

FOREWORD

At a time when Buddhism is spreading fast across the globe, it is our intention to make the general public acquainted with the great teachings of the Lord Buddha.

Whilst listening to a sermon is the ideal way of going forward in the path of Dhamma, some may prefer to read it at their leisure and comprehend the teachings at their own pace and time. Then there may be those who are weak in their faculty of listening, so the only way they can understand it is by reading a text or a Dhamma book.

These transliterations are available for all those who wish to have an understanding of the Lord Buddha's teachings in order to find true salvation.

****This work is a transcription of the sermon held in 2017-09-17. There may be the odd omission or inclusion inadvertently due to quality issues of the audio or deliberate editing to make the text more readable.**

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KEY WORDS

Prathyavèkshàva

Gatha/ Stanza

Litmus test

Cause & effect / hetu pala wadaya

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

2017-09-17

Àrya

In our lives we have done so much *sankhàra*, expecting to be born as human beings. That is what we wished for, hoped for, and worked for. And now that we are born as a human being, we try and distance ourselves from human beings as much as possible. The irony of this is quite striking, and I think that is because, throughout *sansàra*, we have been coming along and finding birth, finding existence in various forms. We have been animals, we have been *Dèvas*, we have been Brahmas, we have been human beings, even in this birth. But ever since we entered the clan that is Àrya, we have found a new existence, a new type of birth. We have been reborn. You do not have to necessarily don robes to be an Àrya. *Riya* is a vehicle, and if you want to stop that vehicle, then you are an Àrya. In Sinhala, if you put the letter 'ah' (අහ) in front of a word, then you get the opposite of that. What is this vehicle? It is the vehicle that we have been going through in *sansàra*. So, if you understood the Dhamma, and made a firm decision and determination that this *sansàra* has only brought me pain and suffering, I have no desire to go through this *sansàra* again, then you are an Àrya.

Lord Buddha's teaching

But that understanding only comes with an understanding of the reality. The reality that the Lord Buddha comes into this world and teaches us *anicca, dukka, anatta*. So, it is always *anicca, dukka, anatta*, and Nibbàna that we talk about in our discourses and nothing else. Because that is the ultimate gift that we can offer you, for all the alms that you offer to the Mahà Sangha, for all the worshiping that you do, for all the love and care and attention that you give to the Mahà Sangha. Whatever you have to offer, you give us the best and the most that you can offer, so therefore, is it not our duty to offer you in return, the best that we have? And the best that we have, is not necessarily how you can go to a heaven in the next birth, because there are a lot of monks who talk about that. There is nothing wrong with that, but there is something

even more valuable, something even more worthwhile that we can offer, and that is Nibbàna. This is why, The Lord Buddha did not for a moment say,

“You can find ultimate happiness, ultimate bliss in becoming a Dèva or a Brahma.”

He said,

“There is not a pin drop or a pinhead, in this entire universe where you can find ultimate happiness and ultimate bliss.”

And He said in His own words,

“This is why I say, you have to attain Nibbàna. This is why I preach Nibbàna.”

The Lord Buddha also says,

“If there was even a tiny bit of happiness anywhere in this universe, I would not be preaching Nibbàna to you today.”

All of you are very busy people. I was one as well. Now I am a lot freer than I used to be. I had diaries full of appointments, people to see, places to go and things to do. I was always head down in front of a computer doing something, speaking to someone, trying to play the world the way I wanted it. It took me a while to realize that I was playing a game of poker. Sometimes I won, or at least I felt like I won, when it seemed like things were working out in my favour. But little did I realize that it had nothing to do with what I wanted it to be, that it was not working out how it was, because I wanted it to be like that. It was only because there were causes that gave that effect. That is why The Lord Buddha talks about **cause and effect** or **hètu pala wàdaya** (□□□□ □□ □□□□). I realized that happiness comes when you stop seeking happiness, when you stop going after it, when you stop the pursuit of happiness, therein lies happiness. When I understood that, that is when I decided that enough is enough, and this is why I am now practicing a much simpler life. No responsibility, except for the responsibility I have to The Lord Buddha and to you. Why? Because as I said, you do all of this for me, for the Mahà Sangha, expecting only one thing in return, and that is for me to fulfil my task. My Nirvàna.

