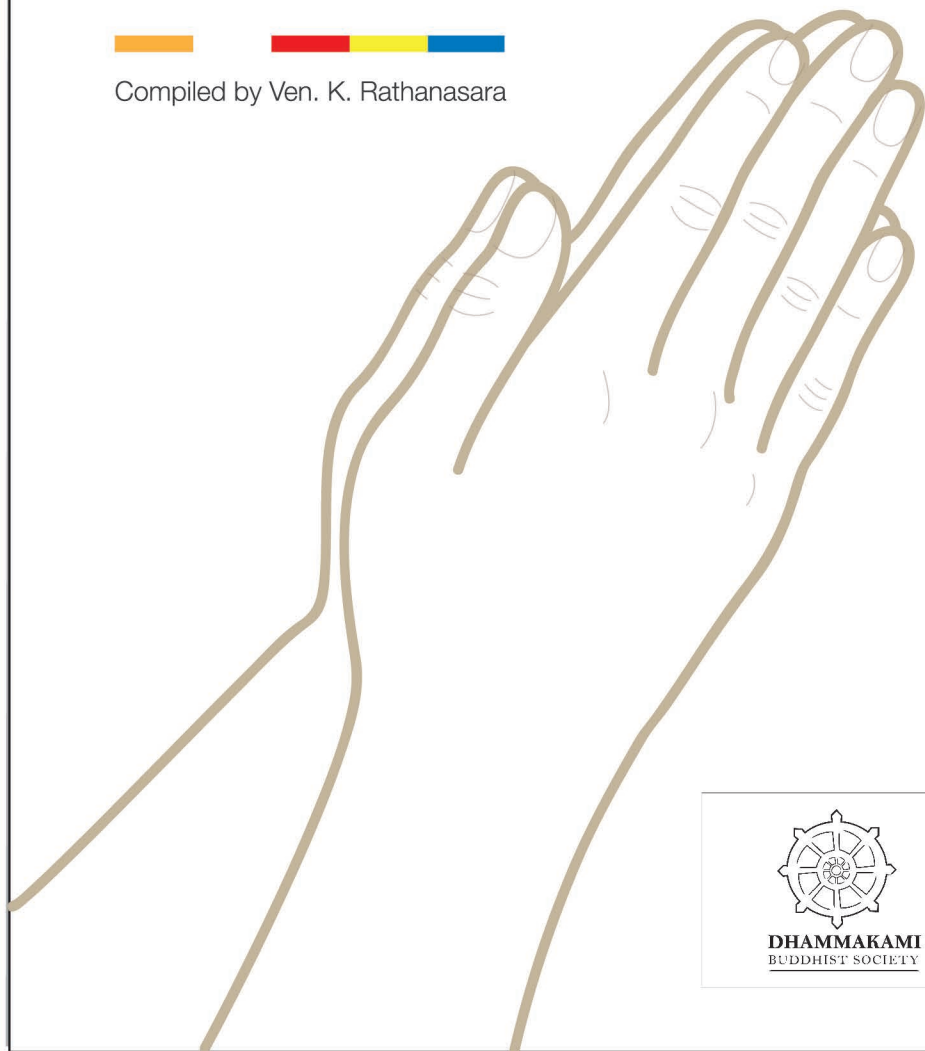


Vandanā & Metta

Devotional Practice
& Loving Kindness



Compiled by Ven. K. Rathanasara



DHAMMAKAMI
BUDDHIST SOCIETY

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Vandanā (Veneration)

An Introductory Note by Ven. K Rathanasara

Like birds which need two wings to fly, we too need two elements for us to lead a successful, meaningful and joyful human life. These two elements are: the material and spiritual aspects of life.

How then do Buddhists cultivate the spiritual aspect of their lives?

The path of the Buddha is essentially one that leads to the purification of the mind. When Buddhists follow the Noble Eightfold Path, they undertake a three-fold training process - practising virtue; cultivating the mind; and developing wisdom – in order to become Enlightened human beings.

In Buddhist training, devotional practice - though not compulsory - provide favorable conditions and grounds for spiritual cultivation.

