

# 9

## *Dhammânussati*

The Recollection of the Dharma | **Vism 7.68-88**  
 Theme: The 6 virtues of the Buddha's true teaching  
 Translated by Piya Tan ©2006

### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 THE DHARMA AS TEACHING.

**1.1.1** Buddhaghosa, in the Vinaya Commentary, **Samanta,pāsādikā**, states that the Dharma as the Buddha's teaching comprises the following collections (*nikāya*):<sup>1</sup>

Dīgha Nikāya	the collection of long discourses,
Majjhima Nikāya	the collection of middle length discourses,
Saṃyutta Nikāya	the collection of connected discourses,
Āṅguttara Nikāya	the collection of numerical discourses, and
Khuddaka Nikāya	the collection of minor discourses.

**The Dīgha Nikāya** comprises mostly long dialogues or debates between the Buddha and an outsider, with the purpose of showing what Buddha's teaching has to offer the world.

**The Majjhima Nikāya** comprises dialogues where the Buddha explains the Dharma in detail, or where he gives a brief teaching, it is elaborated by a disciple.

**The Saṃyutta Nikāya** arranges the Dharma according to topics (such as ideas, persons and places) for example, the aggregates, the senses, feelings, Moggallāna, Citta, and Devadaha), and is especially useful as a meditation guide.

**The Āṅguttara Nikāya** arranges the Dharma according to numbers from one to eleven, giving mostly brief teachings, assuming that we already have knowledge of the previous collections. However, it also contains important long **discourses** not found elsewhere, such as the Kesa,puttiya (Kālāma) Sutta (A 3.65),<sup>2</sup> the Dīgha,jānu Sutta (A 8.54),<sup>3</sup> and the (Saddha) Jāṇussoṇī Sutta (A 10.177).<sup>4</sup> Such teachings are generally addressed to the laity.

**1.1.2** Buddhaghosa, echoing the Buddha, goes on to say that the Dharma is

one	in taste ( <i>rasa,vasena eka,vidham</i> ); <sup>5</sup>
twofold	as the Dharma and Vinaya (as the teaching and the discipline);
threefold	according to what is first, intermediate and last (that is, the 3 trainings); <sup>6</sup>
threefold	according to the Piṭakas ("baskets," that is, collections); <sup>7</sup>
fivefold	according to the Nikāyas (see above); <sup>8</sup>
ninefold	according to the limb ( <i>aṅga</i> );
<i>forming</i>	altogether 84,000 aggregates of Dharma ( <i>dhamma-k,khandha</i> ). <sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For details of these five sections and the 15 books of the fifth, see **Epilegomena 1 (II B)**, Textual Conventions

<sup>2</sup> SD 21.3.

<sup>3</sup> SD 5.10.

<sup>4</sup> SD 2.6a.

<sup>5</sup> That is, the taste of freedom (V 2:236; A 4:204;U 56).

<sup>6</sup> That is, training in moral virtue, in mental concentration, and in wisdom.

<sup>7</sup> This is a commentarial classification, not found in the Vinaya or the Nikāyas.

<sup>8</sup> The earliest mention of this classification, however, is in late passages in the Vinaya (V 2:287,27-28,5:3,5).

<sup>9</sup> VA 16-31; VA:J §§15-33/14-30. This is often taken to mean the "84,000 Dharma-doors," occasions or opportunities for realizing the truth. It is difficult to quantify the True Teaching. However, the number could be taken sym-

**1.1.3** In the 5 Nikāyas, the usual classification of the teaching is that of the 9 limbs (*aṅga*), namely, *sutta, geyya, veyyākaraṇa, gāthā, udāna, iti,vuttaka, jātaka, abbhuta,dhamma* and *vedalla*.<sup>10</sup> Buddhaghosa explains these terms as follows:

Herein, the twofold Vibhaṅga, the Niddesa, the Khandhaka, the Parivāra, Maṅgala, Ratana, Nālaka and Tuvaṭṭaka Suttas of the Sutta Nipāta and other sayings of the Tathāgata bearing the name *sutta* should be known as **Sutta** (Discourses).<sup>11</sup>

All the suttas containing stanzas should be known as **Geyya** (Recitation), particularly the entire Sagātha,vagga (Chapter with Stanzas) in the Saṃyutta.<sup>12</sup>

The whole of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, suttas which contain no stanzas with any other (sayings from the) word of the Buddha not included in the other 8 Aṅgas<sup>13</sup> should be known as **Veyyākaraṇa** (Expositions).

The Dhammapada, Theragāthā, Therīgāthā, and sections entirely in verse in the Sutta Nipāta which are not designated as suttas should be known as **Gāthā** (Stanzas).<sup>14</sup>

The 82 suttantas containing stanzas which were prompted by an awareness of joy should be known as **Udāna** (Utterances of Joy).<sup>15</sup>

bolically: 8 = noble eightfold path, 4 = the four noble truths, and the 000 = the three periods of time; is, the truths and the path are true for all time.

<sup>10</sup> Technically called “the ninefold teaching of the Teacher” (*nav’aṅga satthu,sāsana*): see V 3:8; M 1:133; A 2:5, 103, 3:86.

<sup>11</sup> Curiously the better known suttas of the Dīgha and the Majjhina Nikāyas are not mentioned. **NA Jayawickrama** notes, “Judging from these examples and those that follow for the other eight Aṅgas, it appears that the real significance of the early Navaṅga Division, whose existence is echoed even in the words of the Tathāgata (M 1:133; A 2:103, etc) has been lost by the time Buddhaghosa began to record the Theravāda commentarial tradition. The more precise division into Piṭakas and other subdivisions has ousted all the other divisions and classifications.” (VA:J 101 n31.1). **K R Norman** notes: “It is clear that all Buddhaghosa knew about some of these terms was the fact that there were in his time a number of texts which happened to have the same name as an *aṅga*. Despite the fact that books called Jātaka, Udāna and Itivuttaka actually exist in Pāli, it is probable that the list of nine *aṅgas* did not originally refer to specific works in the canon, but was a description of the various types of texts. [Norman’s n: So *veyyākaraṇa* is commonly used of an exposition in a sermon, eg *veyyākaraṇasmim bhañṇamāne* (D 1:46,27-28).] Some Sanskrit sources mention twelve *aṅgas* [see Thomas, *History of Buddhist Thought*, 1933:276-278], adding *nidāna, avadāna* (which under the form *apadāna* is the same name of a specific text in Pāli) and *upadeśa* to the list.” (*Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden, 1983:16)

