

Wheel Publication No. 38

The Lamp of the Law

#xcerpts from Gurulugomi's
Dharmapradīpikā

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Piyadassi Thera*



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Being selected excerpts from

Gurulugomi's Dharmapradīpikā

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&

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**Buddhist publication Society
Kandy • Sri Lanka**

The Wheel Publication No. 38

SL ISSN 0049-7541

First Edition: 1961

Second Impression: 1982

BPS Online Edition © (2008)

Digital Transcription Source: BPS Transcription Project

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Introduction

In the early forties when the second world war was being waged in all its fury, two bhikkhus lived away from the haunts of men in the quiet solitude of a forest hermitage (*Samarasiṃhārāmaya*) at Telijjavila in South Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), passing their days in quiet contemplation and study. A book that interested them much was a Sinhala treatise on the Dhamma, Gurulugomi's *Dharmapradīpikā*; so great was their fascination with the lucid exposition that they decided to put into English selected excerpts from that celebrated work. One of them, the Venerable Soma Thera, is no more. Meeting ends in parting (*saṃyoga viyogantā*).

Dharmapradīpikā, which may aptly be translated as Lamp (*pradīpikā*) of the Law (Dharma), is a sort of commentary on the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*, the "Chronicle of the Tree of Enlightenment", written in Pāli by that erudite author, Upatissa Mahā Thera.

Judging from the style of language it can be said that the *Dharmapradīpikā* was written either toward the end of 12th century A. C. or beginning of the 13th century. As our author himself says in his other work, *Amāvatura*, the "Perennial Spring", *Dharmapradīpikā* is a work dealing with the doctrine (*Dhamma*) of the Buddha while *Amāvatura*

speaks of the life of the Buddha.

Gurulugomi explains with skill and taste two hundred and five Pāli quotations, or rather terms, from the *Mahābodhivaṃsa*. Some of the explanations are terse, but many others are written at length. These elucidations are not written in unvarying tone, but have change and variety. While making clear the Dhamma terms he introduces charming and informative stories from the Buddhist Canon, and adorns his work with copious, suitable quotations, both verse and prose, from the Pāli and Sanskrit. Though it is easy to trace the origin of the Pāli quotations, scholars have found it difficult to trace some of the Sanskrit verses to their original sources. Some are from the works of āryaśūra, śāntideva, Harṣa and the logician, Dharmakīrti.

Gurulugomi is renowned as one of the rare masters of Sinhala classical diction and style. His translations have the verve and freshness of something vitalisingly original. His elucidations are smooth, natural and convincing. His descriptions, even of the most unlikely things, have vigour, and can hold the reader's attention. Though he is not known to have written any work of poetry, his *Amāvatura* is a prose-poem of deep feeling, lucid and dignified.

Dharmapradīpikā testifies to the range and quality of the author's knowledge of Pāli and Sanskrit wisdom, his dexterity of choice, and his grasp of the subtleties of the Buddha's teaching. Though it bears the title of a scholium to a book of religious history, it is also intended to be a

handbook of instruction on practical points of doctrine.

It may be stated that this is a free translation to which a few quotations from other sources also have been added.

The Buddhist Publication Society merits a word of praise for making this translation available for the large number of their readers, at home and abroad.

Piyadassi

Colombo 5,
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Ceylon (Sri Lanka)
November 1961

I — The Vision of Suffering

Vibrant with compassion for sorrowing humanity, the Wise Being working for perfection, thought, “Without a perceptible starting-point is the wandering on through birth and death (*saṃsāra*); fearful are the states of misery; hard to get at is human life, and in the other remaining kinds of existence good cannot be wrought out well. My forebears accumulated much wealth but flitted hence taking not a copper with them; nor did they ever return to enjoy their treasure. Alas! They have been destroyed; they have missed the luck of getting the best out of a good rebirth.” In this manner, great beings in search of enlightenment view existence and making a gift of their possessions to the world depart for the homeless state of lone endeavour in self-mastery.

What is wandering on (*saṃsāra*)? Penetrating into the centuries and the millenniums with his unclouded knowledge, the Master knows the non-perceivable as such; he knows the limits of knowledge. Through the assured understanding of clear insight into the limits of the knowable, he has declared that a first beginning and a last end of beings faring on in the interminable sea of birth and death cannot be known, cannot be perceived. Wandering on

(*saṃsāra*) is just the succession of the mental and bodily aggregates (*khandhānaṃ paṭipāṭi*) of birth-bound beings whirled between the imperceptibility of the beginning and the imperceptibility of the end.

In this wandering on, this journeying in incalculable time, the suffering borne by beings is colossal. How can one reckon all one's sorrows, life after life, through partings from the beloved, through union with the unloved, through death of dear ones, and through the loss of one's own health, and wealth, limbs and life?

