

## Dhammapada (Senior Syllabus)

### Verse 19: Learning Without Practice Is Of No Worth (Twin Verses – Yamaka Vagga)

*Bahum pi ce sahitam bhāsamāno*  
extensively yet Buddha's words recites  
(sacred tex)

*na takkaro hoti naro pamatto*  
does behaving (become) person slothful  
not accordingly

*Gopo'vo gāvo ganayam paresam*  
cowherd like cattles protecting of others

*na bhāgavā sāmaññassa hoti*  
does partake of the renounced life  
not

*Note: na hoti = does not become*

Translation: Though much he recites the Sacred Texts, but acts not accordingly, that heedless man is like a cowherd who counts others' kine (cattle). He has no share in the fruits (4 stages of sainthood) of the Holy Life (state of monk/ascetic).

Sacred Text = Buddha Tipitaka, the 3 baskets taught, that is, vinaya (discipline), sutta (discourse) & Abhidhamma (ultimate doctrine) pitaka.

Significance: Buddhism's not a mere philosophy nor a religion (belief in the worship of creator or God). It's a unique Path of Enlightenment. Buddhism is therefore rational and intensely practical. It's a system that cannot contain any mysterious or esoteric doctrine (teachings intended for a small group of individuals to understand).

Story: Buddha spoke verses 19 & 20 (twin) in Jetavana Grove regarding two monk- friends at Savatthi

- Two friends who became renounced to become monks after hearing the discourse from the Buddha
- They asked the Buddha about the Duties in his Religion, that is Duty of Study (Scriptures) and Duty of Meditation
- The older monk chose the Duty of Meditation as he acknowledged that he was getting old and wouldn't be able to fulfil his Duty of Study
- The older monk under the Buddha's instruction, strived and struggled hard finally succeeded in Arahatsip
- The younger monk chose the Duty of Study, acquired the Tipitaka and hence preached reciting the Law to 500 monks and become preceptor of 18 large communities of monks.
- A company of monks went to the residence of the older monk after they obtained instructions from the Buddha about meditation. Under the faithful observance of the older monk's admonition, these monks gained archonship too.
- These arahats took leave of the older monks to pay respect to the Buddha.

- The younger monk upon seeing these arahats asked what they have learnt from the older monk in terms of the Digha Nikaya and the other Nikaya.
- When the younger monk realised that none of the arahats knew a single stanza from the Scriptures, he decided that he would ask the older monk some questions on the Scriptures.
- The Buddha read the intentions of the younger monk. Out of compassion, he decided to pay a visit to the two monks.
- When the two monks saw the Buddha, they prepared a seat for the Teacher before they sat down.
- The Buddha asked the younger monk about the First Trance and the Second Trance which the younger monk was able to answer correctly.
- When the Buddha asked about the Path of Conversion, the younger monk was not able to answer. But, when this question was raised to the older monk, he was able to answer correctly. For the remaining three questions about the Path of Conversion, the older monk was able to answer correctly whilst the younger monk was not able to answer any of these questions.
- On four occasions, the Buddha applauded when the older monk answered questions on the Path of Conversion correctly
- The pupils and the fellow-residents of the younger monks were offended that their teacher, who knew the Scriptures by heart and head of 500 monks was given no praise at all as compared to the older monk who knew nothing.
- Hence, the Buddha explained that the younger monk was like a man who tended cows for hire whilst the older monk was like a master who enjoyed the 5 products of the cow at his own good pleasure.

**Verse 24: The Energetic Prosper  
(Heedfulness – Appamāda Vagga)**

*Uṭṭānavatō satimatō*  
Steadfast attentive

*Suci kammassa nisammakārinō*  
Pure in action careful in all activities  
and behaviour

*Saññatassa ca dhammajivinō*  
Well-restrained and leading a righteous life

*Appamattassa yaso bhivaddhati*  
Mindful person glory increases greatly

Translation: The glory of him who is energetic, mindful pure in deed, considerate, self-controlled, right living, and heedful steadily increases.

