

## Vuṭṭhi Sutta (Saṃyutta Nikāya)

### Rain

The main purpose of every word that the Buddha kindly preached to the world is that giving wisdom which leads to get rid of suffering. According to the Buddhist point of view, getting rid of suffering completely depends on how far someone has achieved wisdom or right understanding (Samma ditthi). The Buddha has pointed out four things that should be followed to increase wisdom from the beginning to the end of the path of liberation. They are:

1. Associating good friends
2. Listening to the Buddha's message
3. Wise reflection
4. Practicing

We listen to the sublime truth that the Buddha has delivered through out noble association. When we find a good friend, we also should have some good qualities like honesty, generosity, gratitude and intelligence. Here listening to the correct path that leads to overcome suffering is very important. Therefore, understanding the four-noble truths is the main teaching in Buddhism. Suffering that the Buddha points out is the arising of five aggregates with delusion. Craving or the desire which related to ignorance is the main cause of suffering. The cessation of attachment to the five aggregates is the cessation from suffering. Practicing the eightfold path is the path for the cessation of suffering. According to knowledge that someone received throughout good association, he or she should reflect on it again and again. That is said in Buddhism as wise reflection or wise consideration. Practicing the Dhamma throughout the life is also a compulsory thing on the path of liberation. In short, practice can be seen in three steps as virtue, concentration and wisdom. Having a good discipline in speech and behavior, practicing mindfulness, concentrating mind and reflecting on impermanence lead to liberation as practice.

One day at a night, when the Buddha was in Shrawasthi, a deity (devatā) came and asked some questions saying a stanza near the Buddha.

*“Kiṃsu uppatataṃ seṭṭham,  
kiṃsu nipatataṃ varam;  
Kiṃsu pavajamānānaṃ,  
kiṃsu pavadataṃ varan”ti.*

“What is the best of things that rise up?

What excels among things that fall down?

What is the best of things that go forth on the earth?

Who is the most excellent of speakers?”

Then another deity (devatā) suddenly answered that stanza saying another stanza.

*“Bījaṃ uppatataṃ seṭṭhaṃ,  
vuṭṭhi nipatataṃ varā;  
Gāvo pavajamānānaṃ,  
putto pavadataṃ varo”ti.*

“A seed is the best of things that rise up;  
Rain excels among things that fall down;  
Cattle are the best of things that go forth on the earth;  
A son is the most excellent of speakers.”

This deity is answering here according to ordinary truth that the ancient Indian people believed. However, the Buddha doesn't agree with this idea. Therefore, the Blessed one answers the questions depending on the ultimate truth. The Buddha said his answers preaching a stanza which focuses on the sublime truth.

*“Vijjā uppatataṃ seṭṭhā,  
avijjā nipatataṃ varā;  
Saṅgho pavajamānānaṃ,  
buddho pavadataṃ varo”ti.*

“Wisdom is the best of things that rise up;  
Ignorance excels among things that fall down;  
The Saṅgha is the best of things that go forth on the earth;  
The most excellent of speakers is the Buddha.”

Starting the verse, the Buddha preaches the value of wisdom. Wisdom means the real understanding or vision that guides to overcome suffering. Then the Buddha explains significance of falling down of ignorance which is the main cause of suffering. After that the Blessed one clarifies the worth of the Saṅgha. Next the Exalted one describes how important the Buddha's words are.

### **Wisdom:**

Here the Buddha, first, points out several important things that relate to the path of liberation. First the Buddha says the importance of achieving wisdom which is the comprehension of the process of arising and ceasing of suffering. Wisdom describes what happens to our life as it is. Understanding life through wisdom guides to overcome all sufferings. When there are some sort of experiences through our senses like eyes, it means five aggregates (matter, feelings, perceptions, mental formation and consciousness) arise together and they cease together at the moment. It is instant. As a result of

