**NAMO BUDDAYA!**

**Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa !..**

**Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Supremely Enlightened One !.**

**25. With Mahānāma**

At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Sakyans, near Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Tree Monastery. Then Mahānāma the Sakyan went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him: “Sir, how is a lay follower defined?” “Mahānāma, when you’ve gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha, you’re considered to be a lay follower.”

“But how is an ethical lay follower defined?” “When a lay follower doesn’t kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, or use alcoholic drinks that cause negligence, they’re considered to be an ethical lay follower.”

“But how do we define a lay follower who is practicing to benefit themselves, not others?” “A lay follower is accomplished in faith, but doesn’t encourage others to do the same. They’re accomplished in ethical conduct, but don’t encourage others to do the same. They’re accomplished in generosity, but don’t encourage others to do the same. They like to see the mendicants, but don’t encourage others to do the same. They like to hear the true teaching, but don’t encourage others to do the same. They readily memorize the teachings they’ve heard, but don’t encourage others to do the same. They examine the meaning of the teachings they’ve memorized, but don’t encourage others to do the same. Understanding the meaning and the teaching, they practice accordingly, but they don’t encourage others to do the same. That’s how we define a lay follower who is practicing to benefit themselves, not others.”

“But how do we define a lay follower who is practicing to benefit both themselves and others?” “A lay follower is accomplished in faith and encourages others to do the same. They’re accomplished in ethical conduct and encourage others to do the same. They’re accomplished in generosity and encourage others to do the same. They like to see the mendicants and encourage others to do the same. They like to hear the true teaching and encourage others to do the same. They readily memorize the teachings they’ve heard and encourage others to do the same. They examine the meaning of the teachings they’ve memorized and encourage others to do the same. Understanding the meaning and the teaching, they practice accordingly and they encourage others to do the same. That’s how we define a lay follower who is practicing to benefit both themselves and others.”

**Vishakha**

Meritorious children, Vishakha was the chief female lay devotee among all the other female lay disciples in the Gautama Buddha dispensation. The Supreme Buddha pronounced Vishakha as the female chief donor among the female lay disciples who offer alms for the Buddha and Maha Sangha.

Vishakha became a Stream Entrant (sothapanna) at the age of seven and died at the age of hundred and twenty. She lived in the town of Bhaddiya in the city of Anga. She came to the city of Savatti after her marriage. Vishakha got married to Purnawardhana, the son of a rich man called Migara. On her wedding day, her wise father gave her some advice under these ten headings:

1. A wife should not criticise her husband and parents-in-law in front of other people. Neither should their weaknesses or household quarrels be reported elsewhere.

2. A wife should not listen to the stories or reports of other households.

3. Things should be lent to those who return them.

4. Things should not be lent to those who do not return them.

5. Poor relatives and friends should be helped even if they do not repay.

6. A wife should sit gracefully. On seeing her parents-in-law or her husband, she should respect them by rising from her seat.

7. Before taking her food, a wife should first see that her parents-in-law and husband are served. She should also make sure that his servants are well cared for.

8. Before going to sleep, a wife should see that all doors are closed, furniture is safe, servants have performed their duties, and that parents-in-law have retired. As a rule, a wife should rise early in the morning and unless she is sick, she should not sleep during the day.

9. Her parents-in-law and husband should be treated very carefully, like fire.

10. Her parents-in-law and husband should be given the respect due to devas

 Before Vishakha came to this family all the members were disciples of Nigantta Nathaputhra. But, Vishakha was able to make them take refuge in the Triple Gem as a result of her act of prudence, bravery and also her excellent qualities. She also referred to as ‘Migara Matha’ in that family.

Vishakha looked after the monks like a mother who looked after her children. Vishakha was a very adorable woman Vishakha possessed the five kinds of feminine beauty: . She had beautiful hair, a beautiful body, beautiful teeth, beautiful complexion and a beautiful appearance.