<sup>12</sup> Jayawickrama: “The opening chapter of S[āmyutta]. Geyya (from root *gai*, “to sing”), judging from the explanation given here, seems to represent the “ākhyāna-type” containing stanzas interspersed with narrative prose. Unless there is an early confusion as to what geyya should be, the explanation here seems to be highly inadequate. If some discrimination is made against the narrative prose, restricting Canonical status to the stanzas only, there is some justification for the explanation.” (V:A 101 n31.2)

<sup>13</sup> Jayawickrama: “The phrase, ‘not included in the other eight Aṅgas,’ further points to the Commentator’s lack of familiarity with this ninefold classification.” (V:A 101 n31.3)

<sup>14</sup> Jayawickrama: “There is perfect justification for Dh, Th1 [Tha] and Th 2 [Thī] to be designated as gāthā, but the criterion for judging whether a particular piece in Sn is a *sutta* or gāthā is highly nebulous, except perhaps if Buddhaghosa is taken very literally, when the Vatthugāthā of Nālaka and Rāhula Suttas and the whole of the Pārāyaṇa Vagga together with the Vatthugāthā and the epilogue are alone considered as gāthā. This appears to be highly unsatisfactory and is perhaps far from what Buddhaghosa meant. There seems to be no clear line of demarcation between *sutta* and gāthā, except that prose is excluded from gāthā.” (V:A 101 n31.4)

<sup>15</sup> Jayawickrama: “The extant collections, perhaps unknown during the life-time of the Buddha, and probably finalized centuries later are conveniently identified with the Aṅgas bearing the same names. There are many udānas not only of the Buddha but also of his disciples and lay disciples, scattered all over the Pali Canon outside this meager collection of eighty-two suttantas. So also are the quotations from Buddha’s words found repeated in other discourses often prefixed with the statement, “For it has been said...” (and sometimes with no such introduction), which have failed to find a place in the Itivuttaka collection of 112 suttantas.” (V:A 101 n31.5)

The 112 suttantas which have been handed down prefixed with the statement, “For this has been said by the Exalted One” [*vuttam̐ h’etaṃ bhagavatā ti*], should be known as **Itivuttaka** (Thus Said).<sup>16</sup>

The 550 Birth Stories commencing with Aṇṇaka should be known as **Jātaka** (Birth Stories).<sup>17</sup>

All the suttantas connected with wonderful and marvelous phenomena handed down with words to such effect as, “O monks, these 4 wonderful and marvelous qualities are seen in Ānanda,” should be known as **Abbhutadhamma** (Marvellous Phenomena).<sup>18</sup>

All the suttantas requested to be preached as a result of repeated attainment of wisdom and delight, such as Cullavedalla, Mahāvedalla, Sammādiṭṭhi, Sakkapañha, Saṅkhārabhājanīya, and Mahāpuṇṇama Suttas<sup>19</sup> and others should be known as **Vedalla** (Analyses).<sup>20</sup>

Thus it is ninefold according to the (classification) into Aṅgas.

(VA 31; VA:J §31/25 f, Jayawickrama’s tr)

## 1.2 THE PURPOSE OF THE DHARMA

### 1.2.1 The Buddha Dharma is said to have these six virtues (*guṇa*) or qualities:<sup>21</sup>

it is well taught (*svākkhāta*);

it is visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*), sometimes rendered as “to be seen for oneself”;

it has nothing to do with time (*akālika*);

it invites and entails personal verification (*ehi,passika*);

it is accessible (*opānāyika*); alternately, it “brings on progress”;

it is to be personally known by the wise (*paccattam̐ veditabbo viññūhi*).

(M 1:37; A 3:285; Vism 7.68-88/213-218)

**1.2.2 Bodhi**, in his response to Nāṇavīra’s views on dependent arising, makes a note of these virtues helpful for sutta students:

<sup>16</sup> See prec n.

<sup>17</sup> Jayawickrama: “As in the case of the Udāna and the Itivuttaka there is no justification for equating the Aṅga called Jātaka with the extant Jātaka collection numbering about 550 stories. Firstly, the stories themselves have no Canonical status, which is reserved for the Jātakapāli, the stanzas only. Secondly, there is no reason why Jātakas of Canonical antiquity such as those incorporated in other suttantas, eg Kūṭadanta and Mahāgovinda Suttas in S, should be excluded. The definition given here is highly arbitrary.” (V:A 101 n31.6)

<sup>18</sup> Jayawickrama: “The example given here is not a suttanta by itself but a short discourse incorporated in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (D 2:145). Entire suttantas are hard to find though examples for abbhutadhamma are plentiful in the Canon.” (V:A 101 n31.7)

<sup>19</sup> M 44/1:299-305; M 43/1:292-298; M 9/1:46-55; D 21/2:263-289; **Saṅkhār’upapatti S**, M 120/3:99-103; M 109/3:15-20, respectively.

<sup>20</sup> Jayawickrama: “Two of the examples given here have the title Vedalla and the explanation is based on the word *veda* which is very faithfully rendered as ‘wisdom’ though one would rather prefer ‘ecstasy’ or ‘exhilarating joy’ for it; cp vedajāta. It seems rather strange that the list of twelve Aṅgas at Mahāvīyutpatti 62, has substituted Vedalla with Vaipulya. This is a clear indication that the Mahayanists had already lost the significance of the term and found it necessary to substitute it with a more familiar term. For the Theravādins, at least, the memory of the term remained, and by the time of the Commentarial epoch attempts were made to revive meanings of unfamiliar terms in the light of the then-current tradition. Hence a curious secondary derivative of *veda* (whether it be wisdom or ecstasy) is conceived of whereas even the method of subtle analysis found in the six suttas quoted as examples has not touched a familiar chord. To my mind vedalla means ‘subtle analysis’ coming from an older” *vaidārya* from *vi* and root *dṛ* “to tear apart”; hence, “analysis or break down into fundamentals.” Hence Vedalla should be rendered as “Analyses.” (V:A 101 n31.9)

<sup>21</sup> D 2:92 (Vism 216); A 1:156 (see AA), 227 (AA); Sn 567 (SnA) = M 92 (MA), Sn 1137 (Nc, NdA, SnA); S 2:58 = 4:328.

