**Dhammapada Assignment**

**Instructions: Read the two sets of excerpts (selections) from the Dhammapada and answer the questions below. It might make sense to read the questions first.**

***Dhammapada***

**(First set of Excerpts)**

The following English translations are from Müller (1881). The Pali text is from the Sri Lanka Tripitaka Project (SLTP) edition.[[21]](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dhammapada#cite_note-SLTP-20)

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| **Ch. I. Twin Verses (Yamaka-vaggo)** | | | |
| 1. | All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. |  |  |
| 2. | All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him. |  |  |
| 5. | For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an eternal rule. |  |  |
| **Ch. X. Punishment (Daṇḍa-vaggo)** | | | |
| 131. | He who seeking his own happiness punishes or kills beings who also long for happiness, will not find happiness after death. |  |  |
| 132. | He who seeking his own happiness does not punish or kill beings who also long for happiness, will find happiness after death. |  |  |
| 133. | Do not speak harshly to anybody; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful, blows for blows will touch thee. |  |  |
| **Ch. XII: Self (Atta-vaggo)** | | | |
| 157. | If a man hold himself dear, let him watch himself carefully; during one at least out of the three watches a wise man should be watchful. |  |  |
| 158. | Let each man direct himself first to what is proper, then let him teach others; thus a wise man will not suffer. |  |  |
| 159. | If a man make himself as he teaches others to be, then, being himself well subdued (i.e. his mind, desires, anger, etc. is well under contral), he may subdue (others); one's own self is indeed difficult to subdue. |  |  |
| 160. | One is one's own refuge, what other refuge can there be?? With self well subdued, a man finds a refuge such as few can find. |  |  |
| 161. | The evil done by oneself, self-begotten, self-bred, crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks a precious stone. |  |  |
| 162. | He whose wickedness is very great brings himself down to that state where his enemy wishes him to be, as a creeper does with the tree which it surrounds. |  |  |
| 163. | Bad deeds, and deeds hurtful to ourselves, are easy to do; what is beneficial and good, that is very difficult to do. |  |  |
| 164. | The foolish man who scorns the rule of the venerable (Arahat), of the elect (Ariya), of the virtuous, and follows false doctrine, he bears fruit to his own destruction, like the fruits of the Katthaka reed. |  |  |
| 165. | By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one suffers; by oneself evil is left undone, by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another. |  |  |
| 166. | Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great; let a man, after he has discerned his own duty, be always attentive to his duty. |  |  |
| **Ch. XIII: World** | | | |
| 167. | Rouse yourself, be diligent, in Dhamma faring well. Who dwells in Dhamma’s happy in this birth and the next. |  |  |
| **Ch. XIV: The Buddha (The Awakened) (Buddha-vaggo)** | | | |
| 183. | Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of (all) the Awakened. |  |  |
| **Ch. XX: The Way (Magga-vaggo)** | | | |
| 276. | You yourself must make an effort. The Tathagatas (Buddhas) are only preachers. The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of [Mara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mara_(demon)). |  |  |
| 277. | 'All created things perish,' he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way to purity. |  |  |
| 278. | 'All created things are grief and pain,' he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity. |  |  |
| 279. | 'All forms are unreal,' he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity. |  |  |
|  | | | |
| 343. | Men, driven on by thirst, run about like a snared hare; let therefore the mendicant drive out thirst, by striving after passionlessness for himself. |  |  |
| 350. | If a man delights in quieting doubts, and, always reflecting, dwells on what is not delightful (the [impurity of the body](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Patikulamanasikara), &c.), he certainly will remove, nay, he will cut the [fetter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fetter_(Buddhism)) of [Mara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mara_(demon)). |  |  |

Dhammapada

(Second set of Excerpts)

20 Sayings of the Buddha: The Dhammapada in Two Versions

1  
“If the mind is clear, whatever you do or say will bring happiness that will follow you like your shadow.”

*“We are what we think. All that we are arises with our thoughts.”* (1:1)

2  
“We are but guests visiting this world, though most do not know this. Those who see the real situation, no longer feel inclined to quarrel.”

*"You too shall pass away. Knowing this, how can you quarrel?"* (1:6)

3  
“Perform those actions you will never regret: actions that will ripen into future joy and delight.”

*“Why do what you will regret? Why bring tears upon yourself? Do only what you do not regret, and fill yourself with joy.”* (5:8-9)

4  
“The fragrance of holiness travels even against the wind. The influence of the holy ones extends everywhere.”

*“The fragrance of virtue travels even against the wind, as far as the ends of the world.”* (4:11)

5  
“One who drinks deeply of the Dharma with a clear and open mind, rests well.”

*“Drink deeply. Live in serenity and joy.”* (6:4)

6  
“His sphere of action is wide-open and unmarked, completely free. Like the path of a bird across the sky, (the Arhat’s) way is hard to trace. The Arhat has destroyed all remnants of the fetters … Clear and undisturbed as a deep pond, such a being is not bound to the world.”

*“On the air they rise and fly an invisible course, gathering nothing, storing nothing. … Joyous and clear like the lake, still as the stone at the door, (they are) free from life and death.”* (7:3, 4, and 6)

7  
“Senseless talk brings suffering, for it is thrown right back to you. But if you stay like a broken gong and never speak a word, the cycle of idle talk will break, and you will pass from sorrow.”

*“Angry words hurt, and the hurt rebounds. Like a broken gong, be still, and silent. Know the stillness of freedom, where there is no more striving.”* (10:5 and 6)

8  
“If you do not lead a spiritual life, if you do not obtain real riches while young, you will be like a harp which is broken and sighs for the past.”