In this sweeping on of life's stream, hard it is, says the Master, to find another who has not been one's own mother, father, brother, sister, son or daughter. Ay, every man might well have been bound to every woman, and every woman to every man, in this long trail of woe!

Where in the whole wide earth could be found a spot unpolluted of the dead? Somewhere in beings' endless flux some one might well have lain dead anywhere on the earth's face. To the Brahmin Upasālhaka, who was searching for virgin ground, for ground where no corpse had been burnt, the Master said,

“Just on this spot have been burnt the very
Corpses of Upasālhakas as many
As fourteen thousand; there isn't any
Place on earth that's not a cemetery.”

Every brand of suffering does one undergo through rebirth

in the diverse planes of becoming. And there is nothing in the world but suffering to one who sees life aright; for everything including the highest and most intense form of pleasant sensuous experience, is impermanent, fleeting, passing away. Therefore did the Foremost of mankind's truth-speakers declare: *all that is experienced is suffering* (*yaṃ kiñci vedayitaṃ sabbaṃ taṃ dukkhasmiṃ ti vadāmi*).

And in view of this absolute pain-laden nature of sentient existence the Master urges on his disciples the need for the complete renunciation of it, thus: "Beginningless is the wandering on through the round of rebirth; not to be known is the start of beings enmeshed by ignorance, gulled by craving; running on, speeding on through interminable births and deaths: and in this way, for long have you felt sorrow bitter and sharp, and made the graveyards bigger and bigger. Because of that should you turn away from all *karma* formations (*saṅkhārā*), cut them off, and become free of them."

Rare is Human Birth

During secular stretches of wayfaring in life, very, very rarely does one get human birth: "It is as if a man should cast into the wide ocean a yoke with a single hole in it, and that yoke should be carried hither and thither by the wind's impetuosity—now westward, now eastward, now northward and now southward. And say that a blind turtle comes to the surface once in a century. What do you think,

O monks, will that blind turtle shoot its head through that yoke-hole?"

"If Lord, after the passage of a long period of time it succeeded, then it would be a marvel."

"Quicker, O monks, will be the passing through of the head of that turtle through that yoke-hole, than the getting back to the human state of a man fallen into an existence of misery (*apāya*)."

Fully hard it is to accumulate merit when experiencing great suffering in states of misery: as an animal trembling with fear of death, at the time of seizure, by net, fish-snare and the like; as a draught-animal prodded by pointed goad and so forth; as a ghost tearful of face, subject to insatiable hunger and unquenchable thirst, with a mere skin-and-bone body and exclaiming ever and anon, "Alas, what woe!"

Thus owing to extreme suffering in the states of misery, and owing to intense delight and self-indulgence in the happy worlds of the shining ones, one does not accomplish well doing in both those sorts of becoming, those being unfit for such accomplishment.

But in the human state, through the conjunction of a fair measure of pleasant living, and the fellowship of the good, the door to merit is open. If one suffers as a human, there is every chance of that very suffering becoming a supportive condition for growth in insight, for the gaining of confidence in the truth.

In the fashioning of the sword of wisdom which destroys ignorance and the passions, suffering and pleasant living are like the water and the fire to which the smith resorts in forging a weapon and bringing it to efficiency and the right firmness. Human birth with its “tolerableness” becomes a suitable ground for producing skill. Yet if beings bear human form and have the nature of denizens, of states of misery, that is, of those tormented in hell, in the ghost plane or in the animal plane, then such beings do not accumulate skill. Three are the kinds of unfortunate beings in human guise and they may be known thus: the first by their readiness to kill and to commit all kinds of violence; the second by their lack of energy and consequent depression and misery; the third by their extreme sensuality, lack of independence of character, and by their transgression of the limits of decency.

Then, to which kind of human is it possible to get skill? Only to that kind which has established itself firm in human righteousness. And what is that righteousness? The state of being endowed with shame and fear to do evil; the settled reliance on the fact of moral causation, that is, that good action produces good consequences, and evil, bane; the knowing of what is, and what is not, conducive to one’s own weal; compassion toward other beings; plenitude of the heart’s upsurge to realize the good and the true according to actuality; the shunning of the action-course of unskill (*akusala*); the practice of the action course of skill (*kusala*).

One established in this manner enters the place of merit; for

him the way to the acquisition of worth is open; he grows in good. He becomes pure.

II — On Liberality and Virtue

Liberality is the first among the ten perfections (*pāramī*), [1] the four beneficent actions (*saṅgaha-vatthu*), [2] and the three great kinds of merit (*puñña-kiriya*), [3] it is a quality that all Bodhisattas possess in abundance, and a treasure of the Buddhas.

Givers are of three kinds: those who give away the coarse, and keep for themselves what is fine; those who share with others what they have, be it coarse or fine; those who give away what is fine and keep for themselves what is coarse. The first are those who give as to a servant, the second as to a friend, and the third who give as a master in a lordly way.