The terms all highlight, not the intrinsic nature of the Dhamma, but its relation to human knowledge and understanding. They are all epistemological in import, not ontological; they are concerned with how the Dhamma is known, not with the temporal status of the known ...  
(Bodhi, 1998a §27/p31 digital ed; emphasis added)<sup>22</sup>

**1.2.3** In simpler terms, the Dharma virtues are not about *thinking* philosophical or speculative thoughts of existence, but about how we can really *know* things as they really are for the sake of self-understanding. The Dharma is *the* tool for our spiritual liberation.

### 1.3 THE DHARMA AS TEACHER

**The Gārava Sutta** (S 6.2) recounts how the Buddha, immediately after his awakening, declares that even he should venerate the Dharma, and how Brahmā Sahampati appears before him to applaud the decision.<sup>23</sup>

**9** Then, Brahmā Sahampati, having known with his own mind the reflection in the Blessed One’s mind, just as a strong man might stretch his arm out or bend it back, Brahmā Sahampati disappeared from the Brahmā world and reappeared before the Blessed One.

**10** Then, Brahmā Sahampati, having arranged his upper robe on one shoulder, knelt down on his right knee on the ground, raised his palms lotus-wise towards the Blessed One, and said this to him: [140]

**11** “So it is, Blessed One! So it is, Sugata [well-gone one]! Those who were the arhats, the fully self-awakened ones, in the past, too, honouring, respecting, this very Dharma, dwelt in dependence on it.

Those who will be the arhats, the fully self-awakened ones, in the future, too, honouring, respecting, this very Dharma, will dwell in dependence on it.

May the Blessed One, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, now, too, honouring, respecting, this very Dharma, dwell in dependence on it.”

**12** This is what Brahmā Sahampati said. Having said that, he further said this:

**562** The Buddhas of the past,<sup>24</sup>  
the Buddhas of the future,  
and he who is Buddha now,  
removing the sorrow of the many—

**563** all have dwelled, they (now) dwell,  
and they will dwell, too,  
deeply revering the true teaching—  
for this is the nature of the Buddhas.

**564** Therefore, one desiring ⟨one’s own⟩ good,<sup>25</sup>  
aspiring to spiritual greatness,  
should revere the true teaching,  
recollecting<sup>26</sup> the teaching of the Buddhas. (S 6.2/1:138-140), SD 12.3

<sup>22</sup> See below under “**3. Akāliko**” for fuller quote. For a variant Skt Dharmānusr̥ti, see Paul Harrison, 2007:207.

<sup>23</sup> See also **The teacher or the teaching?** SD 3.14.

<sup>24</sup> *Ye ca atītā sambuddhā; vl ye c’abbhatītā sambuddhā.*

<sup>25</sup> “One desiring...good,” *attha,kāmena* (A 2:21,23, Ce, PTS 1884); *vl atta,kāmena* (A 4:91,1, Be, PTS 1998)

<sup>26</sup> *Saram̐*, “probably a truncated instrumental” (S:B 433 n375), glossed by Comy as *sarantena* (SA 1:204).

Norman however thinks that it could be a *ṇamul* type absolutive (Tha:N n ad Thī 26): see also S:B 406 n235.

## 1.4 THE BUDDHA’S PRESENCE

**The Candûpama Sutta** (S 16.3) is a short sutta reminding monastics to keep social distance from families like the moon keeping its distance while brightening the world. The Buddha then declares that Mahā Kassapa is an example of a monk who is pure in teaching the Dharma, out of compassion for others.

The Sutta closes with this verse which declares that when a Dharma teacher properly teaches a sutta, it is as if the Buddha himself is admonishing us.

Bhikshus, through Kassapa, I will admonish you, or through someone like Kassapa. Thus admonished, you should practise accordingly!” (S 16.3,16/2:199), SD 38.2

— — —

## 2 Buddhaghosa’s commentary

Buddhaghosa, in his magnum opus, **the Visuddhi,magga**, explains the six qualities or virtues (*guna*) of the Dharma in some detail. The whole section on the recollection on the Dharma<sup>27</sup> is given here.

# The Recollection of the Dharma

Based on Vism 7.68-88

## 2.0 The verse

**68** If we wish to cultivate the recollection of the Dharma, we should go into solitary retreat [spend personal quiet time] and recollect the virtues [qualities] of the Dharma (both) as doctrine (*pariyatti*)<sup>28</sup> and as the ninefold supramundane Dharma,<sup>29</sup> thus:

<i>Svâkkhāto</i>	Well-taught
<i>bhagavatā dhammo</i>	is the Blessed One’s Dharma [Teaching and Truth],
<i>sandiṭṭhiko</i>	visible here and now,
<i>akāliko</i>	immediate [not having to do with time],
<i>ehi,passiko</i>	inviting one to come and see,
<i>opanayiko</i>	accessible [leading up to the goal],
<i>paccattam veditabbo viññūhī ti</i>	to be personally known by the wise.

(M 7,6/1:37; A 6.10.3/3:285)

## **2.1 Svâkkhāto** (Vism 7.69-75/213-215)

**69** In this sentence (*pada*) [*svâkkhāto hoti*], **svâkkhāto** includes the Dharma doctrine as a collection; otherwise, it refers to the supramundane Dharma.

<sup>27</sup> Vism 7.86-88/213-218.

<sup>28</sup> “Doctrine” (*pariyatti*), ie theory. The threefold **true teaching** (*saddhamma*) comprises 3 levels: (1) theory (*pariyatti*), ie the study of the sacred texts, or scripture understanding; (2) practice (*paṭipatti*), ie the teaching to be carried out by way of effort, mindfulness, etc; and (3) realization (*paṭivedha*), ie the 9 supramundane states (*lok’uttara,dhamma*) (VA 225; AA 5:33). The first two are known as the twofold **dispensation** (*sāsana*) (Nm 143).