Significance: If a person preserves with a focused mind, if his physical and spiritual actions are pure and if he is self-restraint and live according to the Teaching with a sane mind, his fame will grow.

Wise and heedful actions have always been the advice of the Tathagata in his sermons e.g. Mahamangala sutta, Sigalovada sutta, Parabhava sutta or even in Alavaka sutta.

Story: The Buddha spoke verse 24 in reference to a banker, Kumbhaghōsaka at the Vēluvana Monastery

- A plague broke out at city of Rājagaha and many people were infected with the epidemic disease including the city banker and his wife.
- So they told their young son, Kumbhaghōsaka to flee and only to return after a long time. They also revealed that they had buried a treasure of great worth.
- Kumbhaghōsaka returned to the city after being in the forest for 12 years but by then being a grown youth, nobody recognised him
- He found the treasure was still intact but he knew if should he use it, people might misunderstand him and report him to the king. He might be put in captivated with his property confiscated.
- He decided to work for a living until the time is right for him to unearth the treasure. As such, he strove diligently for a decent living as the town's time announcer.
- King Bimbisara, being a keen judge of voices, heard him one day and sent his maid to investigate on the source of this voice as he perceived that it's the voice of a man with great wealth.
- To everyone's surprise, it was the voice of a youth labourer. But, the king's maid preserved to uncover the mystery and setting out in a disguised as ordinary folk she and her daughter, put up at Kumbhaghōsaka's house.
- One day, to perform a ceremony, it was essential that each household has to do some contributions.

- As the youth doesn't have any money, he took some coins for his treasure. The maid substituted the coins with the money and sent the coins to the king, asking the king to summon the youth to court the next day.
- Kumbhaghōsaka finally revealed his story to the King.
- King Bimbisara brought all the youth's treasure to the palace, married his daughter to the youth and made him a banker.
- This incident was related to the Buddha by King Bimbisara.

### Verse 35: Control Your Mind (Mind – Citta Vagga)

*Dunniggahassa*      *lahuno*  
Difficult to control      swift

*yattha kāmanipātino*  
focusing on whatever target it wishes

*Cittassa*      *damatho*      *sādhu*  
Of the mind      taming      (is) good

*cittam*      *dantam*      *sukhavaham*  
mind      tamed      brings bliss

Translation: The mind is very hard to check and swift, it falls on what it wants. The training of the mind is good; a mind so tamed brings happiness

Significance: The mind is exceedingly subtle and is difficult to be seen. By guarding the mind it brings bliss. With mindfulness, mental defilements would not arise that easily.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jetavana Monastery with reference to a certain monk who expressed his fear of being detected for any impure thoughts by a lay-devotee that has the ability of thought-reading.

- During a rainy season, 60 monks went to the village of Matika after obtaining a meditation subject from the Buddha
- Matikamata, the mother of village headman offered dana to the monks and even built a monastery for their stay
- They taught her the practice of meditation, in particular the mindfulness of 32 parts of the body, leading to the decay and dissolution of the body
- Matikamata practised diligently and so attained to the stage of anagami with analytical insight and mundane supernatural powers, including the ability of thought-reading
- With her divine eye, she knew that the monks had not attained any Maggas yet and need proper food to attain arahatship
- The 60 monks soon attained arahatship having fed on proper food and with right effort. They informed the Buddha after their return at the end of rainy season that they are in good health and Matikamata who are aware of their thoughts offered them their wish choice of food
- A certain monk overheard the conversation and decided to go to the village after getting a meditation topic from Buddha
- He soon realised that Matikamata can read people's thoughts as whatever he wished for was sent to him. Terrified of her, he returned to tell the Buddha that he was afraid that she would know any impure thoughts of his
- The Buddha asked him to control his mind and think only of his meditation object
- The monk returned to Matika and practised as per the Buddha's advice. Matikamata offered him good food and shortly, he too attained arahatship

