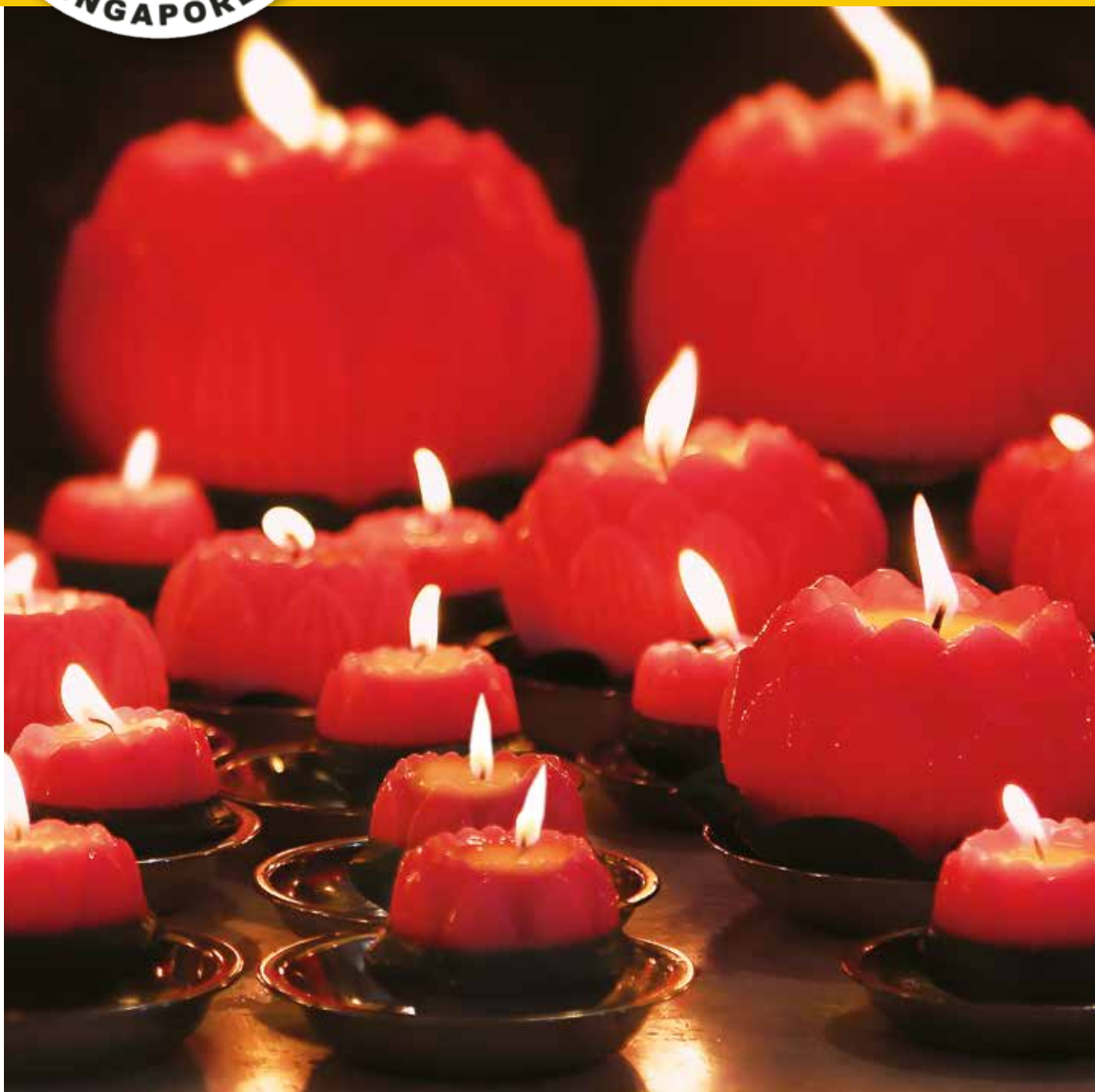




# Burmese Buddhist Temple *Newsletter*

MCI (P) 073/09/2019 缅甸佛教会简讯 VOL 32 No.1 OCT 2019



## GIFT OF LONGEVITY

P 4-7

## TEMPLE ACTIVITIES & QUIZ

P 14

## EVENTS PHOTO DIARY

P15

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## IN THIS ISSUE

2

Editorial Board

3

A Note from the Editor

4-7

Gift of Longevity

8-10

Advice to Rahula  
at Ambalatthika

11-13

Panatipata: The First Precept  
of Pañca-sila

14

Weekly Temple Activities 2019  
& Quiz

15

Events Photo Diary



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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