<sup>29</sup> “**The 9 supramundane dharmas**” (*nava lok’uttara,dhamma*), ie the 9 states of sainthood, comprising the 4 paths (*magga*), the 4 fruitions (*phala*), and nirvana (or the unconditioned, *asaṅkhata*). (Dhs 1094; Pm 2:166)

**Herein, the Dharma doctrine is well taught by the Blessed One because it is good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the ending, and because it declares, in the spirit and in the letter, the holy life that is utterly perfect and pure.** (M 27,11/1:179 = 38,31/1:267)

Even where the Blessed One teaches a single stanza,  
it is good in the beginning with the first word;  
it is good in the middle with the second and third words;  
it is good in the ending with the last word—because of the Dharma’s universal [total] auspiciousness (*samanta,bhadrakattā*).

A sutta with a single meaning-sequence (*anusandhi*)<sup>30</sup> is  
good in the beginning with its introduction (*nidāna*);  
good in the ending with its conclusion (*nigamana*); and  
good in the middle with the rest.

Furthermore, it is good in the beginning with the introduction [the venue], and with the occasion [the origin] for its utterance. It is good in the middle because it suits those who are receptive (*veneyya*) to the teaching, since it is undistorted in meaning, and attended by reasoning and example. It is good in the end with its conclusion that generates faith in the listeners.<sup>31</sup>

**70** The entire Dharma of the Dispensation, too,  
is good in the beginning by way of one’s wellbeing through moral virtue.  
It is good in the middle by way of calm and insight, and by way of the path and the fruition.  
It is good with nirvana as its end.

Or, it is good in the beginning by way of moral virtue, concentration and so on. [214]  
It is good in the middle by way of insight and the path.  
It is good in the ending by way of the fruition and nirvana.

Or, it is good in the beginning by way of the Buddha’s good awakening (*Buddha,subodhitāya*).  
It is good in the middle by way of the Dharma’s good qualities (*dhamm,sudhammatāya*).  
It is good in the ending by way of the Sangha’s good conduct [practice].

Or, having listened to it [the Dharma], it is attainable by one’s practising accordingly, thus:  
it is good in the beginning by way of the supreme awakening;  
it is good in the middle by way of individual awakening [pratyeka-buddhahood];  
it is good in the end by way of the awakening of the disciple [the listener].

**71** And when listened to, it brings good by way of listening through the suppressing of the mental hindrances: thus it is good in the beginning.

When practised, it brings good by way of the practice of calm and insight that brings happiness: thus it is good in the middle.

And when it has been practised thus and the fruition is concluded, it brings good by way of the fruition of the practice that brings the state of suchness (*tādi,bhāva*) [equanimity of the six sense-doors].<sup>32</sup> thus it is good in the ending.

Thus it is “well taught” by way of being good in the beginning, in the middle and in the ending.

**72** Now, the Buddha, when teaching the Dharma, declares the holy life of the Dispensation and the holy life of the path, and he shows them in various ways. It is (well-taught) “in the spirit” (*sāttam*)

<sup>30</sup> “Meaning-sequence” (*anusandhi*) is a commentarial tt signifying both a particular subject treated in a discourse, and also the linking one subject with another in the same discourse. MA gives 3 kinds of meaning-sequence: meaning-sequence in answer to a question (*pucchā’nusandhi*, eg M 1:36), meaning-sequence in connection with the audience’s inclination (*ajjhāsaya’anusandhi*, eg M 1:23), and natural meaning-sequence (*yathā’nusandhi*, eg M 6) (MA 1:175).

<sup>31</sup> *Sotūnaṃ saddhā,paṭilābha,jananena nigamanena ca pariyosana,kalyāṇaṃ*.

<sup>32</sup> DA 3:1037; MA 2:227, 5:26; AA 3:290; VismṬ:Be 1:270.

because it is perfect (*sampatti*) in meaning, and it is (well-taught) “in the letter” (*savyañjanam*) because it is perfect in the details.

It is (well-taught) “in the spirit” because it conforms to the words declaring its meaning by way of explanation, proclamation, revelation, analysis and clarification. It is (well-taught) “in the letter” because it is perfect by way of syllable, word, the letter, style, language and exposition.<sup>33</sup>

**73** Or, it is well taught since it has been properly pointed out without any distortion [perversion] of meaning. The meaning of the sectarians’ Dharma, however, is faulted with distortion; for those states they say are obstructive (*antarāyika*) [215] are not actually obstructive, and those states they say are liberating (*niyyānika*) are not actually liberating; as such, their Dharma is ill-taught (*durākkhāta*).

This is not so with the Blessed One’s Dharma: it is not faulted with distortion; for those states said to be obstructive and those states said to be liberating are actually so.

As such, the Dharma is indeed well taught.

**74** Again, the supramundane Dharma is well taught because both the way that accords with nirvana and the nirvana that accords with the way have been pointed out in the manner, thus it is said:

Again, the Blessed One has well explained to his disciples the way [the practice] leading to nirvana, and they—nirvana and the path—meet, just as the waters of the Ganga and the Yamuna meet and flow on together. (D 19,8/2:223)

**75** And here the noble path, as the middle way, does not approach either extreme,<sup>34</sup> is well taught in being proclaimed as the middle way.

The fruits of recluseship, whereby defilements are stilled, are also well taught.

Nirvana, whose own nature (*sabhāva*) is eternal, deathless, the refuge, the cave, etc, is well taught, too, in being proclaimed to have its own nature that is eternal and so on.

As such, the supramundane Dharma, too, is well taught.

## 2.2 *Sandiṭṭhiko* (Vism 7.76-79/215 f)

**76 Visible here and now** (*sandiṭṭhika*): here, the noble path is “visible here and now” because it can be seen by a noble individual for himself when he has done away with lust (*rāga*), etc, in his (mind-body) continuity (*santana*). As such, it is said [in **the Sandiṭṭhika Dhamma Brāhmaṇa Sutta**]:

Brahmin, when one is dyed with lust, overcome by it, his mind obsessed by it, then he thinks of his own affliction, he thinks of other’s affliction, he thinks of the affliction of both, and he feels mental pain and grief.