Vishakha had a very valuable jewelry item called ‘mahalathapasadini’. Only three of these jewelry items were in Dambadiva at that time. One of these belonged to Vishakha. It was valued more than twenty seven million.

One day, Vishakha forgot her ‘mahalathapasadini’ jewelry in the Jethavana monastery. When she went to bring it back, she understood that Ananda swaminwahanse had kept it in a safe place knowing it belonged to Vishakha. After that Vishakha thought like this. “Now this has been touched by a Noble monk. Therefore it is not good for me to use it as a jewelry. I will sell this and with that money I will do something special for Maha Sangha”.

There was no one who could buy the jewelry for twenty seven million. Therefore she bought it with her money and went to the Jethavana monastery. She told the Supreme Buddha that she wanted to do something special for Maha sangha with that money. Then the Supreme Buddha asked Vishakha to build a monastery for the sangha to live in.

Vishakha got the monastery done with five hundred kuti on the ground floor and another five hundred kuti in the upstairs. She offered this monastery to Supreme Buddha and Maha Sangha in a big ceremony. This monastery was called ‘Purwaramaya’ and also it was called as ‘Migara Mathu Prasadaya’.

**Yathapi pupparasimha - kiramale gune bahu**

**evan jathena machchena - kaththabban kusalan bahun.**

As an expert garland maker makes many garlands from a help of flowers,you who obtained the human life should do many wholesome deeds.

**The story of Visākhā**

Then the Lord, having stayed at Benares for as long as he found suitable, set out on tour for Sāvatthī. Walking on tour, in due course he arrived at Sāvatthī. The Lord stayed there at Sāvatthī in the Jeta Grove in Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. Then Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, approached the Lord; having approached, having greeted the Lord, she sat down at a respectful distance. As she was sitting down at a respectful distance, the Lord gladdened … delighted Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, with *dhamma*-talk. Then Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, when she had been gladdened … delighted by the Lord with *dhamma*-talk, spoke thus to the Lord:

“Lord, may the Lord consent (to accept) from me a meal on the morrow together with the Order of monks.”

The Lord consented by becoming silent. Then Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, having understood the Lord’s consent, rising from her seat, greeting the Lord, departed keeping her right side towards him.

Then towards the end of that night a great cloud rained down in the four continents. Then the Lord addressed the monks, saying:

“Monks, even as it is raining in the Jeta Grove, so it is raining in the four continents. Let your bodies get wet with the rain, monks, this is the last great cloud over the four continents.”

“Very well, Lord,” and these monks having answered the Lord in assent, with their robes laid aside let their bodies get wet with the rain.

Then Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, having had sumptuous food, solid and soft, prepared, commanded a woman-slave, saying:

“Go now, having gone to the monastery, announce the time, saying, ‘Lord, it is time, the meal is ready’.”

“Very well, lady,” and this slave-woman, having answered Visākhā, Migāra’s mother in assent, having gone to the monastery, saw the monks, their robes laid aside, letting their bodies get wet with the rain. Seeing them, she thought: “There are no monks in the monastery, naked ascetics are letting their bodies get wet with the rain.” She approached Visākhā, Migāra’s mother; having approached, she spoke thus to Visākhā, Migāra’s mother:

“Lady, there are no monks in the monastery, naked ascetics are letting their bodies get wet with the rain.” Then it occurred to Visākhā, Migāra’s mother—she being clever, experienced, wise: “But undoubtedly it is the masters, their robes laid aside, who are letting their bodies get wet with the rain; this foolish woman thinks that there are no monks in the monastery, (but) that naked ascetics are letting their bodies get wet with the rain.” She commanded the woman-slave, saying: “Go now, having gone to the monastery, announce the time, saying, ‘Lord, it is time, the meal is ready’.”

