

Rahula Thera Siddhatta and Yasodhara only son



ts Buddha Rāhula aska for his inheritance

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ယသောရကန်တကွခင်းနှင့် ရာဟုလာအမွေတောင်းခန်း

Yasodhara Paying Obeisance to Buddha with Parents Shuddhodana and Maha Pajapati Gotami
& son Rahula watches on.



Rahula Thera

Introduction: *The first thing that Buddha taught Rahula was : The Buddha taught him the most important precept of all – the truth so to bring him up as a virtuous*

person. It is one of the five precepts for us to keep. It just remind me of the year when we were little – Mother said – not to tell lie? This is a great lesson for all of us to keep, while living a virtuous life. *Rahula was foremost among the monks for his high standard of discipline and obedience*

"Similarly, Rahula, before you say or do anything, reflect. Reflect if this speech or action would be beneficial to others and yourself."

a. Anatta kamahtan Practice - Rahula was first taught the *Anatta kamahtan Practice* - "All form, Rahula, whether the past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, low or high, far or near, is to be seen as it is with complete and perfect knowing. Thus: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.' ". The same will hold for the law of Anicca and Dukha.

b. Dat Kamahtan Practice - Again, he was taught the – *Dat Kamahtan Practice – Pathavi, Apo, Tejo, Vayo* – the phenomena of the factors of existence described in detail in "*Cula Rahulavada Sutta* ". Identifying with the earth element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing; knowing and the mind is freed from the earth element. Thus: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.' The same will hold true for Earth, Water, Air (Wind), Heat, and Space, which are the element of existence.

c. The Metta Kamahtan Practice – *Metta , Karuna , Mudita and Upekkha*

d. Anapana Mindfulness Practice – *Breath in and breathe out mindfulness.*

Note that the *Anatta kamahtan Practice* and *Dat Kammahtan Practice* described in *Pa-auk Sayadaw's teaching in his book "Anapana Practice to Vipassana"* were pretty much extracted from this "*Cula Rahulavada Sutta* ". These practices could lead one to attain Arahantship.

The best inheritance that a father can give as a recluse (Buddha) is the liberation from *Samsara* – Nibbana. Rahula attained Arahantship and passed away before his father.

Rahula was the only son of Prince *Siddhartha* and Princess *Yashodhara*. He was named Rahula by his grandfather because the first word Prince Siddhartha said on hearing about the birth of His son was Rahu, which means obstacle. An obstacle to His renunciation had arisen. It was on the day that Prince Rahula was born that Prince Siddhartha made the Great Renunciation. With a heavy heart Prince Siddhartha left His beloved wife and newborn son to seek the path to end suffering for the benefit of mankind and Devas (divine beings).

Prince Rahula saw His father for the first time at the age of seven. Princess **Yashodhara** pointed out the majestic Buddha with His retinue of monks to Rahula from the balcony of the palace. She then described his father, the Buddha, to her son in the Sutta known as '*The Lion of Men*'. After praising and describing the Buddha, the Princess requested her son to approach his father and ask for his inheritance.

As instructed, Rahula approached his father and asked for his inheritance. He then looked at his father and said, "Lord, even your shadow is pleasing to me." Rahula then followed the Buddha back to the Nigrodharama monastery where He was residing. The Buddha thought, "Little Rahula asks for his inheritance. But worldly treasures and wealth cause suffering. I shall give him the most valuable treasure in the world. I will give him the Dhamma." Calling Venerable Sariputtara, His chief male disciple, He asked him to ordain little Rahula.



Prince Rahula asks for Inheritance

King Shuddhodana was very sad when he heard of the ordination of his beloved grandson. He said: "When the Lord renounced the world it was a cause of great pain to me. It was with deep sadness that I watched Nanda renounce the world. But it is especially painful when little Rahula renounces. The love of a father to a son is deep and cuts through the skin, flesh, sinew, bone and marrow. Grant, Lord, that Noble Ones will not ordain sons without permission of their parents." The Buddha readily agreed to this request and made it a discipline (Vinaya) of the Noble Order.

Sariputtara and Moggallana were little Rahula's teachers. While Sariputtara taught Rahula knowledge of the Dhamma, Moggallana concentrated on his conduct. Even though Rahula was only seven when

he became a novice monk, he was very eager to accept instruction and was exceptionally cultured and obedient. Each morning he would rise and, taking a handful of sand, throw it up in the air saying, "Today may I receive from my teachers as much advice and instruction as these grains of sand."