**Verse 54: Fragrance of Virtue Spreads Everywhere  
(Flower – Puppha Vagga)**

*Na pupphagandho pativatam eti*  
(Does not) the fragrance of flowers against the wind waft

*na candanam tagaramallikā vā*  
does not sandalwood lavender jasmine or

*Satañ ca gandho pativātam eti*  
(but of (of virtue) sweet smell against the wind waft  
such noble  
individual  
as the)  
Buddha

*sabbā disā sappuriso pavāti*  
all blows in virtuous person directions

Translation: The perfume of flowers blows not against the wind, nor does the fragrance of sandalwood, lavender, jasmine, but the fragrance of the virtuous blows against the wind; the virtuous man pervades every direction.

Significance: The fragrance of sweet smelling flower and fragrant objects move only in one direction with the wind. However strong their fragrance may be, none of the sweet smell spread against the wind. In contrast, the sweet smell of virtue of a spiritually evolved individual spreads in all directions and is universally experienced. So, it is important to observe and guard morality.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to a question raised by Venerable Ānanda

- Ven. Ānanda arose from his profound meditation one evening to ask the Buddha what substance goes with the wind and against his wind. He said to the Buddha that according his knowledge even the three substances that He possesses – perfume of sandal, roots and flowers goes with the wind
- The Buddha replied the following as substances whose perfume goes both with and against the wind. If the person ...
  - a. seeks refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha;
  - b. keeps one's 5 precepts;
  - c. is virtuous, righteous, with heart free of greed;
  - d. is charitable and generous; and
  - e. takes delight in giving and the distribution of alms,

... in all parts of the world monks utter his praise OR in such a village or market town, having fulfilled the conditions of a. to e., deities and spirits speak his praise.

**Verse 56: Fragrance of Virtue Wafts to Heaven  
(Flower – Puppha Vagga)**

*Appamattō ayam gandhō*  
Is only a little that fragrance (of virtue)

*yāyam tagaracandanī*  
of lavender sandalwood

*yō ca sīlavatam gandhō*  
if there of the virtuous sweet smell

*vāti dēvēsu uttamō*  
(it) spreads in the midst of that is supreme  
devas or  
heavenly worlds

**Translation:** The fragrance of tagara and sandalwood is quite slight, being limited to this world and spread only on earth. The sweet smell of virtue is, in contrast, supreme as it spreads not only throughout earth, it rises even to the highest heavens.

**Significance:** The virtue of a person who is diligent and strict with his own training and practices surpasses any earthly fragrance, even the gods or devas adore him to the extent of vying with each other to give alms to him e.g. Mahā Kassapa

**Story:** The Buddha spoke this verse at Vēluvana Monastery with reference to Ven. Mahākassapa

- Ven. Mahākassapa arose from his meditation that lasted for 7 days and intended to go on his alms round at Rājagaha to favour the poor
- He refused to accept alms from 500 celestial nymphs, wives of King Sakka
- King Sakka hence disguised himself as an old weaver with broken teeth, broken and bent body, and grey hair and transformed one of his wife into an old woman
- With his supernatural powers, he created a weaver's lane and sat there spinning out the thread whilst his wife feeding a shuttle
- Ven. Mahākassapa noticed these two persons and came to their door. Sakka took the venerable's bowl and offered dana
- The portion of the alms, rich with all kinds of sauces and curries soon filled the entire city with its fragrance that gave Sakka's identity away. Ven. Mahākassapa so knew that this person is no ordinary folk and admonished Sakka for depriving the poor of a chance to acquire merit
- King Sakka explained to Ven. Mahākassapa that his glory was even being overshadowed by 3 equally ranked deities who acquired merit during the Buddha's time and were reborn in the heavenly realm. He pointed out that the reason being, he acquired merit prior to the birth of the Buddha
- King Sakka then asked the venerable whether he had acquired merit despite of his deceptive appearance. Ven. Mahākassapa affirmed that he had acquired merit.

