

DHAMMA IS DUTY, DUTY IS DHAMMA



I want everyone to realize that Dhamma is duty, or to see that duty itself is Dhamma. Whether people in the past, or those living today, no one ever thinks that duty is Dhamma. Instead, we do our duties because necessity forces us. If we don't do them, we have nothing to eat. So we do our duty by the force of necessity. This goes against our feelings and we suffer at the same time that we do our duty. I call this "falling into hell while working." There is nothing cheerful about falling into hell while working. Would all these people who have duties to perform please discover that these duties are Dhamma itself.

Dhamma is the thing that will help save people. And duty is the thing that will help save us, because the two are one and the same thing. If they say that God will save us, we must say that duty by itself is what saves us. If we do not do our duty, however many Gods you wish are powerless to help. When duty is done, that duty becomes the God that saves us. The meaning is exactly the same as Dhamma. Whoever has Dhamma is saved; whoever does their duty is saved. Would you please observe carefully that any kind of saving duty should be respected as Dhamma.

You do not have to add anything to the everyday duties that you already have. But be careful. If you are going to do something, see it as Dhamma. With your best mindful-

ness and ready comprehension, set your heart and mind on doing those duties as well as possible, as correctly as possible. And then be content with those duties. That is how to be happy all the time one is doing those duties.

The result is that there is Dhamma in all positions and movements. There is joy in all movements, because they are Dhamma. People do not need to do any extra duties beyond what they are doing already. Please learn, however, to be aware and feel that duty is Dhamma. We must do our best until satisfaction and contentment arise, then there will be happiness all the time the duty is done. To do our duty all day long is to be happy all day long. To do our duty the entire month is to be happy the entire month, even the entire year. This is called being happy in all movements, because we are able to turn our duties into Dhamma through correct understanding.

Before, we never felt this way. When we said the word "duty," we always felt tired. And we felt like doing it only to claim our right to get something in return. Even this is a kind of force, to be forced to do our duty, which makes it a burden most difficult to endure. We are miserable in doing such duties just to have the right to demand something in return.

Now we do not want it that way anymore. We just do our duty and are satisfied; then we are happy. While doing just that duty we are happy, we are happy in that duty. Doing our duty all day long, we are happy all day long. Doing our duty all year, we are happy for the entire year. These results mean, in short and simple terms, that "Duty is Dhamma."

Would everyone please feel this way about doing their duties. Then those duties will be satisfying; they will be gratifying. We call this "being happy while working." This is the opposite of how it used to be, "falling into hell while working." Now we go to heaven while working. Please look at things in this way, understand life in this way, and transform your duties into heaven. Duty and heaven are together, and become the same thing. You won't have to invest your money in heaven anymore. If there is satisfaction in doing our duty, there is happiness. When doing our duty, that is true happiness. Thus, we refresh ourselves, we respect ourselves, and we honor ourselves. We have the best happiness in this way.

The results of work, of duties, are never lost. They come as they always have and they can be used as needed. If they are genuinely used correctly, there will be other benefits, but happiness is already achieved when we do our duties, including the little ones. Duties start with waking up in the morning, brushing our teeth, and washing our face—we are happy the whole time we are washing our face. But fools never get it. Their hearts are floating around who knows where. They have no intention to wash their face as Dhamma, to do their best, to be content and happy all the time they are washing their face.

Fools cannot do it. Happiness and contentment are only for those who have the mindfulness and wisdom to see that even washing one's face is a duty. It is a duty that is Dhamma. Proud in washing our face as best as we can, doing it correctly, contentedly happy the entire time of washing our face.

If we go to take a bath, it's exactly the same. From the first second it's duty, it's Dhamma. We are contented with doing it as well and correctly as possible. Satisfied every moment of bathing means one is happy the whole time of bathing, which is something that foolish, careless people cannot do. One must know this oneself, but whoever thinks about it?

We continue in the toilet as we defecate or urinate, duties we must do, for we will die if we don't. So we do our best and are satisfied. Contentment is knowing we are correct in defecating and urinating. Make it satisfying and correct, then there will be joy the entire time one defecates and urinates. Fools cannot do it, because fools do not act with such a heart. Thus they suffer the entire time they are defecating and urinating.

It is the same while we eat, throughout the whole activity of eating. Even while washing the dishes, if one helps with the dishes, be satisfied with washing those dishes. That is the duty of washing dishes. Be happy with washing dishes the whole time. If one helps to sweep the floor and clean the house, be happy the whole time one sweeps and cleans.

The Thick Ones just cannot do it. All the fools who have these exact same duties cannot even do them. They don't have this feeling because they lack understanding. They don't know that duty is Dhamma. Once they know that duty is Dhamma, they are satisfied, content, and delighted—and that is happiness.

Don't bother asking questions about it; one must know for oneself. When we are happy with everything, from washing our face,

taking a bath, defecating, urinating, eating, cleaning the house, to dressing for work, to going out to work and then, most especially, working at the office, we are correct and content. We do our best and are happy all the while we are working. Returning home it's the same. To do anything, anywhere, the principle never changes. Thereby, we are happy in every movement. These are words that the Thick Ones won't accept. They don't believe that we can have Dhamma in every movement. They don't believe that we can be happy in every movement. That's up to them, they can suffer if they wish. But please examine this carefully for yourself.

If you have truly learned and applied this fact, you will be content; and content, you will be happy. Farmers will work their fields and orchards happily. Traders will do business joyfully. Civil servants will serve the people happily. Laborers working bathed in sweat will be cool with happiness. Beggars will beg happily and coolly. No one will suffer if we see that duty is Dhamma and Dhamma is duty.

We do our best, our very best. We act as correctly as we can, we are as satisfied as we can be, and we are happy. The undeniable fact is that we can do duty in every movement, can have Dhamma in every movement, can be happy in every movement. That is all there is to do. Dhamma is duty, duty is Dhamma.

Translated by Santikaro Bhikkhu

