CHAPTER-III

The practices of Mettā and its Impact on the people of Buddhist Countries

Introduction

The present chapter will explain the original text Metta Sutta and how and why it has much influence on the people of Buddhist countries. And the chapter will clearly show some stories about Mettā from Buddhist literature and why those stories are very familiar with the people of Buddhists, and how those who are not Buddhists around the world are interested in Mettā and how they are practicing depending on their positions are.

Metta Sutta in Roman script and its translation

1. yassanubhavato yakkha, nevadassenti bhisanam;\textsuperscript{148}
yamhi cevanuyunjanto, rattindivamatandito.

Due to the glorious power of this discourse on Love, Spirits dare not disclose the frightful sights, One who devotes to himself, This doctrine day and night diligently.

2. sukham supati sutto ca, papam kinci na passati;
evammadi gunupetam, parritamb tam bhanama he.

Sleeps soundly and does not see, Any nightmare when asleep, Oh dear all! Let us recite, This doctrine endowed with such and other merits.

\textsuperscript{148} Khu.p.10,Sn.p.300,Vism.Vols(1)p.311
3. *karaniyam atthakusalena, yanta santam padam abhisamecca; sakko uju ca suhuju ca, suvaco cassa mudu anatimani.*

He who seeks to promote his welfare, And who has anticipated in the attainment of the state of perfect Peace should be able to be, honest, upright, Gentle in speech, meek and not proud.

4. *santussako ca subharo ca, appakicco ca sallahukavutti; santindriyo ca nipako ca, appagabbho kulesvananugiddho.*

Contented, easy to support, Not over busy, simple in living, Tranquil in his senses, prudent, And not brazen, nor fawning on families.

5. *na ca khuddhamacare kinci, yena vinnu pare upavadeyyum; sukhino va khemino hontu, sabbasatta bhavantu sukhitatta.*

He must refrain from any action that gives the wise reason to reprove him, (Then let him cultivate the thought :) May all be well and secure, May all beings be happy.


Whatever living creatures there be, Without exception, weak or strong, Long, huge or middle-sized, Or short, minute or bulky.

7. *dittha va ye va additha, ye va dure vasanti avidure; bhuta va sambhavesi va, sabbasatta bhavantu sukhitatta.*
Whether visible or invisible, And those living far or near, the born or those seeking birth, May all beings be happy.

8. *na paro param nikubbetha, natimannetha katthaci na kanci; byarasana patighasanna; nannamannassa dukkhamiccheyya.*

Let none deceive or decay, His fellow anywhere, Let none wish others harm, In resentment or in hate.

9. *mata yatha niyamputtam ayusa ekaputtamanurakkhe; evampi sabbabhuitesu, manasam bhavaye aparimanam.*

Just as with her own life, a mother shields from hurt, Her own son, her only child, Let all-embracing thoughts, For all beings be yours.

10. *mettanca sabbalokasmi, manasam bhavaye aparimanam; uddham adho ca tiriyanca, asambadham averamasapattam.*

Cultivate an all-embracing mind of love, For all throughout the universe, In all its height, depth and breadth-Love that is untroubled, And beyond hatred or enmity.

11. *tittham caram nisinno va, sayano yavatassa vigatamiddho; etam satim adhittheyya, brahmametam vihara-midha-mahu.*

As you stand, walk, sit or lie, So long as you are awake, Pursue this awareness with your might: It is deemed the Divine State here.

12. *ditthinca anupaggamma, silava dassanena sampanno; kamesu vinaya gedham, na hi jatuggabhaseyya puna-reti.*
Holding no more to wrong beliefs, with virtue and vision of the ultimate, And having overcome all sensual desires, Never in a womb is one born again

The Buddha and the Mettā (Loving-Kindness) some instances and anecdotes

In the long span of forty-five years wandering life of Buddha, Buddhism flourishes with the message of love and compassion. Wherever Buddha goes people are attracted by his noble personality beaming forth peace and serenity. They flock to him with great enthusiasm and listen to his message of emancipation. Because Buddha adopts a polite way of putting the thing without laying the blame to others. He conquers them all through his Mettā or sheer force of universal love. Mettā means not only love and goodness, but it explains “active interest in others”. A person who really wishes to help. Will almost always find the means thereto. The teaching is that, we must know what is needed, proceed tactfully and never press for help but use psychological ability. Buddha himself cannot remain indifferent to the injustice done to the millions of people. He does not close his eyes, as so many interested people try to make out to the terrible condition of the masses of his day. He presents the concept of corporate emancipation, which is to be realized through a dynamic life of peace, amity and good will, not only between man and man but also between man and other being. He solves the most intricate problems of existence for humanity by the rational interpretation of the harmony in all the conditions.

After attaining the enlightenment, he was not eager to preach his teaching to worldly people. Brahma Sahampati requested him to reach his
sermons to people. There were people who would be able to understand it. Then he took a decision to preach his teachings to them. A problem crept into his mind to whom I should preach first. Lastly he decided to preach his first sermon to *pañcavaggiya Bhikkhus* who had served him during his penance. *Pañcavaggiya Bhikkhus* were dwelling at *Isipatana Migadāya*. He went directly to *Isipatana* and preached his first sermon to them and ordained them. There he formed the *Bhikkhu Sangha* and instructed them to go far and wide in order to preach the *Dhamma* for the welfare of human beings.

‘*Caratha, Bhikkhave, carikam bahujanahitāya bahujana sukhāya lokanukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānam*’-

Walk monks on tour for the blessing of the many folk, for the happiness of the many folk, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare, the blessing, the happiness of *devas* and men. He had a deep sympathy and compassion for entire human beings but for animals too.

These immortal words uttered by this great teacher of humanity more than 2600 years ago will never be irrelevant or meaningless because they embody the universal love and boundless compassion of this great man for the entire creation for the happiness and welfare of whom he loved and preached.

**The conversion of notorious criminal Aṅgulimāla**

In the case of *Aṅgulimāla thera*, there we also find the same thing. Really *Aṅgulimāla* was not a robber, he was made bandit. The then society was responsible for it. He was very able, intelligent and diligent student of his Ashram. Out of hatred or jealousy the Acharya asked him- “your study is
over now you have to pay Gurudakshina. You have to donate one thousand fingers as Gurudakshina. To fulfill the desire of his Guru, he became a robber and began to cut one finger of each and every man who passed through that way. This matter was reported to king prasenajiti. He became very much disturbed to hear this news. His subjects were frightened and left their villages, towns etc. and wandered to and from in order to save their lives. To complete one thousand fingers only one finger was needed. His mother requested his father to do something to save her child. But he refused to do so. She herself went to save her child. Aṅgulimāla became glad to see his mother because his mother’s finger would complete one thousand fingers. In the meanwhile the Buddha appeared. He followed the Buddha. There was a hot discussion between Buddha and Aṅgulimāla. At last he accepted the three gems and became the disciple of the Lord Buddha.

**Story of Rojamalla**

At one time, the Lord Buddha accompanied by one thousand, two-hundred and fifty disciples - Sarīghas made His way to Kusināra from a place called Apana. At that time, the ruling princes of Malla on hearing the news of Buddha's proposed visit to Kusināra, issued a royal proclamation that any person who failed to turn up and welcome the Buddha and His disciples Bhikkhus would be punished with a fine of five-hundred kyats. On Buddha's arrival at Kusināra, Roja was one among the crowd who was present to welcome the Buddha. He was an intimate friend of the Venerable Ashin Ananda.

When Ananda expressed his best wishes, being delighted to see his friend Roja, saying it was very nice of him to give a hearty welcome to the
Lord Buddha, *Roja* was said to have replied as: “I came out to meet the Buddha not because I have great respect and reverence for *Buddha, Dhamma* and *Saṁgha*, but because I fear I would have to pay a penalty of five-hundred kyats which will be imposed upon me should I fail to be present on this occasion of according reception to the Buddha and his Disciples.”

Having heard this reply, *Ashin Ananda* felt sorry and wondered what made *Roja* speak to him in that manner. *Ashin Ananda* then reflected, “*Roja* is very rude and impolite. He is ignorant of the great value of advantages that will be derived by paying his reverence to the triple Gem-*Buddha, Dhamma* and *Saṁgha*. He would, therefore, lose all benefits which he should have gained.” After reflecting as such, *Ashin Ananda* appraised the Buddha on this matter and respectfully put up that if *Roja* were bent upon giving his best regards to this noble Sāsanā, he would have lot of advantages.

Thereupon, Buddha exhorted *Ashin Ananda* to develop *metta bhavanā* with his concentration fixed firmly on *Roja* only. Usually Buddha developed and radiated *Metta* equally on all beings. Buddha also used to radiate his compassionate feelings evenly balanced towards all beings. However, on this particular occasion, Buddha imagined thus: “This man *Roja* would fail to gain merits as he should, if he does not take the opportunity of paying his reverence despite his meeting with the Exalted One, personally.” He therefore; developed and put forth his *metta* concentrating on *Roja* only.