Wealthy folk who stint in giving are like rain clouds that do not empty themselves on the thirsty earth. Like clouds that burst over some particular area, in some folk tract, are they who give of their abundance to some particular person, sect or denomination. And those who give to all without distinction of caste, creed, colour, race or any other restricting consideration, are like those clouds which pour down their fertilizing contents on all parts of a country and

nourish all vegetal life.

A giver should be happy and satisfied at every stage of giving. Pleased and contented should his heart be while going to make a gift, while actually making the gift and after. Only in such circumstances does the full benefit or giving accrue to the giver.

Fivefold is the advantage of such giving: one becomes dear to many, wins the company of the good, one's fame spreads, one fulfils a duty of the household-life, and lastly one fares well after death.

Timely giving is of five kinds: the giving to guests, to those on the point of making a journey, to the sick, to the famine-stricken, and to the virtuous.

Gifts are properly given when they are handed over with respect, with dignity, not casually, and when they are given with belief in the effect of the gift, i.e. its moral efficacy.

Liberality should be practised not only with regard to human beings. Our dumb and forlorn fellows of the animal kingdom too must experience our liberality. All who are capable of benefiting by our gifts should be made partakers of our liberality.

Virtue

The giving of material gifts and alms, however, blesses only a few. But he who cultivates virtue blesses all sentient

beings. He makes to all beings the gifts of fearlessness by his stainless conduct.

Therefore, the Master taught thus: “Here, O monks, a disciple of the Pure Ones giving up killing is restrained as regards killing ... giving up theft is restrained as regards theft ... giving up sexual wrong is restrained as regards sexual wrong ... giving up untrue speech is restrained as regards untrue speech ... giving up drink is restrained as regards drink, and thereby blesses all sentient beings with the gift of security, non-hate, and harmlessness.”

That kind of conduct which brings happiness and ease of mind, which never gives room for remorse and repentance to come up, which leads to a good destiny and is the basis of the good life here and now is called virtue.

Killing

One abstains from killing other beings because one knows how dear life is to oneself; so infers that it must be the same for others. All happiness of men in this world depends on their lives. So to deprive them of that which contains all good for them is cruel and heartless in the extreme. Is it, therefore, a wonder that those who destroy others' lives bring on themselves the hate and ill will of those they slay?

Further, it is said in the books that those who kill will be struck by deadly weapons often in this life, and come to a terrible end generally. After this life the *kamma* of their

ruthless deeds will for long push them to states of woe. Should such destroyers of life be born in prosperous families with beauty and strength and other happy bodily attributes, still their *kamma* will dog them to an early grave. Therefore it is said:

“Tho’ born to treasure, grain and pleasure all
Tho’ dowered with the love-god’s grace of cast,
Who take away the lives of others’ fall
To early death unwilling; sure’s such blast.”

Neither in the sky, nor in mid-ocean, nor in a cleft in the mountains is that place to be found on earth, abiding wherein one may escape from (the consequences of) one’s ill-deed.

But those who refrain from the slaughter of beings, who are as it were protectors of all living sentient things, who give all other beings the gift of security are like mighty trees that shelter and shade man, bird and beast, with their myriad foliage.

Even though their lives be in grave peril, and death with all its terrors confronts them, they stand firm in their determination to save from harm all other forms that pulse with sentience.

In āryasūra’s *Jātakamālā*, the “Garland of Birth Stories,” we read that once when the *Bodhisattva* was hard pressed by enemies in hot pursuit, rather than get beyond reach of his pursuers by crushing an eagle’s nest full of eleven eaglets,

he turned back and went towards his enemies in order to save the small unfledged birds, saying to his charioteer:

“So turn back the car; better for me to die
Struck down by dreadful titan-clubs that loom,
Than live in blame; ashamed, as sure I must,
If I those timid fledglings send to doom.”

And he who thus abstains from slaughter of all kinds becomes himself fearless, calm and serene, pleasant of presence, beloved of all beings human, divine, and ghostly. Such a one truly approximates to the sage in character, for “Ever does the sage guard the things that breathe,” *“niccaṃ muni rakkhati pāṇine.*

Theft

Things which belong to another, things of which another is the master, are never wrongly taken by him who walks according to the Dhamma. To take things wrongly from others, violently or by compulsion or by deceit, is against all standards of decency and gentlemanly conduct. Says an olden book: *“paradravyaharanam ātmadravyasya vinās’ahetu”*—the wrongful taking of others’ substance becomes the cause of one’s own loss of goods. And again: *“Na cauryātparam mṛtyuypāsh’ah,”* worse death-trap there is none than robbery. For who robs and spoils others becomes subject to the king’s punishment and the people’s indignation, to endless suffering and tribulation. Therefore

should one avoid this evil action of wrongly taking others' property as one would avoid poison, fire, and fearful, deadly snakes. Who keeps the rule of abstaining from theft gains much in inner and outer well-being. He lives a happy life and fares well after death.