the gathering of the five aggregates, when reasons are together, we have experience through our senses such as eye, ear, nose, tongue, body. When reasons are separated, the experience ceases. Whatever we experience something through our six senses are the result of arising and ceasing of the five aggregates. Here there is an especial thing that we should realize that only one sense acts in a given moment while the other senses don't act. However, we think all the six senses work together since they act very fast. Though only one sense acts at a given moment, the five aggregates arise together. The highest intelligence in Buddhism is the intelligence that "Not being occurred (in the past) comes to an occurrence. Being occurred (at the present) would not come to (the future) occurrence" (Ahutvā Sambhutam Hutvā na Bhavissati - අහුත්වා සම්භුතං හුත්වා න භවිස්සති). This is the impermanence that the Buddha discovered, realized and proclaimed. If we can understand this ultimate truth practicing insight meditation, that is the only real way to get rid of suffering. Then we live completely in the present moment seeing arising and ceasing our experiences. In this understanding we don't worry about the past. Also, we don't have any especial wishes for the future, and live in the present moment reflecting on impermanence. When someone has this highest understanding, he or she has no suffering in aging, sickness, death and any other difficulties in life. That is why the Buddha says **"Wisdom is the best of things that rise up"**.

### **Ignorance:**

The Buddha says ignorance or delusion is the most severe impurity of the mind. Ignorance is the main reason of all suffering, and desire or attachment is the close reason of suffering. Desire also arises because of ignorance. When ignorance ceases all other defilements automatically cease. Ignorance means unknowing of the process of arising and ceasing of suffering. When some experience arises throughout our six senses, we usually think that the same kind of experiences happened in the past. Also, we think that the experience remains in the same way after we experience it. Further our mind is fixed in outside things and persons thinking they are permanent when we are ignorant. On the other side we think inside mental condition is permanent when some experience arises. In this misunderstanding, when we have enjoyable experiences we are happy, and we worry among unpleasant experiences. Both attachment and detachment arise because of ignorance. Whenever we are ignorant about our experiences, we are never apart from suffering. In this situation the Buddha emphasizes **"Ignorance excels among things that fall down"**.

### **The Sangha:**

Further the Buddha says **"the Saṅgha, his noble disciple is the best of persons that go forth on the earth"**. Wherever the Sangha the Buddha's disciples walk, people can listen to dhamma and can do a lot of merits since the sangha is the best field of merits. We are able to listen to dhamma through the Sanga. And knowing dhamma leads to recognize the Buddha. Therefore, we can say the Sangha keeps the triple gem alive.

## The Buddha:

The Buddha developed his mind with compassion and wisdom to the maximum level. Also, he completely eradicated all defilements (negative thoughts) from his mind. The Buddha had cultivated a lot of qualities that he practiced for many eons. The Buddha's all qualities are included in a prose. Such, indeed, is the exalted one: Worthy (*Arahant*), supremely enlightened (*Sammāsambuddho*), Endowed with knowledge and conduct (*Vijjācaranasampanno*), well gone (*Sugato*), Knower of the world (*Lokavidu*), Incomparable trainer of persons to be tamed (*Anuttarapurisadammasārathi*), Supreme teacher of gods and men (*Satthā devamanussānam*), Enlightened (*Buddho*) and Exalted (*Bhagavā*). With the highest knowledge about the world and beings having a pure mind, the Buddha proclaimed the world reality as it is. All his words that he used during his 45 years are correct, meaningful and focus on getting rid of suffering. There is no any harsh, false, meaningless or malicious word in his speech. Every word that the Buddha preached describes the way to inner peace. The Buddha pointed out the way to make an unshaken mind that none can disturb. Therefore, it is said that "**The most excellent of speakers is the Buddha**".



**May the Triple Gem Bless you!**

තෙරුවන් සරණයි!

**May you be mindful and wise!**

(සතිමත් සහ නුවණැති වන්න)

**May all beings be well, happy and peaceful!**

(සියලු සත්ත්වයෝ සුවපත් වෙත්වා!)

(Tuesday Dhamma Discussion of Los Angeles Buddhist Vihara in Pasadena. 10/31/2017)