## Verse 62: Ignorance Brings Suffering (Fools – Bāla Vagga)

*Puttā m'atthi dhanamm'atthi*

I have sons I have wealth

*Iti bālō vihaññati*

this way the fool worries

*attā hi attanō natthi*

one's own self one does not have

*kutō puttā kutō dhanam?*

how can sons how can wealth  
that be that be

Translation: The fool worries “I have sons,” “I have wealth.” When his self is not his own, then how can he claim, “I have sons” or “I have wealth”?

Significance: A fool prides over his children and his wealth. In reality, he does not even own himself: cannot stop ageing, illness and decay. All the wealth, property and servants cannot be brought along when he dies. It's one's deeds, words or thoughts that he takes with him and follows him like an inseparable shadow → his kamma. All beings fare in accordance to their deeds. Meritorious deeds support one to have a better life in the future world.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to miserly rich man, Ānanda

- There was a very wealthy man In Sāvatti who has 80 billion but was very reluctant to give anything in charity
- He told his son, Mūlasiri not to give away anything from his wealth for he must make it grow, otherwise their wealth will diminish
- Ānanda died without revealing the location of 5 pots of buried gold in his house and soon was reborn in a village of beggars not far from Sāvatti
- When his mother was pregnant with him, the income of the beggars decreased. By process of elimination, they decided that his pregnant mother must be the unfortunate one. Soon, she was driven out of the village
- He was born extremely ugly and repulsive, looking like a mud spit but his mother did not abandon him out of her motherly love
- His mother soon sent him away to the city alone to beg for alms as she could not get any alms at all as before when she begged alone, should he come along with her.
- As he wandered about in the city, he recalled his past existence and his old house. His grandsons were so frightened by his ugly looks that they cried when he went to the house. Hence he was beaten and thrown out of the house by the servants
- The Buddha on his alms-round saw the incident, told Ven. Ānanda to fetch Mūlasiri and told Mūlasiri that the young beggar was his deceased father
- The young beggar was told to show Mūlasiri the location of the 5 pots of buried gold. Only then, Mūlasiri accepted the truth and became a devoted lay disciple of the Buddha

**Verse 63: Wise Is He Who Acknowledges His Foolishness  
(Fools – Bāla Vagga)**

*Yō balō maññati bālyam*  
One's a fool knows one's  
foolishness

*pandito vā'pi tena so*  
a wise person is also by virtue of he  
that knowledge

*bālo ca panditamāni*  
if an ignorant person thinks he is wise

*so ve bālo'ti vuccati*  
he in truth a fool is called

**Translation:** The fool who knows that he is a fool is for that very reason a wise man; the fool who thinks that he is wise is called a fool indeed.

**Significance:** True wisdom is found in the awareness of reality - the right knowledge of things as they really are. If one is aware of one's own foolishness, that awareness makes him wise. Those who are foolish believe that they are wise are truly foolish because their false awareness colours the totality of their thinking.

Foolishness is the result of confusion (mohā) and unawareness (avijjā). Unawareness is the primary root of all evil and suffering in the world, veiling man's mental eyes and preventing him from seeing his own true nature. Unawareness is defined as "not knowing the 4 Truths; namely suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the way to its cessation."

