



Mindful Parenting and Gratitude to Parents: A Guideline from Buddhist Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Buddhism places a high value on gratitude towards parents and its use as a model for mindful parenting in the context of gratitude towards parents. The proposed paper will explore the Buddhist concepts and teachings that encourage parents to raise their kids with an attitude of gratitude and mindfulness. It will also deal with the practical ways to instill appreciation in themselves and their children, such as mindful communication, compassionate discipline, and the development of values like generosity and kindness. Parents can help their children develop empathy, humility, and a good attitude towards life by instilling a feeling of thankfulness. Mindful parenting, which has its roots in Buddhist thought, entails upon developing mindfulness, compassion, and parental wisdom which suggests that thankfulness practices, such as daily meditations or deeds of service, can develop a sense of gratitude and strengthen parent-child relationships. It can also foster psychological well-being and improve family ties. The proposed paper will further examine how thankfulness is a fundamental component of mindful parenting, assisting parents in cultivating a profound appreciation for the possibilities and difficulties that their kids provide. Parents may approach their position with more awareness, patience, and understanding by practicing thankfulness.

Keywords: Mindful, parenting, gratitude, parent-child relationship, responsibility, compassion, virtues, well-being and wisdom.

Introduction

Today, in Myanmar, the sermons preached by the Buddha about the gratitude of parents were found in the three *Piṭaka*, in the five *Nikāya*, in eighty-four-thousands of the *Dhamma* aggregate, and in the Sixth Buddhist Synod. In the *Pāḷi* literature, which has been recognized by the Sixth Synod and has about twenty thousand pages, there are many proverbs about parental gratitude and guidelines for parenting. Mainly, the author would like to focus and discuss about the gratitude of parents from the Buddhist perspective relevant to Buddhist philosophy, canon, and sub-commentaries.

The Concept and Etymology of 'Mother' in Pāḷi Literature and Its Cultural Variations

What kind of advice did the Buddha give about that grace? What kind of teaching did he preach? Let's observe this article. Basically, mother is called *Mātā* in *Pāḷi* literature. It is very close to Mother in English. Because if Sri Lankans and Indians recite it, they recite it as "Matha". In Burma, the sound of "Ta" became a kind of thing called "Tha". They call it a dental sound in *Pāḷi Dantaja*.¹ A *Dantaja* sound is a sound produced by touching the tip of the tongue and above the teeth. Like the sound of the Burmese pronouncing "Tha". It means the kind of sound that is recited by touching the tip of the tongue and the tip of the upper teeth. It must be said that it is very similar to the English word mother. If we more closely observe the history of why this is the same, the Indo-Aryan language that flourished in India is the Aryan religion, and the Indian religion spread to Europe. This is called the Indo-Aryan language. So, the word is very close. If you are looking for the source of the word Mother, you can only find out in an English dictionary that the Old English term "modor" is where the word "mother" in modern English originates. And "mom," as well as other colloquial or abbreviated words like "mommy" and "ma", are often linked to this root. Amongst parent, a mother has more control than father as she spends much more time with the child.²

These shorter phrases may really be more mature, given some thought. The word "mama" appears in some form in dozens of languages, including Mandarin (*Mma*), Hindi (*mām*) and Arabic (*māma*). This is due to the fact that most newborns' first vocalizations are basic utterances like "mama" and

¹ Dental Sound or the dental letters are t, the, d, dh, n, l, and s (U Hoat Sein, Tipitaka Pali-Myanmar Dictionary). Tipi.10,117

² Shrikant Chorghade (MBBS, DCH), "Parenting from Womb to Adolescent" CBS publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, First Edition, 2015. p.12.

“*papa*.” So, according to the hypothesis, the word “mother” and all of its contemporary forms have their origins in the baby language word “*mama*.” Therefore, one thing we share in common with our earliest ancestors is maybe the term we use for “*mum*.”³

The meaning of “*Mātā*” in *Pāli* is “*Puttaṃ Mānetīti Mātā*”. Namely; *Puttaṃ*: To the children,⁴ *Māneti*: Affectionate. That's why it's called *Mātā*.