“Free from the gyve, the lash, the stick, the knife,
Free from the wrath of king, men's ire and blame,
Free from the loss of wealth, of limb, and life,
Full free from theft, the good gain, bliss and fame.”

Misconduct

He who abstains from sexual wrong is blessed with a heart that is ever at peace and serene, and a body possessed of strength and energy at all times. He is moving on towards higher ways of life, and nobler states of thought.

“Who chastely lives wins beauty, strength,
And good men's praise and boon of health;
His mind is clear and fit to tread
The Path to Truth; and he is wed
To noble thought, to kindly deed,
And speech that's pure; he sows the seed
Of virtues rare; makes all to sprout,
And blossom. Then rich fruit brings out.”

But sad is the fate of him who goes wrong sexually. He soils his own mind-flux and that of others. Therefore it is written by the poet:

“The matrix sure of every bane,
The bringer to states of dreadful pain,
Free love is. Dākini’s the name
Of wife not thine. Think not on such dame.”

False Speech

Who abstains from false speech wins the trust and confidence of many, and is honoured by those who know him. It is an abstention pre-eminently practised by the *Bodhisattvas*, the beings who are in search of perfect enlightenment. Of them it is said that they never utter untruth, in any circumstances whatsoever. The speaker of truth is free from fear and trembling in the midst of assemblies. He is ever courageous and firm, and unshakable even when confronted with the greatest hostility. He is strong with the strength of a mighty host in full panoply, because his heart is crystal-clear, pure and speckless. He is always pleasant and gentle, courteous and helpful, restrained and patient, a speaker who delights and calms others with the effortless eloquence of truth. Such a one may truly say of himself:

“Pure is my heart for all that’s true I think,
Clear, my mind; there no dark lies slink.
Clean my speech, rid of things that soil,
A smooth soft kindly flow of limpid oil.”

The liar is everywhere discredited. Who is shameless

enough to speak untruth, he has no virtue in his heart. There is no wrong that a deliberate liar cannot perpetrate. So say the books.

If one who has taken on the life of the homeless monk utters untruth, then by that very utterance one makes one's "monkhood" empty. "Empty, O Rāhula, is the life of that monk who shamelessly utters untruth," says the Master urging on his beloved son the importance of true speech in the holy life.

Further, it is said that the liar comes to get a bad destiny hereafter. He becomes dull, stupid, hideous of presence, repellent to others, and passes on to states of becoming where he loses the power of speech.

Intoxicants

One abstains from intoxicants in order to keep the mind free from confusion. Drink and drugs are destructive of right thinking, that is, thinking based on non-hate, non-violence, and renunciation. He who takes intoxicants becomes angry, cruel, infatuated. Therefore, the follower of the Buddha, knowing well the disadvantages of wrong thinking which follow intoxication, does not taint his mind with the poison of drink which burns out the germinal power of the seeds of good in his mind. Speaking of the evils of drink, āryaśūra in his *Jātakamālā* says:

"O lord of men, how canst thou e'er partake

Of that drink by which good qualities fully break,
Which stuns all worth, doth violence to good name,
Blurs mind's vision and drives out all shame."

Such is the treasure of virtue which men wishing for happiness should increase and protect. It is the right expedient for winning all good things here and hereafter.

All inner wealth has virtue for source. Like a rich mine which yields countless jewels virtue gives endless delight to the good man.

Virtue is the ground from which one takes off to the high place of perfect holiness.

Virtue is the charmed weapon to slay the passions, and the coat of mail that wards off all the blows of Māra.

Virtue makes life pleasant, imbues it with power and vitalizes and refreshes it.

Virtue is like the cool, cleansing, fertilizing rain.

The virtuous attain to the splendour of great renown, wealth and honour.

The man of virtue is always mindful and completely aware. At the moment of death he is free from all confused thinking and is calm and composed.

Because of these things that go along with virtue one fosters it, guards it, and protects it with the single-minded devotion of a mother protecting her only child, the apple of her eye.

III — Renunciation

Now a man endowed with the treasure of virtue begotten of his confidence in the Blessed One, sees the disadvantages of sensual pleasures, remembers how the Teacher impressed on his disciples the need for giving up sensuality—the low, common, worldly thing—by comparing it to a bare bone, a piece of flesh that produces strife, a flaming torch, a pit of fiery coals, a dream, borrowed goods, a fruit tree laid low when one is on it eating the fruits, and turns away from the world’s way. That man is like a mighty elephant speeding out of a burning wood. Stirred by the world’s ill, he hastens out of the confined life of the house to the life of homelessness, free and open as the spreading sky, with just one aim in view: perfection.

