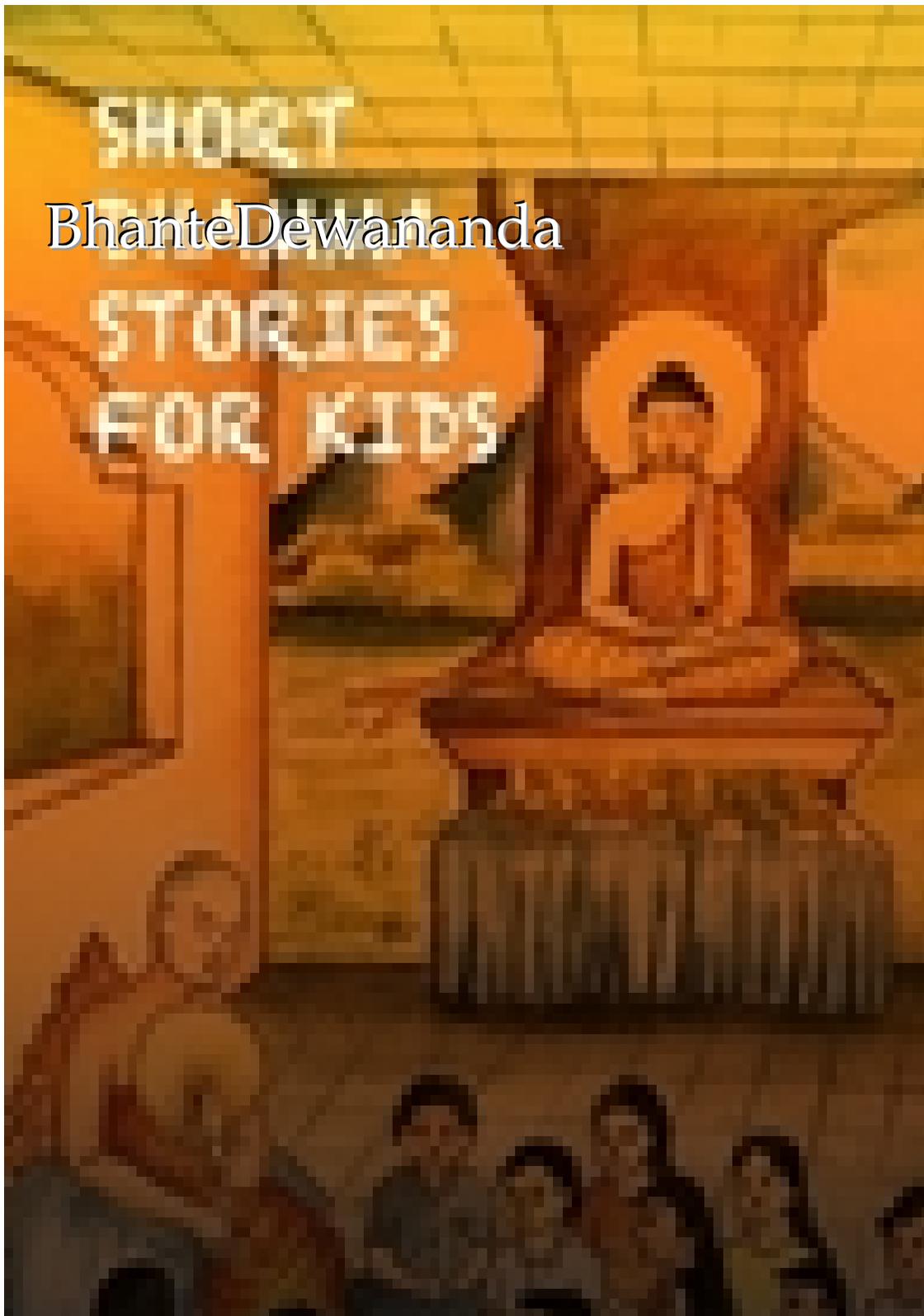


SHORT

Bhante Dewananda

STORIES
FOR KIDS



SHORT DHAMMA STORIES

CHILD'S PICTURE

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From the editor

It is my great pleasure for being able to grant a series of stories under the name of "Small Dharma Stories" for the children's world. It is hoped that the children will be very pleased to listen to them. Various kinds of irrelevant stories are available in every corner of the children's world. This storybook (Small Dhamma Stories) will enter into the stories that would be telecasted and published through the TV Channel (Sri Lanka) and print media as a golden ladder that supports or directs children's world to a new direction.