It is something like a beam of search-light. If the rays of the light were diffused, if would loosen its brightness. If however, the light is focused
on only one single narrow opening or object, it would be very powerful and
dazzling, something that resembles the light emitted by the rays of the sun
during daytime. Heat is also intense. Similarly, when Buddha radiated His
metta concentrating fixedly on Roja alone instead of spreading out the rays
of metta towards all beings, it would be extremely powerful.

The immediate reaction was that a feeling of immense reverence had
occurred in the mind of Roja. It was stated that mind which revered
resembled that of a newly born calf which had its deep and firm attachment
to its mother cow with intense love and devotion. Hence, Roja immediately
left the precincts of a small monastery to another, and then another making
his way hither and thither in search of the Exalted One. Eventually, as
directed by the Samghas, he reached the perfumed Chamber of the premised
where the Buddha was residing. He then took his seat in the presence of the
Buddha worshipping and devotedly paying his obeisance. Buddha then gave
his due admonition and delivered a discourse relating to the virtues of dāna,
sīla, etc. After hearing the Sermon, he became a Sotāpanna. He even
entreated the Buddha to let the Samghas recognize him as their benefactor
and accept his offer of the four necessities relating to the priests, namely,
monastery, robes, food and medicine, and not to accept offerings from
others.

Relying on this incident, it is to be understood that “If metta is
developed and radiated towards others with concentrated attention, it would
have a telepathic effect, and the recipients of metta would tend to love and
respect in reciprocity. Not only human beings but also animals are likely to
reciprocate love. Some time ago, the Home for the aged had published a magazine in which a peculiar incident was found to have been mentioned”.149

**The Conversion of Kassapa brothers by the Psychic Power of contemplating on Mettā**

The Lord Buddha was, walking on tour, in due course arrived at Uruvelā. Now at that time three matted hair ascetics, Kassapa of Uruvelā, Kassapa of the River, Kassapa of Gayā, were living at Uruvelā. Of these, the matted hair ascetic Kassapa of Uruvelā was leader, guide, highest, chief, head of five hundred matted hair ascetics; the matted hair ascetic Kassapa of the River was leader….head of three hundred matted hair ascetic; the matted hair ascetic Kassapa of Gayā was leader … head of two hundred matted hair ascetics.

Then the Lord approached the hermitage of the matted hair ascetic Kasspa of Uruvelā; having approached, he spoke thus to the matted hair ascetic Kassapa of Uruvelā: “If it is not inconvenient to you, Kassapa, let me stay for one night in the fire-room.”

“It is not inconvenient to me, great recluse, (but) there is a fierce serpent king of psychic power there; he is a terribly venomous snake. Do not let him harm you.” And a second time the Lord spoke thus to the matted hair ascetic Kassapa of Uruvelā: “If it is not inconvenient to you…” And a third time the Lord spoke thus to the matted hair ascetic Kassapa, let me stay for one night in the fire-room,”

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149 Vin.Vols(iii), p.345
“It is not inconvenient to me, great recluse, (but) there is a fierce serpent king of psychic power there; he is a terribly venomous snake. Do not let him harm you.”

“It is not likely that he can harm me. Please do you, Kassapa, allow (me the use of) the fire-room.”

“Stay, great recluse, as you wish it.”

Then the Lord, having entered the fire-room, having laid down a grass mat, sat down cross-legged, keeping his back erect, having caused mindfulness to be present in front of him. Then that serpent saw that the Lord had entered, and seeing this, pained, afflicted, he blew forth smoke. Then it occurred to the Lord: “What now if I, without destroying this serpent’s skin and hide and flesh and ligament and bones and the marrow of the bones, were to master (his) heat by heat?”

Then the Lord, having worked a work of psychic power, blew forth smoke. Then that serpent, not conquering anger, blazed up. The Lord, having attained the condition of heat, also blazed up. When both were in flames, the fire-room became as thought burning, ablaze, in flames. Then the matted hair ascetics, having surrounded the fire-room, spoke thus:

“Beautiful indeed is great recluse, (but) he will be harmed by the serpent.”

Then the Lord at the end of that night, without having destroyed that serpent’s skin and hide and flesh and ligaments and bones and the marrow of the bones, having mastered (his) heat by heat, having placed him in bowl, showed him to the matted hair ascetic, Uruvelakassapa, saying: “This,
Kassapa, is your serpent, his heat was mastered by heat.” Then it the occurred to the matted hair ascetic Uruvelakassapa: “Truly the great recluse is of great psychic power, of great majesty, in that he can master by heat the heat of the fierce serpent king who has psychic power and is a terribly venomous snake; but yet he is not a perfected one as I am.”

The conversion of elephant Nalāgīri

On another occasion an intoxicated elephant was driven towards the Buddha in an effort to kill Him. The Buddha calmly radiated His love towards the elephant and subdued it.

A beautiful story may be cited to show how the Bodhisatta as a boy extended his boundless Mettā when his own father ordered him to be killed. Young though he was, the Bodhisatta thought to himself:-

“Here is a golden opportunity for me to practise my Mettā. My father stands before me, my good mother is weeping, the executioner is ready to chop off my hands and feet. I, the victim, am in the centre. Love I must all the four in equal measure without any distinction. May my good father not incur any suffering because of this ruthless act! May I become a Buddha in the future?”

In one of his previous births the Bodhisatta was once practicing the virtue of patience in a royal park. The king, a drunkard, meaning to test his patience, ordered the executioner to beat him and cut off his hands and feet. Still he practiced patience. The impatient king kicked him in the chest. Lying in a pool of blood, almost on the verge of death, the Bodhisatta150

150 Nārada mahā thera, The buddha and his teachings p-624-625.
blessed the king and wished him long life saying that men like himself never get angry.\(^{151}\)

A Bhikkhu is expected to practise *Mettā* to such an extent that he is forbidden to dig or cause to dig the ground lest insects and other minute creatures die.

The high standard of *Mettā* expected from a Bhikkhu can be understood by the following admonition of the Buddha:

> “If bandits sever your limbs with a two-handled saw, and if you entertain hate in your heart, you will not be a follower of my teaching.”

Such enduring patience is extremely difficult. But, that is the lofty ethical standard the Buddha expects from His followers.

**Noteworthy Facts of the Paritta**

After Lord Buddha had attained omniscience and Enlightenment, he taught for 45 years his vast Dhamma, which contained in five Nikāyas, three Piṭakas or 84,000 articles.

> “Paritta” in Pāḷi, “paritrana” in Sanskrit means principally protection. Paritta suttas describe certain suttas or discourses delivered by the Buddha and regarded as affording protection. This protection is to be obtained by reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas*. The practice of reciting or listening to the *paritta suttas* began very early in the history of Buddhism.

The word *paritta*, in this context, was used by the Buddha, for the first time, in a discourse known as *Khandha Paritta* in the *Culla Vagga* of

\(^{151}\) Jātaka Stories, Vol. iii, p.28.
the *Vinaya Piṭaka*\(^{152}\), and also in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* under the title “*Ahi (metta) Sutta*”\(^{153}\). This discourse was recommended by the Buddha as guard or protection for the use of the members of the Order. The Buddha in this discourse exhorts the monks to cultivate *metta* or loving-kindness towards all beings.

Among his discourses are Parittas, or protective verses, which were taught to Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis, male and female lay devotees. The Paritta, as defined in the saying “*Pari-samantato bhayaṁ tāyati rakkhatīti parittam*”, means “Pareik (Paritta) is that which protects one from dangers abounding in all directions”. Regarding the efficacy of the *Paritta* a brief note is given here, it was based on the *Maccupāsamuttipaṅhā*, chapter of *Milinda Paṅhā Pāḷi*\(^{154}\).

During Buddhist Era 500, there existed a royal city called *Sāgala*, situated between the rivers *Chenab* and *Rāwi*, in the present-day *Pakistan*. It was ruled over by the *King Milinda*, who was well versed in Buddhist Scriptures. Once he asked Venerable *Nāgasena*, an *Arahat*, manifold questions on the doctrine. The monk answered them convincingly, by giving many brilliant examples. The records of these were in questions and answer form, and these record of the entire meeting proceeding is called *Milinda Paṅhā*. But here a summary of that only is given.

How effective is the *Paritta* and to what people? For example, just as a dead tree with withered trunk and branches cannot be revived after being watered by one thousand pots of water, so also, a person on the verge of

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\(^{153}\) Aṅguttara, Vol (ii), p.82.

\(^{154}\) Mld, Myanmar, p.152, Roman, p.153.
death cannot be rendered alive through medicine. It is also true for the \textit{Paritta}.

But one whose term of life is not yet over, who is not averaged and blameless as to the five heinous deeds can be benefitted from the \textit{Paritta}.

