

MN#12  
The Greater Discourse on the Lion's Roar  
Mahāśīhanāda Sutta  
(Lomahamṣanapariyāya Sutta)  
Dhamma Talk by Bhante Vimalaramsi  
08-Oct-06

BV: Sutta twelve, this is the Mahāśīhanāda Sutta, The Greater Discourse on the Lion's Roar.

MN: 1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Vesāli in the grove outside the city to the west.

2. Now on that occasion Sunakkhatta, son of the Licchavis, had recently left this Dhamma and Discipline. He was making this statement before the Vesāli assembly: "The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma [merely] hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him, and when he teaches the Dhamma to anyone, it leads him when he practices it to the complete destruction of suffering."

BV: Now, this guy, he ordained so he could be close to the Buddha and see psychic powers. And the Buddha knew that he wanted to see them and he wanted him to do real practice, and he wouldn't do any psychic powers, and it got him upset, so he disrobed. In other discourses, he's called a misguided man, which is really kind of a pretty heavy put down, that the Buddha would say. Anyway ...

MN: 3. Then, when it was morning, the venerable Sāriputta dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into Vesāli for alms. Then he heard Sunakkhatta, son of the Licchavis, making this statement before the Vesāli assembly. When he had wandered for alms in Vesāli and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, he sat down at one side and told the Blessed One what Sunakkhatta was saying.

4. [The Blessed One said:] "Sāriputta, the misguided man Sunakkhatta is angry and his words are spoken out of anger. Thinking to discredit the Tathāgata, he actually praises him; for it is praise of the Tathāgata to say of him: 'When he teaches the Dhamma to anyone, it leads him when he practises it to the complete destruction of suffering.'

5. "Sāriputta, this misguided man Sunakkhatta will never infer of me according to Dhamma: That Blessed One is accomplished, fully enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, sublime, knower of worlds, incomparable leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened, blessed.'

6. "And he will never infer of me according to Dhamma: 'That Blessed One enjoys the various kinds of supernormal power: having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one; he appears and vanishes; he goes unhindered through a wall, through an enclosure, through a mountain, as though through space; he dives in and out of the earth as though it were water; he walks on water without sinking as though it were earth; seated cross-legged, he travels in space like a bird; with his hand he touches and strokes the moon and sun so powerful and mighty;

BV: Out of all of these abilities, this is the one that I REALLY don't understand – how he touches and strokes the moon and the sun, I don't understand what that means, at all, and I've asked, I don't know how many people and they, just wind up repeating saying: "He touches the moon, he touches the sun, he strokes them." What does that mean? I don't know.

MN: he wields bodily mastery even as far as the Brahma-world.'

7. "And he will never infer of me according to Dhamma: 'With the divine ear element, which is purified and surpasses the human, that Blessed One hears both kinds of sounds, the heavenly and the human, those that are far as well as near.'

8. "And he will never infer of me according to Dhamma: That Blessed One encompasses with his own mind the minds of other beings, other persons. He understands a mind affected by lust as affected by lust and a mind unaffected by lust as unaffected by lust; he understands a mind affected by hate as affected by hate and a mind unaffected by hate as unaffected by hate; he understands a mind affected by delusion as affected by delusion and a mind unaffected by delusion as unaffected by delusion; he understands a contracted mind as contracted

BV: What's a contracted mind? Contracted mind is a mind that has sloth and torpor in it. More torpor than sloth, really.

MN: and a distracted mind as distracted;

BV: What's a distracted mind? Restless.

MN: he understands an exalted mind as exalted and an unexalted mind as unexalted;

BV: What's an exaulted mind? A person has one of the first four jhānas.

MN: he understands a surpassed mind as surpassed and an unsurpassed mind as unsurpassed;

BV: What's a surpassed mind?

S: Has the arūpa jhāna.

BV: That's right.

MN: he understands a [collected] mind as [collected] and an [uncollected] mind as unconcentrated; he understands a liberated mind as liberated and an unliberated mind as unliberated.'

(TEN POWERS OF A TATHĀGATA)

9. "Sāriputta, the Tathāgata has these ten Tathāgata's powers, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's

roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma. What are the ten?