Ven. W. Gunaratana Thero (MA)

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From the translator

It is my great pleasure being able to present a "Short Dhamma Story" for children. I have translated "Punchi Bana Katha" which was written in Sinhalese by the Venerable Welewatte Gunaratana Thero. My main object of this noble work is to develop children's Dhamma knowledge and moral education.

Most Venerable B. Sri Saranankara Adhikarana (Judiciary) Nayaka Maha Thera gave me his fullest support and encouraged me in my present work. So my respectful and sincere heartfelt thanks go to him. My very special thanks also goes to the President, Mr. G. Mervyn Weerasena and all members of the Siri Jayanti Association who pursued on my humble attempt. My special thanks goes to Venerable Welewatte Gunaratana Thero who gave me a proper consent to translate into English his Sinhalese book (Punchi Bana Katha).

My sincere and grateful thanks are due to Ms. Lolla Munesinghe and Mr. A.K. Nelson who guided me well to complete my work without any failure. I must remember the name, Sister Mallika Rajapakse who did the proof reading for the whole book. I also wish to thank Ven. Diyakiritte Ananda Thero for designing the book cover and other story drawings.

May all merits that I accrue through this noble work be upon all devotees of the Sri Lanka Buddhist Temple (Siri Jayanti Association) who provided food and shelter during my pursuing for their success. Last but not least, my special thanks are due to Mr. Karunarathne and Mrs. K. Weliwatta who have always assisted me in my religious services in Sri Lanka.

“Sabbadanam Dhammadanam Jinati”
The gift of truth (Dhamma) excels all other gifts.

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1. Prince Panchayudha (Prince with Five-Weapons)

Once upon a time, there was a king who ruled the Kingdom of Banaras (Varanasi). His name was King Brahmadata. Our Bodhisatta (The Buddha to be in the future) was conceived in the womb of the Queen of King Brahmadata. The fortune-teller predicted that the child to be born would be a virtuous and righteous person and he will be skilled in five weapons. Therefore, his parents named him Panchayudha (the Prince of Five Weapons).

Prince Panchayudha was sent to a college at Taksila under the great teacher, Disapamok, where princes are trained as future kings. Prince Panchayudha mastered not only the great learning necessary for a future king but also the great martial arts and the use of weapons. After completing his studies, the prince set forth to his kingdom. On his way back, he had to cross a jungle where a fierce demon lived. The demon had sticky long hair all over his body and matted hair on his head. He was very tall and strong, a fierce man-eating demon, who would devour any human being who crossed the jungle. Because of this no one dared to go into the jungle. As Prince Panchayudha was familiar with the use of weapons, he did not bother or have fear for the demon. The villagers living in the vicinity of the jungle approached the Prince and warned him.

“Young man, please do not cross the jungle alone because there is a very fierce demon that kills everyone that he sees”. But the Prince being self-confident and fearless entered into the jungle. He encountered the ferocious and dangerous demon that had a giant body with rough hairs. The Prince shot an arrow from his bow but it got stuck to the demon’s rough body hairs, likewise the second and third arrows too were stuck into the hairs of the demon’s body. The demon shook his body vigorously and all the arrows dropped off and the demon came towards Prince Panchayudha. The prince then attacked him with his sword, but the sword too got stuck to his rough hairs. After that, the Prince attacked him with a rough club but it too got stuck to his rough hairs. Then the prince attacked the demon with another powerful weapon but it too got stuck to his rough hairs. The Prince was now left with one last weapon, a sharp and long spear. He attacked the demon with it and it too got stuck to the demon’s rough hairs.

