

Thoughts and Actions

This article will deal with how one's thoughts and actions influence one's state of mind. The states of mind influence how thoughts (ideas) are translated into outward physical actions, which result in the fruits of kamma (Kamma Phala) and suffering from kamma (Kamma Vipāka).

The article will be in two sections that will be preceded by a brief background. The first will deal with the different states of mind, and how they relate to the planes of existence. The second will deal with the results of one's actions (Kamma), with reference to examples taken from the Buddha's time.

Background

1. The States of Mind and Planes of Existence
2. Karmic Actions and their Results (Cause and Effect)

Background

How this article approaches the Dhamma will be quite revolutionary. There are some reasons for this. More than 2,500 years have past since the Dhamma was revealed to the world by the great Gauthama Buddha. After the first 500 years since the revelation of the Dhamma, it has been mainly preserved and protected by people who had not even achieved the first stage of enlightenment (those like the majority of us). In the hands of such people, it is hard to believe that the Dhamma existed unchanged and in its 100% pristine glory. Over time, the Buddha Dhamma was no doubt influenced by the powerful forces of religions such as Jainism and Hinduism, with which it shared its cradle. It gave rise to many outgrowths (the many 'Yānas' and 'Vādas) some of which changed so much over time to become almost separate religions in everything but name.

Some of the Alien features which have polluted the Dhamma are: -

- 1) The Vasavarthi Māra Concepts – This is something like the Devil or Satan in Christianity, a powerful being representing (and responsible for) all that is evil.
- 2) The concept of Soul or Ātma - Despite the concept of Anāthma, seems to have crept back in different clothing, such as the Antharābhavika concept (Trans-migrating "souls") a Mahāyāna-ish view.
- 3) The Brahma as the creator god of the universe – no doubt something imported from Hinduism.

Fortunately for us, over time, the world has witnessed the birth of people who (although they were not enlightened,) were able to clear up some of the mess that was polluting the Buddha's word. Such a person was the late Kōtte Sri Dēvananda Thero (Ven. Devananda of Kōtte). His sermons are based on the rule that Lord Buddha's Dhamma word should be practical – something which we should be able to incorporate into our daily life and not just an object of veneration. Since the Buddha himself mentioned in the Kālāma Sūtra that his word should not be taken at face value, but should be realized through practice, it is our view that Ven. Devānanda's path is justified. Therefore, this entire article is influenced by his teachings as well as the discussions conducted by his main lay disciples.