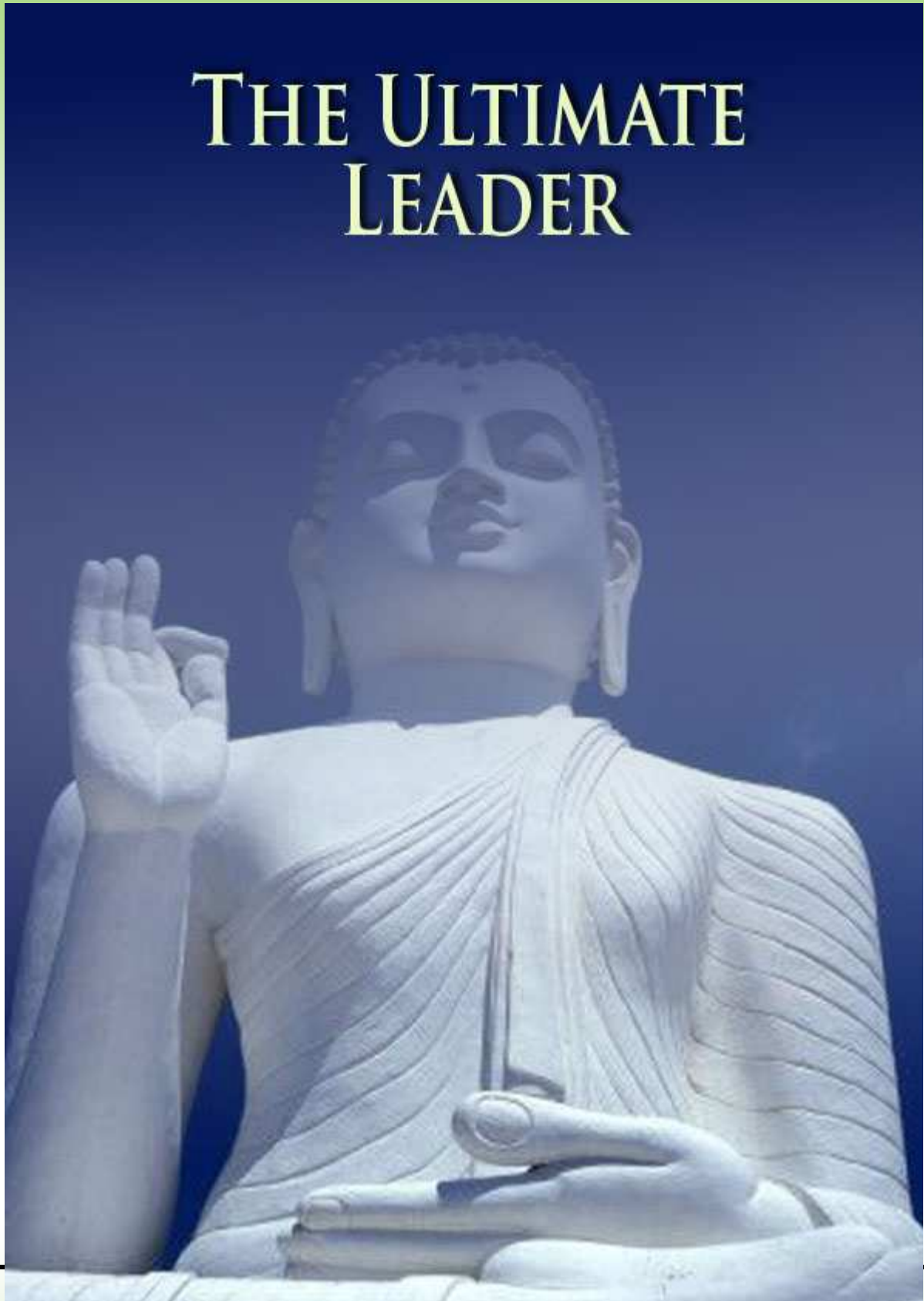


THE ULTIMATE LEADER



The Ultimate Leader

LIFE IS FULL OF INNUMERABLE PROBLEMS. We all would like to live a peaceful life. Is there any of you who would like to see the life extinct as a dream fading out? Therefore, would it be a better idea to go step by step? All people in this world seek help. Moreover, it is difficult to fathom this life which is full of dangers. Who could predict what the future would be, at what moment, we will fall into trouble or any accidents may occur? All in a state of flux. If you look at from any angle you could see there is a streak of sorrow in every of us. There is something lacking in our life. Many pay penalty for their wrong doings. This chain of suffering continues in the form of malefic influences, enemies etc. In other words, life is unprotected. Because of this

uncertainty we feel that the future would be bleak. That is the reason why people go in search of those who could bring solace and protection to these troubled souls. They tend to seek help from deities, miracle makers, blessings from super human beings and the like. Since we are so gullible to these 'hoodlums', we fall a victim without our knowledge. But the Buddha in the *Dajagga Sutta* discloses a secret about deities.

