their little children on them, and the child sits there without any fear. Why? Because they know that whether it goes up or down, they will not fall. They won't fall upside down. What is the reason? As the seat goes up, it adjusts itself accordingly. In this way, we have to understand—this is a rough simile. If it is appropriate, think of it accordingly. We must think of the eight worldly conditions like a Ferris wheel. That is what the Buddha declared:

these eight worldly conditions revolve around the world, and the world revolves around the eight worldly conditions. In this way, we can understand adversity. Sometimes, when we have such weaknesses, we can remind ourselves that the Buddha has declared: *āpadāsu thāmo veditabbo*—it is in times of adversity that we can know whether this strength exists within us or not.

Then the fourth point: *sākacchāya paññā veditabbā*—wisdom is to be understood through discussion. The Buddha gives a very unique simile for this, a subtle simile.

This is how it is shown. First, the Dhamma point is stated. Through discussing with another over a period of time, one understands: "By the way this person brings up points, presents arguments, and responds to questions, it is clear that this person is not wise, but foolish." For this person does not bring forth those deep, peaceful, sublime, beyond-logic (*atakkāvacara*), subtle Dhamma categories that are to be experienced by the wise. Likewise, if this person preaches any Dhamma, they lack the ability to explain it briefly or in detail, or to analyze and expound upon those matters. Therefore, one understands: "This person is foolish, not wise." Here is the simile given. The Buddha gives a very unique simile here. A man with sight, standing by a lake or a pond, sees a small fish rising to the surface. Let us say it is a *kaṇayā* (dwarf snakehead). A *kaṇayā* comes up. He is watching from a distance. Yet from the way the fish surfaces, the ripples it creates in the water, and the speed at which it comes up, that man with sight understands: "This is not a big fish, it is a small fish." The word *kaṇayā* is not in the original text. For some reason, we used this word as a simile for a small fish. It should be understood as a small fish.

Then he gives the other simile regarding a wise person. Through discussion, one understands: "By the way this person brings up points, presents arguments, and responds to questions, this person is wise." Why? Because they present those deep Dhamma matters, beyond logic (*atakkāvacara*), which are to be known by the wise. Moreover, they are capable of explaining, clarifying, and expounding those Dhamma matters briefly or in detail. Here is the simile for that: A man with sight is watching. While watching, a big fish—let us say a *lūlā* (striped snakehead)—comes up. From the way that fish comes up, the ripples it makes, and the speed of its ascent, that wise man reflects: "This is not a small creature. It is a large fish." It is in this manner that a wise person is to be understood.

If this matter is not understood correctly, one might even mistake the small fish for a large fish. This is something that happens very often in the world. Therefore, we must understand another's wisdom and intelligence through wisdom. The Buddha has given certain indicators to understand this. Why? Because as we said before, if we do not recognize wrong view correctly, and if we do not choose the person to associate with correctly over a long period, sometimes our entire life becomes dark. We have exerted effort in the wrong place. We have chosen the wrong person. Such an understanding comes, and that is why the Buddha has given us these hints to recognize people in the world. Whether lay or ordained, when we live in society, the

question that arises is: whom should we associate with? Whom should we not associate with? Whose Dhamma should we accept? And where should we exert effort for our liberation? Everyone has this question. The Buddha has highlighted these matters to help us. We must reflect on them with wisdom.

So we have now highlighted all four of these matters. First, we spoke of virtue. Through that, one who lacks stable principles can sometimes sway their disciples to show that their own practices are correct. Similarly, nowadays, those of other religions, in accordance with the wrong view they have taken and their wrong conduct, direct others to that side, and their followers incline in that very direction. Next, the matter of purity: honesty, adherence to principles, and unshakeableness. These are the basic principles the Buddha has highlighted to recognize these things in society.

Next, to bring out one's stability and fortitude during the loss of relatives, wealth, and disease that come in daily life. Finally, wisdom—it is through discussion. Because in a discussion, especially one in the form of questions and answers, if a person lacks the strength to participate, the shortcomings in their understanding automatically become clear. But if they have understood them deeply, if they possess those qualities, those matters become further clarified. From the way the fish comes to the surface, the ripples it makes, and its speed, one can understand whether it is a big fish or a small fish. We must contemplate based on this hint. We hear that this is an era where various amazing wrong views are spreading in the Sambuddha Sāsana, an era where the Dhamma is being distorted in astonishing ways. It appears that the Dhamma is being subjected to various distortions not only by external religious forces but also by our own people.