Then away from all disturbing worldly influences the giver-up of home lives the lonely life of the recluse according to the enfranchising precepts of restraint (*pātimokkha-saṃvara-sīla*).

He observes the precepts meticulously, seeing danger even in the smallest fault.

Seeing a form, hearing a sound, perceiving an odour, tasting a flavour, feeling some tangible thing, or cognizing an idea, he is not moved either towards or away from any object of consciousness. He maintains perfect equipoise putting afar all likes and dislikes. He subdues his heart. This control, this

guarding of the doors of sense (*indriyaguttadvāra*) he practises with zest.

He is moderate in eating (*bhojane mattaññū*). He takes his food right carefully, reflecting according to the Dhamma, all the while he eats. He knows that he does not eat for sport, self-indulgence, improvement of the body or for making it appear comely but merely for keeping the body unharmed for living out the holy life.

He is devoted to wakefulness (*jāgariyaṃ anuyutto*). Night and day he cleans his mind of all dross that may gather there.

Such a man is satisfied covering his body with a patchwork ascetic robe and stilling his hunger with what he gets into his bowl begging from house to house. He is compared to a bird. Like the wings of a bird are his bowl and robes and he goes whithersoever he lists, unhindered by the weight of many belongings, and without thought of leaving behind anything.

In all his conduct he is mindful and completely aware (*sati-sampajañña*). There is nothing done by him which is bereft of consciousness of purpose (*sāttthaka-sampajañña*), of advantage (*sappāya-sampajañña*), of fitness (*gocara-sampajañña*), of actuality seen steadily in the clear light of transience, suffering and soullessness (*asammoha sampajañña*). Doing all things, rightly and well, he grows in holiness. Of that recluse it is said:

“Who is freed in mind of all that is vain;

Not fickle; wise, with senses under rein;
He verily shines in his robe of rags,
Like lion in its cave midst the mountain crags.”

This searcher of the highest weal practises the burning out of the passions, the true *tapas*. He thinks: Others may harm, but I will become harmless; others may slay living beings, but I will become a non-slayer; others may wrongly take things, but I will not; others may live unchaste, but I will live pure; others may utter falsehood, I, however, will speak the truth; others may slander, talk harshly, indulge in gossip, but I will talk only words that promote concord, harmless words, agreeable to the ear, full of love, pleasing to the heart, courteous, worthy of being borne in mind, timely, fit, and to the point; others may be covetous, I will not covet; others may mentally lay hold of things awry, but I will lay mental hold of things fully aright. Energetic, steeped in lowliness of heart, unswerving as regards truth and rectitude, peaceful, honest, contented, generous and truthful in all things will I be. I will cherish mindfulness and wise penetration that is fully aware of the truth at all times, and will not be moved by the evanescent or grasp at it. Thus, he never acts slavishly like the unthinking herd.

Progressing in this way, shedding all dust by the intensity of practice that becomes keener and keener, he develops the Path of Mental Absorption (*jhānamagga*) by casting out the hindrances.

Seated in cloister cell, at the foot of a tree, under the open

sky, or in some other suitable place, he fixes his mind on a subject of meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna*) and by struggle, and unceasing effort washes out the impurities of his mind-flux and gradually reaches the first, the second, the third and the fourth absorption, and enjoys the benefit of his high attainment. Lastly with the power of concentration he has won, he turns his mind to the understanding of actuality in the highest sense, and when he knows that, clears himself of all defilements by the roots.

With that final clearing out he reaches the state where dawns for him the Light of Nibbāna, the calm beyond words, the “unshakability” beyond all thought, the freedom that is beyond all deeds, the sure and secure ground, the splendour that is imperishable, the happiness of stillness, of relief and perfect peace immeasurably deep and pure which can be overturned by nothing and by none, the highest truth.

That is the very crown of the homeless life; its greatest fruit. That is the thing for the sake of which young men of good family leave home for the homeless life. By that fruit all birth, old age and death are brought to an end, the pure life of holiness is lived out, all that must be done is done, and the world holds nothing more for one.

IV — The Heart of the Holy

Life

He who wishes to put out the fire of anger holds fast to restraint and control and never separates from the genial company of love. *Mettā*, that super-solvent among virtues, which causes all disharmony and luridity of mind to disappear.

Love

Ever is the loving one—*mettavādi*—one who draws in the claws of retaliation, and revenge in him. For him, all that irritates and makes for anger is as it were nonexistent. He holds himself well in, under the greatest provocation.

“Seeing well, he seems to be one blind;
Hearing well, he seems not ware of sound;
Knowing, he seems a fool of some kind;
Powerful, he seems to weakness bound.”

Effacing himself, expunging his propensities and tendencies to anger, he cools his heart with the water of love’s unfailing spring and sprinkles all whom he contacts with the self-same soothing potency.

