

Exploring the ancient path in the Buddha's own words -- Lesson 1.1.1

Bahujanahitasuttam

Vuttañhetam¹ bhagavatā, vuttamarahatāti me sutam—

“Tayome puggalā loke uppajjamānā² uppajjanti bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya³
lokānukampāya⁴ atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam. Katame tayo? Idha,
bhikkhave⁵, tathāgato⁶ loke uppajjati⁷ araham⁸ sammāsambuddho vijjācaranasampanno⁹

¹ All the suttas starting with *vuttañhetam*—this has been said—refer to the female slave of Queen *Samāvāti* by the name *Khujjhuttarā* in Kosambī. The name *Khujjhuttarā* was given to her because she had been born with a deformed back (*khujja*- bent). It is said that in one of her past lives she had imitated a Pacceka Buddha, who was a hunchback. Despite her position as a slave-girl (because in another previous life she had treated a nun like her servant-girl) she had the capacity of quick understanding and the ability to memorize whatever she heard. This was a result of a situation when she proved fast thinking in a previous life, where she quickly presented bracelets to Pacceka Buddhas, who had trouble holding extremely hot food in their bowls). Her main duty under queen *Samāvāti* had been to procure a fresh bouquet of flowers everyday. It had been her habit to buy only half a bunch of flowers and to keep the other half of money for herself. This attitude changed when she listened to a discourse of the Buddha one day, which inspired her to present the correct amount of flowers to the queen. The queen was surprised by the large amount of beautiful flowers on that day and was accordingly informed about the past bad habit. But instead of rebuking *Kujjhuttarā*, the Queen *Samāvāti* instructed her with a new task: From hence on she had to go and listen to the discourses of the Buddha and to repeat them to her every day. The collection of these suttas constitutes the *Itivuttakapāli*.

² The suffix: *-māna* forms like the alternate rare form: *āna* the pres.p. of the medium voice.

³ After the Buddha had ordained his first five disciples, the noble youth Yasa and his friends, the number of Arahants had grown up to sixty-one. Before the first rains retreat the Buddha stirred them with the following words to spread the Dhamma : ‘*Caratha, bhikkhave, cārikaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam; mā ekena dve agamittha; desetha, bhikkhave, dhammaṃ ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhikalyāṇaṃ pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ pakāsetha.*’—“Wander forth, Bhikkhus, for the wellbeing of many, for the happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, the welfare and happiness of gods and men. No two should wander together the same direction. Proclaim, Bhikkhus, the Dhamma which is beneficial in the beginning, beneficial in the middle, and beneficial in the end, with correct wording full of meaning, complete in itself, utterly pure and displaying the holy life.” (see *Vinaya, Mahāvaggo*)

⁴ *lokānukampāya*: lit.:trembling along with, i.e. having compassion, out of pity for (the suffering in) the world

⁵ *bhikkhave*, here untranslated as :- ‘oh Bhikkhus’—is generally the term the Buddha used to address his assembly, which often consisted not only of monks and nuns, but of laypeople as well.

⁶ The expression *tathāgato* is a term that the Buddha uses whenever he talks about himself. It can be derived from *tathā gata* (having gone thus. i.e. having gone the path to enlightenment from the beginning to the end) as well as from *tatha āgata* (having come thus. i.e. having attained the state of enlightenment by the path he and all the Buddhas have proclaimed). For more details of the qualities of

sugato ¹⁰ lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānaṃ buddho bhagavā. ¹¹ So dhammaṃ deseti ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ pariyoṣānakalyāṇaṃ sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ, kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ ¹² pakāseti. Ayaṃ, bhikkhave, paṭhamo puggalo loke uppajjamāno uppajjati bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ.

“Puna caparaṃ, bhikkhave, tasseva satthu sāvako araham hoti khīṇāsavo ¹³ vusitavā katakaraṇīyo ohitabhāro anuppattasadattho parikkhīṇabhavasamyojano sammadaññā vimutto. So dhammaṃ deseti ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ

tathāgato refer to *Lokasuttaṃ* and *Kālakārāmasuttaṃ* in *Āṅguttaranikāyo*, *Catukkanipāṭapāli*, *Paṭhamapaṇṇāsakaṃ*, *Uruvelavaggo*.