When an unexpected situation arises even the deities get excited, jitter, fear psychosis prompt them to run away. If deities are subjected to this sort of behaviour it is utter foolishness to seek help from them. This does not mean that deities are not in existence. But in a tight situation they act in the same manner as we do. It is an old custom to bestow merit on deities when we do some meritorious act. We should be able to select what is best for us in our lives. We must have the knowledge to understand what is preached by the High priests – the Dhamma.

Various philosophers who preach about life in this world are born from time to time. But the Buddha who professed a clear picture about life, enunciated a free thinking concept,

was placed on a higher pedestal, above the three worlds. This shows what sort of a person He is:

"Monks, Samma Sambuddha, the All Knowing One has given up all desires. He is devoid of anger. He is devoid of mystical foolishness. Therefore, he has no fear. No perturbation. No mental stress. Never runs away. He is fearless. He is not quaking either".

(Dajagga Suttam-Samutta Nikaya)

Dear mother, father, sister and brother, what a miracle it is. There is no other religious leader who has said that he has completely freed from defilements. There is no one other than the Samma Sambuddha who has reached the pinnacle in this regard, not even in the Brahma world, heavenly world or in the world of humans. Once he explained his humanitarianism in this manner:

"Monks, there is only one person in this world who would show loving kindness, help when it is needed and show sympathy for both deities and human beings alike and that person is the one who freed from defilements - Samma Sambuddha".

(Anguttara Nikaya)

The advent of a Buddha to this world is not a common happening. It is one of the greatest and rarest happenings in human history. He himself has explained its significance in the following manner:

"Monks, Samma Sambuddha was the greatest Teacher who lived in this world as a human being, an exemplary person. This Teacher was born to this world to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to save the world from its ills. He illuminates the way by which mankind could cross from a world of unsatisfactoriness to a new world of light, love, peace, happiness and satisfaction... He was the happiest and most fortunate amongst mankind for having managed to conquer all evils, for expounding the highest Dhamma and for being endowed with supernormal and superhuman intellectual faculties. The disciples who have attained the four paths and the four fruits of Nobility in Dhamma emerged, namely Sotapatti (stream-winner), Sakadaḡami (once returner), Anāḡami (non-returner) and Arahatta (one of supreme worth). Monks, Samma Sambuddha was the greatest figure in human history and his advent was a blessing for both humans and deities"

(Anguttara Nikaya)

Think for a while. It is a rare moment in our lives. Buddha's supreme spiritual power is outstanding. He had the ability to propagate his Dhamma throughout the world without any hindrance. He told Bhikkhu **Ananda** in this manner:

"Ananda, the sun and the moon spreads its rays to over thousand solar systems. The Thathagata has the power to send light waves to the whole of cosmos. The species in other worlds could well identify these light waves. Through these light waves the Thathagata could broadcast his Dhamma using sound waves. Then they will identify that too".

(Anguttara Nikaya)

He possessed extraordinary spiritual power. The Buddha was an embodiment of all great virtues - unsurpassed and unparalleled in human history. We have not known of any who had an unblemished, high esteemed character. He possessed the noble qualities which are needed in the world - love, compassion, patience, devoid of fraudulent means, wisdom, and a wide knowledge of understanding of human behaviour.

He covered his body with a robe. He ate simple food. Simplicity was the key factor in his life. He was hated by some foolish disciples and people who believed in other religious faiths. Devadatta, one of his disciples made several attempts to destroy his life. He sent Nalagiri, the uncontrollable elephant after feeding him with toddy to kill the Buddha. Once, Devadatta dispatched groups to kill the Buddha. But all these attempts proved futile. Finally, Devadatta decided to kill the Compassionate One by himself.

That day Buddha was walking back and forth at the foot of **Gijjakuta rock**¹. Devadatta climbed to the top of the rock and hurled a large stone aimed at Buddha's head. A miracle happened. There was no human being in sight to protect the Buddha from this incident. There was not even a deity nearby. But the earth, which has no thinking power, came to his aid. Suddenly another large stone appeared from the earth and changed its route. That signified to the world once again that no external force could destroy the life of Thathagata.

Those disciples who loved the Buddha were pained by this incident. But the undisturbed Buddha explained some

¹ Gijjhakuta rock – This rock can be seen in Rajgir, India.

salient features in his life to the perturbed disciples in this manner:

"Monks, there is nothing to get worried, disturbed or feel fear. There is no need to have any external protection. Monks, you better believe that no external force could extinct the Thathagata's life. In fact, it will not happen.

Monks, Thathagata would breathe his last on his own accord and not by any pressure from outside force. He would pass away peacefully and in mindfulness"

(Chullavagga Pali)

He was the leader for all the tree worlds. Leader of par excellence. He was the greatest human being and unequalled in seniority. Buddha explained this to a high cast Brahmin from Veranja:

"Brahmin, I am the first person who broke this strong external shell by using my toe nail, to come out from this darkness. Therefore Brahmin, by developing my mental faculties I reached enlightenment without the aid of any Teacher. Because of this reason I am the greatest and I am the most senior in the world".