BV: I want to see what that means – why not Dhamma instead of Brahma?

Reads footnote: "The Wheel of Brahmā is the supreme, best, most excellent wheel, the wheel of the Dhamma (dhammacakka) in its twofold meaning: the knowledge penetrating the truth and the knowledge of how to expound the teaching (MA)"

That's what it says in the Saṃyutta Nikāya.

MN: 10. (1) "Here, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible.

BV: That means that he doesn't have clinging. He doesn't have imagination. He's not into the story about things. He's in to actually seeing things as they actually are.

MN: And that is a Tathāgata's power that the Tathāgata has, by virtue of which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

11. (2) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the results of actions undertaken, past, future, and present, with possibilities and with causes. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

12. (3) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the ways leading to all destinations. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

13. (4) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the world with its many and different elements. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

14. (5) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is how beings have different inclinations. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

BV: The inclinations of ... when you get into the Visuddhimagga, it will talk about the different kinds of personality. I've never seen it explained as well as in the Visuddhimagga, in this particular instance. The kinds of personalities you have, you have a lust personality. Now, a person of lustful personality, when they wear their clothes, they wear them and they fit just perfectly. When they do a task, they do it quickly, and they do it very well. When they're eating, they eat precisely, without dropping food and all that sort of thing. When they walk, they put their foot down very nicely. An example of a lust personality would be Sujata(?).

There's a hate personality. A hate personality, when they wear their, like wear their robes, they wear them very tightly, and not comfortably at all. When they eat, they eat quickly, chew very little, drop food every now and then. When they do something, they will get a job done, but it's not done completely, they won't ... little things, like they're sweeping an area, there'll still be places where there's dirt around. When they walk, they drive their heel into the ground.

Then there's the sloth and torpor personality. And that's a person, that they're generally kind of dull, when they were their robes, if they're a monk, they're very sloppy with them. They don't always wear them in the same way, there's one time it's too high, one time it's too low, it falls off very often. When they do something, they kind of do it with a ho-hum attitude, and they don't do it very well. When they eat, they eat, don't pay much attention to the taste of food. And they eat in a sloppy manner.

There's another kind of personality that's called the ... this is, it's intelligent, it's into faith, into believing things, without necessarily seeing them for themselves, believing what everybody else told them.

And the intelligent is, kind of almost like a know-it-all. Can't think of the other one. It's not coming right now.

Anyway, there's ... everybody is not just one type of personality, they're mixture of these different things, and it turns out to be sixty

two different kinds of people, personality types. Or, it can be, like the Buddha described, there's basically three kinds of mind. There is the intelligent mind, that is not very sensitive to feelings. There is a feeling mind, that's not as deeply intelligent. And there's the mind that's both. Both Sāriputta and Mogallāna did exactly the same meditation practice – they were doing mindfulness of breathing. They both went through all of the rūpa jhānas, and the arūpa jhānas. They experienced nibbana in the same way. But Sāriputta was more into seeing how things worked and analyzing and figuring out and just doing intellectual kind of exercise without being sensitive to feeling at all. Mogallāna was intelligent, but he was much more sensitive to feeling, and that's why he gained all of these psychic abilities, because he was so sensitive to feeling. Now people that have a feeling kind of personality, they're the ones that are highly emotional, and they pick up feelings from other people, and they think that they're theirs, and then they have this reaction to them. When they gain a sense of equanimity and understanding about their minds, then all of a sudden they're able to see things at great distances and hear heavenly beings talking, and they're able to do a lot of the psychic things. Now it comes more and more as they get into the fourth jhāna, and stay in the fourth jhāna, and the more calm and equanimity they have, the more these different abilities, come up. Now, Anuruddha, was, the foremost monk in seeing other world systems, in the divine eye, basically. And he had other psychic abilities, but they weren't near as strong, as being able to see, I mean, it's like, it's described like you'd be on a hill and you look into the village and you can see what they're doing in the village, he could do that with other worlds. And that's one of the abilities he was talking about here. He was also very intelligent. But it's just that his sensitivity to feeling was stronger than his intelligence was, let's put it that way. Sāriputta, was almost impervious to, feeling. He could feel really gross: "I feel happy. I feel sad." But when it came to other subtler kinds of feelings, he just, wasn't able to feel it. There's a thing in one of the suttas, I don't remember which one, it's in the Middle Length Sayings, that, Sāriputta was sitting in the cessation of perception and feeling, and there's these two devas that are watching him, and this one deva says: "I don't think he's really sitting, in a deep state, and I want to test him. I'm going to go up