Then these monks, having cooled their limbs, being refreshed in body, having taken up their robes, entered (each) his own dwelling-place. Then that woman-slave, having gone to the monastery, not seeing the monks, thinking: “There are no monks in the monastery, the monastery is empty,” approached Visākhā, Migāra’s mother; having approached, she spoke thus to Visākhā, Migāra’s mother:

“Lady, there are no monks in the monastery, the monastery is empty.” Then it occurred to Visākhā, Migāra’s mother—she being clever, experienced, wise: “But undoubtedly the masters, having cooled their limbs, being refreshed in body, having taken up their robes, have (each) entered his own dwelling-place; this foolish woman thinks that there are no monks in the monastery, that the monastery is empty.” She commanded the woman-slave, saying: “Go now, having gone to the monastery, announce the time, saying, ‘Lord, it is time, the meal is ready’.”

Then the Lord addressed the monks, saying: “Monks, arrange your bowls and robes, it is time for the meal.”

“Very well, Lord,” these monks answered the Lord in assent.

Then the Lord, dressing in the morning, taking his bowl and robe, having vanished from the Jeta Grove, just as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm, or might bend back his outstretched arm, became visible in the porch belonging to Visākhā, Migāra’s mother. Then the Lord sat down on an appointed seat together with the Order of monks.

Then Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, saying: “Wonderful, good sirs, marvellous, good sirs, is the great psychic power, the great majesty of the Truth-finder, in that although the floods are rolling on knee-deep, and although the floods are rolling on waist-deep, yet neither the feet nor the robes of a single monk have become wet,” and joyful, exultant, having with her own hand served and satisfied the Order of monks with the awakened one at their head with sumptuous solid and soft food, she sat down at a respectful distance after the Lord had eaten and had removed his hand from the bowl. As she was sitting down at a respectful distance, Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, spoke thus to the Lord:

“Lord, I ask eight boons of the Lord.”

“Visākhā, Truth-finders are beyond (granting) boons.”

“Lord, they are those which are allowable and those which are blameless.”

“Speak on, Visākhā.”

“I, Lord, want to give for life to the Order cloths for the rains, to give food for those coming in, to give food for those going out, to give food for the sick, to give food for those who tend the sick, to give medicine for the sick, to give a constant supply of conjey, to give bathing-cloths for the Order of nuns.”

“But having what special reason in mind, do you, Visākhā, ask the Truth-finder for eight boons?”

“Now I, Lord, commanded a slave-woman, saying, ‘Go now, having gone to the monastery, announce the time, saying: Lord, it is time, the meal is ready’; but then, Lord, that slave-woman, having gone to the monastery, saw the monks, their robes laid aside, letting their bodies get wet with the rain; seeing them, she thought, ‘There are no monks in the monastery, naked ascetics are letting their bodies get wet with the rain’. She approached me, having approached, she spoke thus to me, ‘Lady, there are no monks in the monastery, naked ascetics are letting their bodies get wet with the rain’. Impure, Lord, is nakedness, it is objectionable’ I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order cloths for the rains.

“And again, Lord, an in-coming monk, not accustomed to the roads, not accustomed to the resorts for alms is (still) walking for alms (when he is) tired. But having eaten my food for those coming in, (then when) he is accustomed to the roads, accustomed to the resorts for alms, he will walk for alms without getting tired. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order food for those coming in.

“And again, Lord, an out-going monk, while looking about for food for himself, may be left behind by the caravan, or if he set out tired on a journey he may arrive at the wrong time at the habitation to which he wishes to go. But having eaten my food for those going out, he will not be left behind by the caravan, nor will he set out tired on a journey (and so) he will arrive at the right time at the habitation to which he wishes to go. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order food for those going out.

“And again, Lord, if a monk who is ill does not obtain suitable meals, either his disease will grow very much worse, or he will pass away. When he has eaten my food for the sick, the disease will not grow very much worse, he will not pass away. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order food for the sick.

“And again, Lord, a monk who tends the sick, looking about for food for himself, will bring back food for the sick after the sun is right up (and) he will miss his meal. But having eaten my food for those who tend the sick, he will bring back food for the sick during the right time (and) he will not miss his meal. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order food for those who tend the sick.

