

General Introduction to Sangharakshita's Seminars

Hidden Treasure

From the mid-seventies through to the mid-eighties, Urgyen Sangharakshita led many seminars on a wide range of texts for invited groups of [Order members](#) and [Mitrās](#). These seminars were highly formative for the FWBO/Triratna as Sangharakshita opened up for the still very young community what it might mean to live a life in the Dharma.

The seminars were all recorded and later transcribed. Some of these transcriptions have been carefully checked and edited and are [now available in book form](#). However, a great deal of material has so far remained unchecked and unedited and we want to make it available to people who wish to deepen their understanding of Sangharakshita's presentation of the Dharma.

How should one approach reading a seminar transcription from so long ago? Maybe the first thing to do is to vividly imagine the context. What year is it? Who is present? We then step into a world in which Sangharakshita is directly communicating the Dharma. Sometimes he is explaining a text, at other times he is responding to questions and we can see how the emergence of Dharma teachings in this context was a collaborative process, the teaching being drawn out by the questions people asked. Sometimes those questions were less to do with the text and arose more from the contemporary situation of the emerging new Buddhist movement.

Reading through the transcripts can be a bit like working as a miner, sifting through silt and rubble to find the real jewels. Sometimes the discussion is just a bit dull. Sometimes we see Sangharakshita trying to engage with the confusion of ideas many of us brought to Buddhism, confusion which can be reflected in the texts themselves. With brilliant flashes of clarity and understanding, we see him giving teachings in response that have since become an integral part of the Triratna Dharma landscape.

Not all Sangharakshita's ways of seeing things are palatable to modern tastes and outlook. At times some of the views captured in these transcripts express attitudes and ideas [Triratna has acknowledged as unhelpful](#) and which form no part of our teaching today. In encountering all of the ideas contained in over seventeen million words of Dharma investigation and exchange, we are each challenged to test what is said in the fire of our own practice and experience; and to talk over 'knotty points' with friends and teachers to better clarify our own understanding and, where we wish to, to decide to disagree.

We hope that over the next years more seminars will be checked and edited for a wider readership. In the meantime we hope that what you find here will inspire, stimulate, encourage - and challenge you in your practice of the Dharma and in understanding more deeply the approach of Urgyen Sangharakshita.

Sangharakshita's Literary Executors and the Adhithana Dharma Team

The Itivuttaka

[Tape 1, side 1]

Sangharakshita: We have finished with the Udana for the time being. We come on to the Itivuttaka, which is a collection you can say of sayings and episodes. There is no record of where or when it was compiled, though we may have a few hints as we go through. It seems in some ways a little more stereotyped than the Udana; there is quite a bit of repetition, so I suggest we go straight through the first ten suttas and then discuss them as a group, otherwise I think we shall be repeating ourselves quite a lot. There is a common pattern all the way through, and quite a bit of repetition. That is the oral tradition of course coming in. So let's go through the whole of those first ten short suttas and then have a collective discussion on them. You can read one each, but we won't pause for discussion until we come to the end of the tenth one.

(i)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard: 'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning (to birth). What one thing? Lust, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

By whatsoever lust inflamed
Beings to the ill-bourn go,
That lust, completely knowing it,
Those who have insight do reject.
Rejecting it, no more again
They come unto this world at all.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

(ii)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning. What one thing? Ill-will, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

By whatsoe'er ill-will corrupt
Beings to the ill-bourn go, [2]
That ill-will, completely knowing it,
Those who have insight do reject.
Rejecting it, no more again
They come unto this world at all.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning. What one thing? Delusion, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Confused by whatsoe'er delusion
Beings to the ill-bourn go,
That same delusion, comprehending,
Those who have insight do reject.
Rejecting it, no more again
They come unto this world at all.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

(iv)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning. What one thing? Wrath, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Angered by whatsoever wrath
Beings to the ill-bourn go,
That wrath, completely knowing it,
Those who have insight do reject.
Rejecting it, no more again
They come unto this world at all.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning. What one thing? Spite, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Spiteful with whatsoever spite
Beings to the ill-bourn go,
That spite, completely knowing it,
Those who have insight do reject.

Rejecting it, no more again [3]
They come unto this world at all.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

(vi)

This was said by the Exalted One [...]

'Monks, do ye give up one thing. I am your surety for not returning. What one thing? Pride, monks, is the one thing ye must give up. I am your surety for not returning.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

With whatsoever pride elate
Beings to the ill-bourn go,
That pride, completely knowing it,
Those who have insight do reject.
Rejecting it, no more again
They come unto this world at all.

(vii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, the man who does not understand and comprehend the all, who has not detached his mind therefrom, who has not abandoned the all, can make no growth in extinguishing Ill. But, monks, he who does understand and comprehend the all, who has detached his mind therefrom, who has abandoned the all, can make growth in extinguishing Ill.'

This is the meaning ...

Who, knowing the all in all its parts,
For all its phases hath no lust,
By comprehension of the all
He truly hath escaped all-Ill.

This meaning also...

(viii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, the man who does not understand and comprehend pride, who has not detached his mind therefrom, who has not abandoned pride, can make no growth in extinguishing Ill. But, monks, he who does understand and comprehend pride, who has detached his mind therefrom, who has abandoned pride, can make growth in extinguishing Ill.'

This is the meaning...

(ix)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, the man who does not understand and comprehend lust, who has not detached his mind therefrom, who has not abandoned lust, can make no growth in extinguishing Ill. But, monks, he who does understand and comprehend lust, who has detached his mind therefrom, who has abandoned lust, can make growth in extinguishing Ill.'

This is the meaning...

(x)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, the man who does not understand and comprehend ill will ...'

S: The pattern is quite clear. There is one very important point that emerges from all of this. You have these five, or six really, 'poisons', as they afterwards came to be known. There is first of all lust, then there is ill-will, then there is delusion, then there is anger, then there is spite, and then there is pride or conceit. The point is made that if one is affected or if one is under the control or the domination of these poisons then after death one goes to an ill bourn, one goes to a lower state of existence. On the other hand if one is able to reject that poison during this life, then one doesn't go, one doesn't come back to this world or to any world or anywhere within the samsara at all. The point is made - and this is the really important point - that this rejection of any of the poisons, is possible only through insight. In other words the only way in which one can get rid of any of these poisons is by an actual experience of or insight into or awareness of the transcendental, the higher Nirvanic dimension beyond. In other words, in a way, as we said yesterday, no psychological solutions to psychological problems. You cannot get rid of lust, ill will and so on unless you have reference to or unless you are oriented towards something which transcends the psychological, and even the spiritual in the ordinary sense, altogether - unless you take your stand as it were on the transcendental. Maybe you can restrain [them] for a while or you can suppress [them] but you cannot really get rid of [them] unless you see through, and that is a sort of transcendental faculty. You can see through only with insight or wisdom. You cannot transcend the conditioned unless you can take your stand on the unconditioned. So this is a very important point, that taking your stand on a purely human - in the narrow sense - purely as it were psychological basis, you cannot get rid of any of these poisons; it just is not possible. As I [4] said you may suppress them or hold them in check, but you cannot really dissolve or resolve them. You will always be troubled by them in one way or another.

: How many poisons are there?

S. Here there are six, but the usual later list is five. There is anger and ill-will, so...

: - and spite.

S: Spite is often referred to as jealousy. That is in one of the lists of five poisons.

: You would not say that it was not worthwhile holding down on, keeping a check?

S: No, because unless they are in check to some extent, you cannot even develop your insight, your vision of the transcendental. Meditation in the ordinary sense, experience of the superconscious states, holds them down or keeps them at bay temporarily. You can come out from the most wonderful meditation and still be assailed by them all. But if in the course of the meditation you develop insight, when you come out of the meditation you find that the poisons are not troubling you so much. They have been partially destroyed, or permanently weakened.

: Permanently weakened?

S: Yes. So insight is something which has a permanent effect?

S: Yes. Of course there are degrees of insight: it can be a feeble glimmer or it can be almost total, but to the extent that it is insight, it has a permanent effect, whether that is great or whether that is small. And it is never lost, whereas the gains and benefits of meditation in the non-transcendental sense can be lost, as everybody knows I think. This is why you get the stories in Indian legend of rishis remaining in the samadhi state for aeons, but come out of it and anything can happen. So you are really completely changed, or permanently changed, only when you see things as they really are, when you see things the way they really are.
[6]

: It is presumably the poison still arises but one doesn't base one's whole life so much on that?

S: Yes. So in the case of the stream-entrant, some poisons still arise, but they no longer have a decisive effect. [Pause] And the "all" that is referred to in sutta vii, sometimes this is explained as all conditioned things, or you can also take it as all the poisons.

: Are the five poisons different from the five passions?

S: Sometimes. There seem to be several lists. The five poisons that you get as corresponding to the five Buddhas seem to be this same list, except that anger and ill-will are conflated, put together. Sometimes instead of, for instance, jealousy or spite you get distraction.

: Instead [indistinct] passions [indistinct]

S. The passions can also be a very lengthy list, [there are] several scores, 80-odd in the more refined versions. The five hindrances are rather different from this: to some extent the same but they are quite standard - the five hindrances never change; that is to say kama or craving, ill-will or anger, and then sloth and torpor, hurry and flurry, and ignorance. These are always the same. [indistinct] in almost any of the five hindrances.

: Hurry and worry?

S: Yes. There are various [indistinct] uddhacca-kukkucca, hurry and flurry or worry and restlessness.

: Craving, ill-will, sloth...

S: Sloth and torpor.

: Hurry and flurry. What was the next one?

S: Ignorance. These are the five hindrances: then you have three or four asravas, which remain more or less the same

: So these are the five asravas?

S: No, these are the five hindrances. And the asravas are sensuous desire, desire for the form world, desire for the formless world; and sometimes - nearly always - there is a fourth one added, desire for [7] views, or craving or thirst for views. These are the three or sometimes four asravas. Then there are the various lists of klesas or defilements or poisons or passions, usually this standard list of five or six, but there are variations. In the Udana we saw a list in connection with those four basic practices - there were only four. But one need not be too dogmatic as to exactly how many there are, [how many] defilements or passions or asravas and so on there are. The general idea is pretty clear.

: [indistinct]

S. Anyway, the central message of these little suttas is that these defilements or poisons can be permanently overcome, one can be permanently detached from them, one can permanently reject them once and for all, only with the help of insight. And if you can reject them in that way then your emancipation is guaranteed. The Buddha gives a guarantee. He says, "I am your surety, I will stand guarantee". It is a very emphatic statement.

: And insight is gained through meditation?

S. Normally, yes. Not exactly through but on the basis of. There can be insight developed without recourse to meditation in the formal sense.

: I remember you saying something on the Hui Neng seminar about samatha and vipassana. Samatha is like the accumulation of almost highs in the meditation and these have a cumulative effect so that one's actions become more full of insight, on one's presence in the world.

S: Not necessarily full of insight; that has to be developed separately.

: That is right, but it need not necessarily happen while you are formally sitting.

S. No; though normally of course the mind is too distracted to develop insight. It is only in connection with meditation that it has the chance to develop it. That does not mean it cannot be developed in other circumstances, when you are not actually sitting and meditating: [8] it can. When you are just sitting quietly and thinking things over, insight can develop then; or when you are studying, or when you are going through the scriptures, it can develop then. Or when you have a very profound experience of some kind; for instance, you are suddenly bereaved or there is a terrible accident, you can have a sudden insight into, say, transitoriness or the certainty of death which has a permanent effect on you. That is insight, and it does not arise on those occasions in connection with any meditation. You have as it were been concentrated by the experience - concentratedness being all your energies together, completely geared to what is happening - which otherwise very rarely happens except in

meditation and even then with very great difficulty.

: Is it that some meditation is designed to bring about insight?

S Yes, surely. Meditation methods are usually divided into two groups: those that are the samatha type and those that are the vipassana type. But the vipassana type proceed on a basis of samatha. Sometimes people misunderstand and think that you can have either the one or the other, and that if you take up vipassana meditation you do not have to bother with samatha, which is ridiculous.

: I have not heard these terms before. Could you give a very short definition?

S. Samatha literally means calming down, and it covers all the superconscious states, the dhyanas. Vipassana or insight is the transcendental wisdom faculty which sees reality, that sees the truth and goes beyond meditation in the samatha sense. I sometimes refer to it as contemplation, or use the word contemplation for that state or that activity. It is more like an activity than a state.

: I always had the idea from Theravadin schools that they just did vipassana meditation.

S: Yes, some of the little books about the so-called vipassana system which came from Burma give the impression that "We do not bother about [9] that samatha stuff, we go far beyond that." That is nonsense. Actually in their practice, at least in the practice as it is taught by some teachers, what they call vipassana is actually samatha.

: The mindfulness of breathing?

S: Exactly, yes.

: That is samatha?

S: That is samatha, by itself. There is a whole satipatthana practice, of which that is a part, which comprises both samatha and vipassana. Samatha and vipassana is a basic distinction running through all schools of Buddhist meditation. You find it in a way within the tantra, when for instance you visualize a Buddha or a Bodhisattva, that is samatha, but when you reflect on the significance, that is vipassana, or when you realize that it is void and dissolve it into the void, that is vipassana.

: Is that sort of practice usually done on the basis of years of basic samatha?
[indistinct]

S: In a way not, because Tibetan meditation is so much of it visualization, they start with that, and do it entirely with the help of that and do not do much of other practices except mantra repetition, [they do] a lot of that. You could say that for Tibetan Buddhists, without going into technicalities of tantra, repeating mantras is their basic concentration exercise and visualizing is their principal way of developing samatha and gaining higher meditation-type experiences. When they start reflecting that the visualized image is in fact void, they dissolve it back into the void, that is their equivalent of insight. Then of course they go on to do both together. So the pattern remains the same, even amidst all the richness and complexity of the

tantras.

: So mindfulness and metta are samatha, and what is the six-element practice?

S: The six-element practice where it is an antidote for conceit? Where you say or reflect that the earth element in my body, taking it from the earth element around; this is an insight practice, so is the reflection [10] on the chain of conditioned co-production, again that is insight. But if there has not been a previous development of the samatha, it will not be insight, it will just be reflection; it will just be a conceptual understanding. The insight is a direct seeing - a flash, as it were, at first. You really see and you really know.

* : What about the "just sitting" practice? What does that come under?

S: I do not know. I had not thought about that. Well, it depends in what state you are just sitting, doesn't it? [Amusement] You can be just sitting with samatha or just sitting with vipassana. I suppose it could be either. [Pause]

: Where does the word vipassana come from?

S: It is a Pali word. The Sanskrit is drasana, or vipasyana is more common. The word vipassana has become quite current and quite well known. Maybe it is best to stick to the Pali form. It is a long 'a' at the end in 'vipassana' or 'vipasyana'. Passati or pasyati: "he sees". Vi is "excessively". So it is - what shall I say? - superseeing, supersight, hypervision.

It is very important to keep this in mind, this transcendental element in Buddhism and not lose sight of it, because if you lose sight of that, you lose sight of Buddhism itself. There is the danger to some extent of just getting bogged down in psychology.

[Pause, mewing of seagulls]

Any query on all that?

[Pause] All right. Let us go on to Chapter II, skipping the first three, which are just repetitions of the previous pattern - even the verses are the same - and going straight on to sutta iv.

(iv)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, I see not any other single obstacle, hindered by which mankind for a long, long time fare up and down and wander on. like this obstacle of ignorance. Indeed, monks, it [11] is through this obstacle of ignorance that humankind, being hindered, do fare up and down and wander on for a long, long time.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

There is no other single thing
Hindered by which the human race
For days and nights doth wander on,

Which like delusion hindereth.

They who, delusion giving up,
Have pierced right through the mass of gloom,
No more again do wander on:
In them no cause for that is seen.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard .

S: Ignorance here meaning ignorance of the unconditioned or ignorance of the true nature of desires and so on; absence of insight perhaps, absence of enlightenment. The basic message is that all our troubles are due to the fact that we are not enlightened. The remedy is obvious and simple.

[Pause]

I take it delusion is moha, bewilderment, confusion, ignorance.

: Is there a slightly different meaning here?

S: Avidya (avijja) is the word usually translated as ignorance, meaning non-knowledge. Moha, usually translated as delusion but also bewilderment, is a stronger and more emotive term. Moha means confusion or bewilderment; not only the bare, simple state of not knowing but all the confusion that arises as a result of not knowing. It is that too. In a way it is a much stronger, even a more poetic, word; a richer word. It is very difficult to translate, moha. You can translate avijja but moha is untranslatable.

Sometimes it is translated "intoxication"; this suggests blindness, it suggests activity, but confused, bewildered, dark, blind. Sometimes it is rendered "infatuation". It suggests also attachment, craving; so it is really a multi-significant term, really one of the untranslatable terms. [It is] a sort of existential confusion, based upon existential ignorance. And of course you get it [12] in the triad of lobha, dosa or dvesa and moha represented by the three creatures at the hub of the wheel of life. That's moha, represented by Mr Pig. [Amusement] I do not know why. It is much worse than that; not just a greedy, grunting sort of state. The pig is not really active enough to represent moha.

: It really all is in the [indistinct], isn't it?

S: If you could imagine a rather active, neurotic kind of pig, that would be as bit like moha. Pigs usually seem contented, rather unneurotic creatures. Some people say that the pig has an undeserved bad reputation, it is quite an agreeable, an intelligent, creature. Pigs make good pets. A dog would be a good symbol for moha really; a pet dog, rather neurotic, attached to master, very dependant, not particularly bright.

On to sutta v.

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, I see not any other single obstacle, hindered by which mankind for a long, long time fare up and down and wander on, like this fetter of craving. Indeed, monks, it is through this fetter of craving that humankind, being hindered, do fare up and down and wander on for a long, long time.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

The man with craving as his mate
And bound to ageless wandering,
Cannot o'erpass samsara's stream,
Existence thus or otherwise.

Knowing the danger of it all,
Knowing how craving beareth woe,
Freed from all craving let the monk
Ungrasping, mindful, wander forth.

This meaning also...

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

S: So ignorance is the obstacle, craving the fetter. It is as though ignorance prevents you going on and craving holds you back. "The man [13] with craving as his mate" - tanha or trsna is craving, thirst, and grammatically it is in the feminine gender, so it is like a man's wife, going with him everywhere.

[Pause] That seems quite straightforward. Quite a lot of the Buddhist teaching in the Pali cannon is so straightforward and simple that there is really nothing to be said, except "Go straight off and practise it!"

[Pause] There is also perhaps a slight antithesis between the person wandering in samsara from life to life blindly "with craving as his mate" and the monk who, mindfully leaving home, wanders from place to place without attachment.

[Pause] On to vi.

(v1)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, for the monk who is a learner not yet come to mastery of mind, but who dwells aspiring for peace from the bond, making it a matter concerning the self, I see no other factor so helpful as giving close attention of mind. Monks, the monk who gives close attention of the mind abandons the unprofitable and makes the profitable to become.' This is the meaning ...

For the monk who is a learner there's a thing:
'Tis giving close attention of the mind;
Than which there can be naught so helpful for

The winning of the welfare unsurpassed.
By throughly (sic) striving he may reach Ill's end.

This meaning also...

S. This seems to be just introspection in the ordinary sense: just being aware of what is going on in one's own mind; whether one's mental states are skilful or unskilful; whether the skilful is increasing or decreasing, same with the unskilful; and so on. It is an absolutely basic thing, knowing what is going on in one's own mind. There is nothing more useful than this for a learner, that is, one who is still unenlightened. It is not morbid introspection of course, not just scratching oneself mentally all the time. It also means doing something about what you find in your mental states.

[14]

: It is very interesting to find that there is this mechanism for lack of a better word ... of viewing that from a wholesome standpoint. One sometimes instinctively knows that is not wholesome. Even though it comes...

S: It is Mara. You get quite a different feeling when "Ah! It is Bodhisattva So-and-so."
[Amusement] You get a wise thought: "Ah! It is Bodhisattva Manjusri!" It is quite different from the Mara-inspired thought, a different wavelength altogether. Or when "Ah! It is Mara's daughter. Ah! It is Tara!" [That is] quite different. [Laughter]

: Can someone give me any notepaper? I have just run out.

S. On to vii, which is if anything even more practical and useful.

(vii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks, for the monk who is a learner not yet come to mastery of mind, but who dwells aspiring for peace from the bond, making it a matter concerning what is outside the self, I see no other single factor so helpful as friendship with the lovely. Monks, one who is a friend of the lovely abandons the unprofitable and makes the profitable to become.'