These acts are not to be mistaken for 'Prayers'. The Buddha is neither a God nor a Savior. The Buddha is a Supremely Enlightened Teacher. He doesn't give rewards or punishments but compassionately shows the Path for those who wish to train themselves to achieve Perfect Enlightenment.

As such, these acts of devotional practice help in:

1. Awakening Faith in the Triple Gem and devotion to practise the path.
2. Suppressing negative, destructive defilements in the mind and produce wholesome mental conditions necessary for spiritual training.
3. Giving rise to wholesome Kammic energy which brings peace and happiness in this life and in lives to come.

This booklet which accompanies the CD comprises chanting texts and explanatory notes related to Buddhist Devotional Practice.

It is recommended that you begin first by following the *Tisarana Vandanā* (Homage to the Triple Gem) which is on Track 2. The subsequent track is a guided meditation session on cultivating *metta* (loving – kindness). You can conclude your practice with the *Karaṇīya Metta Sutta* which is on Track 4.

The Devotional recitation and chanting on this CD was performed by Dhammanusari Chanting Group of Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple and Dhammakami Buddhist Society in Singapore with Madam Jenny Sim Jui Gek as narrator and Wee Ai Ling as conductor.

This CD and booklet come to you as a result of the dedication, contribution and generous support of many Dhamma friends. I wish to thank the Chanting Group for their commitment towards this project and the many kind donors and supporters who made this project possible. I also wish to thank Madam Jenny Sim for taking time to provide the narration and Wee Ai Ling for conducting the group. In the preparation of this booklet and the CD, thanks must go to: Eva Fang for the design; Phan Ming Yen for his editorial work; and Bee Eng and Kathrine Zee for overseeing the management of the project.

I also take this opportunity to thank each and every member of Dhammanusari and Dhammakami for their support in sharing the Dhamma in one way or another.

The message of the Dhamma is the message of Peace and Happiness.

May you all be well and happy!

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Venerable K Rathanasara was born in the village of Bibile in Sri Lanka. He became a novice monk in 1984 and received in his higher ordination at the Malwatu Maha Viharaya in Kandy. Since 2001, he has been a resident monk at the Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple. He is also spiritual advisor of Dhammakami Buddhist Society.

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Tiratana Vandana

(Homage to the Triple Gem)



Sādhū... Sādhū... Sādhū...

Vandanā

(Homage to the Buddha)

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa.
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa.
Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā Sambuddhassa.

Homage to Him, the Blessed One,
the Exalted One, the Fully Enlightened One.



Tisarana

(The Three Refuges)

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go to the Buddha for refuge

Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go to the Dhamma for refuge

Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

I go to the Saṅgha for refuge

Dutiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the second time, I go to the Buddha for refuge



Dutiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the second time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge

Dutiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the second time, I go to the Saṅgha for refuge

Tatiyampi Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the third time, I go to the Buddha for refuge

Tatiyampi Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the third time, I go to the Dhamma for refuge

Tatiyampi Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

For the third time, I go to the Saṅgha for refuge



Panca Sīla

(Five Precepts)

Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi

I observe the training precept to abstain from killing

Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi

I observe the training precept to abstain from stealing

Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi

I observe the training precept to
abstain from sexual misconduct

Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi

I observe the training precept to abstain from lying

**Surāmeraya majjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ
samādiyāmi**

I observe the training precept to
abstain from intoxicating drinks and drugs

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Buddha Vandana

(Salutation to the Buddha)

Buddha,
You are the blessed One,
You are the exalted One,
You are the fully Enlightened One,
Endowed with clear vision,
And virtuous conduct,

Well gone on right path,
The knower of the worlds,
The incomparable leader of men to be tamed,
The teacher of Gods and men,
Enlightened and blessed

Buddha,
With great respect and devotion,
I pay my homage to you.

**Iti pi so Bhagavā,
Arahaṃ, Sammāsambuddho,
Vijjācaraṇa sampanno,
Sugato, Lokavidū,
Anuttaro purisa dammasārathi,
Satthā devamanussānaṃ,
Buddho, Bhagavā ti.**



Dhamma Vandana

(Salutation to the Dhamma)

The Dhamma of the Blessed One;
Is perfectly expounded,
To be seen here and now,
Not delayed in time, Inviting one to come and see,
Onward leading to Nibbāna,
To be known by the wise, Each for himself.