“And again, Lord, if a monk who is ill does not obtain suitable medicines, either his disease will grow very much worse or he will pass away. When he has made use of my medicines for the sick, the disease will not grow very much worse, he will not pass away. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order medicines for the sick.

“And again, Lord, conjey was allowed by the Lord at Andhakavinda when he had its ten advantages in mind. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life to the Order a constant supply of conjey.

“There was a case (where nuns bathed) naked together with prostitutes at the same ford of the river Aciravatī. Lord, these prostitutes made fun of the nuns, saying: ‘Why in the world, ladies, is the Brahma-faring led by you while you are young? Surely the pleasures of the senses should be enjoyed? When you become old, then you can fare the Brahma-faring; thus will both extremes be experienced by you.’ Lord, these nuns, being made fun of by these prostitutes, became ashamed. Impure, Lord, is nakedness for women, it is abhorrent, it is objectionable. I, Lord, having this special reason in mind, want to give for life bathing-cloths for the Order of nuns.”

“But having what advantage in mind do you, Visākhā, ask the Truth-finder for eight boons?”

“Now, Lord, monks who have passed the rains in (various) places will come to Sāvatthī so as to see the Lord; having approached the Lord, they will ask: ‘Lord, such and such a monk has passed away; what is his bourn, what his future state?’ The Lord will explain this saying: ‘It is in the fruit of stream-attaining or it is in the fruit of once-returning or it is in the fruit of not-returning or it is in the fruit of perfection.’ I, having approached these, will ask: ‘Honoured sirs, was Sāvatthī previously visited by this master?’

“If they say to me: ‘Sāvatthī was previously visited by this monk,’ I shall come to the conclusion that undoubtedly cloths for the rains or food for those coming in or food for those going out or food for the sick or food for those who tend the sick or medicines for the sick or a constant supply of conjey was enjoyed by this master. On my calling that to mind, delight will be born; from delight, joy will be born; because my mind is joyful my body will be calm; with the body calm I will experience ease; because I am at ease my mind will be contemplative; this will be for me growth as to the sense-organs, growth as to the powers, growth as to the factors of enlightenment. I, Lord, having this advantage in mind, am asking the Truth-finder for the eight boons.”

“It is very good, Visākhā, it is good that you, Visākhā, having this advantage in mind, are asking the Truth-finder for the eight boons. I allow you, Visākhā, the eight boons.” Then the Lord blessed Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, with these verses:

“Whatever (woman), much delighted, endowed with virtue,
a disciple of the well-farer, food and drink

“Gives—having overcome avarice—the gift is heavenly,
dispelling sorrow, bringing happiness; (and)

“She gains a deva-like span
owing to the spotless, stainless way,

“She, desiring merit, at ease, healthy,
delights long in a heavenly company.”

Then the Lord, having blessed Visākhā, Migāra’s mother, with these verses, rising from his seat, departed.

Then the Lord, on this occasion, having given reasoned talk, addressed the monks, saying:

“**I allow, monks, cloths for the rains, food for those coming in, food for those going out, food for the sick, food for those who tend the sick, medicines for the sick, a constant supply of conjey, bathing-cloths for the Order of nuns.**”

*The Portion for Repeating on Visākhā*

**Anepidu Situ – Anatha pindika**

 Anepidu was the chief donor of the Buddha dispensation of the Supreme Buddha’s era. Before he came to be known as Anepidu, his name was Sudattha. He was a skilled businessman. One day he went to Rajagaha for a business matter. He stayed that night at one of his friend’s house. His friend talked about the Supreme Buddha while they were having dinner.