This is the meaning ...

The monk who has a lovely friend, who pays
Deference and reverence to him, who does
What friends advise, -- if mindful and composed
Such in due course shall win all fetters' end.

This meaning also...

S: We have had this word "deference" before. Some people seem to think that it is "difference", but it is "deference". Is everyone clear exactly what this is? To defer to someone?

: To accept their...

: A sort of positive...

: To give way.

S. Yes, positive give way. Instant definition. So here you have a kalyana mitrata phrase.

: So the monk who has...

S: ... has a lovely friend - because this is kalyana mitrata, a good friend, not a pretty friend. The monk who has a lovely friend, who pays [15] reverence to him, who does what friends advise (that is, real friends), is mindful and composed, such in due course shall win all better things. In other words, if you have good friends, if you are paying proper attention to them, listening to their advice, and if you are mindful, then that is a good sign. It is a very promising situation. Once again the kalyana mitra or kalyana mitrata is praised.

: What is the Sanskrit for kalyana mitra?

S: Kalyana mitra. We are using the Sanskrit term. Pali would be kalyana mitta, [the] Sanskrit [is] mitra. Mitra is also a name of the sun, a title of the sun. It is the friend, friend of man. [Then there is] the Mithras cult in the West. Do you remember that? That is the same word really.

: That was a Middle Eastern [indistinct]

S: According to some scholars - others may possibly differ - it seems a reasonable sort of connection

: Pythagoras [indistinct] pita guru, I heard somebody say.

S: Pita guru?

: Pita. That was Ananda who said that.

S: One of Ananda's little jokes.

: He put it in one of his lectures. [indistinct]

S: I think that one has to be very careful about pseudo-etymologies.

[Pause] Let us fare on, then, to viii. From kalyana mitrata, we come to the Order, which is a sort of natural transition.

(viii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'One thing, monks, when it comes to pass in the world, does so to the loss, to the unhappiness of many folk, comes to pass to the woe of many folk, to the misery of devas and mankind. What is that one thing? Schism in the order of monks. Now, monks, when the order is broken there are mutual quarrels, mutual abuse, mutual exclusiveness and mutual betrayals.

Thereupon those who are at variance are not reconciled, and between certain of those who are at one there arises some difference.'

This is the meaning.

Doomed to the Waste, to purgatorial woe
For age-long penalties, provoking schism, [16]
Of discord fain, fixed in unrighteousness,
From peace from bondage doth he fall away,
Breaking the concord of the Company,-
Age-long in purgatory he waxeth ripe.

This meaning also...

S: Let us have the next one too, because it gives the positive side of all that.

(ix)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'One thing, monks, when it comes to pass in the world, does so to the profit, to the happiness of many folk, comes to pass to the welfare, the profit, to the happiness of devas and mankind. What one thing? Concord in the order. Indeed, monks, when the order is harmonious, there are not mutual quarrels, mutual abuse, mutual exclusiveness and mutual betrayals. Thereupon those who are at variance are reconciled, and between those who are at one there arises further growth of unity.'

This is the meaning ...

A blessed thing is concord in the order.
The friend of those who are in harmony,
Of concord fain and fixed in righteousness,
From peace from bondage he falls not away,
Making the concord of the Company,-
Age-long he doth rejoice i' the heaven world.

This meaning also...

S: The moral of all this is obvious. The Buddha does show himself at various times, in various places in the scriptures, to be very concerned with the harmony and unity of the Order. He insists on the regular, frequent, full meetings. This is something we can take very much to heart.

It might be a good time just to discuss, so far as we are concerned in the Order itself, how breaches arise. We have not had any serious ones so far, luckily, but there are little cracks here and there, especially between individuals. It might be useful to look into this briefly and see how this does arise and what ought to be done about it. What do you feel about the harmony and unity of the Order at the moment?

: I think my first feeling is that not so much cracks appearing as they have never really been bonded yet. It is still in the process of coming together...

[17]

S: A certain looseness of texture...

: ...and some relationships as it were are taking longer to come together than others.

S: But of course as the Order grows, it is going to be more and more difficult for every Order member to have a close relationship with every other Order member. I feel more and more that what ought to be stressed - I am not stressing the concrete personal relationships within the Order - is the almost telepathic communion, a feeling that you are all together even though widely separated. Though some may be in Scotland, some in New Zealand, then some in Helsinki, to feel very much at one with them. I think this is very important, too - if anything, more important than the contact on the purely personal level. Perhaps we attach an exaggerated importance to a sort or kind of social contact.

: That in a sense might prevent the other feeling arising.

S: Yes, sometimes.

: It seems that people in London have a certain feeling, whereas people dotted around feel cut off, outside. Maybe we are not developing our communication with them.

: I think this is one of the things that will develop out of individual solitary retreats [indistinct] with the Order. I am a little bit surprised to find that this is not happening outside already. I think it is another factor at work with those outlying Order members who do not feel this.

S: There are outside Order members who feel very much with the Order, like Karuna. She feels it very strongly - no problem.

: And Bodhisri.

S. Yes, Bodhisri; and Vajrabodhi too, come to that. No one writes to me more than Vajrabodhi, and they are very interesting letters every time. When I look through my post, I see one from Vajrabodhi and I think. "I must read that one first." He is always the most interesting.

[18]

There seems to be sometimes an incompatibility of personality types, for want of a better expression. This seems to get in the way of the spiritual unity, communion.

: I think that if one sees this, with oneself, it is just a matter of tolerance; just dropping that for a while to take up things like meditating together. I really get a lot out of just meditating with other people: I do not even have to talk to them. Perhaps working together with them too.

S: Who is senior?

: You are senior [Laughter]

S. You carry on then.

: In my experience I find the reverse of what Dhammadinna says; that the personal relationships make unity.

S: Well, that may happen.

Dhammadinna: I meant on a more general basis. As a group in London, we are concerned with personal relationships and with spiritual relationships; we are not, because we have so many people around, we are not directing our communication outwards in a mental way to those people who are on the outside. They do not even get letters, some of them... which is an indication of something else.

: Yes. It stops becoming the Order, becoming maybe that group of people who are living in Archway.

Dhammadinna: Yes, personal relationships, one-to-one, are very good.

Bodhisri: To me, these groups around Archway, I do not see them very much as Buddhist groups always, I think it is just an English way of life, socializing. I do not see it as a solution. Of course, that as well, but I do not see it is the only way of being together.

S: Perhaps there is not enough working together.

: I was thinking, maybe in the future, when there are more Centres on their own, it could be a bit of a switch around, where different Order members could spend maybe six months, or even a year, at different Centres.

[19]

S: Even those who are not actually running Centres or taking classes? The ordinary, average Order member, say, goes and lives and works in, for instance, Glasgow, Bristol, or Brighton, wherever we have a Centre, and just turns up. It need not be a question of helping to run it; he is just living in the area and joining in for a certain period. That could be very good.

: Something like [indistinct] is going to do.

S: Is she? What is she going to do?

: [indistinct] working there.

S: Visiting: sure. Visiting is very good.

: I know that one thing that Vangisa says, the value of the Order meeting is very, very important to him. It is his one weekly contact with Order members; whereas people living

around the London Centres have contact with Order members all day, perhaps every day. The Order meeting itself is not seen in the same way.

S: They do value it so much.

: He pointed that out once, which is quite good.

S: There is one matter which is a sort of Order matter that it might be appropriate to discuss, and it also concerns the forthcoming Order retreat. Who is going on that? I know that Buddhadasa is. [Activity] That is good. The letter was from Lokamitra, and he writes that Mangala, who is going to be leading the retreat ...

: Not the Order retreat.

S: Ah, just a minute. No, sorry. This is in connection with the mixed retreat. The principle is the same, though, whether or not it extends over to the Order retreat. Apparently Mangala has expressed some fear that Lokamitra, by being very on the ball as regards the organizational side, will tend to undermine his authority as leader of the retreat. So Lokamitra asks me what I feel about this. He also mentions that when Mangala led the Order [End of Tape 1, side 1]

[20]

[Sangharakshita:]... the position clear about Order members on retreats. I have done it before, but everybody may not have heard it. What is important is that, when there is a retreat, and it certainly applies to a mixed retreat, there should be the Order meeting every evening. Whatever Order members are present will have a meeting every evening, an Order meeting to which only Order members will be admitted: even if it is only half-an-hour. A quiet get-together at the end of the day or near the end of the day. They will talk about anything of interest and concern, but especially just review the day. And every Order member present has the right, and even the duty, to say what he or she thinks about that retreat and make any suggestion or any criticism. The leader of the retreat must be prepared and ready to take that.

[Pause] When an Order member leads a retreat, he is not a complete dictator, even a benevolent one. Everything concerning the retreat, including the length of the meditation and the kind of meditation, can be well discussed in the Order meeting. It is certainly not to be discussed outside that [meeting]. It is a matter entirely within the Order. If, for instance, someone leading a retreat found that all the other Order members present disagreed with him, or his way of doing certain things, he should give that very serious consideration. It may well be that everyone else is wrong and he is right or she is right: that may well be. But at least that person leading the retreat must give any criticism or counter-suggestion very serious consideration. This is not undermining, and certainly no Order member should mention anything of these discussions or differences of opinion outside the Order meeting itself; but within the Order meeting there must be complete freedom of expression and comment and criticism and so on.

Was anyone present at that meeting at Aryatara? What have you to say, if anything?

: I think that the situation that Mangala is referring to, was one that we were only discussing last night with regard to Vangisa ...

[21]

: This was the one at the Centre?

: ...talking about something entirely different.

: No, I think it was about the same thing.

S: On the occasion that Lokamitra is referring to, apparently Mangala was the leader for the evening, but he apparently felt that something that someone had said or done had undermined his authority and was not shown proper respect as the leader of the proceedings and he reacted quite definitely with anger afterwards, which showed. Lokamitra says that he admits that maybe there was something wrong so far as he was concerned, in the way he discussed it with Mangala: he admits that; but he says there was a strong reaction of anger from Mangala. He was not happy about that, so there is a certain vulnerability there.

: He also reacted angrily during the [indistinct]

S. Was it Mangala also?

:Yes

: He does seem to have a fiery temper. He is quite aware of it, and most of the time he uses it positively.

: Vangisa brought up some points about chanting and the procedure for bowing. I think Mangala felt undermined at the time, and reacted angrily.

S: I do not think one can speak really of undermining within the context of the Order. If an Order member goes outside and is talking to the Friends - "Such-and-such a party is not much good at taking meetings: he did it all wrong" - that would be undermining, quite definitely. But if you openly express your feelings in the Order meeting with only Order members present, and that person is there - you are saying it in front of him - that is not undermining, even if you are completely wrong and mistaken.

: So the expressing of differences of view within the context of a spiritual community and with that in mind ...

S: I talked with Lokamitra about this on the phone. I said that if you are responsible for the organizational side, that is, the "commissariat" [22] at a mixed retreat, well that is not the retreat leader's concern at all: he need not bother about that; you are responsible for that. But as regards the retreat leader and what he does and how he conducts the retreat and what is happening on the retreat, in the Order meeting everybody must have his say. The leader does not have a completely free hand.

: It is still quite a volatile situation, even though it is probably understood on both sides.

S. Even when I take a retreat, I always ask, "What do you think?" and I listen most carefully to what people say, because one person cannot see everything. It is not that someone else is challenging you, it is just another pair of eyes. Someone might have seen something that you

have not seen, or seen things from an angle you have not noticed.

: I feel that there is a certain tendency to the prima donna in Mangala. I think that is what Lokamitra is pointing at. Just really in the way he leads the Archway meeting. Now we just ring a bell and someone is responsible for the bell-ringing and introducing the Puja, but he did make it more than that. He sat at the front. He felt that even though we were chanting the mantras together, we should be following his chanting. This was the topic that came up for discussion.

S: Probably, yes. If you are not so much in unison that you need to follow someone, then you should follow the one in front.

: indistinct]

S: But then again, if everyone is doing it the standard way and the leader is introducing a new way or a different way, then that can be criticized; that is not wanted. If a lead is needed, then that is the person to give it: if a leader is appropriate, that someone is to be followed.

I said that I would write or talk with Mangala beforehand, and make it quite clear. The point to be made clear is that whoever leads the retreat is not the absolute leader, unless of course there are no other Order members present, but there should be other Order members present.

[23]

: It is almost the wrong word, "leader," isn't it?

S: It is, in a way.

: It gives the wrong impression.

: "Front man."

: "Front man" can be criticized in other ways.

S. Well, it has overtones. "Director." "Leader" is not bad: it will do.

: There is the other side, where one's position can be undermined, without necessarily having to take it out but being over-criticized. Not feeling that the position the person is in is quite a responsible position and he has a lot of weight on his shoulders. I think to keep bringing up little points and quibbles can be a real menace. I think this also has to be taken into consideration.

S: You should be supportive.

: I have only ever taken one retreat. What came out of it for me on that occasion was the importance of having someone right there with you, someone who is very understanding. You can talk about differences and discuss the difference of opinions that will arise all over the place. That is very important.

: I mentioned a couple of days ago the great trouble that I had in Scotland when I led a retreat in the country, a very small retreat. There was one man called Amesh - he comes to the Yoga

class and is Brahmin, was a Hindu monk. That really was undermining because he had very clear views about what we should do and was speaking at the most inappropriate places. It was very tough not having another Order member around. In the end I had to treat some of the more responsible members of the retreat as Order members and take them off and say, "Look, what do you think we should do next?"

S: If other Order members are present and they are not leading the retreat, they should obviously see their responsibility as giving as much support to whoever is leading without necessarily agreeing with everything that he is doing. If they have to draw his attention to [24] something they are not happy about, well, do it in a positive, constructive way, not [to leave him] feeling as though he has to lead the retreat, which is difficult enough, but to ward off these attacks from the members who are not helping him very much.

: Presumably the programme for a retreat is the responsibility of all the Order members attending? Or will this be up to the individual person?

S: I should leave it to the individual person. Once it is started, if Order members feel it is not quite going right, it is not working there is too much meditation for instance, or not enough - well, let them bring that up.

: I think it is better for one person to do the programme. We are never going to have a programme otherwise.

: Yes. I felt this a bit at Norfolk with Devaraja taking a retreat, that we would sit trying to discuss a programme and it was never all that important. We usually stuck to the general standard that we had been doing. We did find that if one person, like Devaraja, would write out a programme and then say, "What do you think of it?" then we could just pass it. [Otherwise it would] take ages.

S. Anyway, let us go on. Number x.

(x)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Here, monks, I discern a certain person of corrupt mind to be such because I compass his thoughts with my mind; and if at this moment this person were to make an end, he would be put just so into purgatory according to his deserts. What is the reason for that? His corrupt mind, monks. Indeed it is because of a corrupt mind, monks, that in this way certain beings, when the body breaks up, after death arise again in the Waste, the Ill-bourn, the Downfall, in Purgatory.'

This is the meaning...

Here seeing a certain one corrupt of mind,
The Teacher 'mid the monks set forth this meaning:
'If at this time this person were to die
He would in purgatory rise again
Because of the corruption of his mind.'

Beings to th' Ill-bourn go thro' mind corrupt.
As one lays down what he has taken up,
So such an one, when body breaks up, weak [25]
In wisdom rises up in purgatory.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

S: That looks like a straightforward warning: "Do not leave it!" Whatever your mental state is at the time of death, you will be reborn accordingly. That is a very important factor, though not the only one the one immediately determining. This is why, in Buddhism, people attach a lot of importance to the way you die - dying peacefully and composedly, if possible in a meditative state, without any fuss or disturbance, suitable surroundings, maybe with friends around and so on. We are still a young Order. We have not had anything of this sort to deal with yet, but sooner or later it is bound to arise.

: Who is going to be the first?

S: We have not lost any Order member by death, have we, so far? Just a very few have left or broken away. There is always the possibility of coming back. No Order member has ever died. This is quite good in a way. We have 40-odd now, we have been going 7 years, and we have not lost a single one by death.

: Did one of them commit suicide? I think Vajrabodhi told me. One of the very early ones?

S: No. That was a Friend of ours, but not an Order member. I think it might have been two people that we knew committed suicide.

: Who knows for whom the bell tolls?

S: It is "...the gong rings," isn't it? [Laughter]

: This is a point I have often thought of, quite seriously. Have you ever had any intention of reading the Bardo Thodol over someone in the West?

S: Yes, I think it would be good. Maybe an edited version, mainly the root verses of the Bardo. I certainly have performed the funeral ceremony, for Friends, not for any Order member. We have not yet made use of the Bardo.

[26]

: What do you mean by the "root verses"? Are they [indistinct]?

S: Yes. A sort of nucleus of the work, really. They are included at the end of the Evans-Wentz translation.

: How is the lady [indistinct] contacted? I cannot remember her name now. She was in hospital.

S: Oh, yes! I do not know. Catherine Castle. I was going to ask him, I was thinking about it

recently. I have heard from her twice fairly recently, and have replied. She does not write herself; she gets someone to write for her.

: Maybe someone else could take that up.

S: That would be very good if they could. It will not be very easy, because she is in a - not exactly senile state - but she knew Rupa from before, and Gotami, but a new person is just a new person. It is quite a difficult situation.

: [indistinct]

S: She probably would not recollect you. It would be good if someone could go along, I think. If anyone does, they might as well be warned that the visit might be quite trying, certainly demanding. She can be quite a difficult person. She has a very hot temper, and resents very much being confined to bed. She was hale and hearty until she was about 73, and then suddenly became quite dependant, and had to have things done for her. She is very independent by nature, and she gets into terrible rages with the nurses and everything, life. She hates herself then suffers terrible guilt and remorse feelings afterwards, that she is no good, that she is not a real Buddhist. She gets very, very upset. It is amazing in a woman of that age that she has such violent emotions still. Now she is about 78. Sometimes she throws things at the nurses and explodes in anger, and there is a terrible reaction afterwards. She feels very, very remorseful.

: Normally in old age, it just dwindles away, doesn't it?

[27]

S: She has a very fiery temper and she has been very surprised that it was there, and feels that all her efforts over the years have been completely wasted. So it would be good if someone could go, but it means work, really, when you get there. You know, you feel a bit tired at the end of the journey; well, it is not such a long journey as it was, but it is still in Barnett. You have to queue up for a bus and all that. By the time you get there you want a quiet cup of tea and a chat with Catherine, but, no, it is a demanding situation. She might begin by saying, "Why hasn't anybody come to see me? No one cares." There might be quite a bit of that for an hour or so. She might even not be very glad to see you, only glad to have someone to complain to. But if someone could go, it would be very good. She calms down if you are patient. She calms down and becomes much better after an hour or so, usually. This is the pattern I have generally encountered.

: It is very trying.

S: When I was in London I was going every month practically, sometimes every month regularly. There was always this pattern even when things were comparatively all right. She would grumble and complain about everything and everybody, and then gradually become more cheerful.

: I spent a week visiting my grandmother, who was 82 and had only one leg. She had incredible spirit and temper. She was very much like that. It was quite exhausting.

: It is almost like it builds up. My own mother - when I go and visit her I get [indistinct] until she has exhausted it all. Then we sit and have a much quieter talk.

S: If someone could go, that would be good. It is the Arkley Lawn Nursing Home. You have to go up to Barnett, and then get the Arkley bus. It is near the Post Office. It is probably as well to ring up beforehand, but there are no visiting hours, you can go quite freely in the afternoon. When I went last she was sharing a room with one other woman.

[End of tape 1, side 2]

[28]

S: All right, who is next?

[Little voice from the corner.] Page 125.

Chapter III - The Ones

This was said by the Exalted One said by the Arahant - so I have heard:

"Here, monks, I discern a certain person with mind at peace to be such because I compass his thoughts with my mind - and if at this moment, this person were to make an end, he would be put just so into the heaven - world according to his deserts. What is the reason for that, his mind at peace? Indeed it is because of a mind at peace, monks, that in this way, certain beings, when body breaks up after death, arise again in the happy bourn, in the heaven world"

"this is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken. Here seeing a certain one with mind at peace, The Teacher 'mid the monks set forth this saying:

"If at this time, this person were to die,
In the happy bourn, he would arise again.
Indeed, the mind of him has come to peace.
Thro' peace of mind, men reach the happy bourn.
As one lays down what he has taken up,
So such a one, when body breaks up, strong
In wisdom rises up in the heaven-world"

S: Perhaps it is just worth commenting on that: This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said" It seems to suggest it isn't necessarily his exact words. And then after that, just for mnemonic purposes, for the sake of learning by heart, the meaning is put into verse. All right. The verse is more or less the kind of material which we had in the previous few suttas. So let's pass on to something, which is a bit more striking, which is coming now.