The Buddha has pointed out that there are two factors that help in the arising of right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*): *"Dveme, bhikkhave, paccayā sammādiṭṭhiyā uppādāya"*. There are two conditions for the arising of right view. What are the two conditions? The first is the voice of another (*paratoghosa*), and the second is radical attention / wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*). *Paratoghosa* means one must get to hear the Dhamma from others. One cannot realize the Dhamma on one's own. One hears or reads the Buddha's Dhamma from someone. That is *paratoghosa*. But right view does not arise merely because of that. What must one do for that? Radical attention / wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*). One must reflect wisely.

The word *yoniso* is also something very deep. We generally translate it as proper reflection. The Buddha has given humorous similes to understand what is proper and what is wrong—such as trying to get oil by squeezing sand, or pulling a cow by the horn to get milk. That was done in the wrong place. Instead of pulling from where the milk comes, he grabbed the wrong place. In that way, radical attention / wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) means proper, wise reflection. It is through that we can develop right view within ourselves. No matter how much Dhamma we hear, if we accept it merely saying "Sādhu" and "that is good," right view has not arisen. That

is blind faith. That is a cause for the arising of the aforementioned devotion, blind faith. One must reflect with wisdom.

In the Cūḷahatthipadopama Sutta, the Buddha has preached that for faith to become truly established, or for faith to be perfected, one must walk this path of practice. An elephant tracker, a seeker of elephants, an elephant catcher, upon entering a forest in search of a valuable elephant, sees elephant footprints. But he does not immediately conclude, "This is indeed the kind of elephant I am looking for." Yet he does not abandon his search either. He must go forward to find more evidence. As more and more evidence is found, that faith is confirmed. Finally, when he realizes it himself—at the moment of realizing the Dhamma of Nibbāna preached by the Buddha—he becomes completely certain: "The Dhamma preached by the Buddha is true." This is a truly wonderful Dhamma.

So that faith is helpful initially, as it is necessary for energy. At the end of every sermon, we always remind Buddhist devotees that in developing the Noble Eightfold Path and the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*), five factors are highlighted as spiritual faculties (*indriya*) and spiritual powers (*bala*): faith (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). Especially when attaining noble states like Stream-entry. Faith is needed for energy. Only if one develops proper faith (*ākāravatī saddhā*) can one apply energy in a fruitful manner. Next, based on that, one must arouse mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Therefore, we must strive to walk this path of Dhamma.

We are familiar with the eight factors: right view, right intention, right speech, and so on. But other religions also have their own sets of practices. The Buddha refers to them as wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), wrong intention (*micchā-saṅkappa*), and wrong effort (*micchā-vāyāma*). They also say, "We too have concentration, we too have liberation and knowledge." They too are not idle. But the Buddha shows with causes and reasons that these end in delusion. That wrong knowledge is not knowledge at all; it is ignorance. Wrong liberation is not liberation; it is a false liberation. Therefore, merely having eight factors does not make the efforts of other religions lead to Nibbāna. It does not bring about the true Nibbāna, liberation from Saṃsāra. But in the Buddha's Dhamma, this Noble Eightfold Path is designated by the term "Sammā" (right/rightly/perfect). *Samyak* means inclined to the correct side. If done properly, it ends in right knowledge (*sammā-ñāṇa*) and right liberation (*sammā-vimutti*), which is the liberation achieved through the supramundane path-knowledge. This is the path that leads to the liberation of Nibbāna. The Noble Eightfold Path we mentioned here is also known as Virtue (*Sīla*), Concentration (*Samādhi*), and Wisdom (*Paññā*).