Buddha
I promise you,
I follow your teaching,
I follow the path of the Dhamma

**Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo,
Sandiṭṭhiko, Akāliko,
Ehipassiko, Opanayiko,
Paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhi ti.**



Saṅgha Vandana

(Salutation to the Saṅgha)

The disciples of the blessed one,
Have entered on the good way;
The disciples of the blessed one,
Have entered on the straight way;

The disciples of the blessed one,
Have entered on the right path;
The disciples of the blessed one,
Have entered on the proper way;

That is to say – the four pairs of Men,
The eight types of persons;
The Sangha of the blessed one,
Is fit for gifts – fit for hospitality – fit for offerings,
And fit for reverential salutation,
As the incomparable field of merits for the world.

Venerable sirs,
You are the living examples,
I pay my respect to you,
I follow the path of the Saṅgha.



**Supaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Ujupaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Ñāyapaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Sāmīcipaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,**

**Yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭhapurisa-puggalā,
Esa Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho,
Āhuneyyo, Pāhuneyyo, Dakkhineyyo,
Añjalikaraṇīyo,
Anuttaraṃ puñṇakkhettaṃ lokassā ti.**

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Pūjā

(Offerings to the Buddha)

Just as this lamp,
Destroy the darkness,
May I have the wisdom,
To destroy the ignorance.

These beautiful flowers,
Which fade away very soon,
Remind me,
The impermanent nature of the life;

With the perfumed incense,
And fragrant smoke,
I worship the exalted one;

May all these offerings,
Be offered to the Buddha;
With these merits,
May we all attain Nibbāna.

Sādhū... Sādhū... Sādhū...



Padipa Pūjā

(Offering of light)

**Ghanasārappadittena
Dīpena tamadhaṃsinā
Tilokadīpaṃ sambuddhaṃ
Pūjayāmi tamonudaṃ**

Sugandha Pūjā
(Offering of incense)

**Gandha sambhāra yuttena
Dhūpenāhaṃ sugandhinā
Pūjaye pūjanīyaṃ taṃ
Pūjābhājanamuttamaṃ
*Puppha Pūjā***

(Offering of flowers)

**Vaṇṇa gandha gunopetaṃ
Etaṃ kusumasantaṭiṃ
Pūjayāmi munindassa
Sirīpāda saroruhe**

**Pūjemi Buddhaṃ kusumenanena
Puññenametena ca hotu mokkhaṃ
Pupphaṃ milāyāti yathā idamme
Kāyo tathā yāti vināsabhāvaṃ**



Cetiya Vandana

(Paying Respect to three great monuments)

I worship all the Pagodas;
Which enshrined the relics of the Buddha.

All the images,
That represent the Buddha;

Seated at whose base,
The teacher overcame all foes,
I pay homage,
To that tree of enlightenment,
Venerated by the lord of the world.

**Vandāmi cetiyaṃ sabbam
Sabbathānesu patitṭhitam
Sārīrikadhātu mahā Bodhim
Buddharūpaṃ sakalam sadā**

**Yassa mūle nisinno va
Sabbāri vijayaṃ akā
Patto sabbaññutaṃ satthā
Vande taṃ Bodhi pādapaṃ**

**Ime ete mahā Bodhi
Loka nāthena pūjitā
Ahampi te namassāmi
Bodhirājā namatthu te**

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Khamā Pana

(Asking Forgiveness)

By thoughts – words – or deeds,
If I have committed,
Any wrong heedlessly,
May the Buddha; Dhamma; and Saṅgha – forgive me

**Kāyena vācācittena – pamādena mayā kataṃ
Accayaṃ khama me bhante - Bhūripaṇṇa tathāgata**

**Kāyena vācācittena – pamādena mayā kataṃ
Accayaṃ khama me Dhamma – Sandiṭṭhika akālika**

**Kāyena vācācittena – pamādena mayā kataṃ
Accayaṃ khama me Saṅgha – Supaṭipanna anuttara**

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Patthanā

(Aspiration)

By the grace of these merits that I have acquired,
May I never meet,
The evil and wicked people;
Until I attain my final emancipation,
May my accompany,
Be with the wise and virtuous.