**Story:** The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to two pick-pockets

- Two men accompanied a great crowd to the monastery to hear the Buddha
- One of them listened to the Teaching whilst the other watched for a chance to steal something
- The 1<sup>st</sup> pick-pocket through listening the Teaching entered the stream whilst 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-pocket stole 5 coins from a certain man. The stolen money was used to buy food for cooking
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-pocket soon noticed that his other companion did not do any cooking. Hence, he and his wife ridiculed the 1<sup>st</sup> pick-pocket for being too wise for his good that he cannot get enough money to cook up his regular meals
- The 1<sup>st</sup> pick-pocket thought to himself that the 2<sup>nd</sup> pick-pocket who is a fool does not even think he is a fool. He told this incident to the Buddha

**Verse 76: Treasure the Advice of the Wise  
(Wise – Pandita Vagga)**

*Nidhinam'va pavattārami*

Like a treasure-revealer

*yam passē vajjadassinam\**

who discovers who indicates error

*niggayha vādim\* mēdhāvim*

who admonishes but constructively wise

*tādisam panditam bhajē*

such a wise person one should associate

*tādisam bhajamānassa*

such to an individual who associates

*seyyō hoti na pāpiyō*

good will happen will not happen evil

Translation: If one discovers a wise person who points one's errors and sternly corrects one, he should be looked upon as a constructive revealer of a treasure. His company should be sought. Such association would make better persons of men.

Significance: These **two qualities\*** are characteristics of a person who criticises constructively. With warm-hearted friends (reference to Sigalovada sutta) who criticise us constructively, they will enable us to realise the inner personality treasures we possess, and will make them adept in proper conduct, so that he can progress satisfactorily along the path of realisation. Constructive criticisms are means to encourage self-reflection for improvement.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Venerable Rādhā, who was at one time a poor old brahmin

- Rādhā stayed in the monastery doing small services for the monks, in return, he was given food and clothing and other needs. He was not encouraged to join the Sangha even though he wished to be a monk
- One early morning, the Buddha surveyed the world with his supernormal power and He knew that Rādhā was due for arahatship
- The Buddha learnt from Rādhā that the monks did not want him to join the Order
- The Buddha then asked all the monks whether the old brahmin had done any good to any of them. Venerable Sariputta recalled that Rādhā offered him a spoon of rice
- The Buddha asked Sariputta that should he not help the old brahmin to be released from sufferings
- Venerable Sariputta agreed, duly admitted Rādhā into the Sangha and guided him. Following Sariputta's guidance strictly, he gained Enlightenment within a few days
- The Buddha told the monks that a monk should be amendable to guidance like Rādhā and should not resent when scolded for any fault or failing

**Verse 80: The Wise Control Themselves  
(Wise – Pandita Vagga)**

*Udakam hi nayanti nettikā*  
Water certainly lead (to whatever place they like) the irrigators

*usukārā namayanti tējanam*  
the arrow-makers shape and bend arrow-shafts

*dārum namayanti tacchakā*  
wood shape and form carpenters

*attānam damayanti panditā*  
their own minds tame and restrain wise

**Translation:** The irrigator who manages water is skilled in directing water to whatever place he wants. The fletcher skilfully shapes and bends a very straight arrow shaft out of a piece of wood. The carpenter shapes and forms a block of wood and constructs whatever he wants out of it, according to his needs. The wise works on taming their minds, practising self-restraint.

**Significance:** If craftsmen can control and tame inanimate things like directing water, shapes stick into an arrow and forming objects from wood, it is then possible for the truth-seeker to shape his mind that is more difficult than the above three.

**Story:** The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to the novice monk Pandita

- Pandita was a young son of a rich man in Sāvātthi who became a novice monk at the age of 7. On the 8<sup>th</sup> day as he was following Venerable Sariputta around on alms round, he noticed that 3 things:
  1. Some farmers channelling water into their fields (water-irrigation)
  2. Some fletchers heating their arrows with fire and straightening them
  3. Some carpenters cutting, sawing and planning timber to make it into cart-wheels
- He asked Venerable Sariputta when he saw water-irrigation process whether water without consciousness can be guided to wherever one's wishes. Sariputta said yes.
- A thought arose in Pandita that was if these inanimate things could be made into something useful, should he not be able to tame his mind and practice meditation since he has consciousness
- He ardently and diligently practiced meditation contemplating on his body, before noon meal Pandita achieved anāgāmi
- The Buddha knew about Pandita's progress and decided to stop Sariputta, who was bringing Pandita's noon meal from entering the his room
- The Buddha knew Pandita would soon attain arahantship if he continued to practise without interruption so He went to Sariputta and engaged him in a conversation with some questions
- Pandita attained arahantship whilst the conversation took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of his ordination
- The Buddha spoke to the monks that when one is earnest in practising the Dhamma, even Sakka and the devas give protection and keep guard; so did the Buddha