**B**urmese Buddhist Temple has been publishing in-house newsletter for many years. The key function of the newsletter has been to inform our lay people of the temple activities, so that they can celebrate and rejoice with all forms of merit-making happening at the Temple. At the same time, the newsletter has achieved much in giving a particular glimpse of Buddhist way of life in every issue. These glimpses of Buddha's teachings, frequently applicable in our daily life have been explained and shared, has made Dhamma closer to our life and guided to be better Buddhists.

With this ethos, a team of editors has been writing and offering their service, together with Resident Monks, to ensure timely printing of newsletter. The level of dedication is an inspiration to any, who knows, the amount time, research and editions to make the newsletter relevant and easy to understand for all lay people. The team has thus grown in maturity and aged with the Temple, celebrated 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of New Temple Site together.

Even though we desire for their continuous service, we cannot ignore the fact of life-change is the only constant. Also, the team is well deserved for rest. We are thankful for their relentless service. No word can express the gratitude that we feel for the dedication they have given to the Temple and anyone who reads the newsletters. Many of the members have volunteered and served the Temple for many decades, in spreading of Buddha Sasana. Once again, Mr. Tan Geok Koon and team, Thank you from all of us!

In conclusion, we should rejoice in the team's Dhamma Dana (in ensuring Buddhist teaching is being expounded and shared in simple way for easy understanding). Lord Buddha has exalted the Dhamma Dana as one of the greatest Danas we can do. It is the greatest gift they have given to the temple and all of us.

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu.





# *Gift of* LONGEVITY

---

Every one of us desires longevity- long and good life. Besides wealth, it is one of the most wished for, prayed for and sought after in our daily life. Often, we don't have clear formula to emulate by looking at someone's long life. We are usually left with more questions and many more unproven theories to try out.



Fortunately, Lord Buddha didn't just show the path to enlightenment (Path of Purity) to all beings but He had also given us, ordinary lay people, guidance and ways to pass through Samsara smoothly till we achieved Nibbana. He had, with deep

compassion for us, addressed the topic of achieving longevity, 2,600 years ago, to Anathapindika (the donor of Monestary) in Jetavana Monastery.

Buddha, the Enlightened One, said:

“

***Long life, householder, is wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world, I say, is not obtained by means of prayers or aspirations. If the long life, is wished for, desired, agreeable, and rarely gained in the world, could be obtained by means of prayers or aspirations, who here would be a short life?***

***Householder, the noble disciple, who desires long life, ought not to pray for long life or delight in it or [passively] yearn for it. A noble disciple who desires long life should practice the way conducive to long life. For when he practices the way conducive to long life, it leads to obtaining long life, and he gains long life as either a celestial or a human.***

(AN-5-43)

”

in our daily lives to enjoy longevity- not only in current life but also every existence hereafter in Samsara. In Buddha's Sasana, the teaching of achieving long life is centered on the gift of longevity that one can take along in his Samsara.

So, what is the gift of longevity? It is the practice of abstaining ourselves from killing any living being or sentient being. This is the first precept that we take as Buddhists in Pancha Sila. If we look at this first precept logically, it is giving the gift of longevity to other beings when one refuses to harm and kill while he is in powerful position enough to hurt, injure and kill them. Naturally, there is no dispute that such a person will enjoy blessing of long life.