The \textit{Paritta} cannot protect all but some people only, just as nutriment, while necessary for the life of all beings, cannot keep alive over eaters, or those with weak digestive faculty. In such cases nutriment can even turn fatal.

Similarly, one who was a perpetrator of one of the five heinous deeds namely

1. Matricide,
2. Patricide,
3. Killing an \textit{arahat},
4. Drawing the blood of a \textit{Buddha}, or
5. Causing schism among the Order; secondly one who was a confirmed heretic; and thirdly one who does not believe in the protective power of \textit{Parittas}- these three kinds of person does not have protection through Parittas.

One who does not commit one of the five Heinous Deeds, one who is not a confirmed heretic, and one who believes in the protective power of \textit{Parittas} has protection through them.

The above is an abridged statement of what is told in \textit{Milinda Pañhā Pāḷi}. Those three factors are required for the hearer of the \textit{Paritta}. Then, the
commentary on the Āṭānāṭiya Sutta, Pāthikavagga,\textsuperscript{155} says there also are three requirements to be fulfilled by reciters of Parittas. They are:

1. The reciter has learnt the meaning, literal or otherwise, of the Paritta well.

2. He has learnt and memorized the Paritta complete with all the words and consonants.

3. He recites the paritta with loving-kindness and goodwill for lessening of suffering on the hearer's part, and with no desire for gains.

Once Vesālī was beset by three kinds of harm, namely, epidemic diseases, various ghosts and famine. Then Venerable Ānandā, by cultivating loving-kindness (Mettā) through pondering of the attributes of the Buddha, recited the Ratana Sutta\textsuperscript{156} to reap good results. So we should recite likewise.

When the required factors exist in both the reciter and hearer, the recitation of Parittas work to great effect.

The preliminaries required for a person who is going to practise meditation on Mettā

Loving-kindness possesses a mystic power, which can easily influence beings far and near. A pure heart that radiates this beneficent force is capable of transforming wild beasts into tame ones, murderers into saints. This mystic power lies within the reach of all. Only a slight exertion is necessary to make it our own.

\textsuperscript{155} DA-p.149, IV, p.205
The Buddha’s loving-kindness is described in the *Dhammapada Attakatha Devadatta* story thus:

\[ Vadhake devadattamhi, sore aṅgulimālakē. \]

\[ Dhanapāle rāhule ca, sabbattha samamānasō.^{157} \]

The Buddha exercised *Mettā* equally towards His own son Rāhula, His adversary Devadatta, His attendant Ānanda, His admirers and His opponents.

This loving-kindness should be extended in equal measure towards oneself as towards friend, foe and neutral alike. Suppose a bandit were to approach a person travelling through a forest with an intimate friend, a neutral person and an enemy, and suppose he were to demand that one of them be offered as a victim. If the traveler were to say that he himself should be taken, then he would have no *Mettā* towards himself. If he were to say that anyone of the other three persons should be taken, then he would have no *Mettā* towards them.

Such is the characteristic of real *Mettā*. In exercising this boundless loving-kindness oneself should not be ignored. This subtle point should not be misunderstood, for self-sacrifice is another sweet virtue and egolessness is yet another higher virtue. The culmination of this *Mettā* is the iden

There is no proper English equivalent for this graceful *Pāḷi* term *Mettā*. Goodwill, loving-kindness, benevolence and universal love are suggested as the best renderings.

\[^{157}\text{DhA, Vol-1, p-94.}\]
A benevolent attitude is the chief characteristic of oneself with all beings (sabbattatā), making no difference between oneself and others. The so-called ‘I’ is lost in the whole. Separatism evaporates. Oneness is realized.

When we practise loving-kindness meditation, we need to be careful about these two enemies; the near enemy (Āsanna) and far enemy (Dūra). The far enemy of mettā is hatred, aversion (Dosa, Byāpāda). (Byāpādo mettāya Dūrapaccatthiko.)\(^{158}\) It is the opposite of mettā. It is the direct enemy of mettā. The āsannapaccatthiko)\(^{159}\) It is very difficult to distinguish loving-kindness from love. The selfish affection or attachment is not so easy to see. When attachment comes to us in the guise of loving-kindness, such kind of love is called as the near enemy of metta. It is more difficult to see it than the far enemy, Dosa. That is why it is said in the Visuddhimagga as Ekamekassa cettha āsannadiravasena far enemy is not difficult to see and not difficult to overcome. The near enemy of mettā is the affection love (Tanhā, Rāga). (Rāgo mettāya dve dve paccatthikā. Each of them, Mettā, Karuṇā, Muditā, and Upekkhā has two enemies; near and distant.\(^{160}\)

A Metta practitioner should cultivate some virtuous qualities prior to start Metta practice. These virtuous possessions are analyzed in the following sub topics.

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(1) *Sakko* (An able One)

*Sakka* is someone who is endowed with well-being and diligence. In other words he is an able one with respect to the administering of the preliminary stage to concentration, use of utensils maintaining the monastery together with other monks etc.

**One Versed in gaining Benefits Shall practise Thus**

Already discoursed was *Karanīya mattha kusalena*, one who is clever at making gains should undertake the three noble practices. That being a summarized discourse, some monks might still stand unenlightened. Hence, the Buddha delivered a wider version containing “*Sakko uju ca*” is needed.

Still, as it is desirable to point out the kind of practice rather than what to practise, the preliminary practice of conduct is given for subjective reasons. Indeed, possessions of these factors only lead to loving-kindness (*mettā*) or non-cultivation of it.

**The five factors required to a religious meditator**

The five-factors which are a requirement to a meditator is taught by the Buddha in *Bodhirajakumāra Sutta*¹⁶¹, *Majjhimaṇṇasī Pāḷi*. They are:

1. Conviction in the Three Gems and in the result of every action;
2. Good health;
3. Honesty;
4. Diligent effort to acquire wholesome dhamma, and
5. Intelligence to contemplate becoming and destruction of things.

¹⁶¹ MA, p.222
An Able One

An able one, *sakko*, is one who enjoys good health and has diligence, as shown in the second and fourth factors of five-factor *Padhāniyaṅga*, explained in the Commentary.

In other words, he is an able, expert and active one as regards administering the preliminary stage to concentration, use of robes and utensils, maintaining the monastery together with other monks, etc.

Only an able-bodied person is capable of cultivating *mettā* so the Buddha has placed such ability among the preliminary practice concerned with loving-kindness (*mettā*).

(2) *Uju* (An honest one)

An honest one must be totally honest and not given to deceitful ways by bodily, verbally and mentally.

The meaning of *Ujūca*

A Mettā, meditator-to-be, must, according to the third out of five factors of *padhāniyaṅga*, be honest and not given to deceitful ways. He must reveal the true state of himself to the Buddha, and his companions in practice and the virtue.

Crookedness consists in three categories: bodily, verbal and mental. An honest one must be free of crookedness bodily and verbally. It is self-evident that a crooked person cannot harbour *mettā* towards others. Therefore, honesty should be imbued by the practitioner at the preliminary practice for the cultivation of loving-kindness (*mettā*).
(3) Suhuju (A noble-minded and honest one)

One who must be free of crookedness by his attitude and with a pure, noble mind.

The meaning of Suhujū ca

One who is going to meditate on mettā has to be noble-minded and honest. One with a crooked mind cannot harbour mettā towards others. Any wholesome dhamma especially honesty, can persist only in those with a pure, noble mind. Honesty is paramount so it is emphasized twice in the teaching.

Distinction between the words ‘uju’ and ‘suhujū’ is explained in many ways in the commentary, but in one way only in these verses. Uju means one is honest when young. Suhujū means he has remained honest since youth up to the end of his lifetime.

Another version: uju means one is not crooked while suhujū means he does not deceive others.

Another version: Uju means one does not show off what he has not possessed, while suhujū means rejection of gains accruing from the attributes he is not possessed of.

Another version: uju means training for higher morality (adhisīla) and superior mentality (adhicitta), while suhuju means training for superior wisdom (adhipaññā).
(4) **Suvaco (Amenable to admonition One)**

One who is in line with good exhortation, amenable to admonition.

**The meaning of Suvaco cassa**

One who is going to meditate on *mettā* must be amenable to admonition, not an intractable ‘*dubbaca*’. The latter, when warned of an action about to be performed, is given to asking questions- Did you see or hear it yourself? Or who said that to you? Etc. Or, a *dubbaca* seemingly pays no attention to it, and remains silent. Again, perhaps he agrees with the admonition but does not abide by it. Such a person is far from meditating on *mettā*, or from realizing the superior dhamma.

On the other hand a tractable person (*suvaca*), on receiving an admonition, says “good! You said wise words. Most people hardly see their faults. Actually they don’t. Under similar circumstances next time, admonish me again out of compassion. Such admonition is hard to come by, and it comes along once in a long while. Don’t sympathize with me for the wrong reason. You may admonish me anytime. I accept your admonition as goodwill and compassion on your part.”