(ii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

"Be not afraid of good things, monks."

S: Yes, this is alternatively translated, "good deeds", punyani, merits. Don't be afraid of merits, don't be afraid of doing good deeds. Some people are afraid.

"This is a name for happiness, monks, for what is pleasant".

S: I mean, the way that some people are reluctant to perform good deeds [29] you'd think that good deeds got you into some sort of misery after death instead of the other way around.

"For what is pleasant, charming, dear, delightful, - this word, "good things," I myself, monks, am conscious of personally enjoying the fruit of good things done for many a long day, a fruit that is pleasant, charming, dear and delightful. After developing for seven years, monks, a heart of good will, for seven aeons of rolling up and rolling out again, I came not back to this world. When the aeon rolled up, monks I was one of the company of Radiant Devas. When the aeon rolled out again, monks, I rose up again in the empty palace of a Brahma. There, indeed monks I was a Brahma, a Great Brahma, Conqueror, Unconquered One, All-Seeing, All-Controller was I. Thirty-six times, monks, I was Sakka, Lord of the Devas. Countless hundreds of times, monks, I was a rajah, a wheel rolling, righteous dhamma-rajah, victorious over the four quarters, one who wins security in his kingdom, with the seven treasures endowed. Such was I, not to speak of the times when I was ruler over a district only.

Then it was to me, monks, that this thought occurred: Of what deed, I wonder, is this the fruit, of what deed is it the ripening that I am now of such mighty power and majesty? Thereupon, monks, I had this thought: "Why, this is the fruit of three deeds, the ripening of three deeds, that I am now of such mighty power and majesty: to wit deeds of charity, self-control and abstinence." This was the meaning ...

Let that man train himself in doing good
That lasts for long and ends in happiness.
Let him make grow charity, the life of calm,
A heart of goodwill let him make to grow.
Making these three things grow that end in bliss,
The wise man surely doth arise again
In the happy world wherein no trouble is.

S: There seems to be some difference between the prose and the poetry or the verse. The verse is much more general. The prose is much more specific and, as it were, much more legendary, it presupposes the whole Buddhist theory or philosophy of cosmic evolution and involution over millions upon millions of years, and being born at this level and at that level, and reborn, whereas the verse puts it quite simply in terms of just future happy states, and doesn't go into any further details. So we can either take the prose literally or not. In any case, the verse holds good. "Let that man train himself in doing good that lasts [30] for long and ends in happiness. Let him make grow charity, the life of calm, (that is meditation), a heart of good will, (that is the metta bhavana), let make to grow, making these three things grow that end in bliss; the wise man surely doth arise again in the happy world wherein no trouble is.

Not nirvana, these are not sufficient to take you there, only Insight will take you there, but

dana, a quiet life, meditative life, developing metta bhavana, these will surely bring you to happiness, to happy states, both in this life and in a future life. But they do fall short of Nirvana itself.

: Why do you think it might be that people aren't exactly afraid but don't act and get into doing good deeds?

S: Have you found yourself ever in this sort of situation?

: Yeah, I have. There have been various sorts of rationalizations, one of them is little sayings like, "The road of hell is paved with good intentions" and feeling, being a goody-goody etc.

S: Well, there is that concrete example the begging bowl. People pass it, and I am quite sure that sometimes people would want to put something in, but they don't. They hold back.

: A feeling of embarrassment.

S: Embarrassment. Why should one be embarrassed about doing good? No one at the centre is going to disapprove. You're disapproving of yourself in a way. Some part of you is disapproving and not happy about it. I think sometimes people, it is as though people feel that their good deed is not required or not wanted. It is sort of too impersonal. They want to do it as it were to someone that they care about and get a definite response. I think that very often it is that. Because if you are a Christian and believe in God, well, God sees and he repays even so the Bible tells you. In fact he repays tenfold, a hundred fold. It is like a good investment, because in Buddhism we don't have that, not with regard to a person; you have got it in terms of future karma, happiness in heaven and even in this life and so on, but you don't get that personal appreciation. Maybe it is that that you want.

: I can remember with myself when Subhuti left and I wanted to say good bye and how I appreciated you being here, and I hope you will be happy where you are going, and nice things like that, and I just couldn't say it, I just said 'so long' and after he had gone, I realized that I had really wanted to express...

[31]

S: Maybe one is a bit afraid of one's own feeling. Maybe you were afraid that you might sort of start weeping and flinging your arms around his neck and he might not like that, and maybe your bosom would start to heave and you thought, well, no we can't have that.

: Well it wasn't really as emotional as that.

S: Well perhaps there was something deeper, but you just didn't want it to come up.

: I did realize it so strongly that I did try to see him afterwards and try to express it then. And that sort of cleared it up. I find it much sort of easier to do that sort of thing afterwards.

S: I think that people are often afraid of their own feelings, especially their positive feelings. Maybe they are just afraid of being hurt of being wounded, they don't let their positive feelings out. Often people are better than they seem to be. Shyness, as I said in the case of Padmaraja, it is a sort of sensitivity and shyness, and not wanting to be hurt. And that is often

the sort of situation that you find yourself in, so you cannot, in an appropriate situation or one that is particularly appropriate, suddenly switch all that off, and be open and expressive if you are habitually having to guard your feelings. Sometimes you cannot sort of just let the barriers dissolve when you would like them to.

: And with times this feeling that you are buying friendliness ...

: People don't usually object to buying things. And they do spend money on things. I mean they spend money on their girlfriend and they don't sort of hang back because you might think that they are trying to buy her. Or vice-versa.

: I think in the case of dana, it is just forgetfulness.

S: I think that it is more than that.

: Because when somebody goes around with a dana bowl and shakes it under their noses, people respond.

S: But it is personal, that is what I am saying. Some particular person is asking you, and you get a big smile from him, maybe.

: Almost the more negatively it is asked for, with more vigour they give. If you growl at them, they give. If you ask them sweetly, not so much.

[32]

: You have found this, have you !

S: Well Kevin did rather well with the begging bowl at one stage at Centre House. It worked very well. They grumbled, even criticized, but they paid up. They put it into the calyx of that great big lotus, the paper lotus that he made, and it slid right down the tube, they had a laugh about that., but it collected a bit of money, a few pounds anyway, more than we would have got with out it. I think it is as though people are afraid to be positive. It is as though you cannot go around the world, it seems, being positive; you get a bit bruised and broken, so you close up your positiveness.

: Well, if you are really positive, you don't.

: Why is it that one gets bruised and broken?

S: Well, there are a lot of negative people around and they don't appreciate your positiveness, and sometimes there are so many situations where it seems that negativeness is more useful than positiveness.

: It might be something that one hasn't got total conviction behind one's positive feelings and one thinks that one doesn't want to impose them on the other person, and that they will find them an intolerably slushy burden.

: I can see that they might not actually appreciate it.

S: With the begging bowl there you feel some positive feelings very often but you don't give. Seems very odd. I think that is due mainly to the absence of the personal touch, because in the case of the ... Well maybe people find it very difficult to do things as individuals. You know, in Church, there isn't this problem usually there, because the plate is going round, or the little bag, and it goes from everybody and to avoid putting in, you have to pretend to put in, put a button in or something. But we just leave it to each individual and maybe people find it difficult to do things as individuals. If you had them all lining up and someone watching them and counting them and it had to be done, maybe it would be more easy. It means an individual decision about how much do I give, should I give ten pence, or twenty pence, or could I get away with five pence or maybe should I lash out and give fifty pence? And there are all those sorts of conflicts, as it were, going on so the simplest way out is not to give anything. Maybe we make it difficult by not having a sort of charge; people seem to pay up when they know definitely what the fixed amount is. But maybe it is the uncertainty and having to make up their own minds even, and evaluate and decide and choose and all that.

: Of course, if you really did evaluate it, you would give [33] everything. You may know that instinctively.

S: Right , maybe. But anyway, I am still not in favour of charging for meditation, but other things I think we ought to charge as much as we possibly can.

: I think also, ones approach to it might be different. I was thinking of the Yoga classes, and I feel we would probably find that the Yoga students become more serious and more determined.

S: Ananda in a previous letter asked me how I felt about that, and Lokamitra has asked me too, and I feel quite all right about that. Quite happy. Anyway, it says "don't be afraid of good deeds", don't be afraid of heaping up too much merit, or getting to heaven too quickly or spending too long there, don't be afraid , heaven doesn't hurt. On to three.

(iii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

" One thing, monks, if practised and made much of, wins both kinds of welfare and abides both for this present life and that to come. What one thing? Diligence in good things. Indeed, monks, this one thing if practised and made much of, wins both kinds of welfare and abides both for this present life and for that to come" This was the meaning ...

The wise praise diligence in virtuous deeds.
He that is wise and diligent doth win
Twofold advantage - wins that which is good
In this life and wins good in life to come.
Because he grasps wherein his 'vantage lies,
The man inspired doth win the name of wise.

S: This is saying more or less the same thing as the previous sutta, except it is in respect of diligence, diligence in good things, rather than in heaping up of meritorious deeds.

: Patience?

S: No, persistence. and energy. It doesn't tell us what the original Pali word is.

All right then, on to four, where there is quite a famous simile.

(iv)

This was said by the Exalter One ...

[34]

"Monks, the bones of a single person running on, faring on for an aeon, would make a cairn, a pile, a heap as great as Mount Vepulla were there a collector of those bones and if the collection were not destroyed."

This is the meaning...

The pile of bones of (all the bodies of) one man
Who has alone one aeon lived,
Would make a mountain's height - so said the mighty seer
Yea, reckoned high as Vipulla
To north of Vulture's Peak, crag-fort of Magadha.
When he with perfect insight sees
The Aryan truths - what suffering is and how it comes
And how it may be overpassed,
The Aryan Eightfold Way, the way all Ill t'abate,
Seven times at most reborn, a man
Yet running on through breaking every fetter down,
End-maker doth become of Ill.

S: This of course is obviously a corollary of the teaching of Rebirth that if you just look back over all the past aeons, all the times that you have been a human being, all the times that you had a body, and therefore a skeleton, all the skeletons that you have left behind in the course of that long journey would have piled up together, would make an enormous heap; this is just a reflection, as it were, to make one feel how long one has in the Samsara, and how we ought to be making some sort of effort to get out of it, that this business has been going on for a long time. Well, you can often feel that way even with regard to this life, that certain things have been going on for much too long and it is time you got out of them. Obviously if one doesn't accept rebirth literally, this particular comparison doesn't have any meaning, except in the sense I have just mentioned with regards to this life itself.

In this little work so far, there seems a much greater emphasis on heaven than there is in the Udana. Does anyone notice this? It is almost as though much of it is a collection more for the Upasakas than the monks and those who are aiming at Nirvana. There is quite a bit about heaven and rebirth and the good deeds that lead to heaven, though one cannot generalize too much because the contents are quite mixed, it does seem much like popular religion, almost, than the contents of the Udana, so far anyway.

[35]

S: Then on to five;

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One...

"Monks, I say there is no wicked deed that may not be committed by the man the human being, who has transgressed in one thing. What one thing? I mean the intentional uttering of false hood."

This is the meaning...

By him who hath one single thing transgressed,
By that same living man who speaketh lies
And for another world hath no regard
There is no wicked deed but may be done.

S: In other words if you can tell a lie you will do anything. Do you agree with this? A man who will tell a lie will do anything.

: It is certainly the gateway to doing anything.

: In the sense that you can do anything and lie about it.

S: No, that is not what it says. In other words, if you can tell a deliberate lie, well you are capable of breaking any other precept or doing any other evil deed. So is this to be taken literally? Does one agree with this? Why is telling a lie so important, or so significant at least? Why does one tell lies?

: Either because one is afraid or ..

S: Out of hatred or desire to injure someone through your lie, or out of greed for desire of wanting something? So if all those things are there, well presumably you will, you could get around to committing any other evil actions sooner or later. But I think it goes even further than that.

: It denies the whole spiritual life.

S: Well, it denies the whole social life, even more basic. If you lie to other human beings, what does it mean? You cut off all connections with them, you are a complete individualist, you only care about yourself.

: It is the polar opposite to the spiritual life.

S: Mm. If you lie to another person, you refuse to communicate with them, don't you?

: Habitual liars are really strange people because they tell lies all the time; they don't know why they are doing it any more.

[36]

S: Right this is, for instance, why I feel so strongly about being forced into situations where I am almost being compelled to act a lie, or when people would like me to act as though I believed certain things that I don't believe.

So if people won't allow you tell the truth, they are refusing to allow you to communicate with them. Do you see that? If people won't allow you to tell them the truth, or to act the truth, or to speak the truth, at least as you see it, that is, as it were, like saying " I don't want you to communicate ", I just want you to act in a particular way for my sake, for my satisfaction." So a lie cuts off communication between people, whether it is a spoken lie, or an active lie or an implied or suggested lie. So once communication, real contact with other human beings has broken off, well, it is as though you are capable of anything then. You are like some criminals, you are like some psychopath there is nothing human, no contact. So a lie is the simplest form of that.

: Living a lie is probably the most serious.

S: Right. Yes. And this is what you get in some religious movements: some people acting a lie, or living a lie and maybe some others demanding or even begging that they should do that; they don't care whether it is true or not, they just want to be able to believe that that is so. They say "Guru is God", or "Guru Maraji is God", so the whole thing is based on a lie. He is not God. It is very rarely based on a deliberate cynical lie; it is usually a lie of unmindfulness, if you can call it that. But there is certainly no attempt to discover the real truth, no self-questioning. Sometimes people try very hard to put me in the sort of situation - they come along and say "don't you think so and so is wonderful?" and I don't. But they are not just asking, do you think he is wonderful?" they are sort of demanding that I should say that he is wonderful, which I cannot. In other words they are wanting me to give my certificate just to bolster up what they are feeling or thinking about that particular person; they don't really want to know what I think. So it becomes a sort of struggle to speak the truth. It is as though it isn't easy. One isn't allowed to say what one thinks or feels; people don't want that very often. They want you to support their particular beliefs or imaginations or fancies and go along with those. And they are not even happy to discuss it, and try to find out what is the situation. Well maybe you are wrong, but they are not prepared to ... because they believe you are infallible too, so one infallibility [37] has got to guarantee another infallibility. You don't play your part and the whole thing falls to the ground. That is why I get very suspicious when I open these East & West papers and I find one Guru giving a certificate to another Guru, and all this mutual back scratching, I don't like the look of it or the sound of it at all.

: That was something that we were talking about like what happens when - what do Gurus that set themselves up as God figures, how do they feel about other Gurus that set themselves up as God figures? (laughter)

S: Well there are only two possibilities: one, that you are absolutely against them, or you completely agree and accept: Okay so he is god too, that is OK, provided he keeps to his district, and not come into mine.

: I mean do they really believe... otherwise they just deny

S: One advertiser, one manufacturer of car advises that this is the greatest car in the world;

another advertiser says this is the greatest car in the world; do they come to blows about it?

: But supposing they really believe that it is the greatest car in the world? They just don't believe that the other person is ...

S: Well they won't live - they'll say so if they are asked, but they won't try and attack the other person's factory, but it is basically the same business that they are into. If you lose faith in cars to that extent, well, you lose faith in their car too.

: I don't think that they believe it themselves at all.

S: Well maybe some of these Gurus also don't really believe it. Maybe they know in their heart of hearts that somewhere, it is all a bit of a racket. But sometimes you end up believing it yourself if you are not careful, if you have got hundreds and thousands of people around you all the time, saying that you are this or that, you end up believing it yourself. Just as some salesmen end up by believing their sales talk. They do. They get really convinced. That is a good salesman.

: I remember a Mr Natural cartoon, where he was being set up as a big Guru figure and he was really enjoying that, all the offerings and everything and they decided to take him out on a sort of parade and he was being carried and he came across another spiritual group and they were also parading their Guru and the disciples started [38] fighting and Mr Natural and the other Guru decided to pop of in the middle of this and escaped and went off saying "I can't take this" etc., (laughter) and to discuss just how naughty they could be.

S: So the intentional speaking of false hood is a very serious matter. It cuts off communication between people and one should be very careful about this, otherwise you end up in a little world of your own, just made up of lies.

: It comes back to how honest can one be in certain situations.

S: Well, one should have the will, the honesty all the time. If you just insist on reciting factual things which are not appropriate, that is not really communicating. You are not really getting across to the other person. So there must be a certain tact, and allowance of time. A sort of deliberate cold-blooded lie, deliberately intended to deceive and mislead, and maybe harm the other person is perhaps one of the very worse things one can do.

: It does stress deliberate here, doesn't it?

S: Yes, and this is one of the reasons, frankly why I don't want much to do with Mrs , because I found out some years ago, she told me certain deliberate lies to mislead me, and I found this out quite easily and I just prefer to keep aloof after that. But I know it was a long time ago, and she might have changed, but especially where the Friends are concerned, it isn't just me, it is the Movement - I prefer not to take any chances.

: It's strange that once you have found out somebody had been lying, it is very difficult to trust or to really believe them again after.

S: Well, I don't trust her, to tell you frankly.

: They have got to somehow prove their trust after that.

S: How can you, you cannot, unless you both go to a purely Transcendental level where all the past is wiped out, and you both know Mind to Mind directly, that is the only possibility. Otherwise in the purely human sense you cannot trust that person, and they can never prove, they can never restore what they have broken; that is impossible. You break someone's trust, you cannot put it together, except on the purely Transcendental level, where all misunderstandings are wiped out. OK, on to six.

[39]

(vi)

This was said by the Exalted One.

" Monks, if beings knew, as I know, the ripening of sharing gifts, they would not enjoy their use without sharing them, nor would the taint of stinginess obsess the heart and stay there. Even if it were their last bit, their last morsel of food, they would not enjoy its use without sharing it, if there were anyone to receive it"

S: This is especially applicable to monks who are begging for their food. Sometimes you may not get something, he may get something, or vice-versa. So within the monastic community, when it is subsisting on alms, sharing becomes particularly important. You should always share with your brother monks, especially with your teacher.

"In as much, monks, as beings do not know as I know the ripening of sharing gifts, therefore they enjoy their use without sharing them, and the taint of stinginess obsesses their heart and stays there".

This is the meaning:

If only beings knew - as said the mighty sage ...
The ripening of sharing gifts, how great the fruit thereof,
Putting away the taint of stinginess, with heart
Made pure within, they would bestow in season due
When great the fruit of charity on Ariyans.
And giving food as gift to those deserving much.
From man-state falling hence givers to heaven go.
And they, to heaven gone, rejoice and there enjoy
In the fullness of their heart's desire, the ripening
Of sharing gifts. the fruit of their unselfishness.

S: Yes, it is not just giving, it is sharing. When you give, even, you don't lose in a way. You also participate. Share what you have got. It is not so much a question of "you give and you no longer then have", though in a sense this is true to some extent. But just sharing what you have got, let everybody enjoy as far as possible.

: This reminds me of one of my favourite Biblical incidents from the New Testament which has been explained on a purely practical social level, that of the feeding of the Five Thousand. Somebody said that when people went out, they invariably took food with them; some might

have not, some might have, and all that Christ did was to say "Look, you have got some food, now if you all split it up, everybody will get something to eat. " Quite simple.

S: I'd rather believe in the miracle.

[40]

S: That is pooling rather than sharing. All right, lets go on to the last one of the day which is one of the most important.

(vii)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

"Monks, whatsoever grounds there be for good works undertaken with a view to rebirth, all of them are not worth one sixteenth part of that goodwill which is the heart's release; goodwill alone, which is the heart's release, shines and burns and flashes forth in surpassing them. Just as, monks, the radiance of all the starry bodies is not worth one sixteenth part of the moon's radiance that that shines and burns and flashes forth in surpassing them, even so, monks, goodwill ... flashes forth in surpassing good works undertaken with a view to rebirth.

Just as, monks, in the last month of the rains, in autumn time, when the sky is opened up and cleared of clouds, the sun, leaping up into the firmament, drives away all darkness from the heavens and shines and burns and flashes forth, even so, monks, whatsoever grounds there be for good works ... goodwill ... flashes forth in surpassing them.