But when he has abandoned lust, then he thinks not of his own affliction, he thinks not of other’s affliction, he thinks not of the affliction of both, and he does not feel mental pain and grief. (A 3.53/1:156 f)

**77** Furthermore, the ninefold supramundane Dharma<sup>35</sup> is also “visible here and now,” because when anyone who has attained it, it is visible to him through review knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa, ñāṇa*), without having to rely on faith in another.

<sup>33</sup> In simple terms, the Dharma is said to be endowed “with the spirit” (*s’attha*) because it is true and clear in meaning. It is endowed “with the letter” (*sa, vyañjana*) because it is properly phrased, remembered and transmitted, ie, in terms of theory. Whatever errors we may see are human errors, not those of the teaching, and these can be rectified by wise teachers and practitioners.

<sup>34</sup> That is, it avoids the eternalist view (incl the God idea) and the nihilist view (incl materialism): see **Dhamma-cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11/5:420-424), SD 1.1.

<sup>35</sup> See (1.1).

**78** Or, the view (*diṭṭhi*) that is recommended (*pasatthā*)<sup>36</sup> is “right view” (*sandiṭṭhi*).<sup>37</sup> One succeeds with right view, thus he is “one with right view” (*sandiṭṭhika*). For here, in this way, the noble path conquers defilements by means of the right view associated with it; the noble fruition arises on account of it [with right view as its cause]; nirvana arises by means of it as its objective field (*visayī, bhūta*).

Therefore, just as a charioteer (*rathika*) is so called because he conquers with a chariot (*rathena jayati*), even so, the ninefold supramundane Dharma “conquers by right view” (*sandiṭṭhiyā jayati*).

**79** Or, it is seeing (*dassana*) that is called the seen (*diṭṭha*); then “the seen” (*diṭṭha*) is the same as “the seeing” (*sandiṭṭha*).

It is worthy of being seen, thus it is *sandiṭṭhika* (*sandiṭṭham arahatī ti sandiṭṭhiko*). For the supramundane Dharma stops the fearful round (of karma and lives) as soon as it is seen

by means of penetration that is mental cultivation (the path) (*bhāvanābhisamaya*) and

by means of penetration that is realization (nirvana) (*sacchikiriyābhisamaya*).

Therefore, just as one who is worthy of his clothes is said to be well-dressed (*vattham arahatī ti vatthiko*), it is “visible here and now” because it is worthy of being seen (*diṭṭha*).

## NOTES

**1. Visible here and now** (*sandiṭṭhika*) is the adjective form of the verb *sandissati* (*sam*, “self or fully” + *dissati*, “he sees”), literally meaning “is seen together” or better, as in **the Subhūti Sutta** (A 11.-15), means “(he) sees fully for himself,” in the sense of realizing the Dharma.<sup>38</sup> Hence, we can render it into idiomatic English as “He sees the Dharma fully for himself” or even, “The Dharma is fully visible to him.” The sense of immediacy is implicit here.

The immediacy of realization or wisdom is brought out in the adjective *sandiṭṭhika*, meaning “visible here and now,” meaning that the Dharma or the path can be *fully self-realized here and now*. Here, the noble path is “visible here and now” because it can be seen by a noble individual for himself when he has done away with lust (*rāga*), etc, in his (mind-body) continuity (*santana*).

**2. Brahmavamso**, in his article on “*Paṭicca-samuppāda: Dependent arising*” (2003), makes this insightful note on *sandiṭṭhika*:

The passage in the suttas which gives the clearest indication of the meaning of *sandiṭṭhika* is in the Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta (M 13).<sup>39</sup> In this sutta, the dangers of sensual pleasures are described by seven examples of consequences to be experienced in this life, and all seven are described as *sandiṭṭhika*. This is in contrast to the consequences of sensual pleasures described in the sutta’s next paragraph that are to be experienced after death and are called *samparāyika*.

Clearly, *sandiṭṭhika* and *samparāyika* are antonyms (word with opposite meanings). In this context, *sandiṭṭhika* must mean “visible in this life.” Although some Pāli words carry slightly different meanings in different contexts, this is rare and it seems reasonable to assume that *sandiṭṭhika* means “visible in this life” in all other contexts as well.

(*Dhamma Journal* 4,2 July 2003:59)

<sup>36</sup> Past participle of root √*sams*, “to proclaim, point out.”

<sup>37</sup> Here I take the prefix *sam* = *sammā* (SnA 151; KhA 209)

<sup>38</sup> A 11.15,1.3 @ SD 45.1. See also D 1:102, 2:75, 127; S 5:177; Sn 50.

<sup>39</sup> M 13,8-15/1:85-87 (SD 6.9).



### 2.3 *Akālika* (Vism 7.80 f/216)

**80** Its fruiting for one has no connection with time (*akāla*),<sup>40</sup> hence it is time-free (*akālika*). *Akāla* (“not-time”) has just the same meaning as *akālika*.

What is meant is that instead of giving its fruit after taking up time—say, five days, seven days—it gives its fruit at the same time (*samanantara*) as its own occurrence.<sup>41</sup>

**81** Or, “what takes time” (*kālika*) is what must reach ripening (*pakaṭṭha*) time before giving its fruit. What is that? It is the mundane wholesome state [karma]. This (Dharma), however, takes no time because its fruit comes at the same time, as such it is time-free.<sup>42</sup>

This is said in connection with the path.

#### NOTES

1. **Bodhi**, in his critical examination of **Ñāṇavīra**’s view of dependent arising, remarks that

The terms [of the Dharma’s virtues] all highlight, not the intrinsic nature of the Dhamma, but its relation to human knowledge and understanding. They are all epistemological in import, not ontological; they are concerned with how the Dhamma is known, not with the temporal status of the known ...

The Dhamma (inclusive of *paṭicca-samuppāda*) is *akālika* because it is to be known immediately by direct inspection, not by inference or by faith in the word of another. Thus, although birth and death may be separated by 70 or 80 years, one ascertains immediately that death occurs in dependence on birth and cannot occur if there is no birth.

