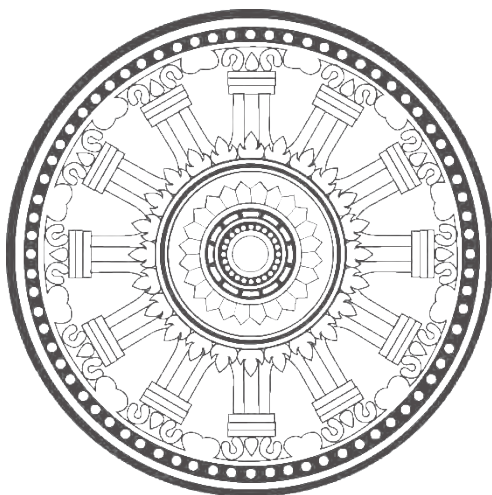


The Law of Kamma



The Law of
Cause and Effect



THE LAW OF KAMMA

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Introduction



Human beings are uniquely different from birth in terms of our looks, our social standing, our economical status, etc. What then causes us to be uniquely different? The Lord Buddha discovered that our uniqueness was determined by our distinctly different past overall Kamma. The details of this teaching are recorded in the Culakammavibhanga Sutta.

The Kamma Principle is deceptively simple. But it is actually very difficult to understand especially the part about the consequences of Kamma. It is the reason why many people say that ‘they cannot readily witness good Kamma which gives good

consequences but what is evident to them is bad Kamma which gives good consequences.’ This wrong view occurs because there are certain decent individuals who have performed good deeds all their lives but still suffer hardship while there are certain immoral individuals who for example operate in the black market become rich and respectable. This apparent contrariness to the Kamma Principle stems from the fact that the workings of the Law of Kamma are highly complex and cannot be reasoned with mere intellect but can only be witnessed via the Threefold Knowledge attained as a result of elevated meditative attainments. The Threefold Knowledge allows one to witness the complex workings of the Law of Kamma. Since we cannot yet attain the Threefold Knowledge, we must learn about the Law of Kamma from the Lord Buddha’s Teachings and endeavor to practice accordingly in order to keep our lives out of harm’s way.

The Lord Buddha discovered that the Law of Kamma is a law of nature which could not be violated. It must be obeyed by all human beings otherwise they will incur ill consequences. Therefore, the Lord Buddha had taken the time to teach about the Law of Kamma and provide the Kamma Principle as the framework for our conduct. The Kamma Principle states that whoever performs good Kamma will receive good consequences. Whoever performs bad Kamma will receive bad consequences. That is, we reap what we sow. Therefore, we should base what we do, say, or think on the Kamma Principle.



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Chapter 1

Fundamental Understanding about the Law of Kamma

Most human beings on earth have no idea why they are born and what causes the particular circumstances in their lives. Some people belong to a wealthy family. Some people belong to a poor family. Some people are healthy. Some people are handicapped. Some people are good-looking. Some people are homely. And the list goes on. What every human being has in common is the fact that we must all die. However, we have no idea when

and how we will die. As a result, our existence is plagued by many puzzling questions. Scientists and psychologists have tried to theorize and rationalize our existence. They also have tried to understand the factors which influenced human behavior and different theories have been postulated. The fact is the answer to human existence and human behavior has been clearly stated in the Lord Buddha's Teachings, since the Lord Buddha could penetrate the entire truth about life and existence as a result of His Enlightenment. Therefore, He is the best personage to tell us how to best conduct our lives for our safety and for the fulfillment of our life's true purpose, which is to seek Enlightenment.

It is crucially important that every individual studies the Lord Buddha's Teachings in earnest in order to gain the most important knowledge of all here and now. Only this most important body of knowledge, which helps us to increasingly accumulate more and more wholesome deeds, can help us to meet with success and happiness all through eternity.

The Law of Kamma is the law of action, the law of cause and effect. It is the law of nature. Nature in this case is defined by the fact that a wholesome thought results in a wholesome deed and an unwholesome thought results in an unwholesome deed. The Law of Kamma is very real and very relevant to life in that a particular cause leads to a particular effect. Kamma encompasses physical, verbal, and mental deeds regardless of whether they are good or bad, intentional or unintentional, frequent or infrequent. Every deed yields its consequences. Some of the consequences may be experienced right here and now. Others are experienced in the hereafter. The Law of Kamma is absolutely exact and no one is exempt from it. It governs human beings of every race, creed, and language regardless of where they are: on land, on the water, in the air, on the moon, in space. No one can escape from the Law of Kamma. Even our current Lord Buddha had to live with the consequences of His past Kamma which had been accumulated during His pursuit of Perfections

throughout countless lifetimes. Our Kamma follows us everywhere like a shadow. The rules and laws thought up by human beings contain loopholes and may change from year to year, but the Law of Kamma never changes and contains no loopholes. According to the Law of Kamma, it states that a good deed yields good consequences and a wicked deed yields ill consequences. Ultimately, there is no such thing as a good deed yielding ill consequences and a bad deed yielding good consequences.

Suppose in each lifetime, an individual accumulates both good and bad Kamma for a total of 1,000 times, when these Kamma give their consequences, the number of consequences can increase significantly compared to the original Kamma of 1,000. It is not unlike a single fruit tree which can yield thousands of fruits within its lifetime. Each one of us is trapped in a maze of accumulated Kamma that is waiting its turn to give its consequences one lifetime after another. Therefore, it is not possible for us to escape this round of rebirth as long as

we are still lugging around with us all of these past accumulated Kamma, which are individually unique. It is also a universal fact that we reap what we sow.

‘Samsara’ is an ancient term that **means a journey, a recycling.** It essentially implies **a long journey, a continuous recycling or round of rebirth from one plane of existence to another until such time as all defilements can be extinguished.** For example, one is a human being in this lifetime and after one dies one is reborn in the States of Happiness. After one ceases to be in the States of Happiness, one will be reborn again. One may be reborn in the Human Realm or may even be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. This recycling is called the round of rebirth and it occurs continuously.

There are certain phenomena which activate and perpetuate the process of the round of rebirth and these include:

Defilements or gloominess means evil which lies latent in our consciousness. It causes our mind

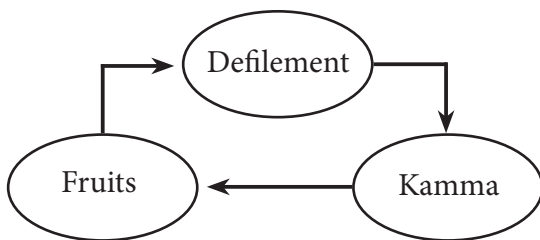
to become clouded and impure. Under the dictate of defilements, a living being cannot be itself but is forced by its defilements to perform all kinds of deeds. There are two key drivers in this process. The first one is '**Kileskam.**' It means the latent evil which forces one to commit certain wrongs in order to obtain the objects of one's desire. The second key driver is '**Vatthukam.**' It means desirable objects which include matter, sound, smell, taste and touch.

Kamma or deeds: They include physical, verbal, and mental deeds and can be either good or bad.

Fruits or consequences: They mean the consequences of Kamma.

Defilements, Kamma and the consequences of Kamma are sometimes referred to as the three causes of the round of rebirth or '**Trivatta.**' Defilements are the main factor that drives one to perform physical, verbal, and mental misdeeds. Once a deed is done, however great or small, there naturally follows its consequences.

The 'Trivatta' Diagram



During a human being's lifetime, he performs many deeds. Some are good and others are bad. When he dies, there are different planes of existence where he will be reborn into. The planes of existence can be grouped into two major destinations as follows:

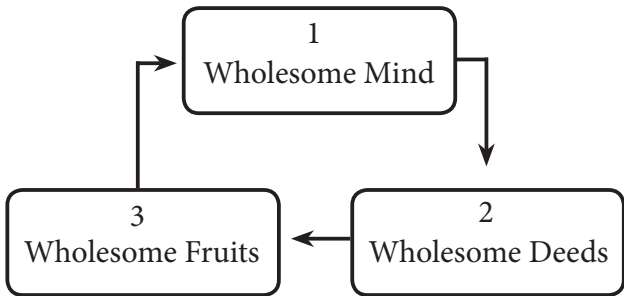
1. The States of Happiness: Individuals who have performed good deeds will meet with happiness in both this and the next existence. Individuals destined for the States of Happiness possess 'Right View.' That is, they have right understanding about the Law of Kamma. They are noble-minded and have performed mostly wholesome deeds through

their body, words, and thoughts. When they die, the fruits of their wholesome deeds will cause them to be reborn in the States of Happiness, which include the Human Realm, the Celestial Realm, etc. These realms are still dominated by defilements and they may still be tempted to commit a misdeed. However, if they can completely extinguish their defilements, then they can attain Nibbana and will no longer have to undergo the round of rebirth within the Three Spheres of existence. These include the Sense Sphere, the Form Sphere, and the Non-Form Sphere. Defilements no longer have any power over them, and the rest of their overall Kamma will no longer have the chance to bear its fruits.

The Lord Buddha taught that rebirth in the States of Happiness is very rare. Of all the dirt in the landmasses, the dirt in the fingernail represents the number of beings that are reborn as human beings, but the rest of the dirt represents the number of beings that are reborn in the States of Loss and Woe. Also, the number of current human beings and

celestial beings who will be reborn as a human being or a celestial being is like dirt in a fingernail, but the number of human beings and celestial beings who will be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe is like the rest of the dirt on earth.

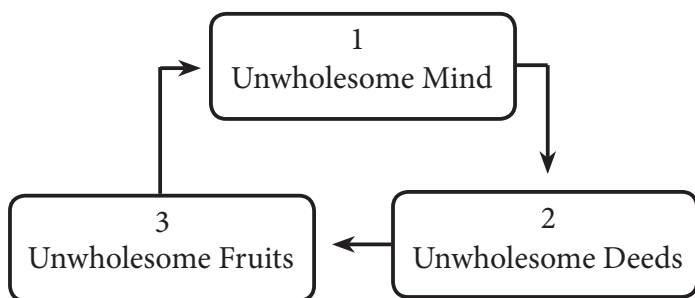
The ‘Trivatta’ Diagram of Right View Individuals



2. The States of Unhappiness (Loss and Woe): Individuals who have committed unwholesome deeds will meet with suffering and difficulties in both this and the next existences. Individuals destined for the States of Unhappiness are those who possess 'Wrong View.' That is, they have wrong understanding about the Law of Kamma. They are driven by base motives to commit unwholesome deeds through their body, words, and thoughts. When they die, the fruits of their unwholesome deeds will cause them to be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. The four States of Loss and Woe include the Hell Realm, the Peta Realm, the Asurakaya Realm, and the Animal Realm. These are the planes of existence where the inhabitants experience the horrible consequences of their unwholesome deeds. Inhabitants of these realms are considered to be unfortunate, since they cannot realize any stages of the Dhamma. They cannot realize the Four Noble Truths, which include suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

According to the Lord Buddha, once a being is reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, it is extremely difficult for it to be reborn a human being. Having a rebirth as a human being is as difficult as a blind turtle which comes up to the surface of the ocean once every 100 years and gets its neck caught in a life-buoy the size of its head, which just happens to be floating around in the vast ocean.

The ‘Trivatta’ Diagram of Wrong View Individuals



The round of rebirth is a universal phenomenon and concerns every human being regardless of his/her race and creed. It is a fact of life which everyone must know. Ignorance of the round of rebirth is dangerous and can jeopardize one's life by causing one to fall prey to the dictate of one's defilements. Right understanding about the round of rebirth can lead one to wish for the way out of suffering. The Human Realm is a plane of existence where Kamma, be it good or bad, can be accumulated to the fullest. The Human Realm is like the center of all good and bad Kamma. The physical form of a human being is robust and strong. It is conducive to the accumulation of Kamma, which in turn propels one along the long journey within Samsara. If good Kamma is accumulated, it will lead one to a long life of blissful enjoyment in the States of Happiness until such time as the accumulated merit is spent. Therefore, merit is a commodity which needs constant replenishing. If bad Kamma is accumulated, it will lead to a long life of suffering in the States of Unhappiness

until the ill consequences are exhausted, provided that bad Kamma is not being further accumulated.

The Discloser of the Reality of Kamma

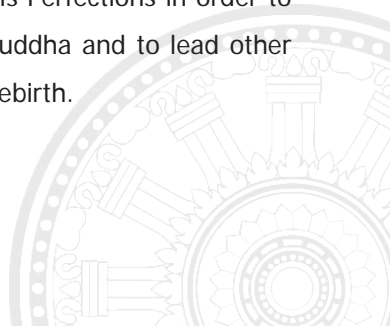
The Lord Buddha had discovered and seen the common and true enemy of all living beings. This common enemy is the evil force behind the scene which uses defilements to control all living beings. Defilements cause human beings to perform deeds or Kamma, the fruits of which cause them to undergo the round of rebirth. The Lord Buddha was able to witness the round of rebirth on the day of His Enlightenment after He attained the Threefold Knowledge.

During the first watch, the Lord Buddha attains the First Knowledge, which is called Pubbenivasanussatinana. It is the supernormal knowledge which enables the Lord Buddha to recall the details of His countless past existences. The First Knowledge is accessible through the Dhamma-Eye.

He is able to witness His countless past existences and the conditions of each of these existences ranging from abject poverty to the wealth and power of an absolute monarch. The bones accumulated from all of His countless existences as a human being piled higher than a great mountain. The blood and tears which He had shed in all these existences were greater than all the great oceans combined.

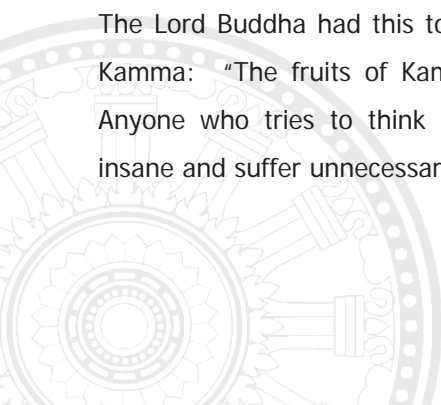
During the second watch, the Lord Buddha attains the Second Knowledge, which is called Cutupapatanana. It is the supernormal knowledge which enables the Lord Buddha to perceive the death and rebirth of other beings through the Dhamma-Eye. The Lord Buddha perceives that each living being's round of rebirth is caused by its overall Kamma. Some are born as animals, Petas, or Asurakayas that lead a life of suffering. Others are born as human beings or celestial beings that are blessed with good looks and lead a life of luxury. This is where the Lord Buddha perceives how each being's unique, overall Kamma causes each being to be uniquely different.

During the last watch, the Lord Buddha attains the Third Knowledge, which is called Asavakkhayanana. It is the supernormal knowledge which enables the Lord Buddha to rid Himself of all defilements and become enlightened as the Lord Buddha. He is the fourth Buddha of this Kappa. The Lord Buddha is omniscient and is the refuge of all living beings. After His Enlightenment and with the deepest compassion for all beings, the Lord Buddha revealed to us that the hereafter exists, and it is our overall Kamma which determines our rebirth in the Hell Realm or in the Celestial Realm. He has told us what Kamma causes us to be reborn in the Hell Realm and what Kamma causes us to be reborn in the Celestial Realm. The Lord Buddha has graciously taught us the whole truth about reality. He had spent the entire twenty Asankheyyas and 100,000 Kappas pursuing His Perfections in order to become enlightened as a Buddha and to lead other beings out of the round of rebirth.



Kamma and Its Consequences Are Unthinkable

Kamma and its consequences are unthinkable and cannot be explained using human intellect alone. The reason is the Law of Kamma is highly complex and cannot be directly witnessed by the human eye or understood by postulating or theorizing. The workings of the Law of Kamma can only be witnessed using the Dhamma-Eye. The Dhamma-Eye allows one to clearly perceive the past (Atitansanana), the present (Paccupapannansanana), the future (Anagatansanana), and how each living being is propelled along by its overall Kamma (Yathakammupaganana). These supernormal knowledge are specifically the Lord Buddha's domain. The Lord Buddha had this to say about the Law of Kamma: "The fruits of Kamma are inconceivable. Anyone who tries to think about them risk going insane and suffer unnecessary hardship."



Definitions of Key Words

We study the Law of Kamma so that we can understand it, so that we can live our lives accordingly. Our daily life requires us to make many decisions, and we must make them knowledgeably in regards to the Law of Kamma. There are important words in Buddhism which have a direct link to the Law of Kamma and it behooves us to learn them well so that we can make our decisions wisely. These important words include:

1. 'Right': It means an act which once it is carried out has a beneficial effect. It does not cause any damage, any harm, or any trouble for oneself and for all concerned.

2. 'Wrong': It means an act of carelessness or heedlessness that causes damage, harm, and trouble for oneself and for all concerned because it is an act of stupidity.

3. 'Good': It is an action which is taken because one is well aware that it is the right thing to do and one does it with attentiveness, carefulness, and confidence. The fruits of such deeds bring about happiness and merit.

4. 'Bad': It is an action which is carried out with the full knowledge that it is wrong, that it will cause damage and trouble for oneself and for all concerned. The fruit of such action is suffering, trouble, and retribution.

5. 'Merit': It means radiance, purity, goodness, and things that cleanse one's body, words, and thoughts from evil. Merit leads to happiness as taught by the Lord Buddha: "Behold, monks, don't be afraid of merit, for merit is the name of happiness." Merit is made when one acts wholesomely through one's body, words, and thoughts. Merit-making is an act performed by high-minded individuals.

6. 'Demerit': It means gloominess, wickedness, and filth which corrupt the body, the words, and the thoughts. Its fruit is suffering, grief, and dissatisfaction. Unwholesome deeds through one's body, words, and thoughts give rise to demerit. Unwholesome deeds are committed by corrupted individuals.

7. 'Advantage': It means the result of a wholesome deed in terms of praise and admiration.

8. 'Harm': It means the result of an unwholesome deed in terms of reproof and censure.

9. 'Should': It means knowing what should be done. That is, if what one wants to do is not wrong, does not cause any damage, but on the contrary is good and decent, one does it attentively and wholeheartedly.

10. 'Should not': It means knowing what should not be done. That is, if what one wants to do is not wrong and does not cause any damage but may be offensive and provoke reproof, then one chooses not to do it.

Kamma means an intentional action and can be performed in three ways: through the body, the words, and the thoughts. Kamma or an intentional action can be categorized in two ways as follows:

1. Wholesome Kamma: It means a good deed which gives rise to merit. The deed is not morally wrong. It is not unethical. It does not cause the mind to be gloomy. It can also be referred to as a wholesome intention, since one intentionally performs a good deed. Wholesome Kamma can be defined by the 'Tenfold Wholesome Course of Action' and involves physical, verbal, and mental deeds as follows:

* **Physical Deeds:** These are wholesome deeds which are performed through the body and can also be referred to as physical honesty and include:

(1) Panatipata Veramani: To abstain from taking the life of another living being.

(2) Adinnadana Veramani: To abstain from stealing.

(3) Kamesumicchacara Veramani: To abstain from sexual misconduct.

* **Verbal Deeds:** These are wholesome deeds which are performed through the words and can be referred to as verbal honesty and include:

(1) Musavada Veramani: To abstain from false speech such as lying, words designed to deceive or take advantage of others, etc.

(2) Pisunaya-vacaya Veramani:
To abstain from divisive speech or words which cause division among people. They include sarcastic words, insulting words, gossip, etc. They also include words which are used to quarrel with one another.

(3) Pharusaya-vacaya Veramani:
To abstain from offensive language which include swear words, words that sting, embarrass, and anger others.

(4) Samphappalapa Veramani:
To abstain from nonsensical speech or words which are uttered at the wrong time, words which are meant to tease one another, words which are unbeneficial, words which are unjust, words which lack concrete evidence, etc.

* **Mental Deeds:** They mean wholesome thoughts and can be referred to as mental honesty and include:

(1) **Anabhijjha:** Non-covetousness.

(2) **Abyapada:** Not thinking about harming or exploiting others.

(3) **Sammaditthi:** Having 'Right View.'

2. Unwholesome Kamma: It means a bad deed. The deed is morally wrong and unethical. Once committed, it incurs retribution and causes the mind to be gloomy. It can also be referred to as an unwholesome intention since one intentionally performs a bad deed. Unwholesome Kamma can be defined by the 'Tenfold Unwholesome Course of Action' and involves physical, verbal, and mental misdeeds as follows:

* **Physical Deeds:** These are unwholesome deeds which are performed by the body and can also be referred to as physical dishonesty and include:

(1) Panatipata: To intentionally take the life of another living being.

(2) Adinnadana: To intentionally steal from others.

(3) Kamesumicchacara: To intentionally commit sexual misconduct.

* **Verbal Deeds:** These are unwholesome deeds which are performed through the words and can be referred to as verbal dishonesty and include:

(1) Musavada: To intentionally practice false speech such as lying, words designed to deceive or take advantage of others, etc.

(2) Pisunavaca: To intentionally practice divisive speech or words which cause division among people. They include sarcastic words, insulting words, gossip, etc. They also include words which are used to quarrel with each other.

(3) Pharusavaca: To intentionally practice offensive language and include swear words, words which sting, embarrass, and anger others.

(4) Samphappalapa: To intentionally practice nonsensical speech or words which are uttered at the wrong time, words which are meant to tease one another, words which are unbeneficial, words which are unjust, words which lack concrete evidence, etc.

* **Mental Deeds:** These are unwholesome thoughts and can be referred to as mental dishonesty and include:

(1) Abhijjha: Covetousness.

(2) Byapada: Thinking about harming or exploiting others.

(3) Micchaditthi: Having 'Wrong View.'



**Comparison of the Tenfold Wholesome Course
of Action to the Tenfold Unwholesome Course of
Action and the Vehicle for Kamma**

The Vehicle for Kamma	The Tenfold Wholesome Course of Action	The Tenfold Unwholesome Course of Action
Physical Deeds	1.To abstain from taking the life of another living being.	1.To intentionally take the life of another living being.
	2.To abstain from stealing.	2.To intentionally steal from others.
	3.To abstain from sexual misconduct.	3.To intentionally commit sexual misconduct.
Verbal Deeds	1.To abstain from false speech.	1.To intentionally practice false speech.
	2.To abstain from divisive speech.	2.To intentionally practice divisive speech.
	3.To abstain from offensive language.	3.To intentionally practice offensive language.
	4.To abstain from nonsensical speech.	4.To intentionally practice nonsensical speech.
Mental Deeds	1.Non-Covetousness.	1.Covetousness.
	2.Not thinking about harming or exploiting others.	2.Thinking about harming or exploiting others.
	3.To have Right View.	3.To have Wrong View.

Kamma or an intentional act must be followed by its consequence. The Lord Buddha had the following to say about the Law of Kamma: **“All beings possess their own Kamma, are heirs to their own Kamma. Their Kamma define their rebirth, their race, their refuge. Kamma differentiates beings into crudeness and refinement.”** A good deed gives rise to merit. Accumulated merit is in turn concentrated into Perfections and Perfections cause the individual's body, words, and thoughts to become purer and brighter. On the contrary, a bad deed gives rise to retribution. The ill consequences of repeated misdeeds make one's defilements more potent.



The Rules Used to Decide What Is Good and Bad Kamma

As mentioned earlier, Kamma is an intentional act which can be performed through the body, words, and thoughts. There are two main types of Kamma: wholesome Kamma and unwholesome Kamma. What decides if a Kamma is wholesome or unwholesome is its consequences?

1. Consider the Final Consequences of an Action: The Lord Buddha taught that "Once an individual performs an action and does not suffer any negative consequences but feels cheerful and joyful about it, then the action is considered a good Kamma. Once an individual performs an action and suffers its negative consequences in the forms of tears and sorrow, then the action is considered a bad Kamma."

2. Consider the Cause of the Action: The Lord Buddha taught that "An action which is devoid of greed, anger, and ignorance is considered

a wholesome Kamma. It causes no harm. It has positive consequences. An action which is performed under the influence of greed, anger, and ignorance is considered an unwholesome Kamma. It has harmful consequences. It causes suffering."

What Causes Kamma to Occur?

Samsara or the round of rebirth is perpetuated by the defilements which are inherent in all living beings. Defilements play a role in all of our action be it wholesome or unwholesome. The causes of bad and good Kamma are as follows:

1. The Causes of Bad Kamma

Lobha or Greed : Covetousness.

Dosa or Anger : The desire to harm others and is expressed as ill-will, anger, irritation, annoyance, frustration, grudges.

Moha or Ignorance : Misguidedness – mistaking something wrong as being right, harboring a grudge.

2. The Causes of Good Kamma

Alobha : Non-covetousness.

Adosa : Not desiring to harm others. The absence of ill-will, anger, irritation, annoyance, frustration, grudges.

Amoha : No misguidedness. One has Right View and does not hold a grudge against others.

The Lord Buddha taught all living beings to know the root causes of Kamma so that Kamma can be extinguished at its source. The Lord Buddha taught us to cure our greed by giving alms; to cure our anger by cultivating loving-kindness and observing the Precepts; to cure our ignorance by practicing analytical reflection of the causes and effects, by practicing creative thinking, by right thinking so that our greed, anger, and ignorance can be reduced; by being motivated to perform good deeds and practice meditation. These practices allow the source of unwholesomeness to be destroyed.

Characteristics of Kamma and Its Consequences

According to the Lord Buddha, Kamma has four characteristics as well as four types of consequences as follows:

1. Black Kamma and Black Consequences:

This is the situation where an individual intentionally commits unwholesome Kamma through the body, the words, and the thoughts. The consequences of which is a rebirth in the States of Unhappiness where the individual experiences pure suffering. The majority of individuals in this category are reborn as hell beings.

2. White Kamma and White Consequences:

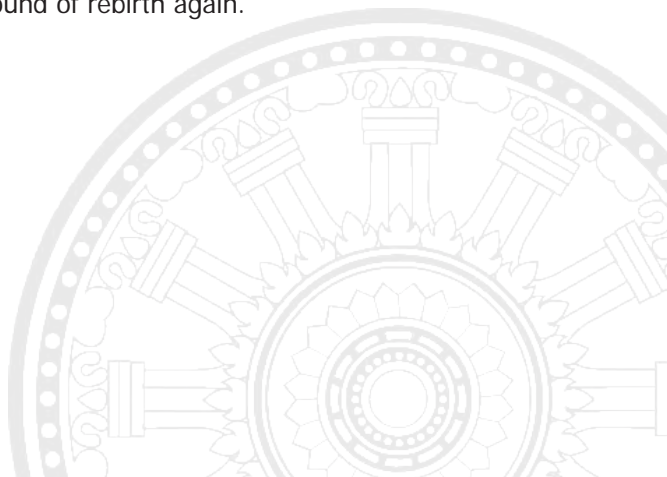
This is the situation where an individual intentionally performs wholesome Kamma through the body, the words, and the thoughts. The consequences of which is a rebirth in the States of Happiness where the individual experiences pure ecstasy. The majority of individuals in this category are reborn as Brahma beings.