Intact is the strength of one who keeps his heart in obedience to reason and strays not to ways of ill will, aversion and hate. He hurts not himself; he hurts not others.

He is a blessing to himself and to all else. He becomes beloved of all. His paths are made smooth. None envy him. Nobody is against him. Nobody grows jealous of him. He wings through life like a swan through the blue sky unhindered, an object of delight to all eyes.

Where such a loving one dwells, there all is at peace; for the loving one never interferes with others' rights, with others' freedom, with others' lives, in any way. He helps others in pleasant, kindly acts, endearing, encouraging, energizing and vitalizing all with his benign nature.

If in a woodland haunt such a loving one stays,
"The tigress seeing the lean young deer
Gives it suck as tho' it were its cub;
And serpents sun-struck for shelter steer
To the shade of pea-fowls' wings: mice do rub
Against the sides of deadly snakes for play
And through the fearful coils make their way."

says the poet, and continues thus:

"In forest glade anywhere does one such stay
Who spreads forth love grown great night and day
And by his thought all hatred does allay
In brute breast, homage him I pay."

Through love does the Blessed One tame all beings. It is with love that he overcame the hosts of Māra in the terrace of enlightenment. All violence and ferocity can be overcome

with love; it is the magic wand to quell the waves in men's unruly hearts.

Other kinds of spiritual emancipation are not equal to the sixteenth part of the emancipation of the heart through love. Through love one adds to the fund of human happiness, one makes the world brighter, nobler and purer and prepares it for the good life better than in any other way. There is no ill-luck worse than hatred, it is said, and no safety from others' hostility greater than the heart of love, the heart in which hate is dead.

Therefore, says the lovable śāntideva:

“How many I slay my foes as welkin vast!
Aye, if hate in my heart is slain my foes don't last.”

And again showing a way to overcome the thought of hate he in his own inimitable way says:

“Overlooking the missiles that hurt if I rate
At him who hurled them moved by force of hate,
Right better would it be to hate hate, which wove
The thought, which him to act of hurling drove.”

If one has developed love truly great, rid of the desire to hold and to possess, that strong clean love which is untarnished with lust of any kind, that love which does not expect material advantage and profit from the act of loving, that love which is firm but not grasping, unshakable but not tied down, gentle and settled, hard and penetrating as

diamond but un hurting, helpful but not interfering, cool, invigorating, giving more than taking, not proud but dignified, not sloppy yet soft, the love which leads one to the heights of clean achievement, then, in such a one can there be no ill will at all. So our books say that if one should say that he has developed mental emancipation through love, and has still hate in his heart he should be told, "Not so! Speak not thus ... Do not misrepresent the Blessed One ... Surely he would not say this was so!"

The power of love as illustrated by the life of the Buddha can be seen in many a story told of him. Among the best is that of Roja, the Mallian, who in order to escape a fine imposed on persons of his clan who did not visit the Buddha, undertook a visit to the place where the Buddha was living once, and then was drawn to the Master as a cow to its calf even before he saw him. That was an instance of the psychic power of love (*Mettā-iddhi*). The taming of the drunken elephant, Nālāgiri, of the demon ālavaka, the saving of Paṭācārā, Kisāgotamī and many another, of helping the greatly worried and dejected Culla Panthaka, Nakulapitā and so forth are all examples of our Teacher's love.

Love is an active force. Every act of the loving one, is done with the stainless mind to help, to succour, to cheer, to make the paths of others easier, smoother, and more adapted to the conquest of sorrow, the winning of highest bliss.

The way to develop love is through thinking out the evils of

hate, and the advantages of non-hate; through thinking out according to actuality (*kamma*) that really there is none to hate, that hate is a foolish way of feeling which breeds more and more of darkness that obstructs right understanding. Hate restricts; love releases. Hatred strangles; love enfranchises. Hatred brings remorse; love brings peace. Hatred agitates; love quiets, stills, calms. Hatred divides; love unites. Hatred hardens; love softens. Hatred hinders; love helps. And thus through a correct study and appreciation of the effects of hatred and the benefits of love, should one develop love.

Patience

A Perfect One is a patient one. Patience is of the essence of all holy living. Without this quality one cannot persevere in good, one cannot maintain oneself in harmlessness, in non-anger, in kindness; one cannot help others; one cannot become fit for full enlightenment.

Therefore does the Bodhisattva cultivate this virtue of patience at all times, in all circumstances, whatever befalls.

In the past birth stories of the Master we read that he bore up with unsullied heart dreadful punishment inflicted on him and with his dying breath blessed his torturer (Khantivādi-jātaka, No. 313). So deep set was this quality in him that even when reborn as an animal he displayed tremendous endurance and forbearance when put to severe pain.

The patient one becomes dear to all, beloved of all; he becomes freed of many faults. At death he is well-composed.