Just as, monks, in the night, at time of day break, the star of healing shines and burns and flashes forth, even so, whatsoever grounds there be for good works undertaken with a view to rebirth, all of them are not worth one sixteenth part of that goodwill which is the heart's release; alone shines and burns and flashes forth in surpassing them"

S: This is quite significant, especially the placing of the sutta; so far we have been mainly hearing about good deeds, for quite a few suttas, about merit, about rebirth in heaven, about happiness in heaven, but now the Buddha is saying that all that is not worth one sixteenth part of the freedom of the heart which comes about by the intensive practice of the metta bhavana. That is a much higher state indeed. And it is a quite poetical passage, I think more poetical than the verse that follows. And it is one of the most famous sections of the Itivutakka, it is very frequently quoted, "one sixteenth part" is a very common expression, a digit, not a fraction, as it were. It is as though you are practising the metta, as it were, for its own sake, not for the sake of getting to heaven, though of course it does lead you thereto. But it is almost like a sort of very high state of samatha meditation, you are in a superconscious state. It may land you in heaven, but you are not concerned about that. You are just concerned with the state itself, for the spiritual path itself, or with just other people. All right, let's hear the verse.

[41]

Whoso doth make goodwill to grow
Boundless and thereto sets his mind
Seeing the end of birth's substrate,
In him the fetters are worn thin.

S: Mm, you see there is a difference here, " Whoso doth make goodwill to grow Boundless and thereto sets his mind Seeing the end of birth's substrate," here you see the metta bhavana is clearly suggested as leading at least part of the way to Nirvana itself, Which is not the usual Theravadin view.

If, with a heart unsoiled, one feel
Goodwill towards a single being,
He is a good man (just) by that,
Compassionate of heart to all
The Ariyan worketh boundless weal.

S: You need a bit of emphasis there. If, with a heart unsoiled, one feel goodwill towards a single being, He is a good man just by that. Compassionate of heart to all the Ariyan worketh boundless weal. If the ordinary person feels goodwill just towards a single being, love and kindness, he is a good man, just by virtue of that. Then think of the Ariyan in comparison, the Ariyan, the spiritually-developed person the stream winner up to the Arahant, he feels that sort of love and compassion towards everybody, and thereby brings about a tremendous amount of good, far more than you could possibly do, just by feeling in that way towards one person. Here the Ariyan seems almost like the Bodhisattva.

: I was going to say it seems to automatically imply the Bodhisattva ideal.

S: All right, lets go on.

Those royal seers who, conquering
The creature-teeming earth, have ranged
Round and about with sacrifice
(the sacrifice of Horse and Man,
The Peg-thrown Site, that called the Drink
Of victory, the Bolts withdrawn)
Such do not share one sixteenth part
Of the heart of good will made to grow,
Just as the radiance of the moon
Outshineth all the starry host.

[42]

S: Here is a reference to pre-Buddhist sacrifice, including even human sacrifices, those who perform all the sacrifices, they don't win a sixteenth part of merit of one who just practices the metta bhavana.

Who smites not nor makes others slay,
Robs not nor makes others to rob,
Sharing goodwill with all that lives,
He hath no hate for anyone.

S: This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so have I heard. So this quite important section stresses the importance of the metta bhavana, stresses even its spiritual value, which isn't always accepted by the Theravada; they agree that the metta bhavana is a good practice

but they regard it as only leading to a heaven state, not to Nirvana. But this passage seems to suggest the contrary, presumably because the metta bhavana leads to attenuation of the feeling of self. And it clearly says here that the fetters are worn thin by metta.. In a ways this verse is quite Mahayanistic, " who so doth make goodwill to grow Boundless and they to sets his mind, Seeing the end of birth's substrate in him the fetters are worn thin." This time of course during the life time of the Buddha, there was no development of Hinayana as opposed to Mahayana etc., but it seems that here we get a bit of what afterwards became the Mahayana.

Anyway we have come to the end of the ones, which is quite a good piece of work for one morning. Tomorrow we shall deal with the twos and most of the threes.

End of side one , tape 2.

End of tape 2.

[43]

[Tape 3, side 1]

II - THE TWOS

Chapter I (i)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, possessed of two things a monk in this very life lives painfully, harassed and tormented, and, when body breaks up, after death the ill-bourn for him may be looked for. What two things? Not guarding the door of the sense-faculties and lack of restraint in eating. Possessed of these two things ... the illbourn for him may be looked for.'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Eye, ear, nose, tongue and body, therewith mind ...
These doorways if a monk neglect to guard,
In eating unrestrained and uncontrolled
In the faculties of sense, he meets with pain,
With pain of body, pain of mind. Tormented
By body that burns and mind that burns, alike
By day and night such liveth painfully.

This meaning also saw spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

Sangharakshita: This whole question of guarding the sense-doors or the doors of the sense faculties, is very strongly stressed throughout the Pali literature. But what exactly does it mean? What does it imply? What is "guarding the doors of the senses"? How does one do it? Has anyone any ideas?

Aryamitra: Being mindful.

S: But in exactly what way?

Aryamitra: Sense his reactions.

S: Yes, sense his reactions. First of all seeing what stimuli are coming where, what impressions are coming where. Each of the senses is regarded as a sort of gate or door, through which impressions are constantly coming in. Mindfulness is like a watchman standing at the door and just seeing who is trying to get in, scrutinizing them, and letting in only those who have a right to enter and not those who haven't. So this "guarding of the doors of [44] the senses" is regarded as very very important, especially for the monk of course, or anyone who is trying to develop or evolve. You have to stand there, as it were, asking for the passes as it were "Have you got a pass? Are you allowed in?" Don't just let in everything that comes along.

And of course this applies to the mind. The mind is also such a door. Watch what thoughts come into the mind, whether you are going to allow them to stay, whether you are going to ask them to leave.

This is probably an aspect of spiritual training that is rather unfamiliar to the modern mind. It is very practical and very necessary. Also something that needs to be said is that when we live in the city, usually many more impressions or a greater number or variety of impressions come in than when you live in the country. So you tend to respond more, you are more stimulated; and therefore very often more restless. In the city, you should be even more cautious about what impressions are seeking admission.

Did you find this, Buddhadasa, when you were on retreat and came back?

Buddhadasa: Very much so. I am still finding it.

Aryamitra: Sometimes after a retreat, if you have been feeling very strong and detached, just going and seeing, say, shop windows and people just walking along. If you see it in a very detached way, you can see very often how you yourself are sucked into everything around you.

S: I had quite a horrible experience in Plymouth once, going into a supermarket. It was an enormous, mammoth Woolworths or something like that - an enormous food department, acres and acres. There were not many people, mostly elderly women. They seemed really just like pretas. The atmosphere was so heavy, so thick, it was really strange. I have noticed since, having become a bit more sensitive to these things since leaving London (where I was living for ten years practically), that in big stores particularly - food stores - there was a very definite kind of atmosphere which you do not seem to find elsewhere. It is just very heavy and thick. You can almost cut it with a knife. It seems to be because of the aura, as it were, of greed hanging around. That is really very [45] strange, and if you are not careful, you do become affected by this. And it is not something quick and hasty - to grasp like that. It is a slow, sluggish, reptilian sort of greed. Sometimes, queuing up at the exit, several times I have noticed the person in front, usually a stout, elderly woman. She looks at the bars of chocolate that are there to tempt you at the last minute. It is not a quick greed, it is a dull, stupid greed. She gazes for several minutes with a glazed look, and slowly - almost mechanically, but slowly mind you - a hand goes out and she grasps... It is really like a spider grasping

something, or a lizard or something of that sort - quite saurian. You notice this very much. If you are not careful, you are affected by it - the atmosphere of these places.

Chintamani: There is a shop in Crouch End that sells herbs and health foods and they pinned up a notice one day as you walked in. It said, "Beware! The consumer mentality!"

Buddhadasa: The point about coming out of retreat is that I did not experience it until about three weeks after coming out. It caught me by surprise. It was almost as though the momentum of the retreat carried me through the first few weeks.

S: You have your own aura, which protects you. You build up your own vibrations, which is quite literally like an aura. You are in a protective shell. Then gradually the shell is dissolved or broken or cracked. One has to be very careful of what impressions one allows in. This also applies by the way to reading matter. I do not think we usually realize. If we do read a newspaper, we must read it mindfully, otherwise we can be affected. When we read about robberies, crimes of violence and fighting, you can be affected by this. You can almost enjoy it, or at least participate in it.

Chintamani: The media generally.

S: The media generally. So these are all different aspects of guarding the doors of the senses. As I mentioned a few days ago, in the Buddha's day monks were asked to be particularly careful when going into the village, because there they encountered other [46] human beings, they encountered womenfolk, maybe taking their morning bath or something like that; their minds started being affected. If they did not watch the doors of their senses, certain impressions would gain admittance and there would be a reaction. It is all right to just look and see; but stand guard and not let any impressions really get in. This is also why one should be a bit careful about reading matter for instance. You cannot really take in the Buddhist scriptures when you have just been deep into a detective mystery or something like that. You are on a completely different wavelength. I think it is very significant that so many of the clergy, the Christian clergy, so we are told, regularly go to bed with a murder mystery. It is supposed to be one of the favourite forms of reading for the clergy. [Laughter]

Chintamani: Presumably if one has developed sraddha one does not have to guard the senses, one merely [indistinct]. Not to the extent of being totally blind except [indistinct]

S: One has to guard the doors of the senses until such time as you are at least a stream entrant, because you can always slip. This is the point that has to be borne in mind. You can always slip back, completely back, until such time as you really develop some insight. You can slip right back and give up everything until you really develop insight. So guarding the doors of the sense faculties and restraint in eating - this is particularly mentioned. Do you think this particularly bothers people nowadays? Do you think that people are particularly liable to fall prey to greed as regards food? Do you think it is common?

Jitari: It is quite common in the Friends.

S: You think so? Do you think it is particularly common? More than one might have expected?

Jitari: No; there is just one person sticking out in my mind.

S: I can think of the odd person here and there. I don't mean just the gourmet, who rather likes good food, but one who [indistinct]. You notice it on retreat: the person who always goes for a second or third helping. You cannot help noticing it. And big helpings, too.

[47]

Jitari: Not knowing when to stop. Some people are not satisfied. I know this in myself: I finish the meal and then looking around for something else to eat.

Aryamitra: In the "Survey" you mentioned a possibility, a comparison between eating and sex. It probably is not mentioned here because monks obviously do not indulge in sex, but it would take the substitute, i.e. eating.

S: I think you do find this. It is well known: I have mentioned this with young girls, at the adolescent stage, having presumably not yet got on to the sexual phase, in the romantic phase, they nibble at bars of chocolate. This can be quite neurotic.

Jitari: What stage comes after the sexual?

S: The asexual. I do not regard it as a stage really. I am becoming increasingly sceptical about all this sort of terminology. I do not think it is a stage you have "got to get through". There is no end to it. There is no end to every stage. You have just got to stop and go on to the next level. It is not going like this [gestures] where you have to go through the lower levels to get to the higher. No, it is like this [gestures] and each one extends infinitely in its own direction. You do not get on to this one by exploring this one more and more. When people say they have got to get through their sexual phase and exhaust that and then go on to the next, that is all rubbish. You can go on indefinitely, there is no end to it. Because it is the same thing over and over again. You have just got to stop and then get on to the next thing. You may stop after one or two turns of the wheel, or after several hundred turns of the wheel. It depends on your degree of insight and maybe on various psychological factors.

Aryamitra: But can you not gain insight by... I am a bit doubtful about this... I still feel that there is a danger of just stopping, thinking you have got over it, but in fact it is like a frustration.

[48]

S: In a way you never get over it; it is always functioning. One day you have to say, "Well, enough! Stop! On to the next thing to be done!" Some people can do this after a relatively limited experience; others only after a relatively extensive experience, which is usually learning the hard way - they have quite a few knocks.

Aryamitra: In a way, I feel that the insight is gained through being aware at that moment.

S. Yes, but you can have insight into any condition. You can have insight into your frustration and repression. You can have insight into any aspect of conditioned existence. It does not have to be healthy.

Aryamitra: I suppose what I am saying is something that you quoted, that you cannot put the brakes all on at one go.

S: Right, you cannot. But that is a rather different thing. The other extreme is, well, never put the brakes on at all, just let the car stop in its own time. Well, this particular car has an inexhaustible supply of petrol. It will never stop. You have to apply brakes. Obviously apply them judiciously, not just slam them on; but the car will not stop until you apply brakes. It is a car that just goes round and round. It is not a question of just working it through. This is why I think the analogy of the levels is better: the levels are not connected - you have jump as it were from one to another, really, in this sense. The levels of the spiritual path are connected, but these levels are not. You have to make a jump. You actually have to give up something. You cannot think, "Well, I am completely satisfied. My desire for that is completely quenched. I am now quite happy to pass on..." I think this hardly ever happens, with anybody. I think there is always an element of just "Stop!" and therefore of frustration. But you do it quite deliberately and mindfully. So therefore all this talk of working your way through it, or working your way through relationships, and sort of coming out at the other end you never do.

[49]

Jitari: In fact "suppression" need not be the dirty word that it has become.

S: No. Repression maybe is a dirty word; but not suppression, which means the quite conscious and deliberate holding of something in check and not allowing it to have its own way.

Chintamani: It puts me in mind of a terrible image of some really horrible, chintzy department store, with different floors all full of produce that are quite glittery and attractive but fall apart after two days of use. The whole store is full of this on different floors.

Aryamitra: We were talking yesterday about insight and perfect vision, and trying to clear up... I wonder if you would clarify that, because we read different terms you can use for insight, and perfect vision I felt was different from insight.

S: Yes. Insight and perfect vision are the same kind of thing. The word "insight" is generally used, especially nowadays, for the sort of initial flash, but samyak-drsti is the same thing developed and more steady. It is like when you have got an electric torch. You can flick it on for just an instant and then off; the insight is like that. Then you can flick it on again and again several times in succession. Then you can flick it on and it remains on, even though it may be quite a weak, slender beam: that is more like the samyak-drsti, the perfect vision.

Bodhisri: But in the text you said that insight has a permanent effect and weakens the poisons (S: Right.), but if I remember, in the lecture on Perfect Vision you say that it is possible to have an experience of perfect vision and yet it not affect your life. You mention certain...

Aryamitra: [Interrupts] That in fact you can forget it.

Bodhisri : ...some people have a spontaneous experience which doesn't...

[50]

S: Perhaps I was using the expression a bit loosely there. There are two kinds of spontaneous experience: one is spiritual, you could say, which is an experience of higher states of consciousness at dhyana levels but is not actually an insight experience, and does not relate to reality; the other kind of experience is more of the insight nature. So I think probably I was using, if I did use the expression, samyak-drsti - perfect vision - rather loosely to cover both that spiritual and the transcendental (for want of a better term) type of experience. So, if you were lucky enough to have an as it were spontaneous transcendental experience, you would never lose that; you might forget it with your conscious mind, yes, but the effects would be there. But in the case of the merely spiritual experience, if you can use that expression, it can be altogether lost. With the transcendental experience you may not be consciously paying attention to it but it is there, it has modified your being. It is all the time held in reserve, as it were. You can always build upon it.

Chintamani: Could you define again the difference between the spiritual and the transcendental?

S: Well, as I use these terms, the spiritual strictly speaking covers all the higher, superconscious states - the dhyanas, both lower and higher, right up to Nirvana itself. The transcendental pertains to Nirvana itself and to whatever directly leads to Nirvana or is an anticipation of it, as on the path of the Stream Entrant. The breaking of the fetters is a transcendental experience. It is permanent, it is brought about only by insight.

Chintamani: So one could almost say one is an experience, and one is an insight.

S: Right, one could say that; though of course you can speak also - it is a question of terminology - of an experience of insight.

Chintamani: Oh, I see You can have an experience without understanding.

S: You can, yes.

[51]

Dhammadinna: This is something we were talking about earlier, wasn't it?

: Yes.

S: This is why some people go quite far in meditation, in the sense of the superconscious levels, have wonderful, blissful experiences, and then it all comes to an end. They are just where they were before, except that they have got the memory of that. But even the memory can become so remote, and you can have a really very, very vivid experience and then a few days later you can almost question whether you had it at all or whether you didn't imagine it.

Aryamitra: And that is an experience without understanding or without insight?

S: You may or may not understand it, but there will not be any insight. Whereas an insight can be what they call "dry", that is to say without any experience at all - no ecstasy, no bliss, just a clean, straight seeing straight through it. And you may not be particularly gifted as

regards meditation even in the strict sense, with no higher experiences, but you do develop that insight and it does have its effect on your character and your whole being.

Dhammadinna: So insight or perfect vision changes you?

S: Permanently, at least to a degree.

Dhammadinna: Permanently, and affects the other [indistinct] to the path, and then you also perfect them into the path to maintain that [indistinct] influence.

S: Yes, exactly. That is exactly what happens.

Aryamitra: What I don't quite understand here is that if insight permanently changes you, then why do you have to do the other seven stages of the path, the stages of transformation?

[52]

S: There are degrees of insight.

Aryamitra: So you still keep that up and ...

S: As Dhammadinna says, if you cultivate consciously the other members or aspects of the path, that acts as a support for the further development of the perfect vision. If you develop say partial perfect vision, you have to work on it to develop it. It does not automatically grow; you still have to work. But because you have got the help of this insight itself, which is a tremendous thing, and also you have got the support of your increased cultivation of the other stages of the path, or rather limbs of the Path.

Jitari: So that essential, fundamental experience is being continually deepened.

S: Right. Yes, we can say that. And it is always there.

Chintamani: Could it be a useful practice to be constantly reminding oneself of that insight, consciously, and casting one's mind back to the situation under which one had it?

S: Oh, yes. This does help. If you dwell upon past experiences of that sort, that does help, surely. This is distinct from trying to recapture: you should not try to recapture, that is a different thing. But if when you are meditating, you just let your mind dwell on a previous experience and take it as the starting point for your present practice, that can be very good. That is not, as I have said, trying to recapture or have the same experience all over again [laughter]: that is quite different. It is just using the previous experience as a starting point, hm? You can really, if you are very tactful about it, almost recreate the experience it is so real if you just allow yourself to remember it, it so real that it becomes the present experience. Because it is not just in time as it were, it is there all the time; whereas with just an experience in the ordinary sense, it is left behind. But the insight experience, to use that expression, is never left behind, it is always there; it isn't just your past experience, it is your present experience too. So if you dwell upon the experience as [53] past, it comes as it were into the present too. Of course, being a sort of transcendental experience, if you have had that, it is no more really connected with the past than it is with the present. It is a little hole made

in time, through which you can peep.

Chintamani: Like developing a theme in a piece of music. Or is that a bad analogy?

S: It is a clever analogy. No, it is not a good analogy, I think.

[Pause] So if you do not practise guarding the doors of the senses, you will suffer. I think that is pretty obvious. Also, with regard to this whole question of restraint in eating, this is where the occasional fast helps - just so you realize occasionally how strong the craving to eat is. You are not going to die, you know, if you do not eat for a few days. You are not even going to suffer any real discomfort. We have got into such a habit of eating that if we do not have a nibble every two or three hours, something is wrong. So it is good to have the occasional fast - maybe just once or twice a year, even. That is almost enough, just to give you some experience, to give the stomach a rest - clean it out periodically - and give yourself an opportunity to watch the workings of greed and compulsive eating.

How many people have had a fast sometime or the other? Oh! All! That is very good.

Dhammadinna: [indistinct]. The feeling for compulsive eating doesn't last very long, just the first couple of days, I find, and then I'm just not interested in food at all.

S: Right. This is what I felt originally. It is as though when eating again you are putting some foreign substance into your mouth which is rather odd. As though it did not belong there.

Chintamani: All that going "brrr".

Dhammadinna: I think it is possible to fast for quite a long time actually.

[54]

S: Well, you read about political prisoners: some of them have been fasting for hundreds of days. Apparently a strong, healthy person can go up to three months without food.

Chintamani: Just liquids.

S: Well, not necessarily nourishing liquids. Water - you need water, you cannot do without water.

Chintamani: It is a technical problem, I believe one also needs to wash away the excess of digestive juices otherwise the stomach starts digesting itself and you can get ulcers.

Dhammadinna: If you are meditating as well ...

S: You are in quite different world. You feel much more refined and subtle, like a ghost but in a very nice, positive sort of way. And especially if you observe silence: that is even better. Has anyone done that?

Dhammadinna: Well, I fasted the second week of a retreat when I was a lot of silence.

S: It is best of all, I think, if there aren't other people around.