**Verse 94: Gods Adore Arahats  
(The Saints – Arahanta Vagga)**

*Yass' indriyāni samathan gatāni*

Whose senses calmness have

*assā yathā sārathinā sudantā*  
horse like charioteer (like by) (are) well tamed

*pahīnamānassa anāsavassa*  
judgement given up taintless

*dēvā'pi tassa pihayanti tādīnō*  
even gods their (sight) (are) pleased by mentally stable one

**Translation:** Those whose senses are calmed as a horse trained by charioteer, who have fully given up judgement (pride), who is free of corruption (influences), the sight of those mentally stable ones pleases even the gods

**Significance:** Senses refer to the 6 senses – eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and thought. A person's stability is the emotional stability that comes from not reacting to what is seen, heard, smelt, tasted or touched. The reaction begins with judgement of things as good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant. Guarding the senses prevents reacting and not reacting means the senses are calmed

**Story:** The Buddha spoke this verse at Pubbārāma Monastery with reference to Venerable Mahākaccāyana

- During one of the festive occasion, the Buddha was sitting on the ground floor of a mansion, surrounded by important lay disciples and intending to expound the Dharma.
- As usual, they left a seat for Venerable Mahakaccayan as he would come from great distance to attend.
- King Sakka with his celestial troops honoured the Buddha with celestial perfumes and garlands and noted the absence of Venerable Mahakaccayan. King Sakka very much wished to see Venerable Mahakaccayan and finally noticed that the venerable took his seat at the empty space
- King Sakka honoured Venerable Mahakaccayan in the same way as that of the Buddha, after which stood at the venerable's side respectfully
- The monks were offended and expressed that King Sakka had showed on due respect to Mahakaccayan only and not even to the rest of the Chief Disciples
- On hearing this, the Buddha asked the monks to keep their senses guarded. He pointed out that monks who guard their senses – practising self-restraint are loved by gods and men.

**Verse 99: The Passionless Delight in Forests  
(The Saints – Arahanta Vagga)**

*Ramanīyāni araññāni*

(Such) attractive forests

*yatha*            *na ramatī*            *jano*  
those places    do not take delight in    the worldly masses

*Vitarāgā*            *ramissantī*  
the passionless    take delight in

*na*                    *te*                    *kāmagavesino*  
do not (take delight in)    those places    pursuers of sensual pleasures

Translation: Those fascinating forests that do not capture the mind of the worldly masses and in which they do not take delight are attractive to the passionless ones.

Significance: The passionless ones are the arahats who does not accumulate fresh kammic activities as the seeds of his reproduction have been all destroyed. To an arahat, with the heavy burden of sorrow defeated, all forms of craving and ignorance eliminated, and uncontrolled passions and the defilements of the world removed, experienced only Nibbanic bliss. Arahats could experience Nibbanic bliss uninterruptedly for as long as they liked even in this life known as ***nirōdha-samāpatti***.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to a woman of doubtful character