Similarly, although the ignorance and *saṅkhārā* that bring about the descent of consciousness into the womb are separated from consciousness by a gap of lifetimes, one ascertains immediately that the descent of consciousness into the womb has come about through ignorance and *saṅkhārā*.

And again, although future becoming, birth, and aging and death are separated from present craving and clinging by a gap of lifetimes, one ascertains immediately that if craving and clinging persist until the end of the lifespan, they will bring about reconception, and hence engender a future cycle of becoming.

It is in this sense that the Buddha declares *paṭicca-samuppāda* to be *sandiṭṭhika*, *akālika*—“directly visible, immediate”—not in the sense that the terms of the formula have nothing to do with time or temporal succession. (Bodhi, 1998a §27/p31 digital ed; reparagraphed)<sup>43</sup>

2. The word *akālika* in the Dhammānussati verse is used in the context of a series of words signifying *knowledge*. As such, the word qualifies the principle (*dhamma*) that is seen and understood, meaning that

<sup>40</sup> *Attano phala, dānaṃ sandhāya nāssa kālo ti akālo*. “To do with time,” *kālika*, lit “that which takes time”; conversely, *akālika* mean “having nothing to do with time,” which can also mean “without delay.” CPD: “2. immediate, present, at hand.”

<sup>41</sup> See Sn 226.

<sup>42</sup> **Ratana S** (Khp 6 = Sn 2.1) refers to a liberation called “uninterrupted samadhi” (*samādhi ānantarika*), which is found only in the Dharma (Khp 6.5b = Sn 226b) that arises immediately upon attaining of path-concentration (*maggā, samādhi*) (ie, a concentration leading to the attaining of sainthood) (KhpA 181). The term appears in **Das’uttara S** (D 34) as the “uninterrupted mental concentration” (*ānantarika ceto, samādhi*), which is said to be “the one thing that is difficult to penetrate” (*eko dhammo duppaṭivijjho*, D 34, 1.2(7)/3:273). This seems to be a unique samadhi, different from the 8 liberations (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*) [SD 49.5b (3)] or the dhyanas [SD 8.4] (ThīA 98 f :: ThīA:P 131).

<sup>43</sup> See also his n at S:B 754 n103.

it is known and seen immediately, the conditional relationship of reality is to know directly with perceptual certainty, as the Buddha declares in **the Bālena Paṇḍita Sutta** (S 12.19):<sup>44</sup>

Bhikshus, for the foolish, hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving, so this body has arisen. For the foolish that ignorance has not been abandoned and that craving has not been utterly destroyed.

What is the reason for that?

Because the foolish has not lived the holy life for the utter destruction of suffering. As such, with the breaking up of the body, after death, the foolish fares on to another body.

Faring on to another body, he is not freed from birth, decay-and-death; not freed from sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair; not freed from suffering, I say!

(S 12.19,7/2:24), SD 21.2

Such immediate knowledge, as Bodhi notes, is contrasted with knowledge of the consequence, or inferential knowledge (*anvaye ñāṇa*), by which the disciple does not grasp a principle by immediate insight but by reflection on what the principle entails (ib).

3. One of the clearest passages explaining *akālika* is found in **the Samiddhi Sutta** (S 1.20), where the young newly-ordained venerable Samiddhi, is approached by a devata (probably Māra in disguise) tries to tempt him thus:

... Enjoy human pleasures, bhikshu. Do not abandon what is visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhika*) in order to pursue what takes time (*kālika*)."

"I have not abandoned what is visible here and now, avuso, in order to run after what takes time. I have abandoned what takes time, avuso, in order to run after what is visible here and now.

For, avuso, the Blessed One has declared that sense-pleasures are time-consuming, full of suffering, full of despair, and the danger therein is greater, while this Dharma is visible here and now, immediate, inviting one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.

(S 1.20/1:9) + SD 21.4 (2.2.3)

4. **Brahmavamso**, in his article on "*Paṭicca-samuppāda: Dependent arising*" (2003) quoted above [2], gives another interesting angle on *akālika*, quoting a passage from **the Samiddhi Sutta** (S 1.10),<sup>45</sup> **the (Sandiṭṭhika) Sambahula Sutta** (S 4.21)<sup>46</sup> and **the Kīṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70):<sup>47</sup>

*Sandiṭṭhika* and *kālika* (the opposite of *akālika*) are used together in a revealing phrase which occurs three times in the suttas [S 1.10, 4.21; M 70].<sup>48</sup> The phrase, with minor variations in each sutta is as follows:<sup>49</sup>

<sup>44</sup> S 12.19/2:23 f (SD 21.2).

<sup>45</sup> S 1.10,5/1:9 (SD 21.4).

<sup>46</sup> S 4.21,3/1:117 (SD 103.7).

<sup>47</sup> **Kīṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70) records how the recalcitrant monks Assaji and Punabbasu, when told that the Buddha has introduced the rule regarding untimely eating (*vikāla, bhojana*), reply:

"Avuso, we eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time. By so doing, we are free from illness and affliction, and we enjoy health and strength, and abide in comfort. Why should we abandon what is visible right here, and run after what is time-bound? [Why should we give up an immediate benefit for one that has not yet come?]<sup>47</sup> We shall eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time." (M 70,4.2/1:474), SD 11.1.

Comy explains *kālika* as *anāgate kāle pattaḥāṇā ānisamsāṇā*, "benefits to be obtained at a future time" (MA 3:-187). However, we can also take *kālika* here as "limited by time," since the rule limits eating only after dawn and before noon. *Sandiṭṭhika* and *kālika* are here clearly antonyms.

<sup>48</sup> S 1.10,5/1:9 (SD 21.4); S 4.21,3/1:117 (SD 103.6); M 70,4/1:474 (SD 11.1), respectively.

<sup>49</sup> The verse lines here have been rearranged as "badc" and the Pali given interlinearly to bring out the meaning more clearly.

Having abandoned what is *sandiṭṭhika*,  
I don't run after what is *kālika*.  
Having abandoned what is *kālika*,  
I run after what is *sandiṭṭhika*.