Buddhadasa: I did it on a retreat for seven days. I felt quite weird at the end. At the end of seven days, I thought, "Well, fourteen is probably the best time." I wasn't prepared to do it on my own for fourteen days. I wasn't quite sure of the consequences.

S: I think you should be very careful about going beyond seven days. At least have another Order member around; even if necessary a sensible doctor within reach. There can be complications. Preferably someone who understands something about fasting. Not an ordinary GP.

Aryamitra: You can get books on fasting.

[55]

S. That might be a good idea, rather than to do it just blindly just to know what is happening.

Chintamani: How to come off it.

S: Yes, that is the most important point of all - to come off it very slowly and gradually.

Bodhisri: What about a ten-day rice diet?

S: I just do not know. Some people speak about it very favourably; others not so favourably. And some say that the bad effects you experience are curative symptoms, because even on fast you get fever, which they say is the toxins being eliminated.

Bodhisri: I found it very good from there

S. What were your experiences from there, then?

Bodhisri. I felt fine. [S: Good.] [indistinct] craving [indistinct] and a very good walk

S: Good. It may be good if there were two or three Order members who familiarized themselves with the whole subject - the physiological side, especially with regard to diet and fasting and to have some really sound knowledge about it, not just old wives' tales and fancy theories. Really to know, hm? To know also what we don't know. It might be a good idea if people pooled their experiences with regard to such things as fasting, wrote a short account: not so much the spiritual experiences as the physiological ... Any point that you noticed that you think ought to be attended to or a mistake that is likely to be made. [Pause] And also one experiences usually a great mental clarity when one is fasting. [Long pause]

Let us carry on to sutra II, which is basically the same I think.

(ii)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, possessed of two things a monk in this life lives happily, unharassed, free from torment, and, when body breaks up, [56] after death the happy bourn for him may be looked for. What two things? The guarding of the door of the sense-faculties and moderation in

eating. Possessed of these two things ... the happy bourn for him may be looked for.'

This is the meaning ...

Eye, ear, nose, tongue and body, therewith mind, ...
These doorways if a monk keep guarded well,
In eating well restrained and well controlled
In the faculties of sense, he meets with ease,
With ease of body, ease of mind. With body
That burneth not, with mind that burneth not,
By day and night such live happily.

This meaning also ...

S: So this is the positive counterpart of the previous sutra. I don't think there is anything special we need to say about that.

Go on to the next two, which are also negative and positive in the same way. Just read them both straight through, then we will talk about them.

(iii)

This was said by the Exalted One

'Monks, these two things sear (the conscience). What two things? Herein, monks, a certain one has done no lovely deed, has done no profitable deed, has given no shelter to the timid; he has done evil, cruel, wrongful deeds. At the thought: I have done evil, he is tormented. These are the two things which sear (the conscience).'

This is the meaning ...

Guilty of doing wrong with body or speech
Or thought or whate'er else is reckoned sin;
Not having done a profitable deed,
But having done full many an evil one,
When body breaks up, he, the weak in wisdom,
In purgatory rises up again.

This meaning also ...

(iv)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, these two things sear not (the conscience). What two things? Herein, monks, a certain one has done a lovely deed, has done a profitable deed, has given shelter to the timid; he has done no evil, cruel, wrongful deeds. At the thought: I have done a lovely deed, he is not tormented. At the thought: I have done no evil, he is not tormented. These are the two things, monks, which sear not (the conscience).'

[57]

This is the meaning ...

Giving up doing wrong with body or speech
Or thought or whate'er else is reckoned sin,
Not having done unprofitable deeds,
But having done full many a goodly deed,
When body breaks up, being strong in wisdom,
He in the heaven-world doth rise again.

This meaning also ...

S. Wisdom here seems to be wisdom not in the sense of prajna but in the quite ordinary, more mundane sense. Sear - that is understood as meaning sear the conscious, sear one - tapaniya, burn. The suggestion is that one experiences remorse. One experiences remorse thinking about the good deeds one could have done but didn't, and also thinking about the bad deeds one was able to do and actually did. And then again, if one can reflect on good deeds done and bad deeds not done then there is no searing, there is no such painful experience of remorse. Do people actually find this, do you think?

Aryamitra: Occasionally.

S: It is rather different from feeling guilty in the Christian sense. You are just sorry at the missed opportunity, and sometimes you do miss opportunities, or you do make a mistake, or you do fail, or you do something that later you look back on and you think, "Well, I just shouldn't have done that, that was a real mistake," and you feel really sorry for that. So this is what is referred to here, that sort of burning or remorse. You do not feel guilty, but certainly you feel remorse and regret.

Dhammadinna: Is that what one feels in the Confession of Faults in the Puja?

S: Right, especially if it is irrevocable, if it something that once done, it cannot be undone, like when there is a misunderstanding maybe with another person. There is nothing you can do about it: you have committed that mistake and you cannot undo it, it is then that you feel really upset. or you had an opportunity of doing some good skilful thing and you didn't, and that opportunity is not coming again; you have missed it once and for all, and you really feel sorry about that. It may be an [58] opportunity of benefiting yourself or of benefiting somebody else, but you didn't do it. You feel it especially if someone dies with some misunderstanding unresolved. "I could have done it if I had taken a bit of trouble, I could have cleared it up, but now that person is dead and gone." That misunderstanding is as it were for ever now. It can never be altered .

Bodhisri: Often it is quite difficult to tell what is a good deed because you go and do something which you think is good and it just harms the other person if he is not ready for it.

S: I think these verses refer to cases which are more clear-cut; where quite definitely you knew it was good, but you did not do it, or you knew it was bad but you did it nonetheless, and that sometimes happens too.

I think probably nowadays, and within the Friends, I think people are more likely to suffer from lost opportunities. I don't think anyone is going around doing anything violently bad that they need to feel remorse over but it is more being bad by default. There is an absence of positive good action. I think in the Friends generally, our goodness, such as we have, more often too much takes the form of not doing what is unskilful rather than doing very positively and vigorously what is skilful. In other words it is a rather anaemic sort of virtue very often, not very heroic. Do people feel this, or not? In the movement generally? There is not enough of positive skilful things going on?

Chintamani: Not so much now.

S: Not so much now.

Chintamani: I am thinking specifically of newcomers coming along. There are people sitting around not exactly being nasty to them but not saying anything at all. I've done that, and been rather fragile and uncommunicative.

S: Well, we do not want too many pieces of priceless porcelain standing around, but there is a stage when if one is feeling fragile, one can't pretend that one isn't, but we need a few people who can be strongly and positively skilful in thought and in [59] action. It is good for them. "Fragile" is perhaps a stage, it is not something to cultivate, but it is also something not to prevent.

Aryamitra: Maybe reflecting on the positive aspects of the precepts would be better, because there also they seem to be positive actions rather than abstaining or just not doing something.

S: The traditional, the classical view is that when you stop doing unskilful actions there is a tremendous amount of skilful energy available and you are doing all sorts of skilful actions almost automatically. But with us it does not seem to work like that always, we stop doing the unskilful actions and we just sort of sag then with nothing to keep us going once we have given up the unskilful actions and thoughts. There is not this release of positive skilful energy and activity very often. It may be just the general conditions of life, especially in the city, and everything being a bit wearing, people often being rather tired, having to fight off influences so much of the time.

Chintamani: A feeling that I have had on occasions is ... when I have been feeling positive I felt a bit smothering, especially at the Centre.

S: Smothering?

Chintamani: Yes. I was quite conscious of the fact that I could ... It was not anything very concrete, it wasn't reasoned; it was just a feeling of being smothering, all over them, when they didn't particularly want that.

Aryamitra: It comes back to what we were saying a couple of days ago, about [being] frightened to show positive feelings ...

S: That is also true.

Aryamitra: ... because they are not accepted.

Bodhisri: I noticed that at work, always when I felt a bit depressed people liked me more than when I was very happy, they sort of disliked me. I came down to their level.

[60]

S: They also felt sorry for you?

Bodhisri: Yes; they liked it.

S: I think this does happen, yes.

Dhammadinna: People a mutual ... whatever you call it, exchange of problems .

S: Negative rap. Rapping about this, that and the other. Grumbling, grouching.

Bodhisri: More human or something.

Chintamani: When you are happy there is nothing really to talk about .

S: There are always some people who get quite irritated with healthy, happy folk, and think they are rather a drag, rather crude and insensitive.

Dhammadinna: Waiting for them to fall into a depression.

S: Yes, so that they can rush off and smother them. [Laughter]

Dhammadinna: You see that at the Centre sometimes. You see people standing in the room and the two people with the most problems will gravitate towards each other and talk about them.

S: Well, that is good in a way. Perhaps they are not really talking about them; or just indulging each other, helping each other to indulge.

Anyway, let us pass on. Number v.

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, possessed of two things a person is cast into purgatory according to his deserts. What two things? Wrongful habit and wrongful view. Possessed of these two things a person...

[61]

This is the meaning ...

A mortal having these two things,
Wrongful habit and wrongful view,

When body breaks up, weak in wisdom,
In purgatory rises up.

This meaning also ..

S: Let us have the next verse too, which is the positive counterpart.

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, possessed of two things a person is put into heaven according to his deserts. What two things? Good habit and good view. Possessed of these two things a person...

This is the meaning ...

A mortal having these two things,
Habit that's good and view that's good,
When body breaks up, strong in wisdom,
Doth rise up in the heaven world.

This meaning also ...

S: The point that needs to be noticed here is the importance given to perfect views or right views. It does matter what you think and what your in a sense opinions are, your views, your philosophy. A wrong philosophy can really lead you astray, and a right philosophy, as it were, can help you follow the right path.

Chintamani: Do people follow a philosopher?

S: There is an implicit philosophy, but here something more than that. It is a philosophy that has reached a self-conscious stage, of a consciously-held conviction. This is the dristi, whether mithya-dristi or samyak-dristi. This is explicitly formulated, and therefore becomes stronger in a way. So wrong views, or false philosophy can be a great hindrance to treading the path, to one's personal development. We have seen this ourselves in the case of some of our famous psychological mithya-dristi, like this or that is a stage you have got to get through, when it may be simply an indulgence you have got to give up. Well, don't we see this?

Voices: Yes.

[62]

S: It is like the squirrel, you know, in the wheel, or the mouse in the wheel. It is as though the squirrel or the mouse says, "Well, this is something I have just got to get through. I cannot stop, I have got to go on, you know. And when I have done a few thousand miles, I shall just come to the end." But no, it is the same thing going round and round, it is the same pattern repeating itself again and again. You are not exploring or extending, you are just repeating. The frills may differ, but the basic pattern is exactly the same.

Buddhadasa: What is the attraction of the philosophical side of development, as opposed to the spiritual? A lot of people do seem to have... almost be attracted to ..

S: Well, people have minds, and they want to understand, and they look to philosophy, or to a philosophy, to give them an understanding of what it is all about, what life is all about, why they are here. This is basically what people look for in a philosophy when they come to the more conscious level or conscious question.

Buddhadasa: I think I used "philosophy" there when I meant "psychology", in fact. Still, I take your point.

S: Philosophy is a system of thought, a reasoned account or a reasoned explanation of things, which appeals to the intelligence. Of course, in a way, there is nothing like philosophy in Buddhism, in the Western sense of the word philosophy.

Chintamani: What is the distinction?

S: Well, in the case of Buddhism there is the Buddha, the Enlightened One, who sees things in a certain way because he is enlightened, and communicates what he sees and encourages others to try to see things in the same way and on the basis of what he has said. Out of that enlightened consciousness later thinkers, some of whom were enlightened, some of whom were not, have tried to build up a systematic way of looking at the Universe.

[63]

Buddhadasa: So the philosophy came later; it was never anything to be followed?

S: Well, originally it came, when it did come just as a help to following the spiritual path. But in the West, philosophy has been a search for reality itself; whereas in the case of Buddhism, you start with reality, because the Buddha has realized that; that is the difference.

Another little hold-up. [Noises of activity.] Save your jewels of wisdom until it is working properly!

Chintamani: That is as much as I can do: it is falling apart. Impermanence is catching up on us.

S. Right-ho.

So, it is important what views you hold. And of course quite a lot of people are unwilling to think consistently and hard. In a way that doesn't matter; but there are so many philosophical views and opinions and beliefs and ideas drifting around, and they are affected or influenced by one or another - you know, they do not guard the doors of the mind in that respect - and sometimes they act according to one and sometimes they act according to another; so, often there is no consistency in what they are doing or practising. So, it is almost better not to have any sort of views; suppose someone coming along to the Friends just having a general sort of faith in Buddhism, and just getting on with your practice and not bothering about philosophy. Unless you are the sort of person who cannot help asking questions and needs, or demands at least, the answer to those questions; but not many people are like that. But you can get by without philosophy - I mean, in the Western sense. Becoming involved with Buddhism isn't accepting a philosophy; it is becoming involved with a spiritual community and participating in its life and activity, basically, which may or may not include philosophising. If someone says, "What is the philosophy of the Friends", say, "Come along and I will show you" or

"Come along to a retreat and you will see!" But you cannot expound it on the spot, even if you have decided which particular school of Buddhist thought you happen to favour.

I don't think we have many philosophers in the group as a matter of fact. And I don't think it matters particularly, not at this stage.

[64]

That is different from an intelligent understanding of the dharma. Everyone should have an intelligent understanding of the broad general principles, but not everybody needs to go into Buddhist philosophy. And we know of course that the Buddha discouraged pure speculation, mere speculation.

While I think of it, I think I gave a wrong list of the five hindrances yesterday. Did anyone notice that? There was a mistake in the last one. I think I did. I suddenly recollected it yesterday in the evening.

Dhammadinna: Poisons or hindrances?

S: Hindrances. The poisons were all right, but the hindrances I just want to check up on.

Chintamani: Craving, ill-will, sloth and torpor, hurry and flurry, and ignorance.

S: No, not ignorance. Doubt. Doubt is the fifth hindrance.

Buddhadasa: What page is this on?

S: I don't remember which page of text it relates to. Someone should have spotted that. You have been in lectures, haven't you? I was sitting quietly there yesterday evening and I suddenly thought of it. They are in the Survey.

Bodhisri: What is the Pali name of those hindrances?

S: All five?

Bodhisri: Yes.

S: First of all is karma.

Bodhisri: Yes, but all together?

S: Oh, nivarana, pancha nivarana. Literally, it means coverings. I think you will find it in the Survey. Yes, you will, page 154.

[65]

Chintamani: Is that the Pali?

S: It is both, it is the same in Pali and Sanskrit. Some words are the same in both languages.

Chintamani: I imagine you could really do an interesting play on words if you were a Sanskrit

scholar.

S: So the importance of cultivating samyak-drishti and avoiding the various mithya-drishtis. I think we shall have to have a seminar on the mithya-drishtis sometime or the other. I mean, within the Order, and clear up... I think meanwhile people should make a list or at least a note of what they think may be or perhaps definitely are mithya-drishtis and how they come to be mithya drishtis and why, and what effect they do have on practice if one takes them seriously.

Bodhisri: How do you spell that?

S: Mithya-drishti? This is the Sanskrit form: mithya-drishti.

Buddhadasa: I think the most common is just psychological versus ...

Jitari: Well, it used to be around, but not so much now, just it's all in the mind which is an excuse for...

S: Well, perhaps it is a good idea to ask oneself, well, if you take the particular view - assuming you do not know yet whether it is mithya or samyak - literally and act upon it, what happens, or does not happen? Just ask yourself that.

Bodhisri: Is this the opposite of samyak-drishti?

S: Yes, broadly speaking. Yes; to the extent that something that is samyak can have an opposite.

[Pause] All right, then; on to vii.

(vii)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, a monk who is void of zeal and unscrupulous cannot grow to perfect insight, cannot grow to nibbana, cannot grow to win the unsurpassed freedom from the bond. But a monk who is zealous and scrupulous can grow to perfect insight, can grow to nibbana, can grow to win the unsurpassed freedom from the bond.

This is the meaning ...

Void of zeal, unscrupulous,
Sluggish, lacking in energy ...
Who is full of sloth and torpor,
Shameless and irreverent ...
Such a monk cannot become
Fit to reach supreme insight.

But heedful, in his musing shrewd,
Ardent, scrupulous and zealous,
Cutting the bond of birth-and-eld,

In this very life (on earth)
One may reach insight supreme.

This meaning also ...

S: So here the virtues stressed are zeal and scrupulousness. It does not give the Pali word for scrupulousness. What do you think it means?

: [indistinct]

S: No, the broad meaning is thoroughness, conscientiousness, attention to detail. Zeal is of course virya, energy, vigour. But also scrupulousness is important. This seems to be a virtue rather neglected nowadays. There is certainly not enough of it in the Friends. You know, scrupulousness, thoroughness, conscientiousness, attention to detail, doing things properly, with full mindfulness and energy. There is a tendency to let things go, let things look after themselves. I suspect this is connected with a mithya-drishti. Which one do you think it could be connected with?

Bodhisri: Things will look after themselves.

S: Things will look after themselves, yes.

Bodhisri: Divine providence.

[67]

S: Right, yes. Well, Buddhists do not actually go so far as to refer to providence, I hope; but yes, it will look after itself, it will all come out all right in the end.

Dhammadinna: [indistinct]

S: Go with the flow. Let things happen; you are stopping things from happening

Buddhadasa: It reminds me of... Once in a lecture you talked about disciples or new disciples given the task of sweeping a room.

S: Ah, yes; right. And being inspected afterwards, and dusting furniture and things like that.

Buddhadasa: ...there were at three sorts of people: the greedy.

S: Ah, that is the Visuddhi Magga. That is something else. I have referred to both. The first was my friend [T'ien Chow] the Vietnamese monk, told me that in Vietnam, where it is half zen, half hsin, they give the young monks the job of dusting. It is care.

[Tape 3, side 2]

S: It is like the very worthy Ceylon monk, who accompanied me on my trips among the untouchables, and was warning them against the dangers of wealth and things like that, and they are all mostly paupers!

Maybe there are certain mithya-drishtis that are specifically English. Do you see this?

Bodhisri: Yes.

S: Which would you say are particularly English ones? Or ones you notice...

Bodhisri: Or maybe American, all these you mention sound very American to me.

[68]

S: What, "Go with the flow", and "Things will look after themselves"?

Bodhisri: Yes, and "Let things happen".

S: Right. Fins don't have these. Well, that's very good. Not even in Buddhistic or Oriental circles.

Bodhisri: Maybe this entra... - er...

S: Anthraposophy?

Bodhisri: Yes, there is this Steiner thing. But they are more elderly people. Fins tend to think more that "You can't be happy without money," and ...

S: Well, up to a point you can't. There is a certain meaning in that. But money doesn't make you happy.

Bodhisri: Oh, they think it does.

S: And if they are not happy, they simply think "Well, it is a question of we do not have enough money: we just need some more.

Bodhisri: Or everybody has got to have the equal amount of money.

S: In India there are certain mithya-drishtis which are very strong. For instance, "It is all in God's hands" and "God will look after it". This is very common among Hindus. "What can we do?" For instance, even things like this: I was once entertained by quite a poor man, and he said, "Look, I have got all these children. I cannot afford to have them [indistinct]." He had I think ten or twelve children. He said, "But what is it to do with me? It is nothing to do with me; it is all God's gift. I had nothing to do with it." [Laughter] And he really believed that, that it was nothing to do with him. They just came from heaven as though God gave them. He said, "It is nothing to do with me.

Chintamani: Handy excuse.

[69]

S: He seemed genuinely to believe that. He wasn't just rationalizing it. It seemed to be his conviction.

Chintamani: What did you say to that?

S: I don't remember. I didn't say anything, I suppose. What can you say? If you had denied it, he would have felt you weren't a very holy sort of person, and you would at once have lost all influence with him.

Anything further here? The verse is a bit more expansive; not only void of zeal and unscrupulous, sluggish, lacking energy, shameless and irreverent, such a monk cannot become fit to reach supreme insight.

Buddhadasa: Depressing, reading all this!

S: But heeding, in his musing shrewd. You see, that is rather interesting. A shrewd meditator. Skilful. Yes, I feel this a little: the Itivuttaka seem to have a much stronger negative feeling.

Bodhisri: Sounds more like the Bible to me.

S: It doesn't sound like that to me. But there is a hint of a threat almost of punishment, as distinct from just consequences.

Bodhisri: That is what I meant, the punishment sounds like the Bible.

S: Whereas you don't have it in the Udana at all. It is a very subtle sort of switch over from saying, "Well, if you do this, that will happen" and saying, "You mustn't do this because that will happen and you will really suffer and you will be punished," and going on to great detail about it. There is a difference. And we almost see that as between the Udana and the Itivuttaka. It is as though the Itivuttaka represents a later stage of development.

