



OPENING THE DHAMMA EYES: THE PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPT OF DHAMMA CAKKHU (WISDOM EYE) IN BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

This article intends for providing a detailed account of eye especially based on the Theravāda Pāṭi literature. It paves the way to understand the concept of Dhamma eye. This work mainly relies on the method of a single word study of the technical term 'cakkhu'. Thus, plenty of glances at the Buddhist belief in eye have been illustrated. This work is believed to contribute plenty of knowledge on eye according to what the Theravāda Buddhist belief and practice. This work is concluded that Dhamma eye is seen as the vital role which plays in the main theme of Buddhist concept.

KEYWORDS: Dhamma "Nature", Cakkhu "Eye", Different Eyes, Blind Eye, Single Eye, Double Eyes, Interconnection Between Dhamma and Eye.

INTRODUCTION

Dhamma in the Pāli language originally meant "the law of nature" or "the truth." The Dhamma teaches us how to live a life of pure Dharma, a life full of peace, harmony and goodwill for others.

The Buddha said about the dhamma eyes "*Sutvadammanvijananti, narakalyanapapakam*" that only when seeing, hearing and practicing the Dhamma, the people will penetrate good and evil. A person not to blind the eye of wisdom must associate with virtuous person. make the union with the good men. Having known the noble teaching of virtuous person, he gains profit, not be inferior.¹

The people of this world are blind; in this world, only a few can see clearly (with Insight). Just as only a few birds are able to free themselves from a net, only a few find their way to the world of the gods and *Nibbāna*.² So, we should observe proper practice; do not observe improper practice. One who observes proper practice lives happily both in this world and the next.³ human mind is usually delighted in evil. Most of the people forget certain good deeds, if so, their eyes are going into the blind. The nature of eyes by the people sees only the arising in everything. The eye of Dhamma sees only the ceasing of everything.

Dhamma From Very Closed Surrounding Us

Some of us start to practice, and even after a year or two, still don't know what's that. We are still unsure of the practice. When we're still unsure, we don't see that everything around us is purely Dhamma. We can learn Dhamma from nature, from trees. For example, A tree is born due to causes and it grows following the course of nature. Right here the tree is teaching us Dhamma, but we don't

¹ JatA.V.P.535.

² Dhap. P. 174. DhapA. ii. P. 111. PTS. P. 171.

³ Dhap V.169.

understand this. In due course, it grows until it buds, flowers and fruit appear. All we see is the appearance of the flowers and fruit. We are unable to bring this within and contemplate it. Thus, we don't know that the tree is teaching us Dhamma.

We will see that the birth of a tree and our own birth are no different. This body of ours is born and exists dependent on conditions, on the elements of earth, water, wind and fire. It has its food; it grows and grows. Every part of the body changes and flows according to its nature. It's no different from the tree; hair, nails, teeth and skin. all are change. If we know the things of nature, then we will know ourselves.

People are born. In the end they die. Having died they are born again. Nails, teeth and skin are constantly dying and re-growing. If we understand the practice then we can see that a tree is no different from ourselves. If we understand the teaching of the Buddha, then we realize that the outside and the inside are comparable. Things which have consciousness and those without consciousness do not differ. They are the same. And if we understand this sameness, then when we see the nature of a tree, for example, we will know that it's no different from our own *five khandhas*: body, feeling, perception, formation and consciousness. If we have this understanding, then we understand Dhamma. If we understand Dhamma, we understand the five *khandhas*, how they constantly shift and change, never stopping.⁴ We understand Dhamma if we have this understanding. If we understand Dhamma, we understand the five *khandhas* and how they shift and change all the time.