Shortly after Rahula's ordination the Buddha taught him the importance of telling the truth. This discourse is known as the [Rahulovada Sutta](#). [The Buddha placed truth as the highest of all virtues](#). The seekers of Truth (those who have as their goal Nibbána) should not break the precept of Truth. The Buddha explained this in a way a young child would understand by using the following example.

Rahula had just washed the feet of the Lord and prepared a seat for Him. Taking the vessel which now contained a little bit of water at the bottom, the Buddha showed it to Rahula and said: "Rahula, do you see the small (insignificant) amount of water left in this vessel? Similarly, Rahula, insignificant (of little value) is the character of those who are not ashamed of telling lies."

The Buddha then discarded this little bit of water and said; "Rahula, do you see how I discarded the little bit of water in this vessel? Similarly discarded (set aside and not recognized) is the character of those who are not ashamed of telling lies."

He then overturned the pot that had contained the water and said, "Rahula, do you see how easily I overturn this vessel? Similarly easily overturned (easily influenced and changed) is the character of those who are not ashamed of telling lies."

Finally, the Buddha placed the pot upright, showed it to Rahula and said, "Rahula, do you see this empty vessel that is void of any water? Similarly empty and void is the character of those who are not ashamed of telling lies."

The Buddha said that the precept of truth was the most important of all the precepts, as a person who tells lies would very easily then break the other precepts and cover up his misbehavior by telling lies. A person who always told the truth would not perform an act he would be ashamed to own up to later.

The Buddha also instructed Rahula on reflecting and thinking before he acted to ensure that his actions were moral and conducive to the well being of others and himself, by using examples and language a young child would understand.

Showing him a mirror, the Buddha asked Rahula what a mirror was used for. Rahula replied that it was for the purpose of reflecting. The Buddha then said: "Similarly, Rahula, before you say or do anything, reflect. Reflect if this speech or action would be beneficial to others and yourself. If, when you reflect, you feel that it is not beneficial to others and to yourself, and then refrain from saying and doing it. If you feel when you reflect that it is for the benefit of yourself and others, that such an action will not bring harm to another, that it is beneficial to others, then and only then should you perform this action. You should then perform this action again and again."

With this simple but easily understood example the Buddha introduced little Rahula to mindfulness and the discipline of the mind before action so that his thoughts, speech and actions would be moral and wholesome.

Rahula was well known for his obedience and truthfulness. As the son of the Buddha and because of his pleasing nature and young age he was well-liked by all. When Rahula was eighteen, the Buddha preached to him a very deep discourse on sense desire. He helped Rahula, who was pleased with his very handsome appearance understand the dangers of vanity.

The Buddha, accompanied by Rahula, was seeking alms. They both looked exceedingly handsome, like a majestic royal elephant and his calf, a beautiful swan with his cygnet. Rahula, seeing the extremely handsome appearance of the Buddha, thought, "I too am like my parent, the Exalted One. Beautiful is the Buddha's form and mine is similar."

The Buddha instantly read his thoughts and said, "Rahula whatever form there is should be looked at as follows: *"This is not mine; this am I not; this is not my soul."* Rahula then inquired if it was only form that should be regarded thus. The Buddha then said that all five aggregates should be regarded thus. In this way the Buddha introduced the very deep and difficult **concept of no permanent soul (anattá)** to Rahula.

Rahula then chose not to seek alms and instead went back and sat in meditation reflecting on the words of the Buddha, trying to understand and penetrate the Truth of the Buddha's words. Shortly after, on hearing the [Cula Rahulavada Sutta](#), he attained Arahantship. The following words were uttered by Rahula on attaining Arahantship:

*Being fortunate from both sides,
They call me "Lucky Rahula";
I was the son of the Buddha,
The son of the Seer of Truth.
Blinded by sense desires spread over like a net,
Covered by a cloak of craving,
Bound by the kinsmen of heedlessness,
I was like a fish caught in the mouth of a funnel-net.
That sense desire I have burnt,
The bond of Mara (death) I have cut.
Eradicating craving from its root,
Cool am I, peaceful am I.
Destroyed are all my corruptions,
There is no more rebirth for me,
An Arahant am I, worthy of offering,
Possessed of threefold knowledge and a seer of the deathless.
-- (Theragatha 295-298)*

Rahula passed away before the Buddha; Sariputtara and Moggallana. The Buddha declared that Rahula was foremost among the monks for his high standard of discipline and obedience. Rahula, who had entered the order at the tender age of seven, was a role model for the younger members of the Noble Order through his obedience and pleasing nature.