Patience and forbearance, says the Master, comprise the aim of a recluse.

“Bearing up is the best ascetic way,
Forbearing, the ceasing best, Buddhas say.”

And further, it is said:

“Who bears with a heart that’s from anger free
The gyve, the scourge, the rack, the stake, that one,
For whom his patience can an army be,
That one’s a man who unto worth has won.”

It is because folk are impatient of others that discord is rife in the world. Violence, spoliation, bloodshed, all these, source from hatred, the child of impatience. The patient one is ever forgiving, ever restrained, ever ready, to overlook others’ shortcomings, and to forget injuries, done to him. He cannot cherish revenge. He knows:

“Time-honoured is this law which says: “Never ended
Is hate by hatred here: but by non-hatred’.”

Therefore is it said:

“Just as the fragrant sandal-wood tree
Perfumes the axe which lays it low,
So the good man, willer of world’s weal,

Angers not though struck by cruel blow.”

V — The Buddha

Four incalculable aeons ago, our Buddha, as an ascetic full of knowledge and compassion, meeting the Perfectly Enlightened One, Dīpaṅkara, turned away from the Nibbāna that lay within his grasp as though it were saṃsāra. Thereupon entering the difficult track of suffering he completed the Perfections and was reborn in the Tusita realm. At the entreaty of the *Devas* and *Brahmas* of tens of thousands of world-systems he thereafter took human form at Kapilavatthu and in the maturity of manhood left home life for the homeless state. Then setting great energy afoot, seated in the pose of meditation under the Tree of Enlightenment, conquering Death, he attained omniscience.

His Virtues

The Perfectly Enlightened One who is called omniscient is endowed with boundless virtues. Inconceivable, incomparable, incomprehensible is the Perfect One’s beauty of form; so also the charm of his speech and the splendour of his wisdom. Therefore, he is beyond measure of thought, the reach of words, the range of similitude, the grasp of

knowledge. Though a Perfect One lauds his peer's virtues a whole aeon long, still would those virtues be unexhausted. Though put into the vast ocean, the capsule of a mustard seed, a crock, a pot, can take in only so much water as each can hold. In the same way those who enter into the ocean of Buddha-virtue can know only so much as the ability of each one of them allows. They cannot know that virtue in all its fullness.

Some of the virtues of a Perfect One are common to worldlings and to his pure disciples. Others are peculiar to him. Grass is the common food of herbivorous animals but when it is eaten and digested by the Gandhahatthi, 'the fragrant elephant,' it produces a four-fold aroma. So also the grace of form and the mental qualities of absorption, supernormal powers and the like passing into the Buddha flux become unique.

As the precious fat of lions does not keep in vessels not golden, so the ten powers, the four confidences and the like which are exceptional, abide not in a flux other than a Buddha's.

The beauty of form of an Omniscient One comprises the thirty-two marks of the superman and the eighty lesser characteristics that go along with them.

The charm of the speech of an Omniscient One is the instruction given with the voice endowed with the eight factors: clarity, intelligibility, agreeableness, worthiness of being listened to, smoothness of flow, the state of being

confined to the intended audience, depth, resonance.

His Wisdom

And in the pointing out and the laying down of the disciplinary rules, the distinguishing of the mundane and the ultra mundane planes, of relatedness, and the refutation of the views of alien sects, the Buddha's powers of speech spread strong as the lion's roar.

The splendour of the wisdom of an Omniscient One is that it penetrates to the very end of all that is worthy of being known in a thing. It resembles a red-hot iron which burns through to the bottom of a heap of dried leaves on which it is applied.

In the word of Venerable Sāriputta, the Elder, "Greatly wise, indeed, is the Blessed One, broadly wise, pleasantly wise, expeditiously wise, keenly wise, penetratingly wise; he is wise in skilful analysis, a realizer of the fourfold analytical knowledge, an arriver at the four confidences, a possessor of the ten powers, a man-steer, a man-lion, a man-elephant, a man-steed, a human burden-bearer, infinitely wise, infinitely majestic, infinitely glorious, rich, opulent, a leader and a tamer of men willing to be tamed; who makes others think aright, who makes others see Truth, who makes others glad.

Indeed that Blessed One is the creator of the uncreated path, the producer of the unproduced path, the revealer of the

unrevealed path, the perceiver of the path, the knower of the path, the expert on the path. Knowing, he knows; seeing he sees. He is as it were the eye incarnate; wisdom incarnate; the Dhamma incarnate; purity incarnate. He is the speaker, the best speaker, the giver of deep sense, the donor of the deathless, the lord of the Dhamma. And naught there is that the Tathāgata knows not, perceives not, realizes not, experiences not, by his wisdom.