*“Sad is the man who in his youth loved loosely and squandered his fortune—sad as a broken bow, and sadly is he sighing after all that has arisen and has passed away.”* (11:11)

9  
“This world is shrouded in darkness. Here, only a few can see their way free. These few birds escape from the net, and fly away to the heavens.”  
 *“The world is in darkness. How few have eyes to see! How few the birds who escape the net and fly to heaven!”* (13:8)

10  
“Greater than having universal powers, is the fruit of Entering the Stream.”

*“Greater still than dominion over all the worlds, is the joy of reaching the stream.”* (13:12)

11  
“Even a rain of gold could not satisfy your desires—for the smallest taste of enjoyment leads to the suffering of more desire.”

*“The rain could turn to gold, and still your thirst would not be slaked. Desire is unquenchable or it ends in tears.”* (14:8)

12  
“Take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. … Through true wisdom you will clearly see the four noble truths and the eightfold noble path which lead to the release from misery. These are the true refuge. … By going to these for refuge, you will be freed from all suffering.”

*“He who shelters in the way, and travels with those who follow it, comes to see the four great truths concerning sorrow, the beginning of sorrow, the eightfold way, and the end of sorrow. Then at last he is safe. He has shaken off sorrow. He is free.”* (14:12 and 13)

13  
“Not ever grasping at pleasure, you will never be bound by its chains.”

*“Like nothing lest you lose it, lest it bring you grief and fear. Go beyond likes and dislikes.”* (16:3)

14  
“You are like a yellow leaf. The minions of the Lord of Death await you: You stand in the jaws of death with no provisions for your journey. Make of yourself an island—quickly become vigorous and wise. Clear away your impurities and faults, and you will reach the heavens of the saints.”

*“You are as the yellow leaf. The messengers of death are at hand. You are to travel far away. What will you take with you? You are the lamp to lighten the way. Then hurry, hurry. When your light shines without impurity of desire, you will come into the boundless country.”* (18:1 and 2)

15  
“Beings are caught in the strands of desire and attachment; they are caught like spiders in their own webs. The wise cut through these bonds and … slip out of all their suffering, without a backward look.”

*“O slave of desire, float upon the stream. Little spider, stick to your web, or else abandon your sorrows for the way.”* (24:14)

16  
“Whoever in this world overcomes this vicious craving … will find that suffering falls away like drops of water falling from a flower.”  
 *“If you subdue desire, your sorrows shall fall from you like drops of water from a lotus flower.”* (24:3)

17  
“The followers of Gautama’s teachings are always awake. … Day and night, they take great joy in genuine kindness.”  
 *“Forever wakeful, they mind the dharma; …they find joy in all beings.”* (21:11)

18  
“O Monks, empty the boat! When it is empty you will quickly reach your destination. Throw overboard all attachment and hatred, and you will obtain nirvana. … Monks who transcend the five obstructions are called: ‘Those who have crossed the waves.’ ”

*“Seeker! Empty the boat, lighten the load, - passion, desire and hatred, and sail swiftly. … When the five (attachments) have been left stranded on the shore, the seeker is called ‘He who has crossed over.’ ”* (25:10 and 11)

19  
“Never possessing anything, how wonderful our lives become—nourished by the same food of joy as the gods of light.”

*“Live in joy, without possessions, like the shining ones.”* (15:4)

20  
“A monk … who strives in the Buddha’s teachings is like the moon emerging from the clouds and lighting up the world.”  
 *“The seeker who sets out upon the way shines bright over the world. Like the moon, come out from behind the clouds! Shine.”* (25:23)

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**SOURCES**

(1) ***Dhammapada: Translation of Dharma Verses with the Tibetan Text*,** Translated into Tibetan from the Pali by dGe-‘dun Chos-‘phel;  
Translated into English from the Tibetan by Dharma Publishing Staff  
(Berkeley, CA, Dharma Publishing, 1985).

(2) ***Dhammapada: The Sayings of the Buddha***, Translated by Thomas Byrom (Shambhala Publications, 1993).

***Dhammapada* Questions**

**35 marks for the Questions + 5 marks for writing = 30 marks**

Read both sets of excerpts from the **Dhammapada** a few times and, using full sentences, answer the following questions:

1. Do a little on line research and write about **300 words** about the *Dhammapada*. You should say something about its origins, popularity, and nature, etc. Use your own words. Give bibliographic references for you material. You can only use information from either and academic source, or a Buddhist organizations website. Take comprehensive rough notes and hand these in. Submitting rough notes is a condition of this assignment . rough notes  **5 marks**

Research on the *Dhammapada* **10 marks**

1. What don’t you understand? (make a list and leave room for the answers). **2 marks**
2. Which three verses do you find particularly to be most true or useful? Why? **3 marks**
3. Is there anything that you disagree with? Why? 2 marks
4. Which of these teachings are similar to Buddhist teachings that you have already seen? **2 marks**
5. Which of these teachings are similar to Hindu teachings. **2 marks**
6. Which of these teachings are similar to teachings of your own religion (or of another religion or set of values)? **2 marks**
7. Write three verses of your own ‘Dhammapada’ , i.e., write three short verses of practical moral and philosophical teachings  **9 marks**

**Dhammapada Questions**

Read the passages from the Dhammapada and answer the following questions:

1. What don’t you understand?
2. What three things are most interesting about these verses?
3. Is there anything that you find particularly true? Why?
4. Is there anything that you disagree with? Why?
5. Which of these teachings are similar to Buddhist teachings that you have already seen?
6. Which of these teachings are similar to Hindu teachings.
7. Which of these teachings are similar to teachings of your own religion?
8. Write three verses of your own Dhammapada.