As soon as he heard the word “Supreme Buddha”, he was delighted in a way which he could not express in words. ”It’s very rare. It’s very rare. Yes, I have heard that the appearing of a Supreme Buddha is very rare. If I could see the Supreme Buddha, if I could listen to one dhamma word, then if I died after that then I will not mind” thought Sudattha. Actually that night he did not fall asleep. He was thinking only about the qualities of the Supreme Buddha. In the middle of the night, he opened his eyes. When he around it seemed like the sun has risen. Then he left to see the Supreme Buddha. On the way when he passed a cemetery his mind was a little shaken. At once the light disappeared and he was in the dark. He could only see the light because of the pleasant mind he had towards the Supreme Buddha as a result of thinking about the Qualities of the Supreme Buddha. But, in actuality it was still night. Then he heard a voice from the sky.

***“Sathang hatthi sathang assa – sathang assatharee ratha
sathang knna sahassani – amuttha manikundala
ekassa padaveethiharassa – kalang nagghathi solacing***

Which means,

If the foot that you move to go and see the Supreme Buddha is divided into twelve parts, then one of those twelve parts is more valuable than having hundred elephants, hundred horses, hundred beautiful carts with mares and hundred women adorn with jewelry.

As soon as he heard this stanza, he began remembering the Qualities of the Supreme Buddha again. His mind was steadied and the darkness disappeared. He could see the road clearly and resumed his journey to see the Supreme Buddha again. On the way, his mind was shaken three times and on all three times he heard the same stanza.

When he reached Weluvana Monastery, the Supreme Buddha was seated under a tree. “Meritorious Sudattha, come here” the Supreme Buddha spoke to him kindly. Sudattha was very happy as the Supreme Buddha called him by the name. Sudattha went near the Supreme Buddha. He lied on the ground and worshipped the Supreme Buddha. He listened to dhamma from Supreme Buddha and became Stream Entrant (Sotapanna).

Anepidu thought to build a monastery and offer it to Supreme Buddha and the Maha Sangha. There was a beautiful park which was owned by a prince called ‘Jetha’. It was situated neither too near nor too far to the city Savatthi. Anepidu’s mind was attracted only to this park. The prince Jetha also liked this park very much and he did not want to sell it. Once again Anepidu went to see prince Jetha and started to ask him to sell the park. Then at last the prince Jetha said I won’t sell this park even if you covered the land with gold coins. Then Anepidu said, “Okay, prince Jetha, if so, then I have bought the park”. The prince Jetha asked, “Anepidu, how did you buy the park?” “Prince Jetha, now you said, even if I covered the ground in gold coins you will still not give the park. So from tomorrow morning I will start laying the gold coins.” The prince Jetha did not accept this as true.

The following morning the servants of Anepidu brought carts full of gold coins to the park and started to cover the ground with the coins. At last, a small part of the ground remained uncovered when the gold coins finished. The prince Jetha thought “this is an amazing thing. Can a person spend like this even if he has such a pleasant mind? Doesn’t this man have stinginess? If he is to spend what he has earned like this, he might have got a more valuable thing”.

The prince Jetha talked to the rich man, Anepidu. “Meritorious Anepidu, I am really surprised about your generosity. No need to lay coins on the rest of the ground. But I have a small request to you. Once you have finished the monastery, would you like to put my name to this park? Anepidu liked the suggestion. After that the monastery was named as Jethavana Monastery (Jethavanaramaya) and Anepidu offered the Monastery to the Supreme Buddha and Maha Sangha.

 Everyday Anepidu offered alms for the Maha Sangha at his house and the food stall was held for the poor people to eat free. He did a great service to the Buddha dispensation.

**53. Nanda’s Mother**

so i have heard. At one time Venerables Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna were wandering in the Southern Hills together with a large Saṅgha of mendicants. Now at that time the laywoman Veḷukaṇṭakī, Nanda’s mother, rose at the crack of dawn and recited the verses of “The Way to the Beyond”.

And at that time the great king Vessavaṇa was on his way from the north to the south on some business. He heard Nanda’s Mother reciting, and stood waiting for her to finish.