3. Black and White Kamma with Black and White Consequences: An individual intentionally performs a mixture of wholesome and unwholesome Kamma, the results of which are the vicissitudes of life. When wholesome Kamma yields its fruits, the individual will be reborn in the States of Happiness. Likewise, when unwholesome Kamma yields its fruits, the individual will be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. Individuals in this category are reborn as human beings, some types of celestial beings, animals, etc.

4. Neither Black nor White Kamma with neither Black nor White Consequences: This category applies to Arahats who have risen above all conditions which give rise to wholesome and unwholesome deeds as well as merit and demerit. They are destined for Nibbana only.

It can be seen that the type of Kamma affects the characteristics of the consciousness in that a wholesome deed leads to a clear and bright mind. Therefore, a wholesome deed can be

compared to white Kamma because it makes the consciousness clean and white. On the contrary, an unwholesome deed makes the mind sad and gloomy. An unwholesome deed can be compared to black Kamma because it makes the consciousness dark and black. Black Kamma gives rise to demerit and causes the individual to be reborn in the Hell Realm. White Kamma gives rise to merit and causes the individual to be reborn in the Celestial Realm. A mixture of white and black Kamma gives rise to a mixture of merit and demerit and causes the individual to be reborn as a human being, a celestial being, or an animal. Individuals that rise above both merit and demerit can attain Nibbana and will never undergo the round of rebirth again.



The Law of Kamma as Taught in Different Religious Beliefs

It is a universal fact that humanity is divided as a result of different ideas and beliefs. Individuals that share similar ideas and beliefs seek to be with each other. This self-imposed segregation has been with humanity all throughout the ages. During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a widespread of different ideas and beliefs. The ideas and beliefs of some religious sects were good, but others were questionable. The Lord Buddha made comments about these different sects, their ideas and beliefs according to how well or how much their ideas and beliefs corresponded to the Law of Kamma.

Ideas and beliefs which go against the Law of Kamma are as follows:

1. Alms-giving has no consequences.
2. Aid-giving has no consequences.
3. Revering those who are worthy of our reverence has no consequences.

4. An action has no consequences.
5. The reality of this world does not exist.
6. The hereafter does not exist.
7. Motherhood is inconsequential.
8. Fatherhood is inconsequential.
9. There is no such thing as 'Spontaneous Rising.'
10. Enlightened monks, who can penetrate the whole truth about existence and teach it to others, do not exist.

These ideas and beliefs arise from wrong understanding and are called 'Wrong View.' Any individuals who have these beliefs are said to be 'Wrong View' individuals. These 'Wrong View' individuals can be further grouped into three main categories as follows:

1. Natthikaditthi: A belief in nihilism. These individuals tend to pride themselves on having a logical and advanced thinking. They may even antagonize an Arahant as a result of their 'Wrong View.'

2. Akiriyaditthi: The belief that an action has no consequences. Whatever good deed that one does or asks another to do earns no merit. Whatever bad deed that one does or asks another to do earns no retribution. Believers of these ideas deny the existence of the Law of Kamma and the importance of morality.

3. Ahetukaditthi: A belief in non-causality. They believe that an individual's life is not affected by anything but his own fate, which is dictated by his astrological birth chart. Individuals that subscribe to this belief will abandon themselves to their so called fate and show no desire to improve upon their situation. They believe that there is no connection between cause and effect and everything is the way it has to be.

‘Wrong View’ causes human beings to be dominated by defilements, which drive them to commit all kinds of misdeeds. These misdeeds cause suffering for themselves and for society here and now

and cause them to go to the States of Unhappiness after they die. Therefore, the Lord Buddha taught that having the 'Wrong View' is a worse offense than any other types of unwholesomeness. 'Wrong View' causes human beings to be irresponsible and to be unreceptive to anything decent.

If one should wonder why we need to learn about 'Wrong View,' it can be explained in this way. When a person lives in filth, when he hears about the virtue of cleanliness, it is difficult for him to understand what cleanliness is and what use it can be. Only when he has seen both filth and cleanliness can he understand the virtue of cleanliness. In the same manner, a person can understand the virtue of 'Right View' when he can truly appreciate the harm caused by 'Wrong View.'

The Advantages Gained from Learning about the Law of Kamma

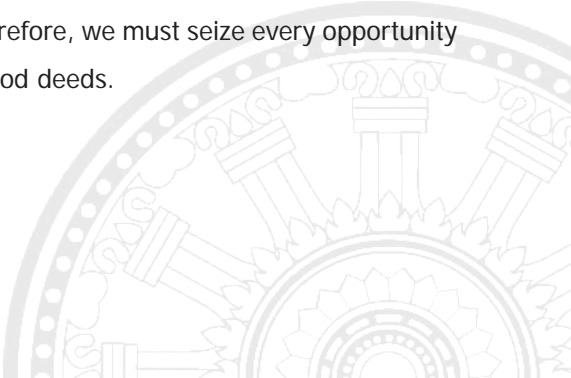
Knowledge of the Law of Kamma has the power to elevate the consciousness of ordinary human beings to that of holy individuals. The following are the advantages which can be gained in this and future existences from knowing about the Law of Kamma.

1. The knowledge helps us to be motivated to perform only good deeds from this day onward. It helps us realize that the fortunate circumstances of our current existence are due to our past accumulated merit or the effects of our past good Kamma and these effects have finite duration in that they can be spent. Therefore, we need to continue accumulating good deeds in order to ensure that our merit is constantly replenished. For those of us who meet with unfortunate circumstances in the current existence, we should not be discouraged. Now that we know what constitutes good and bad Kamma, we can choose to perform only good Kamma

on a continuous basis because the good things we do today will go to create a brighter future for us tomorrow.

2. The knowledge helps us to abandon all misdeeds because it helps us realize the harm which our misdeeds can have on ourselves, on society, and on the environment.

3. The knowledge helps us not to be complacent by thinking that it is enough that we do not commit any misdeed and there should be no need for us to perform any good deed. It helps us realize the fact that every breath which we take uses up part of our accumulated past merit. Therefore, our past accumulated merit is continuously being spent. It helps us realize the fact that death can come to us without any advanced warning. Therefore, we must seize every opportunity to perform good deeds.



4. The knowledge helps us to use our body in the most worthwhile manner possible.

Whether we possess a healthy body or a handicapped one, we realize that it is the result of our overall past Kamma. A handicapped body can still be used to perform many good deeds. Healthy or handicapped, we must learn to control our impulses by controlling our body, our words, and our thoughts so that we do not fall prey to the dictate of our defilements. A handicapped body that is used to perform good deeds is far more superior to a healthy body that is used to commit misdeeds.

5. The knowledge helps us to have a firm belief in the Law of Kamma.

This belief in turn helps us to be increasingly conscious of our action, and its consequences so much so that it becomes our second nature. The consequences of good deeds are a healthy body and a healthy mind; economical success through right livelihood and respectability. The consequences of our good deeds propel us to meet with ever increasing success and prosperity.

6. The knowledge helps us to design our life for both this and future existences.

We can choose whether we want to experience success and prosperity or to experience abject poverty. Most people believe that we cannot choose the circumstances in which we are born. The truth is we can if we truly understand the Law of Kamma and how it works. We can design our next rebirth by choosing to perform our physical deeds, verbal deeds, and mental deeds accordingly.

7. The knowledge helps us to set appropriate goals for our life. We learn from the Law of Kamma that the root cause of our problems is our action which in turn impacts our lifestyle, our business, our society, and our environment. Therefore, to solve the root cause of our problems, we must bear in mind at all times that we are here to perform good deeds, accumulate merit, and pursue Perfections. For these purposes, we can design our lives by setting the objective of our lives at three different levels as follows:

*** The primary level of our life objective:**

To experience ease and comfort in the current existence.

*** The secondary level of our life objective:**

To experience ecstasy in our next existence in the Celestial Realm.

*** The tertiary level of our life objective:**

To elevate our physical, verbal, and mental status to the point where emancipation from defilements can be achieved and the round of rebirth can be terminated.

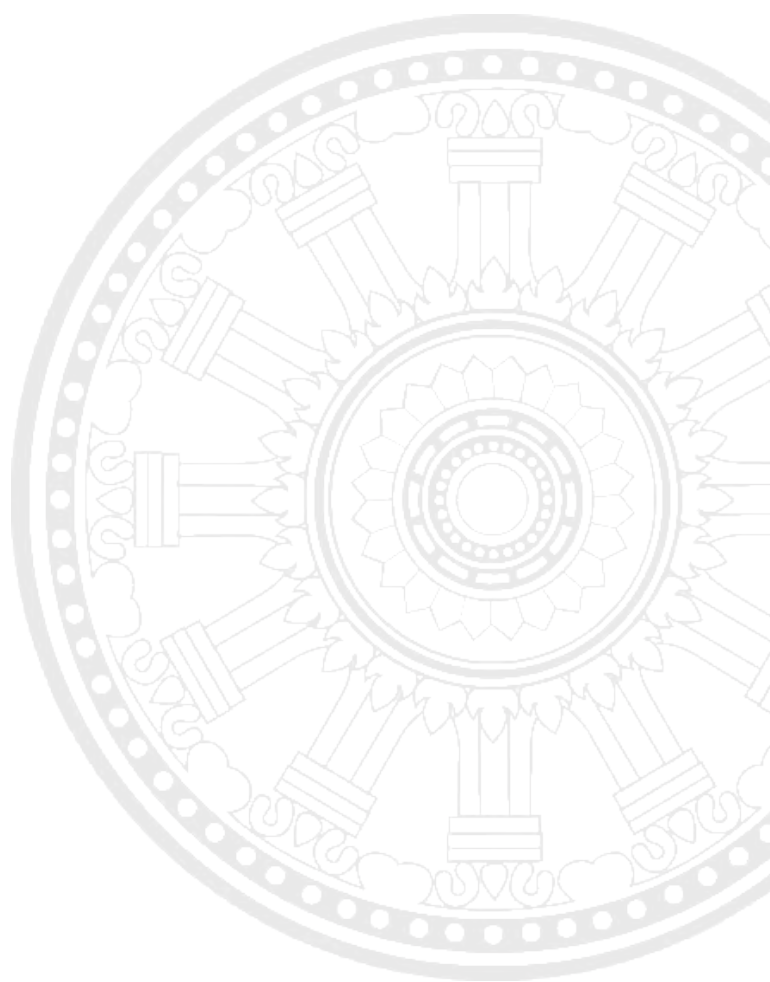
8. The knowledge helps us to teach and train ourselves and others to behave properly.

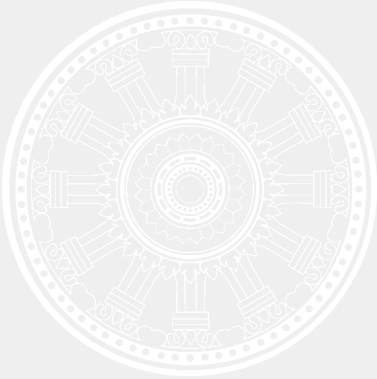
The true nature of our consciousness is beautiful and bright. It can imbibe the goodness of sound advice and help us to feel motivated to do good deeds. Moreover, we can benefit others by becoming their virtuous friend.

9. The knowledge helps us not to be heedless in the way we live our lives. It helps us to pay attention to every small deed and makes us realize why the Lord Buddha taught us to practice generosity, observe the Precepts, and practice meditation. The practice of meditation brings about wisdom, which can guide us to live our lives correctly.

10. The knowledge prevents us from wrong thinking. Human beings tend to have wide imaginings and this poses a great risk where true knowledge about the earth and our existence is concerned. For instance, instead of accepting the truth about the natural aging process of our body, we try to search for a magical remedy that can make us immortal. Some of us are of the opinion that the earth will last forever. Others believe that the reality of this world and the hereafter does not exist. They believe that death is final and signifies the end of everything. These are all dangerous imaginings which give deleterious consequences.







Chapter 2

The Kamma Principle as Taught in Buddhism

The Kamma Principle can be compared to Newtonian physics which states that to every action there is a reaction. This law of physics has to do with the physical world in that if we throw a tennis ball against the wall, it will bounce back. If we throw it very hard, it will also bounce back very hard. In the same token the Kamma Principle states that if we perform a good deed, we will receive its good consequences; if we perform a bad deed, we

will receive its bad consequences. The weightiness of our deed is also reflected by the intensity of its consequences.

Whether we meet with fortunate or unfortunate circumstances in this lifetime is not influenced by external factors such as the stars, the planets, the moon, the sun, but they are a result of our overall past Kamma. Whether we meet with happiness or unhappiness in this lifetime is not dependent solely on our current Kamma. At any point and time, we are affected by our overall Kamma, which includes all of our accumulated Kamma throughout our countless lifetimes as well as our current Kamma or all the deeds that we have performed in the current lifetime.



How the Law of Kamma Causes Us to Be Uniquely Different

The Culakammavibhanga Sutta: The Sutta which deals with the Kamma Principle. Lord Buddha said:

"Behold, young man, all beings possess their own Kamma. They are heirs to their Kamma. Their Kamma determines their birth and their race. They have Kamma as their refuge. Kamma divides beings into crudeness and refinement."

It can be concluded from this saying that what causes the differences among all living beings is each living being's unique overall Kamma. The Lord Buddha's saying can be further explained as follows:

We are heirs to our Kamma: It means that each being is the owner of his own Kamma. Extraneous objects such as money and material wealth are for our temporary use only. When we die, none of these things can go with us. The only thing that follows our consciousness or soul is our

good and bad Kamma. It follows us throughout our endless lifetimes wherever our rebirth may take us. Our real possession then is the good and bad Kamma that we have performed and not our material wealth.

What we will receive as inheritance from our parents and grandparents is not certain, but we will most certainly receive the consequences of our Kamma. Our Kamma is our own and cannot be passed on to anybody else or shared with others. For example, when an individual has an accident and is injured, he alone experiences the pain and suffering of his injury. His relatives can come and visit but cannot possibly share any pain and suffering with him. It is the same way with Kamma and its consequences.

Our Kamma determines our birth: It means that we are reborn because we still possess Kamma and its consequences. That is, we still possess defilements. Our past overall Kamma, which is branded on our consciousness, determines the realm and the circumstances of our rebirth. An individual

that is completely devoid of Kamma such as an Arahant will not undergo anymore rebirth. Parents are the path by which a living being that still possesses Kamma can be reborn into the Human Realm. Some individuals have been parents and children for many consecutive lifetimes. Some individuals do not share their parents' characteristics. Individual characteristics are the result of each individual's overall Kamma. In the case where parents and children share similar characteristics, it means that they share similar overall Kamma.

Children of virtuous parents owe their parents a great debt of gratitude because they have selflessly devoted themselves to the upbringing of their children. But not all parents can bring their children up to be good and decent. A child with past accumulated good Kamma which causes him to be well-behaved knows not to imitate his parents' bad deeds because they went contrary to his nature. Soon enough he will find a more suitable place of his own. Such is the meaning of "their Kamma determines their birth."

Our Kamma determines our race: It means that our Kamma is our race in that it is constantly with us. It protects us when we are asleep and when we are awake. It helps us to prosper. Or it can trip us up, degrade us, and destroy us. Our clan and our siblings may be able to help us sometimes. At times they may turn against us. When we grow up, we may move to live in a different country, in a different continent. It is not so easy then to help each other out in times of need. Siblings may differ widely in terms of their intelligence, level of education, level of success in life, etc. Therefore, our clan, our race, and our siblings are not where we truly belong, but our Kamma is.

We have Kamma as our refuge: It means that our accumulated good Kamma alone is our true refuge for always not only in this lifetime but in future lifetimes as well. In life, we may be able to depend on our parents, our siblings, and our friends from time to time, but not always or forever.

Lord Buddha further elaborated on the subject as follows:

The 1st Pair: A short lifespan is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual had taken another being's life on a regular basis. He was violent and cruel and did not feel any compassion for other living beings. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a short lifespan.

A long lifespan is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual had abstained from taking another being's life. He was ashamed of misdeeds and fearful of their ill consequences. He showed compassion toward other living beings and helped them out as they could. After he/she died, he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a long lifespan.



The 2nd Pair: Being plagued by many illnesses is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual had routinely abused other beings by using his hand, clumps of dirt, a club or some other types of implements. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would be sickly.

Health is caused by the fact that one past existence or more, the individual did not abuse other beings by using his hand, clumps of dirt, a club or some other types of implements. After he died, he had a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would be healthy.

The 3rd Pair: A poor complexion is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual was easily angered, malicious, filled with vengeful anger, filled with ill will and vengefulness. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell

Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a poor complexion.

A good complexion is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual was not easily angered, was not malicious, was not filled with vengeful anger and was not filled with ill will and vengefulness. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a good complexion.

The 4th Pair: A low level of authority is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual had harbored envy and jealousy when other people received accolade, respect, and admiration. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a low level of authority.

A high level of authority is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more the individual did not harbor envy and jealousy when other people received accolade, respect, and admiration. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a high level of authority.

The 5th Pair: Poverty is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual did not give alms in terms of food, water, cloths, means of transportation, scented articles, mattresses, shelter, and sources of light to monks who practiced chastity. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would be poor.

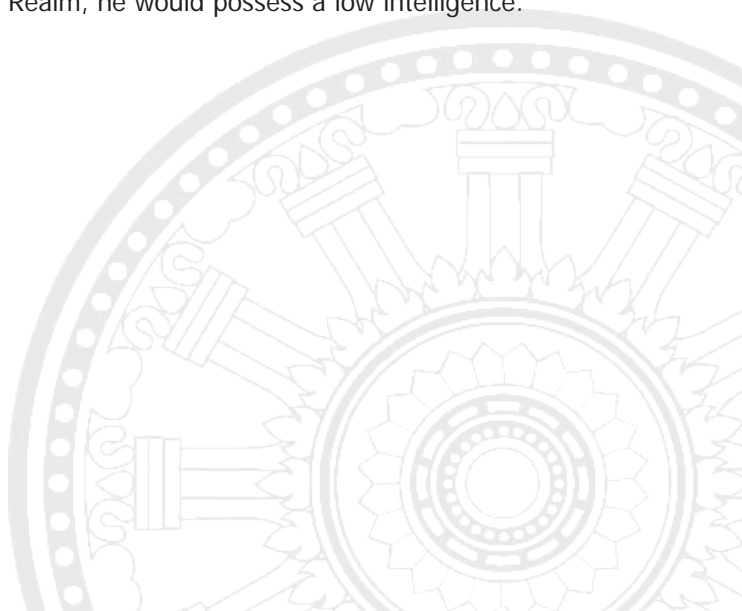
Wealth is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual regularly gave alms in terms of food, water, cloths, means of transportation, scented articles, mattresses, shelter, and sources of light to monks who practiced chastity. After he died,

he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would be wealthy.

The 6th Pair: A low birth is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual was rude and arrogant. He refused to pay homage to those that were worthy of respect. He did not rise to welcome virtuous guests. He did not defer to virtuous individuals. He was disrespectful and irreverent. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a low birth.

A high birth is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual was polite and humble. He paid homage to those that were worthy of respect. He was hospitable, respectful, and deferential. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would have a high birth.

The 7th Pair: A low intelligence is caused by the fact that one past existence or more, the individual did not approach learned monks to find out from them about what was wholesome and unwholesome; what was harmful and what was not; what should be consumed and what should not be; what deeds did not give advantages but led to eternal suffering; what deeds were beneficial and conducive to eternal happiness. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Hell Realm but in the Human Realm, he would possess a low intelligence.



A high intelligence is caused by the fact that in one past existence or more, the individual regularly visited learned monks to find out from them about what was wholesome and unwholesome; what was harmful and what was not; what should be consumed and what should not be; what deeds did not give advantages but led to eternal suffering; what deeds were beneficial and conducive to eternal happiness. After he died, he would have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm. If for some Kammic reasons, he was not reborn in the Celestial Realm but in the Human Realm, he would possess a high intelligence.



The above detail can be tabulated as follows:

	Unwholesome Kamma		Wholesome Kamma	
	Cause	Effect	Cause	Effect
1	Killing	Short lifespan	No killing	Long lifespan
2	Abusing other beings	Being sickly	Not abusing other beings	Being healthy
3	Easily angered	Bad complexion	Not easily angered	Good complexion
4	Being envious & jealous	Low level of authority	Not being envious or jealous	High level of authority
5	Not giving alms	Poverty	Giving alms	Wealth
6	Being rude & arrogant	A low birth	Being humble & gentle	A high birth
7	Not eager to learn from sages	A low intelligence	Eager to learn from sages	A high intelligence

The types of Kamma and their consequences given above are but a few examples of obvious deeds and obvious consequences. There is actually an intricate pattern of how every deed and its consequences cause us to be uniquely different. The most extraordinary physical appearance of the Perfect Man as seen in the personage of the Lord Buddha consists of 32 features and can be obtained once the Ten Perfections at all three levels have been cultivated to the fullest extent. Therefore, our overall Kamma determines our looks, our character, our intelligence, our birth, our level of education, our level of success in life, our health, and indeed every aspect of our life.

The knowledge of the Law of Kamma should prevent us from committing any misdeed which will bring deleterious consequences. At the same time, it should encourage us to accumulate only good deeds for the rest of our lives.

The Complex Mechanism by which Kamma Gives Its Consequences

The law of Kamma is complex and cannot be understood by mere observation and consideration or conjecture. The Lord Buddha taught that the Law of Kamma is unthinkable and is beyond human understanding.

In **Mahakammavibhanga Sutta** the Lord Buddha explained the types of Kamma, the possessors of the Kamma, and the consequences of the Kamma as follows:

1. An individual that kills, steals, etc., is reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, in the States of Unhappiness, in the Place of Suffering, in the Hell Realm because he/she had performed bad Kamma of which consequences is suffering during the past existences or he/she has 'Wrong View' at the time of death.

2. An individual that kills, steals, etc., is reborn in the States of Happiness, the Celestial Realm because he/she had performed good Kamma of which consequences is happiness during the past existences or he/she has 'Right View' at the time of death.

3. An individual that abstains from killing, stealing, etc., is reborn in the States of Happiness, the Celestial Realm because he/she had performed good Kamma of which consequences is happiness during the past existences or he/she has 'Right View' at the time of death.

4. An individual that abstains from killing, stealing, etc., is reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, in the States of Unhappiness, in the Place of Suffering, in the Hell Realm because he/she had performed bad Kamma of which consequences is suffering during the past existences or he/she has 'Wrong View' at the time of death.

Kamma gave definite consequences but it could not always be said that when good Kamma had been performed then one would be destined for the States of Happiness; or that when bad Kamma had been performed then one would be destined for the States of Unhappiness. There are other factors that come into play such as good or bad Kamma that had been performed in the past existences; good or bad Kamma that are performed in the present; whether at the time of death, one has 'Right or Wrong View.'

How Should a Non-Believer in the Law of Kamma Conduct His/Her Life?

For individuals who do not subscribe to any religion, which include those that disbelieve in the Law of Kamma, the Lord Buddha gave concrete instructions for how they should live their lives. These Teachings were recorded in the 'Apannaka Sutta.' Here, relevant teachings of this Sutta which will enable the student to understand the way non-believers in the Law of Kamma should conduct their lives. The student can

then act as a virtuous friend to these people and help them to live a happy life in the present and to have a safe journey in the round of rebirth.

For this purpose, only one example will be given here. For a more in-depth study on the teaching, the student should consult the 'Apannaka Sutta.' On one occasion, the Lord Buddha asked the Brahmins and the wealthy men of Sala City, "Do you have a favorite Master who can inspire you to have faith because his teachings are logical?" The people answered in the negative. Therefore, the Lord Buddha took the opportunity to give the 'Apannaka' sermon where He cited different dogmas as well as the advantages and the harm of each dogma and concluded with the instruction on right conduct. A part of the teaching concerning two groups of Brahmins that have opposing views can be cited as follows:

The 1st Group: These people believe that alms-giving has no consequences, aid-giving has no consequences, revering those who are worthy of our reverence has no consequences, bad Kamma has

no consequences, the hereafter does not exist, etc. Members of this group refuse to perform good deeds but commit only misdeeds. They are immoral. They have 'Wrong View,' 'Wrong Thought,' and 'Wrong Speech.' They are enemies of Arahats. For members of this group, the Lord Buddha gave the following advice:

If the hereafter does not exist, after these individuals die, all will be well.

If the hereafter does exist, these individuals will be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, the States of Happiness, the Place of Suffering, the Hell Realm.

Even if the hereafter does not exist, regardless of whether these individuals' view is right or wrong, they will still be condemned here and now for their conduct.

If the hereafter does exist, these individuals will receive two forms of punishment:

1) They will be condemned in the present for their conduct.

2) They will be reborn in the Hell Realm.

The 2nd Group: These people believe that alms-giving has consequences, aid-giving has consequences, revering those who are worthy of our reverence has consequences, etc. As a result, members of this group abstain from any misdeed but perform only wholesome deeds. They are moral. They have 'Right View,' 'Right Thought,' and 'Right Speech.' They are not enemies of Arahats.

If the hereafter does exist, after they die they will be reborn in the States of Happiness, in the Celestial Realm.

If the hereafter does not exist, regardless of whether these individuals' view is right or wrong, they will most certainly be admired for their conduct in the present.

If the hereafter does exist, they will receive two rewards:

1) They will be admired in the present for their conduct.

2) They will be reborn in the States of Happiness, in the Celestial Realm.

The Lord Buddha taught that the first group of Brahmins had 'Wrong View' whereas the second group had 'Right View.' He also advised wrong-viewed individuals on how to change their view such that they could conduct their lives accordingly. He gave the second group of Brahmins confirmation that their view was correct, and they could confidently continue to follow their dogma.

This teaching can be applied to non-believers in the Law of Kamma or in any religion because it provides them with a guiding principle by which to live their lives. Whether they believe or disbelieve in the reality of this world and the hereafter or the Law of Kamma, they can at least conduct their lives in such a way that they can meet with happiness in the present by not incurring condemnation from other people for their misdeeds. And just in case death is not final and the hereafter does exist, they will not have to endure horrific suffering in the States of Loss and Woe. Therefore, the belief in the Law of Kamma provides only advantages to its believer. It provides the correct roadmap for how to live our lives.

Types of Kamma

The most important canons in Buddhism called 'Visuddhimagga' explain in details about Precepts, Concentration, and Wisdom. This canon provides the overall structure of Kamma and categorizes it into twelve categories and three main types as follows:

The First Type: Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of duty.