Most often, we relate the first precept to abstinence from killing any being. Though abstinence was the ultimate goal of first precept, Lord Buddha had further expounded the first precept into three different practices in the Tipitaka. Thus, the gift of longevity would be instilled in our daily lives and even through Samsara. Lord Buddha said,

***“Here someone, abandoning the killing of living beings, abstains from killing living beings; with rod and weapon laid aside, gently and kindly, he abides compassion to all living beings.”***

In gist, the three practices are:

- 1** Abandonment and abstinence from killing of sentient beings (***Pahatabba***)
- 2** Way of living (daily conduct) to support abstinence (***Sikkhitabba***)
- 3** Training of mind with respect to one's perception to killing and compassion (***Bhavetabba***)

It is clear from Pali Text that we cannot pray for, yearn for or wish for a long life. We need to inculcate and practice values of long life



The understanding of abandonment and abstinence from killing of sentient beings is clear and precise- avoiding any effort/action that will result in loss of life (may it be human, animals, insects) are six types of physical action/effort listed in Pali Text which will be deemed as effort to kill. They are:

**1. Sahatthika-payoga-** killing someone with own effort.

**2. Anattika-payoga-** giving instruction to kill and harm someone via verbal and/or written message or through physical or facial (covert) expressions including silent assent.

**3. Nissaggiya-payoga-** using weapons, such as guns, bow & arrow etc., to kill someone

**4. Thavara-payoga-** laying traps, mines and weapons at the paths or roads to kill or harm anyone who uses that path.

**5. Vijjamaya-payoga-** using medicine, knowledge, poison, magic or occult practices to kill or harm someone.

**6. Iddhimaya-payoga-** using one's supernatural power (gotten from one's good deed, usually celestial beings) to kill or harm someone.

Besides physically harming or killing someone, we also need to be mindful that our words and interactions sometimes can be source of discouragement for someone to live on. Often, we face this scenario



when we encounter with sickness in ourselves or in our friends or family. Though we don't want to see our loved ones suffer, it is wrong to wish that they are relieved of suffering through death. We usually console the patient that they have done many good deeds and need not be afraid of afterlife. In true sense, this is neither an encouragement nor helping patient to conquer the fear of death. It is matter of fact asking patient to give up life. Thus, those who treasure longevity, should avoid such practices. We need be very mindful about the difference between asking patient to look into suffering insightfully to achieve liberation (vedana-vippassana) versus discouraging life. Lord Buddha also admonished such practice strongly:

“

*Should any intentionally deprive a human being of life, or search for an assassin for him, or praise the advantages of death, or incite him to die (saying): “My good man, what use is this evil, miserable life to you? Death would be better for you than life,” or with such an idea in mind, such a purpose in mind, should in various ways praise the advantages of death or incite him to die, he commits a killing of living being. (Wi-1-3)*

”

The Enlightened One, with His great compassion and loving kindness, had always reminded us to avoid killing through any slightest mean and most importantly not to disregard life easily and effortlessly because every living being treasures life and fears death. Lord Buddha stated in Dhammapada:

***Sabbe tasanti dandassa  
sabbe bhayanti maccuno  
attanam upamam katva  
na haneyya na ghataye.***

All are afraid of the stick (weapon), all fear death. Putting oneself in another's place, one should not beat or kill others. (Dhammapada 129)

We have come to next segment of practice-way of living (daily conduct) to cultivate loving kindness. All beings (including human) like to use force and strength to overpower someone who is weaker. As such, if one is to amass weapons which can

kill and hurt others, he would be tempted to use those weapons to overpower and exploit others who have no such weapons. This will be contrary to ethos of gift of longevity and Lord Buddha's teachings. Those, who want a long and good life, should not possess any items that are intended to be used in torturing, harming and killing of any living being.