**Iminā puññakammena
Mā me bālasamāgamo
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu
Yāva nibbāṇapattiyā**

**Iminā puññakammena
Mā me bālasamāgamo
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu
Yāva nibbāṇapattiyā**

**Iminā puññakammena
Mā me bālasamāgamo
Sataṃ samāgamo hotu
Yāva nibbāṇapattiyā**

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Pattidāna

(Sharing the merits with Devas)

May all beings inhabiting space and earth,
Devās and Nāgās of mighty powers,
Having shared these merits,

Long protect – the Dispensation of the Buddha!
Long protect – the Teaching of the Buddha!
Long protect – me and others!

**Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā – Devā nāgā mahiddhikā
Puññaṃ taṃ anumoditvā – Ciraṃ rakkhantu Sāsanaṃ**

**Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā – Devā nāgā mahiddhikā
Puññaṃ taṃ anumoditvā – Ciraṃ rakkhantu Desanaṃ**

**Ākāsaṭṭhā ca bhummaṭṭhā – Devā nāgā mahiddhikā
Puññaṃ taṃ anumoditvā – Ciraṃ rakkhantu
maṃparaṃ**

Sādhu... Sādhu... Sādhu...



Transference of merits to departed relatives

May all my departed – relatives and friends,
Receive these merits;
Having shared these merits,

May they be free from worries!
May they be free from sufferings!
May they be well and happy!

Idaṃ me ñātīnaṃ hotu – Sukhitā hontu ñātayo
Idaṃ me ñātīnaṃ hotu – Sukhitā hontu ñātayo
Idaṃ me ñātīnaṃ hotu – Sukhitā hontu ñātayo

Sādhū... Sādhū... Sādhū...



The following pages comprise a guide by Venerable K
Rathanasara for the practice of *Metta Bhavana*.

*To begin your practice, it is important that you first sit in a
comfortable position.*

*You may sit on the floor or on a chair: choose whichever you
feel works best for you.*

Once you are seated comfortably, relax, and be at ease.

Gently close your eyes.

*Do not pay attention to any sound or any other sense
stimulus such as smell or touch.*

Allow yourself to let go of the past.

And do not think about the future.

Just be aware of the here and the now.

Pay attention to your breath: feel the rhythm of your breath.



When you breathe in, feel your breath enter your body.

When you breathe out, feel your breath leave your body.

Allow yourself to become aware of your body.

*Bring your attention to your body and accept it just the way
it is, with kindness and compassion.*

*Visualize in your mind, yourself; the way you are now, at this
moment.*

*Make peace with this vision of yourself. Forgive yourself and
make peace with yourself with kindness and gentleness.*

*With love and compassion, wish yourself well, and wish
yourself happiness.*

Gently radiate Metta towards yourself over and over again.

Repeat in your mind, slowly and steadily....



May I be healthy and strong!
May I be safe and protected!
May I be peaceful and live with ease!
May I be well and happy!

Then, recall your mother and your father to the mind.

*Your parents are the ones who gave you this life. They
are the ones who brought you up. They are the ones
who showed you the path to success.*

They are the protectors of your life.

*They are the ones who are dearest to you and they are
the ones who are closest to you in your life.*

*Be grateful to them. Radiate Metta towards them. Wish
them all the happiness in their lives. Gently repeat in
your mind.....*



My beloved mother,
My beloved father,
May both you be healthy and strong!
May both you be safe and protected!
May both you be peaceful and live with ease!
May both you be well and happy!

You are not alone in this world.

*You are surrounded and supported by many good
people. Your relatives, friends, teachers and well-
wishers, they all are helpful to you.*

*They help you in many ways. Be grateful to them. Wish
them peace and happiness in their lives.*



**My brothers and sisters
My relatives and friends
My teachers and well-wishers May they all be
healthy and strong!
May they all be safe and protected!
May they all be peaceful and live with ease!
May they all be well and happy!**

*If we are friendly to one another; if we respect each
other, and if we accept one another; then, this world
will be a peaceful place.*

Let us wish a peaceful world for all humankind.