7 The following qualities of the Buddha usually start with “*itipiso bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddho...*” and illustrate and frame together with the qualities of Dhamma “*svakkhato bhagavato dhammo...*” and the qualities of Sangha “*supattipanno bhagavato savaka sangho...*” the homage “*vandana*” to the Triple Gem. The inspiration derived for one's own practice out of properly understanding these qualities is called *Buddhanusati*, *Dhammanusati* and *Sanghanusati*. These ‘-anusati’ are explained in great detail in the *Visudhimaggo*.

8 The chapter of *Buddhanusati* in the *Visudhimaggo* deals in great detail with the derivation of roots and meanings of each of these epithets. For example the word *arahat* can be derived in various ways. *Araha* means—deserving, worthy-: *arahat* is someone worthy of one's veneration. *ara* also takes the connotation of a -spoke of a wheel- and *hari* describes -an enemy-, *hata* or *hanta* are derived from the word *hanati*—to kill, destroy, so the word *arahat* is understood as: -somebody, who has destroyed these spokes (of the wheel of becoming) and killed his enemies.

9 The term *vijjacarana* is translated as theory and practice. A practitioner should understand that *carana* consists of *sīla* and *samadhi* and *vijja* of *panna*. A simile compares *vijja* with the eye of a human being while *carana* resembles the limbs. In the same sense as a person is only perfect with good eyesight and fully-functioning limbs, a practitioner of Dhamma should therefore establish oneself in *carana* by developing proper concentration with a base of perfect moral behaviour as well as *vijja*, developing one's own wisdom through insight.

10 Literally *sugato* means -well gone-, but could also be derived for example from *sobhaṇa-gamana* (his perfect manner of trodding the path), *sammā gata* (having gone rightly without derivation) etc. For another explanation of *sugato* -well spoken- derived from *sammā gadati* see sutta 2.3.20.

11 Refer to commentarial explanation of *bhagavā*: for example in: *Maṅgalasuttavaṇṇanā*, *Nikkhepappayojanam*: *Bhaggarāgo bhaggadoso*, *bhaggamoho anāsavo*; *Bhaggāssa pāpakā dhammā*, *bhagavā tena vuccatī*”*ti*—Having abolished desire, aversion and delusion, freed from impurities, rid of all evil states- such a One is rightly called a *Bhagavā*.

12 *Brahmacariyaṃ* is here translated as ‘holy life’. One who decides to lead the ‘life of a brahma’ in the sense of a bhikkhu who leaves the household and is expected to accomplish the precepts as laid out in the Vinaya. For a householder the third precept means full abstention from sexual activities: *Abrahmacariyā veramaṇī sikkhāpadam samādiyāmi* - ‘I undertake the rule of training to live a life of chastity’. For examples compare *Majjhimanikā*, *Mūlapaṇṇāsapāli*, *Mahāyamakavaggo*, *Cūlasāropamasuttaṃ* and *Mahāsāropamasuttaṃ* or the *Brahmacariyasuttaṃ* in: *Āṅguttaranikāyo*, *Catukkanipāṭapāli*, *Uruvelavaggo*.

13 *khīṇāsavo*: an epithet for a person, an Arahant, whose mind is freed from all the four mental obsessions, i.e. *kāmāsava*, *bhavāsava*, *diṭṭhāsava*, *avijjāsava*—desire for sensuality, desire for living, attachment to philosophical speculations, and ignorance.

pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ ¹⁴ , kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ pakāseti. Ayaṃ, bhikkhave, dutiyo puggalo loke uppajjamāno uppajjati bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ.