There are four categories as follows:

- 1) Janakakamma: Good or bad Kamma which leads to one's rebirth.
- 2) Upatthambhakakamma: Good or bad Kamma which has a supportive role.
- 3) Upapilakakamma: Good or bad Kamma which has an oppressive role.
- 4) Upaghatakakamma: Good or bad Kamma which has a destructive role.



The Second Type: Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of strength.

There are four categories as follows:

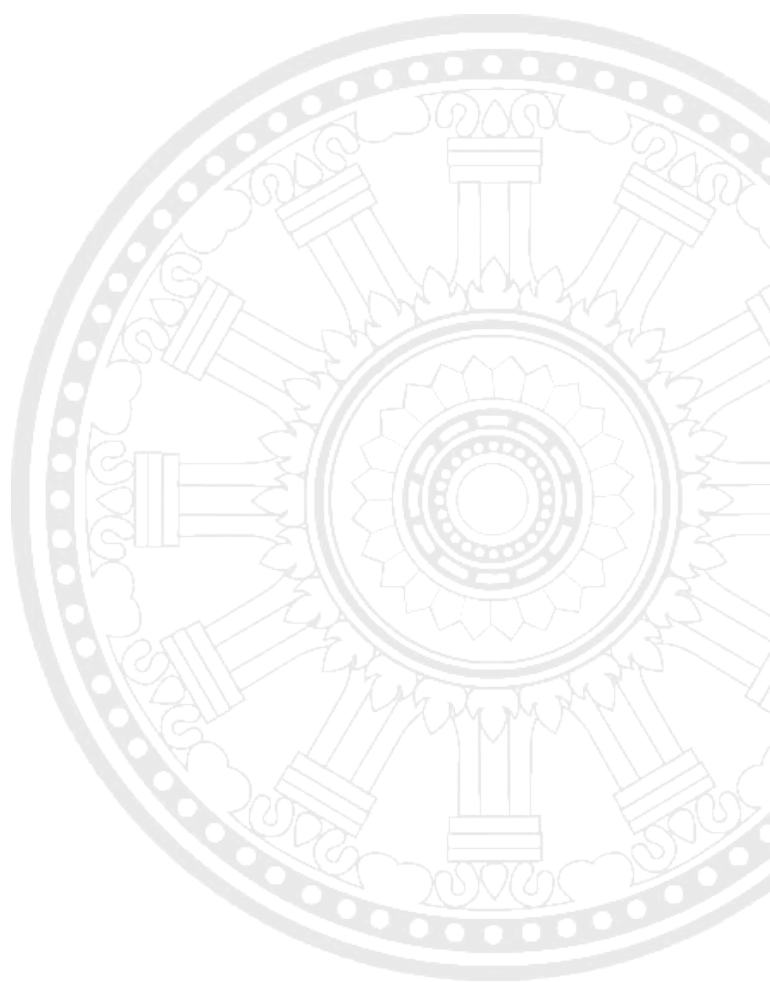
- 1) Garukakamma: Weighty Kamma. It can be either good or bad.
- 2) Bahulakamma or Acinnakamma: Habitual Kamma. It can be either good or bad.
- 3) Yadasannakamma: Good or bad Kamma which can be recalled near the moment of death.
- 4) Katattavapanakamma: Good or bad Kamma which occurs unintentionally.

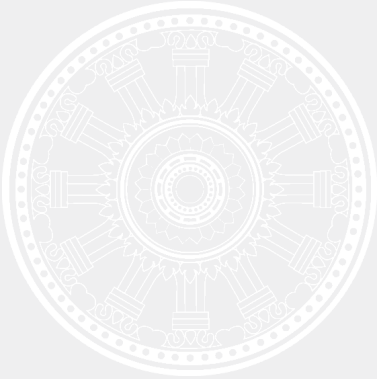
The Third Type: Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of time.

There are four categories as follows:

- 1) Ditthadhammavedaniyakamma: Kamma which gives its consequences in the current existence.
- 2) Upapajjavedaniyakamma: Kamma which gives its consequences in the next existence.
- 3) Aparapariyavedaniyakamma: Kamma which gives its consequences in future existences.
- 4) Ahosikamma: Kamma which is nullified.







Chapter 3

The First Category of Kamma: Kamma Which Gives Its Consequences as a Function of Duty

The first category of the consequences of Kamma is Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of duty. These consequences can be grouped into four types and include **Reproductive Kamma** (*Janaka-kamma*), **Supportive Kamma** (*Upattham-bhaka-kamma*), **Obstructive Kamma** (*Upapi-laka-kamma*), and **Destructive Kamma** (*Upa-ghataka-kamma*).

Reproductive Kamma (*Janaka-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Reproductive Kamma

Reproductive Kamma means Kamma which causes each consciousness to be reborn in a particular realm of existence such as the Animal Realm, the Human Realm, the Celestial Realm, etc.

2. Characteristics of Reproductive Kamma

From its meaning, Reproductive Kamma can be compared to a mother who gives birth to a child. Once Reproductive Kamma causes a being to be reborn in a particular realm of existence as dictated by the being's overall Kamma, its duty is over. It is Reproductive Kamma which provides the physical makeup of each being such as its eyes, ears, nose, arms, legs, etc., be it an animal, a hell being, a human being, a celestial being, etc. In addition, Reproductive Kamma causes all beings to differ in terms of a healthy body, a handicapped body, a good-looking form, a homely form, a high birth, a low birth, a high intelligence, a low intelligence, being wealthy, being poor, etc.

There are two types of Reproductive Kamma: wholesome and unwholesome. Unwholesome Reproductive Kamma will cause a consciousness to be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. These are the four States of Loss and Woe which include the Hell Realm, the Peta Realm, the Asurakaya Realm, and the Animal Realm. Examples of how Reproductive Kamma works are presented in the following case studies.

A Case Study in Unwholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Past Kamma of Four Hell Beings

During the time of the Lord Kassapa Buddha, there were four men who came from four wealthy families and they were very close friends. In spite of their great wealth, they did nothing to benefit others. They were reckless and committed mostly misdeeds. They transgressed the Precepts. They had affairs with married women. After they died, they were reborn in the hell realm of 'Lohakumbhi' and

had experienced horrific suffering there for a total of 60,000 hell years. When each of these four hell beings struggled to the top of the punishment pit, it wanted to voice what was on its mind. The first hell being wanted to say, **“Dujjivitamajivamha yesan tena dadamhase vijjamanesu bhogesu dipannakamha attano,”** which means “When I was wealthy, I did not practice generosity. I did not make any provisions for myself. I lived a life of evil.” Since the hell being only had a fraction of a second before being sucked back into the hot, gigantic pot which was being constantly heated by hellfire, the only sound it managed to make was “Du.”

The second hell being wanted to say, **“Satthivassasahassani paripunnani subbaso niraye paccamananan kada anto bhavissati,”** which means “I have to burn in hell for 60,000 years. I have to serve my sentence. When will it ever be over?” But all it managed to say was “Sa” before it was sucked back into the hot, gigantic pot which was being constantly heated by hellfire.

The third hell being wanted to say, **“Natthi anto kuto anto na anto patidissati tada hi pakatan papan mama tumhanca Marisa,”** which means “There’s no end. Where is the end? There’s no end in sight. I committed too many misdeeds.” But the only sound it managed to make was “Na.”

The fourth hell being wanted to say, **“Sohan nuna ito gantava yoni laddhana manusi vadannu silasampanno kahami kusalan pahun,”** which means “If I ever leave Lohakumbhi and am reborn in the Human Realm, I will give alms and observe the Precepts meticulously. I will accumulate many wholesome deeds.” But all it managed to say was “So.”

The misdeeds of the four men that had been committed throughout their lives became the Reproductive Kamma which caused them to serve their long and horrific sentence in the hell realm of ‘Lohakumbhi.’

A Case Study in Wholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Destiny of a Lay Devotee

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a lay devotee who believed strongly in the Triple Gem. He was devoted to the Buddhist Cause. He held the Lord Buddha's Teachings in the highest regards. He performed wholesome deeds and observed the Five Precepts regularly. On every Buddhist Holy Day, he would observe the Eight Precepts and make a food offering to the monks. Later on, he would be dressed in white clothes and make an offering of the juice of eight different fruits to the monks before listening to the Lord Buddha's sermon. Throughout his life, he had accumulated only wholesome deeds and the reputation of his virtue spread far and wide.

After he died, the accumulation of his wholesome deeds became the Reproductive Kamma which caused him to be reborn as a gentleman celestial being in the Tavatimsa Realm. He possessed a large

and magnificent white celestial elephant whose body was covered with ornaments made of precious gems. The white elephant served as his celestial vehicle that transported him to wherever he wanted. Every time this celestial being went outside his celestial castle, he would ride on this magnificent elephant accompanied by a large celestial retinue.

One night this celestial being or the former lay devotee was thinking about the Lord Buddha. So he was dressed in his most elegant attire, rode on his white elephant and descended from the Tavatimsa Realm to the Earth in order to pay homage to the Lord Buddha at the Veluvana Temple. He was accompanied by his retinue.

When the gentleman celestial being arrived at the temple, Phra Vangisa, who was an Arahant, saw the glorious celestial being who exuded great personal radiance and wanted to converse with him. He asked for the Lord Buddha's permission to speak to the celestial being. After being granted permission, Phra Vangisa asked the celestial being how he came

to possess such a spectacular celestial fortune. The celestial being paid homage to the Arahāt before he gave him the following answer.

“When I was a human being, I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to listen to the Lord Buddha’s sermons. I vowed to be a lay devotee and diligently observed the Five Precepts. I abstained from killing, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech and from alcohol. I offered food and beverages to the monks and novices with respect and devotion. On every Holy Day, I observed the Eight Precepts. These accumulated good deeds caused me to be reborn in the Tavatimsa Realm and to possess this vast celestial fortune.” After the conversation, the celestial being paid the Lord Buddha a deep homage and said his farewell to Phra Vangisa. He then returned to his celestial castle in the Tavatimsa Realm.



Supportive Kamma (*Upattham-bhaka-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Supportive Kamma

Supportive Kamma is the Kamma which supports other types of Kamma in that it causes all the beings in the different planes of existence to experience suffering or happiness accordingly.

2. Characteristics of Supportive Kamma

From its definition, Supportive Kamma is like a hero that helps each being to experience happiness or like a villain that adds salt to the wound by causing each being to experience more hardship and suffering. Supportive Kamma acts in concert with Reproductive Kamma in that it causes beings in different planes of existence to experience suffering or happiness in accordance with their overall Kamma. If Reproductive Kamma causes a being to have a good rebirth, the Supportive Kamma will work to increase its happiness. On the contrary, if Reproductive Kamma causes a being to have a bad rebirth, the Supportive Kamma will work to increase its suffering.

There are two categories of Supportive Kamma and include unwholesome Supportive Kamma and wholesome Supportive Kamma. A being's unwholesome Supportive Kamma can work to cause it to meet with a series of obstacles or disastrous events to make its life really miserable, as shown in the following case study.

A Case Study in Unwholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Hereafter of a Miserly Millionaire

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a millionaire by the name of 'Ananda.' He was terribly mean and never once practiced generosity. Moreover, he did not observe the Precepts. His increasing wealth only went to make him even more miserly. He was determined to keep all of his wealth intact. He was so stingy that he spent very little on food and ate only poor quality food. The problem was he appeared to grow stingier and stingier with time.

Every two weeks, he would call his family members and relatives to meet so that he could remind them of how 800 million was hardly a fortune. Therefore, they should be vigilant and never give any of it out to beggars or ascetics with shaved heads because no advantages could be gained from giving them anything. To him, it was only a waste of money. He admonished them to constantly increase the family wealth by telling them that any dent made on their wealth would make them closer to losing their independence, because one day their wealth would be all spent.

He drilled into them such teaching on a regular basis until he died. His miserliness became the Reproductive Kamma which caused him to have a rebirth in the womb of a beggar woman who lived in abject poverty in the community of beggars. Upon his conception, his Supportive Kamma caused the beggar community to suffer more and more hardship. What used to work for them no longer did and they met obstacles every step of the way. The beggars

had to call a meeting to discuss the fact that in the past, some of their members might have encountered obstacles from time to time, but they had never before suffered such scarcity as a whole community. The love and unity of the community members had been replaced by irritation and annoyance. They concluded that someone of very ill fortune had to be among them.

The members devised a way to find the person of ill fortune by dividing themselves into groups. A person of ill fortune would cause the group to experience scarcity while other groups would not. Finally, they found the person of ill fortune to be the woman in whose womb the former miserly millionaire had been conceived. She was subsequently cast out of the community. After she left, the community of beggars was able to receive alms as they used to do.

After the beggar woman left the community, her life took a downward turn. She had to wander from place to place until she gave birth to a male infant. The infant was terribly ugly. His mother raised him

until he was old enough to be on his own. She then gave him an old begging bowl and left him to find a better life for herself.

After the mother and son parted company, the son wandered off to different places until one day he reached the house in which he used to live during his previous lifetime. He happened to be able to recall his past life so he walked into the house. When the residents of the house found the repulsive-looking beggar in the compound of their house, they were so affronted that they chased him out of the house and beat him until he fell unconscious.

The Lord Buddha happened to walk past the house at the time and saw the entire incident. He told the people at the house that the boy they had just beaten was indeed the rebirth form of the deceased millionaire, Ananda. The homeowners did not believe it, so the Lord Buddha told the boy to recount his past life as the millionaire Ananda for them, and to lead them to the site where he had

buried the treasures. No one else except for the millionaire Ananda knew about this site. As a result, Ananda's son came to believe in the Law of Kamma and the Lord Buddha's Teachings.

A Case Study in Wholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Past Kamma of the Senior Monk Phra Anuruddha

Phra Anuruddha was one of the most important Arahats during the time of our Lord Buddha. He was one of the eighty foremost Arahats and was most accomplished in the area of 'Celestial Eye.' It was said that except during mealtimes, Phra Anuruddha could maintain his elevated meditative state and employed his 'Celestial Eye' to watch the comings and goings of different beings in all three spheres of existence. During the Lord Buddha's attainment of complete Nibbana, it was Phra Anuruddha who employed his 'Celestial Eye' to follow every step of the holy process.

Phra Anuruddha was a cousin of the Lord Buddha. He was the prince of a royalty by the name of 'Amitodana' of Kapilavastu City, the Lord Buddha's uncle. He had a brother born of the same mother by the name of 'Mahanama.' He possessed an incalculable amount of merit which caused him to be high-born. Before becoming ordained as a Buddhist monk, he had enjoyed all forms of physical comfort and had never experienced any hardship or any want. He had no idea what 'no more' meant.

Once when Phra Anuruddha was still a child, there was an agreement among the children who were his playmates that whoever lost in a game would bring snacks for everyone else. Since he lost most of the time, his mother ended up having to provide so many snacks for all of his playmates. One time, his mother had an attendant tell him that there were no more snacks. Because of his life of plenty, he understood his mother to say that the snack was called 'no more' so he sent his attendant to fetch the 'no more' snacks. His mother wanted to teach

him a lesson so she sent a covered gold platter with nothing inside it to him. But when he opened the cover, he found the platter to be filled with delicious snacks. The delicious snacks appeared by means of celestial powers which were manifested on his behalf as a result of his incalculable merit.

During one conversation with his royal cousins, the subject of the origin of rice was discussed. One boy said that rice came from the paddies. Another one said it came from the granary. Another one said it came from the rice pot. Young Anuruddha said it came from the plate. It goes to show that these boys had seen the work carried out in the rice paddies, all except for young Anuruddha. By the time he was a teenager, his parents had three castles built for him for each of the three seasons. Music played by female musicians echoed throughout the castle whenever he was in residence.

After his cousin Prince Siddhattha became enlightened as the Lord Buddha and returned to Kapilavastu City to teach His father King Suddhodana,

the king held a meeting of all the royal members. He wanted each royal house to send a son so that they could be ordained as a Buddhist monk. Young Anuruddha was among the ones chosen. He studied meditation with the Most Venerable Sariputra, the Lord Buddha's Chief Disciple. Phra Anuruddha later attained Arahathship and was honored by the Lord Buddha as being the most accomplished in the area of 'Celestial Eye.'

A long, long time ago during the time of the Lord Padumuttara Buddha, in that existence Phra Anuruddha was a very wealthy man and had the opportunity to listen to the Lord Padumuttara Buddha's sermons together with the masses. After one sermon, the Lord Padumuttara Buddha honored one particular monk as being the most accomplished in the area of 'Celestial Eye.' This caused Phra Anuruddha in that existence to feel a deep desire for the same honor sometime in the future. He respectfully approached the Lord Padumuttara Buddha to request Him and 100,000 monks to receive food offerings from him the

following day. He had made great offerings for the entire seven days. On the seventh day, he made an offering of a very fine cloth to the Lord Padumuttara Buddha. He told the Lord Buddha that he had made all the offerings for the entire week with the hope that one day in the distant future he would be honored as being the most accomplished in the area of 'Celestial Eye' during the time of a future Buddha. The Lord Padumuttara employed the 'Buddha-Eye' to look into the future. The Lord Buddha found that the wealthy man's wish would indeed be fulfilled. The Lord Buddha gave the forecast that 100,000 Kappas into the future, there would appear a Buddha by the name of 'Gautama.' During the time of the Lord Gautama Buddha, the wealthy man would be honored as the most accomplished in the area of 'Celestial Eye' and his name would be 'Anuruddha.'



In that existence, he had accumulated only wholesome deeds throughout his entire life. After the Lord Padumuttara attained complete Nibbana, the masses came together to build a gold Cetiya 112 kilometers high. The wealthy man worshipped the gold Cetiya with a large number of great and small torches. In this Kappa, Phra Anuruddha was once reborn in the time of the Lord Kassapa Buddha. After the Lord Kassapa Buddha attained complete Nibbana, the masses came together to build a Cetiya 16 kilometers high. In that existence, Phra Anuruddha had a large number of bronze vessels made. He put clarified butter and coils of wick in each vessel and placed the vessels side by side all around the Cetiya. He then had a large bronze vessel made and filled it with clarified butter and 1,000 coils of wick. He lit the wicks, placed the large vessel on his head and circumambulated the Cetiya all night long.



In another one of Phra Anuruddha's past existences, he was reborn during the time when the Lord Buddha was absent from the world. He was very poor and earned a living by hauling fresh grass. His name was 'Annabhara' and he shared accommodations with a wealthy man's attendant. He had the opportunity to offer alms to the Silent Buddha (Pacceka-buddha) by the name of 'Uparittha' who had just emerged from the bliss of deep meditation. The merit made gave its fruit almost instantly and caused a huge treasure trove to appear miraculously to him. He was later honored by the king to assume the position of millionaire by the name of 'Dhana the millionaire.' He had accumulated wholesome deeds for the rest of his life. After he died, he was reborn in the Celestial Realm and the Human Realm countless times until he had his last rebirth as Prince Anuruddha.

Obstructive Kamma (*Upapi-laka-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Obstructive Kamma

Obstructive Kamma does its work by exerting an effect opposite to the other types of Kamma.

2. Characteristics of Obstructive Kamma

The above definition demonstrates that Obstructive Kamma exerts an effect opposite to Reproductive and Supportive Kamma. For example, if Reproductive Kamma causes an individual to be reborn under good circumstances, Supportive Kamma will aid the situation by making it even better, but Obstructive Kamma will wreak havoc on the individual. On the contrary, if Reproductive Kamma causes a being to be reborn under poor circumstances, Supportive Kamma will add insult to injury, but Obstructive Kamma will aid the individual by improving his/her situation.

There are two categories of Obstructive Kamma: unwholesome and wholesome. Unwholesome Obstructive Kamma works to decrease the being's happiness and success by causing it to receive suffering and loss as can be seen in the following case study.

A Case Study in Unwholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

Being Destined for the States of Loss and Woe Because of the Lack of Analytical Reflection (Yonisomanasikara)

Once there was a man whose house was close to the temple. One evening as he was bathing at the landing by the river in front of his house, he saw a novice monk who was rowing by in a boat. He wanted to tease the novice monk so he began to splash the novice monk with water. The novice monk did not want to get wet and tried to duck the streams of water. His movements caused him to lose his balance and the small boat capsized. The novice monk swam toward the bank and hurled abusive remarks at the man, which made the man angry and he boxed the novice monk's ears a few times. He helped pull the novice monk out of the water and returned home feeling annoyed.

After the man died, he had undergone the round of rebirth for an incalculable amount of time until the time of our Lord Buddha. He was reborn as a human being in the royal family of 'Licchavi' by the name of 'Sunakkhatta.' After he grew up, he had the opportunity to listen to the Lord Buddha's sermons. His heart was filled with religious fervor and he requested to be ordained as a Buddhist monk. After his ordination, he wanted to practice meditation by first working on his concentration (Samatha). He wanted to attain the Jhanas before he continued with his insight development (Vipassana) where different levels of defilements can be removed and he could attain the different stages of holiness. As soon as the Lord Buddha gave him instruction on how to develop his concentration, he began practicing meditation immediately. In a few days, he was able to attain the Jhanas as well as the Superknowledge of 'Celestial Eye.'



His attainment of 'Celestial Eye' allowed him to penetrate the different realms of existence. He was filled with delight and felt the deepest respect for the Lord Buddha. He had the desire to continue practicing meditation until he could attain the Lokutara Realm, but first he wanted to attain the next Superknowledge of 'Celestial Ear.' The Lord Buddha gave him the instruction as requested, but He did not give him any strategy because He knew about the monk's Obstructive Kamma, which arose from the existence where he boxed the novice monk's ears.

Phra Sunakkhatta practiced meditation by chanting a few words in his mind in order to attain 'Celestial Ear.' But however hard he tried he could not attain the Superknowledge of 'Celestial Ear' because a particular Obstructive Kamma was giving its consequences. After three years of endeavoring, he still could not attain 'Celestial Ear.' Later, his Obstructive Kamma caused him to have the perverted idea that the reason for his failure came from the fact that the Lord Buddha only knew how to attain 'Celestial Eye' but not how to attain 'Celestial

Ear.' He concluded that it was the reason why the Lord Buddha was still not coming forth with any more instruction.

With this doubt in his mind, he continued to practice in the same way without making any progress. He soon became tired and concluded that the Lord Buddha had only attained the Superknowledge of 'Celestial Eye' but not other Superknowledges. He also concluded that the Lokutara Realm as well as Nibbana, which the Lord Buddha had been teaching about, did not exist. He further concluded that the Arahats who claimed to have attained enlightenment after the manner of the Lord Buddha could in fact attain 'Celestial Eye' only.

Finally, he abandoned Buddhism in order to look for higher knowledges in other religious beliefs. He subsequently disrobed and became a householder.

Later, he went searching for other great teachers and finally ended up in the office of 'Nigaranathanatputra,' the leader of another religious belief. As a result of his 'Wrong View,' after he died he was reborn in the Hell Realm.

A Case Study in Wholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Hereafter of an Executioner Who Had Faith

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a very fierce-looking man. He had bulging yellow eyes. His hair was long and unkempt. He had a long red beard. He inspired fear in everyone who saw him. He did not have a job and did not do any work. One day he went into the woods to meet a gang of robbers. The head of the gang wanted to know his reason for being there and was told that the man wanted to join the gang. The head of the gang was well-versed in making predictions based on the individual's physical characteristics and could tell that the man was a beast of a person in that he was capable of cutting off his mother's breast and drinking blood from his father's throat.

As a result, the head robber decided not to let him join the gang. But the man did not give up; he hung around the robbers and waited on them until

they were willing to beg the head robber to take him in. Eventually the head robber did not want to go against the wishes of the gang members and reluctantly allowed the man to join his gang.

One day government officials tracked down the robbers and arrested all of them. Their crimes were such that they were sentenced to receive capital punishment. None of the government officials wanted to carry out the execution, however. Therefore, they made a bargain with the head robber. They offered him freedom if he would execute the rest of the robbers. The head robber refused the offer. The offer was made to every robber respectively, but everyone turned it down except for the newest member of the gang. He was willing to execute the rest of the robbers in exchange for his freedom.

After the mass execution, he was set free as promised. Later, whenever mass execution had to be performed, this man would be called upon to do the nasty job.

The red-bearded executioner had continued to perform his work for payment for 55 long years. As he became older, he did not have enough strength to decapitate criminals with just one stroke, but it took him a few strokes to do it. This caused the criminals to suffer horrifically before they died. Onlookers felt very bad for the criminals and requested the king to retire him and hire a younger, stronger man in his place.

On the morning of his retirement, he received a large amount of cash reward. As a result, he wanted to wear new clothes, put flowers behind his ears, and consumed an elaborate dish of rice pudding which he had yet to taste. He went to the market to buy what he wanted and gave his wife some money to buy what she needed in order to cook him a fine meal. Afterward, he went to the landing by the river to bathe and shave himself. Later, he put on his new clothes, sprinkled himself with scented water, and put flowers behind his ears. He went up to the house and sat down to wait for the finest meal of his life.

On the same morning, Phra Sariputra just emerged from the bliss of deep meditation and considered whom he could save that morning. The image of the red-bearded man appeared to him and he could foresee that if he saved the man, the man would later receive tremendous wealth. Therefore, Phra Sariputra took his alms-bowl and appeared instantly at the man's door by supernormal powers. The man was just about to eat his food when he saw Phra Sariputra. He was filled with religious fervor and happiness. He reflected upon the fact that all his life, he had decapitated so many criminals and never once did a wholesome deed, but now was an excellent opportunity for him to do a good deed because Phra Sariputra had appeared at his doorstep. He wanted to offer his finest meal to the holy one.

He subsequently got up and went to where Phra Sariputra was standing. He went down on his hands and knees in front of Phra Sariputra and requested Phra Sariputra to come inside the house. He took the alms-bowl and filled it with the fine food. He gave

the alms-bowl back to Phra Sariputra so that he could commence eating. With a heart filled with faith, the man stood at one side to fan the monk while he was eating.

After the meal, Phra Sariputra rejoiced in the man's wholesome deed by giving him a sermon, but the man's mind was elsewhere. Phra Sariputra asked him the reason for his absentmindedness and the man answered that he had committed a great number of unwholesome deeds by decapitating criminals. The memory prevented him from being able to concentrate on the Dhamma lecture. Phra Sariputra then asked him if he did the killing of his own volition or because it was his duty. He answered that he did it because it was his duty, for he had no desire to kill anyone. Phra Sariputra then asked him if that was the case, would his killing still be considered an unwholesome deed. The man understood it not to be and he was then able to concentrate on the Dhamma lecture that Phra Sariputra was presenting to him. As a result, at the end of the sermon, the

man was able to attain the First Stage of Holiness (Sotapanna). This miraculous event took place because the man was being aided by his wholesome Obstructive Kamma.