So, the word *Mātā* in *Pāli* literature means a human being or a mother who loves her offspring. Her love is not certain for others. However, she is sure that she loves her own children. In the *Mettasutta*, The Buddha gave an example and preached, “*Mātā yathā niyaṃ puttamāyusā ekaputtamanurakkhe*.”⁵ Just as a mother gives life and protects her only child. The Buddha preached that a mother's love is concentrated on her only child, so try to put it on all beings. It is a saying to understand to love. So, the meaning of the word *Mātā* is very pleasant. She is called *Mātā* because she loves her children. The Burmese people call their mothers “*Amay*”, while the Ceylonese people call their mothers “*Amma*”. In *Pāli* also has the word *Amma*. Mother is also known as “*Āmā*” in Chinese.

The Concept and Etymology of 'Father' in Pāli Literature and Its Cultural Significance

On the other hand, the meaning of the word *Pitā* is that which is very close to “*Pa*” and “*Pha*”. Sometimes it is pronounced “*Pha*” instead of “*Pa*”. Therefore, it is close to the English word Father. These words are very strange and incredible similar. At one time, human beings moved away from each other, just as languages moved away. The basic concept of calling mom and dad is pretty close. Mother and father can be said to be the first languages that appeared in human language. People must say the words mother and father first before saying other words. That's because it's the first and closest word between children and parents.

The term “*Pitā*” originates from an Indo-Aryan language and serves as the precursor to the word “father.” Its definition, as found in *Pāli* literature, is encapsulated in the phrase “*Puttaṃ Pāti Rakkhatīti Pitā*,” which translates to “the person who protects and cares for his children is called *Pitā*.” The role of a father is rooted in his responsibility to safeguard his children. In society, mothers are revered and cherished for their love and nurturing. Conversely, a father's primary duty is to provide protection. It falls upon him to shield his loved ones from harm and danger. While a mother displays affection and shares a close bond with her child, a father's presence is often dictated by the need to lead and safeguard the family. When a human being comes into existence, their initial experiences are shaped by the presence of both their mother and father. It is not from heaven that a human being becomes a human life. They arrive after conception in the mother's womb.⁶

The Buddha's Teachings on the Beginning of Human Life and Parental Gratitude

When we focus on that conception, according to the Buddha's teachings, when does the Buddha begin to define the absolute beginning of a human being? Actually, the Buddha discovered embryology 2500 years ago without any help of x-ray machine or any machinery devices. Later, X-rays began to be used in embryology research shortly after their discovery by Wilhelm Conrad Roentgen in 1895. Researchers quickly recognized the potential of X-rays to study the internal structures of living organisms, including embryos, without dissection.⁷ According to Buddhist teaching, the time when the first foetus appears in the mother's womb is called the *kalāpa* or *Kalala* in *Pāli*. *Kalāpa* is a very small droplet. A substance that can only be seen with a microscope. In that small substance, people's lives begin. When it starts like this, the power of *Kamma* or *Karma* in Sanskrit, and the liquid called *kalāpa* are formed and then established. At the same time, conception occurs. Dependent on that mind, then the spiritual things that come together with the mind arise. There are 30 basic material seeds. These are the 10 shapes that are the basis of the body. Although it is very small, his natural powers are fully present. It can be divided into ten types. In addition, there are 10 physical objects related to the heart, which are very important for the distribution of the life or blood of the body, and 10 physical objects called Femininity or Masculinity related to the male seed or the female seed. There are ten types of physical objects of Masculinity for those who are going to be men in their lives. For those who are going to be women, there are 10 Femininity figures. If we count it all together, the human body has 30 Material qualities in the liquid called *kalāpa*.

First of all, this is how it develops if you examine embryology. More than 2,500 years ago, the Buddha addressed on the specifics of this birth. Even modern scientists are taken aback by this. They are shocked since, more than 2,500 years ago, the Buddha expressed extensively on the beginning of human existence. according to the following verse:

Paṭhamaṃ kalalaṃ hoti, kalalā hoti abbudaṃ;

Abbudā jāyate pesi, pesi nibbattaṭī ghano;

³ <https://proofed.com/writing-tips/mothers-day-etymology-mum-mom-mam/>

⁴ the specific grammatical definition of *Putta* means son. But *Pali* literature has the same meanings. It was combined the word son and daughter. It is a shortened word.