**My fellow brothers and sisters in Singapore,
Those who live in neighbouring countries,
All the people in Asia,
And all the human beings who live in this world,**

**May they all be healthy and strong!
May they all be safe and protected!
May they all be peaceful and live with ease!
May they all be well and happy!**

*In this vast universe, the planet Earth is not the only
place where life exists. In the many different planes of
existence, we will find various types of living beings.
We all are interconnected and inter-related.*

*Let us radiate boundless love and compassion towards
all living beings who share this world with us.*



**Those living beings who live on the ground,
Those who live in the water,
Or, those who live in the outer space,**

**Those who are having gross level physical bodies,
Or, those who are having subtle level astral bodies,
Living beings who visible or invisible,
Those who live near or far, big or small,
All the kinds of living beings who live in this world
existence,**

**May they all be healthy and strong!
May they all be safe and protected!
May they all be peaceful and live with ease!
May they all be well and happy!
May all the living beings attain Happiness Nibbana.**

Karaṇiya Metta Sutta

(The Discourse on Loving-Kindness)



Karaṇīya Metta Sutta

**Karaṇīyamatthakusalena
Yaṃ taṃ santaṃ padaṃ abhisamecca,
Sakko ujū ca sūjū ca
Suvaco cassa mudu anatiṃānī.**

He who is skilled in doing good and who wishes to attain that state of calm, should act thus: He should be able, upright, perfectly upright, obedient, gentle and humble.

**Santussako ca subharo ca
Appakicco ca sallahukavutti,
Santindriyo ca nipako ca
Appagabbho kulesu ananugiddho.**

Contented, easily supportable, with few duties, simple in livelihood, controlled in senses, discreet, prudent, not be greedily attached to families.



**Na ca khuddhaṃ samācare kiñci
Yena viññū pare upavadeyyuṃ,
Sukhino vā khemino hontu
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā.**

He should not commit any slight wrong such that other wise men might censure him. May all beings be happy and safe; May their hearts be wholesome!

**Ye keci pāṇabhūtatthī
Tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā,
Dīghā vā ye mahantā vā
Majjhimā rassakāṇukathulā.**

Whatsoever living beings be there; feeble or strong, long, stout or medium; short, small or large;

**Diṭṭhā vā yeva addiṭṭhā
Ye ca dūre vasanti avidūre,
Bhūtā vā sambhavesī vā
Sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā.**

.....those seen or unseen, dwelling far or near, those who are born and those who are yet to be born. May all beings, without exception, be happy minded.



**Na paro paraṃ nikubbetha
Nātimaññetha katthaci naṃ kañci,
Byārosanā paṭighasaññā
Nāññamaññassa dukkhamiccheyya.**

Let not one neither deceive another nor despise any
person anywhere. In anger or ill-will let him not wish
any harm to another.

**Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttāṃ
Āyusā ekaputtamanurakkhe,
Evampi sabbabhūtesu
Mānasaṃ bhāvaye aparimāṇaṃ.**

Just as a mother would protect her only child at
the risk of her own life, even so, let him cultivate a
boundless heart towards all beings.



**Mettaṃ ca sabbalokasmiṃ
Mānasaṃ bhāvaye aparimāṇaṃ,
Uddhaṃ adho ca tiriyaṃ ca
Asambādhaṃ averaṃ asapattaṃ.**

Let thoughts of boundless love pervade
the whole world - above, below and across,
without any obstruction, without any hatred,
without any enmity.

**Tiṭṭhaṃ caraṃ nisinno vā
Sayāno vā yāvatassa vigatamiddho,
Etaṃ satiṃ adhiṭṭheyya
Brahma metaṃ vihāraṃ idhamāhu.**

Whether he stands, walks, sits or lies down, as long
as he is awake, he should develop this mindfulness.
This, they say, is the Highest Conduct here.



**Diṭṭhiñca anupagamma sīlavā
Dassanena sampanno,
Kāmesu vineyya gedhaṃ
Na hi jātu gabbhaseyyaṃ punareṭī'ti.**

Not falling into error, virtuous, endowed with insight, he
discards attachment to sensuous desires. Truly, he does not
come again; to be conceived in a womb.