Maha Rahulovada Sutta

Big Advice to Rahula



Rahula Thera

EVAM ME SUTAM.

Thus have I heard.

Once, the Generous One was staying at Anathapindika's grove in the Jetavana forest. One morning the Generous One, having dressed and taken up his robe and bowl, went to Savatthi for alms. That same morning the venerable **Rahula**, having dressed and taken up his robe and bowl, also went to Savatthi for alms, following close behind the

Generous One. The Generous One, without turning around, addressed the venerable Rahula:

“All form, Rahula, whether the past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, low or high, far or near, is to be seen as it is with complete and perfect knowing. Thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not me, and this is not my self.’ ”

“Form only, Generous One? Form alone, Well-Gone One?”

“As with form, so it is with basic reactivity, symbolization, habitual patterning, and consciousness.”

Then the venerable Rahula thought, “How can I go into town for alms after receiving, face to face, teachings from the Generous One?” Turning back, he sat at the root of a tree, crossed his legs and set the body erect, and kept mindfulness present.

The venerable Sariputta saw Rahula sitting cross-legged at the root of a tree with the body erect, keeping mindfulness present. He addressed Rahula,

“You should practice being mindful of the in-breath and out-breath, Rahula. If mindfulness of breath is cultivated with continuous practice, then there is a vast harvest, there is great richness.”

At evening time the venerable Rahula arose from solitude and approached the Generous One, sitting down to one side. Seated, Rahula asked the Generous One,

“How is mindfulness of breath to be practiced? How is it that continuous practice will bring a vast harvest and great richness?”

“Whatever is internal to the individual which is solid, has become solid, or which is derived from solidity such as the hair on the head, body hair, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, pleura, spleen, lungs, intestines, bowels, stomach, and whatever else is internal to an individual and experienced as hard or solid is said to be the internal earth element. Rahula, the internal earth element together with

the external earth element are the earth element. Becoming wearied of identifying with the earth element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing, knowing **and the mind is freed from the earth element.** Thus:

‘This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.’

“And what is the element of water, Rahula? The water element may be internal and it may be external. What is the water element internally? Whatever is internal to the individual and is liquid, has become liquid, or is derived from liquid such as bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, mucous, snivel fluid, urine and anything else internal to an individual which is liquid is the internal water element. **The internal water element together with the external water element, are the water element.** Becoming wearied of identifying with the water element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing, knowing **and the mind is freed from the water element.** Thus: **‘This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.’**

“And what, Rahula, is the fire element? The fire element may be internal and it may be external. What is the fire element internally? Whatever is internal to the individual and is fiery, has become fiery or is derived from fire such as whatever consumes or burns up, whatever causes digestion of what is eaten and drunk, chewed and tasted, and anything else which is internal to an individual which is fiery is the internal fire element. **The internal fire element together with the external fire element, are the fire element.** Becoming wearied of identifying with the fire element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing, knowing **and the mind is freed from the fire element.** Thus:

‘This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.’

“And what, Rahula, is the air element? The air element may be internal and it may be external. What is the air element internally? Whatever is internal to the individual and is windy, has become windy or is derived from wind such as the upward moving wind, the downward moving

wind, the wind in the bowels and outside the bowels, and the winds which move throughout the body, the in-breath and out-breath, and anything else which is internal to an individual which is windy is the internal air element. The internal air element together with the external air element, are the air element. Becoming wearied of identifying with the air element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing, knowing and the mind is freed from the **air element**. Thus:

‘This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.’

‘And what, Rahula, is the space element?’ The space element may be internal and it may be external. What is the space element internally? Whatever is internal to the individual and is spacious, has become spacious or is derived from space such as openings of the ears, the nose, the mouth, the space in which is swallowed the food we have eaten, the space where the food is held, and the space it passes through to be excreted through the lower part of the body, and anything else which is internal to an individual which is spacious is the internal space element. **The internal space element together with the external space element, are the space element.** Becoming wearied of identifying with the space element, one sees it as it is with complete and perfect knowing, knowing and the mind is freed from the **space element**. Thus: **‘This is not mine, this is not me, this not my self.’**

‘Practice like the earth, Rahula. If you become like the earth then the sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, do not take hold of the mind, nor do they establish themselves. People may pour clean things onto the earth, or dirty things such as fasses, urine, saliva, pus, blood, but the earth is not hurt, nor is it angered or moved to disgust. So too, if you practice like the earth, *Rahula, then sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, cannot take hold of the mind, nor will they establish themselves.*

‘Practice like water, Rahula. If you become like water then the sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, do not take hold of the mind, nor do they establish themselves. People may wash clean things with water or dirty things such as pus and so on, but the water is not hurt, nor is it angered or moved to disgust. So too, if you practice

like water, Rahula, then sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, cannot take hold of the mind, nor will they establish themselves.

