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Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 2

The Second Discourse on the One Who Lives the Dharma | A 5.74

Theme: We must understand the Dharma's meaning with wisdom

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2007, 2013

Introduction

The **Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 2** (A 5.74) makes a shorter statement of the same message as that of **the Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 1** (A 5.73).¹ Whatever of the Dharma that we master, teach, recite or think about, we should make every effort to understand its true meaning and purpose. This is “going further” (*uttari*) with wisdom, beyond what is merely an external gesture for an inner experience.

The Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 2 closes just like the Dhamma, vihārī Sutta 1, with the Buddha reminding us that mastering, teaching, reciting and thinking about the Dharma should be taken up with the purpose of wisely understanding its meaning, that is, to see its purpose and pursue it. The Sutta ends with the Buddha declaring that he has compassionately taught us everything for our spiritual progress. All we need to do now is to look deep into these windows of Dharma joy, and walk through the door of liberation. Thus we “live the Dharma.”²

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The Second Discourse on the One Who Lives the Dharma

A 5.74

1 [88] Then, a certain monk approached the Blessed One. Having saluted the Blessed One, he sat down at one side.

Sitting thus at one side, the monk said this to the Blessed One,

1.2 “**One who lives the Dharma**; one who lives the Dharma (*dhamma, vihārī*),’ bhante, so it is said. In what way, bhante, is a monk one who lives the Dharma?”

2 (1) “Here, bhikkhu, a monk learns [masters] the Dharma as

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|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. the discourses, | <i>sutta</i> |
| 2. the discourses with verses, | <i>geyya</i> |
| 3. the prose expositions, | <i>veyyākaraṇa</i> |
| 4. the verses | <i>gāthā</i> |
| 5. the inspired sayings, | <i>udāna</i> |
| 6. the thus-said sayings, | <i>iti, vuttaka</i> |
| 7. the birth-stories, | <i>jātaka</i> |
| 8. the marvellous accounts, | <i>abbhuta, dhamma</i> |
| 9. the catechisms. | <i>vedalla</i> . ³ |

But not going further, he understands not its meaning with wisdom.⁴

¹ A 5.73 (SD 44.4).

² For other details, see **Dhamma, vihārī S 1** (A 5.73), SD 44.4 (1.1.2).

³ *Idha bhikkhu bhikkhu dhammam pariyāpuṇāti suttam geyyam veyyākaraṇam gātham udānam iti, vuttakam jātakam abbhuta, dhammam vedallam*. Technically, the 9 categories form the “nine-limbed Teacher’s teachings” (*navaṅga satthu, sāsana*). See SD 30.10 (4); SD 26.11 (3.2.1.3).

This monk, bhikshu, is called “one great in learning” (*pariyatti,bahula*),
not one who lives the Dharma.

3 (2) Furthermore, bhikshu, a monk **teaches** to others the Dharma in detail, just as he has heard it,
just as he has mastered it,

But not going further, he understands not its meaning with wisdom.

This monk, bhikshu, is called “one great in making known [theory]” (*paññatti,bahula*).

4 (3) Furthermore, bhikshu, a monk **recites** to others the Dharma in detail, just as he has heard it,
just as he has mastered it,

but not going further, he understands not its meaning with wisdom.

This monk, bhikshu, is called “one great in recitation” (*sajjhāya,bahula*).

5 (4) Furthermore, bhikshu, a monk passes the day **thinking and pondering in his mind**, turning
over in his mind the Dharma, just as he has heard it, just as he has mastered it,

but not going further, he understands not its meaning with wisdom.

This monk, bhikshu, is called “one great in thinking” (*vitakka,bahula*).

The one who lives the Dharma

6 (5) Here, bhikshu, a monk **learns [masters]** the Dharma as

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. the discourses, | <i>sutta</i> |
| 2. the discourses with verses, | <i>geyya</i> |
| 3. the prose expositions, | <i>veyyākaraṇa</i> |
| 4. the verses | <i>gāthā</i> |
| 5. the inspired sayings, | <i>udāna</i> |
| 6. the thus-said sayings, | <i>iti,vuttaka</i> |
| 7. the birth-stories, | <i>jātaka</i> |
| 8. the marvellous accounts, | <i>abbhuta,dhamma</i> |
| 9. the catechisms. | <i>vedalla.</i> |

but, **going further**, he understands its meaning with wisdom.

Such a monk, bhikshu, is called “**one who lives the Dharma**” (*dhamma,vihārī*).

7 Thus indeed, bhikshu,

have I shown you	the one great in	<i>learning,</i>	[89]	<i>pariyatti,bahula</i>
have I shown you	the one great in	<i>making known,</i>		<i>paññatti,bahula</i>
have I shown you	the one great in	<i>reciting,</i>		<i>sajjhāya,bahula</i>
have I shown you	the one great in	<i>thinking,</i>		<i>vitakka,bahula</i>
have I shown you	the one great in	<i>living in Dharma.</i>		<i>dhamma,vihārī</i>

The Buddha’s advice

7.2 Bhikshus, whatever a teacher should do out of compassion for the good of disciples, for the sake
of their welfare, it has been done to you by me.

⁴ *Uttariṃ* [only *Be uttari*] *c’assa paññāya atthaṃ na-p,pajānāti*. Comy explains this as: Other than his learning of the Dharma, he does not understand its meaning with the insight of path wisdom (the saint’s wisdom). He neither sees nor penetrates the 4 noble truths (*uttari c’assa paññāya atthaṃ na-p,pajānātīti tato pariyattito uttari tassa dhammassa saha,vipassanāya magga,paññāya atthaṃ na-p,pajānāti, cattāri saccāni na passati na-p,paṭivijjhatīti attho, AA 3:267*).

7.3 These, bhikshu, are the foot of trees;⁵ these are empty spots.⁶
 Meditate,⁷ bhikshu! Be not heedless! Regret not later!⁸
 This is our instruction to you.”⁹

— evaṃ —

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⁵ “Those are the foot of trees,” *etāni...rukkha,mūlāni*. “Foot” here is usually single, like “bottom.”

⁶ *Suññ’āgāra*, sometimes rendered as “empty abode.”

⁷ “Meditate!” *jhāyatha*, lit “cultivate *jhāna*” (M 1:45, 118; S 4:133, 4:359, 361, 362, 368, 373; A 3:87, 89, 4:139, 392). Syn *bhāvētha* (2nd pl), “cultivate!” See **Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (3.3.2).

⁸ On the advantage of youth in spiritual life, see **Anāgata,bhaya S 2** (A 5.78), SD 1.10. See also MA 1:195; SA 3:111; AA 3:267.

⁹ This is stock: **Sallekha S** (M 44,18/1:45); **Dvedhā, vitakka S** (M 19,27/1:118); (**Nava Purāṇa**) **Kamma S** (S 4:133), SD 4.12; (**Nava Purāna**) **Kamma S** (S 35.146/4:132 f), SD 4.12; **Kāya S** (S 43.1/4:359), SD 12.21(1), & all suttas in the same **Asaṅkhata Saṃyutta** (S 43.2-44/4:360-373); **Yodh’ājīva S 1** (A 5.73.7/3:87), **Yodh’ājīva S 2** (A 5.74.7/89), **Vinaya,dhara S** (A 7.70.4/4:139), **Devatā S** (A 9.19.4/4:392); **Dh 671a**: see SD 34.2 (3.11.1); cf **Mahā Palobhana J** (J 507).