The Buddha has declared the qualities of this Dhamma as well-expounded (*svākkhāta*), visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*), timeless (*akālika*), inviting trial (*ehipassika*), leading onward (*opanayika*), and so forth. Because this Dhamma is well-expounded, its results are visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*). It can be seen

right before one's eyes in this very life, according to the measure of one's practice. From the moment one enters this Dhamma and fulfills the practice, one realizes to some extent at each point that this is correct. One must enter into it. It is not something to be done merely through words and logic. Thus, the benefits of virtue are understood by the one who guards virtue. The one who develops concentration understands its benefits. In this way, we must understand that because it is well-expounded (*svākkhāta*), it can be seen right before one's eyes in this very life. For that very reason, it is timeless (*akālika*); its results can be seen without delay. It is *ehipassika*—there is a power in the Dhamma, an amazing power, as if saying "come and see." The Dhamma poses a challenge to put it into practice and see. According to this nature of the Dhamma, a person inclines towards it and puts it into practice. The appeal "come and see" (*ehipassika*) can be made without fear because the Dhamma has an acceptable nature, proceeding according to wonderful, matching causes and reasons.

Next, *opanayika* (leading onward) is something even more special. The Dhamma has a nature of leading from one step to the next, drawing one towards the other. That is what the Buddha declares on some occasions:

> *"Sammādiṭṭhissa, bhikkhave, sammāsaṅkappo pahoti.*
>
> *Sammāsaṅkappassa sammāvācā pahoti.*
>
> *Sammāvācassa sammākammanto pahoti.*
>
> *Sammākammantassa sammāājīvo pahoti.*
>
> *Sammāājīvassa sammāvāyāmo pahoti.*
>
> *Sammāvāyāmassa sammāsati pahoti.*
>
> *Sammāsatissa sammāsamādhi pahoti"*

It goes on like this, explaining these factors. Especially for a person who has attained right view, right intention arises almost effortlessly according to these natural laws of the Dhamma. Think about it: after the Buddha points out what is good and what is bad in relation to right view, the train of thought of the person who trains themselves accordingly follows that very path. You are familiar with the ten-factor right view (*dasa-vatthuka sammā-diṭṭhi*). That is one aspect of right view, from a saṃsāric perspective. The other side is the deep right view regarding the truth. In any case, once that view is established in the mind, the train of thought that follows it—that is, right intention—arises automatically. Following that right intention, right speech follows. In this way, there is a path of practice within this that systematically aligns through cause-and-effect relationships. One must strive, without thinking that it is impossible. That is why, at the final moment, when Venerable Ānanda was reflecting, "How can we cope? Now that the Blessed One has attained Parinibbāna, this dispensation is leaderless, a dispensation without a teacher," the Buddha said, "Do

not think so, Ānanda. Whatever Dhamma I have taught and Vinaya I have laid down, that will be your teacher when I am gone."

According to that, we must think that as long as this Dhamma and Vinaya exist, it is as if the Buddha is still present with us. So no matter what stories there are, based on this Dhamma we have received—in the past, during the Buddha's time, some realized the paths and fruits even without having this much Dhamma. Now we have before us a considerable amount of the Dhamma preached to various individuals according to their character—a vast amount of Dhamma. Actually, we do not need this much to put it into practice. If we have understood the basic parts that are correctly grasped by our mind, we must engage in this work from that point. Only the one who engages in it can reach further understanding at each step, like the person who went in search of the elephant. As for the qualities of this Dhamma: well-expounded (*svākkhāta*), visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*), timeless (*akālika*), inviting trial (*ehipassika*), leading onward (*opanayika*). Then, *paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi*—that is why it was said: the truth of this Dhamma must be understood by each wise person individually.

Treating this statement of the Buddha as an invitation to put the Dhamma into practice, you too must strive for that. Why did we make such a statement on such a valuable day? In these times, there is an intellectual attitude towards the Dhamma that is limited to various arguments and debates—like trying to capsize ships from the dry land. They try to understand the deep matters of this Dhamma through logic alone. But devotees, as the Buddha has shown, we must build some concentration (*samādhi*) based on virtue (*sīla*). It is with the help of that concentration that insight meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*) must be developed. They proceed systematically. Through that insight meditation, on one hand, is the realization of the Four Noble Truths; on the other hand, the realization of the paths and fruits is the moment one personally experiences the three characteristics of impermanent / inconstant (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and not-self / non-self / unsubstantial (*anattā*). To go towards that, each person must arouse interest. The Buddha has shown the necessary factors for all of this. At the time of his Great Passing (*Mahāparinibbāna*), the Buddha summarized the Dhamma he had preached from direct knowledge throughout his life as the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*). The thirty-seven factors of enlightenment, devotees, consist of seven groups. You may have heard of some of them.

