

NANDA'S LAMP

Long ago in India, there lived a woman named Nanda who was so poor that she could barely feed herself; but she was very kind and carried a deep faith in the Buddha's Teachings.

In those days, it was a custom for the people to practice Dana, everyone offering what he could to the Buddha and his disciples. Nanda had nothing to offer.

One day, she found a job and made a little bit of money, so she too could make an offering. She decided to use some oil to light a lamp at the temple where the Buddha was staying.

When evening came, many lights flickered brightly and among them was Nanda's. During the night all the lamps burned out except one. One of the Buddha's disciple tried to blow out the flame that burned on in the sunlight.

The master said, "It is useless. Even if you poured the great ocean upon it, this lamp will remain burning. A very poor woman offered this light, sacrificing the food she needed. Her pure heart is contained within it. Do not forget that in charity the thought behind the offering is the most important thing."

* Review Dana.

* Discuss if you were Nanda, when you had some money, would you offer something to the Buddha or buy some food for yourself.