Dhammadinna: Where does the word "eld" come from?

[70]

S: Eld? It is Anglo-Saxon, I suppose. "Oldness." I hope Bodhisri is writing down all these archaic English words. You mustn't use them in your lectures. [Amusement] You mustn't say things like, "I am looking forward to eld."

Bodhisri: It is a Swedish word actually, but it means "friar". I don't think it can have any connection.

S: Well, let us get on to and see whether we have anything more cheerful. I think viii and ix together. Have we come all the way along again?

(viii)

This was said by the Exalted One

'Monks, this Brahma-life is not lived for the sake of deception, for the sake of cajoling folk,

Aryamitra: [Breaks off] "Cajoling", is that?

S: What would you say cajoling meant?

Chintamani: Buttering up.

S: Buttering up; getting things out of them by flattering.

Buddhadasa: Gentle bullying.

S: Yes, gentle bullying. Coaxing, in a rather negative sort of way.

[Continues reading]

for the sake of gain, honour, reputation and profit, with the idea of "let folk know me as such and such." No, monks, this Brahma-life is lived for the sake of self-restraint and abandoning.'

This is the meaning ...

For self-restraint and abandoning,
Heedless of what men say, this Brahma-life
Did that Exalted One proclaim as going
Unto the plunge into nibbana ('s stream).

This is the way whereon great souls, great seers
Have fared; and they who, as the Buddha taught,
Attain to that will make an end of Ill,
E'en they who what the Teacher taught perform.

This meaning also ...

[71]
(ix)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, this Brahma-life is not lived for the sake of deception, for the sake of cajoling folk, for the sake of gain, honour, reputation and profit, with the idea of "let folk know me as such and such." No, monks, this Brahma-life is lived for the sake of seeing into things and understanding them.'

This is the meaning ...

For seeing into things and understanding,
Heedless of what men say, this Brahma-life
Did that Exalted One proclaim as going
Unto the Plunge into nibbana ('s stream).

This is the way whereon great souls, great seers
Have fared; and they who, as the Buddha taught,
Attain to that will make an end of Ill,
E'en they who what the Teacher taught perform.

This meaning also ...

S: We also notice that most of the verses in the Itivuttaka are not directly attributed to the Buddha. It is the Buddha's meaning, versified. And even some of the prose seems to be not the Buddha's own words, but a redaction of what he says. So perhaps we are at a somewhat later stage. Perhaps this little anthology was put together after the Buddha's parinirvana and no doubt includes some quite ancient material, including the words of the Buddha, and also some sort of redactions or editions coming rather later.

Chintamani: Is that possibly an explanation for the rather negative tone of the thing?

S: Possibly. I get the impression that it was compiled by a rather conscientious sort of monk, with this very definite emphasis on not doing this and not doing that; or maybe a group of monks. But again, there are some very beautiful and some very positive teachings here and there. For instance, we had that quite beautiful passage on metta. [Pause]

Perhaps we can say that in the Itivuttaka there is a slightly more "monastic", in inverted commas, type of Buddhism that we get, which later on became fully-fledged in the Theravada school. Even though in the Udana there are monks, in the sense of people wandering about in rags and begging, they are not monks in quite the later sense. [Pause]

[72]

Just as a point of interest, in the text the word mahata is used, mahamsa, which is very uncommon in Pali texts. Obviously something left over from the archaic period. In later Buddhism they certainly avoided this. The great soul, the mahatma.

Right. Pass on to the next - number x - which contains something quite interesting.

(x)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, possessed of two things in this very life a monk lives much at ease, nay, much in happiness, is stoutly bent on the ending of the cankers. What two things? Strong emotion on occasions for emotion and, being thrilled thereby, the making of a strong effort. Possessed of these two things a monk lives much at ease ...

This is the meaning ...

One who hath wisdom should be strongly thrilled
At thrilling times. A monk discreet and ardent
Should thoroughly examine things by wisdom.
So dwelling ardent, living a life of peace,
And not elated, but to calmness given,
He should attain the ending of the cankers.

S : The interesting point here is this word sangveda, which means a very strong thrill of positive emotion of a spiritual nature. This isn't much stressed in later Theravada Buddhism, but it does appear in some of the early texts and it appears here. That this strong spiritual

emotion is a good thing. It is when you are thrilled or affected by something - especially when you understand something or see something, when your enthusiasm is aroused. So it is right to see this - or feel this - on the occasions when it is appropriate.

Bodhisri: Is it the same thing as priti?

S: It is very much akin to priti, yes, but it has more of a suggestion of insight and understanding. It is a sort of emotion that shakes the whole being. Priti is a thrill of joy of a purely meditative type, as it were, but the sangveda seems to go further than that and be even more, as it were, devastating, though it is a positive experience. A "strong emotions, sangveda on occasions for emotion and being thrilled thereby, the making of a strong effort." It is very difficult to make that strong effort in a real sense unless there is this tremendous powerful spiritual emotion behind it: otherwise it is too forced. But when you have that emotion [73] behind the effort, the effort becomes easy almost, it is natural, spontaneous. So sangveda is a very important concept, even though rather lost sight of later on. It is a shattering sort of spiritual emotion.

We are at the end of the chapter, so let us pause there for a little refreshment.

[Tape stops and restarts] [During the break, the following sutta was presumably read: i

This was said by the Exalted one, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks, two trains of thought much occupy the Wayfarer, the Arahant who is rightly awakened, - the thought of serenity and the thought of seclusion. Monks, the wayfarer delights in and enjoys doing harm to none. This same Wayfarer, monks, is much occupied by such a train of thought as this: By this way of living I do no harm to anything at all, be it movable or fixed. Monks, the Wayfarer delights in and enjoys seclusion. This same Wayfarer, monks, who delights in and enjoys seclusion, is much occupied by such a train of thought as this: Whatsoever is unprofitable has been left behind.

Wherefore, monks, do ye also dwell delighting in and enjoying doing harm to none. If ye dwell so delighting, so enjoying ... this same train of thought will much occupy you: By this way of living we do no harm to anything, be it movable or fixed. Monks, do ye also delight in and enjoy seclusion. If ye so dwell ... this same train of thought will much occupy you: What is unprofitable? What has not been left behind? What have we left behind?'

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Two trains of thought do occupy the mind
Of the Wayfarer, the Awakened One,
Who beareth things that others cannot bear, ...
Serenity (the thought he spake of first),
Thereafter was seclusion uttered next.
Dispeller of the darkness, gone beyond,
That mighty seer who hath won mastery,
Freed of the cankers, even he who was
Vessantara, set free by slaying craving,
That sage, I say, here wearing his last body, ...
By conquering Mara eld hath conquered.

As on a crag on crest of mountain standing
A man might watch the people far below,
E'en so does he, in wisdom fair, ascending,
The seer of all, the terraced heights of truth, [74]
Look down, from grief released, upon the nations
Sunken in grief, oppressed with birth and age.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.]

S: ... noteworthy that in the prose the word "wayfarer" - that is, tathagata - doesn't seem to refer exclusively to the Buddha himself. It is as though this passage reflects a stage when the word tathagata, even the word Buddha, was used with reference to the arahant as such - the individual enlightened person. So it isn't just himself the Buddha is talking about, but anyone of high spiritual development. "He is occupied with two trains of thought," as it were, "the thought of serenity and the thought of seclusion." Let us see what 'serenity' is in Pali. It doesn't say, unfortunately. Anyway, serenity seems to be very clear, but seclusion is not. Seclusion for some reason they give the Pali of that in the index: it's parviveka. Viveka means separate; parviveka extreme separateness, aloofness, holding aloofness from. It is not seclusion in the sense of shutting yourself away from, but being detached from. It is rather like what you were talking about, Buddhadasa, earlier on, when you came out of retreat, for the first few weeks you experienced that parviveka - you were separate from, detached from. You were not part of, even though you were in the midst of it. You were 'insulated from'. This is what is meant here. Seclusion in that sense - not tucking yourself away in a quiet little corner necessarily.

So the spiritually enlightened person is much occupied with the thought of serenity and the thought of seclusion, and "he delights in and enjoys doing harm to none. This same wayfarer, monks, is much occupied by such a train of thought as this: By this way of living I do no harm to any thing at all, be it moveable or fixed. Monks, the wayfarer delights in and enjoys seclusion. This same wayfarer, monks, is much occupied by such a train of thought as this: whatever is unprofitable is left behind." He is secluded from, detached from, aloof from, all unprofitable states of mind, all unskilful states of mind. That is the real seclusion, not the physical seclusion - that follows, but the real seclusion is mental, even spiritual. Sometimes it is rendered as aloofness, though that could be misunderstood.

Chintamani: It is somehow not a withdrawal?

[75]

S: Not a withdrawal. But then again, what does one mean by withdrawal? Why shouldn't one even withdraw? Provided it is mindful? And provided it is a profitable thing to do? Even cut off communication: if communication is not helping, if it isn't real communication. Very often withdrawal is negative; but it can be a very positive thing to withdraw from a situation. You can do it positively. One mustn't assume that withdrawal is always negative. I know one or two people in the Friends who have felt this: been made to feel or given to understand that any withdrawal is a negative thing. Everybody ought to be mucking in, happily, and seeing a lot of one another and being rather sociable, friendly, communicative. Well, that is true; but then withdrawal can be equally valid, at least with some people, provided it is a positive and skilful thing and not just a reactive or defensive thing.

This thought, that the way you are living is not doing harm to anybody, this is a source of delight. It is quite a strong thing, and in the East, to someone following the more or less traditional pattern of monastic life, it is possible. It is very difficult for us to feel that here, that, "following my way of life I am not doing harm to anybody." We are usually doing some harm, directly or indirectly. But if one isn't, well, reflect upon it and realize it, that this is what is happening, that you are very lucky. You may be very skilful; you are not doing harm to anybody just by being alive in the world. Especially if you are following a means of livelihood which isn't antisocial in any way. It is a very good thing to reflect on it, to feel happy about it.

What about these verses? Any queries on them?

The first five lines seem to summarize the prose, but then the compiler or the author of the verses flies off at a tangent and starts praising the Buddha. "Dispeller of the darkness, gone beyond; that mighty seer who has won mastery; freed of the cankers, even he it was, Vessantara, set free by slaying cravings. That sage I say, here wearing his last body, conquering Mara, Hell doth conquer.." Vessantara is the king that the Buddha was supposed to have been in his last birth before the one in which he became a Buddha - the king who gave away wife and family, you may remember wife and two children. This was a sort of supreme expression of generosity. And then the poet further says, "As on a crag on crest of mountain standing, a man might watch the people far below, even [76] so does he in wisdom fair, ascending the seer of all, the terraced heights of truth look down from grief released upon the nation sunken in grief oppressed with birth and age." The Buddha is as it were up there on a mountain, looking down compassionately on all those who are wandering below. It is a quite noble image, but as it has to be translated into English it gets very involved.

Chintamani: It is an image rather like Avalokitesvara.

S: Right; yes.

: That's really nice, because then it shows that aspect of the Buddha.

S. Right; yes. There is a note that "looks down" is etymologically connected with the root of the name Avalokitesvara. Avalokitesvara is the one who looks down, so there is that sort of association. It is as it were the Buddha as Avalokitesvara.

Any further query on those verses? Right, on to ii then.

(ii)

This was said by the Exalted One ..

'Monks, two dhamma-teachings of the wayfarer arahant, a rightly-awakened one, take place one after the other. What two? "Look at evil as evil" is the first dhamma-teaching. "Seeing evil as evil, be disgusted therewith, be cleansed of it, be freed of it" is the second dhamma-teaching.'

These two dhamma-teachings of the Wayfarer take place one after the other.

This is the meaning ..

Of the Wayfarer, the awakened one,
Who hath compassion on all things that be,
Behold the way of speech and teachings twain:
'Evil behold for what it is, and then
Conceive disgust for it: with heart made clean
Of evil, ye shall make an end of Ill.'

This meaning also ...

S: Here he in fact [indistinct] seeing and what results from seeing .

S: In a way it is a rather negative formulation of the teaching, but it is quite down to earth and realistic. Just seeing within [77] your own mind what is unskilful, just seeing it as unskilful. Recognizing it, and just getting rid of it, completely. In one way, from a certain point of view, the Dharma is no more than that. But you notice the positive touch too: the Buddha is referred to as "the one who hath compassion on all things that be", which links up a little with the previous sutta when he is looking down. There has not been much reference so far in either of these works to the Buddha as the Compassionate One, but here there is a clear reference. "The Wayfarer, the Awakened One who hath compassion on all things that be." So this is his teaching, out of compassion, to recognize evil for what it is, to get disgusted with it, and then to get rid of it.

Chintamani: It is another kick in the teeth for the "All is One" ...

S: Yes, right. The "All is One" thing is getting quite a hammering the last two study seminars, if not three.

[Long pause] All right; on to iii.

(iii)

This was said by the Exalted One

'Monks, ignorance leads the way to the attainment of unprofitable things; shamelessness and disregard of blame follow after. But, monks, knowledge leads the way to the attainment of profitable things, shrinking and fear of blame follow after.'

This is the meaning ...

Whatso be these ill-bourns in this world and the next,
All are rooted in ignorance, of lust compounded.
And since the wicked man is void of shame, and hath
No reverence, therefore he worketh wickedness,
And through that wickedness he to the Downfall goes.
Wherefore foresaking longing, lust and ignorance
And causing knowledge to arise in him, a monk
Should give up, leave behind, the ill-bourns one and all.

This meaning also

S: Shrinking in fear of blame. This is hiri-ottappa. Hiri is like modesty; it is hri in Sanskrit which is the same hri as in the Om Amideva Hrih. Red is the colour of Amitabha, and according to Lama Govinda's interpretation, hri is the red blush of shame that suffuses your face when you have done anything wrong. And ottappa is remorse; it is sort of fear of blame, fear of other people blaming you for something bad. Shrinking in fear of blame, hiri [78] -ottappa, this is a very common pair. The first is more like the reproach of your own conscience, and the other is more shrinking from what people might say about you - fear of disapproval, especially the disapproval of the good and the wise. And whoever is doing the section after the next one will see that these two are regarded as very important indeed, even from the worldly point of view. I don't know that they are purely spiritual necessarily, because they can be very much the product of just habit and custom, and the particular cultural tradition.

Chintamani: Why should this be connected with Amitabha? Why should that blush...

S: I don't remember the details. Govinda, so far as I remember, very ingeniously does so connect.

Aryamitra: Something to do with hri is the seed-syllable of... I don't know. Is it connected with the Amitabha practice at all? Do you use...

S: It is at the end of the mantra.

Aryamitra: End of the mantra? Amideva hrih. Yes. And it also means in Sanskrit this shame?

S: Shame, shamefastedness, to use an old-fashioned word. It is almost like conscience, a feeling that you have done wrong. But it is what your own conscience tells you, as it were, leaving aside all this question of the super-ego and what has been introjected; but taking it that there is such a thing as the still, small voice of conscience, it is that which speaks and expresses itself in this shrinking - "You mustn't do this, don't do that; it's wrong!" And the fear of blame is the same sort of thing, but coming not from within but from outside. The disapproval of other folk - not just anyone but especially good and virtuous people and wise people that they will disapprove and the consciousness of their disapproval. So maybe within the context of the spiritual community, this is quite healthy; but especially nowadays, you cannot go by what the community might approve or disapprove - you might have to go clean against it.

[79]

Dhammadinna: [indistinct]

S: No. The Greeks had a very high opinion of shame. They regarded it as very becoming that a young man in the presence of his elders should blush and be very modest, and he is praised for that.

Jitari: Was there something to do with burning as well?

S: The blushing is a sort of anticipatory form of burning, without your actually having done

anything wrong. Sometimes it is translated "modesty and fear of blame." "Shrinking" is a bit too negative. "Modesty and fear of blame."

Dhammadinna: Modesty isn't considered much of virtue these days, either.

S: No not even in ladies!

Dhammadinna: Young ladies don't blush nowadays.

S: They've got a permanent blush. But then modesty is not regarded as a virtue in anybody. If you are pushing and loudmouthed and strident and aggressive, this is praised. The word "aggression" is a positive term now, especially in America. But to say that someone is modest, this is not a very positive thing to say about anyone. It is perhaps rather a pity. A modest woman well, that is an anachronism. I don't think any young lady would like to be called modest now. And what to speak of a young man? This is how values change. Is there anything like this in Finland?

Bodhisri: I think it has something to do with making money, and a modest person is not so aggressive at making money.

S: Yes. And to be modest in the presence of your elders, people who know more than you do. Well, students nowadays are not modest, are they? I wonder how this has happened. Maybe it is just secular ideals getting out of hand.

[80]

Jitari: Maybe it is a reaction from ...

Dhammadinna: Victorianism.

Jitari: ... yes; and from people that may be older but just didn't know better

S: When we say we are reacting, why should we react? We weren't brought up in the Victorian period.

Aryamitra: Maybe it is a reaction to parents.

S: Were we brought up to be modest? I don't remember being brought up in this way. I am sure you weren't - a younger generation still. How is it that certain virtues that seem to be quite positive have gone so completely out of fashion?

Chintamani: Ah, maybe it's ... you get a load of strong personalities who are quite pushy, rebellious by nature. And all the people who'd naturally maybe be modest, would then feel inferior because they aren't like the others, the pushy people, so they would start imitating them, so the whole thing ...

S: Surely that has always happened? Surely pushy people have always got to the top?

Dhammadinna: [indistinct]

S: Gladstone wasn't modest, neither was Disraeli. Neither was Peel. Neither was Palmerstone.

Chintamani: Maybe it is just a long-term reaction after years or centuries of suppression. Repression? Suppression.

S. Why should ... we haven't been repressed for centuries as individuals.

Chintamani: We were talking the other day about biological karma, hereditary karma. I think that might have something to do with it. A child can pick up the resentment of the mother and carry it through a bit.

[81]

S: Well, it is the cumulative momentum of our cultural tradition, one can say that.

Dhammadinna: We just never considered modesty [indistinct]

S: It isn't even in the sense of Christian virtue. It is a classical virtue. The Greeks have a lot to say about modesty, but that is certainly not one of the cardinal virtues in Christianity.

Dhammadinna: (Modesty I don't mind, but) the word shame just makes me feel rather uncomfortable. I associate it somewhere with guilt.

S: I don't know whether the Greeks had shame; no, they had modesty. Sometimes of course the word shame is used in translations, but they seem to have had the concept and the feeling more of modesty, as we would say, though a bit stronger than that. There is also just sensitivity; they thought it proper that a young man should be modest in that sort of sense. But we did mean that he shouldn't be eager and forward; he should be that too. Not shy: the Greeks didn't believe in shyness.

Dhammadinna: One usually associates blushing with shyness, actually. And a lack of confidence in teenagers.

S: I notice in Greek literature when someone is described as blushing, it seems to be something almost sort of pleasant, and the atmosphere that surrounds it is of friendliness and encouragement. The young man is very eager, but at the same time is conscious that he is young and not so experienced as the others. He is aware of that, and that produces the blushing; but the others are all very encouraging and sympathetic. This is the connotation of the word "modest" in the Greek context. I think it is much the same as that in the Pali.

That sort of modesty you do not seem to find in Christianity. We tend to think of modesty, when you say Victorian modesty, as sexual modesty. The Greeks don't seem to have had sexual modesty, perhaps no knowledge of it, but Victorian modesty is that sort of thing. A woman doesn't show her ankles, or doesn't look at a strange man, and that sort of thing. Modesty in that very specific [82] sense, and narrow sense. So that the modesty that is expected of the monk, presumably the hiri or hri, is ... well, there is a sort of eagerness there, a desire to advance. There is also a consciousness of where he is at the moment - that he is not all that developed, and he is also aware of the encouragement all around him on the part of his elders who are much more experienced than he is. He is very unwilling to do anything that is unworthy of himself and which would disappoint them.

Buddhadasa: That is probably a difference - encouragement in one's upbringing, rather than a forcing in one's upbringing. He was encouraged. Pushed.

Chintamani: Yes. There is very little encouragement in that respect.

S: Personal encouragement? Yes. Incentives are offered, but that is another thing.

Dhammadinna: One is not encouraged for one's own well-being but one is pushed for some other motive.

Buddhadasa: You have got to acknowledge the person for what he is if you are going to encourage him.

S: Yes.