(Veranja sutta - Anguttara Nikaya)

Dear mother, father, brother, sister, there is no one in this world who could come close to the Buddha. We must all be happy to have a spiritual leader in the calibre of this great person. In fact, we are not disciples of any other religious group or any other religious denomination. We are all disciples of the Buddha having taken refuge in **Tisarana**² - Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. We have taken refuge in Tisarana not only once but three times. The Great One explained that one should observe Tisarana according to his/her conscience.

"Ananda, the fragrance from Saman and jasmine flowers only being carried by the wind. But the disciple who takes refuge in the Triple Gem conscientiously, that disciple be known even in the Deva world. The deities would speak about it thus - 'O, pious people see what's happening. See the grandeur of wise men in the human world. That men and women who are from that village have taken refuge in this Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha conscientiously and they are the fortunate ones'"

(Anguttara Nikaya)

² Tisarana – Three Jewels, Triple Gems. (Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha)

The Thathagata very well knew that he should choose and follow a Dhamma that would suit his way of life. Therefore, he always advocated that one should follow not the flamboyance forms but the purest form of all. Taking refuge in the Triple Gem is said to be the purest form.

"Ananda, if someone loves his parents, children and friends, he owes a duty by them. He should advise them clearly and precisely how to observe the Triple Gem. Let them take refuge in tisarana with a good knowledge of its meaning."

(Anguttara Nikaya)

"Monks, if someone believes in Sambuddha, his noble teachings and truly follows, that will bring solace to him. It's the first meritorious act".

(Abhisanda Sutta)

"Monks, if someone doubts the greatness of the Buddha and his achievements, does not believe in his teachings, or acts in contrary to the teachings, he is a pauper, a mendicant spiritually as well".

(Ena Sutta)

"But O, monks, if someone take refuge in Tisarana fully understanding its true meaning and he who believes the Thathagata, that disciple possesses great wealth. He is the possessor of spiritual wealth".

(Cittatha Dhana Sutta)

Once, his close relative Sakyan Mahanama asked Thathagata to describe the qualities of a true disciple. In reply, the Buddha said,

"Mahanama, the true disciple should have the following qualities. He should have full faith in his enlightenment because he comprehended the existence of the world in its proper perspective. The disciple would come to know all great virtues of the Buddha as follows;

The Buddha is depicted as Arahant in five aspects:

- 01. He has discarded all defilements*
- 02. He has suppressed all the enemies connected with the eradication of defilements*

03. He destroyed the spokes of the wheel of existence.
04. He is worthy of being given offerings and paid homage
05. He withheld no secrets in his character or in his teachings

The disciple firmly believes these aspects of the Buddha.

He discovered the Four Noble Truths through His own comprehension.

The term '*Vijja-carana sampanna*' meant that the Buddha was endowed with perfect clear vision and exemplary good conduct.

The Buddha was also designated as '*Sugata*' which meant His path is good, the destination is excellent and the words and methods used to show the path are harmless and blameless.

The term '*Lokavidu*' is applied to the Buddha as the one with exquisite knowledge of the world.

'*Anuttara purisadamma sarathi*' - these three terms imply an incomparable leader, capable of bringing wayward men to the path of righteousness.

'Sattva deva-manussanam' is that the Buddha was a Teacher of devas and men.

'Buddha' means that the Master, being omniscient, possessed extraordinary powers of being able to convince others of His great discovery through His exquisite art of teaching others His Dhamma.

'Bhagava' used to describe the Buddha as the 'Blessed One' because he was the happiest and most fortunate amongst mankind for having managed to conquer all evils, for expounding the highest Dhamma and for being endowed with supernormal and superhuman intellectual faculties.

Mahanama, if someone concentrates on these sterling qualities as true virtues of the Buddha, he is a true Buddhist"

(Mahanama Sutta)

Dear mother, father, brother and sister, Let's take refuge in Tisarana. And we will not take refuge of any other person. He is the Holy One, Fully Enlightened One, endowed with clear vision, virtuous conduct, the Knower of worlds, the Leader of gods and men. It is necessary to emulate these great qualities who follow the Buddha's teachings. By taking refuge in Tisarana with a clear understanding of its meaning

one could lead a happy life both in this world as well as the next. There is no doubt that any individual would not regret because he will not be born in a bad environment. Buddha had mentioned this fact at many of his discourses:

"Mahanama, if one takes refuge of the three precepts - Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha and follow it conscientiously, there's no reason why he should be born in a bad environment"

(Sarakani Sutta)

Now it is clear as a crystal. There is a superior person who could help us to overcome suffering, provide strength and satisfaction to face all our ills. His power radiates throughout the universe.

Actually you could derive that power to make your life easy. Therefore, if you have confidence, trust or conviction in the Buddha, you could negate all the malefic influences that impel the life of an individual.

All the aspirations one have could be accomplished and lead a happy life through the aid of the Buddha.

Moreover, you could follow the Noble Eightfold Path and reach the ultimate goal of Buddhists - Nibbana.