Then when her recital was over she fell silent. Then, knowing she had finished, Vessavaṇa applauded, saying: “Good, sister! Good, sister!” “But who might you be, my dear?” “Sister, I am your brother Vessavaṇa, the great king.” “Good, my dear! Then may my recital of the teaching be my offering to you as my guest.” ‘Good, sister! And let this also be your offering to me as your guest. Tomorrow, the mendicant Saṅgha headed by Sāriputta and Moggallāna will arrive at Veḷukaṇṭa before breakfast. When you’ve served the Saṅgha, please dedicate the teacher’s offering to me. Then that will also be your offering to me as your guest.”

And when the night had passed the lay woman Nanda’s Mother had a variety of delicious foods prepared in her own home. Then the Saṅgha of mendicants headed by Sāriputta and Moggallāna arrived at Veḷukaṇṭa. Then Nanda’s Mother addressed a man: “Please, mister, go to the monastery and announce the time to the Saṅgha, saying: ‘Sirs, it’s time. The meal is ready in the house of the lady Nanda’s Mother.’” “Yes, Ma’am,” that man replied, and he did as she said. And then the Saṅgha of mendicants headed by Sāriputta and Moggallāna robed up in the morning and, taking their bowls and robes, went to the home of Nanda’s Mother, where they sat on the seat spread outs. Then Nanda’s Mother served and satisfied them with her own hands with a variety of delicious foods.

When Sāriputta had eaten and washed his hand and bowl, Nanda’s Mother sat down to one side. Sāriputta said to her: “Nanda’s Mother, who told you that the Saṅgha of mendicants was about to arrive?”

“Sir, last night I rose at the crack of dawn and recited the verses of ‘The Way to the Beyond’, and then I fell silent. Then the great king Vessavaṇa, knowing I had finished, applauded me: ‘Good, sister! Good, sister!’ I asked: ‘But who might you be, my dear?’ ‘Sister, I am your brother Vessavaṇa, the great king.’ ‘Good, my dear! Then may my recital of the teaching be my offering to you as my guest.’ ‘Good, sister! And let this also be your offering to me as your guest. Tomorrow, the mendicant Saṅgha headed by Sāriputta and Moggallāna will arrive at Veḷukaṇṭa before breakfast. When you’ve served the Saṅgha, please dedicate the teacher’s offering to me. Then that will also be your offering to me as your guest.’ And so, sir, may the merit and the growth of merit in this gift be for the happiness of the great king Vessavaṇa.”

“It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing that you converse face to face with a mighty and illustrious god like the great king Vessavaṇa”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. I had an only son called Nanda who I loved dearly. The rulers forcibly abducted him on some pretext and had him executed. But I can’t recall getting upset when my boy was under arrest or being arrested, imprisoned or being put in prison, killed or being killed.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing that you purify even the arising of a thought.”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. When my husband passed away he was reborn in one of the realms of spirits. He revealed to me his previous life-form. But I can’t recall getting upset on that account.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing that you purify even the arising of a thought.”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. Ever since we were both young, and I was given in marriage to my husband, I can’t recall betraying him even in thought, still less in deed.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing that you purify even the arising of a thought.”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. Ever since I declared myself a lay follower, I can’t recall deliberately breaking any precept.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing!”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. Whenever I want, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, I enter and remain in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. As the placing of the mind and keeping it connected are stilled, I enter and remain in the second absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and confidence, and unified mind, without placing the mind and keeping it connected. And with the fading away of rapture, I enter and remain in the third absorption, where I meditate with equanimity, mindful and aware, personally experiencing the bliss of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous and mindful, one meditates in bliss.’ With the giving up of pleasure and pain, and the ending of former happiness and sadness, I enter and remain in the fourth absorption, without pleasure or pain, with pure equanimity and mindfulness.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing!”

“Sir, this is not my only incredible and amazing quality; there is another. Of the five lower fetters taught by the Buddha, I don’t see any that I haven’t given up.” “It’s incredible, Nanda’s Mother, it’s amazing!”

Then Venerable Sāriputta educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired Nanda’s Mother with a Dhamma talk, after which he got up from his seat and left.

**Sadu ! Sadu !! Sadu !!!**