Then the Prince yelled at the demon, “Hey you, monster, haven’t you heard of me? I am Prince Five-Weapons and I came into this forest with more than just the power of the five weapons. He then beat the demon with his right hand yelling “I will completely destroy you” but the prince’s hand got stuck to the demon’s body. Then he beat the demon with his left hand, his right leg, his left

leg, his head but all got stuck to the demon's body. The Prince told the demon "I am not afraid of you".

The demon was surprised to hear the words of the Prince. He wondered what a brave man the Prince was and why wasn't the Prince afraid of him. The demon then asked the Prince, "Young man, why do you say such when you are my prey right now?" The demon wanted to know who the Prince was and what was the reason behind it. The Prince replied, "I am going to warn you of one thing. My secret weapon is my whole body. It is a sharp weapon which when eaten by you will cut your intestines into pieces and instantly kill you. Then both of us will die at the same time. So I am not afraid". The demon became afraid upon hearing the Prince's words and so he released him and the Prince was free to continue with his journey.

(Ven. Devananda, what is the moral of this story? This story must deliver a message or else it is like any other fairy tale. I suggest you include the moral of the story)



2. Ven. Cakkhupala Thero (The Blind Monk)

Prince Palita was living in a very rich family in the city of Savatthi. He had seen devotees going to the Jetavana Monastery to venerate the Buddha, so one day he too accompanied them and came to the temple. He heard the preaching of the Buddha and became very happy. Later, he was ordained at a very old age in the Buddhist order as a disciple of the Buddha.

One day while he was practicing insight meditation (Vidarsana) very deeply and for a long period without sleep he lost his eye sight and became blind.

He became blind because he did not take the medication that was prescribed to him by the physicians during his meditation as he was at that time in a state of attaining Arahant hood. Finally, he attained Arahant hood soon after he lost his eyesight. So he was named Arahant Cakkhupala.

In his previous life, Arahant Cakkhupala was a very famous and talented eye doctor. He cured a lady who had an eyesight problem and she promised him that if she was cured she would become his family servant. But when she was cured, she did not keep to her promise. So, the doctor became very angry and decided to take revenge on her. He prescribed her a poison for further

treatment for her eyes. As soon as the lady used this eye lotion, she became blind. This unwholesome act of his created a very bad 'kamma' for him. This bad kamma (unwholesome act) followed him and it became fruitful in his last existence just before he became an Arahant.

Therefore it is important to remember that when we do an unwholesome act intentionally, with evil and bad intentions, we create bad 'Karmic effect' that will follow us for a very long time in this life and our future lives.



3. Kali Yakkhine, who cast cruel aspirations before dying

There was a young man in the city of Savatthi. After his father's death, he took good care of his mother. Then one day he got married to a very beautiful girl from a very suitable family but unfortunately she was barren. Then his mother thought that a family, which could not have off-springs, would eventually lose its wealth to others. So she decided that her son should marry another girl. The barren wife came to know about this and she made all arrangements for her husband to marry the girl, with the blessings of her mother-in-law. Both the barren wife and the second wife lived very happily and peacefully with their husband.

After a while, the first wife (barren wife) thought, "I am barren. If she gets a child, she will be the owner of this house and all the properties. She will then create many problems for me". So she thought she must find a solution to this problem before it happens to her. The barren wife told the new wife (second wife) to inform her when she is pregnant. On two occasions as soon as she knew the second wife was pregnant, the barren wife gave her food mixed with abortion medicine causing her to have miscarriages. Later the second wife came to know the reason behind the miscarriages and thereafter considered the barren wife her enemy.

On her third pregnancy, the second wife did not inform the barren wife. When the barren wife came to know about the pregnancy, she became very angry and gave her the abortion medicine as before. This time both the mother and child died. Just before her death, the second wife was filled with hatred and vowed vengeance.

The second wife's aspiration was successful and in the barren wife's future existence the second wife's curse managed to destroy the barren wife's children in her two future lives. However in the barren wife's third existence, the Buddha was involved and He explained to them the values of loving-kindness. So in the third existence the barren wife's children escaped death.