*nāhaṃ sandiṭṭhikaṃ hitvā*  
*kālikaṃ anudhāvāmi*  
*kālikaṃ hitvā*  
*sandiṭṭhikaṃ anudhāvāmi*

5. In these three contexts, *sandiṭṭhika* and *kālika* are clearly direct opposites, antonyms again. Thus it is reasonable to assume that the opposite of *kālika*, *akālika*, must be synonymous with *sandiṭṭhika*. That is, *sandiṭṭhika* and *akālika* have essentially the same meaning. They both refer to that which is “visible in this life.”

For example, the Buddha encouraged such practices as *maraṇa, sati*, the meditation on death, and many monks, nuns and lay Buddhists practise this method with liberating results. *Maraṇa, -sati* is certainly a part of Dhamma that is *sandiṭṭhika* and *akālika*. So, if these two words really did mean “here and now” and “immediate,” *maraṇa, sati* would be next to impossible—one would need to be dead to be able to contemplate death in the “here and now,” “immediately”! Obviously, *sandiṭṭhika* and *akālika* do not have such a meaning. They both refer to something visible in this life, as opposed to what may only be known after one has died.

(*Dhamma Journal* 4,2 July 2003:59 f)

## 2.4 *Ehi,passiko* (Vism 7.82/216 f)

**82 “Inviting one to come and see.”** This Dharma is worthy of an invitation for one to look at, thus, “Come and see this Dharma!” But why is it worthy of this invitation?

Because of it is exists and because of it is utterly pure.

For if a man has said that there is money or gold in an empty fist, he cannot say, “Come and see this!” Why not? Because it does not exist.

But on the other hand, while dung and urine may well exist, a man, hoping to delight the mind by way of beauty, will not be able say, “Come and see this!” On the contrary, they have to be covered up with grass and leaves. Why? Because of they are impure.

But this ninefold supramundane Dharma<sup>50</sup> exists as such in its own nature, and it is pure like the disc of the full moon on a cloudless sky, like a gem of pure water on bleached cloth. [217]

Thus it is worthy of inviting one to come and see because it exists and is pure, as such it is inviting one to come and see.

### NOTE

The Dharma invites inspection, it is worthy of being examined. Unlike some guru's secret teachings, it has nothing to hide, no guru's fist of secret teachings or partial truths. As evident from **the Udumbārikā Sīha, nāda Sutta** (D 25), if any intelligent, honest and open-minded person were to examine the Dharma and practise it accordingly, he would taste its sweet fruit in just 7 years, or even as short as 7 days.<sup>51</sup>

## 2.5 *Opanayiko* (Vism 7.83 f/217)

**83 Accessible** (*opanayiko*) means “that which should be brought near to” [“should be applied”] (*upanetabbo*). Here is an explanation. The act of leading up close to (*upanayana*) is the act of bringing near (*upanaya*). (As the 4 paths and 4 fruitions,) this Dharma is worthy of bringing near (to oneself) in our

<sup>50</sup> See here, §68n.

<sup>51</sup> D 25,22.2/3:54 (SD 1.4).

mind (*citte*, ie subjectively)<sup>52</sup> by means of development, reflecting as if our clothing or our head were ablaze.<sup>53</sup>

Thus, it is accessible (*opanayiko*). [*Opanayiko* being, indeed, same in meaning as *opaneyyiko*.]<sup>54</sup> This applies to the (8) conditioned supramundane states.<sup>55</sup>

But, as regards the unconditioned state (nirvana), it is worthy of bringing one up close to it, with one's own mind (*cittena*, by way of being an object):<sup>56</sup> thus it is accessible. The meaning is that it is worthy of being treated as our shelter (*allīyana*) by virtue of realizing it.

**84** Or, the Dharma leads one up to nirvana, meaning that it is the noble path is “leading up to” (*upaneyya*) it.<sup>57</sup> “It should be brought near to” (*upanetabbo*) ourself for realization, meaning “leading up to” (*upaneyyo*) the states of fruitions and nirvana; *upaneyyo* being indeed synonymous with *opanayiko*.

## NOTES

1. **The Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary** defines the BHS cognate *upanayika* as “conducive (to the desired religious end)” (Mvst 3:200.10).

**The Critical Pali Dictionary** says that “the context in which [*opanayika*] occurs shows clearly that it cannot have the active sense ‘leading to’ or ‘conducive to,’ but must rather be interpreted in a passive sense (ger[undive]) in accordance with the C[ommentaries]” (CPD 2:736).

2. *Opanayika* is a secondary derivation (*taddhita*) of *upanaya*, “worthy of being brought near or of applying it (to practice or test).” While *ehi,passika* reflects the Dhamma’s quality that invites approaching and verification in a theoretical sense, *opanayika* reflects how the Dharma is worthy to being taken up by and for ourself, and putting it into practice (after we have verified its truth). In either case, there is the vital element of taking up the Dharma as a practice. While *ehi,passika* is about verifying its truth (theory and practice), *opanayika* is about working for its spiritual fruit (practice and realization).

3. **Bodhi**, in his translation of **the Samiddhi Sutta** (S 1.20/1:9), adds

To be sure, Vism 217,10-12 [Vism:Ñ 7.84] does allow for an active sense with its alternative derivation: *nibbānaṃ upaneti ti ariyamaggo upaneyyo ... opanayiko*, “it leads to Nibbāna, thus the noble path is onward-leading ... so it is leading onwards”; this derivation, however, is almost surely proposed with “edifying” intent.

Earlier in the same passage the word is glossed by the gerundive *upanetabba*, “to be brought near, to be applied,” so I follow the derivation at Vism 217,3-9 [Vism:Ñ 7.83] which is probably correct etymologically: *bhavanā,vasena attano cite upanayanam arahatī ti opanayiko ... asañkhato pana attano cittena upanayanam arahatī ti opanayiko; sacchikiriyāvasena allīyanam arahatī ti attho*; “The Dhamma (as noble path) is applicable because it deserves application within one’s own mind by way of meditative development ... But the unconditioned Dhamma (ie Nibbāna) is applicable because it deserves application with one’s mind; that is, it deserves being resorted to by way of realization.”