Our common goal

Fortunately, that is what I want, at least as much as you. And that is what The Lord Buddha expected of me. Therefore, there is no clash in objectives. There is no clash in goals. Whereas in worldly life, everyone wants to get something. You go to a supermarket. You want to buy something. The shopkeeper wants your money, you want the goods. The supplier wants their money. The shopkeeper might not want to discount. I want a discount. Everyone wants a different part. The tax man wants his money. The Government wants their bit. So everyone wants a part of something. But once you enter the stream that takes you to Nibbàna, everyone wants the same thing, and that is to attain Nibbàna. No one is pulling in different directions. We are all pulling in the same direction; therefore, the journey becomes much easier. If the path is clear and you are walking in the path, then there is nothing to stop you. As long as you have the determination, you have the energy, you have the effort, you put in the effort to achieve that, nothing is going to stop you and nothing is going to get in your way. So, this is what we all expect and strive for.

There is something that I have been thinking about of late. When I came into this monastery, the Chief Monk in the monastery offered me one of his chalets or *kuti*. There are few of them in the monastery, and sometimes we share it with one or two other monks. This is too much room for one person. Every time I think about this, I am reminded of my time as a lay person. When I used to go on holiday, and we booked a hotel online, we tried to find the one that has the most space. The one that gives you the most luxury, the biggest bed. A single bed is not good enough. Even if you are just one person, you want a king size bed. It might be that I am only staying one day, but I want the most that I can afford for my money. I checked to see the different types of breakfast that they offer. Is it a fixed menu or a buffet breakfast? I always wanted more. What was offered was never enough. This is why I would look on one website, and then go to another website and compare them. If it is the same hotel, do they offer more for the same price?

Live carefully

But now it is very different. Now, a few of us have given up this chalet, and we found a home under a tent, and that is where we spend the night now. We have informed the Chief Monk that this is too much for us. I do not need a roof over my head. I just need some kind of shelter. As long as it does not rain, as long as there is some kind of shelter when the sun is scorching hot, and there is something to protect me from the elements, that is all I need. A mattress is good enough. I do not need a bed. One meal is all I take now, and that is perfectly sufficient. I have been doing that for about 8 months, even before I became a monk. I thought that this is going to be tough. How can we survive on one meal? So I tried it as an experiment. You as *upāsakas* may be trying to practice this. You may include some of these practices in your own lives. So, I am guessing you will come across the same decisions, you will come across some of the same challenges as you walk that path.

One of the challenges I had was my friends and family. When I started to cut my meals down, they got really worried, and they said,

"How are you going to survive on one meal a day?"

So, I wanted to prove to them that three meals a day is not what my body needs. My body needs one meal a day. My tongue and my mind need three meals a day. And I proved it to them. How? I did everything I used to do on three meals, on one meal. That included catching the tube to go to work, walking several hundred yards to and from the station, going to the gym after work and spending an hour at the gym every other day. I made it a point not to give up anything, because I wanted to prove, both to myself and to those that were concerned. Yes, I did lose some weight. I was 80 kg when I started, and now I am down to 62 or 63 kg. But then they said,

"My God, you have lost a lot of weight"

So I pulled up the BMI chart, measured my height and measured my weight, and I was perfect. Perfectly healthy weight. So I said,

"Where is the problem now?"

I was perfectly fine. I did not have any issues with my health, I was not feeling weak. In fact, I was feeling much healthier. I was feeling much better within myself. Why?

Because my body was not struggling to digest all this food that I was constantly feeding it, previously, before I made the decision to cut my meals down to what my body needs to function. I now realize that my body was a machine that converted food to faeces. That was all my body was. Convert food to something that I pass out.

But now, since I cut my meals down to essentially what I need, to just get the nutrients I need, not satisfy my tongue or my mind, this is now a machine that helps my mind, that supports my mind to achieve its purpose, and that is to attain Nibbàna. I did all the work at home, cleaning and washing up. I changed nothing, and I was perfectly fine. So, for others who might be interested in trying, you know how people say, *"it is really difficult to lose weight"*,

Buddhism offers the perfect aid, a perfect solution for that. You do not have to go to these classes that charge you many thousands and millions of Rupees or Pounds. They put you on these diet plans. You diet two days a week, and then eat to your heart's content the other three days, and then diet another two days. Scrap that. You don't need that. Just eat what your body needs. You can start by stopping snacks. You know how when you walk past the kitchen, you feel like,

"Hmm, what is in the drawer?"