To the extent of things worth knowing stretches the wisdom of the Enlightened One. All things become objects to him when he adverts, when he wills, when he attends, when he thinks. Open to him are all beings' inclinations, tendencies, behaviour, and dispositions. He knows beings, who are slight of passion and those heavy of passion; also known by him are those possessed of controlling faculties that are keen or soft, fine or coarse.

Blessed, worthy, fully-wake, endowed with wisdom and virtue, is the Tathāgata. Rich with the ten powers, the four confidences and innumerable such attributes is the Body of the Dhamma, which the Master realized.

Rid of greed, hate, and ignorance, he is blessed; endowed with many lucky qualities, he is blessed; seeing deep into the nature of things through penetrative analysis, he is blessed; spewing forth all passion, all wayfaring in saṃsāra, he is blessed.

Worthy is the Blessed One because he is free from defilement, because he has destroyed the foes of the

passions and broken the spokes of saṃsāra's Wheel of Becoming. Suited is he for the receiving of offerings because he does not do evil even in secret.

Realizer of the Truth without the aid of a teacher is the Enlightened One who has understood the Dhamma unheard of before. One who reached the very peak of the ten powers is he; one who has made others attain to the Truth. Through omniscience, through seeing everything with the eye of knowledge, through radiating measureless worth, through being numbered among the eradicators of evil, through separation from all soil, through assured freedom from the triple fire of lust, ill will, and ignorance, through treading the Sole Way to emancipation, through attainment of Uttermost Perfection, he is the Enlightened One.

The Ten Powers

The Master is the possessor of the ten powers, to wit: the knowledge of what is and what is not a particular cause; the knowledge of the effects of action in the three division of time, past, present, and future; the knowledge of the exact nature of wayfaring in the future to which every volition leads; the knowledge of the world comprising aggregates, elements and sense-bases; the knowledge of every being's dispositions; the knowledge of the hearts of others in regard to the controlling faculties of confidence, mindfulness, energy, and so forth; the knowledge as regards the falling

away from and development of the different kinds of absorption, emancipation, concentration, and attainment, and the emergence from them; the knowledge of past births; the knowledge of beings passing away and re-appearing life after life; the knowledge of the final extinction of the cankers.

The Four Confidences

The four confidences of the Master are: the calm, courage, and certainty consequent on the absolute impossibility for any recluse, Brahmin, god, Māra, or Brahma to disprove that the Tathāgata is supremely enlightened as regards those things mental about which he says that he is supremely enlightened (*Sammā-sambuddho*); the calm, courage, and certainty consequent upon the absolute impossibility for any recluse, Brahmin, god, Māra, or Brahma to disprove that the Tathāgata has eradicated those cankers which he says he has destroyed utterly (*khināsavo*); the calm, courage, and certainty consequent on the absolute impossibility, for any recluse, Brahmin, god, Māra, or Brahma to disprove what the Tathāgata says are obstacles on the Path to Deliverance; the calm, courage, and certainty consequent on the impossibility for any recluse, Brahmin, god, Māra; or Brahma to disprove what the Tathāgata says are things leading out of the swamp of saṃsāra to the firm ground of Nibbāna.

The Possessor of Vision

The Enlightened One is the possessor not only of the fleshly, the physical organ of sight, but of the divine eye by which the death and rebirth of beings, their faring on according to kamma is seen, the eye of wisdom by which all things in the three divisions of time are sensed aright, the enlightened eye by which the character and faculties of beings are understood and the all-seeing eye of omniscience.

“Nothing at all in the world is unseen
By the Tathāgata; unknowable by him is naught;
In all the wide world is there aught
Knowable? Sensed by him has all that been.”

Amongst all the jewels of the world the Enlightened One is the most excellent. The brilliance and glow of all worldly gems fade before the effulgence of the Buddha-sun which dispels the darkness of men’s abysmal ignorance. Therefore do gods and men hail him as the Teacher par excellence the illuminator of the clouded heart and the mist-veiled mind. Further is he called Teacher because he taught the way out of the world’s ills, and pointed the path across the floods of passion to the haven of Uttermost Safety.

Notes

1. The *pāramī* are ten essential qualities of extremely high standard, initiated by compassion, and ever tinged with understanding, free from craving, pride and false views, that qualify an aspirant for Buddhahood. They are: *dāna* — charitable giving; *sīla* — virtue or purity of conduct; *nekkhamma* — renunciation; *paññā* — wisdom; *virīya* — unflinching energy; *khanti* — forbearance; *sacca* — truthfulness; *adhiṭṭhāna* — resolution; *mettā* — loving-kindness; *upekkhā* — equanimity. [\[Back\]](#)
2. *Dāna* — generosity; *piyavacana* — pleasant speech; *atthacariyā* — selfless service; *samānattatā* — equality. [\[Back\]](#)
3. *dāna*—liberality; *sīla*—morality; *bhāvanā*—meditation. [\[Back\]](#)

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