Thus saying, he listens to the admonition and invites more of it next time. Moreover, he obeys the admonition. Such a person is close to meditation on *mettā*, or realizing the superior dhamma. Hence tractability is found among the preliminary practice concerned with loving-kindness (*mettā*).
(5) Mudu (A humble, gentle person)

Just like refined gold is soft enough for being turned into a desired object, so also, a gentle person is given to performing duties, to practicing to gain Higher three precepts (Sikkhā) with diligence based on conviction.

The meaning of Mudu

A meditator-to-be on mettā should be a humble, gentle person, not a stubborn, harsh person, just like unrefined gold is too hard for being turned into a desired object.

A humble, gentle person does not mean one who is easily ordered about to run errands or serve others. Just like refined gold is soft enough for being turned into a desired object, so also, a humble, gentle person is given to performing duties, to practicing to gain higher morality, superior mentality and superior wisdom with diligence based on conviction. He is always ready to take up mettā meditation.

In another way, those of gentle behaviour do not bear a scowl but a happy face, are accessible for an easy chat, and given to sweet words. They bring peace among people with amicable words of greeting. They are like a good port- a refuge to marine travelers.

Being possessed of a certain practice concerned with mettā meditation, their nature reflects mettā. Therefore, humility and gentleness belongs to the preliminary practice of loving-kindness.
(6) Anatimāni (A humble person without haughtiness)

A humble person, who has lack of uncare, haughtiness and well regard, adore and honour others. Who is not haughty according to his high birth his education etc.

The meaning of Anatimāni

A meditator-to-be of mettā should not be uncaring and haughty towards others, in spite of his high birth, his education, etc. if otherwise, it is conceit, a sign of no mettā and hence no foundation for mettā meditation. He must be a person of humility, without any unwholesome pride.

A humble person is apt to make way for, respect, well regard, adore and honour others. A humble person without haughtiness is possessed of a way of practice for mettā meditation.

Humility and lack of conceit are the habitat of mettā and thus belongs in the preliminary practice of mettā meditation.

(7) Santussako (A contented person)

One who is contented has satisfaction with his own possessions and fairn with things, good or bad.

The meaning of Santussako

A would-be mettā-meditator should be easily contented, never a malcontent. One who is not content seeks things of his desire no matter what, feels sorry for not gaining them, and even if they are gained, he hankers after more. So he cannot be the base for mettā or able to meditate on mettā.
But one who is easily contented can be the base for *mettā*, with no cause for misery as regards physical property or other people, and with his mind at peace.

**Three kinds of persons who are easily satisfied**

There are three kinds of persons who are easily satisfied, namely:

1. One content with his own possessions:

   The four monastic requisites—alms-food, robes, monastery and medicines and medicinal requisites are things held by monks. Whether the offering is good or bad, rendered appropriate for a monk’s use or not, if the monk uses it in a proper way without an expression of dissatisfaction, he is said to be one content with his own possessions. If a lay person uses his own possession, he is said to be one easy to be satisfied.

2. One content with his possessions in hand:

   A monk is content with his possessions in hand, wishing for none other than these, with no desire for each and every thing coming into his view, ditto for a lay person.

3. One content in all fairness with things good or bad:

   A monk is said to be content in all fairness if he is so with sense objects good or bad, ditto for a lay person.

   Those easily satisfied with their possessions, their possessions in hand, or in all fairness with sense objects good or bad could be a base for *mettā*. Hence such attitude belongs in preliminary practice of *mettā* meditation.
(8) Subharo (Easily fostered person)

Endowed with one easy for oneself to foster and one easy for others to foster.

The meaning of Subharo

A meditator-to-be on mettā should be one who is easily fostered.

Two difficult to foster and Two easily fostered

One difficult to foster is divided into:

1. One difficult for oneself to foster,
2. One easy for oneself to foster,
3. One difficult for others to foster, and
4. One easy for others to foster.

1. One difficult for oneself to foster: for example when is given sweet food, he does not remain content but searches for sour food, and vice versa.
2. One easy for oneself to foster: He keeps on working hard, satisfied with the gains good or bad.
3. One difficulty for others to foster: Take the monks, for example. They depend on others for their livelihood. But some still show displeasure on receiving offerings like alms-food, robes, etc. from people. Even before they do nor they give away those offerings to others, while reprimanding him. Such monks are difficult for others to foster. So people shun such monks, sharing among themselves their opinion of those extremely fussy monks.
4. One easy for others to foster: some monks use the offerings, good or bad, much or little, with a happy, contented face. They are easy for others to
foster. People become friendly with and respectful towards such monks at first sight. They foster such a monk by way of pledging to remain on teacher disciple terms, sharing among themselves the opinion to the effect that monk is easy to foster, he is content with whatever offerings he receives and so worthy of our veneration. Monk or lay person, one who is easy for one or others to foster can be a base for mettā. Hence training to have such a trait belongs in the preliminary practice for mettā cultivation.

(9) **Appakicco (One with few impediments)**

One who lives only with inevitable small duties, avoids obsession with his affairs, chatting, companionship of friends or sleeping.

**The meaning of Appakicco**

One going to meditate on mettā needs to be free of impediments. One with few impediments only can harbour loving-kindness (mettā), One with many impediments (or obstacles) obsesses about matters which are useless and none of his business.

When meditating on mettā, one should avoid obsession with monastic or household affairs, chatting, companionship of friends, or sleeping.

*Visuddhimagga* says a meditator-to-be must cut off the 10 impediments (*Paḷibodha*).
Ten Kinds of impediment (*Paḷībodha*)

They are:

1. Monastery or home;
2. Male or female donor; Dear one;
3. Gifts;
4. Disciples or pupils;
5. Various affairs;
6. Travel;
7. Relatives;
8. Sickness;
9. Scripture; and

Only when these are cut off one is able to take up meditation.

One may carry out personal activities such as washing robes or clothes, manicuring, and shaving one’s hair, doing the dishes or alms-bowls, and cleaning the living quarters. Those burdened only with these inevitable small duties can be host to *mettā*. Hence having few impediments in the preliminary practices on *mettā*.

(10) *Sallahuka vutti* (One who lives sparingly)

Like the birds that fly to wherever they like without carrying any object, one without as much burdened as the amount of utensils he keeps, is ready for meditation.
The meaning of Sallahuka vutti

A meditator-to-be on mettā should live sparingly. If one has items of property one too many, he will be burdened with duties of looking after or managing them. A person with more than necessary utensils cannot harbour mettā to meditate on.

If a monk has too many utensils, he must seek the assistance of many disciples on his travel which will prove burdensome. He should only carry the eight monastic utensils such as alms-bowl, three sets of robes, girdle, water strainer, thread and needle, and adze-like razor, like unto birds that fly to wherever they like without carrying any object. Even at a monastery a monk will feel as much burdened as the amount of utensils he keeps, and it would not be easy for him to meditate on loving kindness (mettā).

A monk with a suitable quantity of monastic utensils, or a man without unnecessary burdens, can meditate on mettā well. Therefore, keeping things sparingly or a lean livelihood belongs in the preliminary practice for mettā cultivation.

(11) Santindriyo (One whose faculties are stabilized)

One with unruffled faculties tries through a means of mental concentration to suppress his emotions, like, suppression of greed when faced with a desirable pleasant sense object or suppression of hatred when faced with and undesirable, unpleasant sense object.
The meaning of Santindriyo

A meditator-to-be on mettā should keep his faculties stabilized.

Those faculties mean eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and the mind. One with unruffled faculties tries through a means of mental concentration to suppress his emotions, like, suppression of greed when faced with a desirable, pleasant sense object, or suppression of hatred when faced with an undesirable, unpleasant sense object.

One who has disturbed faculties will feel greedy, angry, bewildered, or conceited on being faced with sense objects good or bad. He is the one led by the faculties, not vice versa. He will not be able to harbour mettā to meditate on.

There are those who can control themselves not to harbour greed, hatred, bewilderment and conceit on being faced with sense objects good or bad. Only such persons who can bend the faculties to their will can be a base for mettā to meditate on. Therefore, unruffled faculties belong in the preliminary practice for mettā meditation.

(12) *Nipako* (One has well-rounded intelligence)

The one who is intelligent enough to accomplish things, the one who knows his work, with foreknowledge of the consequences good or bad, He has knowledge of the seven kinds of appropriateness (*sappāya*).

The meaning of *Nipako*

A meditator-to-be on mettā should have well-rounded intelligence – one who knows his work, knows the appropriate time, place and
circumstance to undertake it with fore knowledge of the consequences good or bad. They are intelligent enough to accomplish things; so their success is ensured.

A monk about to meditate on mettā should have knowledge of the seven kinds of appropriateness (sappāya) concerning his activities.

