

## The Path Finder

Dear Sayadaw,

Humbly much respects to you. My knowledge is that before a new Buddha appeared, the old Buddha's Dhamma, Sangha and all of his relics will disappear. It also is said that the life-span of some Brahmas are eons long. Then, an Ariya Brahma of Buddha Gotama can still be alive when Buddha *Metteyya* comes?

If there are previous Buddha's Ariyas in the world, it is possible that ascetic *Siddhattha* may discuss the Dhamma with them. Then, it is impossible that he has no teacher when he attained Enlightenment.

Your answer to Q 190 says that some *Sotapana Ariyas* can also be reborn many times. It can make me confused too, because they can meet another Buddha maintaining their earlier Ariya status. Then, how can we say different Buddhas can't influence one other?

Si Thu

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### *Can be alive*

I hope you know that the Brahma *Ghatikāra* who offered lotus robe to Prince *Siddhattha* at the beach of *Anoma* was a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*). That means when the Prince destined to be a Buddha was born, a disciple of another Buddha existed outside this world. So the answer is yes, that is, a Brahma who is an Ariya, can be alive when Buddha *Metteyya* appeared in this earth.

### *Lokadhātu*

Buddha says it is impossible that two Buddhas should be born in "same one *Lokadhātu* (*Anguttara*, Vol. I, p. 22)". The Commentary on *Anguttaranikāya* describes that there can not appear another Buddha in this world as long as there are previous Buddha's relics (Vol. I, p. 358). Here we should understand the word *Lokadhātu* clearly. According to *Visuddhimagga* (Vol. I, p. 199), *Tāvātimsā* celestial realm above, *Avīci* hell underneath and four great planets around are all included in a *Cakkavāla*. A *Cakkavāla* itself is called a *Lokadhātu* (*ekam cakkavālam ekā lokadhātu*).

### ***Middle Land***

*Majjhimanikāya* Commentary states that, though all ten thousand *Cakkavāla* (which also is to be called *Buddhakhetta* or *Jātikhetta* or boundary for the region where a Buddha can be born) should be included in the word "same one *Lokadhātu*", here it should be limited only to this *Cakkavāla* (Vol. IV, p. 85) and *Dighanikāya* commentary comments that it should also be confined only to the Middle Land (Vol. II, p. 252). Therefore, we can conclude that "*Ekissā lokadhātuyā* = same one *Lokadhātu*" means "the Middle Land" in this issue.

### ***It seems to me***

Depending on above mentioned comments, it seems to me that no Buddha's relics would be seen on this earth while Buddha *Metteyya* comes into existence. But, in some Brahma worlds there can be long life Ariya Brahmās like *Ghatikāra* and so. A Bodhisatta may have some discussions about Dhamma when he was in same abode with them too. We can say that an Ariya Brahma may help Prince Siddhattha physically donating food or robe or medicine or place to live in, but not philosophically teaching him a Dhamma.

Answering Q 190, I quoted some ideas that *Sotāpanna* and *Sakdāgāmi* can be reborn in Deva worlds as a deva and human

world as a human being many times (but not up and down from human to deva, again from deva to human) until they reached Arahantship. However, it should be understood that their end will be before a future Buddha's becoming. So we can say there would be no Ariyas on this earth when *Metteyya* arrived.

### ***No teacher***

Do you know prince Siddhattha learnt some practices from the sages like *Ālāra* and *Udaka* before his Enlightenment? Still he was no teacher for the Middle Way which he discovered and is his own method. Also he might have some discussions about it as a Brahma or a higher deva while he was going in *Sansāra* as a Bodhisatta. Would you like to be insistent in saying it is impossible that Buddha *Gotama* has no teacher? □