- A monk retired to a dilapidated pleasure garden to meditate after obtaining a meditation topic from the Buddha
- Coincidentally, a man made an appointment with a courtesan to meet up
- After waiting in vain, the courtesan was very disappointed that the man didn't turn up
- When she strolled into the pleasure garden and saw that the monk was meditating with no one around, she decided to throw his thoughts into confusion
- She did a few cheeky actions standing before the monk,:
  1. Took down her undergarments several times and put it on again;
  2. Loosened her hair and bound it up again;
  3. Clapped her hairs and laughed
- The monk's body became suffused with excitement and he became excited not knowing what this would mean
- The Buddha wanted to know the progress of this monk and noted the evil conduct of this courtesan was upsetting the monk. Hence, He spoke to the monks that there is no delight for those who seeks after lusts, whilst those who are free from passion are full of delight
- The Buddha sent a radiant image of Himself to the monk and instructed the monk on Dhamma

**Verse 100: One Pacifying Word is Noble  
(Thousands – Sahassa Vagga)**

*Sahassam api cē gāthā*

Thousands (are not worth) even words

*anattapadasamhitā*

full of meaningless and worthless expression

*Ekam gāthāpadam seyyo*

one such meaningful word is noble

*yam sutvā upasammati*

if by hearing (it) a person is pacified

Translation: Better than a thousand verses, comprising useless words, is one beneficial single line, by hearing which one is pacified.

Significance: Discourses full of useless words are not conducive to the attainment of higher spiritual goals. There are 32 topics that fall within the category of useless discourse as stated in traditional commentaries such as descriptions of sky, mountains, forests, villages, cities, settlements, oceans, moon-rise, sun-rise, parks, water-sports, drinking parties, get-togethers, are considered as themes unfit to be spoke by aspirants.

Similarly, topics like matters relating to kings, to thieves, to administrators, forces, fears and wars are termed unfit words.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Tambadāthika, the executioner of thieves.

- Tambadāthika served the king as an executioner of thieves for 55 years. As he retired in his old age, he gave orders that sweet milk porridge to be cooked for him.
- On that same day, he bathed himself at the river, decked himself with garlands, put on perfumes and went home to have his meal.
- As he was about to enjoy his meal, Venerable Sariputta appeared at the door of this former executioner's house.
- Tambadāthika paid his reverence to Sariputta, invited him to his house, served him with the sweet milk-porridge and fresh ghee and stood beside the Venerable to fan him.
- After the meal, Sariputta taught him the Dhamma but Tambadāthika could not pay attention as he was too agitated when he recollected his past occupation as an executioner.
- When Sariputta knew about his state of mind, he tactfully asked Tambadāthika whether he killed the thieves because he wished to kill them or because he was ordered to do so.
- Tambadāthika answered that he was ordered by the king to carry out the execution. So, Sariputta asked him whether he would consider himself guilty for his actions. Tambadāthika concluded that he was not responsible for the evil deeds hence he was not guilty and he calmed down.

- Tambadāthika requested Sariputta to continue with his exposition of the Dhamma. As he listened to the Dhamma with proper attention, he came very close to attaining sōtāpatti magga and reached as far as adaption-to-truth-knowledge (anulōma ñāna).
- Tambadāthika died on his way home after sending Venerable Sariputta off for some distance from his house. He was gored to death by a cow (a demon in disguise).
- The monks informed the Buddha of this incident and asked Him about Tambadāthika's rebirth destination.
- The Buddha explained that Tambadāthika was reborn in the Tusita deva world as he comprehended the Dhamma after hearing it and had already attained anulōma nana before he died.
- The monks wondered how such an evil-doer could have such great benefit after listening to the Dhamma just once.
- The Buddha said that the length of a discourse is of no consequence, for one single word of sense can product much benefit.

**Verse 104: Self-Conquest Is The Best of All Conquests  
(Thousands – Sahassa Vagga)**

*Attā*            *have jītam*            *seyyō*  
One's own self is truly conquered            noble

*yā*    *cā'yam*            *itarā*            *pajā*  
if other people are conquered (that is not noble)

*Attadantassa*            *posassa*  
the self conqueror            of that kind of individual

*niccam*            *saññatacārino*  
constantly            is restrained in behaviour

Translation: Greater the conquest of oneself than subjugating others, that one who's always well-restrained, that one who's tamed of self.