When Phra Sariputra realized that the man had attained the First Stage of Holiness, he bid the man farewell. The man accompanied Phra Sariputra halfway to the temple before he turned around to return home. On his way back, a Yakkhini (a female ogre) that was bound to him by ill-will from a past existence possessed a cow in the field and caused it to attack and gore the man to death. After he died, he was reborn as a gentleman celestial being in the Tusita Realm.



Destructive Kamma (*Upa-ghataka-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Destructive Kamma

Destructive Kamma works by having a canceling or destructive effect on other types of Kamma.

2. Characteristics of Destructive Kamma

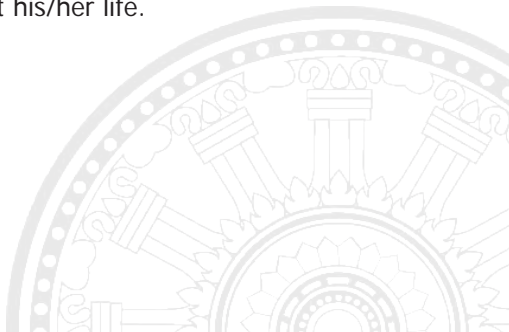
Its characteristics can be compared to an archer who is about to shoot an arrow at a target which is 560 meters away, but a man shows up and blocks the released arrow with a hammer and causes it to drop to the ground. The instant Destructive Kamma gives its consequences, it will completely stop the workings of other types of Kamma.

Destructive Kamma is opposed to Reproductive and Supportive Kamma but supports Obstructive Kamma. For example, Reproductive Kamma causes an individual to be reborn in a wealthy family, to be smart and good looking. Supportive Kamma may cause him/her to be well-loved by many. Whatever he touches turns to gold, for example. In this case, his/her Destructive Kamma may cause him/her to

meet with sudden disaster or death. On the contrary, if Reproductive Kamma causes an individual to be reborn in a poor family, supportive Kamma may cause him/her to suffer increased hardship, but as soon as his/her Destructive Kamma gives its consequences, his/her life will improve almost miraculously. For example, he/she may meet with sudden success or become famous overnight.

3. Differences between Obstructive Kamma and Destructive Kamma

As mentioned earlier, Obstructive Kamma does its work by exerting an effect opposite to other types of Kamma, but the effect is gradual. For example, if unwholesome Obstructive Kamma is giving its consequences, it works to erode away the individual's wholesome Kamma by gradually causing him/her to experience a downward turn in his/her fortune, but does not cut short his/her life.



On the other hand, Destructive Kamma works in a sudden manner. For example, if unwholesome Destructive Kamma is giving its consequences, it will work against the individual's wholesome Kamma by causing him/her to experience sudden bankruptcy or to suddenly lose everything he/she ever owns. Worst of all, it can cause the individual to die with a sad and gloomy state of mind and be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, although he/she has accumulated many good deeds earlier.

There are two categories of Destructive Kamma: wholesome and unwholesome. When one's unwholesome Destructive Kamma gives its consequences, it can completely destroy one's wholesome Kamma as can be seen in the following case study.



A Case Study in Unwholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Story about King Ajatasattu

King Ajatasattu is the son of King Bimbisara of the kingdom of Magadha. Magadha was one of the four largest and most powerful kingdoms during the time of our Lord Buddha. King Bimbisara had the deepest faith in the Lord Buddha and was a staunch supporter of Buddhism. Moreover, he was able to attain the First Stage of Holiness as a Sotapanna.

While the queen was pregnant with Ajatasattu, she had morning sickness and craved blood from her husband's arm. When she told her husband about it, King Bimbisara felt such loving-kindness for his unborn child that he was willing to cut his arm and collect his blood for his wife to drink. After she drank it, her sickness disappeared. King Bimbisara told the royal astrologers about the incident and wanted to know if it foretold something bad. The astrologer told the king that

the unborn son would later be an enemy to the throne, but the king did nothing about the situation.

The queen, however, upon hearing the astrologers' prediction, had no wish for the pregnancy to continue. She tried a few methods to cause an abortion. When the king found out about it, he forbade her to do it because he did not want her to commit a misdeed.

After the baby was born, King Bimbisara named him 'Ajatasattu.' While the prince was growing up, he kept the company of Phra Devadat who was an evil monk. He was jealous of the Lord Buddha because he did not receive as much gain and fame and was not regarded with great respect, as other senior monks were. Worse, he meant the Lord Buddha harm because he had the perverted idea that once he removed the Lord Buddha, he could just take over and rule the Buddhist monks in the place of the Lord Buddha.

Phra Devadat talked Prince Ajatasattu into killing his own father in order to take over the throne. Prince Ajatasattu agreed to do it and hid a Kris within his clothes when he went to see the king. However, he was acting so suspiciously that the ministers cornered him in order to question him. The ministers found out the truth and told the king about it. When King Bimbisara realized that his son wanted to kill him in order to ascend the throne, he willingly ceded the throne to him.

After King Ajatasattu assumed the throne, he went to see Phra Devadat and told him about what had happened. Phra Devadat insisted that King Ajatasattu kill his father anyway and King Ajatasattu went along with the evil monk's advice. King Ajatasattu had his father put in prison and did not allow anyone to visit him except for his mother. When he found out that his mother brought food for her husband in the prison, she was forbidden to visit him again. Without food, King Bimbisara could still survive because he was nourished by the practice

of walking meditation. When King Ajatasattu found this out, he had his barber use a sharp razor to cut the soles of King Bimbisara's feet and bathe them with saltwater. King Bimbisara could not stand the torture and eventually died.

Since the death of King Bimbisara, King Ajatasattu could not be happy again. The memory of his atrocious acts against his own father kept haunting him. Later, he had the opportunity to listen to the Dhamma given by the Lord Buddha. He was filled with faith in the Teachings. After the Lord Buddha attained Complete Nibbana, King Ajatasattu sponsored the grand council for the purpose of settling questions of doctrine and to fix the text of the Scriptures. He was a staunch supporter of Buddhism for the rest of his life. After he died he was reborn as a hell creature in the hell realm of 'Lohakumbhi' as a result of the Destructive Kamma of having committed patricide. It gave its ill consequences before the wholesome Kamma of supporting Buddhism could yield its fruit. He would receive horrific punishments in the Hell Realm for a long, long time to come.

A Case Study in Wholesome Kamma as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Story about Phra Ongulimala

Phra Ongulimala is one of the most important Arahats in Buddhism. He was the son of King Pasendikosala's royal advisor. King Pasendikosala ruled over the kingdom of Kosala. On the day of Ongulimala's birth, there was a supernormal event. All the weapons throughout the city lit up brightly. When asked by the king about the strange occurrence, the royal advisor said that the supernormal happening was caused by his infant's power. His infant was born under the astrological sign of criminals. When he grew up, he would be a very dangerous criminal and wreak havoc on the inhabitants of the kingdom. He requested the king have his infant killed, but the king did not see any threat from the infant and allowed the royal advisor to keep and raise him.

The royal advisor named his son 'Ahinsaka' which meant 'no aggression.' After 'Ahinsaka' grew up, his father sent him to learn the arts in the city of 'Takasila,' which was the center for learning during the time of our Lord Buddha. 'Ahinsaka' was highly intelligent and well-behaved. He was an astute student and well-loved by the master. As a favorite of the master, he incurred the jealousy of his fellow classmates. They conspired with each other to make the master become suspicious and ultimately fearful of 'Ahinsaka.' Initially the master ignored these students' false stories, but with time and increasingly convincing schemes, the master came to believe that 'Ahinsaka' really meant him harm. The master thought about getting rid of 'Ahinsaka' by borrowing someone else's hands.

Once the master thought up a plan, he called 'Ahinsaka' to him and lied to him that all the knowledge which he possessed had already been passed on to 'Ahinsaka' except for one more subject, which was the ultimate knowledge. He told 'Ahinsaka'

that to learn this last subject, he would have to kill 1,000 people. Although 'Ahinsaka' had never taken a life before given his family background of piety, his thirst for knowledge made him believe his master's lie. He subsequently took up a weapon and went to lie in wait for his victims in the forest. To keep count of the number of people he had killed, he would cutoff a finger from each murdered victim and wore the severed fingers around his neck after they were dried in the sun. As a result, he became known as 'the villain Ongulimala.'

'Ongulimala' killed so many people in the forest that eventually no one dared go into the forest. 'Ongulimala' had to ambush people in the villages instead. After more and more people had been killed, the villagers had to abandon their homes and move into the city of 'Savatthi,' which was the capital city of the kingdom of 'Kosala.' They eventually made their plight known to the king.

The king had already been aware of the situation but with increasing complaints from the

villagers, he decided that it was time to capture 'Ongulimala.' The royal advisor told his wife about the planned arrest. She became very unhappy and fearful for her son's life. She intended to go into the forest to warn him. On the same morning, the Lord Buddha was as usual employing the 'Buddha-Eye' to see whom He could save that day and the image of 'Ongulimala' appeared to Him. The Lord Buddha knew that if 'Ongulimala' heard the Dhamma lecture from Him, he would want to become ordained as a monk and would later become an Arahant. But if 'Ongulimala' killed his mother first, the grave unwholesome Kamma of matricide would prevent him from realizing the Dhamma.

The Lord Buddha went immediately to the forest. As soon as 'Ongulimala' saw the Lord Buddha, he raised his sword and ran after Him. With Buddha-Power, the Lord Buddha made it impossible for 'Ongulimala' to catch up with Him, no matter how fast or how long he ran. Finally, in exhaustion, he asked the Lord Buddha to stop. The Lord Buddha answered that He

had already stopped but it was 'Ongulimala' who was still moving. In exasperation, he said that the Lord Buddha was lying. Therefore, the Lord Buddha explained to him that He had been emancipated from birth, aging, pain, and death. He would no longer undergo the round of rebirth or Samsara, which meant that He had already stopped. 'Ongulimala' however was bestial and had killed somany people. He would most definitely be reborn in the Hell Realm as a result of his unwholesome Kamma. He would continue to undergo the neverending suffering of the round of rebirth.

The Lord Buddha's words reminded 'Ongulimala' that the person conversing with him had to be Prince Siddhattha, who had become enlightened as the Lord Buddha. Ongulimala's wholesome Destructive Kamma gave its consequences in time to make him a believer. He threw away his sword, walked toward the Lord Buddha, bowed low at His feet, and asked to become ordained as a Buddhist monk. The Lord Buddha checked and saw that during Ongulimala's past

existences, he had made offerings of necessary items to Buddhist monks who practiced righteousness; therefore, he could receive the very special and supernormal ordination of 'Ehibhikkhu-upasampada.'

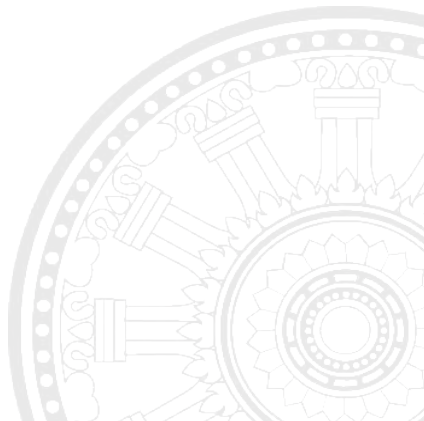
After the villain 'Ongulimala' became a Buddhist monk, he had to perform monastic duties. He went on his alms-round in the city, but the people were terrified of him and no one would offer him any food. Moreover, they threw stones and sticks at him. Therefore, he returned to the temple with an empty alms-bowl and sustained injury everyday. The people were still angry with him for having killed their relatives. As time passed, however, people began to forgive and forget and started to make food offerings to Phra Ongulimala. Later, he continued practicing meditation until he was able to attain Arahatsip.

In this case, the wholesome Destructive Kamma of the villain 'Ongulimala' gave its consequences immediately when he heard the Lord Buddha's words and decided to become ordained as a monk. The vast amount of his past accumulated merit caused him to eventually attain Arahatsip. As a result, he was able to escape the unwholesome Kamma of killing so many people.

In conclusion, Kamma gives its consequences as a function of duty. If Reproductive Kamma is compared to an elder brother, then Supportive Kamma is the little brother who listens to the elder brother and Obstructive Kamma and Destructive Kamma are the little brothers who have a mind of their own and refuse to obey the big brother. Obstructive Kamma disobeys in a gradual manner whereas Destructive Kamma does it in a sudden and straight-forward manner.

Reproductive Kamma determines the individual's realm of rebirth while Supportive Kamma enhances the effect of Reproductive Kamma. If Reproductive Kamma causes an individual to have a good rebirth then Supportive Kamma will make the good circumstances of his birth even better. Obstructive and Destructive Kamma will have an opposite effect. If Reproductive Kamma causes the individual to have a good rebirth in a wealthy family, Obstructive and Destructive Kamma will cause the individual to be sickly, to be unable to spend his/her fortune, to be unhappy, etc. Obstructive Kamma is more like a disease which gradually weakens the body until it finally expires. Destructive Kamma is more like a sudden accident which ends the individual's life or a sudden financial disaster which causes him to go bankrupt. It can also wreak havoc on both fronts at the same time.

It is very important that we do not live life in a reckless manner, but should accumulate as much merit as we can and as often as possible. We should make it a habit to recall all the merit that we have made and keep our mind clear and bright. In this way, we can prevent our unwholesome Kamma to give its ill consequences but allow our wholesome Kamma to work all the time, so that our success and happiness can be increased until such time that we can rid ourselves completely of all defilements and attain Nibbana in the manner of the Lord Buddha and the Arahats.





Chapter 4

The Second Category of Kamma: Kamma Which Gives Its Consequences as a Function of Strength

Kamma works to make us uniquely different and our overall Kamma depends on our past and current deeds. We may sometimes hear about a certain individual that has had a good life when for some reason, he begins to suddenly experience one problem after another, sort of like **'when it rains, it pours.'** He may go from being a millionaire to being a poor person, or we may hear of a person who has

been poor all of his life when for some reasons he meets with unexpected prosperity. Our lives can indeed change very dramatically and quickly at times. When our overall wholesome Kamma has been nearly exhausted and no new wholesome deeds are being accumulated in the present, this situation can cause our past unwholesome Kamma to give its consequences quite suddenly. But if we had accumulated a vast amount of wholesome deeds in our past lifetime(s), and we continue to regularly accumulate wholesome deeds in the present lifetime, it will be difficult for our past unwholesome deeds to give its consequences.

Our overall wholesome and unwholesome Kamma follows us everywhere like a shadow. If anyone is unwary and reckless in the way he lives his life, he can easily commit unwholesome deeds. If the unwholesome Kamma is very grave, it will give its consequences with a real force when the time comes. A comfortable life can turn into a life plagued with all kinds of problems. Or if one dies, one will suffer

horrific forms of punishment in the States of Loss and Woe for an unimaginably long time. Knowledge of the Law of Kamma should help us to live our lives carefully so that we will not make the mistake of committing any misdeed.

We will concentrate on the category of Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of strength. For this category of Kamma, one rule applies: Kamma which is more potent will give its consequences faster. This applies to both wholesome and unwholesome Kamma, regardless of when it is performed. That is, if the Kamma is potent but performed later, it can still give its consequences earlier. It means that the speed and the order with which Kamma gives its consequences depend on its potency or strength. The order in which different types of Kamma give their consequences is automatically in place and needs no aid from any outside agent. Our different Kamma knows to arrange itself accordingly and in the right order.

This category of Kamma includes:

Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma (*Garuka-kamma*);

Death-Proximate Kamma (*Asanna-kamma*);

Habitual Kamma (*Acinna-kamma*); and

Casual Kamma (*Katatta-kamma*).

The speeds with which they give their consequences are as follows:

Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma (*Garuka-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma

Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma means very grave or very potent Kamma. It can give its consequences first and other types of Kamma can never obstruct it.

2. Characteristics of Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma

Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma is the gravest or most potent Kamma. It has the strongest force and will give its consequences before any other

types of Kamma. No other types of Kamma can ever compete with it, because they are less potent and have less force. Only Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma can vie with each other but still the more potent Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will always dominate and the less potent Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will serve to support its more potent counterpart. In the absence of the most potent Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma, the less potent Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will give its consequences on its own.

There are two types of Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma: unwholesome and wholesome. Unwholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will definitely give its consequences in the next existence by causing the individual to be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. In the same manner, wholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will definitely give its consequences by causing the individual to be reborn in the States of Happiness. Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma cannot be overridden by other types of Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma

There are two types of unwholesome Strong -Effect-Producing Kamma, as follows:

(1) Nitaya-micchaditthi-kamma:

It means having terribly wrong views. For example, one believes that Kamma has no consequences and there are no such things as good and bad deeds, merit and demerit. Nitaya-micchaditthi-kamma is further divided into three subtypes, as follows:

(1.1) Natthika-ditthi: It means having the wrong view that good and bad deeds have no consequences. During the time of the Lord Buddha, a man called 'Acita-kesa-kampala' was the leader of this particular belief. He negated human deeds by teaching that good and bad deeds had nothing to do with human happiness or suffering.

(1.2) Ahetuka-ditthi: It means having the wrong view that life as it stands is not caused by anything. During the time of the Lord Buddha,

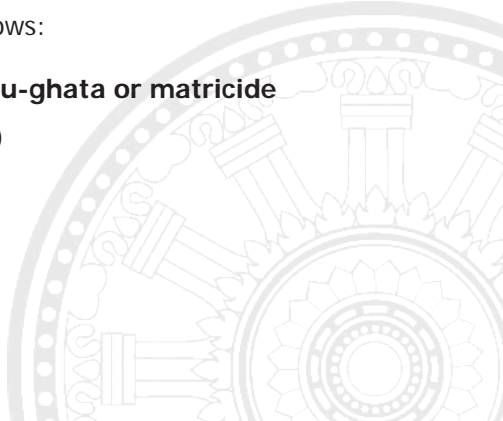
a man called “Makkhali-gosala’ was the leader of this particular belief. He taught the view that the differences seen among human beings happened by chance and had nothing to do with the consequences of their past Kamma.

(1.3) Akiriya-ditthi: It means having the wrong view that one’s deeds do not result in merit and demerit. During the time of the Lord Buddha, a man called ‘Purana-kassapa’ was the leader of this particular belief. He taught that there were no such things as merit and demerit.

(2) Ananta-riya-kamma: It means very grave unwholesome Kamma that will definitely give its consequences after one dies and can never be avoided. Ananta-riya-kamma is divided into five categories, as follows:

(2.1) Matu-ghata or matricide

(see details in 2.2)



(2.2) Pitu-ghata or patricide: Matricide and patricide apply only to one's birth mother and birth father and do not apply to foster parents or adopted parents. Matricide and patricide are considered to be Ananta-riya-kamma even when the killer does not know that he is killing his birth mother or birth father.

If one hires someone else to kill his birth mother or birth father, one will still receive the consequences of Ananta-riya-kamma. The hired killer will receive the consequences of killing a human being but not the consequences of Ananta-riya-kamma. Ananta-riya-kamma only applies to human beings.



A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

Phra Maha-Moggalana's Past-Life Kamma

In one of Phra Maha-Moggalana's past existences, he was a man living in the city of Benares. He worked to support himself and his parents and took good care of them. Later, his parents felt bad that he had to work so hard and discussed with him the matter of finding him a wife. After having refused to be married a few times, he finally gave in to his parents' request and married the woman of their choice.

Just a few days after they were married, the woman came up with a scheme to make her husband misunderstand his parents by littering the house with food and other personal items. When the husband returned from work and asked her who did the littering, she told him that it was his parents. Initially the husband did not believe it, but the woman continued to litter the house regularly and finally convinced her husband to believe that his parents

were becoming a real problem. He finally found a way to get rid of them by pretending to take them to see some relatives. Once they reached the forest, he got out of the carriage and left his parents alone. He then dressed like a robber and returned to beat his parents to death in spite of the fact that throughout the heinous act, his parents were yelling for their son to run for his life. He left their bodies deep in the forest.

After he died, he was reborn in the hell of Aveci and received horrific forms of punishment there for hundreds of thousands of hell years. During his subsequent rebirths as a human being, he was beaten to death for hundreds of lifetimes. In his final rebirth, he was able to attain Arahathship. Even then he was beaten to but he didn't die by a group of robbers before he attained Nibbana.

Phra Maha-Moggallana's Ananta-riya-kamma of matricide and patricide was such a grave and forceful Kamma that it caused him to be in the hell of Aveci for an unimaginably long time. It also caused him to be beaten to death hundreds of lifetimes during his subsequent rebirths as a human being up until his final lifetime.

(2.3) Arahata-ghata or killing an Arahata

The killing of an Arahata before or after his ordination as a Buddhist monk is considered Ananta-riya-kamma. The killing may be intentional or unintentional; it may be carried out by oneself or by hiring someone else to do it, but if it results in the Arahata's death, the person is considered to have committed Ananta-riya-kamma. The killing of individuals that have attained other stages of holiness such as Ana-gamis, Sakida-gamis, Sotapannas, though serious is not considered to be Ananta-riya-kamma. Ananta-riya-kamma only applies when both the killer and the Arahata are human beings. If the killer is an animal, it is not considered to be Ananta-riya-kamma.

If the Arahant is a celestial being or a Yakkha but the killer is a human being, the unwholesome deed is not considered to be Ananta-riya-kamma.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

500 Believers of Another Religious Faith and 500 Robbers

Once during the time of the Lord Buddha, believers of another religious faith called a meeting because the number of their followers as well as the number of offerings made to them were declining, but those of the Lord Buddha's were increasing. They came to the conclusion that the cause was Phra Maha-Moggallana. They decided to hire a group of robbers to kill him.

The said robbers went to surround Phra Maha-Moggallana's abode, but given his great supernormal powers, he could escape harm every time. But when Phra Maha-Moggallana checked his past lives' Kamma, he found that he had committed

Anantariya-kamma in one of his past lifetimes. As a result, Phra Maha-Moggallana allowed the robbers to beat him until his bones were crushed into small pieces.

These believers of another religious faith and the robbers were finally caught and sentenced to death. They subsequently had a rebirth in the hell realm of Aveci for the crime of killing an Arahant and would serve their sentence there for an unimaginably long time.

(2.4) Lohitu-papada or causing the Lord Buddha to sustain a bruise

Our Lord Buddha's body is considered to be 'Abhe-dakaya,' which means that while the Lord Buddha is alive, no weapons or assaults can ever cause any of His organs to suffer injury such as cuts or open wounds. The Lord Buddha's body can be cut only with His express permission as in a surgical process. Otherwise, the most that can happen to the Lord Buddha's body is a bruise. Therefore, anyone

who causes the Lord Buddha to sustain a bruise is considered to have committed 'Lohitu-papada.'

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

Phra Devadat Committed Lohitu-papada

Phra Devadat had formed a bond of ill-will with the Lord Buddha beginning in an existence far into the past. This bond had lasted hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. During the time of the Lord Buddha, Prince Devadat had faith in Buddhism and requested to be ordained as a Buddhist monk. After a period of meditation practice, he was able to achieve a low level of meditative attainments, which allowed him to have some supernormal powers. The bond of ill-will deep within him eventually caused him to perversely want to overthrow the Lord Buddha and rule the Buddhist monks himself.

On one occasion, he talked Prince Ajatasattu into climbing up to the top of a mountain and picking out a huge rock while he waited for the Lord Buddha

to walk past. As soon as he saw the Lord Buddha, he dislocated the rock and let it roll downward toward the Lord Buddha. At that moment, two big slabs miraculously emerged from the ground and bent their tops together to break the impact of the rock and cause it to splinter. One small piece of the splintered rock hit the Lord Buddha's heel and caused it to bruise.

This was how Phra Devadat committed Lohitu-papada, which is a very grave unwholesome Kamma. After the incident, the physician 'Jivaka' had to cut the skin around the bruise with a surgical knife in order to let the blood out and release the pressure. In this case, the physician did not commit Lohitu-papada.

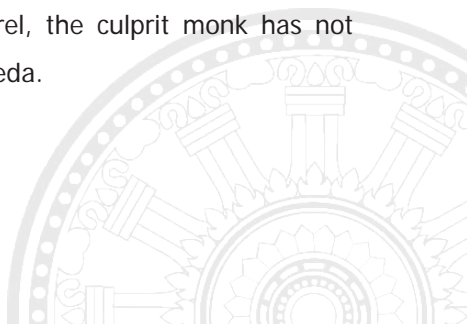
(2.5) Sangha-bheda or causing dissension among the Buddhist monks.

Sangha-bheda or causing dissension among the Buddhist monks is considered to be a very grave unwholesome Kamma and applies only when the one

causing the dissension is also a Buddhist monk. If the culprit is a novice monk or a lay person, it is not considered to be Anantariya-kamma, but it is still considered a grave unwholesome Kamma.

A Buddhist monk intentionally commits Sangha-bheda and when other Buddhist monks that possess poor intellect fall for his words, which are distorted from those of the Lord Buddha's and leave the monastic order to join his order to perform Sangha-kamma separately, the monk is said to have caused dissension. This monk has committed Sangha-bheda, which is a very grave unwholesome Kamma.

Should the same scenario occur but the other Buddhist monks are still believers and worshippers of the Lord Buddha and practice according to the Dhamma-Discipline but leave to live on their own as a result of a quarrel, the culprit monk has not committed Sangha-bheda.



A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

Phra Devadat Committed Sangha-bheda

Prince Devadat had faith in Buddhism and became ordained along with seven other princes from the 'Sakkaya House.' Phra Devadat eventually achieved a low level of meditative attainments which caused him to have some supernormal powers. He wanted gain and fame and had the perverse thought of replacing the Lord Buddha. He approached young Prince Ajatasattu and displayed his supernatural powers to the young prince to impress and convert him.

Once Phra Devadat succeeded in recruiting Prince Ajatasattu, he approached the Lord Buddha and asked for permission to rule the Buddhist monks in His place. Phra Devadat was admonished by the Lord Buddha and it caused him to feel vengeful. He later tried different ways to assassinate the Lord Buddha. He talked Prince Ajatasattu into sending an official to assassinate the Lord Buddha. A mad

elephant named 'Nalagiri' was released for the purpose of harming and killing the Lord Buddha. A huge rock was dislodged to hurt and kill the Lord Buddha and caused Him to sustain a bruise. Yet, nothing could kill the Lord Buddha.

Phra Devadat decided to recruit some Buddhist monks such as Phra Kokalika. He wanted to commit Sangha-bheda by deliberately asking the Lord Buddha to legislate five new practices^[1] under the pretense that he wanted to practice renunciation in a more rigorous manner, knowing fully well that the Lord Buddha would not do it. When the Lord Buddha refused his request, he took the opportunity to use the refusal to cause a dissension among the Buddhist monks. The ignorant ones agreed with Phra Devadat but the wise ones criticized his actions.