While the word *opanayika* does not occur in any other context it allows us to draw inferences about its meaning, the cognate expression *att’ūpanāyiko* [S 55.7/5:353,21,26 & V 3:91,33-34] clearly means “applicable to oneself.” On the other hand, to indicate that the Dhamma conduces

<sup>52</sup> This and foll para (“by way of an object”), I follow Vism:Ñ 235.

<sup>53</sup> See A 4:320.

<sup>54</sup> Only in Be, which generally read *opaneyyika* for *opanayiko*.

<sup>55</sup> That is, the 4 paths and 4 fruitions: see here, §68n.

<sup>56</sup> This and prec para (“subjectively”), I follow Vism:Ñ 235.

<sup>57</sup> Absol of *upaneti* (“he leads to, brings to”); also fut pass part of *upaneti*, but not applicable here. See Geiger 2000: §202; Warder, *Introduction to Pali*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1974:104-107.

to Nibbāna the texts use another expression, *niyyānika upasama, saṁvattanika* [see eg S 55.25/-5:380,11 & M 1:67,13], which would not fit the contexts where the above formula appears.

(S:B 353 n33; citations normalized)

## 2.6 *Paccattam veditabbo viññūhi* (Vism 7.85-88/217 f)

**85** “To be personally known by the wise” (*paccattam veditabbo viññūhi*) means that the Dharma can be experienced by all kinds of wise individuals, beginning with the intuitive (*ugghaṭitaññū*),<sup>58</sup> each by himself, thus, “The path has been cultivated by me, the fruition attained, and cessation realized.”

It is not so that when a preceptor has developed the path, his co-resident would abandon his defilements, nor does a co-resident dwell in comfort owing to the preceptor’s attainment of fruition, nor would he realize nirvana when the preceptor does so.

So, this is not visible like an ornament on another’s head, but rather it is visible only in our own mind. The meaning is that it is to be often cultivated by the wise. It is not the within the sphere of the foolish [spiritually immature].<sup>59</sup>

**86** Furthermore, this Dharma is well taught. Why? Because it is visible here and now (*sandiṭṭhikatā*). It is visible here and now because of its timelessness (*akālikattā*). It is timeless because its inviting us to come and see (*ehi, passikattā*). And what invites us to come and see, is accessible (*opanayika*).

**87** As long as we recollect the qualities of the Dharma in this way, then [as stated in **the (Anussati) Mahānāma Sutta**], it is said of us (the practitioner):

... at that time, his mind is not obsessed by greed, or by hate, or by delusion. Indeed, at that time, his mind has become straight (*uju, gatam*), taking moral virtue as his object.<sup>60</sup> (A 6.10,3/3:285)

## 2.7 The benefits of the recollection of the Dharma

87.2 [THE SUCCESSFUL RECOLLECTION] So when he has suppressed the mental hindrances, by preventing obsession (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) by greed, etc, and his mind is straight (*uju*) before the meditation subject, then his initial application and sustained application occur with an inclination towards the Dharma’s virtues.

As he continues to exercise initial application and sustained application on the Dharma’s virtues, zest (*pīti*) arises in him. With a zestful mind, with the zest as a basis [proximate cause], his bodily and mental disturbances gain tranquillity (*passaddhi*). When the disturbances have been tranquillized, bodily and mental joy (*sukha*) arise in him. Being joyful, his mind, taking the Dharma’s virtues as objects, becomes concentrated (*samādhiyati*), and so the dhyana factors eventually arise in a single thought-moment.

But due to the depth of the Dharma’s qualities, or else due to his being occupied in recollecting qualities of many kinds, he only reaches access concentration,<sup>61</sup> not full concentration (*appanā*), that is, dhyā-

<sup>58</sup> The texts speak of 4 kinds of individuals by way of learning: (1) the intuitive (*ugghaṭitaññū*), one who understands at the first hearing of the mere text, of condensed statement, without need of further or detailed explanation; (2) the intellectual (*vipacitaññū*), one who understands only after a detailed explanation; (3) the trainable (*neyya*), one who understands only through some guidance; (4) the dullard (*pada, parama*), one who understands merely a word (or merely the letter) of the text at most (A 2:135; Pug 41; Nett 7, 125; MA 3;100; SnA 2:163; CA 329).

<sup>59</sup> For example of “the wise” here, see SD 50.16 (1.1.2.4).

<sup>60</sup> “Taking ... as his object,” *ārabha*, lit “having begun, beginning with or from, having initiated”; here it is used in the sense of “mentally focused on; inspired by.” See CPD sv.

<sup>61</sup> “Access concentration” (*upacāra*). In meditation, an entirely clear and immovable image (*nimitta*) arising at a high degree of concentration is called **counter-image** (*paṭibhāga, nimitta*). As soon as this image arises, the stage of neighbourhood (or access) concentration (*upacāra, samādhi*) is reached. For details, see SD 13.1 (3.14) (7); also see BDict: *kaṣiṇa, samādhi*.

na. That (access concentration) is itself regarded as the recollection of the Dharma, because it has arisen by virtue of the recollecting of the Dharma's qualities. [218]

**88 [BENEFITS]** When a monk is devoted to this recollection of the Dharma, he thinks:

“I have never before met a teacher who teaches a Dharma that is accessible thus, who is endowed with this quality (*āṅga*)<sup>62</sup> in this way.”

So, on seeing the Dharma's qualities, he is respectful of the Teacher. He shows great reverence for the Dharma, and gains abundant faith, and so on. He has much zest and gladness. He conquers fear and dread. He is able to withstand pain. He comes to feel that he is living in the presence of the Dharma.

And his body, while occupied with the recollection of the Dharma's virtues, is worthy of veneration as a shrine-hall (*cetiya, ghara*). His mind tends towards the realization of the supreme Dharma.

When he is confronted by an opportunity for transgression, due to his clear recollection of the Dharma's good qualities, moral shame and moral fear are present in him.

If he penetrates no higher, he would at least cross over to a happy destiny.

Therefore one who is truly wise would surely cultivate heedfulness,

In this way, one always has great power (*anubhāva*) through recollection of the Dharma.

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<sup>62</sup> “Quality,” *āṅga*, lit “limb, factor.”