Besides practicing restraints in physical aspects of our lives, we also need to train our mind to avoid having thoughts that will harbour ill-intention to hurt someone. The key elements to train our minds are:

**1 Being self-conscious (fearful and ashamed) to do a bad deed. If one feels ashamed and fearful from just harbouring a thought of killing someone and knows that it is wrong, he would not be able to put his thought into action to commit a bad deed.**

**2 Having, showing and outpouring of compassion and loving kindness to other living beings. If one sees all other beings as if his only child, would he be able to hurt any being? As stated in Metta Sutta, we needed to practice compassion and loving kindness equally without any bias.**

**3 Showing empathy by practicing Karuna on any being who is suffering or weak; and practicing Mudita on any being who is successful and powerful. This will prevent us exploiting and harming someone who is weaker as well as prevent us to hurting and destroying someone who is better than us out of spite and jealousy.**

In conclusion, Lord Buddha has offered us the gift of longevity, which is exercised earnestly in our daily lives through balance of practice in mind, body and physical restraint, will not only give us long life in current life and hereafter in Samsara but also put us a step closer to Nibanna.



# Advice to Rahula

## AT AMBALATTHIKA

*Middle Discourses 61*

Thus have I heard, at one time, Lord Buddha was staying near Rajagaha, in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground.

At that time, Venerable Rahula was staying at Ambalatthika, who was about seven years of age at that time. Then in the late afternoon, Lord Buddha came out of retreat and went to Ambalatthika to see Venerable Rahula. Rahula saw Lord Buddha coming off in the distance. He spread out a seat and placed water for washing the feet. Lord Buddha sat on the seat spread out, and washed his feet. Rahula bowed to Lord Buddha and sat down to one side.

Then Lord Buddha, leaving a little water in the pot, addressed Rahula, "Rahula, do you see this little bit of water left in the pot?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's how little of the ascetic's nature is left in those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

Then Lord Buddha, tossing away what little water was left in the pot, said to Rahula, "Do you see this little bit of water that was tossed away?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's how the ascetic's nature is tossed away in those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."



Then Lord Buddha, turning the pot upside down, said to Rahula, "Do you see how this pot is turned upside down?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's how the ascetic's nature is turned upside down in those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

Then Lord Buddha, turning the pot right side up, said to Rahula, "Do you see how this pot is vacant and hollow?"

"Yes, sir."

"That's how vacant and hollow the ascetic's nature is in those who are not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie."

Suppose there was a royal bull elephant with tusks like plows, able to draw a heavy load, pedigree and battle-hardened. In battle it uses its fore-feet and hind-feet, its fore-quarters and hind-quarters, its head, ears, tusks, and tail, but it still protects



its trunk. So its rider thinks: 'This royal bull elephant still protects its trunk. It has not fully dedicated its life.' But when that royal bull elephant ... in battle uses its fore-feet and hind-feet, its fore-quarters and hind-quarters, its head, ears, tusks, and tail, and its trunk, its rider thinks: 'This royal bull elephant ... in battle uses its fore-feet and hind-feet, its fore-quarters and hind-quarters, its head, ears, tusks, and tail, and its trunk. It has fully dedicated its life. Now there is nothing that royal bull elephant would not do.'

In the same way, when someone is not ashamed to tell a deliberate lie, there is no bad deed they would not do, I say.

So you should train like this: 'I will not tell a lie, even for a joke.'

What do you think, Rahula? What is the purpose of a mirror?"

“

*It's for checking your reflection, sir.*

”

“In the same way, deeds of body, speech, and mind should be done only after repeated checking.

When you want to act with the body, you should check on that same deed: 'Does this act, with the body that I want to do, lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both? Is it unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result?' If, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I want to do, leads to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result.' To the best of your ability, Rahula, you should not do such a deed.

But if, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I want to do,

doesn't lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's skillful, which has happiness as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should do such a deed.

While you are acting with the body, you should check on that same act: 'Does this act, with the body that I am doing, lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both? Is it unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result?' If, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I am doing, leads to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should desist from such a deed.

But if, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I am doing, doesn't lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's skillful, which has happiness as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should continue doing such a deed.

After you have acted with the body, you should check on that same act: 'Does this act, with the body that I have done, lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both? Is it unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result?' If, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I have done, leads to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should confess, reveal, and clarify such a deed to the Teacher or a sensible spiritual companion. And having revealed it you should restrain yourself in future.

But if, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act, with the body that I have done, doesn't lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's skillful, which has happiness as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should live in rapture and joy because of this, training day and night in skillful qualities.