They are:

1. Village of his alms-round;
2. Monastery;
3. Words for his meditation;
4. Person with similar views;
5. Deportment or choice out of the four reclining, sitting, standing and walking;
6. Suitable diet;
7. Salubrious climate;

Apart from a discriminative knowledge of the above, cleverness at morality and taking care of robes and clothing are required.

Such knowledge contributes significantly in undertaking the practice system. Persons with such knowledge can be a base for mettā. Therefore, having a well-rounded intelligence belongs to the preliminary practice for mettā cultivation.

(13) Appagabbho (A person is cultured bodily, verbally and mentally)

One who is not rude and rough bodily, verbally or mentally, is cultured behaviourally.
The meaning of Appagabbho

A meditator-to-be need to be cultured bodily, verbally and mentally. A person could be rough and rude in three ways: bodily, verbal or mental, and he is utterly undesirable.

Being rough and rude bodily on a monk’s part means: sitting cross-legged before a monk elder in an audience, not making room for him, preventing junior monks from obtaining a seat, cutting the line to get a good seat or better food, leading the Mahātheras on entering a city or town, and being bodily playful with juniors, etc.

Being rough and ready on a monk’s part means: giving a discourse without permission from monk elders; answering doctrinal questions without consulting monk elders; asking aloud at a house in a village, like, “You female donor! What food for offering? Do you have rice porridge, rice and curry, cakes or fruits? What will you offer me to eat and drink? Etc.

Being rough and rude mentally on a monk’s part means: having thoughts about sense pleasures, even if not performed bodily or articulated. Also having thoughts on ruining or oppressing others.

Mettā, naturally concerned with culturedness and gentleness, cannot exist in people with rough and rude behavior or mentality. But those gentle and cultured bodily, verbally or mentally can harbour mettā to meditate on. Therefore being cultured bodily, verbally and mentally belongs in the preliminary practice for medititon on mettā.
(14) *Kulesvananugiddho* (One has not too strong attachment and fetter)

A person like unto that of the moon, in dealing with household members or his own male or female donors.

**The meaning of Kulesvananugiddho**

A meditator-to-be on *mettā* should not have too strong an attachment to household members or others. A person burdened with fetters cannot move about freely and is unable to prosper. Even if he says he meditates on *mettā*, it cannot be genuine and will bring no benefit.

Monks are apt to have attachment to their own male or female donors. Because of greed or intimate relationship with donors opposed to disciplinary rules they keep such relations alive so much so that they follow in the footsteps of their donors’ ups and downs, there is happiness or distress.

It is impossible for such monks to meditate on *mettā*. Close enemy and distant enemy of *mettā* are greed and hatred respectively. So too much greed or hatred could hardly bring up genuine *mettā*. Therefore, the Buddha has taught and suggested an approach like unto that of a guest or the moon.

In dealing with the host, a guest eats what is given, stays where he is assigned, keeps off becoming too familiar with the host or participating in his business, and goes away when the visit is over.

Similarly a monk goes on alms-round, receives what is offered and keeps off becoming too familiar with the donors or participating in their business, and leaves when the time comes.
The moon, on its travels in the sky, has no companion, or fetters. Yet people like it and look forward to seeing it. So the Buddha taught that monks shall act like the moon, to be loved and appreciated by the worldlings. Only such monks can be the base for mettā. Therefore having no fetters concerned with lay supporters belongs to the preliminary practice for meditating on mettā.

(15) Na ca khudda mācare kiñci yenaviññūpare upa vadeyyum (One must not commit evils blamed by the wise)

A person must not commit evils blamed by others especially the wise, however small they are.

The meaning of Na ca khudda mācare kiñci yenaviññūpare upa vadeyyum

A meditator-to-be on mettā must not commit evils blamed by the wise, however small they may be.

He should be a capable person endowed with ‘sakko ujuca’. The precepts he has to follow are then given. Next he is told about the evils blamed by the wise, however small they are. And actions to be shunned (akaranīya) are expounded.

While explaining evils, blameworthiness in this life is to be emphasized. Hence the Pāli “Yena viññū pare upavadeyyum” (Any evil is blamed by others especially the wise).
The wise do matter

Indeed the ignorant does not matter. Why? They seek blame where there is none, or makes a small blame look big. The wise do matter because they blame through reasoned analysis what is blameworthy, or praise what is praiseworthy. The Buddha taught that as the counsel of the wise matters, one should not commit even a small demeritorious deed worthy of their blame.

Precincts and protection

Capability such as familiarity with a home’s precincts and honesty, as explained formerly, belongs to the preliminary practice of mettā meditation, and are also called mettā’s precincts. Then, to serve as a protective verse against the tree guardian spirits for the 500 monks and as preliminary practice of mettā meditation concerned with insight meditation, how to disseminate mettā is taught.

Mettā meditation method of practice according to Visuddhimagga

Here is the mettā meditation method in brief according to Vissuddhi Magga. Having learned how to meditate on mettā, the would-be meditator, doing away with impediments (palibodha), should go to a quiet secluded place. He first contemplates the faults of hatred, and the benefits of patience. In disseminating mettā, there are three kinds of persons to whom it is directed: the person to whom mettā should not be disseminated first, the person to whom mettā is disseminated in due order, and the person to whom mettā should never be disseminated.
The Person Not To Receive Mettā First

The person not to receive the disseminated mettā first, again, they are four types: the unloved (hated) one, loved one, neutral one, and the enemy. When one disseminates mettā to a hated one, one is apt to become angry and mettā cannot arise. When mettā is disseminated to the beloved one, already with feeling of attachment for him/her, he/she begins to be anxious about his/her well-being, and the mettā cannot be genuine. When disseminating mettā to the middle (i.e. neutral) person first, one is not affectionate enough towards him/her yet and mettā cannot arise. When disseminating mettā to an enemy first, one is apt to become angry and mettā cannot arise.

Mettā Recipients in Due Order

The five persons to whom mettā should be disseminated in due order are: I, the loved one, the beloved, neutral one and enemy.

Those who should not be disseminated with mettā and those who should not be aimed at with mettā

Those who are already dead should not be disseminated with mettā because the meditator cannot attain neighborhood absorption the development of absorption upacārajhāna or appanājhāna.

You should not disseminate mettā to a person of opposite sex because it could give rise to lust. That mettā cannot be pure.

A story goes: a minister’s son asks an acquaintance monk whom he should disseminate mettā to. The monk suggests one held in his affection. So the minister’s son disseminates mettā to his wife, his beloved. Naturally it adds to his lust for his wife, with tiresome consequences.
Suppose a person is repeatedly disseminating mettā to self, the beloved, enemy and a middle (neutral) one. Meanwhile, bad characters come over and demand one out of the four. They say their intention is to cut his/her throat for sacrificial offering. Now there does not arise in the disseminator of mettā discrimination as regards mettā cultivation when he mentally picks one out of the four to hand over to those bad characters, or even when he picks himself because offering up one besides oneself is malevolence while offering up oneself is altruism.

But, the disseminator of mettā is said to be cultivating mettā without discrimination when he sees no-one, out of the four, to offer up to the bad characters. He is having a balanced mentality towards them all. So mettā is best disseminated without delimitation, and such dissemination is said to be its sign. Continuing mettā cultivation on this line will lead to the attainment of Jhāna.

**Reasons for The influence of Metta Sutta on the people of Burma**

There are many reasons why Metta Sutta has much influence on the people of Burma. Some stories about this Sutta which will be mentioned later are main reasons why Metta Sutta has much influence on the people of Burma. Most of the people in Burma have become very familiar with this Sutta mainly because of monks. I came to know this Sutta since I was 12 years old. My teacher in my village taught us at my village monastery.

Every evening before we went back home from the monastery, we had to pay homage to the Buddha, and at that time our teacher used to said a Burmese poem which talks about eleven blessings of Metta, and we had to repeat it after him, so we all learned it by heart as we had heard it every day.
In that monastery, there is one notice board as well which is made of wood and, the eleven blessings of Metta were written on it in Burmese. It has been hung on a wall where it is most visible until now so that everyone who comes to the monastery sees and reads it and practices it. This is one reason why this Sutta has much influence on the people of Burma.

Some other public places also almost the same notice boards were hanged the monastery. Especially in villages, the monastic education system influences people significantly even today. Therefore to become familiar with the discourses of the Buddha is quite possible for them. On the other hand, in big cities, like Yangon which is the capital of Burma, it is also quite possible to introduce it to the people because there are even regular courses on Metta Sutta.

Dhamma talks (the teaching of the Buddha) by monks are almost everywhere in Burma. So monks talk about Metta Sutta very often in their Dhamma talks. The following are the stories most often told in Burma by the Buddhist leaders, monks or anyone. Those stories touch people hearts so much and make them believe in it strongly. There are some of the stories on the adoption of the concept of Mettā.