“Puna ca paraṃ, bhikkhave, tasseva satthu sāvako sekho hoti pāṭipado bahussuto sīlavatūpapanno. Sopi dhammaṃ deseti ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ, kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahmacariyaṃ pakāseti. Ayaṃ, bhikkhave, tatiyo puggalo loke uppajjamāno uppajjati bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya

14 The expression: *sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ* can be translated purely literal: ‘with—sa- meaning, with differentiation’. *Attha* has a wide variety of meanings (goal, benefit, meaning,...) and *byañjana* is understood as letter, characteristic mark. The common translation is: ‘the spirit and the letter’. The translation: ‘with correct wording full of meaning’ tries to convey the sense of the commentarial explanations. The commentary relates *sātthaṃ* to *paṭipatti* and elucidates that the explanation of meaning should be satisfying and inspiring to any wise person through it’s profoundness and purity of explanation. *Sabyañjanaṃ* is related to *pariyatti* , it should be eliminating all doubts amongst worldly folks and generate faith through the profoundness of teaching, analytical exegesis and proper placement of words: *Yaṃ pana bhagavā dhammaṃ desento sāsana brahmacariyaṃ maggabrahmacariyaṃ pakāseti, nānāyehi dīpeti, taṃ yathānurūpaṃ atthasampattiyā sātthaṃ, byañjanasampattiyā sabyañjanaṃ. Saṅkāsaṇa, pakāsaṇa, vivaraṇa, vibhajana, uttānīkaṇa paññatti atthapadasamāyogato sātthaṃ, akkharapadabyañjanākāraniruttiniddeśasampattiyā sabyañjanaṃ, atthagambhīratāpaṭivedhagambhīratāhi vā sātthaṃ, dhammagambhīratādesanāgambhīratāhi sabyañjanaṃ. Atthapaṭibhānapaṭisambhidāvisayato vā sātthaṃ, dhammaniruttipaṭisambhidāvisayato sabyañjanaṃ. Paṇḍitavedanīyato parikkhakajana appasādakanti sātthaṃ, saddheyyato lokiyajana appasādakanti sabyañjanaṃ. Gambhīrādhīppāyato sātthaṃ, uttānapadato sabyañjanaṃ. Upanetabbassa abhāvato sakalaparipuṇṇabhāvena kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ, apanetabbassa abhāvato niddosabhāvena parisuddhaṃ, apica paṭipattiyā adhiḡamabyattito sātthaṃ, pariyattiyā āgamabyattito sabyañjanaṃ..... Tasmā “sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ ...pe... pakāseti” ti vuccati.*

When the Bhagavā, teaching the Dhamma, declares the holy life of the dispensation and the holy life of walking on the path, he throws light on it in manifold ways: if corresponding to the comprehension of the meaning: it is *sātthaṃ*, if corresponding to the comprehension of the letter: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*. Giving explanation, making known, uncovering, going into detail, clarification, description with the motto of conjunction: this is *sātthaṃ*; for the comprehension of letters and words, the explanation and analytical exegesis of letters and forms: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*.

Because of depth of meaning, profoundness of comprehension: it is *sātthaṃ* ; because of depth of Dhamma and profoundness of teaching: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*. Because of illumination of meaning, analytical knowledge in the sphere of meaning in extension: it is *sātthaṃ*; because of grammatical analyses in the field of casual relation, explanation of the origin of words, it is *sabyañjanaṃ*. Leading to comprehension amongst the wise ones and making it bright to investigating beings: it is *sātthaṃ*; inspiring faith and making it bright to the worldly people: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*.

Profound in inference: it is *sātthaṃ*; clear in words: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*.

It should bring to conclusion, not be in want of anything, it should be entire, complete and developed, fulfilled in it’s entity, it should remove (faults), not be in want of anything, faultless pure and developed, utterly pure and further more through *paṭipatti* lead to the manifestation of knowledge: it is *sātthaṃ*, through *pariyatti* it should be for the accomplishment of scriptures: it is *sabyañjanaṃ*.....Therefore it is said: “He teaches pe with correct wording full of meaning.”

devamanussānaṃ. Ime kho, bhikkhave, tayo puggalā loke uppajjamānā uppajjanti bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ”ti¹⁵.

Etamatthaṃ bhagavā avoca. Tatthetaṃ iti vuccati¹⁶—

“Sattā hi

Ayampi attho vutto bhagavatā, iti me sutanti.