Or you just walk into the kitchen and you open the fridge to get a bottle of cold water, or maybe the milk, and you see a box of chocolates. What do you do? Automatically your hand goes there. When you get that desire, make a contract with your mind. What is a contract? A contract is ideally something you do to get something back, right? So the contract is this:

"Okay, fine. I will give you what you want. But first, let's have a little bit of a chat."

You can have this chat in your mind. And it goes something like this:

"Why do you want that chocolate?"

"Because I am hungry"

"Really? Okay. So, go and have some rice then."

"But I just had rice."

"But I thought you were hungry"

If you are hungry, you should be able to eat anything. Your mind plays tricks on you like nobody does. You know how people get annoyed when other people trick them? Like if someone tries to take your money by fooling you, or tries to take something that belongs to you, by tricking you or tries to underhand you, you get really annoyed. You get really upset.

"How can you do something like that to me?"

Plant the seeds of wisdom within you

Sometimes people go to courts for things like that. But we forget that the biggest trickster is within ourselves. It is our mind. The mind plays tricks on us like nothing else, like nobody else. So, when it says, *"I am hungry"*, ask a question;

"Okay. Go and have a glass of water."

Isn't that going to fix the problem? Have some plain rice. Isn't that going to fix the problem? Although when you go to a restaurant, and you think, *'What am I going to have? What am I going to order?'* and your mind is looking at plain white rice, there is fried rice, there is biriyani.

"Oh! biriyani. Okay."

So what are you now trying to feed? Why did you come to the restaurant? Because you are hungry. Okay. So if you are hungry, why do you need biriyani? Why do you need fried rice? What is wrong with plain white rice? I am not saying that every time you go into a restaurant you have to have plain white rice. If you go with friends and family, they will probably think that you are a stingy fellow. You look at the cheapest option on the menu and say,

"Let's have plain white rice"

That is not what I am saying, but get into a habit of having those discussions with yourself, because that is the way to win this war. The *ràga, dvèsha, mòha* that is in your mind is always fighting with you. It is always fighting with the wisdom which is within you. Part of your mind is still under delusion, is still suffering from ignorance. But as people who practice this Dhamma, as people who listen to this Dhamma, that will most definitely be the seed of wisdom that has been planted within you. You have got to let that plant grow. And to allow that plant to grow, you need to feed it. With water and with fertilizer, in a metaphorical sense. In reality, what you need to do is,

give it a chance to grow, give it sunlight, give it a bit of love and tend to it. You tend to it by allowing it to have a conversation with you. So, before you jump into anything, have that conversation.

“Why do you need it? What are you trying to do, by taking this food?”

What did The Lord Buddha say, take food for? When we take our food, we remind ourselves,

Prathyavèkshàva

Pati sankhà yòni sò - Pindapàthan pati sèvàmi nèva davàya

*Na madàya Na mandanàya na - Vibùsanàya Yàvadèva - Imassa kàyassa
dhèethiya*

*Yàpanàya vihinsùparatiyà - brahmachàriyànuggahàya ithi purànancca vèdanan
patihankàmi*

Navancca vèdanan na uppàdessàmi - yàthra cha mè bhavissati

Anavajjanà cha vàsuvihàròchati,

Translation;

I do not take this food for pleasure.

I do not take this food to grow my body and build my muscles and be muscular.

I do not take this food to pleasure my taste buds.

I take this food for one purpose, and one purpose alone.

If I have suffered from any ailments, from any discomforts due to malnutrition or not having the right nutrients, not taking enough food, then may this food comfort me.

May this food allow me to practice the path of this Dhamma.

Practice this path of Nirvana, and remove any discomfort that may arise in the future.

That is why we take food. Food is a medicine. Why do we not see food as a medicine? And something that we do in this monastery, we take all our food in the same bowl. There is rice, pumpkin, fruit, fish, chicken, papadam, dhal curry, ice cream, yogurt,

coffee, chocolate, everything together. If I have understood that food is medicine, say you prescribe medicines to a patient; you have to take this for diabetes, this for blood pressure, this for cholesterol, and this for something else you have, and you have to take it after meals at night, they don't say, okay, first one, water, second one, water, third one, water. What do you do? They just take all of it together, put it in and drink a glass of water. There is nothing wrong with that, right? Why? Because it is medicine. What is so different with food then? As soon as it goes past your tongue, you have no idea what happens to it, and it is all going into the same place. Once it's there, it's all together anyway. What is the big deal about having to separate all of it before, just for the time during which it passes your tongue? What is the difference? That is your delusion fighting with food that does not taste well.

