

**Paying Reverence
to
Twenty-Eight Buddhas**
(Hnit Kyaik Shit Su Phaya)



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A Gift of Dhamma

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Introduction: -

In the Theravada Buddhist world, we often come across event where Buddhists worship and pay reverence to *Twenty-Eight Buddha including Gotama Buddha*. We Buddhists have special reason for worshipping **Twenty-Eight Buddhas**.

The Twenty-Eight Buddha's comprise of three Buddha's - *Tanhankara, Medhankara, and Saranankara in the second period of Bodhisatta verbal aspiration; twenty-four Buddhas in his third stage of active aspiration; and including Gotama Buddha himself make up the sum total of twenty-eight Buddhas*. Let us look at our Buddha Gotama Buddha; how he had gone through fulfilling the ten perfections in three stages in so long a time period to become a Buddha, The twenty-eight Buddhas are the significant land mark in our Gotama Buddha career in quest for the Buddhahood. Our Bodhisatta had gone through three stages of aspiration periods:

THE MANO-PANIDANA KALA (Era of Mental Aspiration) FIRST PERIOD

THE VACI-PANIDHANA KALA (Era of Verbal Aspiration) SECOND PERIOD

THE KAYA-PANIDHANA KALA (Era of action) THIRD PERIOD

The Period when our Bodhisatta Received the Definite Proclamation to become a Buddha, started from Dipankara Buddha including Gotama Buddha himself numbered – 25 Buddhas. This period is called - *Kayapanidhana Kala* (Era of Action) (*the period when our Bodhisatta received definite proclamation from the 24 Buddhas*) in which our Bodhisatta actively completed the ten perfections. This period started with the *Dipankara Buddha*. At this time our Bodhisatta was **Ascetic Sumedha** and he received the first *definite proclamation from the Dipankara Buddha*. Our Bodhisatta met each of the Buddha and received the definite proclamation and was encouraged by the Buddha's to complete the 10 perfections. Because the period is so very long, it is measured in world cycles or Mahakappa.

In the last world cycle of the *Vacipanidhana Kala* there were 3 other Buddhas called *Tanhankara*, *Medhankara*, and *Saranankara*. Our Bodhisatta, however, was not as yet ready to receive the definite proclamation from these three Buddhas. And so we include these 3 Buddhas in this very long period and venerate them and thus totaled twenty-eight (28) Buddhas.

Aspiration Stages	Time in Reference to the Present
THE MANO-PANIDANA KALA (Era of Mental Aspiration) FIRST PERIOD	300,000 world cycles and twenty incalculable periods ago 1. Only in the period 100,000 world cycles interspersed with 7 incalculable periods – when he was king Atideva at the time of Brahma-Deva Buddha did he made his mental aspiration . 2. He then met 125,000 Buddhas, each and every one of them and made his mental aspiration 3. He then lived in Brahma world during the time when there was no Buddha.
THE VACI-PANIDHANA KALA (Era of Verbal Aspiration) SECOND PERIOD	200,000 world cycles and thirteen incalculable periods ago 1. Only in the period 100,000 world cycles interspersed with 9 incalculable periods – when he was prince Sagara at the time of Purana Gotama Buddha did he made his Verbal aspiration . He aspired before the Purana Gotama Buddha to be like him in Sakkyia family and named as Gotama Buddha. For the first time. 2. He then met 38,700 Buddhas each and every one of them and made verbal aspiration. 3. He received only indefinite prophecies from every one of them.
In the period - 100,000 world cycles and four Asankheyya -incalculable periods ago, he met Tanhankara Buddha as Universal Monarch did he made his Verbal aspiration. See continuation in 28 Buddhas description.	
THE KAYA-PANIDHANA KALA (Era of action) THIRD PERIOD	100,000 world cycles and four Asankheyya -incalculable periods ago

Twenty-Eight Buddhas Chart				
Buddha	Time in relation to present	Bodhisatta's name	Proclamation	Meritorious Deeds and Aspiration
Maha Kappa of Vaci-panidhana kala (Era of Verbal Aspiration)				
Tanhankara Buddha (1)	100,000 world cycles and four Asankheyya periods	Universal Monarch Sudassana	Indefinite Prophecy (total 3 Buddhas in Vaci-panidhana kala)	Sudassana made meritorious deeds and mental aspiration to become a Buddha.
Medhankara Buddha (2)		Ascetic Somanassa		Somanassa made meritorious deeds and verbal aspiration to become a Buddha.
Saranankara Buddha (3)		Ascetic Yasavanta		Yasavanta made meritorious deeds and verbal aspiration to become a Buddha
In the above three periods, our Boddhisatta was not qualified to receive A definite proclamation.				

