

The Swiftest Enlightenment

Born in the city of Suppararakabay (around Bombay or Mumbai) as a merchant during the Buddha's time, Pahiya set sail to the Golden Peninsula (Thailand, Burma, Laos, and Cambodia) for trading. Unfortunately, a bad storm wrecked his ship shortly after leaving the Bay City. Barely survived, he swam ashore back to his town. Naked and cold, he dressed himself with barks tied together with strings. Almost nude, people mistook him as an arahant, enlightened being, and offered him food and medicine. Afraid of losing his fortune, he kept himself naked to lure people as an arahant.

One day, the Great Brahma (a Devine being, who was his old friend from the past - perhaps his own sub consciousness or Buddha nature) came to prompt him of the precious time being wasted, and informed him of the existence of the Buddha in Sravasti. He then rushed to meet and learn from the Buddha.

Caught up with the Buddha at the Sravasti market during his morning alms round, Pahiya prostrated in front of the Buddha, asking him to teach. Twice he was rejected as it was not an appropriate time and place to teach. Upon his third request, the Buddha gave in and started his teaching as follows:

"To see is just see, to hear is just hear, to perceive (through one's eyes, ears, nose, tongue, bodily contact, and mind/thought) is just perceive, and to realize (it is but a thought) is just realize. If one can see as just see, hear as just hear, perceive as just perceive, and realize as just realize, then the so-called 'you' can no longer exist.

Without 'you' (or 'self'), then 'you' will not exist in this realm, the future realm, or between those realms. That is the end of suffering."

With those plain and simple, yet profound remarks, Pahiya, attained enlightenment instantaneously in front of the Buddha.

While seeking for robes and bowl in the market so he could be ordained, Pahiya was charged and killed by a raging cow that morning. The Buddha and his disciples passed by the market after finishing their meals, and he ordered them to cremate Pahiya's body and to save his ash for housing in a stupa to be built for him. All his disciples were surprised by the request, the Buddha then explained to them that Pahiya was *supreme in attaining enlightenment with the shortest instruction.*