⁵ *Suttapīṭaka*, *Khuddakanikāya*, *Khuddakapāṭhapāli*, *Mettasuttaṃ*, Verses No.7, P.11. / *Suttapīṭaka*, *Khuddakanikāya*, *Suttanipāṭapāli*, *Uragavaggo*, *Mettasuttaṃ*, Verses No.149, P.301.

⁶ *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, *Rūpapavattikkama*, Verses No.55, P.44.

⁷ Carlson, Bruce M. “*Human Embryology and Developmental Biology*.” 5th Edition, Saunders, 2014.
Needham, Joseph. “*A History of Embryology*.” 2nd Edition, Cambridge University Press, 1959.

*Ghanā pasākhā jāyanti, kesā lomā nakhāpi ca.*⁸

The Buddha's preaching about embryology is not preaching to humans. It is the Dhamma preached to a demon because a demon asked a question. Human life began as a *kalāpa* as we discussed above. After 7 days of the *kalāpa*, "*Paṭhamam kalalam hoti, kalalā hoti abbudam*," the clear liquid becomes foam. It is identical to what is shown in embryology. *Abbudā Jāyate pesi*: When the 7th day is complete, it becomes a cream-like meat. Each step takes a week. *Abbudā* takes a week. *Pesi* is also a week. *Pesi nibbattati ghanā*: It became elaborate in the form of lumps of flesh. *Ghanā pasākhā jāyanti* - At the place where the lump is formed, five branches called *Pasākhā* come out. It means the place where the human head will come out, the place where the arms will come out, and the place where the two feet will emerge. A total of five lumps are called *Pasākhā* in *Pāli*. And also, it shows when hair and fur appeared on the human form. There is a certain time when the eyes first appear.

Dr. Ne Win, who lives in England, said that in relation to Embryology, the growth of hair at the stage of the fetus was not described earlier in their medical science. According to recent findings, it is consistent with the date week in the *Aṭṭhakathā* book in *Pāli* literature. What he wants to say is that scientists have found it again, as it was found more than 2500 years ago, as the Buddha preached. He had published an issue in the *Dhammabyūhā* magazine in Myanmar. Dr. Daw Tin Lay, a doctor at the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University, was pursuing a Ph.D. She wrote her Thesis about Embryology from a Buddhist Perspective. They are very interesting.

Life started for humans in this way. According to the Buddha, human existence begins with the foetus, also known as *kalāpa*. It was difficult for the mother to understand that there was a foetus in the human mother's womb when the first awareness or mind began. Human life has already started since that time. To kill a human person at that time would be sinful for monks. Because of this, some people feel that death has not yet happened during fertilization, which is relevant to the abortion issue. Additionally, there are people who are seen as inactive. Some people think that the moment the foetus starts breathing, it becomes living. According to Buddhist philosophy, life starts at the same time as the foetus develops within the mother's womb. Because of this, taking another person's life is a crime. From the time of conception, if a monk kills by intentional killing, that monk commits the crime of *Pārājika*. It's the same thing to kill someone.

To bring about death at the level of *Kalala* is forbidden by Buddhist law. From that point on, she became the focal point of the human race's existence. It soon becomes clear that the mother's care is just as important when it comes to the foetus' health. After birth, we are all aware of how to properly care for it. The motivation behind this was a kind of appreciation for the parents. Observe the population of today. A small meal of rice, or when you ask someone to show you the way they answer, you would say thank you. So why not express gratitude to your parents? This indicates that she is very appreciative of being alive. There, parents will respond in a variety of ways when asked how they have shown their children kindness and care. However, the Buddha only mentioned it briefly and in three words. Three words best describe a parent's appreciation for their children about their lives. When referring to parents in almost every sutta, the Buddha would often utilize these three terms. "*Bahukārā, bhikkhave, mātāpitaro puttānaṃ āpādakā posakā imassa lokassa dassetāro.*"⁹ Monks, parents are very appreciative of their kids. If you ask why parents are grateful to their children, the answer is *Āpādakā* in *Pāli* word that they are grateful because they kept them alive. Yes, the woman may have an early abortion if she didn't want children. In today's situation, there is a lack of love that can't even come into human life. It's a very strange era. Everyone wants to come, but it's not always easy to do. Even though they intended to arrive as "*Bhikkhave, appamādena sampādetha, dullabho manussattapaṭilābho*,"¹⁰ they were forced to leave since they were denied permission to enter as individuals. Unfortunately, there are a number of methods to stop human life from existence. *Āpādakā*: guards against catastrophe when it comes to human life. Consider this. A baby cannot sip water on his own if he is unable to support his legs. It cannot claim to be hungry. Just consider how much difficulties there would be if just the parents had been caring for the baby at that time. That's why we should never forget the gratitude of our parents. *Āpādakā*- took care of it. Along with caring for it, he gave it fresh milk to drink. The Buddha taught that mother's milk is a kind of blood. According to legend, the mother's love is what caused the blood to become white. Red blood and the maternal loving force become white. The blood was clear and colorless. A chemical alteration has occurred. Your face will get crimson if you seem to be furious. The mind's impulse is what it is known as. The mother's blood, which was intended to nourish her kid, became white as a result of the maternal heart's love sentiment. It became frigid and the blood became white due to the mental force of love.