When you want to act with speech, you should check on that same deed: 'Does this act of speech, that I want to do, lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both?'

If, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act of speech, that I have done, leads to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should confess, reveal, and clarify such a deed to the Teacher or a sensible spiritual companion. And having revealed it you should restrain yourself in future.

But if, while checking in this way, you know:

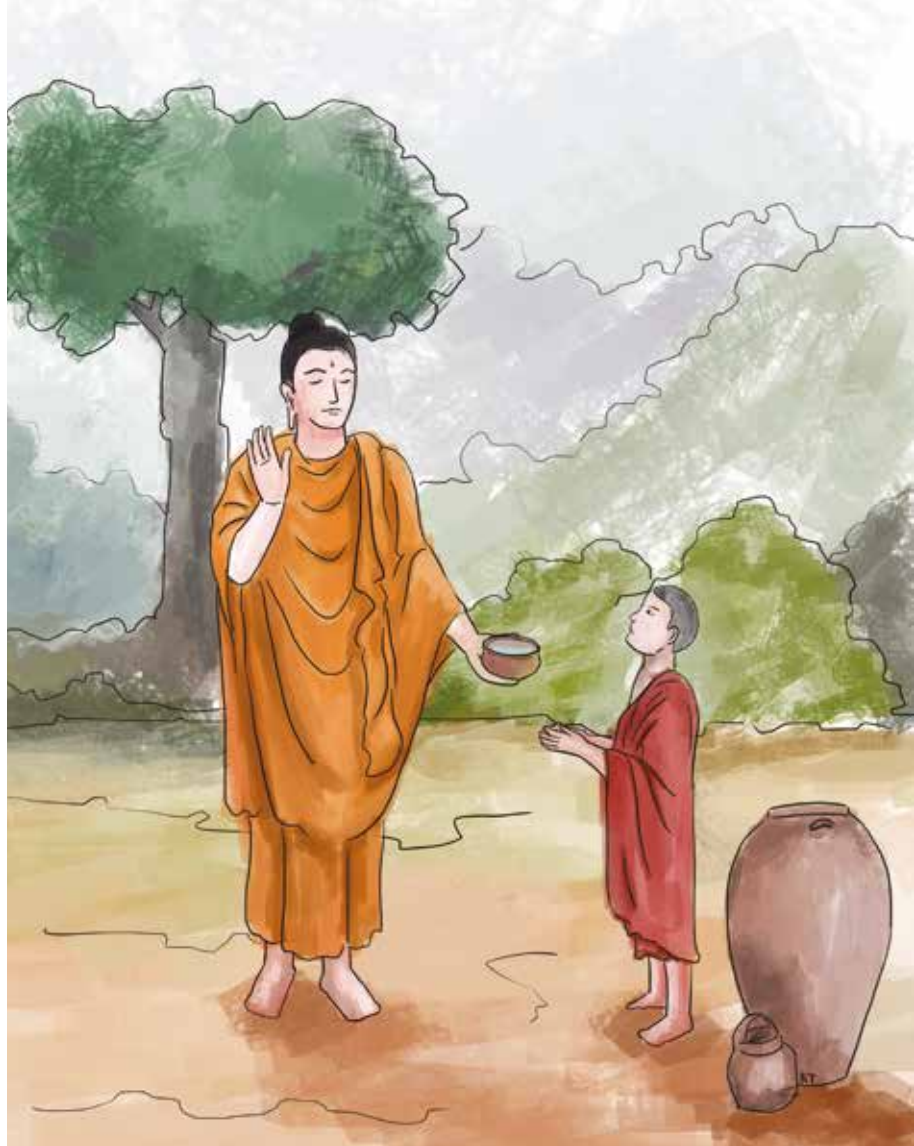
'This act of speech, that I have done, doesn't lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's skillful, which has happiness as its outcome and result.'

Then, Rahula, you should live in rapture and joy because of this, training day and night in skillful qualities.

When you want to act with the mind, you should check on that same deed: 'Does this act of mind, that I want to do, lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both?'