Significance: Self conquest is greater than the conquest of others. The victory of one who conquers himself cannot be turned into defeat. He remains a self controlled individual who lives ever disciplined.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Brahmin Anattapucchaka.

- One occasion Brahmin Anattapucchaka came to the Buddha to ask about practices that are beneficial and he also asked whether the Buddha knew of practices that are not beneficial.
- The Buddha replied that he knew which practices that are not beneficial as well.
- The Buddha enumerated 6 practices that cause dissipation of wealth:
  1. Sleeping until the sun has risen            }
  2. *Habitual idleness*            } very
  3. Cruelty            } similar to
  4. *Indulgence in intoxicants that cause drunkenness and negligence* } Sigalovada
  5. *Sauntering alone in streets at unseemly hours*            } sutta
  6. Sexual misconduct            }
- The Brahmin applauded the Buddha for knowing both the gain and loss. The Buddha wanted to know the Brahmin's motive for asking the 2 questions.
- The Buddha asked the Brahmin what is his means of livelihood. The Brahmin replied that gambling is his livelihood.
- The Brahmin replied that sometimes he wins and sometimes he loses
- So, the Buddha said to him that the victory of him defeating another is a trifle matter and that there is no superior victory in this situation. But if this individual overcomes his defilements and hence conquers self, wins a better victory and no one can turn this victory into a defeat.
- Such a self conquest cannot be turned into defeat either by a god, a spirit, a Mara or a Brahma.

**Verse 105: Victory Over Oneself Cannot Be Undone  
(Thousands – Sahassa Vagga)**

*N'eva devo na gandhabbo*  
Cannot be an angel or a god not a spirit

*na māro saha brahmunā*  
not a Mara (devil) and creator

*Jitam apajitam kayirā*  
conquest turned into a defeat

*tathārūpassa jantuno*  
of that kind of person

Translation: Neither deva nor minstrel divine (heavenly musicians), nor Mara together with Brahma, can overthrow the victory of such as self-conquest as this.

Significance: The victory over self cannot be reversed by either gods, Mara or Brahma.

In Buddhist thought the self (atta) mentioned here is the concept of anatta – no soul or selflessness that is a central Buddhist principle. The Buddha rejects theories that assert the existence of an immortal soul or an eternal ego that man has obtained in a mysterious way from an equally mysterious source. If the soul that is supposed to be the essence of man is eternal, there could neither be a rise or a fall.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to Brahmin Anattapucchaka. *(Please read Verse 104 for the complete story).*

**Verse 129: Kill Not/Think Of Others As Would Do So As Your Own Self  
(Punishment – Danda Vagga)**

*Sabbe*      *tasanti*      *dandassa*  
All            are frightened      at punishment

*Sabbe*      *bhāyanti*      *maccuno*  
all            fear                  death

*Attānam*    *upamam katvā*  
One's own self    taking as the example

*na haneyya*    *na ghātaye*  
do not kill        do not get anyone else to kill

Translation: All trembles at force, of death are all afraid, Likening others to one, kill not nor cause to kill.

Significance: All dread death and physical harassment. Using one as an example, we should not kill nor hurt anyone else.

Story: The Buddha spoke this verse at Jētavana Monastery with reference to a group do six monks.

- Once a group of monks was cleaning up a building with the intention to occupy it when they were interrupted in their task by another group of monks who too arrived at the same site.
- The monks who arrived later told the 1<sup>st</sup> group of monks that they were elderly and more senior than them hence should give way to them as an act of respect. The senior monks intended to occupy the building.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> group of monks resisted the senior monks and did not give in to their demands. As such, these monks were beaten up by the senior monks till they cannot bear the beating and cried out in pain.
- The Buddha learnt about the quarrel between the two groups of monks. He admonished them and introduced the Vinaya rule that monks should refrain from hurting one another.