Thus, the Buddha said thus "*Bhijjana-dhammambhinnam, maranadhammammatam*" the nature of destroying must destroy one day (the hings), the nature of dying must dye one day (the beings) so we must contemplate with proper attention every moment that things and beings are going to change at all time. So, without worrying about them should develop the mindfulness of the death before we die ahead.⁵

If we establish the Buddha within our mind, then we see everything, we contemplate everything, as no different from ourselves. We see various animals, trees, mountains and vines as no different from ourselves. We see poor people and rich people. They're no different. They all have the same characteristics. One who understands like this is content wherever he is. He listens to the Buddha's teaching at all times. If we don't understand this, then even if we spend all our time listening to teachings from the virtuous person, we still won't understand their meaning.

The Buddha said that enlightenment of the Dhamma is just knowing Nature, the reality which is all around us. If we don't understand this Nature, we experience disappointment and joy. we get lost in moods, giving rise to sorrow and regret. Getting lost in mental objects is getting lost in Nature. When we get lost in Nature, then we don't know Dhamma. The Enlightened One merely pointed out this Nature.⁶

The Buddha addressed that the ignorance makes non-benefits only (*Anatthajananomoho*), and then it counteracts the human mind as well. Being danger because it doesn't know such kinds of condition. The ignorance doesn't know the benefit, no see the Dhamma (Natural law), that is harmful to beings. At the time, it is going to darkness for him who doesn't know the natural law (Dhamma). We should note a person that he is as blind man because he doesn't perceive Dhamma.⁷

Having arisen, all things change and die. Things we make, such as plates, bowls and dishes, all have the same characteristic. A bowl is molded into being due to a cause, man's impulse to create, and as we use it, it gets old, breaks up and disappears. Trees, mountains and vines are the same, right up to animals and people. When *Annasi-Kondanna*, the first disciple, heard the Buddha's teaching for the first time, the realization he had was nothing very complicated. He simply saw that whatever thing is born, that thing must change and grow old as a natural condition and eventually it must die.

This feeling was different from anything. He had ever known before. He truly realized his mind, and so "Buddha" arose within him. At that time, the Buddha declared that *Annasi-Kondanna* had

⁴TF .P. 52.

⁵DhapA. II. P. 180.

⁶TF .P. 53.

⁷Iti .P. 252.

received the Eye of Dhamma. This Eye sees that whatever is born has aging and death as a natural result. "Whatever is born" means everything! Whether material or immaterial, it all comes under this "whatever is born." It refers to all of Nature. Like this body, for instance, it's born and then proceeds to extinction. When it's small, it "dies" from smallness to youth. After a while its "dies" from youth and becomes middle-aged. Then it goes on to "die" from middle-age and reach old-age, finally reaching the end. Trees, mountains and vines all have this characteristic.⁸

To contemplate thus, the Buddha point out in *Theragatha* commentary: all youth put an end to ageing, all healthy put an end to decay and disease, all living put an end to dying and all combination put an end to part company.⁹

Opening the Dhamma Eyes

So, as the Buddha expounded the Dhamma, *Annasi-Kondanna* opened the Eye of Dhamma. This Eye is just the "One who knows clearly." It sees things differently. It sees this very nature. Seeing Nature clearly, clinging is uprooted and the 'One who knows' is born. Previously he knew but he still had clinging. You could say that he knew the Dhamma but he still hadn't seen it, or he had seen the Dhamma but still wasn't one with it. At this time the Buddha said, "*Kondanna* knows." What did he know? He just knew Nature! Usually we get lost in Nature, as with this body of ours. Earth, water, fire and wind come together to make this body. It's an aspect of Nature, a material object we can see with the eye. It exists depending on food, growing and changing until finally it reaches extinction. This mind is capable of knowing the truth of Nature.

If the mind still has obstructions, then we say it knowsthrough ignorance. It knows wrongly and it sees wrongly. Knowing wrongly and seeing wrongly, or knowing andseeing rightly, it's just a single awareness. We say wrongview and right view but it's just one thing. Right and wrong both arise from this one place. When there is wrong knowledge, we say that Ignorance conceals the truth. When there is wrong knowledge then there is wrong view, wrong intention, wrong action, wrong livelihood everything is wrongand on the other hand, the path of right practice is born in this same place. When there is right then the wrong disappears.