Khuddakanikāye, Itivuttakapāḷi, Tikanipāto, Catutthovaggo, select.

ādikalyānaṃ	ādi + kalyāṇa+m	in the beginning + beneficial
anuppattasadattho	anu+p+patta+sad+attho	having reached+one’s own+goal
anuttaro	an+uttaro	not + higher (than that)
araham	arahant +nom.sg.	a worthy one, an Arahant
atthāya	attha +aya	for the benefit
bahujanahitāya	bahu+jana+hita+āya	many +people,beings +benefit +for
bahujanasukhāya	bahu+jana+sukha+āya	many +people,beings +happiness +for
bahussuto	bahu+s+suto	much heard—well versed, of great learning
brahmacariyaṃ	brahma+cariya+m	faring the path of a brahma
devamanussānaṃ	deva+manussa+ānaṃ	gods + mankind +of
dutiyo		the second
etamatthaṃ	etaṃ + atthaṃ	this + meaning/matter/goal
katakaṇṭhiyo	kata/pp.+kaṇṭhiyo/ger.	done+ought to be done
katama	interr.	what?
kevalaparipuṇṇaṃ	kevala+pari+puṇṇaṃ	complete+pref.+full
khīṇāsavo	khīṇa/pp.+āsavo	destroyed, exhausted, ‘without’ impurities (lit.: that which flows—intoxicating extract)
lokānukampāya	loka+anu+kampā(f.) +āya	the world + pref. +trembling
lokavidū	loka+vidū(adj.)	the world + clever, wise
majjhakalyānaṃ	majjhe+kalyānaṃ	in the middle +beneficial
ohitabhāro	ohita/pp.+bhāro	laid down + burden
pāṭipado	pāṭipada(adj.)	following the path in the correct manner
paṭhamo		the first
pakāseti	caus. of pakāseti	to make known, explain, illuminate
parikkhīṇabhavasamyojano	pari+k+khīṇa+bhava+samyojano	pref.+destroyed +becoming +fettors
parisuddhaṃ	pari+suddha+m	pref. +pure
pariyosānakalyānaṃ	pariyosāna+kalyāṇa+m	end, conclusion + beneficial

15 ‘ti: The oral tradition indicates with the syllable : ‘ti’ the end of a quotation, today often shown by quotation marks. ‘ti’ therefore remains untranslated. If the preceding word ends in ‘m’ - (devamanussānaṃ)- the pronunciation rules demand the change from ‘ṃti’ to the dental: ‘nti’: saddhammassavanaṃ + ti’ : saddhammassavananti

16 The expression: *Etamatthaṃ bhagavā avoca*—The Bhagava explained this matter—in general concludes the prose part of the words of the Buddha. The following expression: *Tatthetaṃ iti vuccati* —... in connection of which this was stated...- introduces verses that are then added in this connection to summarise the meaning in verse.

purisadammasārathi	purisa+damma/pp.+sārathi	men + to be tamed (see: dameti) + trainer (the trainer of the mankind that needs to tamed)
sātham sāvako sīlavatūpapanno	sa + attha+m sīla+vata+ūpapanno/pp.	with meaning disciple, pupil morality+practise+being furnished with
sabyañjanam sammadaññā satthā satthu sekho sugato tathāgato tatiyo tatthetam	sa+byañjanam samma+d+aññā satthar +ā/nom. satthar +u/gen. fr. sikkhati su+gato/pp. tathā+gato/pp. tattha + etam	with letter, according to the letter right + knowledge teacher of/under the teacher one in training, imperfect well+gone thusgone the third there, in connection of which + this
tayome uppajjamāno uppajjati vijjācaraṇasampanno	tayo+ ime uppajja+māno vijjā+carāṇa+sam+panno/pp.	these three the arising come out, arise knowledge+walking+perfect possessed of (alt.:good conduct)
vimutto vuccati vusitavā vuttañhetam	vimutto/pp. vusita/pp.+vā vutta+ m + ñh+ etam	liberated, freed to be called, said fulfilled,perfected said (pp. of 'vuccati') + this