Once the Buddha was returning from his alms round together with his retinue of monks. As they were nearing the prison, in consideration of a handsome bribe received from Devadatta, who was the Buddha's evil and ambitious cousin, the executioner let loose the fierce elephant Nālāgiri, which was used for the execution of criminals. As the intoxicated elephant rushed towards the Buddha trumpeting fearfully, the Buddha projected powerful thoughts of metta towards it.
Venerable Ananda, the Buddha's attendant, was so deeply concerned about the Buddha’s safety that he ran in front of the Buddha to shield him, but the Buddha asked him to stand aside since the projection of love itself was quite sufficient.

The impact of the Buddha’s metta-radiation was so rapid and overwhelming that by the time the animal neared the Buddha it was completely tamed as though a drunken wretch had suddenly become sober by the magical power of a spell. The tusker, it is said, bowed down in reverence in the way trained elephants do in a circus.

There is also the famous story of the cow. It seems that a cow was giving milk to her calf in a forest. A hunter wanted to kill her flung a spear which, when it struck her body, bounced off like a palm leaf. So mightily powerful is metta loving-kindness. This is not the case of one who has developed metta-samādhi. It is a simple case of the consciousness of love for the offspring.

And further there are many other stories of Metta, like Ālavaka ogres which tried to kill the Buddha became very kind-hearted one because of the Buddha’s Metta radiation to it. And Paṭāsāri, a woman who had gone completely mad with being broken heart of loss of her husband and two children at the same day, had been completely recovered from her grief and pathetic situation because of the Buddha’s Metta to her and finally she gained Nibbana which is the final goal of her.

Indeed, the power of Metta can never be told enough. The commentaries on the Pāli canon are replete with stories, not only of monks,
but also of ordinary people who overcame various dangers, including weapons and poison, through the sheer strength of *Metta* selfless love. Therefore it was not surprising why many people, not only Buddhists, but non Buddhists as well around the world have been practicing *Metta Sutta*.

**Metta Sutta and Burma**

*Metta Sutta* is very much often recited as part of their religious services in the Buddhist traditions. Especially in Burma, *Metta Sutta* is recited not only as a part of religious services but as part of many others as well. And nowadays in Burma, it seems to be recited for every purpose in their daily life according to their daily demands. In almost every ceremony, it is recited with different expectations. Of course according to its commentary, it has eleven blessings. But now they are reciting it with expectation for whatever they want. Therefore everyday recitation of *Metta Sutta* can be heard almost everywhere in Burma.

It is very common in Burma that people invite monks or nuns or novices to their houses for meals whenever a ceremony takes place like a wedding ceremony etc, and it will be recited before or after having meal at any ceremony. For many other things as well, monks are invited to recite *Metta Sutta*, like when one is ill; when one wants to get a good position in a job; when one wants to be free from any danger; and when one wants to be simply happy by hearing the recitation of *Metta Sutta* and so on.

To be very frank, *Metta Sutta* is recited both when people are in good as well as in bad situations. They strongly believe that reciting it is
auspicious. To hear someone reciting it even if they might not get any benefit materially by doing so it gives pleasant nice feelings inside the mind.

Earlier around 1990, when I was young, at the age of 8, I remember that every morning at the beginning of a radio program, it started with a song of Metta Sutta. The song was very famous in those days. I even acquired it effortlessly as I heard it very often on radio program. The song was about the eleven blessings of Metta Sutta and how we should cultivate Metta in our daily lives.

Now a days there are Metta Sutta CDs recited by monks, nuns and others who are not religious leaders. Usually they play the CD early in the morning because they believe that it is very auspicious and pleasant to listen to it before they start their daily work. They do believe too that the day will be perfect for everything if it is started with Metta early in the morning. It can be heard in the early morning from the houses and shops, generally the shop where you can get breakfast. Some recite it themselves because they learned it by heart or by looking at a book.

It is even celebrated annually as a memory of the day when the Metta Sutta was taught by the Buddha. It is the full moon day of Wākhaung month according to the Burmese calendar. The day is called “Mettā Day”. It is one of the biggest celebrations in Burma.

On the day, people across the country recite the Sutta as a group or individual and, they invite monks to recite it at their houses or on the roads and ask them to talk about the Sutta and they donate requisites to those monks who are invited to talk about the Sutta. In some places, people donate
food to those who come to the celebration of *Metta* Day and they stay the whole day at the place where monastery or some other places where *Metta* Day celebrations take place and discuss it.

In some monasteries, it has to be recited every morning and every evening as part of their daily routine ritual. At a monastery where I stayed for two years, we had to recite *Metta Sutta* every day before we had breakfast and lunch. And some are given the name *Metta*. One whose name is *metta* is one of the famous jokers in Burma. *Metta* is also named to associations or groups, usually to volunteer groups, like *Metta* Foundation, and some monasteries are also named *Metta*, like *Mettaransī* which means “the light of *Metta*”.

To be very clear, on many occasions, like a wedding ceremony, a funeral ceremony, or during inaugurations, and even for political issues, *Metta Sutta* is recited as a custom. In September and October 2007, it has been recited by more 500,000 monks, nuns, and novices and more than 400,000 people on the roads as part of their demonstrations against the military in Burma, which was considered as the symbol of non violence. This is just one of the occasions occurred in the past just to say to what extent the *Metta Sutta* influences the Buddhist people of Burma.

**Metta Sutta and its influence on other Buddhist countries**

*Metta Sutta*, in other Buddhist countries, like *Srilanka, Thailand, Laos* and *Cambodia* are broad because they obviously practice it according to their traditions. Usually they also recite it rather than practicing it because most unknowingly think it is only to be recited. According to one of my
experiences about the practice of *Metta Sutta* in other countries also, it is practised very sacredly.

In 2006, 50 monks from Burma, were invited to attend *Visākha* Day in Thailand which is one of the most important days of Buddhists. The day is celebrated mainly in Buddhist countries, but the date of *Visākha* varies according to the various lunar calendars used in different traditions. In Burma, it is called *Ka-sone-la-pyae* meaning “Full moon Day of Kasone” which is the second month of the Myanmar Calendar.

The Day is said to be “Buddha Day” in Burma because it encompasses the birth, enlightenment (*Nīrvana*), and passing away (*Parinīrvaṇa*) of Gautama Buddha. At the celebration of *Visākha* Day in 2006 in Thailand, more than 7,000 Buddhists and those interested in Buddhism from seventy one countries across the world participated. The celebration lasted for 3 days and many Buddhist scholars discussed Buddhism for various purposes. Every day before discussions were started, *Metta Sutta* was recited by each group especially from Buddhist countries. We also had to recite it on behalf of Burma.

I have found that the name *Metta* has been frequently used in Thailand for various things. Like *Metta* Forest Monastery, *Metta* college etc. Those names reveal us how much *Metta Sutta* is influencing the people in Thailand as well.

And more interestingly, there was a course on *Metta Sutta* in Germany which is not a Buddhist country. In the short course, *Metta Sutta* was translated in Sign Language so that it could be understood by those who
know only Sign Language of German. The translator completely understands the significance of it and how Metta Sutta is important for everyone.

Metta Sutta being recited in Pāli, and the translator showing Signs for the meaning of each and every stanza is quite interesting. You can see the video on Youtube.

Sign Language users were definitely thankful to the translator, because though they did not practice it, they had a great opportunity to understand such a wonderful discourse like the others. So, Metta Sutta is being practiced or recited not only in Buddhist countries but in other countries as well because they do know how important it is that Metta be practiced in the world today.

**Different practices in the recitation of Metta Sutta**

There are different methods of recitation of Metta Sutta according to different traditions. Metta Sutta in Burma consists of twelve stanzas because first two introductory ones were set by the learned elder-monks of Burma and, it is simply called Metta Sutta. But in other Buddhist countries, especially in Srilanka, it is called Karaniya Metta Sutta. The two first stanzas are not found in their Metta Sutta.

They start to recite with the third stanza - Karanîya matthakusalena, so it is called Karanîya Metta Sutta. But in Burma, the first two stanzas were added by the learned elder-monks of Burma so that those who recite Metta Sutta can understand what kinds of benefit they can gain by reciting it. The
first two stanzas of *Metta Sutta* in Burma mention the eleven blessings of *Metta* briefly according to its commentary.

There are many other differences as well in the recitation of this *Sutta*, just like intonation, pause, linking system-one word or one verse into another etc. According to its commentary, it is believed that if intonation is put on the wrong place or if it is paused somewhere else which is not in accordance with commentary, the benefits of *Metta Sutta* are not as effective.

This is a belief of monks in Burma according to its commentary. Therefore if you listen to the recitation of any *Sutta* recited by Burmese monks, you will find rhythm even if a hundred monks are reciting it together because they all know where intonation or pause should be put.

These days, music has also started using to recite *Sutta=Metta Sutta* or any *Sutta* though it seems improper according to Theravada Buddhist literature. Especially, monks in Tibet, China, Korea, and Japan use musical instruments for reciting *Sutta*, but it has not been seen in other Buddhist countries. It is very common in other cultures that as they have, Buddhism and other customs.