The wise know the wrong paths but they relinquish them, they give them up. They are unmoved by pleasure and displeasure, happiness and unhappiness. These things arise but those who know don't cling to them, they let them go according to their nature. This is right view. When

one knows this fully there is liberation. Happiness and unhappiness have no meaning for an Enlightened One.

The Buddha said that the Enlightened Ones were far from defilements. This doesn't mean that they ran away from defilements, they didn't run away anywhere. Defilements were there. He compared it to a lotus leaf in a pond of water. The leaf and the water exist together, they are in contact, but the leaf doesn't become damp. The water is like defilements and the lotus leaf is the EnlightenedMind.

Seeing theWorldly Dhamma

Gain and loss, praise and criticism, fame and disrepute, happiness and unhappiness - this is the world. The person who is lost in the world has no path of escape. Because the world overwhelms him. This world follows to the Law of Dhamma. So, we call it worldly dhamma. He who lives within the worldly dhamma is called a worldly being. He lives surrounded by confusion.

Therefore, the Buddha taught us to develop the path. We can divide it up into morality, concentration and wisdom. We have to develop them to completion. This is the path of practice which destroys the world. Where is this world? It is just in the minds of beings infatuated with it. The action of clinging to praise, gain, fame, happiness and unhappiness is called "world." When it is there in the mind, then the world arises, the worldly being is born.

⁸TF .P. 54-5.

⁹TherA. li. .P. 201.

The world is born because of desire. Desire is the birthplace of all worlds. To put an end to desire is to put an end to the world. Our practice of morality, concentration and wisdom is otherwise called the Eightfold Path. This Eightfold Path and the eight worldly dhammas are a pair. We say that gain and loss, praise and criticism, fame and disrepute, happiness and unhappiness are the eight worldly dhammas. Right view, Right Intention, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness and Right Concentration, are the Eightfold Path. These two eightfold ways exist in the same place.¹⁰

In Mangala-sutta, explained thus. When we experience with the eight worldly dhamma, not shaking the mind, sorrowless in mind, stainless in mind and safely is highest blessing one.¹¹

Let's see the human nature. When ignorance has arisen, knowledge can't enter, because the mind has accepted ignorance. When knowledge has arisen, ignorance cannot stay. So, the Buddha exhorted his disciples to practice with the mind, because the world is born in this mind, the eight worldly dhammas are there. The Eightfold Path, that is, investigation through calm and insight meditation, our diligent effort and the wisdom we develop, all these things loosen the grip of the world. Attachment, aversion and delusion become lighter, and being lighter, we know them as such. If we experience fame, material gain, praise, happiness or suffering, we are aware of it. We must know these things before we can transcend the world, because the world is within us.

This Nature is neither happy nor sad, neither big nor small, heavy nor light; neither short nor long, black nor white. There's nothing you can compare it to. No convention can reach it. This is why we say *Nibbana* has no colour. All colors are merely conventions. The state which is beyond the world is beyond the reach of worldly conventions. So, the Dhamma is that which is beyond the world. Each person should see for himself. It is beyond language. You can't put it into words, you can only talk about ways and means of realizing it. The person who has seen it for himself has finished his work.¹²

Three Persons with Different Views

In *Anddha* sutta, the Buddha stated thus there were three persons in the world:

1. He who has no business eye and virtuous eye also "lack of two visions" (*Andha-cakkhuka*).
2. He who has only business eye, but not virtuous eye "lack of one vision" (*Eka-cakkhuka*)
3. He who has both of eyes "no lack in two visions" (*Dvi-cakkhuka*).