[Pause] All right; let's go on.

(iv)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, those beings have indeed fallen away who have fallen away from the Ariyan insight.

S: [Interrupts reading] Insight here is not used in the technical sense of transcendental understanding or wisdom or insight. A sort of spiritual understanding in general.

[Continues reading] 'Not only in this life do they live painfully, in vexation, trouble and distress, but, when body breaks up, after death the ill-bourn may be looked for for them. Monks, those beings who have not fallen away from the Ariyan insight indeed have not fallen away. They both in this life live happily without vexation, trouble and distress, and, when body breaks up, after death for them the happy bourn may be looked for.'

[83]

S: [Interrupts reading] Either a pleasant rebirth on Earth or a rebirth in a higher heavenly world. Obviously if they developed insight in the transcendental sense then they could even look forward to Nirvana.

[Continues reading] ' This is the meaning ...

Thro' falling from the insight lo! the world
With deva world on name and shape is bent
In the belief that this thing is the truth.

But best of all things in the world is insight
By which one to nibbana goes, and knows
Rightly the utter end of birth-and-death.

Those thoughtful ones who fully are awake,
Who insight have and their last body wear,

Both devas and mankind long to behold.

This meaning also ...

S: The verse seem to go beyond the prose, because it speaks of the insight by which one goes to Nirvana.

Chintamani: It is vipassana?

S: Yes. In its initial stages it is called vipassana.

If you could literally fall away from insight in the transcendental sense, you could fall away from Nirvana too, presumably.

Any special point that arises here? In the prose we see the same emphasis that we have found in much of this particular text on rebirth - the happy, heavenly rebirth or the unpleasant rebirth in the lower states. There does seem to be quite a different emphasis in this work so far compared with the Udana. It seems to be much less of a gospel and more of a rather personally-oriented selection.

Right. Let's go on to this next sutta where there is a bit more about shrinking and fear of blame.

(v)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, these two bright things guard the world. What two? Shrinking and fear of blame. Monks, if these two bright things did not guard the world, there would be here no distinguishing between mother and mother's sister and mother's brother's wife, between one's teacher's wife and those of men revered; but the world would fall into promiscuity, as is the case with goats, sheep, poultry, [84] pigs, dogs and jackals. But, monks, since these two bright things do guard the world, therefore there is distinguishing between these.

This is the meaning ...

In whom no shame and fear of blame exists
Ever and always, they (to the womb) descending,
Grounded on seed, to birth-and-death go on.

But they in whom are shame and fear of blame
Ever established firmly, in the Brahma-life
Growing, those good men more-becoming end.

This meaning also ...

S: So here shrinking and fear of blame are regarded as the guardians, as it were of the social order, and without them there would be "no distinguishing between mother and mother's sister and brother's wife." In other words, there would be no taboo against incest - this is what

they are getting at. And to have intercourse with one's teacher's wife - this is of course the Brahminical tradition especially - is considered particularly culpable: just as bad as incest. And without these taboos, which are brought about by shrinking and fear of blame, the world would fall into promiscuity - i.e. sexual promiscuity. In the light of modern anthropology and cultural relativity, the whole passage seems a bit more dubious than it might have done in the Buddha's day or just after. According to some recent research, there is a genetic tendency against incest in human beings. It isn't just cultural conditioning - it is a genetic thing, i.e. inherited.

Chintamani: You see what happens when there isn't a taboo. You get freaks.

S: But we could say mother's brother's wife, this is just convention. There is no taboo here. Mother's brother's wife: that would mean your aunt by marriage, and presumably on your uncle's decease you could marry her. There doesn't seem to be the same taboo here. There are also different patterns in different countries - polyandry, polygamy, monogamy and so on. But anyway, there is a social order, though different, and presumably shrinking and fear of blame do govern it, even though it does take different forms. It functions in the same sort of way for presumably the growth of the proto-individual.

[85]

Freud of course has argued that the taboo against incest is very strong because the instinct, the tendency towards incest is very strong. This does not seem to be borne out by the latest research.

So the two bright things are there and they do seem to guard, but it seems they guard different kinds of social order in different parts of the country, or different parts of the world. So it is a way of functioning rather than a particular pattern of functioning.

Any query about these verses? "In whom no fear of shame and blame exists, Ever and always they to the womb descending, Grounded on seed, to birth-and-death go on. But they in whom are shame and fear of blame, Ever established firmly, in the Brahma-life, Growing, those good men more-becoming end." This would presumably apply only in those communities where the norms are in fact healthy and conducive to development.

Aryamitra: This is probably why they are talking about why there isn't this thing of shame, shrinking away, because it does represent the social order.

S: But there are some things that people do shrink away from. There isn't one sort of shrinking and fear of blame for the whole community now, but different groups have got their own shrinkings and fears of blame, within the wider community. For instance, would any of our friends and Friends think of appearing in evening dress? Would they? They'd shrink. Why?

Chintamani: Fear of ostracization. Well, everybody would have a good laugh, if they did.

S: Well, you see?

Buddhadasa: Has anybody worn evening dress?

Dhammadinna: Yes.

S. Well, it's easier for ladies, isn't it? Or acceptable.

Buddhadasa: I have, quite a few times.

[86]

Dhammadinna: [indistinct] ... and I used to go off to College Balls.

S: You see what I mean? It isn't that we don't have these [indistinct], but they function in different ways, though in principle it is the same thing. Would you be seen dead wearing a dinner jacket?

Chintamani: Yes. I have worn tails ..

S: Then it's all right. I'd love to see you. [Laughter]

Chintamani: Admittedly with a clown's wig and a red nose. [Laughter]

S: If you wore tails you would look either like a head waiter or the conductor of an orchestra.

Well you see how the whole thing functions? There are certain things that people in the Friends wouldn't do, as though the Friends, or the liberated community in general, has its own particular guardians.

Buddhadasa: They probably would at the first opportunity away from the Friends.

S. But if these norms are healthy, well it's OK. Sometimes they are not, sometimes the norms, the particular form that shrinking and fear of blame take within any given community, can be thoroughly unhealthy.

Aryamitra: What is meant here by "grounded on seed"?

S: Rooted in seed in the sense of semen. In other words taking rebirth as a result of the copulatory process, as described in the Tibetan Book of the Dead. That is your basis; that is where you take your stand as it were. Presumably seed and ovum is also meant, not just seed.

"They in whom are shame and fear of blame, Ever established firmly, in the Brahma-life, Growing, those good men more-becoming."

[87]

But supposing your community or society doesn't approve the Brahma life, your shrinking and fear of blame are quite different then. Maybe as in Soviet Russia, you need as it were to affront the feeling of the public and your friends when you try to lead a spiritual life. You are going against the local "right thing". A community as a community seems to meet the right things, but may not be a very good or a positive community. But to the extent that it is a community, it needs to be held together by common norms. Hence when in Rome, do as Rome does. I think we have to distinguish ourselves between what are real sort of objective norms for human development as such, and on which we cannot compromise, and what are

merely conventional norms, to which we can gracefully adapt, where we don't have to be obstinate and make it into a principle.

Aryamitra: Could you repeat that?

S: Well, there are as it were truly objective norms, that you need to conform to, as it were, because they represent something which is necessary for human development as such. But then there are purely conventional norms, which apply within the given society but which may be quite artificial and nothing to do with development maybe not against it either. So what you really need to observe are the objective norms, and there should be no compromise about those; but if in the community in which you live, there are certain conventional norms which don't go against spiritual development, even though they don't help it, well why not observe them just to be able to get along with people a bit more easily? If you are invited to a party and everybody is wearing evening dress, well you wear it too. What does it matter, even if you don't normally wear it and you don't particularly like it? Why not adapt? It is a very minor matter. It is not a basic principle. Sometimes we really sort of are very firm about trivial matters and neglect important things.

Dhammadinna: We were talking about this recently, to do with going out seeing people like Estate Agents. You need to follow their norms in terms of dress and language. Otherwise they won't ...

[88]

S: Do you really want to get what you want to get or not? It is as simple as that. And are you really compromising in putting on a collar and tie? You are not really. Again, it is easier for a woman than a man, because in the case of a man a much greater range is possible in this respect. Each degree means something very definite.

Dhammadinna: Subhuti went and bought a suit. So the message went home.

S: Ah, good.

Dhammadinna: It is very important ...

Jitari: And very smart he looked too. I wish he would clean his boots.

Dhammadinna: I am sure he communicates much better in that [indistinct]

S: He probably feels different. Probably gives him an added touch of confidence, even though he is not lacking in confidence. It helps no doubt to feel that he is looking presentable and the other person isn't having any doubts about him, etcetera.

Dhammadinna: There were people who said, "A suit?" [indistinct]

S: Well, if it represents sheer extravagance and self-indulgence and vanity, that is another matter; but then it was done quite objectively for the sake of the Friends. Spending all that money on a suit, he could have bought some new records or books on Buddhism and really indulged himself.

We could even have just two or three communal suits. [Laughter] In different sizes.

Chintamani: The straight one; the velvet one ...

Dhammadinna: A pinstripe

[89]

S: Dress is - let's just touch on this for a few moments - dress is psychologically quite important, isn't it?

Chorus: Yes.

S: We have only taken that as an example. But it is important, and if it is a question of principle - suppose it is a principle that you will never wear leather, well go against the norms of society then. But not when no real question of principle is involved, including the principle of extravagance.

[Pause] All right, let's go on. This section seems to echo one in the Udana .

(vi)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, there is an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded. Monks, if that unborn, not-become, not-made, not-compounded were not, there would be apparent no escape from this that here is born, become, made, compounded. But, monks, since there is an unborn, a not-become, a not-made, a not-compounded therefore the escape from this that here is born, become, made, compounded is apparent.

This is the meaning ...

The born, become, produced, compounded, made,
And thus not lasting, but of birth-and-death
An aggregate, a nest of sickness, brittle,
A thing by food supported, come to be, ...
'Twere no fit thing to take delight in such.

Th'escape therefrom, the real, beyond the sphere
Of reason, lasting, unborn, unproduced,
The sorrowless, the stainless path that ends
The things of woe, the peace from worries, -- bliss.

S: The prose we have had before, but the verse is new. Do you notice anything different? Anything we haven't come across before? [Pause] I feel that we have a slight increase in the negativeness. The "nest of sickness", presumably the body.

Chintamani: The Dhammapada

S: There is one verse like that in the Dhammapada. But also something important and

positive we haven't had before ... "beyond the sphere of reason" (Attakkavacara). It is explicitly said that the Real is beyond the sphere of reason. Takkha is "reasoning, [90] logic, systematic thought." As far as I recollect, this is the first time this word has occurred, either here or in the Udana.

[End of tape]

[91]

Bodhisri: I'm, not quite sure if I understand this whole thing - this chapter.

S: The unborn, the not become, the not made, the not compounded that is referred to, is Nirvana itself. As a sort of, though we must be careful about this, as a sort of absolute principle, not just as a subjective state of mind. A sort of transcendental entity, that if this does not exist outside the Samsara, outside conditioned things, there would be no escape from conditioned things, there would be nothing, as it were, to take hold of with the help of which you could lift yourself out of the Samsara. It is rather like if there is an island in the midst of the water, you can get out of the water, but suppose it is all water and no island, you cannot get out of the water. You cannot climb out. So if there was not that transcendental entity and state, it wouldn't be possible to get out of the Conditioned, the Mundane.

Jitari: It reminds me of a verse that goes something like "If there ... if the element of Buddhahood did not exist in everyone, there would be no disgust with suffering and a striving to overcome that suffering"

S: If you weren't potentially that, you couldn't even try to become that. So the fact that you try to become proves that you can attain or even in a sense that you are. All right on to seven then, which makes an important doctrinal distinction.

(vii)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, there are these two conditions of nibbana. What two? The condition of nibbana with the basis still remaining and that without basis. Of what sort, monks, is the condition of nibbana which has the basis still remaining? Herein, Monks, a monk is arahant, one who has destroyed the cankers, who has lived the life, done what was to be done, laid down the burden, won the goal, worn out the fetter of becoming, one released by perfect knowledge. In him the five sense faculties still remain, through which, as they have not yet departed, he experiences sensations pleasant and unpleasant, undergoes pleasure and pain. In him the end of lust, malice and delusion, monks, is called "the condition of nibbana with the basis still remaining."

And of what sort, monk is the condition of nibbana that is without basis? Herein a monk is arahant... released by perfect knowledge, but in him in this very life all things that are sense have no delight for him, they have become cool. This is called "the conditioned of nibbana without basis". So monks, these are the two conditions of nibbana'.

[92]

This is the meaning ...

These two nibbana-states are shown by him
Who seeth, who is such and unattached.
One state is that in this same life possessed
With base remaining, tho' becoming's stream
Be cut off. While the state without a base
Belongeth to the future, wherein all
Becomings utterly do come to cease.

They who, by knowing this state uncompounded
Have heart's release, by cutting off the stream,
They who have reached the core of dhamma, glad
To end - such have abandoned all becomings.

S: This is a comparatively late distinction according , already implicit in the early teaching between Nirvana with remainder as it were and Nirvana without remainder. And as the text says, the first is the experience of Nirvana with the physical body or even the whole psycho-physical organism still remaining. You are enlightened but you are still with the body, and you still experience pleasure and pain and neutral feelings. Even though you have realized Nirvana and enjoy Nirvana, experienced Nirvana, you can along with that experience pain still, physical pain, not mental pain. But it doesn't touch you really, it doesn't move you, but when the psycho-physical organism which is the remainder has dropped off, there is only as it were the Nirvanic experience left, then that is called Nirvana without remainder, there is no five skandhas, there is no psycho-physical organism there as it were attached to it. And in that state one cannot say that the individual continues to exist or one cannot say that the individual doesn't continue to exist, or both or neither. It is beyond the sphere of reasoning. (Long Pause)

In the verses there is a quite interesting expression, the core of the dharma, or the essence of the dharma, dharmasara(?). They who have reached the core of Dharma, the essence of Dharma, the dharmasara. (Long Pause)

Sometimes we have the distinction Nirvana and Parinirvana. Parinirvana is the nirvana without remainder. That is according to later technical terminology. So when we speak of the Buddha's parinibbana, it means his physical death, when the remainder i.e. the psycho-physical organism passed away.

: What is para?

S: Para means great or extreme. And only the experience of Nirvana was [93] left. It is not another, as it were, higher kind of Nirvana. The content of the experience remains the same. But in one the psycho-physical organism is attached, in the other it isn't, it just drops off. But really there is no difference.

Bodhisri: Does this second part of it refer to this Parinirvana?

S: Yes. The base remaining and without base remaining... "These two nibbana states are shown by him who seeth, who is such and unattached. One state is that in this same life possessed with base remaining, tho' becoming's stream be cut off" Though the defilements have been eradicated, while the state without a base belongeth to the future, "that is when one

dies," wherein all becomings utterly do come to cease That is Parinibbana. These are the two. And the last four lines seem to refer to both equally., or are equally applicable to both.

Bodhisri: Is it possible to gain Parinibbana without gaining Nibbana? (laughter)

S: well by the very definition not.

Aryamitra: Wait a minute, what about after death? Enlightenment after death? Wouldn't that be Parinibbana without the previous? If you define Nirvana as being the state with body, and after death ...

S: Ah, nama-rupa, psych-physical organism. There can be nama-rupa on any of the planes, there can be a subtle nama-rupa as well as a gross nama-rupa. So what would happen say in the case of the Anagami in his pure abode, he has a nama-rupa, something corresponding to our gross psycho-physical organism. And so, as it were, in that nama-rupa on that higher plane he gains Nirvana, and then at the end of a long period, said to be much longer than that of earthly life his very very subtle and refined nama-rupa drops off and that is his Parinibbana. Otherwise how do you suppose the Anagami exists? Once he is not in Nirvana, and he is reborn in the Samsara, what does it mean to be reborn in the Samsara with some kind of nama-rupa.

Aryamitra: What does nama mean?

S: Nama means name, it is the whole "mental" side as we would say. Rupa is the form. Subject and object if you like. His body is not just body in our sense, and here again there is a considerable difference of terminology between East and West. It is a sort of concretion, or crystallization even, on a particular level. I mean devas have bodies. But they don't have gross material bodies, but that is just looking as it we analogically. You could say that an aura was a sort of body.

[94]

Chintamani: A portion of energy that is distinct from other

S: Not only distinct but organized. Which has a sort of common centre of gravity as it were.

Aryamitra: A common centre of gravity with the gross physical body ...

S: well I am using the expression 'common centre of gravity' analogically - a sort of single organizing principle would perhaps be better. When you die, what happens? the organizing principle which in Pali is called the giva(?) givita, departs as it were, so it was that which was holding everything together, so everything starts collapsing, the physical body collapses, it breaks up, it disintegrates into its constituent parts. Smaller principles of organization take over, they start running their own show, just like an empire when it sorts of breaks up, it collapses, the different states become independent, because the central authority is no longer there. So it is like that at death, the central authority is withdrawn so everything collapses, they all start running their own shows, in every single little cell. Same thing on the level of the order, when the common central principle becomes weak, the whole thing falls apart, starts dividing. Breaking up. Then the Devadatta principle takes over. (pause) OK, on to eight then.

(viii)

This was said by the Exalted One...

'Monks. do ye delight in solitary communing: delighted by solitary communing, given to mental calm in the inner self, not neglecting musing, possessed of insight

S; Musing, dhyana, superconsciousness meditative experience

do ye foster resort to empty places

S: Caves, especially

One of two fruits is to be looked for in those who (do these things) namely, gnosis,

S: Knowledge, wisdom

in this very life or, if there be still a basis, not-return to this world'

This is the meaning ...

They who with heart at peace discriminate,
Thoughtful and musing, rightly dhamma see,
Their Passions they do closely scrutinize. [95]
For being fain for seriousness and seeing
Peril in wantonness, they are not the sort
To fail, but to nibbana they are close.'

S: So the Buddha says if you delight, if you enjoy a solitary communing, if as a result of that you experience a state of mental calm and peace, you meditate, experience higher states of consciousness, if you are in the habit of living in empty places, then, you can look for one of two things, either the highest spiritual attainment in this life, or at the very least not coming back into this world but being reborn in a higher sphere and gaining enlightenment from there. The verse elaborates a little more, 'they who with heart at peace discriminate', between the skilful and the unskilful, "Thoughtful and musing"; thoughtful is more like reflecting, contemplative, musing, experiencing higher states of consciousness and rightly dhamma see', who see the Truth, directly, this is Insight, their passions they do closely scrutinize. For being fain for seriousness, and seeing peril in wantonness, these are not the sort to fail, but to nibbana they are close". You know what wantonness is? Wantonness is thoughtlessness, carelessness, a pseudo-merriment and pseudo-hilarity, and being very careless with your energy. And irresponsible. (Long pause)

And the next sutta is more or less the same and the one following, so lets have the two together and comment on what needs commenting on.

(ix)

This was said by the Exalted One.

'Monks, do ye dwell for the profit of the training, for the sake of further wisdom, of the essence of release, of the mastery of mindfulness. Monks, of those who dwell for the sake of (these things)... one of two fruits is to be expected, gnosis in this very life, or, if there be still a basis, not-returning (to this world)

This is the meaning...

S: Basis means of course basis for rebirth anywhere, in this case not gross enough for rebirth on the earth, but gross enough anyway for rebirth in a higher world.

Perfected pupil, who hath surety won
And won the higher wisdom, seen births end,
That sage, I say, her wearing his last body,
By conquering Mara eld hath conquered.

Wherefore for musing fain, of mind composed,
Ardent and seeing the end of births, O monks [96]
By overwhelming Mara with his host,
Become ye those who birth-and-death transcend.

(x)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant - so I have heard:

'Monks, a monk should be wakeful, he should dwell mindful, composed, peaceful, happy, serene, and in such states he should see the proper time for things that are profitable. If a monk be wakeful and dwell mindful... one of two fruits is to be looked for, either gnosis in this very life, or, if there be yet a basis, not-returning (to this world).'

This is the meaning of what was said by the Exalted One. Herein this meaning is thus spoken.

Ye watchers, hear ye this, Sleepers, awake!
Better than sleep is watchfulness. There is
No fear for him that watcheth. Who so watches,
Mindful, composed, peaceful, serene and happy,
He dhamma searching thoroughly in due season
Rising to oneness drives away the gloom.
Wherefore rouse ye and practise wakefulness.
The ardent monk, discriminating, wins
The musing, cuts the bond of birth-and-eld.
In this same life he wins wisdom supreme.