Therefore, it is good to practice the virtue of spreading loving thoughts and kindness to all living beings without harbouring any hatred or ill-will in our minds at all times.



4. Mattakundali who went to heaven due to a pleasant mind

There was a rich Brahmin in the city of Savatthi, who was very stingy and never gave a single cent from his wealth to the poor and needy or for any meritorious deeds. Because of this, he was named "Adinnapubbaka". He had only one son by the name of Mattakundali and he was a good boy. Even the gold ornaments for his only son was made by himself to save payment for workmanship.

Mattakundali did not get proper care in his daily life and when he fell ill, no physician was consulted. His father gave his son his own choice of medication as he did not want to spend money on the services of a doctor due to his greed of wealth. When his son's sickness became very serious and he was dying, his father placed him in the verandah of the house so that people coming to his house to visit his son, would not see his valuable possessions inside the house.

That morning, the Buddha having arisen from His deep meditation saw the miserable state of Mattakundali. During His alms round, the Buddha stood near the door of Mattakundali's house and radiated a ray of light to attract the youth's attention. When Mattakundali saw the Buddha, he became very happy. He died with that pleasant thought and was reborn in the heaven.

Therefore, it is important that we should always cultivate good thoughts and deeds, so that when we are dying, the pleasant mind and thoughts that appear before our death will help us to be reborn in the heavens.



5. Cundasukara the butcher who led an evil life

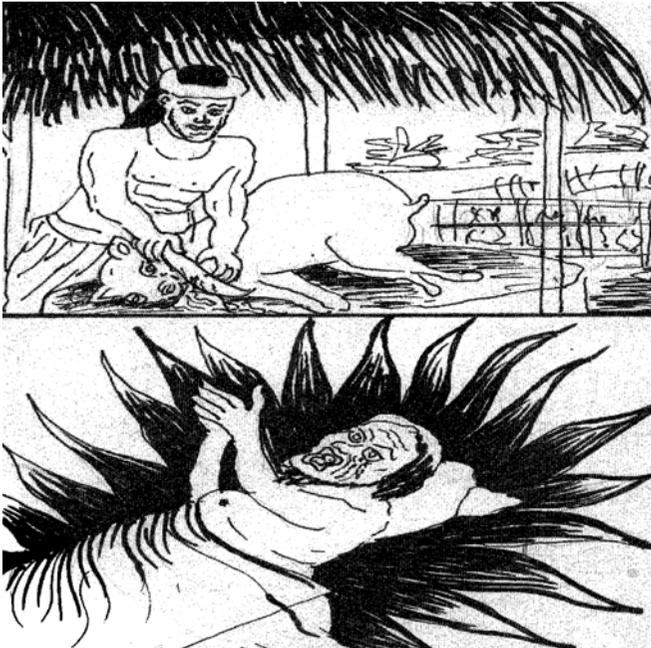
Once there lived a butcher named Cundasukara who led a very sinful life. He spent his whole life, daily killing pigs and selling pork. Before killing a pig, he tied it to a post and beat it very cruelly to make its flesh swollen. Then he poured hot boiling water into its mouth, by putting a big stick into it. The water having entered into the stomach cleanses its intestines and feces and urine comes out through the anus. Then Cundasukara poured some hot water onto its body so that the skin will come off easily. With the money that he made from selling pork, he enjoyed his life.

The Buddha was residing in Veluvanaramya, which was located adjoining a monastery not far away from the village where Cundasukara lived. Devotees came to the monastery every morning and evening to pay their respect to the Buddha. They observed precepts and gave dana in the temple frequently. But butcher, Cundasukara could not change his mind. To him it was unpleasant hearing the chanting and sounds that came from the monastery. For 55 years of his life, he had not done a single meritorious deed. No one was able stop his evil actions.

Eventually he fell sick. When his sickness became very serious, he started remembering his evil acts. Before he

died, he was in such great pain and agony that he was grunting and squealing like a pig for several days. It was very troublesome for the neighbours and also the family people. He suffered physically and mentally for seven days and on the seventh day he died and was reborn in hell.