It can be seen on YouTube how *Metta Sutta* is recited in different ways according to different traditions and belief. There are many recitations on many *Suttas*. This is how the recitation of *Metta Sutta* differs in different countries.
Methodical Practice

The heart-deliverance of loving kindness is practised with unspecified extension, with specified extension, and with directional extension.

That with unspecified extension is practised in five ways as follows: May all beings be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.

May all breathing things, all creatures, all persons, may all those who are embodied be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.

That with specified extension is practised in seven ways as follows: May all women be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.

May all men, all noble ones, all who are not noble ones, all deities, and all human beings, may all those in the states of deprivation be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.

That with directional extension is practised in ten ways as follows:

May all beings in the eastern direction be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss. May all beings in the western direction, in the northern direction, in the southern direction, in the eastern intermediate direction, in the western intermediate direction, in the northern intermediate direction, in the southern intermediate direction, in the downward direction, in the upward direction be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.
May all breathing things, all creatures, all persons, all who are embodied, all women, all men, all noble ones, all who are not noble ones, all deities, all human beings, all those in the states of deprivation in the eastern direction be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss. May all those in states of deprivation in the upward direction be freed from enmity, distress, and anxiety, and may they guide themselves to bliss.162

And how does a Bhikkhu abide with his heart imbued with loving kindness extending over one direction? Just as he would feel friendliness on seeing a dearly beloved person, so he extends loving kindness to all creatures.163

**As Practised without Insight into the Four Noble Truths**

“Master Gotama, I have heard it said that the Monk Gotama teaches the path to the retinue of the High Divinity. It would be good if Master Gotama would teach me that.”

“And then listen and attend carefully to what I shall say.”

“Even so, sir,” the student Subha Todeyyaputta replied. The Blessed One said this: “And what is the path to the retinue of the High Divinity? Here a Bhikkhu abides with his heart imbued with loving kindness extending over one quarter, likewise the second quarter, likewise the third quarter, likewise the fourth quarter, and so above, below, around, and everywhere and to all as to himself; he abides with his heart abundant, exalted, measureless in loving kindness, without hostility or ill-will, extending over

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162 Pt. Myanmar, p.313, PTS, 2.129.
the all encompassing world. While this heart-deliverance of loving kindness is maintained in being in this way, no action restricted by limited measurement is found there, none persists there. Just as a vigorous trumpeter could easily make himself heard in the four directions, so too when the heart-deliverance of loving kindness is maintained in being in this way no action restricted by limited measurement is found there, none persists there. This is the path to the retinue of the High Divinity.”

As Practised with Insight into the Four Noble Truths

Here, Bhikkhus, a certain person abides with his heart imbued with loving kindness extending over one quarter, likewise the second quarter, likewise the third quarter, likewise the fourth quarter, and so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself; he abides with his heart abundant, exalted, measureless in loving kindness, without hostility or ill-will, extending over the all-encompassing world.

He finds gratification in that, finds it desirable and looks to it for his well-being; steady and resolute thereon, he abides much in it, and if he dies without losing it, he reappears among the gods of a High Divinity’s retinue.

Now the gods of a High Divinity’s retinue have a life-span of one aeon. An ordinary person (who has not attained the Noble Eightfold Path) stays there for his life-span; but after he has used up the whole life-span enjoyed by those gods, he leaves it all, and (according to what his past deeds may have been) he may go down even to hell, or to an animal womb, or to the ghost realm. But a disciple of the Perfect One stays there (in that heaven) for his life-span, and after that he has used up the whole life span enjoyed by

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164 M(ii), Myanmar, vols (ii), p.422, PTS, 2.207.
those gods, he eventually attains complete extinction of lust, hate, and delusion in that same kind of heavenly existence.

It is this that distinguishes, that differentiates, the wise disciple who is ennobled (by attainment of the noble path) from the unwise ordinary man, when, that is to say, there is a destination for reappearance (after death, but an Arahant has made an end of birth).

Here, Bhikkhus, a certain person abides with his heart imbued with loving kindness extending, over the all-encompassing world.

Now whatever therein (during that state of contemplation) exists classifiable as form, classifiable as a feeling (of pleasure, pain, or neutrality), classifiable as perception, classifiable as determinative acts, or classifiable as consciousness, such things he sees as impermanent, as liable to suffering, as a disease, as a cancer, as a barb, as a calamity, as an affliction, as alien, as being worn away, as void, as not-self. On the dissolution of the body, after death, he reappears (as a non-returner) in the retinue of the Gods of the Pure Abodes (where there are only those who have reached the noble path and where extinction of greed, hate, and delusion is reached in less than seven lives without return to this world). And this kind of reappearance is not shared by ordinary men (who have not reached the Noble Eightfold Path).165

The Avadana sataka refers to three fold performances for the welfare of others; namely, good friendship (kalyanamitra) good companionship (kalyana-sahayatā) and good intimacy or relationship (kalyana-samparka).

While practising the friendliness the man dwells in such a wonderful state in which he finds that all the directions are saturated with love,

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165 A(iv), Myanmar, vols.1, p.443, PTS, 2.128.
affection and friendliness in that background according complete harmony in the society will prevail.

_Sabbe bhavatu sukhino_

_Sabbe santu niramaya_

_Sabbe bhadrani passantu_

_Makashit dukkh māgamā._

**Story of Visākha Therī**

At one time, there lived a rich man by the name _Visākha_ in the city of _Pāṭaliputta_. While residing at _Pāṭaliputta_, he had heard of the news of the existence of many Buddhist shrines and pagodas in the island of Ceylon (now Sri Lanka). The entire place was said to be glowing with the bright colour of the yellow robes adorned by Saṃghas and monks. Every place was safe and secure and one could peacefully reside and spend the night anywhere without menace. Weather was favourable and conducive to good health. Pleasant were the monasteries which went in harmony with the fine and gentle behaviour of the people, both physical and mental, which thereby created a congenial atmosphere for listening to the sermons with peace of mind and devotion.

These favourable circumstances had caused him to reflect that it would be feasible for him to proceed to Ceylon and enter into priesthood. With this bent of mind, he transferred all his business enterprise and properties to his wife and children. After having done so, he left his home with only one (rupee) kyat in his pocket. At a seaport town, he had to wait for a month to set off on his journey by a sea-going vessel.
In those old days, sea-going vessels were not like the present type of steam-ships but big boats with sails (sailing boats). Being endowed with the gift of business acumen, he started indulging in trading, buying and selling goods by moving about from one place to another while waiting for the boat to arrive.

He earned a thousand rupees by legally buying and selling goods within a month. Trading in a legal way means buying articles or commodities, paying what is really worth, and selling them at a correct price. In ancient times, a margin of profit of only two (2) picepyas was usually taken on a capital outlay of one rupee. Buying and selling goods by fair means with correct price is called “vammika vāṇija” which means trading according to law honestly.

Carrying on trade in a legitimate trade in a legitimate way for one's livelihood as mentioned, is “sammā ājīva”, right living; however, it appears that it was not the intention of Visākha, the rich, to deal in such business transaction for his subsistence. It seems his natural inclination that had actually spurred him to deal in trading business. This is evident from the fact that he had later discarded all his money that he earned from the said business venture.

Thereafter, this rich man Visākha left the port and reached Ceylon where at Mahāvihāra monastery, he made a request to a priest to be ordained. On his way to the “Thein” (sīmā), one thousand rupees (kyats) in cash which he carried in his pouch tucked up at his waist, slipped out accidentally. When the senior priest who had escorted him to the Sīmā inquired of him as to what were these meant for, he replied, “Your Reverend
this is my own money worth one thousand rupees.” On being instructed by the Mahātheras as:

“O, Upasaka! (Devout layman). Under the Rules of Discipline, from the time of your becoming an ordained monk, you cannot possibly handle and manage the cash, and as such, you may make your own arrangements to dispense with this money right now.” Visākha responded, “I do not wish to see all those who would favour me with their presence at my Ordination, return home empty-handed.” So saying, he threw away all one thousand rupees to let them fall scattering among the crowd of devotees outside the precincts of the Sīmā (Thein). Only after having done so, he received ordination.