[1] These include: 1) All monks must live in the woods. Any monk who lives in town will be punished, 2) All monks must beg for alms. Any monk who receives lay supporters' invitation for a meal will be punished, 3) All monks must robe themselves with rag robes. Any monk who receives new robes from lay supporters will be punished, 4) All monks must live under a tree. Any monk who seeks shelter will be punished, and 5) All monks must not consume fish and meat. Any monk who eats fish and meat will be punished

When the situation was known to the Lord Buddha, He tried to dissuade Phra Devadat from committing Sangha-bheda. But it was useless, since Phra Devadat was determined to do it. On one Buddhist Holy Day, Phra Devadat announced, in the midst of the Buddhist monks, his wicked intention and he had the monks draw lots to see who would side with him. It turned out that the 'Vajjiputra' monks who had just been ordained believed Phra Devadat and all 500 of them followed him to live at a place called 'Gayasisa.' The Lord Buddha asked His two Chief Disciples Phra Sariputra and Phra Maha-Moggalana to bring the 500 monks back, which they did. Moreover, they were able to make the monks gain right understanding about the monastic order.

When Phra Devadat heard about it, he was so filled with anger that hot blood spurted out of his mouth. Later, he did feel remorseful and went to see the Lord Buddha, but before he reached his destination, the ground opened up and pulled him down to the hell realm of Aveci.

Phra Devadat was perversely ambitious and wanted to rule over the Buddhist monks. He recruited the help of Prince Ajatasattu in an effort to assassinate the Lord Buddha but when he was unsuccessful, he decided to commit Sangha-bheda and led a group of monks to form a separate order. His action was considered to be Ananta-riya-kamma. It caused him to be pulled toward the hell realm of Aveci to serve a horrific sentence there for an unimaginably long time.

Out of the five categories of Ananta-riya-kamma which include Matu-ghata or matricide, Pitu-ghata or patricide, Arahata-ghata or killing an Arahant, Lohitu-papada or causing the Lord Buddha to sustain a bruise, and Sangha-bheda or causing dissension among the Buddhist monks, the first four categories can be committed by both lay people and Buddhist monks, but the last category can be committed by Buddhist monks only.



If anyone commits all five categories of Ananta-riya-kamma, after he dies, Sangha-bheda will send its consequences first. It will cause him to receive horrific forms of punishment in the hell realm of Aveci for the rest of the Kappa.

4. Wholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma

Wholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma means great wholesome Kamma that earns tremendous merit. It is referred to as Mahag-gata-kusala and is divided into nine categories. They include five categories of Form-Kusala and four categories of Non-Form Kusala. Mahag-gata-kusala arises from meditative attainments.

Mahag-gata-kusala will send its consequences before any other types of Kamma. Meditation practice allows one to attain the Jhanas and the attainment of the Jhanas causes the practitioner to have a rebirth in the Brahma Realm right after his death. The individual may have committed a great deal of unwholesome deeds in the past, but these unwholesome deeds cannot compete with the power of Mahag-gata-kusala.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The King Who Attained the Jhanas

A long, long time ago, there was a king of the city of Benares. On one occasion during his reign, five Silent Buddhas (Pacceka-buddhas) traversed the air to the city gate of Benares in order to bless the people by accepting their alms. They went on their alms-round until they reached the palace gate. The king felt deeply impressed with the Silent Buddhas and requested them to have a meal at the palace. After the meal, the king asked the Silent Buddhas about the harm of sensual pleasures.

After the Silent Buddhas gave him a Dhamma lecture, the king praised the Silent Buddhas for having ordained and lived the life of renunciation. He made an offering of robes and medicine to the Silent Buddhas. After the Silent Buddhas rejoiced in his merit, they traversed the air back to Mount Nandamullaka.

From that time onward, the king gradually became bored with material things and decided to start practicing meditation. He practiced meditation by focusing on an object until he was able to attain the Jhanas. His wife wanted to know the reason for his boredom so the king gave the queen a Dhamma lecture about the harm of sensual pleasures. After the sermon, the king decided to abdicate and appointed his ministers to look after the affairs of the land in his place. He traveled to the Himavanta Forest and ordained as a Yogi. After he died, he had a rebirth in the Brahma Realm.

The King of Benares felt deeply impressed with the Silent Buddhas. After they gave him a Dhamma lecture, he felt bored with material things because he could understand the harm of sensual pleasures. He had endeavored to practice meditation until he attained the Jhanas, which earned him wholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma. The great power of Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma caused him to be reborn in the Brahma Realm after he died.

Death-Proximate Kamma (*Asanna-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Death-Proximate Kamma

Death-Proximate Kamma is wholesome and unwholesome deeds that are performed soon before death or wholesome and unwholesome deeds that are recalled just before death.

2. Characteristics of Death-Proximate Kamma

Death-Proximate Kamma is second to Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma in terms of strength. It means that when an individual has not performed wholesome or unwholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma, it is Death-Proximate Kamma that will give its consequences first after he dies. But if the individual possesses Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma, after it gives its consequences, Death-Proximate Kamma will be next in line to give its consequences. The speed with which Death-Proximate Kamma gives its consequence is not dependent on its level or amount. It is like cows which have been kept in the corral;

once the fence is opened, the cow closest to the fence at the time will be the first one out. It does not matter whether it is old and weak or young and strong. Whatever deeds or Kamma that an individual can recall just before death will give its consequences first, regardless of the presence of other types of past unwholesome or wholesome Kamma.

There are two types of Death-Proximate Kamma: unwholesome Death-Proximate Kamma and wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma. Unwholesome Death-Proximate Kamma will lead one to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe after one dies. On the contrary, wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma will lead one to be reborn in the States of Happiness after one dies.

3. Unwholesome Death-Proximate Kamma

Unwholesome Death-Proximate Kamma means unwholesome deeds which lead one to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

Having a Rebirth as a Naga Because of His Unwholesome Death-Proximate Kamma

During the time of the Lord Buddha Kassapa, there was a young lay devotee who had the desire to leave the suffering of the round of rebirth. He gave away all of his possessions and became ordained as a Buddhist monk. He diligently practiced meditation. One day, he wanted to go look for a suitable place that would be conducive to his meditation practice. He had to travel by boat in order to get to his destination. Unfortunately, during the ride his hand accidentally got tangled in some vegetation and as the boat moved, the vegetation was uprooted. He realized that he had just transgressed the Dhamma-Discipline by having caused the vegetation to be uprooted. It was necessary for him to recognize his transgression according to the Dhamma-Discipline but he did not do it, thinking it was only a minor transgression.

After he found the location he wanted, he devoted himself to meditation practice for a total of 20,000 years. Yet, he could not realize the Dhamma. As the time of his death approached, he recalled the incident about the uprooted vegetation and became very worried about this transgression. Unfortunately that was his last thought before he died. As a result, this unwholesome Asanna-kamma led him to be reborn as a Phya Naga king by the name of 'Erakapatta.'

4. Wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma

Wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma means wholesome deeds which lead one to be reborn in the States of Happiness after one dies.



A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Hereafter of Matthakundali

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a Brahmin in the city of Savatthi. He was a miserly man and would never give anyone anything so the people called him **'Adinnapubbaka.'** He had an only child. Although he loved his son dearly, when he wanted to give his son some jewelry, his miserliness caused him to make the jewelry himself by fashioning two simple earrings from gold. So the people called the young man **'Matthakundali'** which meant **simple earrings.**

When Matthakundali was 16 years old, he was afflicted by an illness which made him thin and sallow. The Brahmin's wife told her husband to fetch a physician, but being miserly he went to ask for a formula from the physician so that he could prepare the medication himself. But the medication made his son's symptoms worse, so this time the Brahmin went to fetch the physician. By then, it was too late

and the physician could not do anything to help the young man.

As the young man's condition grew worse, the Brahmin moved him to the front porch because he did not want anyone visiting his sick son to see his possessions inside the house. Near dawn one morning, the Lord Buddha had just emerged from the bliss of deep meditation and checked to see whom he would save on that day. The image of Matthakundali appeared to Him. The Lord Buddha immediately appeared at the front door of the Brahmin's house. At the time, Matthakundali was lying down and facing the house. The Lord Buddha exuded His personal radiance once to make the young man wonder what the light was. He turned toward the light and saw the Lord Buddha. Since his father had never taken him to see the Lord Buddha, to listen to the Dhamma lectures, or to make an offering of alms to the Buddhist monks, Matthakundali never had the opportunity to pay homage to the Lord Buddha. Since he was so weak that he could not raise his hands or do anything

to pay homage to the Lord Buddha, he did so in his mind. After the Lord Buddha left, the young man died. He was reborn in the Tavatimsa Realm as a gentleman celestial being having a celestial castle standing 390 kilometers high.

Matthakundali never gave alms or listened to any Dhamma lecture given by the Lord Buddha, but he had a firm belief in the Lord Buddha just before his death. It was this wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma that caused him to have a rebirth in the Celestial Realm.

Habitual Kamma (*Acinna-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Habitual Kamma

Habitual Kamma means unwholesome or wholesome deeds which are performed on a regular basis or often. They include physical, verbal, and mental deeds.

2. Characteristics of Habitual Kamma

Once Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma and Death-Proximate Kamma have given their

consequences, then it is Habitual Kamma's turn to give its consequences. Whether wholesome or unwholesome Habitual Kamma will give the consequences first depends on its strength. Wholesome and unwholesome Habitual Kamma are like two wrestlers who try to beat each other. Habitual Kamma with more strength will send its consequences before Habitual Kamma with less strength.

Good, wholesome deeds such as making an offering of food to Buddhist monks every morning or observing the Precepts everyday, etc., are wholesome Habitual Kamma which is very powerful and causes one to meet with increasing happiness and success. Bad, unwholesome deeds such as fishing on a regular basis, stealing often, butchering pigs and cattle for a living, etc., are unwholesome Habitual Kamma which is very powerful and causes one to meet with great suffering and trouble.

There are two types of Habitual Kamma: Unwholesome Habitual Kamma and wholesome Habitual Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Habitual Kamma

Unwholesome Habitual Kamma means unwholesome deeds which are performed on a regularly basis or often. It causes one to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe and to suffer there for a long, long time.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

A Pig Butcher

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a man by the name of 'Cunda.' He butchered pigs for a living and had killed a large number of pigs in his life. The more pork he sold, the more pigs he had to butcher. In the years where the harvest was not good and food was expensive, he would buy up all the grains and used the grains to barter for piglets from farmers. He would give the farmers one to two measures of half a coconut shell for a piglet.

After he filled his wagon with piglets, he would bring them home and raise them until they were

ready to be butchered. In the butchering process, 'Cunda' would first tie the pig to a stake. He would then use a big rectangular-shaped hammer to beat the pig's body to increase the volume of its flesh. He then forced the pig's mouth open with a piece of wood and poured hot boiling water into it so that the hot water would flush out all that remained in its digestive tract. He would do this until only clear liquid came out through the pig's anus. Next he poured hot water all over the pig to remove its hair before using a sword to cut off the pig's head. He used a container to collect the blood.

'Cunda' had killed pigs for a living for a total of 55 years and had never once made merit in spite of the fact that his house was not far from the temple where the Lord Buddha was staying. On his deathbed, he fell ill and the flames of the hell realm of Aveci appeared to him. He experienced tremendous suffering and could not remain still on the bed. He crawled around the room and squealed loudly like a pig which was being butchered. His wife and children

and his neighbors felt sorry for him and helped him back to the bed. He pushed them away and resumed his crawling and squealing.

He suffered in that manner for seven days before he died. He was reborn a hell creature with a huge body in the hell realm of Aveci. He was burned by hellfire continuously. He received horrific suffering as a result of his unwholesome Habitual Kamma of slaughtering pigs.

4. Wholesome Habitual Kamma

Wholesome Habitual Kamma means wholesome deeds which are performed on a regular basis or often. It causes one to be reborn in the States of Happiness.



A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

A Lady Celestial Being Who Was Once a Female Slave

Once when our Lord Buddha was staying at the Jetavana Temple in the city of Savatthi of the kingdom of Kosala, a male lay devotee went to the temple along with his lay devotee friends in the evening to listen to the Dhamma lecture from the Lord Buddha. After the lecture, everyone left the temple to go home except for this lay devotee. He approached the Lord Buddha, paid Him a deep homage and said that he wished to make a food offering to four Buddhist monks on a regular basis. The Lord Buddha told him to see the monk who was in charge of making such arrangements.

Once everything had been arranged, he returned to his house and told a female slave to prepare food for the four Buddhist monks everyday. This female slave was a devout Buddhist and felt very happy to be given the job. Every morning, she would rise before dawn to prepare food and scented cushions for the

monks. When they arrived, with deep respect she would invite the monks to be seated on the cushions. She paid them homage and made an offering of candles, incense sticks, and flowers before making the offering of food in a respectful manner.

One day after the monks finished eating, she respectfully asked them a question. "What must a person do in order to meet with ease and happiness in the hereafter?" She asked the question because she did not want to be reborn a female slave in her future existence. The monks answered, "If you desire happiness and ease in your future existence, you must take the Triple Gem to be your refuge and observe the Precepts." They led her to request the Triple Gem to be her refuge and to request the Precepts. In addition, they told her about the fruits of these wholesome deeds. From that day onward, the female slave took the Triple Gem to be her refuge and observed the Precepts meticulously for the rest of her life. Sixteen years later, she died and was reborn a beautiful lady celestial being in the Celestial Realm.

Her wholesome Habitual Kamma of taking the Triple Gem to be her refuge and observing the Precepts caused her to be reborn in the Celestial Realm.

Casual Kamma (*Katatta-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Casual Kamma

Casual Kamma means unwholesome and wholesome deeds which an individual has performed both in the past and present existences. It does not have the strength of Karuka-kamma, Asanna-kamma, or Acinna-kamma. They are deeds that have been performed unintentionally.

2. Characteristics of Casual Kamm

Casual Kamma has the least strength of the four types of Kamma. Casual Kamma is an unintentional deed such as that of an innocent child. For example, if its parents have 'Right View' and are devoted to making merit, they will naturally want to instill these values in their child. When they make an offering

of food to the monks, they may take the child's hand and help it to give food to the monks. They may teach the child to pay respect to the monks. Although the child may have no idea about what it is doing, these wholesome deeds will still give their consequences, albeit weakly. The reason is Kamma means an intentional act. If no intention is involved then the action is not considered to be Kamma or if it is, it will not have as strong an effect as an intentional Kamma.

The timing of the consequences of Casual Kamma is not definite because it is weak Kamma and can only support other types of stronger Kamma. Casual Kamma can be compared to an arrow which is shot by a blind person. It cannot hit the target because the blind person does not know where the target is. He only knows that it will eventually fall to the ground. It is the same way with Casual Kamma. It cannot be said that Casual Kamma will give its consequences in this or that existence. It can only be said that it will give its consequences sometime in the future.

There are two types of Casual Kamma: Unwholesome Casual Kamma and wholesome Casual Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Casual Kamma

Unwholesome Casual Kamma means unintentional, unwholesome deeds which cause one to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Past Kamma of a Peta

There was once a farmer who lived during the time of the Lord Kassapa Buddha. One day the people got together to make merit at the temple and to pay homage to the Lord Buddha. They invited him to join them, but he did not go because he thought of it as a waste of time. He did not listen to the people when they told him that making merit with the Lord Buddha was worth a great deal more than plowing the rice field.

He said with annoyance to the people, "What makes the Lord Kassapa Buddha so great? Could He plow the field as I do?" The people were shocked to hear what he said. They praised the Lord Buddha and told him that he should never be disrespectful to the Lord Buddha. They told him about the great harm of being disrespectful to the Lord Buddha, but he was eventually filled with indignation and said rudely, "All right, enough already. So the Lord Kassapa Buddha is great but I still believe that as long as He cannot plow the field as I do, I will not make any merit or pay Him homage. If He should take up the ploughshare and plow the field, then I will make merit and pay Him homage." Because of these disrespectful remarks which were made as a sarcastic response to the people's goodwill, after he died he was reborn a Peta. He suffered tremendous hunger all the time and without any respite.



4. Wholesome Casual Kamma

Wholesome Casual Kamma means unintentional wholesome deeds which cause one to be reborn in the States of Happiness.

A Case Study as Recorded in the Tripitaka

The Hereafter of a Frog

Near dawn one day during the time of our Lord Buddha, He was staying at a temple by the lotus pond in the city of Campa. He had checked to see whom He could save on that day. He could see that in that very evening during His Dhamma lecture, there would be a frog which after having heard His voice would be reborn in the Celestial Realm. The Lord Buddha then carried on with His daily activities as usual.

In the evening the four Buddhist communities, which included male and female monks, male and female lay devotees, as usual assembled in the pavilion to listen to the Dhamma lecture. The Lord

Buddha left His perfumed dwelling to go to the pavilion which was situated by the lotus pond. After being seated on the Buddha-seat, the Lord Buddha gave a Dhamma lecture in a resounding and glorious voice.

At the same moment, a frog was swimming around in the lotus pond. It heard the Lord Buddha's voice and felt so delighted to hear it. Although it could not understand the words, it was so moved by the Lord Buddha's voice that it immediately jumped out of the water and went to sit on the grass near the rear of the pavilion. With great joy, it closed its eyes to listen to the Lord Buddha's voice. While it was completely immersed in the Lord Buddha's voice, a cow herder happened to walk past the area. He saw that the Lord Buddha was delivering a Dhamma lecture and felt a deep desire to listen to it. He went to stand by the frog, but the frog was completely unaware of his presence. As the cow herder stood listening to the Dhamma lecture, he stuck the goad to the ground and accidentally crushed the frog's head and killed it.

The frog was instantly reborn a handsome gentleman celestial being in the Tavatimsa Realm as a result of having felt moved by the Lord Buddha's voice even though it had no idea what He was saying. It was this Casual Kamma which caused it to be reborn in the Celestial Realm.

To conclude, Pakadana-pariyaya-catukaka refers to the four different types of Kamma. If all four types of Kamma are performed, Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will give its consequences first because it is the gravest and most powerful Kamma. Unwholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma will cause a rebirth in the hell realm of Aveci. Sangha-bheda causes the person who performs it to suffer for an entire Kappa in the hell realm of Aveci. Wholesome Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma causes the person who performs it to be reborn in the Brahma Realm.

If Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma is not performed, then Asanna-kamma will be next in line to give its consequences. Unwholesome

Death-Proximate Kamma cause the person who performs it to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe, whereas wholesome Death-Proximate Kamma causes the person who performs it to be reborn in the States of Happiness.

If Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma and Death-Proximate Kamma are not performed, then Habitual Kamma will be next in line to give its consequences. Unwholesome Habitual Kamma causes the person who performs it to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe whereas wholesome Habitual Kamma causes one to be reborn in the States of Happiness.

If Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma, Death-Proximate Kamma, and Habitual Kamma are not performed, it means that one has not performed serious unwholesome and wholesome Kamma. In this case, Casual Kamma will be next in line to give its consequences. Unwholesome Casual Kamma causes the person who performs it to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe whereas wholesome Casual Kamma

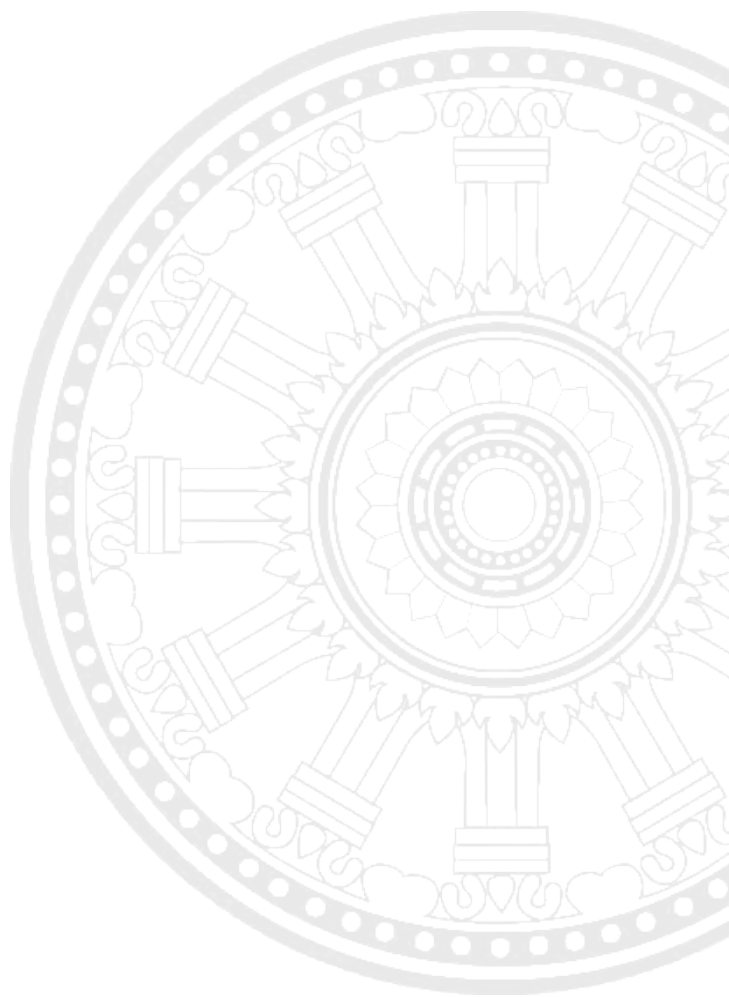
causes the person who performs it to be reborn in the States of Happiness.

The four types of Kamma possess different strengths in the following descending order: Strong-Effect-Producing Kamma > Death-Proximate Kamma > Habitual Kamma > Casual Kamma.

All of us need to exercise vigilance and make sure that we do not abuse anyone with our body, words, and thoughts because every single one of our deeds has consequences. Moreover, we must endeavor to accumulate more and more good deeds and abandon recklessness, because it is very difficult indeed to be reborn a human being. The Lord Buddha taught that "suppose someone throws a life-buoy into the ocean where a blind turtle lives. Every 100 years, it would come up to the surface. The chance of this blind turtle getting its head caught in the buoy is as rare as a human rebirth."

Since rebirth as a human being is very rare, we must live our life in the most worthwhile manner in order to benefit our self and our fellow human beings. We must accumulate merit on a regular basis. We should choose to forget about our past mistakes and determine to perform only good deeds every minute of every day. We should keep our mind clear and bright so that our past unwholesome Kamma will not have the chance to give its consequences. Our accumulated good deeds will not only keep us out of the States of Loss and Woe but will also cause us to meet with increasing prosperity in the present existence.







Chapter 5

The Third Category of Kamma: Kamma Which Gives Its Consequences as a Function of Time

There are Kamma which gives its consequences as a function of time. This third category of Kamma is called '**Paka-kala-catu-kaka.**' There are four types of 'Paka-kala-catu-kaka,' as follows:

1. Effective Kamma

(Dittha-dhamma -veda-niya-kamma)

2. Subsequently Effective Kamma

(Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma)

3. Indefinitely Effective Kamma

(Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma)

4. Defunct Kamma (*Ahosi-kamma*)

Effective Kamma

(Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma)

1. The Meaning of Effective Kamma

Effective Kamma means Kamma which gives its consequences now or in the current lifetime. Once performed, this type of Kamma gives its consequences quickly. The effect is immediate.

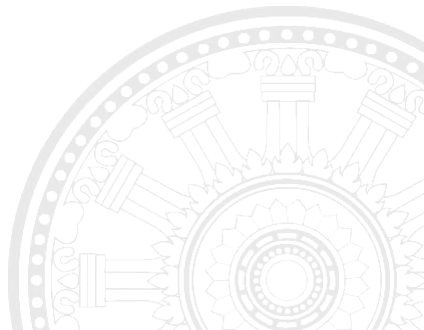
2. Characteristics of Effective Kamma

Effective Kamma can be compared to a hunter who kills a deer with an arrow. If he hits the target then he would have venison for his family but if he misses, the deer would run for its life. In the same manner if an individual's unwholesome or wholesome

deed which has been performed in the current lifetime does not give its consequences now, it will turn into Defunct Kamma and will never give its consequences ever again.

In performing a deed through the body, the words, the thoughts, wholesome or unwholesome, there is a period during which there is full perception and at which Kamma is performed. This process of consciousness usually lasts for countless number of seven thought-moments. This process is called 'Javana-cita.' **Effective Kamma occurs during the first thought-moment or the first 'Javana-cita.'**

Therefore, Effective Kamma can only give its consequences within the current lifetime because the wholesome or unwholesome intention is confined to the first 'Javana-cita.' Therefore, it has a very weak effect. There are two types of Effective Kamma, as follows:



1) Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma:

Not only will it give its consequences within this lifetime but within seven days. There is unwholesome and wholesome Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma, as follows:

Unwholesome Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma

It will cause its performer to suffer the ill consequences of the misdeed within seven days as of the case in the Tripitaka.

‘King Supapa-buddha-sakaya’

King Supapa-buddha-sakaya was the sovereign of the city of Deva-daha and was the father of Phra Devadat and Princess Yasodhara. King Supapa-buddha-sakaya was angry with the Lord Buddha for two reasons: One for having abandoned Princess Yasodhara; two for not allowing Phra Devadat to have his way. One day he decided to block the Lord Buddha’s path during His alms-round by sitting

down to drink alcohol in His path. Many people tried to dissuade the king from doing it, but he did not listen to anyone. The Lord Buddha decided to turn back when He saw the path being blocked by the king.

After this incident, the Lord Buddha told Phra Ananda that King Supapa-buddha-sakaya had committed a grave misdeed and within seven days he would be swallowed up by the ground near the staircase outside his own castle. When the king's spy relayed the Lord Buddha's words to him, he fled to the seventh floor of the castle and told his pages to guard the staircase and prevent him from coming down the stairs for the entire seven days. He wanted to prove the Lord Buddha wrong.

On the seventh day the king's auspicious horse started to act up for no apparent reasons but as soon as it saw the king's face at the window, it calmed down. The king wanted to catch the horse so he descended to the main floor of the castle. The castle door opened by itself and the pages tried to restrain

the king. But the power of the king's unwholesome Kamma caused him to fall with his face down to the ground. At that instant, the ground separated and he was pulled toward the hell realm of Aveci Mahanarok.

The king's unwholesome Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma caused him to receive its ill consequences within seven days.

Wholesome Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma

It will cause the performer of this type of Kamma to experience happiness and prosperity within seven days as in case of **'The Millionaire Kala-valiya'** as recorded in the Tripitaka.