S: there is one word to comment on here, rising to oneness, it is translated, (ekodibhuto?) it means becoming more and more integrated until everything comes together, flows together, and your whole being reaches a point of oneness, an apex or peak. And that state of oneness is of course, is associated with light, and the opposite state, being scattered and disintegrated is associated with gloom, and unmindfulness.

Buddhadasa: Could one experience that oneness in a glimpse of experience?

S: Well one experiences it all the time especially when one is meditating, you feel everything coming together, more, yes? All the energies flowing together. You are becoming more integrated. One should be experiencing it all the time, as one progresses, more and more. But here where ...as one gains enlightenment, it reaches an absolute peak, and everything comes completely together at the highest possible level. This is a very important aspect of spiritual life, especially meditation - the integration and unification of energies. Unification of a whole stream of energy, there is no tension because there is no one thing [97] pulling against another. It is all working in the same direction. All flowing in the same direction. I think that this is one of peoples' greatest sources of difficulty, that there are distractions, there are different streams of energy trying to go in different directions. There is no overall flow. There is one quite powerful stream trying to get into Nirvana or meditation, but there are two or three other streams of energy going in other directions and pulling one against another. That makes it very difficult. But one of the things that happens with meditation is that you get all the energies together, eventually. And then you can make much more rapid progress. This is one of the chief functions of meditation, and one of the chief things that you experience in it, that all your energies are coming together.

Jitari: What would you say would be the cause of the distractions are? Just the sense thing, just being put off through

S: Well sense things, but also mental things, that is to say recollections of things that have happened before, things that have affected you. And very deeply rooted unconscious impulses. Your basic lobha, dvesa and moha, that brought you here into the world in the first place. I am sure that many people have had the experience that they have been going on very beautifully in meditation, it is all very nice, and happy and they are doing quite well, but something makes them break off. Almost a sort of perverseness, there is no reason, they are enjoying it, the meditation is going well, you don't feel bored or tired, you could easily carry on, but you don't something makes you break off, so what is that?

Dhammadinna: You mean in one period of meditation, or over a whole period of...

S: One particular period.

Aryamitra: mm, I have often wondered this, what is that make one

S: well it is that primordial sort of gravitational pull, of which you may not even be conscious, 'enough!', 'enough!' Enough near Nirvana for today, you are getting a bit too near for comfort, not that you feel any discomfort, it is not a conscious thing. In your conscious mind you are quite happy, and everything is going well, and yes you would like to sit, but you don't, you break off and have a cup of tea, have a chat, go for a walk or do nothing in particular.

: It is like you are rewarding yourself for having a good meditation.

S: It is not even that, not what I am speaking of, though you do sometimes do that, or you do that in many ways, you reward yourself with [98] a bit of unskilful activity for your skilful activity. 'I have been a good boy today, I sat in meditation for a whole hour very nicely, OK, three cream buns !' 'I can let myself go a bit this evening'

Dhammadinna: O I can remember after some meditation saying "I felt like I could have sat there for ever", and they said "well why didn't you?" and I really didn't know.

S: Right, sometime you have the feeling that you could sit there for ever, but you don't even sit five more minutes. Why? I mean assuming you have got nothing to get on with, it is that primordial pull that you are not even conscious of, you just get up. You don't even feel uncomfortable, sometimes, you just get up and stop it. It is really odd, isn't it? What is it that makes people come out of a good meditation when there is no need to? If it was going badly you could understand it, for instance if they were uncomfortable or stiff, all right, they give up; a bit regretfully, but there it is they are going along well and they feel that they could sit for ever, there is nothing that they have got to get up and get on with; they could easily sit for another half hour or hour, but they don't.

Aryamitra: Sometimes I feel that I don't want to start indulging in it. That's like a rationalization ...

S: You can indulge in Nirvana, and meditate as much as you like.

Aryamitra: Oh, great ! (laughter)

S: That will look after itself when the time comes. A Buddha will come along and gently tap you on the shoulder and say "well you are a Buddha now, you ought to be up and doing" , "Two or three worlds need sorting out, there is a little universe over there not doing so nicely" Some far off outpost of samsara.

Dhammadinna: If you feel something more tangible than that pulling you away, but you still don't know quite what it is, is it, should one carry on meditating or stop...

S: I think if you haven't done your full quota for the sitting, if you have a quota, normally sit say for an hour or whatever well then carry on, but if you have in any case done your quota, well break off, get up, but mindful and trying to see what is happening. In a sense, from a certain point of view, it doesn't matter what you do, provided you remain mindful and you are aware of what is happening.

Dhammadinna: I sometimes feel that I don't want to meditate that morning and I don't know really why, and it is very difficult to actually [99] get down to it.

S: And therefore it is sometimes difficult to tell whether you ought to make yourself or whether it would be the most skilful thing to do, just to give yourself the morning off. Occasionally, if you feel like that well don't force yourself, provided it is occasional, if you find it is happening once or twice a week, be very, very cautious, if it happens once or twice every three months, well that is OK, well never mind, you can afford to experiment a little. I think as a general sort of rule, almost, the beginner, by which I mean the person who is just starting, should keep up really, apart from absolutely unavoidable accidents, unflinching regularity for at least two years; once they have decided to sit every morning or every evening or both, if they are really determined and want to get into it, they must sit without ever breaking for two years every day, otherwise it is very difficult to get into it properly.

Aryamitra: Is this to form a habit?

S: Well in a sense, even though later on you may break up the habit though without that habit it is very difficult to get into a sort of consistently higher state of consciousness, which you can keep more or less all the time, with care, with trouble. Once you have done that you can afford, not exactly to relax, but to proceed in a slightly different way; not that you give yourself a little moral holiday then, but you can afford to do things in a more - actually to practise in a more relaxed way. It is not a relaxation of practice, it is just practising differently.

Dhammadinna: Sometimes when I feel that I don't want to sit and actually do it, everything is fine.

S: Yes, it is very often like that, and sometimes you think that you are going to have a dreadful meditation or not going to succeed and it goes fine and sometimes vice-versa; that is one of the reasons that you need to just sit regularly, almost disregarding whether it is good, bad or indifferent. The fact that you put in that effort over a certain period of time, will have its own results, whether you are very much aware of it or not. Usually you are in the long run, even if not in the short term. (pause) ... mmm Sunshine ! If it keeps like this for your trip to Truro you'll have a very nice little outing. Last time I went it was primroses all the way, quite literally, all along the banks. All right lets go on.

[100]

(xi)

This was said by the Exalted One said by the Arahant - so I have heard ...

'Monks, these two are doomed to the Downfall, to Purgatory, if they abandon not their fault
What two? He who being no liver of the Brahma life claims to be such, and he who harasses
the one who lives the Brahma life completely and purely (by charging him) baselessly with
lapse therefrom. These are the two...

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning
is thus spoken.

The liar reaches hell and he who says
He did not what he did -
Both are the same hereafter, men of crooked ways.
And many a one the yellow gown who wears,
Wicked and uncontrolled,
By reason of his evil deeds in hell appears.
Better for him a red hot iron ball
One mass of fire, to swallow,
Than wicked, uncontrolled, to eat the country's food.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One ...

S: Yes here we are dealing with something much the same as what we dealt with before, that
is the lie, especially the lie as lived, or the lie as embodied in life. I mean when there is a

contradiction between what you say and what you do. It is also noticeable that the Buddha says "these two are doomed to the Downfall. to Purgatory, if they abandon not their faults": it is never too late. You might be on the very edge of the precipice, but you can just pull back in time if you only change. You only give up what you were doing and start doing what you are supposed to do.

Malini: What is meant by Purgatory in these terms?

S: A state of suffering, not ... after death presumably, not a hell, because it isn't eternal, but certainly a painful state. Niraya is the term in Pali. And once again, the importance of truthfulness. Both explicit and implicit, both as spoken and as lived is emphasized. (pause) The notes say, 'Hell', (for purgatory) is purely metricaused on account of the metre. What they have translated as hell in the verse and Purgatory in the prose is the same word, same state. Suffering, but not endless suffering. Also it emphasizes the seriousness of falsely accusing somebody else. This is regarded as a very serious offence. (pause) The reference to the red-hot iron ball is on account of the fact that food very often comes in balls and charity is often called pinda [101] : -dan", the charity of balls of food, rice balls. That verse also by the way comes in the Dhammapada, all three verses in fact.

Aryamitra: Sounds a bit negative, especially the last verse.

S: It does in a way, almost again threatening. It is odd how this sort of note seems to have sort of crept in, into the Itivuttakka. It certainly wasn't there before, in the Udana. It seems to be a more archaic work. And it is almost as if the Buddha's words are being repeated at second hand, and selected and put into a different form. In the case of the verses this is quite clearly so, though we seem to be a bit further away from the original tradition, both the letter and the spirit, than we were in the case of the Udana. This doesn't seem such a complete 'gospel' as it were. And also the episodes are missing in a way. They are simply teachings, there are no incidents or happenings, no real context. It is almost as though it is a selection made for his personal use by a well meaning but rather narrow or limited sort of monk.

Aryamitra: But I wonder if they have missed out those, because it starts with "This was said by the Exalted One:" and I wonder if they might have missed out some descriptive...

S: This is quite possible, or maybe it had been forgotten or the compiler didn't bother with it, or it hadn't been handed down. It is more like a little hand book. There is a quite noticeable increase of the negative emphasis, this fear of the consequences of doing evil, this is a bit pronounced here.

Aryamitra: "The red hot iron ball, the mass of fire to swallow than wicked, uncontrolled .." ugh!

S: All right lets pass on to section twelve, which is the last one in this chapter.

(xii)

This was said by the Exalted One.

'Monks. hindered by two views to which they resort, both devas and mankind stick fast, while

some go to excess, and some who have sight see aright. And how, monks do some stick fast? Monks, devas and mankind delight in becoming, rejoice in becoming, take pleasure in becoming. When teaching is proclaimed for making becoming to cease, their heart springs not up thereat, it is not calmed, is not settled, is not drawn to it. Thus, monks, some stick fast.

And how monks, do some go to excess? On the other hand some are afflicted by becoming, humiliated thereby, and loathing becoming they take pleasure in not-becoming. They say: "My good sir, inasmuch as, [102] when body breaks up, after death this self is annihilated, destroyed, it exists not after death. This view is the real one, the excellent the true view Thus monks some go to excess.

And how, monks, do some who have sight see aright?

Herein, monks, one sees what has become as having become. So seeing he is set on revulsion on passionlessness on making an end. That monks, is how they who have sight do see aright".

This is the meaning...

He who beholding what has become as such
And how to pass beyond what has become,
By the utter end of craving is released
In that which really is - he comprehending
What has become - that monk from craving freed
For births or high or low, by ending
What has become, goes no more to becoming.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

S: First of all "those who delight in becoming", that is those who wallow in sentient existence, those who wallow in the mundane. So if they hear a teaching, which depreciates the Mundane, and suggests that they get out of it, they don't like it very much. We notice this,- I have noticed this certainly at the centre and certainly taking classes and giving lectures, that people are not at all happy with anything that seems to run down worldly life and worldly experience and pleasure and so on. And they seem to want to bring in the Worldly life and sort of justify it in the name of religion, or sprinkle it with a little rose-water, and that is the spiritual life. There seems to be this tendency very strongly.

Chintamani: Especially in connection with Zen ...

S: Yes that is true. Or in connection with Tantra, perhaps even more.

Aryamitra: In what way in connection with Tantra?

S: Sex.

Dhammadinna: I don't see the connection with Zen.

S: Well it is in every day life, and every day life is Zen.

Dhammadinna: Oh I see.

Chintamani: Zen is washing up and catching a bus, shouting at the secretary, going to the theatre, making a million...

S: That is what the Maharishi says, well making two millions - you've made your million before you came to him. (Laughter)

S: All right, that is the first, then "going to excess" is taking a sort of psychologically negative view, depreciating sentient existence for psychological rather than spiritual reasons and regarding it as just coming to an end with death or even the tendency to suicide, self-hatred, self-destruction. This is going to excess. But 'seeing aright', is seeing sentient existence, seeing becoming seeing its limitations and resolving to go beyond that into some higher transcendental dimension. So you neither wallow in it, nor do you react violently against it, you just see its limitations and rise above it. It seems all very neat, but very difficult. Any query on the verses?

Aryamitra Tomorrow is the last day, isn't it?

S.: Yes. We have quite a lot to get through. We may be having to have a double session, but let's see. Certainly quite a lengthy one but let's see. Anyway, we seem to have made quite good progress. We seem to have got through quite a lot of material.

End of Tape 4 IT

[104]

III. The Threes.

Chapter One.

(i.)

This was said by the Exalted One, said by the Arahant; so I have heard:

'Monks there are these three roots of evil. What three? Lust is a root of evil, hate is a root of evil, delusion is a root of evil These are the tree roots of evil.

S: Evil, akusala. The unskillful, akusala mula, roots of the unskillful (roots of unskill)

This is the meaning of what the Exalted One said. Herein this meaning is thus spoken. Lust, hatred and delusion

Ruin the man of wicked heart; They are begotten in himself;
Like the lush growth of pith and stem.

This meaning also was spoken by the Exalted One; so I have heard.

S: Hm, so we are dealing with formulas, formulas of threes, and here we get one of the best known of all, lust or craving, hatred and delusion. Loba, dvesa, and moha.

Buddhadasa: Is this word unskillfulness generally to be applied to the word evil, when it crops up?

S: I think very often, sometimes though 'papa', more often translated as sin, is translated as 'evil' too. But here, it is quite clearly akusala. So "lust, hatred and delusion ruin the man of wicked heart, they are begotten in himself, like the lush growth of pith and stem" They just spring up like weeds on the soil of the heart as it were. I don't think there is much to discuss there. It is only too obvious, and it is one of the best known sets of three. These three which are illustrated at the hub of the Wheel of life by the pig, the cock and the snake. So let's ponder briefly and pass on.

(ii)

This was said by the Exalted One ...

'Monks, there are these three elements What three? The element of form, that of the formless and the element of ending. These are the three elements.' This is the meaning...

Who Rupa-world-conditions comprehend,
In the arupa-worlds well established in the formless they who are released
Who are released by making (things) to cease,
Those folk are they who have left death behind.
With his own person reaching the deathless element,
That element that hath no base, and of himself
Discovering renunciation of the base,
He, canker-free, the perfectly awakened one,
Doth thus proclaim the sorrowless, the stainless way.

Break in tape...

S: ... Mara sitting right in the middle with a little pitch fork, digging it into the tape every now and then. Western touch.

Dhammadinna: I think I've got most of it down in longhand (laughter)

S: Anyway I think the gist is quite clear.

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Bodhisri: Which category which you put this so-called biological needs, we talked about a day ago, having children and things like, what sort of a longing is that?

S: A biological need? Well let's take a more simple example, what about food?

Buddhadasa: A longing for becoming and sensual delight.

S: Yes. it can be both. You need to sort of maintain the bodily base even for the sake of the spiritual life. So strictly speaking purely as a biological function I would say, it comes under the 'longing for becoming' But if you take eating for the sake of eating then it becomes a longing for sensual delights. If you eat say only to keep the body alive so that you can lead a spiritual life, well you could include it then under longing for the brahma life. Eat to live or eat for the sake of the better life.

... break in tape

S: ...strongly among primitive people, a replica of me. I sort of conquer death in that way. I continue to live in my son especially or in my progeny in general, and you can accept perhaps the fact of your own death more easily if you see that your lineage is continuing, your on progeny are there, and carrying on indefinitely into the future.

Dhammadinna: But having children is a different sort of biological need from food say; one doesn't need to have children, I mean personally any individual doesn't need to biologically have children. It is a different level of need.

S: Well yes, but the only thing one could say is that in the case of women one could say that they are perhaps - that they are so structured physically that the ... built for having children, and if they don't, if that sort of biological need is not fulfilled, there is such a violent kick-back from the organism that they cannot get on with anything else for the time being. At least in the case of some women. Or least that is how some women appear to feel, others apparently don't feel it at all, and there is the whole question of whether one has something else to do that fills the mind completely, so that even the biological need to have a child, if it is there, is no longer felt. To what extent is it psychological? - one cannot even be sure of that. It is almost like something that you can love and cuddle and is yours, your very own , there is also this, very very strongly, which is psychological rather than biological.

Dhammadinna: Bodhisri was saying more or less, the other day that it was just another [106] longing, just another form of greed in a way and something that we could therefore get over, as you get over other manifestations of those things without having to go through them.

S: I think it is very difficult to say; it does seem in the case of the majority of women perhaps, and I don't feel like being very dogmatic over this, that motherhood is almost a necessary stage and that they don't want to get on with anything else until they have had that sort of satisfaction. Many. Would you agree with that?

Bodhisri: I don't think that I said that you don't have to go through it . I was wondering whether it was possible without going through it.

S: Well it is quite clear that some women have a quite positive and creative and successful life without motherhood, and apparently without suffering, but they don't seem, but there doesn't seem to be very many of them. And you find them in religious orders, on the other hand in religious orders you do find quite a bit of sourness and repression and general bitchiness that seems to stem from some kind of frustration. But whether it is frustration of motherhood or whether it is frustration of sexuality, sometimes it is very difficult to tell. I think this is something that probably only women themselves can say. I think it is very difficult to say, if you are not actually in that sort of position yourself and having to make that sort of choice. And there does seem to be a great sort of range, a great variation among women themselves. Probably for the majority of women, motherhood is a need and they are better with it than without it, but probably the majority of those will never, in any case, think very seriously in terms of any personal development. But probably a woman is really bent on personal development, and for whom it is something very positive and very inspiring would not feel very much the loss of motherhood any more than the loss of other mundane things.

Bodhisri: Bhante, could it be possible that some woman would have a child because of longing for Brahma life? Because she wouldn't know that, that it would be an obstacle otherwise if she didn't have the child.

S: I can certainly see the abstract possibility, of that, but I can also see it being as used as a very heavy rationalization. And sometimes the woman herself with all sincerity might not be very sure whether she was being objective or whether she was not just rationalizing. In other cases too, it is very difficult to know if one is being objective or whether one isn't rationalizing. It is the same with lots of other things.

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Like you might say, "If I don't have occasional days off or let myself go sometimes, or go to the cinema or go to a few parties, well I'll get so dull, that I won't even be able to meditate", you may be being objective, you may be rationalizing. It is difficult to tell. I think ... think about it sincerely, consult a few spiritual friends, those who know you very well and intimately and then try to arrive at a consensus. If they all think you are rationalizing, well, be very careful about disregarding that, but if they all agree, 'no, this is objectively the thing for you', well OK, you can be much more confident about your own feelings in the matter. You might even feel the same sort of doubts about marriage; you might think, well some people might feel that marriage could be conducive in the long run, in the sense if I don't enter into the married state, it could leave me in a state of frustration and general dissatisfaction and I just wouldn't get on with personal development at all, but I could go through the marriage experience and it could work out positively. It is the same sort of situation isn't it? Or with regard to the arts, or with regard to sports, so many things, you could even apply it to mountaineering. Well if I go mountaineering each weekend, it is not directly related to Buddhism, but it keeps me alert and keeps my energies flowing and it is healthy it is out of doors, it is all conducive, so you could be rationalizing or you could be being quite objective it is not always very easy to be very sure about which it is. So very much in this case also, very much so. So I would say, think it over in your own mind very carefully, consult spiritual friends and only then come to a definite conclusion.

Bodhisri: Bhante, do you know any women who have gone through this process without having children and sort of got over the longing for them.

S: Oh yes, in India, and also - have become highly spiritually developed, yes, a few certainly, not very many. I think perhaps in at least one or two cases they were almost well - developed to begin with and weren't really troubled by the longing for children. Without being just masculinized women, I am not considering that. Just quite normal healthy feminine sort of women. Yes I have known a few. I don't know that I have encountered anyone over here in this country, but I have not sort of got round much in spiritual circles, I have just been in contact with the Friends. But in the East certainly. And probably this is a question that does effect or at least concern most female Order members, you know they think about it very seriously, presumably. If they don't have any sort of feeling to have children, well obviously there is no need to think about it. But presumably most of them do [108] at some time or other, think about this, and wonder which is the best thing to do, especially those who aren't already married. I mean effectively married. Because it is a very big thing, as Jinamata has found, you have a baby, but you have got a big responsibility for quite a few years. It is not something that you can just get through in a year or two, it is ten fifteen eighteen maybe even twenty years of active concern, and giving a very big part of your life, and having to do it