This rich man was named Ashin Visākha in the role of a priest. For five years, he strove to study and took is training in the field of Vinaya Rules and Precepts called Dwemātika. After completion of five Vassa, he took up Kammaṭṭhāna meditation practice for four months each at four different monasteries. While practising as such, he once made his way to a forest, remained in one solitary place, and then made a joyous utterance of hymn reflecting upon his noble attributes, as follows:

“Yāvatā upasampanno, yāvatā idha āgato.
Etthantare khalitam natthi, aho lābha te mārisa.166

Yāvatā upasampanno- from the time of my first entering into priesthood, yāvatā idha āgato- until I arrived at this forested area, etthantare- during this period of interval, khalitam- failure in the observance of moral precepts concerning the priests, natthi- had never happened or

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166 Vism, Myanmar Vols(i), p.258.
taken place. *Marisa- O, Venerable Visākha, te- your, labha- gains and advances relating to the morality of priests, aho- were indeed wonderful!*

Later, *Ashin Visākha* proceeded to one monastery on *Cittala* Mountain situated at the extreme end of the southern range. On his way, he reached a junction of the road where he stopped for a while, his mind wavering as to which route he should resume his journey. At this juncture, a guardian angel of the mountain appeared and directed him pointing the hand towards the path saying, “This is the route you should take.” After four months had elapsed since his arrival at *Cittala* monastery, one day at dawn he was lying down planning to leave the monastery for another place. While he was thus reflecting, *a rukkha-devatā*, guardian angel of a tree, called Manila, which stood at the head of the terrace, was said to have been found sitting on a step of the stairs, and crying.

*Visākha Thera* then asked, “Who are you and why are you weeping?” The guardian angel replied, “I’m the guardian spirit of that “Thabye tree.” To the query as to why he was weeping, the reply given was that he was crying feeling sorry and dejected for the imminent departure of *Visākha Thera* from this place. *Visākha* then questioned him, “What noble advantages you all have derived by my sojourn here?” The guardian spirit said in reply, “Sir, your presence here has brought about a feeling of loving-kindness among us-the Devas; and if you are going to leave this place, quarrel will hurting one another's feelings.” *Visākha* then said, “If my stay here will bring happiness to you all, I will have to stay on.” He continued to reside at the monastery for another four months. Similar incidents happened again and again at the end of every four months, and *Visākha* was perforsed to stay on and on at this *Cittala* monastery until the time of his death-
Parinibbāna. This piece of anecdote is a clear and salient example illustrated in the Visuddhimagga showing how a person who is developing metta is loved and respected by the Devas.

The manner of developing Metta by Ashin Subūti

The exercise of mindfulness on metta can bring about much benefit particularly in the interest of the donors. Such being the case, Ashin Subūti Thera, an Arahat, used to enter into a trance of jhāna mettā while stopping a while in front of every house when going round for alms. Only after arising from this metta jhana, he accepted the offering of food. This is done so with a view to bestowing beneficial results on the male and female benefactors. The said Ashin Subūti later received the highest approbation from the Buddha and was conferred upon with the Pre-eminent Title of Etadagga of all the noble disciple-doner-recipients of alms. Nowadays, on the occasion of religious functions held in connection with the offerings of gifts in charity, Metta Sutta Paritta is recited by monks for the benefit of the donors. Hence, where chanting metta paritta as a blessing on any such occasion, it should also be properly and seriously recited by developing metta.

It is important to note that developing metta hile listening to the sermon is really advantageous. Metta Bhāvanā needs to be developed as and when opportunity affords, and at any place wherever you may be. In the least, it should be developed immediately after worshipping the Buddha as much as time permits. If circumstances are favourable, metta jhāna can be

\[167\] ApA.Vols (i), p.28
achieved soon even while metta is being developed through meditation. It is similar to the case of Dhanañjhāni, a Brahmin, as narrated below.

The Story of Uttarā the Lay-Disciple

While residing at the Veluvana monastery, the Buddha expounded the story of Uttarā, a female lay-disciple.

Uttarā the daughter of a farm labourer named Puṇṇa and his wife. Puṇṇa worked for a rich man named Sumana, in Rājagaha. One day, Puṇṇa and his wife offered alms-food to Thera Sāriputta soon after his arising from sustained deep mental absorption (nirodha samāpatti\(^{168}\)), and as a result of that good deed they suddenly became very rich. Puṇṇa came upon gold in the field he was ploughing, and the king officially declared him a royal banker. On one occasion, the family of Puṇṇa offered alms-food to the Buddha and the bhikkhus for seven days, and on the seventh day, after hearing the Buddha’s discourse, all the three members of the family attained Sotāpatti\(^{169}\) Fruition.

Later, Uttarā the daughter of Puṇṇa married the son of the rich man Sumana. That family being non-Buddhist, Uttarā did not feel happy in her husband’s home. So, she told her father, “My father, why have you put me in this cage? Here, I do not see any bhikkhu and I have no chance to offer anything to any bhikkhu.” Her father felt sorry for her and sent her fifteen thousand in cash. With this money, after getting permission from her husband, Uttarā engaged a courtesan to look to the needs of her husband. So

\(^{168}\) Buddhist dictionary by Nyanatiloka, p-108; Nirodha samāpatti is attainment of extinction and the temporary suspension of all consciousness and mental activity, following immediately upon the semi-conscious state called ‘sphere of neither-perception nor nonperception. It is also called saññā-vedayita-nirodha, extinction of feeling and perception.

\(^{169}\) Buddhist dictionary by Nyanatiloka, p-173; Sotāpatti, i.e. the ‘Stream-Entry’ is path and fruition of stream-entry, the lowest of the 8 noble disciples (ariyapuggala).
it was arranged that *Sirimā*, a well-known and very beautiful courtesan, was to take her place as a wife for fifteen days.

During that time, *Uttarā* offered alms-food to the Buddha and the *bhikkhus*. On the fifteenth day, as she was busy preparing food in the kitchen, her husband saw her from the bedroom window and smiled, and then muttered to himself, “How foolish she is! She does not know how to enjoy herself. She is tiring herself out with this alms-giving ceremony!” *Sirimā* saw him smile, and forgetting that she was only a paid substitute wife felt very jealous of *Uttarā*. Being unable to control herself, *Sirimā* went into the kitchen and got a ladleful of boiling butter with the intention of pouring it over the head of *Uttarā*. *Uttarā* saw her coming, but she bore no ill will towards *Sirimā*. She reflected that because *Sirimā* had stood in for her, she had been able to listen to the Dhamma, make offerings of alms-food for fifteen days, and perform other acts of charity. Thus she was quite thankful to *Sirimā*. Suddenly, she realized that *Sirimā* had come very close to her and was going to pour boiling-hot butter over her; so she made this asseveration: “If I bear any ill will towards *Sirimā* may this boiling-hot butter burn me; if I have no ill will towards her may it not burn me.”

As *Uttarā* had no ill will towards *Sirimā*, the boiling butter poured over her head by *Sirimā* was just like cold water. Then *Sirimā* thought the butter must have gone cold; and as she went for another ladleful of boiling butter, the attendants of *Uttarā* fell upon her and beat her hard. *Uttarā* stopped her attendants and instructed them to rub *Sirimā* with medicinal ointment.
Then, *Sirimā* remembered her true position and she regretted that she had done wrong to *Uttarā* and asked *Uttarā* to forgive her. To her *Uttarā* replied, “I have my father; I shall ask him whether I should accept your apology.” *Sirimā* then said that she would readily go and apologize to the rich man, the father of *Uttarā*. *Uttarā* then explained to *Sirimā*, “*Sirimā*, when I said ‘My father’, I did not mean my real father, who had brought me into this round of rebirths. I was referring to my father the Buddha, who had helped me break the chain of rebirths, who had taught me the Dhamma, the Noble Truths.” *Sirimā* then expressed her wish to see the Buddha. So it was arranged that *Sirimā* should offer alms-food to the Buddha and the bhikkhus on the following day at the house of *Uttarā*.

After the meal, the Buddha was told everything that had happened between *Sirimā* and *Uttarā*. *Sirimā* then owned up that she had done wrong to *Uttarā* and entreated the Buddha that she should be forgiven, for otherwise *Uttarā* would not forgive her. The Buddha then asked *Uttarā* how she felt in her mind when *Sirimā* poured boiling butter on her head, and *Uttarā* answered, “Venerable Sir, because I owed so much to *Sirimā* I had resolved not to lose my temper, not to bear any ill will towards her. I sent forth my love towards her”. The Buddha then said, “Well done, well done, *Uttarā*! By not bearing any ill will you have been able to conquer one who has done you wrong through hate. By not abusing, you should conquer one who abuses you, by being generous you should conquer one who is stingy; by speaking the truth you should conquer one who tells lies.”
Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows:

\[ \text{Akkodhena jine kodham, a } s\text{\=adhun } s\text{\=adhun } \text{a } jine. } \]

\[ \text{Jine kadariya}m \text{ } \text{d}\text{\=anena, sa} \text{ccen}\text{\=a} \text{'}likav\text{\=adina}m. }^{170} \]

Conquer the angry one by not getting angry (i.e., by loving-kindness); conquer the wicked by goodness; conquer the stingy by generosity, and the liar by speaking the truth.

At the end of the discourse \textit{Sirim\=a} and five hundred ladies attained \textit{Sot\=apatti} Fruition.

\footnote{170}{Dh. Verse-223.}