The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), the Four Right Efforts (*cattāro sammappadhānā*), the Four Bases of Power (*cattāro iddhipādā*), the Five Faculties (*pañcindriyāni*), the Five Powers (*pañca balāni*), the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), and the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya aṭṭhaṅgika magga*). When these seven groups are taken together, there are thirty-seven factors.

At the final moment, what the Buddha presented as "the Dhamma I have preached all this time" were these very groups of Dhamma that are to be understood practically by a person. These are not merely objects of the intellect. They are things that can be

recognized by putting them into practice. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness is not something to be learned from books alone. The Four Right Efforts is not something that should be limited to books. These are things to be put into action and understood by the individual. When viewed from a practical level, what the Buddha called "the Dhamma" are indeed these thirty-seven factors of enlightenment. Therefore, regardless of book-knowledge, if one engages in the work, one can recognize these thirty-seven. Sometimes, a practitioner (*yogāvacara*), without reading books anew, understands while practicing the meditation subject, "Ah, this indeed is what is being said." In that way, we must develop the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment shown by the Buddha.

These days, many people speak to us about the danger of this Saṃsāra. Thinking only about present life and the calamities and disasters in it, some speak of this Saṃsāra in a terrifying manner. Some say they have understood suffering (*dukkha*). Regardless of whether they have understood it, some even come searching having understood it to some extent. But the Buddha has shown this suffering (*dukkha*) far beyond that. In this extremely long Saṃsāra, for an infinite time, in an even more terrifying manner, we have gone on being born and dying in this Saṃsāra, subjected to the suffering (*dukkha*) of birth (*jāti*), aging and death / decay and death (*jarāmaraṇa*), sickness, and death. For those who believe the Buddha's word, even hearing such a sutta discourse generates great spiritual urgency (*saṃvega*). Now, many devotees seek Nibbāna having generated a spiritual urgency that lasts only for a few days due to a bomb blast or a sudden disaster.

But for devotees who think deeply and regard the Buddha's word as the truth, this is nothing new. We must reflect that that spiritual urgency (*saṃvega*) is only our beginning. From that point on, what we must do is apply effort in the correct manner at the correct place. Without trying to milk a cow from the horn, if one exerts effort in a true dispensation, in the Buddha Sāsana, then, as the Buddha declared, one can experience in this very life the qualities of this Dhamma: visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*), timeless (*akālika*), inviting trial (*ehipassika*), leading onward (*opanayika*), and to be personally experienced (*paccattaṃ veditabbo*). If the Buddha's word is true, we have traveled in this Saṃsāra for a long time, not only as humans but as animals, ghosts (*petas*), demons (*yakshas*), and occasionally as devas and brahmas, exerting futile efforts to satisfy our craving (*taṇhā*). The Buddha declared that this craving (*taṇhā*) cannot be satisfied in that manner. By eradicating the ignorance (*avijjā*) that is the cause of craving (*taṇhā*), we must stop this running after the mirage.

Having made such a determination, through the power of practice engaged in today, and with the help of this Dhamma sermon, may you make the right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) you exert successful. With the help of the association with noble friends (*kalyāṇa-mitta*) and by making your Dhamma listening and meditation successful, may this merit of preaching the Dhamma act as a strong supportive condition (*upanissaya*) for quickly realizing the noble paths and fruits of Stream-entry

(*Sotāpanna*), Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi*), Non-returning (*Anāgāmi*), and Arahantship, thereby realizing the supreme, deathless, great Nibbāna!

Today, through fulfilling these practices, guarding virtue, and practicing meditation—through the accumulation of merit gathered through all of this—let us strive to bring an end to this suffering (*dukkha*) of Saṃsāra. Likewise, if there are any sentient beings from the Avīci hell up to the Akanīṭha heaven who are waiting for Nibbāna by rejoicing in this merit of preaching and listening to the Dhamma, may all of them, by rejoicing thus, be comforted by the supreme, deathless, great Nibbāna through a Bodhi of their aspiration! Reflecting thus, recite these verses.

"*Ettāvatā ca amhehi……..*"