'The Millionaire Kala-valiya'

During the time of the Lord Buddha, there was a poor man by the name of 'Kala-valiya.' He had to work very hard just to seek out a living. One day his wife prepared young rice grains and pickled vegetables for him. On the same day, Phra Maha-kassapa had

just emerged from the bliss of deep meditation and desired to bless a poor person. He saw Kala-valiya's wife in his nana (Insight) and subsequently went to stand at the door of their house. The woman felt a deep devotion toward the senior monk and respectfully made an offering of the rice and pickled vegetables to him. She was so delighted with her alms-giving and went to tell her husband about it.

When Kala-valiya heard about his wife's merit-making, he sincerely rejoiced in his wife's action. Later, Phra Maha-kassapa offered the food to the Lord Buddha. The Lord Buddha in turn gave the food to other monks. Kala-valiya followed the senior monk to the temple and was there in time to eat some of the leftovers. Afterward, the senior monk asked the Lord Buddha about the consequences of Kala-valiya's action. The Lord Buddha said that within seven days, Kala-valiya would be honored by the king as a millionaire. The Lord Buddha's words filled Kala-valiya with great delight. And indeed what the Lord Buddha said did come to pass. It so happened

that Kala-valiya's wife had volunteered to do a service for the king. She agreed to bring food for the prisoners that had been pierced with sharp stakes and put on display. They were left to die slowly and horribly in the grounds of the corpse-yard which was filled with non-humans.

On her way to the corpse-yard, an ogre appeared and asked her to make an announcement for him. The announcement had to do with the fact that the ogre's wife, who was the daughter of the ogre 'Sumana,' had just given birth to a male ogre. When 'Sumana' heard the announcement, it made him so happy that he gave her the treasure hidden beneath the banyan tree. After having fed the poor prisoners, she returned to the city and told the king about what happened. King Bimbisara commanded the royal officials to unearth the hidden treasure. As a result, both husband and wife were honored by the king as the city's millionaire. And their new name was 'Thana.' They enjoyed a life of ease and comfort for the rest of their lives.

Their wholesome Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma caused Kala-valiya and his wife to become a millionaire practically overnight. Pari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma is a very powerful Kamma which gives its consequences within seven days.

2) Apari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma:

This type of Kamma gives its consequences within this lifetime but later than seven days after it is performed. The different timeframes in which this type of Kamma gives its consequences are as follows:

1. If unwholesome or wholesome Apari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma is performed when the individual is young, he/she may receive its consequences as a young adult, as a middle-age person, or as an old person.

2. If unwholesome or wholesome Apari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma is performed when the individual is in his/her middle

age, he/she may receive its consequences in his/her middle years or final years.

3. If unwholesome or wholesome Apari-pakka-dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma is performed when the individual is in his/her final years, he/she will receive its consequences in his/her final years.

The following case is recorded in the Tripitaka which gives a better appreciation of the timeframes in which this type of Kamma gives its consequences.

The Immediate Consequences of a Man Who Was Very Fond of Meat

During the time of our Lord Buddha, there was a man who earned his living as a butcher. He slaughtered animals daily and prepared their meat for sale. He would keep the lean meat for his and his family's consumption. He butchered animals for a living for 45 years. Throughout his life, he had never once thought about giving alms, observing the Precepts or practicing meditation in spite of the fact

that the Lord Buddha was staying in the Veluvana Temple not far from his house. The Lord Buddha and the Buddhist monks walk by his shop on a regular basis, but he never once wanted to listen to a Dhamma lecture or even paid homage to the Lord Buddha and the monks.

This man would only eat the meat that he butchered. One day all the meat was sold out except for the piece of meat which he had given to his wife to cook for him. While he was taking a bath, a close friend of his came to buy some meat. His wife told the friend that all the meat had been sold except for the piece that she was about to cook for her husband. The friend insisted on buying this last piece of meat and paid her for it.

After the butcher had bathed, he found out from his wife that his friend had already bought the meat she was about to cook for him. In great exasperation, exacerbated no doubt by his hunger, the butcher took his knife and went to the back of the house where a cow had been tied to a post. He

pulled out the cow's tongue and cut it with his knife. He then gave the bloody tongue to his wife to cook for him. The poor cow cried out in agony and as the wound continued to bleed profusely, it eventually bled to death.

After his wife cooked the tongue, he sat down to eat. He had only taken a few bites when all of a sudden his own tongue fell out of his mouth and onto the plate. Blood spurted from his mouth. He opened his mouth and cried out loudly. He crawled around the house until the floor was wet with his saliva and blood. He was in pure agony. He eventually bled to death in front of his wife and children.

Effective Kamma will give its consequences within this lifetime providing that this type of Kamma meets one of the following four criteria:

1. When one Effective Kamma is not opposed by another Effective Kamma. That is when one wholesome Effective Kamma is not counteracted by a corresponding unwholesome

Effective Kamma. If opposing Effective Kamma occurs then it will cancel each other out and become Defunct Kamma.

2. When Effective Kamma is particularly powerful because it is supported by four types of Vipatti^[1] and four types of Sampatti^[2]. Wholesome Effective Kamma consists of the four types of Sampatti whereas unwholesome Effective Kamma consists of the four types of Vipatti.

Subsequently Effective Kamma (*Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Subsequently Effective Kamma

Subsequently Effective Kamma means Kamma which will definitely give its consequences in the next lifetime.

[1] **Four Types of Vipatti** include 1) **Gati-vipatti**: being reborn in the States of Unhappiness; 2) **Upadhi-vipatti**: being reborn with a physical handicap; 3) **Kala-vipatti**: being reborn in an age where the ruler has Wrong View; and 4) **Payoga-vipatti**: practicing wrong perseverance.

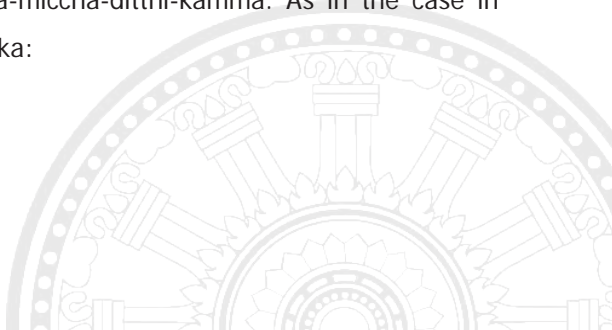
[2] **Four types of Sampatti** include 1) **Gati-sampatti**: being reborn in the States of Happiness; 2) **Upadhi-sampatti**: being reborn with good looks; 3) **Kala-sampatti**: being reborn in an age where the ruler has Right View; and 4) **Payoga-sampatti**: practicing right perseverance.

2. Characteristics of Subsequently Effective Kamma

Subsequently Effective Kamma will give its consequences in the next lifetime because it is performed during the seventh thought-moment or the seventh 'Javana-citta.' It means that when an unwholesome or wholesome Kamma which is performed during the first thought-moment (Effective Kamma) does not have the opportunity to send its consequences then it is up to Subsequently Effective Kamma to give its consequences in the next lifetime. There are two types of Subsequently Effective Kamma: Unwholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma and wholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma is a grave Kamma

and includes the five types of Ananta-riya-kamma and Nitaya-miccha-ditthi-kamma. As in the case in the Tripitaka:



‘The Hereafter of the Layman ‘Nandiya’ and His Wife ‘Revadi’

There was once in the city of Benares a very wealthy family. The family members had Right View and were devout Buddhists. When the son of this family whose name was ‘Nandiya’ was of age, his parents arranged his marriage to a woman named ‘Revadi.’ Since Revadi was not a person of faith and was miserly by nature, Nandiya did not want to marry her. His parents came up with a scheme to have Revadi come to live in the house and pretend to be a lay-devotee. Revadi decided to go along with the plan and Nandiya eventually decided to marry her.

After Nandiya’s parents died, Revadi was in charge of the household. The more Nandiya supported Buddhism, the more devoted he was to the Lord Buddha’s Teachings. Once he commissioned four great pavilions to be built in the deer sanctuary. They were subsequently furnished with beds, chairs, tables, etc. To celebrate the completion of the pavilions, Nandiya invited a large number of

monks presided over by the Lord Buddha to attend the celebration. When everything was ready, Nandiya offered the pavilions to the Buddhist monks by pouring water onto the Lord Buddha's hand to signify the transfer of ownership. In that instant, Nandiya's celestial mansion which was decorated with seven types of precious gems, 192 kilometers wide, 192 kilometers long, and 1,600 kilometers high along with 1,000 celestial attendants appeared instantly in the Tavatimsa Realm.

Later, Nandiya was out of town for many days to conduct his business transaction so he asked Revadi to take care of the offering of alms to the Buddhist monks and the poor on his behalf. She continued to give alms for only a couple of days and then stopped doing it altogether. Besides, she gave alms with disrespect by offering putrid leftovers to the monks. The monks had to throw the contents away after they returned to the temple. When Revadi heard about this, she made it a point to vilify the monks and to stop alms-giving altogether.

When Nandiya returned home and heard about Revadi's treatment of the Buddhist monks, he chased Revadi out of the house. He resumed his alms-giving to the Lord Buddha, the Buddhist monks and the poor. After he died, he was reborn in the Tavatimsa Realm enjoying the ecstasy of his celestial estate. Revadi returned home to inherit her husband's fortune. She did not continue with the alms-giving. Moreover, she continued to vilify the Buddhist monks. One night during her sleep, she heard a voice above her saying "Seven days from now, Revadi, you will die and be reborn in the Hell Realm."

Revadi was terror-stricken and had the doors of her castle bolted shut. On the seventh day, King Vessuvan commanded two Yakkha subjects to bring Revadi around the city for the masses to see before taking her to the Tavatimsa Realm to show her Nandiya's celestial estate. Afterward, they took her to the hell realm of Ussadanarok. The hell denizens immediately cut off her hands, her feet, her ears, her nose, and left what was left of her body to be pecked at by a flock of hell crows.

Revadi's grave misdeed of vilifying the Buddhist monks who practiced righteousness became unwholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma which gave its consequences in the following existence.

4. Wholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma

is a weighty Kamma and includes the eight types of Mahac-cata-kusala that allows an individual to attain the Jhanas. When the individual dies, his Jhana attainments will cause him to be reborn in the Brahma Realm. If the Jhana attainments are weak then the Kamma will turn into Defunct Kamma as in the following case study.

A Yogi's Ascetic Practice Was Undermined.

A long, long time ago in the city of Benares, our Bodhisatta was reborn a Brahmin by the name of 'Udicca.' After graduating from the arts, he ordained as a Yogi and went to live in the Himavanta Forest. There he had practiced meditation until he attained the Jhanas and Supernormal Powers. In the forest there was a doe which grazed on grass and drank

water from the Yogi's urinal pit which contained his semen. The doe felt a deep devotion for the Yogi and eventually became pregnant. She gave birth to a male infant and the Yogi named him 'Isi-singa.' After Isi-singa grew up, he ordained as a Yogi and practiced meditation by gazing at an object until he attained the Jhanas and Supernormal Powers. He had diligently practiced going in and out of each Jhana so expertly that King Sakka became anxious that he would soon be out of power and be replaced by Isi-singa as a result of his Perfections and Precepts. King Sakka felt that he had to do something to destroy the Yogi's Precepts. Therefore, he caused no rain to fall in the kingdom of Kasika for three whole years. People suffered tremendous hardship and asked their king for help. King Sakka subsequently appeared to the king of Kasika and told him that "The Yogi Isi-singa's ascetic practice is so bold and strong that he is causing drought by staring into the air. To correct the situation, his ascetic practice must be destroyed." The king decided to send his daughter, Princess Nalinika, to go and do the job of destroying the Yogi's ascetic practice.

One day, our Bodhisatta, the Yogi 'Udicca' left his son alone in the ashram while he went into the forest to look for fruit. Princess Nalinika under the guise of a Yogi went into the ashram and caused Isi-singa's practice of chastity to be violated. Having finished her assignment, she immediately returned to the city. Our Bodhisatta returned to find his son in a delirious state and knew that his son's chastity had been violated. He said to Isi-singa, "Behold, son, there are Yakkhas who go around the Human Realm and assume different forms in order to consume human beings that fall under their powers. Therefore, a wise person does not associate with Yakkhas. In the same manner, the practice of chastity comes to an end when one falls for someone in the guise of a Yogi. A Yakkhini has indeed found you but has not eaten you up yet."

Isi-singa's awareness returned as a result of his father's words. He began to practice the Four Noble Sentiments which include loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. As a

result of these practices, he was able to regain the Jhanas and Supernormal Powers. He had practiced the Four Noble Sentiments for the rest of his life. After he died, his wholesome Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma caused him to be reborn in the Brahma Realm.

Both unwholesome and wholesome Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma gives their consequences according to the gravity level of each Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma. When a number of unwholesome Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma have been performed, the gravest Kamma will give its consequences as soon as the individual dies. For example, if an individual commits all five types of Ananta-riya-kamma, after he dies, Sangha-bheda, which is the gravest type of Ananta-riya-kamma, will cause the individual to be reborn in the Hell Realm. At the same time, the rest of the Ananta-riya-kamma will immediately become Ahosikamma and will never give their consequences.

Indefinitely Effective Kamma

(Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma)

1. The Meaning of Indefinitely Effective Kamma

Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma (Indefinitely Effective Kamma) composes of three words: **Apara** which means another realm, another lifetime; **Pariyaya** which means timeframes; **Vedaniya** which means the consequences of Kamma. When the three words are combined, the term means Kamma which will give its consequences in future lifetimes. That is, in the third or more lifetime from now.

2. Characteristics of Indefinitely Effective Kamma

Indefinitely Effective Kamma is Kamma which will give its consequences in the next three or more lifetimes. Indefinitely Effective Kamma occurs during the second to the sixth thought-moments and once performed it will follow the person everywhere and will give its consequences as soon as the time is right. It can be compared to a hunter who goes

hunting with the help of a pack of dogs. As soon as the hunter spots a deer, he lets the dogs loose to chase after the deer. As soon as they catch the deer, they will bring it down. In the same manner, Indefinitely Effective Kamma will follow a person until it is time to give its consequences. The only exception is when the person attains Arahatsip. In that case, Indefinitely Effective Kamma will not be able to give its consequences. There are two types of Indefinitely Effective Kamma: unwholesome and wholesome Indefinitely Effective Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Aparā-pariyaya-veda -niya-kamma:

It means unwholesome deeds that will cause suffering and trouble for the person in the next three or more lifetimes as can be seen in the following case study as recorded in the Tripitaka:



Death as a Consequence of Unwholesome Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma

During the time of our Lord Buddha, a group of Buddhist monks boarded a large sea-faring vessel in order to come to the city of Savatthi where the Lord Buddha was staying. One day, in the middle of the sea, the vessel stopped still for no apparent reason. The captain sent some crew members to investigate what was causing the vessel to stop moving, but they could not find anything wrong with it. The captain decided to call the passengers together in order to inform them of the situation with the hope that they could come up with an idea to help solve the problem. Finally, one passenger said that the situation was caused by a person of ill-fortune in their midst. Everyone agreed and decided to draw lots to see who the person of ill-fortune might be. It so happened that the captain's young wife drew the lot three times in a row. For the sake of the crew and the passengers, the captain decided to tie a container filled with sand around his wife's neck

and threw her along with the container of sand into the sea. As soon as the deed was done, the vessel miraculously started moving once again.

The Buddhist monks witnessed the incident with great sadness and wondered why the vessel stopped still when nothing was wrong with it and why the young woman had to die at such a young age. As soon as they were in the Lord Buddha's presence, they recounted the incident to Him and requested Him to explain to them the reason behind the young woman's death.

The Lord Buddha told them that in one of her previous lifetimes, she was born the wife of a rice farmer. She was a good housewife. One day she found a street dog and decided to keep it. She took good care of it and the dog was devoted to her. It followed her everywhere. It would be nearby and watch her do every chore. A group of young men began to tease her about the dog until she felt very embarrassed. As a result, she would beat the dog

with a stick to discourage it from following her. Since the dog was her husband in a past lifetime, it continued to follow her everywhere.

She was so angry at the dog for disobeying her that one day after having delivered food to her husband who was working in the paddies, she called the dog to her. As soon as it came to her, she tied the dog's neck with a container filled with sand and pushed it into the water. As a result of this misdeed, she was reborn in the States of Loss and Woe and suffered horrifically there for a long, long time. Once most of her misdeed had been paid for, she was reborn the captain's wife.

What she did to the dog two lifetimes ago became unwholesome *Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma* which caused her to suffer in the third existence the same fate as the dog.



4. Wholesome Aparā-pariyaya-veda -niya-kamma:

It means wholesome deeds that will cause the individual to meet with happiness and success starting in the third existence from now as in the case in the Tripitaka:

‘Queen Mallika’

Queen Mallika was responsible for making an offering of Asa-disa-dana to the Lord Buddha. Asa-disa-dana means an Unparalleled Gift which is offered to the Lord Buddha and occurs only once during the life of each Buddha. She had also accumulated tremendous amount of merit. She did, however, commit a misdeed by lying to her husband about the fact that she had a sexual relationship with a dog. Although her husband, King Pasen-di-kosala paid no mind to her deviant behavior, the obscene deed stuck to her memory up until the last day of her life. As a result, she was reborn in the hell realm of Aveci Mahanarok for seven earth days before she was reborn in the Tusita Realm to enjoy the ecstasy of her celestial estate as a result of her Asa-disa-dana to the Lord Buddha.

Her most recent rebirth is a result of her wholesome *Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma*, which gave its consequences in the third existence.

Defunct Kamma (*Ahosi-kamma*)

1. The Meaning of Defunct Kamma

Defunct Kamma means unwholesome or wholesome Kamma which has already given its consequences or Kamma which is waiting to give its consequences when it becomes defunct. Therefore, Defunct Kamma is Kamma which will never give its consequences.

2. Characteristics of Defunct Kamma

Defunct Kamma can be compared to seeds that have been stored for too long or seeds that have been roasted. When the seeds are sown, they cannot grow in spite of rich soil and adequate water. The Tripitaka under the subject of 'The Way of *Mutta-sangaha-vibhaga*' had the following to say about Defunct Kamma.

1.) Ahosi-kamman nahosi-kamma

-vipako: Kamma which has already given its consequences by causing the individual to meet with suffering in the Hell Realm or utter happiness in the Celestial Realm. The Kamma then becomes defunct. Or after a more powerful Kamma has already given its consequences, it then causes the less powerful Kamma to be defunct. For example, when an individual has attained the third Jhana, then the first and the second Jhanas will not give their consequences and become defunct.

2.) Ahosi-kamman natthi-kamma

-vipako: Kamma which will no longer give its consequences. It can be unwholesome or wholesome Kamma which is performed in the current lifetime but cannot give any consequences by causing the individual who performs the Kamma to experience suffering or happiness. One example is Kiriya-citta or functional consciousness which yields defunct Kamma. Another example is when an individual's past wholesome Kamma stops sending its consequences

because it is overpowered by a much weightier unwholesome Kamma. In this case, this particular past wholesome Kamma will become defunct. In the same manner, an individual's unwholesome Kamma can stop sending its consequences because it is overpowered by a much weightier wholesome Kamma. Therefore, this particular past unwholesome Kamma will become defunct.

3.) Ahosi-kamman nabha-vissti

-kamma-vipako: Kamma which has no consequences as in the case of Phra Ongulimala. His unwholesome Kamma of killing so many people could not give its consequences as soon as he was able to attain Arahathship, which caused the round of rebirth to be terminated. His unwholesome Kamma turned into Defunct Kamma. It is like a person who runs away from a chasing dog. Once he crosses to the other side, the dog can no longer reach him. Since the person does not return, the dog can only watch him until it dies.

The **Sammoha-vino-dani Scripture** has the following to teach about Defunct Kamma.

"Of all the various types of Kamma including Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma, once one Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma gives its consequences in the current existence, the rest of Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma will not give its consequences at all. When Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma has been performed, the rest of the Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma will not give its consequences at all. Once one type of Ananta-riya-kamma causes an individual to be reborn in the Hell Realm, the rest of the Ananta-riya-kamma will not give its consequences at all. When Jhana attainments cause an individual to be reborn in the Brahma Realm, the rest of the same type of Kamma will not give its consequences at all."

The three types of Defunct Kamma which includes Ahosi-kamman nahosi-kamma-vipako, Ahosi-kamman natthi-kamma-vipako, and Ahosi-kamman nabha-vissati-kamma-vipako, will become defunct once it is past the time for it to give its consequences. In the situation where the individual attains Nibbana, every single one of his Kamma will become defunct. There are two types of Defunct Kamma: Unwholesome and wholesome Defunct Kamma.

3. Unwholesome Defunct Kamma:

It means unwholesome deeds which will not give their consequences because they are overdue as in a case recorded in the Tripitaka:



The Story about Phra Malaka-tissa.

Phra Malaka-tissa was born into a family of hunters. The Buddhist monks from the Gamena-davasi Temple in the suburb of Rohana had to pass by the hunter's family home when they went on their alms-round. After Malaka-tissa grew up, he earned a living by being a hunter just like his father and grandfather before him. He trapped animals using different methods and accumulated many unwholesome deeds. One day, he carried a torch and some salt out of the house and headed toward the forest. There he killed a deer which had been caught in his trap. He subsequently cooked some of the meat and ate it. On the way back he felt very thirsty and stopped by the Gamena-davasi Temple to look for some water to drink. In spite of the fact that the temple had ten large water vessels, he could not find anything to drink. He was angry and criticized the temple which had many Buddhist monks but could not be bothered to provide any water to quench the thirst of the thirsty. The senior

monk Phra Cula-pinda-patika-tissa heard the hunter and went to him right away. He noticed that the water vessels were filled to the brim with water, so he concluded that the being in front of him had to be a Jiva-mana Peta. The senior monk said, "Layman, you can quench your thirst now." He picked up the water vessel and poured some water onto the hunter's hands. However, the hunter's accumulated unwholesome Kamma caused his thirst to be unquenchable even after he had drunk the entire vessel of water. The senior monk said to him, "Layman, what evil deeds have you committed that turn you into a Peta in this very lifetime?"

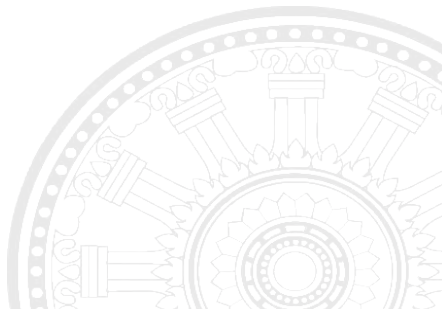
The words of the senior monk caused the hunter's sense of right and wrong to be awakened. He paid homage to the senior monk and threw away his hunting gear. He went home to check on his wife and children. He destroyed his spear, left the torch and all the trapped game in the forest. After all was said and done, he returned to the senior monk and requested to be ordained a Buddhist monk. After he

became a monk, he was eager to learn the Buddha's Sayings. One day he heard the sermon on the Devadut Sutta which taught about punishment in the Hell Realm. He was seized with fear and asked the senior monk about the prescribed duties of a Buddhist monk. The senior monk told him that a Buddhist monk had two main duties namely Vipassana-dhura (the duty of contemplation) and Gantha-dhura (the duty of studying the Scriptures). The new monks felt that Gantha-dhura was for those with abilities and talents. Since his faith came out of his suffering, he opted for Vipassana-dhura by practicing meditation.

The senior monk taught Phra Malaka-tissa how to practice meditation. Later, Phra Malaka-tissa went to practice meditation at the Cittala-panpata Temple one day, at the Gamena-davasi Temple the next day, and at the Gocaragam Temple the following day. When Thina-middha (sloth and torpor) overtook him, he would put wet leaves on his head and put his feet in the water in order to stay awake. One day, he had been meditating all night at the Cittala-panpata

Temple. Near dawn, he began to feel sleepy so he put wet leaves on his head. At the time, the novice monks were chanting the Aruna-vati Sutta but all he heard was "Be diligent, endeavor and persevere in the practice of the Dhamma. Destroy death like an elephant which destroys the house of reed. Whoever is not reckless in the Dhamma-Discipline will leave the round of rebirth and end suffering." Phra Malaka-tissa was overjoyed and felt the Lord Buddha's words to be directed at him especially. In his delight, he continued to meditate until he attained the Fruit of Never-Returning (Ana-gami-phla). He continued with his endeavor until he finally attained Arahathship.

All the misdeeds that Phra Malaka-tissa had committed as a hunter became Ahosi-kamma and would never give its consequences the instant he attained Arahathship.



Wholesome Defunct Kamma

It means wholesome deeds which are overdue, hence can no longer give their consequences. Wholesome Ahosi-kamma can be exemplified in the following story as recorded in the Tripitaka:

‘Yogi Kala-devila’

The Yogi Kala-devila had attained the eighth level of meditative absorption. He was one of the teachers of King Suddho-dana, Prince Siddhattha’s father. The Yogi’s level of meditative absorption caused him to be reborn in the Brahma Realm to enjoy the bliss there for a very long time. His meditative absorption is considered to be Garuka-kamma.

Although the Yogi attained respectively the first to the seventh level of meditative absorption, which are considered to be Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma, it became defunct as soon as the Yogi was able to attain the eighth level of meditative absorption. It was his eighth level of meditative absorption alone

which caused him to be reborn in the Brahma Realm. The scenario can be compared to a person dining on eight tablespoons of rice. By the time he gets to the eighth spoonful, he is already full. The first to the seventh spoonfuls have a supporting role but the decisive role is the eighth spoonful.

The types of Kamma and the way they give its consequences as a function of time and the third category of Kamma can be summarized, as follows:

1. Effective Kamma (*Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma*): It gives its consequences in the present lifetime and can be compared to an annual plant. It possesses a weak force and can only give its consequences within one lifetime. Any unwholesome or wholesome Effective Kamma which an individual performs will result in suffering or happiness right here in the present lifetime.

2. Subsequently Effective Kamma

(*Upa-pajja-veda-niya-kamma*): It gives its consequences in the next lifetime and can be compared to a biennial plant. It possesses a stronger force than Effective Kamma. It will only give its consequences in the next lifetime and its job is finished. Any unwholesome or wholesome Subsequently Effective Kamma which an individual performs will cause him/her to be reborn in the States of Unhappiness or in the States of Happiness after he dies.

3. Indefinitely Effective Kamma

(*Apara-pariyaya-veda-niya-kamma*): It gives its consequences starting from the third lifetime from now and can be compared to a perennial plant. It possesses more force than Effective Kamma and Subsequently Effective Kamma. When it is time for Indefinitely Effective Kamma to give its consequences, it can continue to do so endlessly until such time as all defilements are removed and Arahantship is attained. Any unwholesome or wholesome Indefinitely Effective

Kamma which an individual performs will cause him to experience suffering or happiness starting from the third lifetime onward.