That is why the Buddha said that it was the blood of the parents. Milk is the blood of parents. *Posakā*: Parents have been feeding it since it was a little child and could not eat. To sum it up, *Imassa lokassa dassetāro*: All of the world's experiences we face today are shown by our parents. We can say that

⁸ *Sagāthāvaggapāli*, *Yakkhasamyutta*, *Indakasutta*, P.280.

Kathāvattupāli, *Cuddasamavagga*, *Salāyatanuppattikathā*, P.358.

Sagāthāvagga-aṭṭhakathā, *Yakkhasamyutta*, *Indakasuttavaṇṇanā*, P.274.

Mahāniddesa-aṭṭhakathā, P.214.

Paṭisambhidāmagga-aṭṭhakathā, V-1, P.30. / V-2, P.18.

Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā, V- 4, P.501.

Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā, P.28.

Sāratthadīpanī-ṭīkā, V- 2, P.252. 253.

Jātaka-abhinavaṭṭikā, V.2, P.103. 214. 324. 329. 330.

Visuddhimaggapāli, V – 2, P.107.

Visuddhimagga-mahāṭṭikā, V – 2, P. 163.

Paramatthadīpanī, P.316.

⁹ *Ānguttaranikāya*, *Dukanipātapāli*, *Samacittavagga*, P.63.

¹⁰ *Suttapīṭaka (aṭṭhakathā)*, *Dīghanikāya (aṭṭhakathā)*, *Sīlakkhandhavagga-aṭṭhakathā*, *Brahmajālasuttavaṇṇanā*, P.47.

everything we experience in human life is given to us by our parents. That's why the Buddha ended his speech with just these three words about being grateful to his parents. *Āpādakā* takes care of. *Posakā*: fed. *Imassa lokassa dassetāro* shows this world. This means that the opportunity to see this world and the opportunity to be in human society are appreciations from the parents. If you expand on the rest, it won't be the end. The Buddha explained the grace of parents with these three points. There is also a sermon by the Buddha in the *Sabrahmakasutta* so that people can understand that the gratitude of parents is so great.

There, the Buddha taught about the beliefs of humans for those who believe in Brahma. The word Brahma in English is translated as God. But in India, it is used as *Brahma*. The Buddha said that *Brahma*, which people are talking about, means parents. He means parents are God. The Buddha used it like this: *Brahmāti Mātāpitāro* which means that the only two parents are Brahman. Brahman may exist as a living being in heaven, but it is not related to us. The Buddha means Brahman is your mother and father. Therefore, that's what the Buddha clearly said. A person who reveres and cares for his mother and father is like living with Brahma. The Buddha means that parents are the same as God. This is what the Buddha asked: to change the way of thinking according to the Indian way of life.

Because of this, according to the Buddha, Brahma in heaven is distant from you in the company of those who adore him. Your parents are the ones feeding you. Parents are God for this reason. The Buddha imparted this knowledge. Undoubtedly, yes. And the Buddha provided a definition for it. The great *Brahmas* of heaven lead a beautiful existence known as *Brahmavihāra*, or lovingkindness, compassion, joy, and serenity.