**Etena sacca vajjena sotthi te (me) hotu sabbadā!
Etena sacca vajjena sabba rogo vinassatu!
Etena sacca vajjena hotu te (me) jayamangalaṃ!**

By the firm determination of this truth, may you be well !
By the firm determination of this truth, may you be healthy !
By the firm determination of this truth, may joyous victory
be yours !



Devotional Practice and the Noble Eightfold Path

by Ven. K. Rathanasara



When you visit a Buddhist temple, the sight of devotees performing acts of devotional practice is a common one.

These acts usually include prostration, taking refuge in the Triple Gem, observing precepts, reciting the virtues of the Triple Gem, making offerings, making confession and spiritual aspirations, sharing of merits, chanting, meditation and Dhamma reflection.

For a Buddhist who follows the Noble Eightfold Path, the Triple Gem is supreme: there is nothing comparable to The Triple Gem.

Faith (Saddhā) in the Triple Gem is essential in following this path towards Enlightenment. The Buddha once compared faith to a seed: without a seed, a plant or a fruit cannot be expected. He said: ‘Faith is the seed and practice is the rain.’¹ For Buddhists, faith means understanding, confidence and dedication to practice. It is not the baseless blind belief that is encouraged by certain religions.

Buddhism is essentially a path of purification. As such, understanding and practice should go hand in hand in order to achieve perfect Enlightenment. When the Buddha said that “with faith one crosses the current of repeated existence”², he was emphasizing dedication to the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path based on understanding.

1 “Saddhā bījaṃ tapo vutthi”, Kasibhāradvāja Sutta, *Sutta Nipāta*

2 “Saddhāya tarafī oghaṃ”, Ālavaka Sutta, *Sutta Nipāta*



The Noble Eightfold Path is specifically designed to uproot greed, hatred and delusion which result in the realization of perfect Enlightenment and Buddhist devotional practice, though not compulsory, provides favorable conditions for the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path.

In this, devotional practice is a meritorious deed. It suppresses and mitigates negative, destructive, unwholesome defilements by producing positive, constructive and wholesome thoughts such as respect towards Triple Gem, generosity, compassion and understanding. It also arouses devotion, faith and energy which need to follow the path.

The acts of devotional practice that we mentioned earlier serve not only as meritorious deeds but also as skillful means along the practice towards Enlightenment. Upon closer inspection and contemplation we can see that devotional practice is inevitably connected with the Noble Eightfold Path.

Ethical conduct, Mental cultivation and Development of wisdom are the Threefold training involved in eight factors of the Noble Path.

In daily life, gems or jewels are recognized as very precious possessions. For someone who follows the Noble Path, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha are considered to be the most precious of gems. People take shelter and refuge in secure places when their lives are endangered with floods, volcano eruptions, earthquakes or any other natural disaster. Likewise, Buddhists take refuge in the Triple Gem with the intention of training themselves to be released from Saṃsāric suffering through achieving Supreme Enlightenment.



One who takes refuge in the Triple Gem undertakes the ethical training by observing righteous principles and keeping away from all evil. This is the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path and this is what a devotee does in devotional practice by observing Five Precepts.

Having listened to the Dhamma, one develops greater respect towards the Buddha, and out of faith in him, one starts to follow the path. We listen to and follow the instructions of those for whom we respect and hold in high esteem. When a Buddhist prostrates in front of a Buddha image or a sacred monument, he is thus paying homage to the Enlightened One and showing respect for and willingness to follow the Buddha's teachings.

The second step of the Noble Path involves mental cultivation. Here; meditation, contemplation and reflection on the Dhamma play a greater role. There are various meditation subjects which are meant to cultivate different aspects of the mind. While some meditation techniques help to develop concentration, others lead to insight and wisdom.



A practitioner will undertake mental cultivation by contemplating the nine virtues of the Buddha, six qualities of the Dhamma, and nine attributes of the Sangha. He does it while reciting traditional Pāli verses in homage to the Triple Gem, being mindful and aware of their meaning throughout. By reflecting on the virtues of the Triple Gem, his mind becomes calm, serene and peaceful. All the unwholesome states of his mind are mitigated and the mind is conditioned in a wholesome way.