4. Defunct Kamma (*Ahosi-kamma*): It does not give its consequences in the past, in the present or in the future. It can be compared to seeds which have been stored for too long or which have been roasted. When these seeds are sown, they cannot grow regardless of how fertile the soil may be or how much water may be available. Defunct Kamma is Kamma which is overridden by more powerful Kamma and applies to both unwholesome and wholesome Defunct Kamma.

The above contents allow us to better appreciate the complexity of the consequences of Kamma and how it is difficult for most people to understand the complex workings of the Law of Kamma. This lack of understanding causes many people to disbelieve in the Law of Kamma or in the Kamma Principle which states that one reaps what

one sows. Such disbelief is very harmful and dangerous because it leads to recklessness. Every single one of our action waits for its time to give its consequences, it is only a matter of when and how it will give its consequences.

No one can escape the consequences of his Kamma as the Lord Buddha once said,

“Once a person has performed an unwholesome deed, he can try to escape by air, to the middle of the ocean, to a gorge or to a far away land but he can never escape the consequences of his unwholesome deed.”





Chapter 6

The Way Buddhism Views the Concept of Washing Away One's Sin

There are many religions on earth, but if we count only major religions that have provided a refuge to humankind and have a large number of followers all over the world, there are only three main religions. These include Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam. The fundamental teachings and practices of each of these religions differ tremendously from one another.

Many religions on earth teach that God creates everything and provides a prophet to wash away the believers' sin. Believers can wash away their sin by confessing them or by bathing in a sacred river. A question has often been raised about whether it is true that one's sin can really be washed away. Therefore, the Buddhist view on the concept of washing away one's sin will be presented in this chapter.

Actually, the term 'washing away one's sin' was never mentioned in the Lord Buddha's Teachings because He stressed the importance of keeping one's action, words, and thoughts pure in order to ultimately remove one's defilements. Once a misdeed is committed, it incurs ill consequences as dictated by the Law of Kamma and such consequences cannot be washed away.

Sin or demerit means evil, wickedness. In Buddhism, sin or demerit has three meanings, as follows:

1. As applied to the state of mind:
a sad and gloomy mind.
2. As applied to its cause:
all forms of misdeed.
3. As applied to its consequences:
all forms of suffering.

From the above description of the meaning of sin or demerit, it can be concluded that sin or demerit means the spoiled states of the mind. When the words washing and sin or demerit are combined together, the term means the complete removal of defilements which are the causes of all sin or demerit. The fruit of such lofty endeavor is an ever increasing improvement of the mind which causes the body, the words, and the mind to be cleaner and purer until such time when all defilements can be completely removed. The term 'one who has washed away his sin' is mentioned in the **Dutiya-soceyaya Sutta**, as follows:

"Behold, monks, the word 'Soceya' means the three types of cleanliness. When an individual is clean in the body, in the word, and in the mind, he is without defilements and is clean with the cleanliness of virtue. The sages call such an individual a person who has washed away his sin."

From this verse in the Sutta, 'a person who has washed away his sin' means an individual who is able to destroy all defilements and is therefore clean and pure in the body, word, and mind. Washing away one's sin according to this Sutta implies the complete removal of all defilements which in turn gives rise to a person's cleanliness and purity.



The Origin of Sin According to the Lord Buddha's Teachings

The Lord Buddha, who penetrated the reality of existence and possessed true knowledge about the working mechanism of the law of nature, allowed Him to know the nature of defilements and the fact that defilements are the cause of all sin or demerit. He also knew how these defilements could be completely destroyed.

The Lord Buddha summarized the origin of sin or demerit succinctly, as follows:

Sin cannot be incurred by someone who does not commit it.

Whoever commits a misdeed, his mind will be sad and gloomy.

Whoever does not commit a misdeed is pure.

These sayings of the Lord Buddha confirm the fact that sin or demerit is personal and cannot be inherited. Whoever commits a misdeed will receive its ill consequences. Whoever does not commit a misdeed is free from its ill consequences. If the father commits a misdeed, the demerit incurred is his alone and cannot be passed on to his children. It is in the same manner that when a father eats, his children cannot become full. Buddhism teaches that demerit is incurred as a result of the individual's misdeed which is in turn caused by the defilements in his mind. His misdeed will eat away at his mind and cause it to become sad, gloomy, and clouded. A tormented mind will lack efficiency.

Sin or Demerit Occurs in Three Ways

Sin or demerit arises from defilements which are inherent in the mind in the form of greed, anger, and ignorance. Defilements force human beings to commit misdeeds through the body, the word, and the mind. Once a misdeed is committed, the

mind becomes troubled. A troubled mind is sad and gloomy. According to Buddhism, there are ten ways to commit misdeeds. These are called 'The Tenfold Unwholesome Course of Action.' It includes three physical acts, four verbal acts, and three mental acts, as follows:

1. The three physical acts are the three types of misdeeds which are committed through the body and include:

(1) Taking the life of another living being

(Pana-tipata)

(2) Stealing *(Adina-dana)*

(3) Committing sexual misconduct

(Kame-sumiccha-cara)

2. The four verbal acts are the four types of misdeeds which are committed verbally and include:

(4) Lying *(Musa-vada)*

(5) Practicing divisive speech *(Pisuna-vaca)*

(6) Practicing offensive speech

(Pharusa-vaca)

(7) Practicing nonsensical speech

(Samphap-palapa)

3. The three mental acts are the misdeeds which are committed mentally in the forms of:

(8) Covetousness (*Abhij-jha*)

(9) Ill will (*Bya-pada*)

(10) Wrong View (*Miccha-ditthi*)

Since there are three channels by which sin or demerit can occur, it should behoove us to be very careful and to restrain our body, words, and thoughts so as not to commit any misdeed by practicing 'The Tenfold Wholesome Course of Action.' It consists of ten ways to practice honesty through our body, our words, and our thoughts as taught by the Lord Buddha in the Cunda Sutta.

Once, our Lord Buddha was staying in the mango grove belonging to Cunda-kammara-putra. This man was talking about cleanliness and the way Brahmins practiced cleanliness which was different from that of Ariyans or holy individuals.

The Lord Buddha answered that Ariyans or holy individuals become filthy as a result of dishonest

deeds committed through the body, the words, and the thoughts.

The way Ariyans or holy individuals practice cleanliness through the body is by not killing, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct.

The way Ariyans or holy individuals practice cleanliness through the words is by abstaining from lying, from practicing divisive speech, from practicing offensive speech, from practicing nonsensical speech.

The way Ariyans or holy individuals practice cleanliness through the thoughts is by the absence of covetousness, the absence of ill will, and having Right View.

This Sutta teaches that we can keep our self clean in three ways which include our body, our word, and our thought. In the same token, there are three main channels through which sin or demerit can occur.



Buddhism Denies the Concept of Washing Away One's Sin as Held in Other Religious Beliefs.

In regards to the religious belief that sin is inherited and newly born human beings must be baptized or the religious belief about a savior who was born to redeem other human beings, the Lord Buddha had the following to say:

Suddhi asuddhi paccattan

Purity or impurity is a personal concern.

Nanano annan viso-dhaye

No one can redeem others from sin.

The Lord Buddha teaches that one individual's sin cannot be passed onto another individual. The Lord Buddha also teaches that once an individual commits a misdeed, no one else can redeem him from its ill consequences.

In regards to the religious belief that one can wash away one's sin by bathing in the sacred river, the Lord Buddha negated such belief as shown in the **Vatthu-pama Sutta** as follows.

Once our Lord Buddha was staying in the great Jetavana Temple near the city of Savatthi, a Brahmin by the name of Sundrika-bhara-davaja (who believed in the concept of washing away one's sin in the sacred river) was seated near Him. The Brahmin heard the Lord Buddha talk about internal bathing so he asked the Lord Buddha, "Is the Exalted One going to the Pahuka River to bathe?"

The Lord Buddha answered, "What good can come from bathing in the Pahuka River?" The Brahmin said, "The Pahuka River is widely known to be sacred and can impart purity to those who bathe in it as their sin is floated away."

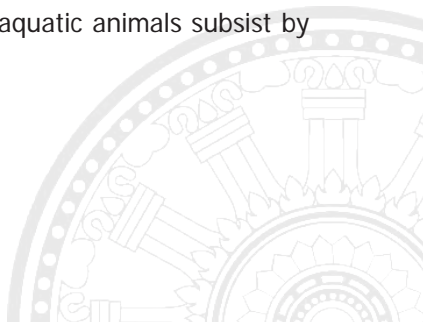
The Lord Buddha said, "Indecent, sinful folk travel to the Pahuka River, to the Gaya River, to the Adhi-kakka Landing, to the Sundrika River, to the Sarasdi River, to the Pyaga Landing, or to the Bahu-madi River. Although they do it regularly, they still cannot become pure. None of these rivers can ever cleanse one from one's retribution, from one's base action which results in a misdeed but

cleanliness is achieved by decent individuals that perform only deeds of purity. You should bathe in my teachings and cause delight in others by not lying, not killing, not stealing, by having Right View, and by not being miserly. Then there will be no need for you to bathe or drink in the Gaya River.”

A Few Main Points Can Be Derived from This Sutta:

1. The act of bathing regardless of where, how, or what the source of the water may be, is but a neutral action. There is no merit or demerit attached to the act. It can only cleanse the body, but it cannot cleanse the mind.

2. If water can wash away one's sin, then all the aquatic animals would have all been cleansed and purified and could all go to the Celestial Realm. But the fact remains that aquatic animals subsist by eating each other as food.



3. Sin or demerit is inherent in the mind. It is a mental factor and cannot be washed away by using a physical substance like water. Only the Dhamma which deals with the mind can cleanse such mental factor as sin or demerit. The mind can be cleansed by practicing charity, keeping the Precepts, and practicing meditation. The more these practices are earnestly performed, the purer one's mind will become.

4. Individuals who are still committing misdeeds, who are still harming others, can bathe themselves in the so-called holy water all they want and they will never become clean. Their bodies are still unclean because they are still committing physical dishonesty. Their words are still unclean because they are still committing verbal dishonesty. Their minds are still unclean because they still harbor greed, ill-will, and Wrong View. When an individual abstains from all misdeeds and regularly accumulates merit, he is clean even though he does not bathe in any holy water.

The Lord Buddha did not mention the concept directly but His Teachings are about purifying the mind until such time that all defilements can be removed from it.

Dissolving Sin or Demerit through the Accumulation of Merit

It is generally understood that once sin or demerit occurs as a result of a misdeed and ill consequences are incurred, that sin or demerit cannot be washed away. This understanding is correct when sin or demerit means the ill consequences of a misdeed. However, according to the knowledge about the Law of Kamma, the emphasis is on the removal of defilements, which are the root cause of sin or demerit.

Although the Lord Buddha taught us to abandon wickedness, to perform good deeds, to keep our mind bright and clear so that we can eventually destroy all of our defilements, however, in the course of our daily life, most of us perform a mixture of

good and bad deeds. Therefore, when our misdeeds give their consequences, they will not be able to do so in a continuous manner because they will be interrupted by our good deeds which will also give their consequences. Good and bad deeds will jostle with each other to give their consequences but the pattern is unique to each individual's overall Kamma. Sometimes an individual may have been making real progress in life when his past misdeeds suddenly cause him to meet with obstacles. In the case where an individual performs more bad deeds than good deeds, how can he then go about improving his situation, since the consequences of his misdeeds cannot be washed away?

The Lord Buddha taught us to perform good deeds on a regular and continuous basis. When this is done to the fullest extent and defilements are completely destroyed then the true deed of a human being is done. Therefore, according to the Lord Buddha, to undo one's unwholesome deeds, one must first realize the harm of one's unwholesome

deed and admit to one's wrongdoing. One must then be determined not to commit the same misdeed again. Next, one must learn to accumulate more and more good deeds so that one becomes accustomed to doing good deeds. Once one can accumulate more and more merit through one's ever-increasing number of good deeds, it will cause the consequences of sin or misdeeds to be left far behind. Buddhist scholars called this pathway 'the way to dissolve sin or demerit.' It is the way to make sin or demerit more dilute or less potent. Without the merit earned by performing good deeds, sin or demerit can easily give its consequences. Once sin or demerit begins to give its ill consequences, the situation will make it difficult for one to perform good deeds to the fullest extent. This method of dissolving sin or demerit is mentioned in the Lonaka Sutta, as follows:



“Behold, monks, if one puts a lump of salt in a small cup of water, would you suppose the water would be so salty as to be undrinkable?” The monks answered, “Indeed, it would be so, Most Exalted One.” The Lord Buddha asked, “Why is that?” The monks answered, “It’s because there’s only a small amount of water.” The Lord Buddha said, “What if one puts the same lump of salt but this time in the Ganges, would you suppose the water would be so salty as to be undrinkable?” The monks answered, “No, it would not be, Most Enlightened One.” The Lord Buddha asked, “And why is that?” The monks answered, “It’s because there’s so much water in the Ganges that just one lump of salt cannot cause the water in it to become salty.” The Lord Buddha said, “In the same manner, monks, some individuals commit a small amount of misdeed yet it can cause them to have a rebirth in the Hell Realm. For some individuals, the same small amount of misdeed becomes *Dittha-dhamma-veda-niya-kamma* (Kamma which gives its consequences within the present lifetime) therefore, has a very light effect.”

This Sutta teaches that we can dilute the consequences of our misdeed by deliberately accumulating a great amount of merit.

The accumulation of merit has the effect of adding more water whereas the accumulation of demerit has the effect of adding more salt as in the analogy above. Therefore, we must regularly accumulate merit in order to offset our demerit. It is like a lump of salt being dissolved in more and more water until its saltiness cannot be tasted. Yet the salt is still there in the water.

Nonetheless, there are those of us who in spite of knowing what constitutes a good deed, still refuse to perform it because they have succumbed to the force of their defilements. In this case, it is nearly impossible for them to dissolve their sin or demerit. It is best in any case not to commit any misdeed at all or to commit as few misdeeds as possible. We should make it a habit to think and consider everything thoroughly before we say or do anything.

Washing Away One's Sin or Demerit by Observing the Precepts, Practicing Meditation, and Attaining Insight.

The Lord Buddha's Teachings are contained in 84,000 Scriptures as recorded in the Tripitaka. These Teachings can be summarized as the Noble Eightfold Path which consists of the following eight components:

1. Right View (*Samma-ditthi*): It means having right understanding about reality such as the facts that we owe our parents a great debt of gratitude; a good deed gives good consequences and a bad deed gives bad consequences; the Celestial Realm and the Hell Realm exist; this world and the hereafter exist; the higher truth about suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, and the means of ending suffering exist.



2. Right Thought (*Samma-sankappa*):

It means not thinking about sensual pleasures; it means thinking about having no ill-will; thinking about not harming others; thinking about not causing trouble for others.

3. Right Speech (*Samma-vaca*): It means not lying; not practicing divisive speech; not practicing offensive speech; not practicing nonsensical speech; not being boastful.

4. Right Action (*Samma-kammanta*): It means not killing; not stealing; practicing chastity.

5. Right Livelihood (*Samma-ajiva*): It means earning one's living by engaging in honest work.

6. Right Effort (*Samma-vayama*): It means preventing unwholesome deeds from occurring; abandoning current unwholesome deeds; making new forms of merit; continuing to perform existing wholesome deeds.

7. Right Mindfulness (*Samma-sati*):

It means not allowing one's mind to wander aimlessly. It means that one is constantly aware of the inner physical form which resides within another inner physical form, each inner thought which exists within another inner thought, each inner Dhamma which exists within another inner Dhamma.

8. Right Concentration (*Samma-samadhi*):

It means keeping one's concentration at the center of one's body in order to follow each inner physical form which exists within another inner physical form, each inner thought which exists within another inner thought, each inner Dhamma which exists within another inner Dhamma until one can respectively attain different levels of meditative absorption and proceeds from the mundane to the supramundane level of meditative attainments.

The practice of the Noble Eightfold Path leads one out of suffering. It is the principle method for washing away one's sin or demerit and can be summarized into the threefold training which includes morality, concentration, and wisdom as follows:

*** Right Speech, Right Action, and Right Livelihood: Precepts**

*** Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, and Right Concentration: Concentration**

*** Right View and Right Thought: Wisdom**

The Teachings of the Lord Buddha can also be summarized as abstaining from misdeeds, performing good deeds, and keeping the mind bright and clear. This threefold training can be considered the heart of Buddhism. The Lord Buddha stressed this threefold training to the Buddhist monks very often because its earnest practice can lead to the destruction of defilements, hence, the washing away of one's sin.



Practices that Lead to the Washing Away of One's Sin

1) Value the Precepts More than One's Life: Diligently train oneself by disciplining one's body, word, and mind so as to keep them pure. One keeps the Five Precepts on regular days and the Eight Precepts on Holy Days. Novice monks must keep the Ten Precepts and the Buddhist monks must keep the 227 Precepts. One must be willing to lay down one's life for the sake of Precepts because the Precepts are like the path which leads the practitioners directly to his destination.

Precepts Has To Do with Cleanliness

According to the Lord Buddha's Teachings, cleanliness brought about by the Precepts is not at the superficial level but at the deep level. The Lord Buddha taught that "A person can bathe himself 100 times a day but if he still kills, steals, commits sexual misconduct, that person is still not considered to have a clean body. A person can brush his teeth 1,000

times a day but if he still lies, practices nonsensical speech, gossips, that person is not considered to have a clean mouth."

Therefore, in Buddhism cleanliness means physical cleanliness, verbal cleanliness, and mental cleanliness which arise from keeping the Precepts. It is the type of cleanliness that protects us from physical misdeed, verbal misdeed, and mental misdeed.

The Lord Buddha teaches that "Physical cleanliness, verbal cleanliness, and mental cleanliness are true cleanliness." Precepts allow us to abandon all unwholesomeness and to keep our life flawless. This is the first level of decency and can also be considered as the first stage in the process of washing away one's sin.

2) Train the Mind by Practicing Meditation:

Discipline the mind by keeping it continuously tranquil in accordance with the Four Foundations of Mindfulness by contemplating the body, the feelings, the mind, and the mind objects until Higher

Knowledge or Vijja is attained. It is crucially important to discipline the mind because every action begins with an intention. The mind is the boss. The mind is king. Everything can be accomplished because of the mind. Therefore, if the mind is properly disciplined, it can control the action of the body.

Meditation Has To Do with Brightness

If inner brightness or inner illumination does not occur then the Noble Paths, which begin with the First Path Sphere and all the way to the Dhammakaya, cannot be attained. How bright must this inner brightness be? This inner brightness can be compared to the brightness of the midday sun. But the level of brightness needed to access the details of one's past existences has to be as bright as the sky filled with hundreds, thousands, and countless number of suns. The greater the brightness, the more pronounced and the purer the insight will be. The Lord Buddha had the following to say about the brightness that occurs through meditation practice (as recorded in the **Upak-kilesa Sutta**).

"Behold Anuruddha, I know this. Anytime my meditation power is low, that's the time I can see only a little. When I experience only a small amount of brightness, I can see only a little. But anytime that my meditation power is immeasurable, that's the time I can see immeasurably well and the amount of brightness is also immeasurable. I can see an immeasurable number of forms all night, all day or all night and all day long."

Meditation practice is considered a medium level of decency. It enables us to better lead our lives within the framework of the Precepts. Our mind can more effectively keep our physical and verbal deeds pure. The meticulous keeping of the Precepts controls our physical and verbal acts and make them purer. Precepts are instrumental in keeping our mind still to a certain extent. The more we practice meditation, the more we can still our mind and the brighter our mind becomes. Precepts and meditation

practice support each other. Meditation practice can be considered as the second stage in the process of washing away one's sin.

3) Develop True Wisdom: True wisdom leads us to the truth and controls all of our behavior. It releases the mind from the clutch of ignorance. It causes the mind to be tranquil, spacious, and free. Wisdom is developed from meditation practice. Once meditation practice gives rise to inner brightness, the higher the brightness level, the more wisdom is increased, and the more Higher Knowledge is gained.

Wisdom Has To Do with Tranquility

Tranquility in this case does not mean wisdom which comes from memorization or from thinking but from the Dhamma within us. Wisdom which comes from the Dhamma within allows the truth to be witnessed. The more truth one can witness, the more tranquil the mind will be. One realizes how limited the physical eye is and how small the world really is. In seeing with the physical eye, the vision is only 180 degrees but when we close our eyes to look inward, our mind can be expanded until it covers the entire

world and much more. When we use our inner eye, the world is only the size of a gooseberry. The Lord Buddha had the following to say about inner peace (as recorded in the **Pathama-rohi-tassa Sutta**).

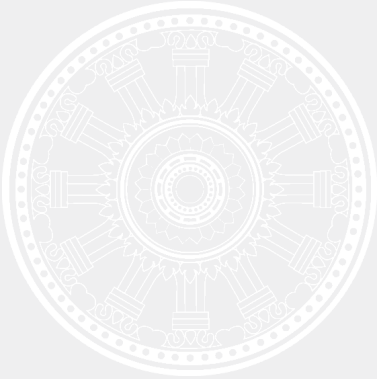
The end of the worlds cannot be reached however much time it takes. However as long as one cannot reach the end of the worlds, one cannot escape suffering. However, one who has attained insight and gained the truth about the worlds; one who has already reached the end of the worlds; one who has practiced chastity; is tranquil and no longer desires the things of the worlds.

Once one observes the Precepts more and more meticulously, one's mind will become bright and clear. One's Insight Sphere will be bright and one can see life for what it truly is. One understands suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, and the way to end suffering. One does not fall prey to one's inherent defilements and can abstain from all forms of misdeed. One can eventually be emancipated from defilements which are the root cause of demerit

and attain Nibbana. Developing true wisdom can be considered as the final stage in the process of washing away one's sin.

The way to wash away one's sin is by practicing the Noble Eightfold Path, which can be summarized into the threefold training of Precepts, meditation, and insight. Physical and verbal cleanliness reflects a clean mind and causes the practitioner to be bright both on the outside and the inside. Physical and verbal cleanliness which results from keeping the Precepts and the brightness within which results from meditation practice in turn allows one to develop tranquility as a result of insight. Insight helps one to be constantly aware of defilements which are the causes of all misdeeds. This vigilance allows defilements inherent in the mind to be scrubbed away until eventually the mind is scrubbed completely clean of them. When that happens, sin is washed away and purity of the mind becomes a permanent state as in the case of Arahats.





Chapter 7

Summary Of The Main Point About The Law Of Kamma And Its Relevance To Other Laws

The Law of Kamma and Right View

The Lord Buddha, the light of the world and the universe, happens for the purpose of assuaging suffering and promoting arises for all living beings. He is the world's and the universe's true refuge. Since the first day He resolved to become enlightened as a Buddha one day, He had Right View and continued to accumulate merit and cultivate

Perfections throughout His countless lifetimes. He did everything good and decent for the sake of Buddhahood. In His final lifetime, He became enlightened as the Lord Buddha and discovered the Four Noble Truths. He knew that living beings continued to suffer because they lacked Right View. In ignorance, they continued to accumulate misdeeds. The Lord Buddha emphasized the importance of having Right View because it could guide one to accumulate only good deeds. The Tenfold Right View is as follows:

1. Practice Generosity: To survive, we all need the four necessities which include shelter, food, clothes, and medicine. Since all of us are still trapped in the round of rebirth and must continue to suffer rebirth, aging, illnesses, and death, it is necessary that we help each other by generously giving to one another. Moreover, we must not exploit each other and we must not be inconsiderate. We must try to remove miserliness from us by practicing generosity. We must believe that alms-giving does

bear fruit. Unfortunately, what we are seeing today is selfishness, exploitation, and other signs of greed.

2. Help Each Other Out in Times of Need:

We must learn to live together despite our diversity because none of us can exist alone. When everyone in the community can have more or less an equal standard of living, there will be less problems overall. When certain members of the community encounter financial hardship and cannot adequately support themselves, it is up to the better-to-do members to help these other members out as best as they can so that they can continue to survive and have the opportunity to better themselves later on. We must believe that aid-giving does bear fruit. It means that giving to social aid is one way to accumulate good deeds because we are helping our fellow beings out in times of need. Unfortunately, what does happen in the world today is that these less fortunate members of the community are sometimes taken advantage of by the better-to-do members.

3. Admire and Honor Virtuous Individuals:

Individuals worthy of our respect and gratitude both directly and indirectly include our ancestors, our parents, our teachers, our elders, our superior, and the Buddhist monks who practice righteousness. We express our gratitude to them by admiring them and respecting them, by not finding faults with them, not feeling jealous of them, or not trying to act superior to them. Admiring and honoring virtuous individuals is a decent practice which should be passed on to posterity. We must believe that revering individuals who are worthy of our reverence does bear fruit. The practice fosters harmony and unity and encourages us to do good deeds. Unfortunately, most people nowadays feel no need to care for their aging parents. They want to replace their boss by taking over his job. They do not respect their teachers, etc. Such indecent practices spawn fierce rivalry, disunity, and disharmony.



4. Good and Bad Kamma Do Bear Fruit:

This is in accordance with the saying 'we reap what we sow' in that we receive the good consequences of our good deeds and we receive the ill consequences of our bad deeds. Therefore, it is crucially important that we know the criteria of good and bad deeds so that we can choose to perform only good deeds. Everything we decide to do remains within us. It is like hammering a nail into a plank of wood and removing the nail afterward, the plank still bears the scar from the nail. Good deeds cannot wipe away bad deeds. However, good deeds can dilute or slow down the ill consequences of bad deeds in the way that water can be added to salt. The more water is added, the less salty the water will be. But if more salt is added, then the water will become more salty.

5. The Reality of This World Exists: This world encompasses conditioned things, body, and mind in the forms of living beings which include human beings, celestial beings, hell beings and their respective abodes. The Law of Kamma dictates that

each being lives with the consequences of his past Kamma and lives to perform new Kamma. That is, everything in our lives and every aspect about our lives are determined by our overall Kamma. There are no such things as coincidences. As a human being, each one of us meets with life's vicissitudes in a unique way as a result of our unique overall Kamma. No two people face the exact same pattern of vicissitudes. Not only does the reality of this world exist but this world is a world of opportunities for human beings. We can use our body to perform good deeds and accumulate as much merit as we wish. This is in contrast to celestial beings and animals that cannot perform good deeds to any real extent. The Human Realm is conducive to the accumulation of good deeds because we are surrounded by virtuous friends such as Buddhist monks, novice monks, parents, teachers, etc. We have only a finite amount of time in this world. We may or may not reach the average lifespan and death can come at any moment. Certain misdeeds in our past existences can very

easily cut short our life. It behooves us then to hurry and accumulate as many good deeds as possible while we can and to abandon all misdeeds. We must do our best with whatever time we have left. Remember that this world is a world of opportunities and we must use everything it provides to perform only wholesome deeds.