That is why, in the circle of people who worship *Brahma*, the Buddha said, *Brahma* in heaven is far away from you. It's mom and dad who are feeding you. That's why Parents are God. It was taught by the Buddha. Yes, of course. And the Buddha explained it as a definition. The great *Brahmas* of heaven are living with *Brahmavihāra*, which is called lovingkindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity—a noble life. Mothers and fathers also have high regard for their children. They love their children. They want their children to grow up. They want their children to be educated with degrees. It's a parent's love. If their own children are in trouble, mothers are in pain and agony. It's a parent's compassion. They are very happy if their children pass the exam and get a degree. Some parents can't handle bragging in environment. It's in a parent's nature. The environment must understand that she is speaking about her children and the feelings in her heart. If their son and daughter send them a cup of curry, they can't stop expanding their environment anymore. They used to say it proudly in environment. It's a parent's mindset. That's called parent's enjoyment.

When the offspring progress with their own jobs or businesses and parents no longer have to take care of them, parents' mindset changes the nature of equanimity. Moment by moment, parents' emotions are changing towards adolescence into a period of lovingkindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity. So, The Buddha said that there is nothing to do with Brahma having a haven for their children; those who have lovingkindness, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity towards their children should be Brahma. And furthermore, Buddha said that parents are the first teachers. Children's first teacher. People want to recognize only the teacher who teaches at the school as a teacher. Actually, the first teachers are mom and dad. Parents are the first teachers in our lives. Of course, the *Pāli* word is used *Pubbācariya*. That's why Myanmar people used to say that "bad children are because of bad parents, and bad students are because of bad teachers."

So, it is the parents who bring their children into the human world first and start teaching them to be humane and civilized. Therefore, the Buddha preached that parents are called the first and foremost teachers, mentioned on page 205 of *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā* (Vol. 6), "*Bhadde, pubbadavatā nāma mātāpitāro, tava pītu yāguṃ harissasi maññe*" ti.¹¹ *Pubbadaevata*¹² - The Buddha also defined this as the home deity. The people of the world are very respectful of the house deity. They made *Pūjā* with the first meal and offered banana, coconut, etc. The Buddha taught us that the house deity is our parents. There are many proverbs in *Pāli* literature where the Buddha taught about the gratitude of parents. Some people in Myanmar, they used to speak the virtues of parent given an example to their parents. They gave an example and said that it is higher than Mount Meerut, which people know to be the highest mountain in this universe.

There are two ways to repay gratitude to parents. (1). The way to thank mother and father is to put on the left shoulder and the right shoulder (this means taking responsibility) and care for and feed his parents for a hundred years. He could not fully reciprocate the gratitude of his parents. (2). Even if the parent is praised as the Lord King who rules the entire earth, the grace of the parent cannot be fully reciprocated. There are endless ways to repay gratitude to parents. Some also say that even the Buddha went to the land of the *Tāvātimsa Deva's* world and preached *Abhidhamma* as a way of repaying his gratitude to his mother, who gave birth to him.

So, how should we reciprocate our parents' gratitude? The Buddha said that it is not enough to fully reciprocate the gratitude of parents just to feed and take care of them; just giving them position and power and giving them worldly luxuries is not enough to repay the parents' gratitude. Let the parents who are not yet perfect in moral conduct become virtuous; let the parents who do not yet have generosity have generosity; let the parents donate who are stingy about property; let the uneducated parents become educated. The Buddha said that if you reciprocate the gratitude from the Dharma side, it will be enough. There are many Sutta concerning the virtues of parents as taught by the Buddha. Concerning the duties of parents and sons, the *Siṅgālasutta* has eight directions in which the parents are from the east. So, the east must be secured. The words of a father who taught his son *Siṅgāla* that he must stay safe in the south, west, north, above, and below.

He thinks that the east is the place where the sun rises in the east, and because he gets up every morning to worship, that is not what the Buddha said. When making such mistakes, the Buddha said, that is not what he said. The east means the parents. You have to take care of that parent. "*bhato ne*

¹¹ *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā*. Vol. 6., P.205

¹² *Pubbadevatāti mātāpitūnaṃ adbhivacanaṃ. Bhadde! Pubbadavatā nāma mātāpitāro* ti. The same definition as *Jātaka-aṭṭhakathā* in *Jātaka-abhinavaṭṭhā* (Vol-V. P.94)

*bharissāmi*¹³ Taking care of parents means your mother and father fed you and you have to feed them again. It is called responsibility. It means repaying what was done to you. Your mother and father took care of you, and again, you fed and cared for them. When they get old, they need to be cared for and fed. This means that it is a duty that children should do for their parents. Another issue in Pāli word is that “*kiccaṃ nesaṃ karissāmi*”¹⁴ They have to take responsibility for their affairs. On behalf of parents, you have to do everything that parents have to do. The third Pāli word is “*kulavaṃsaṃ ṭhapessāmi*”¹⁵ Parents are a small community called *kula*. In ancient times, they used to preserve that lineage very well. There are several *Jātaka* in the 550 *Jātaka* story in Suttanta Piṭaka, such as *Ditthamingalika-jātaka*, *Mātiṅga-jātaka* etc.