If, while checking in this way, you know: 'This act of mind, that I have done, leads to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's unskillful, which has suffering as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should be horrified, repelled, and disgusted by that deed. And being repelled, you should restrain yourself in future.

But if, while checking in this way, you know:



'This act with the mind, that I have done, doesn't lead to hurting myself, hurting others, or hurting both. It's skillful, with happiness as its outcome and result.' Then, Rahula, you should live in rapture and joy because of this, training day and night in skillful qualities.

All the ascetics and brahmins of the past, future, and present who purify their physical, verbal, and mental actions do so after repeatedly checking. So Rahula, you should train yourself like this:

'I will purify my physical, verbal, and mental actions through repeatedly checking and reflecting.'

That is what the Buddha said. Venerable Rahula was satisfied and happy with what the Buddha said.



# Panatipata:

## THE FIRST PRECEPT OF PAÑCA-SILA

**P**anatipata veramani sikkhapadam samadiyami. It is the statement of the first precept written in Romanized Pali in the Buddhist text. Literal translation of it into English can be read as “Undertaking (**samadiyati**) the training precept (**sikkhapada**) to abstain (**veramani**) from destroying (**atipata**) of breathing things (**pana**)”.

The key phrase ‘**Panatipata**’, which is a blend of two words ‘**pana**’ and ‘**atipata**’, means ‘destruction of breathing things’ or ‘killing’, hence it is the act of killing anything that one perceives as breathing or having life.

Notwithstanding the fact that ‘**Panatipata**’ has been commonly known to lay Buddhists, it is practically worthy to study some commentaries on the first precept and appreciate its characteristics, means, measure and merits. Such reading is certainly a knowledge sharpener to further deep-root one’s personal confidence and faith. Moreover, one can also draw inspiration from the abundant list of merits earned by undertaking the first precept.





## CHARACTERISTICS

According to commentaries in the Buddhist literature, there are five characteristics or factors to qualify killing in violation of the first precept. These factors are:

1. **There was a breathing thing**
2. **Knowledge that the breathing thing was alive**
3. **There was intention to kill**
4. **There was effort to kill**
5. **Breathing thing died**

If someone killed a living being with all the five factors above fulfilled, he or she had committed killing hence violated the first precept. However, if only one of the five above was not fulfilled, it did not reach to the point of violation of the first precept. For example, if someone killed a breathing thing without having any intention or someone stumbled upon killing act accidentally but not deliberately, then he or she did not violate the precept.

One must note, however, that any effort with intention to kill a living being, though the living being fortunately survived from being killed hence it was not a wholly violation of the first precept, would not produce a clean sheet for the perpetrator. Similarly, acting upon a dead body with impression of being alive and with intention to kill did not violate the first precept but was never to get away without any repercussions.

## MEANS

Means are extension of the characteristics above. Means are concerned with types of effort one invested in as part of the action. There are six kinds of means of effort to justify one's involvement in violation of the first precept. These means are described as:

1. **By own hand**
2. **By command**
3. **By weapon (remotely)**
4. **By conspiring or fixing**
5. **By magic or knowledge**
6. **By supernatural power**

Unlike the five 'Characteristics' which requires all points must be fulfilled to constitute violation of the first precept, committal in any single kind of 'Means' above in destruction of a living being is justified for one's participation in killing act and thus attributes to violation of the first precept.

By the means of above, one's involvement in the act can be deduced in two ways, with direct effort and indirect effort (i.e. by conspiring). Indirect effort of killing would often involve a middleman or a medium. For example, someone wanted to kill a person without having contact with that person needed another person as a middleman to act on behalf upon the targeted person. Or the perpetrator with intent who used own knowledge to misguide the victim to death, though not with direct physical contact, clearly committed killing.

## MEASURE

The measure of the effect of killing is direct proportionate to the virtues of the killed, the relationship between the killer and the killed, and the level of effort taken by the killer to kill. For example, killing an 'Arahant' whom has earned wisdom of Nibbana and attained completeness would trigger a severe measure of repercussions with long lasting impact on the perpetrator. Such degree of measure is similarly true for killing of own parents. On the other hand, measure of effect on certain chosen professions such as pest control or slaughtering house would be lesser and would result smaller impact compare to killing of the enlightened one or own parents or own siblings or friends known for many years. That explains the level of effort in this regard is not just a physical measure but a psychological measure too.