6. The Reality of the Hereafter Exists:

Death is definitely not the end. As long as the consciousness is still dominated by defilements, only the body deteriorates and dies but the consciousness continues to undergo rebirth as dictated by its overall Kamma. The Lord Buddha said, "All beings possess their own Kamma. They are the heir of their Kamma. Their rebirth and their race are determined by their Kamma. Their Kamma is their refuge. Their Kamma determines their crudeness and their refinement." The Lord Buddha's saying makes us realize that wherever a human being or an animal is born, each being is receiving the consequences of the good and bad Kamma accumulated in his past existences. That

makes each one of us the heir of our Kamma. After death, each being continues to live in the hereafter by being reborn as a human being, an animal, etc., depending on each being's overall Kamma. For example, if during one's existence as a human being, one is a womanizer and a liar, after one dies one will be reborn as a monkey. Based on the Lord Buddha's Teachings, the theory of evolution is inconsistent with the truth because what causes a human rebirth and what causes an animal rebirth are completely different. Species does not evolve and the overall similarity among species arises from similar overall Kamma of members of the respective species.

The hereafter or rebirth takes place right after death. Since living beings are still trapped in the round of rebirth, there subsequently arise different realms of existence to accommodate them. Take for example our earth where we can see human beings and a great variety of animals inhabiting the same realm of existence. Human beings live like human beings and animals live like animals. For example,

fish must live in the water. They will die if they try to live on land. In the same token, human beings who try to live like fish will only die. The hereafter of each living being is unknown. One does not know what type of being one will be reborn as next. One may have a rebirth in a different universe altogether. The only thing which is certain is the fact that everyone must be reborn and continue to live in the hereafter because our inherent defilements are still with us. Therefore, it behooves us to learn about the hereafter and how it is determined by our overall Kamma.

There are four ways to prepare for life in the hereafter:

- 1) We must believe in Kamma and the Law of Kamma.

- 2) We must practice generosity by giving alms and do it to our best ability. We must convert our money and other material wealth, which are crude wealth into merit which is refined wealth. The reason life in the hereafter is nourished by our accumulated merit or condemned by our accumulated demerit.

3) We must observe the Five Precepts meticulously. The Five Precepts are what make us truly human.

4) We must develop our insight through the practice of meditation. Meditation is instrumental in the cultivation of penetrating insight. This penetrating insight allows us to witness the truth for what it is. The brighter our penetrating insight, the further we can witness the truth. This type of insight is called 'Bhavana-maya-panna' or insight resulting from mental development.

Life in the hereafter is unavoidable since we are still dominated by defilements. How we live in the hereafter is dictated by our overall Kamma and the Law of Kamma. If we have made mistakes throughout our past, now is the time to stop making them. We must go forward and leave all the mistakes behind us. We must follow the Lord Buddha's instructions and live each day to the best of our ability by accumulating only good deeds.

7. We Are Indebted to Our Mother: Mother is considered the Arahāt of the home. She carries us in her womb. She nurtures and takes care of us since our birth. She gives of herself generously. At the very least, we owe our mother in the three following ways:

- 1) She makes it possible for us to be conceived.
- 2) She is our physical prototype.
- 3) She is our psychological prototype.

It is becoming more and more evident these days how teenagers tend to overlook their mothers' important role. They pay more attention to their friends than to their mothers. They tend to get annoyed with their mothers and accuse them of being nagging when they are only trying to teach them something. The ready availability of alcohol and drugs causes some individuals to commit matricide because their mothers refuse to give them any money to indulge in their habit. Matricide is a very grave misdeed and will cause the perpetrator to have a rebirth in the hell realm of Aveci immediately after he dies. The

best way to repay our mother is not by becoming a successful professional or by giving her money but by encouraging her to give alms, observe the Five Precepts, and practice meditation.

8. We Are Indebted to Our Father: An example of someone who could eventually realize his father's important role is King Ajatasattu. Having been misled by a wicked person, he killed his father King Bimbisara. A story was told to demonstrate the deep love that King Bimbisara had for his son. When his son was young and suffered from a very painful boil, King Bimbisara used his mouth to suck the pus from the boil because he could not bear to see his son cry so piteously. After the patricide, King Ajatasattu understood the love his father had for him because he became a father for the first time himself. His guilt made him unable to eat or sleep. Our father made it possible for us to be conceived. He serves as our physical and psychological prototype in the same way as our mother. Here again, the best way to repay our father is not by becoming a successful professional

or by giving him money, but by encouraging him to give alms, observe the Five Precepts, and practice meditation.

9. The Reality of Spontaneous Rising Exists: Spontaneous rising means have a rebirth in an adult form, which is completely different from human beings and animals. A rebirth in the Celestial Realm, the Form Brahma Realm, and the Non-Form Brahma Realm takes the form of spontaneous rising. Spontaneous rising also occurs in the Peta Realm, the Asurakaya Realm, and the Hell Realm. There are at least two reasons why we should study about spontaneous rising as follows:

1) Knowledge about Spontaneous Rising Encourages Us to Develop Hiri and Ottappa Hiri means being ashamed of evil while Ottappa means being fearful of the ill consequences of evil deeds. The lack of these two virtues is what causes many more living beings to be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. The Lord Buddha compared the number of beings being reborn in the

Sates of Happiness as the number of an ox's horns whereas the number of those reborn in the States of Unhappiness as the number of the ox's body hair. The chance of having a rebirth as a human being is as scarce as a blind turtle which comes up for air every 100 years and happens to get its neck caught inside a noose hanging about at the surface of the great ocean. The number of living beings that are reborn as a human being is like the amount of dust in the fingernail when compared to all the dust on earth. All the dust on earth can be compared to the number of human beings that are reborn in the States of Unhappiness after they die simply because they have committed so many misdeeds during their human existence on earth.

Hiri and Ottappa work to keep us from making mistakes in two ways:

1.1) When temptation comes from outside of us in the form of diversity especially in the area of differences in religious belief, it can lead to

misunderstanding, arguments, fights, and all the way to violent eruptions which can lead to killing. When we are caught in the situation, we must exercise patience and resist any anger which may arise because once a fight breaks out, enmity will not only occur between the involved parties, but will also follow both parties and bind them in a bond of enmity for endless lifetimes to come.

1.2) When temptation comes from outside of us in the form of different Causes of Ruin^[1], we must avoid them at all cost by exercising our Hiri and Ottappa.

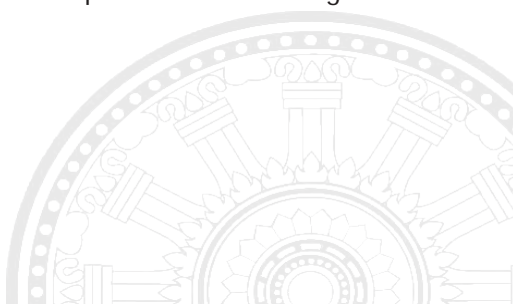
2) Knowledge about Spontaneous Rising Encourages Us to Accumulate Merit

Now that we know how life continues in the hereafter in two ways which are the States of Happiness and the States of Unhappiness, we should feel encouraged to perform only wholesome deeds so that we can spend our hereafter in the States

[1] There are six Causes of Ruin: 1) Substance addiction; 2) A penchant for the nightlife; 3) Game and sport junkies; 4) Gambling addiction; 5) Keeping the company of wicked individuals; 6) Laziness

of Happiness. After we have continued to perform wholesome deeds countless lifetimes after countless lifetimes, we can eventually achieve Emancipation and attain Nibbana.

The fact that the naked human eye cannot detect spontaneous rising which has a more refined physical form can cause some of us to disbelieve about life in the hereafter. But for those of us fortunate enough to learn about spontaneous rising, we should take care and live our lives in ways that will lead us to spend the hereafter in the States of Happiness. We must endeavor to perform only wholesome deeds and not to give in to any temptation to exploit or harm others for the sake of our own gain. We should be willing to lay down our lives in order to avoid committing any misdeed. This way we can remind ourselves and advise others not to commit even the slightest misdeed, but to perform even the slightest good deed.



10. The Accomplished Buddhist Monks Who Practice Righteousness and Possess the Insightful Knowledge of This World and the Hereafter Exist: It means that the Path which leads to enlightenment exists. It means that Arahats exist. It means that as long as there are holy individuals in the world who practice according to the Noble Eightfold Path, there will continue to be Arahats. Individuals who have the insightful knowledge of this world and the hereafter can be divided into two categories, as follows:

Category 1: The Lord Buddha

Category 2: The Arahats

The Lord Buddha mentioned this particular part of the Tenfold Right View because He wanted to point out that there were indeed individuals that had insightful knowledge of the hereafter. The hereafter is not a figment of imagination or a result of intellectual debate. Such insightful knowledge can only be gained by Buddhist monks who practice

righteousness in accordance with the Lord Buddha's Teachings. The knowledge can be gained by any individual who lays down his life to practice according to the Noble Eightfold Path. Although the Lord Buddha and the Arahats are no longer with us, there are still holy individuals that have attained a certain level of this insightful knowledge. Therefore, it is up to us to search for such worthy individuals, to learn from them, to follow their teaching so that we too can gain a certain level of this insightful knowledge.

Having the Tenfold Right View can help us to set three life-goals which include abandoning evil, performing good deeds, and keeping our mind bright and clear. These goals keep us on the right course. Therefore, we must keep these goals in mind all the time. There were several examples of individuals during the time of our Lord Buddha who possessed enough overall merit to attain Arahatship. However, they missed the precious opportunity because they associated with fools in their youth.

The Law of Kamma and the Round of Rebirth

As long as one still possesses defilements, one will continue to perform both good and bad deeds and receive their consequences. An individual's Kamma and its consequences follow him like a shadow and it is only a matter of time before the consequences show up. Our deeds good or bad are what cause the round of rebirth to be perpetuated. Every single one of us has been reborn for countless times and has been everything imaginable from a king to a shrimp, a snail, a crab, and a fish. As long as defilements are still inherent within us, we will continue to perform Kamma and receive its consequences by being reborn in different life circumstances such as being reborn in a family of nobility, being reborn in a poor family, being reborn in the Celestial Realm, being reborn in the Hell Realm, etc. Our rebirth is determined by our overall Kamma and its consequences. The uniqueness of each individual's overall Kamma causes each individual

to be uniquely different in every possible way. Our particular circumstances in life are not dictated by any powerful being. An individual's health problem, financial problem or the vicissitudes of life do not happen for the purpose of testing his faith. It has been long debated as to the source of differences and diversity among human beings. Answers are quick to surface and different solutions have been tried to solve the problem but to no avail because the solutions do not address the root cause of the problem. A wealthy person in this lifetime will not necessarily be wealthy in future lifetimes especially if he is reckless and careless in the way he lives his life in this lifetime. In the same manner, a poor person in this lifetime will not necessarily be poor in future lifetimes especially if he is careful in the way he lives his life by accumulating good deeds.

What does it mean by not being reckless or careless? The root cause of recklessness or carelessness is our defilements which include greed, anger, and ignorance (Avijja). Avijja or ignorance

destroys our ability, effectiveness, and quality. Greed causes us to be stingy. Stinginess in turn causes poverty or the depletion of material wealth. Anger causes ill-will. Ill-will causes the depletion of corporeal wealth because ill-will undermines and destroys one's good looks and complexion. Ignorance causes us to be misguided and to have Wrong View. Wrong View destroys one's mindfulness and discernment. These are the root causes and effects. After our Lord Buddha attained Enlightenment, He discovered how defilements influence all living beings to live life recklessly, to live life without the benefit of mindfulness and discernment. Since the Lord Buddha saw that we are under the influence of greed, anger, and ignorance, He taught us to counteract greed with generosity. Alms-giving is the true source of material wealth. He taught us to counteract anger with loving-kindness and the Precepts. Keeping the Precepts is the true source of corporeal wealth. He taught us to counteract ignorance with meditation practice. Meditation attainments are the true source

of one's attributes. Most importantly, meditation attainments lead us to enlightenment. The Dhamma which consists of 84,000 Scriptures can be summarized as alms-giving, Precepts, meditation practice, and insight. These practices form the components of the Noble Eightfold Path or the Middle Path which includes Precepts, concentration, and insight. Yet, the entire body of the Scriptures can be summarized into one thing and that is: not being reckless. The Lord Buddha compared this summary to the footprints of all animals which can be contained within the footprint of an elephant. When an individual is born replete with material wealth, corporeal wealth, and attributes, it will make it much easier for him to continue accumulating merit and cultivating Perfections in this lifetime. When a person lacks material wealth, he may have to spend his entire life working and still may not be able to accumulate any real wealth. When a person is born physically handicapped or mentally retarded, it will be difficult for him to accumulate good deeds

because he needs practically all of his efforts just to care for himself. Some people know suffering and are resigned to it. Some people know creature comforts, but can penetrate suffering as in the case of our Lord Buddha. He was surrounded by every material thing desirable, yet he could discern its impermanence and potential harm. Some people may have heard about alms-giving, keeping the Precepts, and practicing meditation, yet they cannot be bothered to practice any of these virtues. They see the path right in front of them, but choose to walk another path which they imagine to be better. We need to have *Yoniso-mana-sikara* or analytical reflection so that we can live our lives without recklessness. Living just one day with recklessness is better than living recklessly for 100 years.



Summary of the Lord Buddha’s Teachings

Tri-pitaka	The Threefold Training	The Eightfold Path	The entire body of the Scriptures can be summarized as ‘Not Being Reckless’
Vinaya-pitaka 21,000 Scriptures	Precepts	Right Speech Right Action Right Livelihood	
Suttanta-pitaka 21,000 Scriptures	Mental Discipline	Right Effort Right Mindfulness Right Concentration	
Abhi-dhamma-pitaka 42,000 Scriptures	Insight	Right View Right Thought	

The round of rebirth is perpetuated by the Law of Kamma which works all the time and never rests. It sends the consequences of our past overall Kamma as soon as it can and they manifest themselves as life's vicissitudes. Our good Kamma gives happy consequences while our bad Kamma gives unhappy consequences. In the context of the round of rebirth, there are four different types of human beings:

1. Individuals Who Come from Darkness and Return to Darkness: An individual is reborn in abject circumstances and commits misdeeds through his body, his words, and his thoughts. After he dies, he will be reborn in the States of Unhappiness.

2. Individuals Who Come from Darkness and Return to Light: An individual is reborn in abject circumstances and endeavors to perform honest deeds through his body, his words, and his thoughts. After he dies, he will be reborn in the States of Happiness.

3. Individuals Who Come from Light and Return to Darkness: An individual is born in good circumstances but commits misdeeds through his body, his words, and his thoughts. After he dies, he will be reborn in the States of Unhappiness.

4. Individuals Who Come from Light and Return to Light: An individual is born in good circumstances and performs honest deeds through his body, his words, and his thoughts. After he dies, he will be reborn in the States of Happiness.

Of all living beings within the round of rebirth, human beings have the best opportunity to rid themselves of all defilements and achieve Emancipation. The process of Emancipation requires the scrupulous training of the body, the words, and the thoughts according to The Threefold Training and The Eightfold Path. The more scrupulous the training, the shorter the round of rebirth will be.

Individuals who can achieve Emancipation through the Four Noble Truths and are on their way to attain Nibbana include Stream-Enterers (Sota-pannas), Once-Returners (Sakata-gamis), and Non-Returners (Ana-gamis). These holy individuals have a small amount of defilements left in their nature. If they can completely remove their residual defilements from their nature in the present lifetime, as soon as they die they will attain Nibbana and will no longer undergo the round of rebirth as in the cases of the holiest individuals that include the Lord Buddhas, the Silent Buddhas, and the Arahats. As long as human beings cannot remove all the defilements from their nature, they will continue to undergo the round of rebirth just like the rest of the living beings. Living beings continue to encounter suffering as a result of their inherent defilements. All living beings risk the danger of committing misdeeds and receiving the ill consequences of their misdeeds. All living beings share the suffering of birth, aging, illnesses, and death. We are all compatriots

under the dictate of our own defilements and the Law of Kamma. Therefore, we should not view each other as enemy, since our common enemy is the force which compels all living beings to undergo the endless round of rebirth.

“Our nature is led by our mind. The mind is chief. Everything is achieved by the mind. If a person’s mind is evil, whatever he says or does will eventually cause him to suffer.” Everything depends on the mind. Someone once asked the Lord Buddha, “Of all the physical, verbal, and mental deeds, which type of deeds can wreak the most havoc?” The Lord Buddha answered that mental deeds can wreak the most havoc. The Lord Buddha also gave us an analogy to demonstrate the point. Suppose there was a village inhabited by 100 or 1,000 people and a man decided to kill all the inhabitants. He could succeed in killing perhaps ten to fifty people before he became physically fatigued and overcome by his enemy. This analogy shows clearly how one’s mind is capable of thinking about doing something at a

scale far greater than what can actually be carried out physically and verbally. If human beings can control themselves by practicing morality, there will not be any need for law and order, which serve to solve problems at the end result rather than at the root cause. Every human problem can be ended when each human being practices morality which is the beginning of all decency. It is crucially important that every human being learns to control his mind by returning it to its original location. A decent mind leads to decent words and action. Decency comes from keeping the Precepts so meticulously that not even a single thought of committing a misdeed is present. When the body is at peace, so will the mind be. Once both the body and the mind are at peace, it gives rise to mental discipline. The more mental discipline one possesses, the brighter one's insight will be. The more insight one gains, the better one can penetrate the reality of life, the reality of the worlds, and the reality of the Law of Kamma.

Conclusion

It behooves everyone to learn about the Law of Kamma. Ignorance of this law is very dangerous. The knowledge of this law can at least help conduct one's life in a safe manner and to ensure a safe journey within the round of rebirth such that one will be reborn only in the Human Realm and the Celestial Realm so that one can continue to accumulate more and more merit. A true understanding of the Law of Kamma motivates one to make more merit than mistakes and any mistake made will be minor and infrequent. One will also be equipped to not only deal with one's death, but to also prepare for it in a knowledgeable manner and in accordance with the Lord Buddha's Teachings:



*"When the mind is gloomy, the States of
Unhappiness can be expected.*

*When the mind is not gloomy, The States of
Happiness can be expected."*

In other words, one's hereafter is decided upon by the state of one's mind just before one's death. If one's mind is clear and bright, one will be reborn in the States of Happiness, but if one's mind is gloomy, one will be reborn in the States of Unhappiness. The mind is gloomy as a result of all the unwholesome deeds which one has committed. Therefore, it is important to know what is considered wholesome and unwholesome. In terms of what is wholesome, we must look at individuals who have been able to rid themselves of all defilements as our role models. We must learn from their examples and from their teachings. To put it in a nutshell, these holy individuals perform only wholesome deeds which give rise to merit. Once merit is made, unwholesome

deeds can be abandoned altogether because merit can refine one's mind and make it clear and bright. Therefore, if we desire a particular effect we must start with the corresponding cause. In the hereafter, there is no such thing as earning a living. Life in the hereafter is conditioned by either merit or demerit and has nothing to do with who and what one used to be on earth.

The main points concerning the Law of Kamma are as follows:

1) As long as defilements still remain, one must continue to undergo the round of rebirth.

2) Whatever one is reborn as, be it a human being, an animal, etc., know that there is a vast number of past good and bad deeds that are lining up to send their consequences. Some individuals meet with hardship in life and want to escape by committing suicide without realizing how much more suffering they will be facing in the hereafter once

they die. Therefore, they should try to solve their problems according to the Threefold Training. They must try and do the best they can to make sure that they will not meet with the same hardship in the next existence.

3) Being reborn in the States of Loss and Woe is the real danger of the round of rebirth. A rebirth as a human being is extremely rare and difficult. The longer it takes to be reborn as a human being, the further one will be from Emancipation and the higher the risk of performing more and more Kamma with its endless consequences.

4) How must we live to make sure that we will spend our future existences in the States of Happiness from now until the time we can attain Nibbana and never again to be reborn in the States of Loss and Woe?

5) Keep to the Buddhist ideal, 'Abandon evil. Perform good deeds. Keep the mind bright and clear.'

Summary of practices concerning Kamma which have already been performed and will be performed in the future.

1) Forget about all past mistakes and do not think about them again. Otherwise, they will send their ill consequences and cause us to suffer.

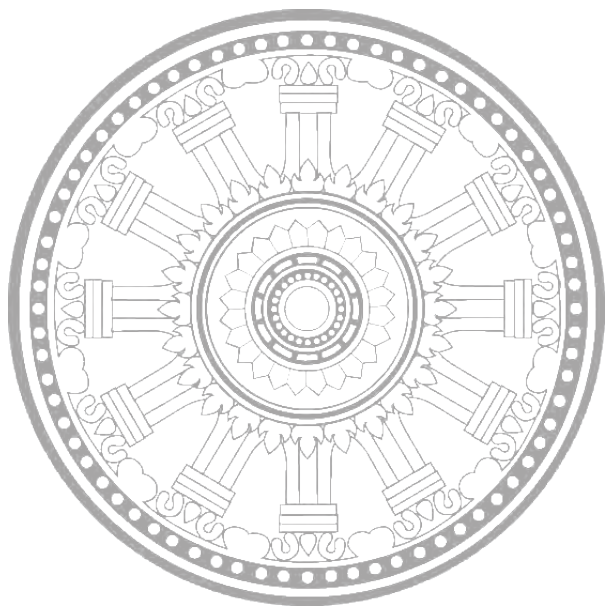
2) Abstain from all misdeeds now and forever.

3) Perform only good deeds and think of them often. Merit occurs before, during, and after the merit-making activity. Thinking about our good deeds will cause them to send their good consequences and cause us to be happy.

4) Perform good deeds regularly, everyday, every week. Habitual performance of good deeds is the source of merit and wholesomeness. Merit in turn brings with it happiness and is behind every success in life, in education, in business and work.

5) Practice meditation regularly and daily to refine the mind. A clear and bright mind encourages us to perform more and more good deeds.





THE SEVEN BASES OF THE MIND



How to Meditate

Dhammakaya Meditation Tradition

The Dhammakaya Meditation method was initiated in Thailand 60 years ago by the Great Master Phra Mongkoltepmuni, famously known as Luang Pu Wat Paknam. It is one of the most popular meditation techniques practiced by Buddhists and non-Buddhists around the world. The method is simple, easy, and effective. Everyone can learn how to do it and can achieve inner peace and happiness that you may never know existed.

“Dhammakaya” is a Pali word which means **“Body of Enlightenment”**. The term appears in many places in the Buddhist scriptures of Theravada, Mahayana and Vajrayana (Tibetan) schools. The uniqueness of the Dhammakaya Meditation is that it

teaches about the center of the body as the natural home of the human mind as well as the inner gateway to enlightenment. The stiller the mind is at its natural home, the deeper the happiness one experiences.

Dhammakaya Meditation also has a moral impact on the mind. A person who meditates regularly will become gentler, kinder, and more peaceful.

Step-by-Step Instruction

1. The sitting posture, which has been found to be the most conducive for meditation, is the half-lotus position. Sit upright with your back straight, cross-legged with your right leg over the left one. You can sit on a cushion or pillow to make your position more comfortable. Nothing should impede your breathing or circulation. Your hands should rest palms-up on your lap, and the tip of your right index finger should touch your left thumb. Feel as if you were one with the ground on which you sit. Feel that you could sit happily for as long as you like.

2. Softly close your eyes as if you were falling asleep. Relax every part of your body, beginning with the muscles in your face, then relax your face, neck, shoulders, arms, chest, trunk and legs. Make sure there are no signs of tension on your forehead or across your shoulders.

3. Close your eyes gently but not completely. Stop thinking about any worldly things. Feel as if you were sitting alone; around you is nothing and no one. Create a feeling of happiness and spaciousness in your mind.

Before starting, it is necessary to acquaint yourself with the various resting points or bases of the mind inside the body.

- The first base is at the rim of the nostril, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.

- The second base is at the corner of the eye, on the right side for men and on the left side for women.

- The third base is at the center of the head.

- The fourth base is at the roof of the mouth.

- The fifth base is at the upper center of the throat.

- The sixth base is at a point in the middle of your abdomen, the meeting point of an imaginary line between the navel through the back and the line between the two sides.

- The seventh base of the mind is two fingers' breadth above the navel. This base is the most important point in the body. It is the very center of the body and the point where the mind can come to a standstill.

4. Feel that your body is an empty space, without organs, muscles or tissues. Gently and contentedly rest your attention at a point near the seventh base of the mind at the center of the body. Whatever experience arises in the mind, simply observe without attempting to interfere with it. This way, your mind will become gradually purer and inner experience will unfold.

5. If you find that you cannot dissuade the mind from wandering, then your mind needs an inner object as a focus for attention. Gently imagine that a bright, clear, crystal sphere, about the size of the tip of your little finger, is located inside at the center of the body. Maybe, you cannot imagine anything, but later, you'll be able to see a crystal ball with increasing clarity. Allow your mind to come to rest at the center of the crystal ball. Use the subtlest of effort and you'll find that the crystal ball becomes brighter and clearer.

6. If you find that your mind still wanders from the crystal ball, you can bring the mind back to a standstill by repeating the mantra, "Samma-arahang" silently, as if the sound of the mantra is coming from the center of the crystal ball. Repeat the mantra over and over again without counting.

7. Don't entertain thoughts in your mind. Don't analyze what's going on in the meditation. Allow the mind to come to a standstill. That is all that you need

to do. If you find that you cannot imagine anything, repeat the mantra “Samma-arahang”, silently and continuously in the mind. If you are not sure about the location of the center of the body, just know that anywhere in the area of your abdomen will do. Don’t be disappointed if you find your mind wandering. It is only natural for beginners. Make effort continuously, keep your mind bright, clear and pure, and in the end, you will achieve success.

8. Keep repeating the mantra. Eventually the sound of the mantra will fade away. At that point a new bright, clear, crystal sphere will arise of its own accord. This stage is called “pathama magga” (primary path). At this stage the shining crystal sphere is connected firmly to the mind, and is seated at the center of the body. You will experience a great happiness that you have never known before. With a perfectly still mind focused at the center of the crystal sphere, it will give way to a succession of increasingly purer transcendental inner bodies, until it reaches the “**Body of Enlightenment**” known as “Dhammakaya”.

This is the highest meditative attainment which enables the practitioner to achieve super knowledge and supreme happiness.



Human beings are uniquely different from birth in terms of our looks, our social standing, our economical status, etc. What then causes us to be uniquely different? The Lord Buddha discovered that our uniqueness was determined by our uniquely different past overall Kamma.



<http://www.dhammakayapost.org>