There must be a way to preserve and protect one's own lineage. If you don't preserve your lineage, there will be no lineage left for future generations. You should preserve your lineage. This is not an obsession. Therefore, the children must preserve the culture of their parents. Keeping it in line with the current trends in clothing. The trend cannot be stopped. The current trend is fast. If it closes, the dam will break. So, what we really need to maintain is a moral and ideological culture. What you wear and eating system will change according to the situation at the time. Culture is not primarily about material things; attitudes and morals are the most important ethics. What is Myanmar's culture? They respect their parents, teachers, and elders. This is Burmese culture. We have to keep that culture from disappearing. That's why the Pāli word says *kulavaṃsaṃ ṭhapessāmi*. As children, they should have the mindset of protecting their parents' lineage.

The next Pāli word is “*dāyajjaṃ paṭipajjāmi*”¹⁶ *dāyajja* is the property that parents have to give and leave behind, called *Dāyajja*. Those inheritances are also heirlooms. Gold, silver, and jewels are also inheritances. Usually, people only want to inherit things like gold, silver, and money. They don't want to inherit what parents did well. That doesn't match their parents' purpose. Some of them have inherited their parents' inheritance in Burma and have to preserve the things that their parents donated so that they don't get misplaced. If the parents are there, it is a responsibility that the children have to work on.

Another thing is that if the mother and father have ended their lives, then the responsibility to be shared merit is the last responsibility. This duty is mandatory for offspring. You may ask whether the Buddhists really benefit from sharing like this; it is beneficial if they are in a place where they can get merit. If your parents are in a state of the Peta (ghost) life, if you give them this merit, they will get it immediately. Unfortunately, if he is in hell or in other realms, communication with him has been cut off. If there is no way to communicate, even though you have done good deeds and distributed merit to them equally, their parents who have passed away will not get merit. However, you yourself have merit. However, the right thing to do is to dedicate yourself to your parents and do good deeds. At least you will get merit. This is the right thing to do; nothing else will benefit them. The Buddha preached this as a moral for his children.

When asked why the children have to share so much with their parents, what the mother and father rarely did is summed up in what the Buddha said: “*bhikkhave, mātāpitaro puttānaṃ āpādakā posakā imassa lokassa dassetāro.*”¹⁷ The answer is that they cared, protected them from danger, fed the offspring, and allowed them to see the human world, which means parents allowed the children to live a human life. Not only that, but regarding children, as the saying in Pāli word “*Pāpā nivārenti*”¹⁸ parents do their best to prevent their children from following bad paths; “*kalyāṇe nivesenti*”¹⁹ Parents placed the children in a suitable and good situation places to develop their future; “*sippaṃ sikkhāpentī*”²⁰ – let them learn Education. Today, most parents are still dutiful. They spend a lot of money on their children and send them to a high school. “*patirūpena dārena saṃyojenti*”²¹ parents provide for their offspring to marriage with suitable person.

The other thing is “*samaye dāyajjaṃ niyyādentī*”²² parents should hand over the inheritance when it should be given. It should be given only to intelligent offspring. If the offspring are not intelligent, parents should not hand them over. That's why the Buddha said it was a suitable time to hand over to adolescence. The Buddha laid down the laws related to parents and the things that are practised in this world. Then, according to *Vasalasutta*, the Buddha preached in verse is followed:

“*Yo mātaraṃ pitaraṃ vā, jīṇakaṃ gatayobbanam;*

*Pahu santo na bharaṭi, taṃ jaññā vasalo iti.*²³

The Buddha admonishes strictly in the above Pāli verses that if adolescence doesn't care enough and feed their parents, when mother and father are old or decaying, if they do not take care of parents even though they have the ability to take care of parents, they must be considered a mean person.