THE KAYA-PANIDHANA KALA (Era of action)				
Dipankara Buddha (4)	100,000 world cycles and four Asandkeyya periods	Ascetic Sumedha	Definite proclamation to be Gotama Buddha	Sumeda made verbal aspiration before Dipankara Buddha
<p>This time he met the ten perfections' qualifications: Dana, Sila, Nekhamma, Paninia, Viriya, Khanti, Sacca, Adhittana, Metta and Upekkha - the prerequisites to Buddhahood, and met Eight qualifications (1) Qualified to attain Arahantship; (2) He must be a male (3) He is a Human; (4) He come face to face with living Buddha; (5) He must be an Ascetic; (6). He must possessed Psychic power (jhanas); (7). He must be prepared to lay down his life for the Buddha; (8). He must gave up arahantship to remain in Samsara for the sake of man and Gods</p>				
Kondanna Buddha (5)	After one Asankheyya period	King Vijitavi	Definite Proclamation	Vijitavi King made verbal aspiration before Kondanna Buddha
Mangala Buddha (6)	After another one Asankheyya period	Brahmin Suruci	Definite Proclamation	Brahmin Suruci made verbal aspiration before Mangala Buddha
Sumana Buddha (7)		Naga king Atula	Definite Proclamation	Naga King Atula made verbal aspiration before Sumana Buddha
Revata Buddha (8)		Brahmin Atideva	Definite Proclamation	Brahmin Atideva made verbal aspiration before Revata Buddha
Sobhita Buddha (9)		Brahmin Ajita	Definite Proclamation	Brahmin Ajita made verbal aspiration before Sobhita Buddha
Anomadassi Buddha (10)	After another one Asankheyya period	Demon	Definite Proclamation	Demon made verbal aspiration before Anomadassi Buddha
Paduma Buddha (11)		Lion	Definite Proclamation	Lion made verbal aspiration before Paduma Buddha
Narada Buddha (12)		Ascetic	finite proclamation	Ascetic made verbal aspiration before Narada Buddha
Padumuttara Buddha (13)	Maha Kappa After another one Asankheyya period	Jatila	Definite Proclamation	Jatila made verbal aspiration before Padumutta Buddha
Sumedha Buddha (14)	Maha Kappa After another one Asankheyya period	Uttara	Definite Proclamation	Uttara made verbal aspiration before Sumedha Buddha
Sujata Buddha (15)	After another 12,000 Maha Kappa period Or 18,000 Maha	chakkavatti king	Definite Proclamation	chakkavatti king made verbal aspiration before Sujata Buddha
Piyadassi Buddha (16)		Brahmin Kassapa		Brahmin Kassapa made verbal aspiration before Piyadasi Buddha

Atthadassi Buddha (17)	kappas before our Buddha	Ascetic Susima		Ascetic Susima made verbal aspiration before Atthadassi Buddha
Dhammadassi Buddha (18)	18,000 Maha kappas before our Buddha	Sakka - God	Definite Proclamation	Sakka God made Verbal aspiration before Dhammadassi Buddha
Siddhatta Buddha (19)		Ascetic Mangala		Ascetic Mangala made verbal aspiration before Siddhatta Buddha
Tissa Buddha (20)	2 Maha Kappa before our Buddha)	King & Ascetic Sujata		Ascetic Sujata made verbal aspiration before Tissa Buddha
Phussa Buddha (21)		King Vijitavi		King Vijitavi made verbal aspiration before Phussa Buddha
Vipassi Buddha (22)	91 Maha kappas before our Buddha	Naga king, Atula		Naga King Atula made verbal aspiration before Vipassi Buddha
Sikhi Buddha (23)	31 Maha kappas before our Buddha	King Arindama		King Arindama made verbal aspiration before Sikha Buddha
Vessabhu Buddha (24)	1 Maha kappas before our Buddha	King Sudassana		King Sudassana made verbal aspiration before Vessabhu Buddha
Kakusandha Buddha (25)	(Buddha Kappa) Maha Buddha Kappa 5 Buddhas in this Buddha Kappa	King Sema		Definite Proclamation
Konagamana Buddha (26)		King Pabbata	King Pabbata made verbal aspiration before Konagama Buddha	
Kassapa Buddha (27)		Brahmin Jotipala	Brahmin Jotipala made verbal aspiration before Kassapa Buddha	
Gotama Buddha (28)		Prince Siddhatta	Attained Buddhahood	
Metreyya Buddha				In another 100,000 years in the future

Our Bodhisatta met each of these Buddhas and received the definite prophecy from each one of the twenty four Buddhas during the Kaya Panidhana Kala (**Era of action**).

It was during the period between the **Buddha Sobhita** and the **Buddha Anomadassi**, in the dark period of one asankheyya when there was no Dhamma, that the Bodhisatta erred. He killed His brother to inherit the family wealth. The reason He erred was that He was still a world ling - a Bodhisatta who had been practicing the ten perfections for aeons and aeons of time but was still a world ling with 1,500 impurities (**kelesa**) and the desires and greed of a world ling. This is why at the time of the Buddha **Anomadassi** He was a leader among the demons (**Asuras**). This is why He was a lion at the time of the **Buddha Paduma**. This is why He had to work His way up through the animal

kingdom back to a human form. This is why there are many Jataka stories where the Bodhisatta was an animal. And it was the residual effect of this action that caused the injury to His foot when Devadatta rolled the big rock at Gijjhakula to kill Him. Having given His limbs, His life in countless births, a Buddha has reached the saturation point in generosity and cannot be killed. However, the karmic result of that one action still affected the Buddha as a painful injury to His foot.



Buddha said to Ananda about the next Buddha to come –

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"And Ananda, holding back his tears, said to the Buddha:

'Who will teach us when you are gone?'

And the Blessed One answered:

'I am not the first Buddha who has come upon the earth, nor shall I be the last. In the right time, another Buddha will arise in the world, a Holy One, a Supremely Enlightened One, endowed with wisdom in conduct, auspicious, Knowing the Truth, an incomparable leader of men, a Master of Spirit and mortals. He will reveal to you these Eternal Truths. He will preach his Dharma, Glorious in its Origin, Glorious in the Middle, and Glorious in its end, in the Spirit as well as the letter. He will proclaim a life of Dharma, wholly Perfect and Pure, even as I now proclaim.' Ananda said: 'How shall we know him?' And the Buddha said: 'He will be known as **Metreyya** which means, the friend.'"

References:

1. Practicing the Dhamma with a View to Nibbana by Radhika Abeysekera