Evildoers suffer both in this life and thereafter. So we must avoid all unwholesome acts (akusala) which creates very bad results in this world and in our future existence.



6. The fox who preyed on others through deception

The Bodhisatta was once born as a rat during the reign of King Brahmadata in the Kingdom of Baranasa. The Bodhisatta rat had a big body and he became the leader for about 1000 rats. They lived in an anthill. A fox, which was seeking for food, having seen the group of rats, thought of playing a trick on them so that he will be able to eat all of them very easily.

One day, the fox stood on one foot nearby the road where the Bodhisatta rat used to walk with his mouth opened and, facing to the east. The Bodhisatta noticing the fox and went over to him and asked, "Who are you?" The fox replied, "I am a righteous and virtuous ascetic (hermit)". Then, a dialogue took place between both of them.

"Oh hermit, why are you standing on one foot?" asked the Bodhisatta rat.

"As the earth cannot stand my weight, I do not stay on four feet", replied the fox.

"My next question is why are you standing with open mouth?"

"To catch air as I depend on it", replied the fox.

“My last question, why are you facing the east direction?”

“To respect the Sun God”, said the fox.

The leader Bodhisatta rat accepted his words and trusted him as a worthy one. He told the other rats about it and so they came to the fox twice a day for salutation and respect. The very cunning fox ate one rat on every visit. Usually the fox would eat the last rat at the back of the group as they walked back home. The rats realized that their group was getting lesser and lesser and reported this to the leader. “Oh Lord, we lived here trusting each other earlier but now we have a problem. We understand that our group is slowly reducing in number. So please look into this matter.” The leader thought that he must investigate this matter personally and wondered whether the hermit fox had created it.

One day the rats went to the fox and respected him as usual. The leader Bodhisatta rat purposely walked at the end of his group on the way back to the house. As usual the fox jumped over the leader rat, but the leader rat escaped from the clutches of the fox, as he was expecting this to happen. He then told the fox, “You have shown us so far false virtues just like a cat. Today you do not have any excuse and you will get your punishment”.

The rat jumped and bit the neck of the hermit fox and killed him. Later, the other rats too joined in to kill him.

So, we as little children must understand that it is wrong to deceive people in order to obtain any kind of benefits. The practice of deception or telling of lies, will in the end will bring us ruin.



7. Merchant Todeyya who was reborn as a dog

There was a Brahmin named Todeyya who inherited a huge wealth in Kosala Kingdom. He was a very stingy and proud man. He did not donate a single cent for anyone in his lifetime. One day he instructed his son, "My dear son you must use all your wealth and properties carefully which you will inherit after my death".

The Brahmin said son "normally women apply lotion that is made by mixing various types of incenses, to beautify and to increase their beauty and to get good health. They apply very little lotion but it finishes very soon. Likewise, if we have more wealth, we do not know when it would be lost. So we must collect more and more without spending, just like a white ant that builds an anthill taking soil little by little". Brahmana Todeyya passed away in due course of time and was conceived in the womb of a bitch in the same house. After a few days, the bitch delivered a very beautiful puppy. Todeyya's son, Subha fed the puppy lovingly and arranged a separate bed for it to sleep.

One day, the Buddha visited Subha's house for alms. The dog started barking at the Buddha. Then, the Buddha spoke saying, "Oh Todeyya you barked at me in

the previous life and now in this present life, you are barking at me too”.

After that, from that day onwards the dog started to sleep in a heap of ashes. The house people noticed that the dog had changed its attitude when the Buddha addressed it by the name Todeyya. Hearing this Subha became upset and told that it was very wrong to address a dog by his father’s name and went to the Buddha to enquire.

“Ven. Sir, why do you address my dog with my beloved father’s name when you approached my home?”

“Oh young man, where does your father stay now?”

“Sir, he is born in the Brahma world”

“What amount of wealth does your father have?”