¹³ Pāthikavaggapāli, Verses No.267, P.154.; Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā, P.322.

¹⁴ Ibid

¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ Ibid

¹⁷ Dukanipātapāli, Samacittavagga, verses No.34, P.63; Tikanipātapāli, p.131; Catukkanipātapāli, p.382.; Itivuttakapāli, p.239.; Khuddakapātha-aṭṭhakathā, p.115.

¹⁸ Pāthikavaggapāli, Verses No.267, P.154.; Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā, P.322.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ Ibid

²² Pāthikavaggapāli, Verses No.267, P.154.; Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā, P.322.

²³ Suttanipātapāli, Vasalasutta, Verses No. 124., P.298.

This alone defines him as a villain. No one wants to be a mean person. *Vasala* in Pāli means lower caste, untouchable. No matter how high caste a person is, it is defined as low caste for those who have bad behaviour because their behaviour is the behaviour of villains. Regarding behaviour, the Buddha defines good action and bad action, not defined by low caste and high caste. That's why, in *Suttanipāta*, *Vasalasutta*, the Buddha preached in verse as follows:

“*Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo;*

Kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo.”²⁴

“*Na jaccā vasalo hoti, na jaccā hoti brāhmaṇo.*”²⁵ This word has a lot of meaningful and useful in India. It's just a word to fight the caste system and casteism.²⁶ According to Buddhist teaching, the Brahmins, who have a strong faith in it, are not related to the caste system. The lower caste called *Vasala* is not related to caste. What does it mean, “*Kammunā vasalo hoti, kammunā hoti brāhmaṇo*”²⁷? The word *Vasala* is relevant with his behavior or actions. If the action is bad, he is a bad person. If the action is good, he is a good person. So, we judge a person based on his behavior. A person who steals other people's property is considered a thief, regardless of nationality. It's just the action he does. If you are teaching literature, you are a teacher. Otherwise, if you do business, you are a merchant. If you wear a robe, you are a monk. After inspecting his actions, this name became his own. The Buddha defined a person who does not feed his parents as a mean or foolish person.

Another Pāli word, which the Buddha admonished, is

“*Yo mātaraṃ pitaraṃ vā, bhātaraṃ bhaginim sasum;*

Hanti roseti vācāya, taṃ jaññā vasalo iti.”²⁸

The above verse means that if he talks back rudely to his parents with a harsh or abusive word, it means that he is considered a mean person or a foolish person.

Next, according to the *Mangala Sutta*, just as the Buddha preached about the cause of growth, there are teachings about the cause of destruction in *Parābhavasutta*. *Maṅgalasutta* was preached in order to promote growth and development for those who practised accordingly. The Buddha predicted that if you do this work, you will grow and develop not only for this life but also for the next. In this *Parābhavasutta*, the only sermon preached about destruction if this life is not destroyed in the current situation, the next life will be destroyed if he does the particular thing based on *Parābhavasutta*. Even if you are reborn in the next life, you will not be able to reach the higher level. Sometimes people think that their situation is good because the situation in this life is good, but they are so low that they have no hope in the next life. That is why there is a verse preached by the Buddha in *Parābhavasutta* as follows: "

“*Yo mātaraṃ pitaraṃ vā, jīṇṇakaṃ gatayobbanam;*

Pahu santo na bharati, taṃ parābhavato mukhaṃ.”²⁹

When the parents are old and decaying, if the offspring are not fed and cared for by their parents, it is called the cause of destruction. That's right. In most of the family, if a person doesn't take care of his parents, his children also get careless with him. This is called immediate retribution. *Vatta* in Pāli. If a child respects his mother and father, his children also respect him in the immediate effect. If he is still yelling back at mom and dad, his offspring will also be yelling back at him. It pays off immediately. It does not wait until the next life, and the response occurs immediately in this life. That is the reason for destruction and loss, as the Buddha preached in *Parābhavasutta*. The information that the author has just given is extracted from the sermons that the Buddha himself taught and preached. Gratitude to parents and the teachings of the Buddha are mentioned in the real literature and in the 550 *Jātakas*. There are many stories about how Bodhisatta took care of their parents. This is the Dhamma that the Buddha preached about parents in *Sutta Pāli*.

