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Karma in International Affairs
Venerable Mahinda

Abridgement of Unibuds Dhamma talk given on Friday,
May 8th 1992 at the University of NSW.

Have you ever wondered why you were born in your family? Have you ever considered how significant your thoughts are? Each action you do is an expression of your thoughts, each word you say, is the choice of your thoughts. If you are mindful, if you try and think only good thoughts, then good words and good actions will follow. If you are upset by others, your angry thoughts will normally lead to angry words, and then to angry actions.

Ven Mahinda mentioned the example of how, as a boy, he had been reading Francis Bacon (a famous 15th Century English playwright) who wrote " Travelling maketh the man". :- A person may become wiser in the ways of the world by travelling around and seeing that different cultures may solve similar problems with different approaches, but in equally effective and acceptable ways.

Ven Mahinda said, that at the instant he read that suggestion, (that he could become wiser by travelling), he decided that he would travel. Some years later, someone mentioned to him that "In India, people die like flies." The adolescent Ven Mahinda wondered; "How do people die like flies? How are they allowed to die like flies?" He decided there and then, as a teenager, that he would travel to India and see for himself, the plight of the Indians.

Ten years after having that thought, he arrived in India as a Monk. He saw great poverty and great wealth. He also saw great warmth, courage and family spirit. All this he saw as a result of his thought ten years earlier.

The history of Nations is determined by the thoughts of the individual citizens. Your good thoughts and actions as a citizen of your country, will bring a good result for your country.

Ven Mahinda emphasised, that your current situation, is a result of your thoughts, and that you have an absolute free choice to think what you wish. Determine what you want to achieve in life, and keep those thoughts in your mind. But you should remember, that thinking; "I hope I will pass my exams/get that job." is not good enough. You must be more positive; you must think and tell yourself; "I will pass my exams/get a satisfying job."

By thinking positive thoughts, and reminding yourself of them, you will find your actions becoming more and more attuned. Your actions are tangible expressions of your thoughts, and you can achieve exactly as you think.

Also, when you are upset by others, it is important for you to maintain a positive and helpful attitude. By sending thoughts of loving kindness towards others in times of stress, or anger, you will overcome your own anger, and unhappiness. You will also be better able to let the disappointments and frustrations of life pass you by. Better still, you will be showing a good example to those around you, who will respect and appreciate your equanimity.

Do you understand now why you were born into your current family?

After answering many questions, the discussion ended by Ven Mahinda conducting a short, guided meditation for the 30 participants present.

Abridgement of the Dhamma talk given on Friday, May 8th 1992 at the UNSW as reported by Mike Kiddle. Friday Dhamma Talks between 7pm - 9pm are conducted regularly by the Unibuds throughout the year, and are open to all students and the general public.