“He has about 80 million.”

“Did your father give that wealth to you?”

“Not at all, Sir”

“Do you like to get them?”

“Yes, Sir”

“If so, go back home now and ask your wife to cook milk rice with butter (Ghee) and give it to the dog after you have bathed it. When the dog is sleeping deeply go and ask, “my dear father where is the wealth that you have deposited while you were living”? Then the dog will show you where they are, said the Buddha

The young man, Subha did what the Buddha told him to do. The dog rose up and went to the corner of the house and showed the place where he put the wealth by scratching the floor.

Subha became very excited when he uncovered the big amount of wealth. Instead of becoming grateful, he went to the Buddha with that pleasure and asked Him, “Ven. Sir, my father became a dog in this present life because of being a rich man?”

“Oh young man, we must earn wealth, so that it can benefit us as well as for others”.

One may become either a divine being or Brahmin or man or dog depending on their individual good or evil kamma (cause and effects). If one who says with very proud thought, “I am very rich and powerful and descending from noble lineage”, probably that could

make him to be able to be reborn as a dog like Todeyya Brahmana.”

We must learn not to be stingy but to be generous and share our wealth with the less fortunate. We should not be proud but be kind and respectful. We can even be happy with the little that we possess if we are not greedy.



8. Soreyya, a man who turned into a women

There once lived a merchant, named Soreyya in the city of Soreyya. One day this merchant (rich nobleman) went for a bath together with his close friend. They met Ven. Maha Kaccayana who was adjusting his robes before going into the city to beg for alms. Soreyya seeing the beautiful golden complexion of the Venerable thought, "Oh, why didn't he become my wife or why didn't my wife get a beautiful complexion like him." Suddenly and mysteriously he began to change from a man to a woman. He was so ashamed that he left the city to Takshila.

Soreyya who had now become a woman got married to a merchant at Takshila and delivered two children. Soreyya also had two sons from his previous marriage as a man. This matter was kept a secret. One day, Soreyya came to know that an old friend from Soreyya city had come to Takshila. She revealed her identity to this friend and related all that had happened, about the wrongful thoughts. The man advised Soreyya to go and meet Ven. Kaccayana and ask for his pardon for the evil thought that she generated in connection with the Venerable's beauty. After seeking pardon, Soreyya changed back to a man.

Having been dissatisfied (disgusted) after recalling his past memory of what had happened to him within in a very short time, Soreyya ordained himself into the Buddhist order. People, who knew that he became a monk, visited him and asked him which child he liked the most out of his four children. He would answer that his love for those born of the womb was greater. This question was put to him so often that he felt very annoyed and ashamed. He strove diligently and attained Arahant hood. When the question was put to him again, this time he replied he had no personal attachment to anybody.

The Buddha said in connection with this matter, "Liberation cannot be granted by our own parents but can be gained through the mind with good knowledge of the Dhamma." Therefore, as little children we too must do more good and cultivate our minds well.



9. Ekasataka Brahmin who conquered his mind

There was once a poor Brahmin in the city of Savatthi. He was famous by the name Culla Ekasataka (who had only one cloth). Both Brahmana Ekasataka and his wife had only one cloth to cover their shoulder and to cover their body when they sleep. As they had only one cloth they could not go out together. When Brahmana Ekasataka visits some place his wife took rest at home and vice versa. Though they were very poor, they were very devoted to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

There were many religious activities at Jetavana monastery in the city of Savatthi. One day, the Brahmana Ekasataka addressed his wife and said, "My dear darling, shall we go to the temple to listen to the Dhamma either this evening or tonight?" As they have only one cloth, the wife went in the evening and Brahmana Ekasataka went at night. He was very happy with the Buddha's preaching but he did not have any requisites to be offered to the Buddha. So he became very unhappy. He thought of offering his only piece of cloth, but he was unable to make up his mind. Thus his mind was in conflict in wanting to make an offering to the Buddha.

Eventually he conquered his miserable mind and proclaimed, "I have conquered, I have conquered" and

ordered a minister to catch him and punish him at that very moment.