We came to human life because of our parents' gratitude. The human life that comes from being connected to parents is the first great blessing of the parents. Remembering in our hearts that repaying this special treatment is very consecrated for them, so people who have parents who are alive and well can take care of their parents and repay their gratitude. The combination of mindful parenting with the Buddhist understanding of gratitude shows that, despite the difficulties of contemporary living, it is still possible to build a thoughtful, compassionate, and thankful attitude to parenting. In addition to strengthening family ties, this fusion acts as a spiritual discipline that benefits both parents and kids. Families are given the tools to face the difficulties of parenting while cultivating an atmosphere that allows the seeds of knowledge, compassion, and awareness to grow.

²⁴ Suttanipātapāli, Vasalasutta, Verses No. 136., P.299.

²⁵ Suttanipātapāli, Vasalasutta, Verses No. 125., P.298.

²⁶ “The Gratitude of Parents and The Admonish of Buddha's Word” by Dr. Nandamālābhivamsa, (Burmese Version Dhamma Talk) in https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NQ-WTHotqk&ab_channel=DhammaChannel

²⁷ Suttanipātapāli, Vasala Sutta, Verses No. 125., P.298.

²⁸ Suttanipātapāli, Vasala Sutta, Verses No. 136., P.299.

²⁹ Suttanipātapāli, Parābhavasutta, Verses No.98, P.295.

Parenting is an art and science at the same time. There are definite scientific principles for appropriate parenting, though the art of parenting is often learned from our own parents. Some of us are blessed with an offspring early on after marriage, some a little later and quite a few who never. Whatever early or late, most of us go through this stage of the life cycle totally unprepared.³⁰

Reciprocal Duties and Responsibilities Between Parents and Children According to Sīṅgālasutta

If we follow both side of responsibilities between parents and children in vice-vasa, the family will be happy and peaceful life. In brief, according to *Sīṅgālasutta*, the Buddha uttered five kinds of duty for the parents. They are as follows:

Keeping their children away from evil courses;

Engaging them in good and profitable activities;

Giving them a good education;

Providing their adolescents for marrying them into good families and

Handing over the property to them in due course.³¹

Each of parents has to fulfill these duties and they should understand unconditionally that it takes to make a peaceful family as primary rules and Five Ways of Administering to Parents for Children, in five ways, young householder, a child should minister to his parents as the East:

Having supported their children, then children must support back to parents,

The children must do their parents' duties,

The offspring must keep the family tradition,

The offspring must make themselves worthy of their inheritance,

Furthermore, the offspring must offer alms and share merit in honor of their departed parents and relatives.³² If each of them in vice-vasa did not follow the primary responsibilities, they will be called mean persons said the lord Buddha.

Conclusion

In conclusion for families looking to build peaceful, caring settings, the union of mindful parenting with the Buddhist viewpoint on appreciation is a light of direction. Parents and kids may cohabit in a setting of respect, understanding, and love by adopting mindfulness as a compass and thankfulness as a unifying principle. Buddhism provides a timeless foundation for promoting positive family relations and opening the door for next generations to flourish in a climate of awareness, appreciation, and spiritual development via an all-encompassing approach.

You can't deny that parents are good for their offspring. From the moment you were born, until today, you must try to know the love that your parents have for you. It is very difficult to know things that do not exist. There is nothing difficult about making to known which is exist. They don't know because they don't try to know. So, parents' love, kindness, and gratitude are real existing things. If you think deeply and respectfully about it, you will be clearly understood it. Even knowing that it's so good on me makes me think I'm going to reciprocate better for them. If you think like that, don't wait until your parents are uncomfortable. It can lead to emotional pleasure if your parents want to be happy, as well as to be happy yourself. How pleasant it is to give these delicacies and clothes with your labor and your abilities.

Therefore, what the author wants to emphasize is that children should not wait until their parents feel uncomfortable situation. Also, don't wait until children feel comfortable. If children can't do anything, at least give them sweet words and cold love. This is what the author wants to discuss in summary. By responding to the great love and gratitude of your parents, the author wishes them to be good people who follow the words of the Buddha and make themselves prosperous.

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³⁰ MKC Nair (MC DCH), "*Parenting from Womb to Adolescent*" CBS publishers & Distributors, New Delhi, First Edition, 2015. p.3.

³¹ Pāthikavaggapāli, *Sīṅgālasutta*, P.146, 157.

³² Ibid

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