Litmus test for rāga dwēsha mōha

"Ooh, that does not taste very nice"

Hang on a second. I thought we took food for the purpose that we described before. We should remove any discomfort that has occurred in the past, so that it does not come back again, and to remove any discomfort that may come in the future to keep myself free from any ailment, any diseases, and to practice this path to Nirvana. It does not matter what flavour it is. What flavours are the tongue sensitive to? Sweet, sour, bitter, salt? The four primary tastes. Let's say, you are eating a mango curry. You might taste it and say,

"(□□□□ □□□□□□□ □□□□ □□□). It is not sour enough"

You do not say,

"It doesn't taste like mango." (□□□□ □□ □□ □□□)" □□□□□ □□□□□□□□

□□□□

We say that, it doesn't have a sour taste in it, or there is not enough salt in it. Why are you actually saying it? You are saying,

"I can taste the four or five basic fundamental tastes, and I am sensing that something is not enough."

So, what you are essentially saying is that these are the four or five things that you can taste. Mango taste is something that you create in your own mind. Your tongue is not

sensitive to mango or pizza or sausage or chocolate. It is something that you create in your mind, because you know you are eating mango, and as soon as you know you are eating mango, your mind is now thinking,

"What mango have I tasted in the past? Ah, now that's what it needs to taste like"

Now you take all those tastes that come to your tongue, you mix it all together, and now you have something to compare with. You have a taste that you have had in the past, you have the taste that you are experiencing now, and now you start this comparison. If it tastes as good as the best mango you have ever tasted, great. If not, you say,

"Hmmm, I don't like it"

So, where does that comparison come from? From your own mind. But we don't realize this is happening. Why? Because we don't allow for that plant to grow, you don't give it time to get that sunlight. And to give that sunlight, essentially, just have that conversation before you complain about something. Before you say,

"I need to go and eat something that is not my main meal."

No. This is why I said, you can start by stopping snacks. Then you can cut down to, say, two meals a day. It is not like taking a U turn which might be difficult. That's how I did it. I just decided, right that's it, one meal a day. Stopped everything else. It was difficult at first, but I had made up my mind. I was thinking to myself, if a mind can be so strong and have such determination to become a Sammà Sambuddha, what am I trying to do here. So, I will take one meal. That can't be so difficult, because minds can have so much power and so much determination to decide,

'I am going to sit down under this Bòdhi tree, let my blood and my bones and my muscle rot and decay. I am not going to get up from this place until I have attained my goal, my aim, and that is to become a Sammà Sambudhdha.'

If a mind has so much power, what am I trying to do? Cut down on snacks. Cut down on meals that I do not need. But you don't all have to try and do that. Do it gradually, and then come to a point where you decide,

"Okay, I am doing fine on two meals a day."

Then maybe for a week, try one meal a day to see if it works. And if you're thinking,

"Yes, I'm doing perfectly fine."

Then you can come to the conclusion that all this time, I have been taking food unnecessarily. What happens when you take food unnecessarily? You have to then treat that ailment as well. It is like you take so much medicine, now you have got to treat your kidneys and your liver. Now, if you take too much food, then you obviously have to treat yourself again for high cholesterol and high blood pressure, for this, that and the other.

These things are good experiments for us. I know I still have some more to go, so I am always using everyday situations to test how far I have come. Every day, every situation is a litmus test for me. How much more *ràga, dvèsha, mòha* do I have in me? Are there still things that I come into conflict with? Are there still things that draw me, with so much desire and so much lust? How far am I from Nibbàna, and how did I react to that situation yesterday, to how do I do it today. Do I handle that situation better? Do I still feel the same fire within me? *Ràga gini, dvèsha gini, mòha gini*, or do I feel that I quenched that fire a little bit, that I have put it down a little bit. If so, I am walking on the right path, and I am making progress. If I feel that it has got worse, then something is wrong with the way I practice.



00.09.25 Àrya

00.11.16 Lord Buddha's teaching

00.15.15 Our common goal

00.18.52 Live carefully

00.25.42 Plant the seeds of wisdom within you

00:28:21 Prathyavèkshàva

00:31:12 Litmus test for *ràga dwèsha mòha*

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