Thursday Dharma Classes – Spring 2019
***The Life and Teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha As They Relate To Us In 2019***

Class 2 Shakyamuni Buddha: his enlightenment and his first teachings

 -the *Turning of the Wheel Sermon*

Gautama’s Renunciation
“…he shaved his hair and beard and handing over his garments and ornaments…assumed the simple yellow garb of an ascetic and led a life of voluntary poverty…

His studies and practices during his six years of seeking
He studied with Alara Kalama p.12-14 (**The Buddha and His Teachings** Narada Thera)
He studied with Uddaka Ramaputta p.15 who invited him to take full charge of all the disciples as their teacher.
p. 21-30 MahaSaccaka Sutta describes his preliminary efforts and his austerities.

“…he met with disappointment but not discouragement…”
 What have we explored in our years of seeking?

His decision to “stop” – he p. 30 “…was fully convinced from personal experience of the utter futility of self-mortification…
What prompted our decision to “stop”

p.31 “…the five favorite disciples who were attending on him with great hopes…felt disappointed at this left him saying the ascetic Gautama had become luxurious, had ceased from striving, and had returned to a life of comfort…”

He came to the market town of Senani and the place p.19 “…lovely indeed…suitable indeed is this place for spiritual exertion?
p/ 20 “…the place was congenial for his meditation. The atmosphere was peaceful. The surroundings were pleasant. The scenery was charming. Alone, he resolved to settle down there to achieve his desired object…”

His bathing, putting on new and comfortable clean clothes, his eating a hearty meal, his sitting on a comfortable cushion and resolving not to get up til “…he achieved his aim”.
 Where is the place we have found “suitable indeed for spiritual exertion…”

The first watch of the night
p.31 the first four Jhanas
p.32 the modes and details of his varied lots in his former births

The second watch of the night
p. 33 with clairvoyant supernatural vision he beheld the disappearing and the reappearing of beings

The third watch of the night
p. 34 dependent origination
The morning star – p. 54“…house builder, thou shalt build no more…”

 How has our own “dark night” unfolded?
 What “woke us up”?

It is important to note that p.37-38 The Buddha had no teacher for his Enlightenment. “A teacher I have not” are his words.

P 46 – 53 The seven weeks after his enlightenment – continuing unfolding of the Buddha’s understanding and insight.

His reluctance to teach and the gods’ invitation and insistence to teach p.57-64
What has our response to our insight been? Have we experienced reluctance? What form has that reluctance taken?

His first converts – the two merchants p.64 who brought a meal and received teaching.

P. 69 His encounter with the 5 acestics – and the fact that only Kondanna believed him
 How have we been received after our insights?

p.73 His encounter with the first 5 disciples

p.74 -95 The Sermon of the Turning of the Wheel.
 What was our first exposure to the Dharma

It is said there are 84,000 dharma gates, which is a poetic way of saying there are infinite ways to enter Buddhist practice.  As Dogen says “…the means of training are thousandfold, but pure meditation must be done…”