The third stage of the Noble Eightfold Path is the development of wisdom. As long as greed, hatred and delusion are rooted in human mind, Enlightenment is impossible. It is only through the uprooting of these defilements that release from suffering is possible. Development of wisdom leads to eradication of defilements.

In Buddhist devotional practice, the offering of incense, flowers and light is symbolic of the development of the wisdom.



We can analyze the significance of these offerings in three ways.

In the first, the offering of incense, flowers and light itself is seen as a form of charity (Dāna). In Buddhist practice, giving is encouraged not only as a form of meritorious deed but also as a skillful mean to reduce defilements. When one gives, instead of being greedy, he has to be generous. Thoughts of caring and sharing arise in his mind. Instead of hateful thoughts, he has to generate loving-kindness, compassion and goodwill. Instead of being deluded he has to practice charity with understanding. In this way the mind is conditioned in a wholesome way. The wholesome mind is a favorable condition for wisdom to arise.

Second, a practitioner offers incense, flowers and light to the Buddha as a mark of profound gratitude to the Supreme Teacher. He is showing his love, care, concern, respect and devotion to the Buddha. In such an event his mind is devoid of all unwholesome thoughts. He achieves a wholesome state of the mind and experiences serenity, peace and joy. A focused mind is conducive for wisdom to arise.



Third, incense, flowers and light symbolically represent Enlightenment. The Noble Eightfold Path leads to development of great compassion and profound wisdom which release us from suffering and culminate in Supreme Enlightenment.

In other words, Buddhist devotional practice leads to development of wholesome qualities of the heart and mind. Compassion is an umbrella term qualities of the heart such as loving-kindness, goodwill, friendship, generosity, gratitude and humility. In Buddhist devotional practice, incense represents the virtuous qualities.

Desired qualities of the mind include intelligence, understanding and insight. In Buddhist meditation, wisdom is developed by careful and attentive observation of the true nature of the five aggregates of clinging. This observation leads to discovery that everything is impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self.



Flowers are beautiful and fragrant but they wither away soon just as our lives are subject to decay, diseases and death. This observation and deep contemplation of the impermanent nature of life and existence is the key to understanding that whatever subject to impermanence is unsatisfactory and suffering. On the other hand, whatever that is subject to change does not have a permanent entity such as a soul. That which actually exists is the psychophysical entities which undergo constant changes. Deep understanding and penetration to the nature of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and soullessness open the door to Enlightenment.

Enlightenment is symbolically represented by the light. Light dispels darkness just as the Supreme Wisdom uproots the delusion, which is the cause root of all the miseries.



Buddhist devotional practice also includes confession, making spiritual aspirations and the sharing of merits. The Buddhist practice of confession is different from those of theocentric religions. Buddhists do not believe that the Buddha can forgive us for our sins and thus prevent us being born in the hell. The act of confession in Buddhist practice is similar to that of a student openly admitting to his teacher that he has made a mistake and promises not to repeat it in the future. This practice encourages a devotee to abide by the Noble Path each and every time he or she makes a mistake.

The spiritual aspiration involves one's determination and ceaseless effort to achieve Nibbāna while sharing of merits involve in dedication of merits to other living beings, wishing them also same release from suffering and the bliss of Nibbāna.

May all be well and happy!



Tiratana Vandanā and *Karṇīya Metta Sutta* were recited by the Members of the Dhammanusari Chanting Group of Sri Lankaramaya Buddhist Temple and Dhammakami Buddhist Society

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“O monks, there are eleven profits expected from love, (that arises) from the emancipation of the heart, associated (fondly), developed, made much of, made a habit of, made a basis of, effected (or experienced), practised, well started. What are the eleven?

(One) sleeps well, gets up well, does not see bad dreams, becomes affectionate to human beings, becomes affectionate to non-human beings. The deities protect (him). Neither fire nor poison nor a weapon affect (him). His mind becomes calm immediately. The colour of his face brightens. He attains death in good senses. Beyond that, if he does not comprehend (Nibbāna), he goes to the world of the brahmas.”

Mettānisamsa Sutta

(The Discourse on the Profit of Loving Kindness)

Anguttara Nikāya