# Poson Pōya

Posted on

The Great Day of Visit of Anubudu Mihindu



Monk Mihindu came to Mihintale in Sri Lanka. Poson Poya Day Mihinthalaya, Sri Lanka

The Lord Buddha visited Sri Lanka on Vesak Pōya Day for the third time. After the

Buddha’s passing away the Second Buddha, Arahant Mahā Mahinda Thero visited Sri Lanka in the Dharma Ashōka period, in India. During the reign of King Ashoka (227-236), his peaceful Dharma, which included Buddha Dharma, was spread to many countries by King Ashoka. The Second Buddha, Arahant Mahā Mahinda Thero, visited Sri Lanka during this period and his begotten son, who later became Arahant, was also ordained. Today, we commemorate the arrival of the Arahant Mahinda Thero on a Poson Poya Day, which takes place in June. The Sri Lankan community places a higher value on this day than Buddhists in other countries, as we continue to practice this psychological and practical Dharma for the betterment of people’s lives.

On the auspicious day of Poson Poya, we commemorate the arrival of Arahant Mahinda Thero in Sri Lanka, which marked the beginning of a new chapter in the lives of the nation’s people. In these challenging times, when we face various social and mental problems and sufferings or Dukkha, it has become even more significant to follow the path of the Dharma. It is worth noting that Emperor Ashoka was revered as a supreme and unconquerable leader, ruling over an empire that spanned a vast territory of India, consisting of five great rivers, namely the Yamuna, Ganga, Sarabhu, Achirawathi, and Mahi, and encompassing 16 states, including Magadha, Kasi, Kosala, Vajji, and Malla, as per historical records.

The historical figure of Ashoka, who is often regarded as a Great King, underwent a significant transformation in his character from his earlier moniker of Chandashoka, which connoted cruelty. During the conquest of 16 states, he received this name. However, his behavior changed after he conquered the state of Kalinga, which led to unfortunate devastations for the people. The war resulted in the death of thousands of soldiers on both sides, plunging multitudes into suffering. This event profoundly affected the monarch, who felt great remorse. At this juncture, a novice Buddhist monk expounded on the Dhamma, which Ashoka embraced, leading to his conversion to Buddhism. Nonetheless, King Ashoka’s adherence to Dhamma was fair to all religions. Thus, he became known as Dharmashoka, which signified his commitment to the principles of righteousness. Subsequently, he wrote the Dharma on pillars and carved it on rocks for the well-being of the people, as a testament to his devotion to his people.

“I strongly believe that all people following religious beliefs should live in peace and harmony. In my opinion, there is no better way to serve humanity than to promote

the welfare of all people. It is my hope that my sons, grandsons, and great-grandsons will embrace this idea for the betterment of the world. Along the roads, I have planted banyan and mango trees to provide shade for both humans and animals. Additionally, I have dug wells and constructed rest houses in various locations. I have also made watering-places available for the use of animals and humans."

> On the significant occasion of Poson Poya Day, Arahant Mahā Mahinda's sermon from the Mihintalā mountain remains a relevant philosophy for uplifting one's mind to a state of serenity.

Furthermore, he has stated about human life: "As human beings live, enjoying peace of mind and collective protection, self-control and purity of heart, I desire for the animals of the jungle in my kingdom also to enjoy equal survival" (Bauddhālōkaya: p.185-186).

The non-religious teachings, which are applicable to the contemporary society, deserve appreciation. It is a legitimate question to ask why some inhumane individuals cannot think about the lives of other human beings. Despite being in a so-called developed world and following numerous religious rituals, we witness vast killings and various other problems in the same society. It leads to the question of whether it is karma, ignorance, or both. Therefore, it is essential to raise awareness about the workings of every individual's mind, irrespective of their background. As Kusumā Devendra, M.A. writes in SATI in Buddhist Meditation, "In being mindful of one's consciousnesses, an honest self- examination is possible. By observing thoughts and emotions as they arise in the mind, their nature can be understood as skillful or unskillful. Examining mental thoughts offers an opportunity to act or refrain from acting verbally or physically. Consequently, a great battle can be won over emotions. Good qualities can be understood and strengthened, whereas weaknesses can be understood and abandoned." The solution to every problem, whether mental or physical, is within our minds if we learn to use it.

During the Third century B.C.E., the Mauryan empire was established by several ambitious individuals. Among them was King Ashōka, who became deeply troubled by the widespread destruction caused by warfare. As a ruler who had previously

sent out armies to kill and conquer, he had witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of war on people and their communities. In response, he made the decision to renounce all warfare, adopt a code of non-violence, and integrate Buddhist principles into his rule. This transformative decision had far-reaching effects, as it was the reason for the worldwide spread and acceptance of Buddhism.

Patrick Goodness, a renowned philosopher, has written a thoughtful review of King Ashōka's life and legacy. In today's world, it is rare to find leaders who prioritize non-violence and peace over war and conquest. As a result, conflicts and wars continue to cause significant problems and disruptions globally. This reality is often attributed to the psychological concept of disappointment and the Buddhist concept of Dukkha, which highlights the inevitability of unexpected and unwelcome events in life. The story of King Ashōka can serve as a valuable lesson for leaders today, as it demonstrates the power of transformative change and the positive impact that can result from prioritizing non-violence and peace.

The concept of Dharma is universal and transcends all religious aspects. On the significant occasion of Poson Poya Day, Arahant Mahā Mahinda's sermon from the Mihintalā mountain remains a relevant philosophy for uplifting one's mind to a state of serenity. It is imperative that we comprehend the essence of his teachings beyond the observance of this day's significance alone. One cannot attain the pinnacle of knowledge or a state of transcendence without embracing the principles of Dharma. Therefore, a brief analysis of the Chullahatthi Padōpama Sūtra preached by Arahant Mahinda to the King and his followers on this day at Anurādhapura, Sri Lanka, would be of immense benefit in enhancing our knowledge of Dharma.

"Just as the footprints of all-legged animals are encompassed by footprints of the elephant and the elephant's footprint is reckoned the foremost among them in terms of size; in the same way, all skillful qualities (Kusaḷa) are gathered under the four noble truths. And what is the noble truth of suffering?"

The following statement affirms that birth, aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair are forms of suffering. It is evident from our current circumstances that reality does not always conform to our desires. This has resulted in a sense of hopelessness, identified as frustration (Icchā-bhangạ), which inevitably leads to grief. To overcome suffering, it is essential to reflect on it non-judgmentally from a psychological perspective. Moreover, it is crucial to comprehend the nature of human existence according to the Dharma to identify the root cause of suffering.

*Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero (B.A., M.A., M.Phil.)*

*Expert Psychological Counselor and Meditation Instructor Siriwardhanarama Buddha Dhamma College*

*Mano¯daya Meditation Center Siriwardhanaramaya, Temple Lane, Kollupitiya*
*sirirevathad@gmail.com dhammavedi.com*



Ven Diyapattugama Revatha Thero, Chief Incumbent of the Siriwardhanaramaya Temple, Kollupitiya.