“Practice like fire, Rahula. If you become like fire then the sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, do not take hold of the mind, nor do they establish themselves. People may burn clean things with fire or dirty things but the fire is not hurt, nor is it angered or moved to disgust. So too, if you practice like fire, Rahula, then sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, cannot take hold of the mind, nor will they establish themselves.

“Practice like air, Rahula. If you become like air then the sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, do not take hold of the mind, nor do they establish themselves. Just as the air moves over clean things or dirty things but the air is not hurt, nor is it angered or moved to disgust. So too, if you practice like air, Rahula, then sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, cannot take hold of the mind, nor will they establish themselves.

“Practice like space, Rahula. If you become like space then the sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, do not take hold of the mind, nor do they establish themselves. Just as space abides nowhere so too, if you practice like space, Rahula, then sensations which arise, whether pleasant or unpleasant, cannot take hold of the mind, nor will they establish themselves.

“Practice friendliness, Rahula. Becoming kind, malevolence is released.

“Practice compassion, Rahula. Becoming compassionate, violence is released.

“Practice benevolence, Rahula. Becoming benevolent, aversion is released.

“Practice equanimity, Rahula. Becoming balanced, anger is released.

“Practice the contemplation of impurity, Rahula. Contemplating impurity, obsession is released.

“Practice the recognition of impermanence, Rahula. Practicing the recognition of impermanence, asserting a self is released.

“Practice being mindful of the breath, Rahula. Practicing continuous mindfulness of breathing in and breathing out leads to a vast harvest and great riches. And, how Rahula is mindfulness of breath practiced and how does its sincere practice lead to a great harvest of richness?

“Here, Rahula, one goes into the forest, to the roots of a tree, or to an empty room, sits down cross-legged and holds the body upright, keeping mindfulness present.

“Breathing in, one is mindful; breathing out, one is mindful. Breathing out a long breath, one understands, ‘I breathe out a long breath.’ Breathing in a long breath, one understands, ‘I breathe in a long breath.’

Breathing out a short breath, one understands, ‘I breathe out a short breath.’ Breathing in a short breath, one understands, ‘I breathe in a short breath.’

One practices, ‘I breathe out with full experience of the whole body.’

One practices, ‘I breathe in with full experience of the whole body.’

One practices, ‘I breathe out, calming the tendencies of the body.’ One practices, ‘I breathe in, calming the tendencies of the body.’

“One practices, ‘I breathe in, experiencing joy.’ One practices, ‘I breathe out, experiencing joy.’

One practices, ‘I breathe in, experiencing happiness.’ One practices, ‘I breathe out, experiencing happiness.’

“One practices, ‘I breathe in, experiencing habitual patterns of mind.’ One practices, ‘I breathe out, experiencing habitual states of mind.’

One practices, ‘I breathe in, calming habitual patterns of mind.’ One practices, ‘I breathe out, calming habitual states of mind.’

“One practices, ‘I breathe in, experiencing mind.’ One practices, ‘I breathe out, experiencing mind.’

“One practices, ‘With contentment of mind I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘With contentment of mind I breathe out.’

“One practices, ‘With a harmonious mind, I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘With a harmonious mind I breathe out.

“One practices, ‘With a freed mind I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘With a freed mind I breathe out.’

“One practices, ‘Realizing dispassion, I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘Realizing dispassion, I breathe out.’

“One practices, ‘Realizing cessation, I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘Realizing cessation, I breathe out.’

“One practices, ‘Realizing renunciation, I breathe in.’ One practices, ‘Realizing renunciation, I breathe out.’

“This is the practice of mindfulness of breath, Rahula. This is how the sincere practice of mindfulness of breath leads to a vast harvest and great richness. If mindfulness of breath is practiced continuously, then your last breath will be in knowing, not in unknowing.”

Thus spoke the Generous One. His heart gladdened, the venerable Rahula enjoyed the speech of the Generous One.

Reference:

- 1. Relatives and Disciples of the Buddha by Radhika Abeysekera**
- 2. Big Advice to Rahula - translated by Ven. Anzan Hoshin roshi and Tory Cox**