## MERITS

According to the commentaries, there are twenty-two merits or benefits or good karma one could accumulate by observing and truthfully undertaking the first precept. These merits are compiled and described in the table below.

NO.	MERIT	DESCRIPTION/EXPLANATION/ASSOCIATED BENEFITS
1	Excellence of limbs	Physical strength.
2	Excellence of height and girth	Likeable feature. Physical strength.
3	Excellence of speed	Physical strength.
4	Sure-footedness	Likeable feature.
5	Elegance	Likeable feature.
6	Malleability	Physical strength.
7	Pureness	Mental strength.
8	Courage	Mental strength.
9	Great strength	Physical strength.
10	Clarity of speech	Likeable ability. Social strength.
11	Popularity in the world	Social strength.
12	An assembly without schisms	Social strength.
13	Untimorousness	Free from nervousness. Mental strength. Likeable ability.
14	Unpersecutedness	Free from oppression. Social virtue.
15	Immunity from death by others' violence	Social virtue.
16	Constant support	Social virtue.
17	Beauty of form	Likeable feature.
18	Beauty of shape	Likeable feature.
19	Unafflictedness	Free from impairment. Mental strength.
20	Sorrowlessness	Lesser encounters of sorrow and grief. Personal virtue. Social virtue.
21	Non-separation from those dear and beloved	Personal virtue. Social virtue.
22	Longevity	Personal virtue. Social virtue.

It is crystal clear that the twenty-two merits earned upon observing and undertaking the first precept bolsters all aspects of health, social, mental, physical and personal advantages in one's life. To this, to follow the path is neither hard nor easy. Only mindfulness is the key in harnessing balance in our life. May reader of this article be blessed with mindfulness.



# WEEKLY TEMPLE ACTIVITIES 2019



8:00pm-9:00pm  
Puja, Meditation &  
Dhamma Talk



7:00pm-8:00pm  
Adult Meditation  
Class



7:00pm-8:00pm  
Dhamma Talk  
in Myanmar  
8:00pm-9:00pm  
Dhamma Chanting



9:30am-10:00am  
Pali Chanting &  
Dhamma Talk



## UPCOMING

Temple Events 2019

13 Oct (Sunday) – Thadingyut Full Moon Day

20 Oct (Sunday) – Kathina Celebration

29 Dec (Sunday) – 28th Anniversary

## QUIZ

Let's have a walk  
down to the location!

Before becoming Buddha, the bodhisatta had many past lives as a human being. In those lives, he put great efforts to bring happiness for all beings, dispel their fright and terror, provide them lawful protection and shelter, and support all their necessities. Due to his accumulated good karma in those past lives, Buddha acquired the wonderful, unique auspicious signs on the soles of his feet.

**1. How many Auspicious signs on the Buddha's Sole?**

a) 96 b) 108 c) 100

**2. Auspicious sign on no 68 is**

a) King of Tigers  
b) King of Cranes  
c) King of Lions

**3. Blue water Lily (Nilapala) is on which number of Buddha's Sole?**

a) 19 b) 20 c) 21



If your answer is all correct,  
Editorial team will snowball  
**3 participants** and provide  
CANDLE for you to offer  
Buddha.



### HOW TO SUBMIT?

Scan **QR Code** to submit via  
online form or go to  
<https://tinyurl.com/y29rdo3n>



# EVENTS PHOTO DIARY



▲ 1 JANUARY 2019 | "WELCOME 2019" CHANTING



▲ 5-6 FEBRUARY 2019 | Chinese New Year



▲ 14 APRIL 2019 | Myanmar New Year



▲ 19 MAY 2019 | Vesak Day Celebrations



▲ 25 JUNE 2019 | Culture Carnival





**WHERE  
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THE PAST  
ISSUES?**

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of Burmese Buddhist  
Temple Newsletter at

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