The minister who investigated the case reported to the king that Brahmana Ekasataka has proclaimed such as he had offered his only one cloth to the Buddha having conquered his mind. King Kosala who understood the greatness of the poor Ekasataka Brahmana's meritorious good act (deed) treated him well and donated various types of garments and wealth. Brahmana Ekasataka just offered a single piece of cloth with a very pure mind without expecting anything in return but he received more.

To support the Sangha Community and to offer Dana is a highly meritorious deed. Those who give willingly will in return be rewarded. What you sow so shall you reap. This is the law of Kamma. Therefore do not be lazy or hesitate to perform more good deeds. Let's move our mind away from unwholesome thoughts and concentrate on wholesome thoughts.



10. The Hunter, Koka who fell into trouble for causing trouble to a Worthy One.

Once, there lived a hunter named Koka in the vicinity of the city of Savatthi. He spent his life selling meat. He was famous by the name 'Koka the dog hunter' as he hunted with dogs in the day. One day, when he set forth for hunting with his dogs, he met a monk who was on his alms round. He thought it was a bad omen and started grumbling to himself saying, "Since I have seen this monk, I don't think I will get anything today". As expected by him, he did not get anything. He met the monk once again on his way home, and thought thus.

"Alas! today, I could not even hunt a single animal as I have seen this wretched monk". He thought that he would lose his lunch too now as he has seen the monk again and he became very angry. So he released his hunting dogs towards the monk. The monk ran and climbed up a tree. The dogs chased him and stood around the tree barking at him. The hunter pierced the monk's sole with the tip of his arrow. The monk was in great pain and was struggling to avoid the piercing. As he was struggling he was unable to hold onto his robes. So the robes slipped and fell onto the hunter who was standing at the foot of the tree. The hunter, who was now covered by the robe, tried to remove it. The dogs seeing a person covered in the yellow robe thought the

monk had fallen off the tree and started attacking the hunter by biting him.

The monk came down from the tree and drove the dogs away and found that the hunter had died. He felt sorry for him and thought, whether it was his fault since the hunter had died after having been covered up by his yellow robes. The monk was distressed thinking that the hunter's death would ruin his virtues as he would have protected it even at the risk of his life. So he went and asked the Buddha about this matter. The Buddha told him that his virtues could not be broken as a result of that incident.

When performing an act, whether good or bad, will depend on your mindset at the time of committing the act. If it was done with bad intentions you will reap bad Kamma, but if it was done without any bad or evil intentions, you will not reap bad Kamma. Paying respect to members of the Maha Sangha is a highly meritorious deed.



About the Author:

Ven. Bokanoruwe Dewananda Thero is an esteemed researcher in the social philosophy the Buddha as Depicted in the Pali Canon. During his many years of researching the Pali Canon, he acquired degrees in Education and completed his Ph.D. at The University of Delhi in the field of Buddhist Social Studies. In these regards, Dr. Dewananda is eminently suited towards writing on the topics of “mother” and “parents” from the Buddhist perspective.

In these turbulent times, Dr. Dewananda’s writing is a beacon shining in the darkness, guiding us all back to the path of love, respect, and gratitude towards one’s parents who gave us life and introduced us to the world. The spiritual debt to our parents is truly vast, and Dr. Dewananda makes it extremely clear how this debt should best be repaid, all the while citing the words of the historical Buddha who gave us this wisdom more than 2500 years ago. These words of the Buddha are just as valuable today as they were over 25 centuries ago.

Dr. Dewananda has authored several Dhamma books and CD’s in both Sinhala and English. He came to the United States in 2007 and is the chief resident monk at the Florida Buddhist Vihara. He is actively engaged in teaching meditation and the Dhamma to devotees visiting his Theraveda Buddhist Temple and Vipassana Meditation Center in Tampa. He also takes part in Buddhist research activities with university students. Currently, he is doing research on “Meditation as depicted in the Pali Canon”

- Jeffrey Ferris, Editor
Seattle, Washington
Nov 2012

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