The first one of three person is blind man. How is he blind? Because he has no the business eye and virtuous also. He is effortless one. He didn't strive to get the property what has not gotten and to develop the property what has gotten and then he doesn't know good and evil, blame and blameless, inferior and superior, black and white also. So, he was called as a blind man "a person lack of two visions". According to sub-commentary, Here, vision means the eye of wisdom. If a certain person has lack of present welfare and the welfare in the circle of rebirth, Therefore, he was so called as a blind man (*andha-cakkhuka*).¹³

For a certain person, although disappear the natural eye, need not to disappear the Dhamma eye. Only thus, he will perceive everything detail. Only having heard the Dhamma, beings will perceive good and evil. So, we have to try to hear the Dhamma from respected teacher at proper time.

In *MajjimaNikaya*, the commentator stated that for a person there are five ways to remove ignorance:

1. Having to live depending on respected teacher.
2. Reading aloud any subject matter.
3. Asking for meaning to respected teacher.
4. Hearing the Dhamma at proper time.

¹⁰TF .P.59-60.

¹¹KN i.P.3.

¹²TF .P.62.

¹³AN iii. P. 126.

5. Giving a decision the fact or matter about an event, reason, purpose.¹⁴

The Growth and Power of Wisdom

These four things, O monks, are conducive to the growth of wisdom.

What four?

- 1) Association with superior persons,
- 2) hearing the good Dhamma,
- 3) proper attention, and
- 4) practice in accordance with the Dhamma.

These four things are conducive to the growth of wisdom. These four things are also a great help to a human being.¹⁵

The Power of wisdom is the power of seeing what things truly are and how to act rightly when the problems of life come before us. The seeds of wisdom have lain latent in us, and when our hearts are soft and warm with love they grow into their powers. When a man has stilled the raging torrents of greed, anger and delusion he becomes conscientious, full of sympathy, and he is anxious for the welfare of all living beings. He abstains from stealing and is upright and honest in all his dealings. He abstains from sexual misconduct and is pure, chaste. He abstains from tale-bearing. What he has heard in one place he does not repeat in another so as to cause dissension. He unites those who are divided, and encourages those who are united. He abstains from harsh language. He speaks such words are gentle, soothing to the ear and which go to the heart. He abstains from vain talk. He speaks what is useful at the right time according to the facts. It is when his mind is pure and his heart is soft by being equipped with this morality that the divine seed, wisdom, grows. Knowledge of the properties of the magnetic needle enables the mariner to see the right direction in the ocean in the darkest night when there are no stars visible. In the same way wisdom enables a man to see things as they truly are, and perceive the right way to peace. It is this wisdom which enable us to unite with all beings in one immense ocean of tenderness and love.

CONCLUSION

These five things should often be contemplated by both women and men, by both householder and home leaver. What five? "Old age can come to me; I have not got beyond old age. Sickness can come to me; I have not got beyond sickness. Death can come to me; I have not got beyond death. I am the result of my own deeds, the heir to deeds - deeds are the source, the kin and the foundation. Whatever deed I do, whether good or bad, I shall become heir to that." These five things, should often be contemplated by both women and men, by both householder and home-leaver.¹⁶

To understand the nature of Dhamma and to see the world with the eye of Dhamma need to have right view and right intention. Hearing the one word of the Dhamma can bring peace to the mind.¹⁷ Better than living for a hundred years with those who do not perceive the arising and dissolution of the five aggregates is one day living with those who perceive the arising and dissolution of the five aggregates. Better than living for a hundred years with those who do not perceive the deathless state is one day living with those who perceive the deathless state. Better than living for a hundred years with those who do not comprehend the Noble Dhamma is one day living with those who comprehend the Noble Dhamma.¹⁸ We should note for a person thus "Long is the night to those who cannot sleep; long is the road to the weary. Long is the cycle of birth and death to those who do not know the Dhamma."¹⁹

¹⁴ MN A. i. P. 392.

¹⁵ AN i.P. 67.

¹⁶ BhV. P. 73-4.

¹⁷ Dhap V. P. 102.

¹⁸ Dhap V. P. 113.5.

¹⁹ Dhap V. P. 60.

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