and slap him in the head." And the other deva says: "I don't think that that's a wise thing to do, don't do it." Now this monk he says: "But my hands are itchy, I got to do it." So he goes down and smacks Sāriputta with such force, that it would have knocked out an elephant, and it didn't even move one of his hair on his head, and Mogallāna saw this happen. And after a while Sāriputta comes out of his meditation, and Mogallāna goes up to him and he said: "Venerable sir, are you all right?" And Sāriputta: "Yeah, I'm fine." - "Well, does your head hurt?" He said: "Well, yeah, there's this slight, slight, I bumped my head or something, I don't know." So Mogallāna told him what happened. But it didn't affect Sāriputta at all, because he was in the cessation of perception and feeling, so there's no feeling, didn't know what happened. But because Mogallāna had the psychic ability, to be able to see this kind of thing, he saw the whole thing unfold. That's just kind of one of those, interesting stories.

Ok -

MN: 15. (6) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the disposition of the faculties of other beings, other persons. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

BV: So he knows, which faculty is arising and how you're able to recognize it and all of that, which ones you're more sensitive to than others.

MN: 16. (7) "Again, the Tathāgata understands as it actually is the defilement, the cleansing, and the emergence in regard to the jhānas, liberations, [collectedness], and attainments. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

BV: So you can't, fool your way. (Laughs)

MN: 17. (8) "Again, the Tathāgata recollects his manifold past lives, that is, one birth, two births... (as Sutta 4, §27)... Thus with their aspects and particulars he recollects his manifold past lives. That too is a Tathāgata's power..."

18. (9) "Again, with the divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, the Tathāgata sees beings passing away and

reappearing, inferior and superior, fair and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate...(as Sutta 4, §29) ...and he understands how beings pass on according to their actions. { ...}

BV: This is the tevijja, the three knowledges, that the Buddha got, and this is the second of the three knowledges. The third is seeing Dependent Origination. But, when somebody is practicing seeing their past lifetimes, and they start seeing how actions and karma actually work in their own lives, and then they start seeing how that works in other being's lives, the law of karma, it's not a philosophy anymore. It is an absolute reality, and you really see it and you understand it, very, very well. With that understanding, comes a anatta experience, that, all of the karmic things that happened, happened because the conditions, and there is a, there's a choice that everybody makes, of whether they're going to do this, or whether they're going to do that, and when you see how karma really works, then you start, purposefully just choosing the wholesome, and directing your mind towards the wholesome. It's very much easier to let go of the lust and the hatred, when you have these, these are called super knowledges. And when you do that, then you see the impersonal natures, so clearly, that the craving doesn't even arise anymore, and then you start in to see the Dependent Origination and how that works. And seeing the Dependent Origination and how it works is the ultimate, in, the realization, and this is the way that the realization occurred, for nibbana, to arise, seeing everything as part of a process. So when you're going back to your past lifetimes, you're kind of grossly seeing cause and effect, and then you start seeing it in other beings, and you start seeing it in a more refined way. And then when you start seeing the Dependent Origination, you really get it. Now this is the fast track, to attain nibbana, it really is.

Anyway -

MN: 19. (10) "Again, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, the Tathāgata here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

BV: The taints won't even arise anymore because you're seeing the Four Noble Truths, well involved in that too, I mean it's seeing and realizing the Four Noble Truths and Dependent Origination.

MN: That too is a Tathāgata's power that the Tathāgata has, by virtue of which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

20. "The Tathāgata has these ten Tathāgata's powers, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

21. "Sāriputta, when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me: 'The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma [merely] hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him'—unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and relinquishes that view, then as [surely as if he had been] carried off and put there he will wind up in hell. Just as a bhikkhu possessed of virtue, [collectedness], and wisdom would here and now enjoy final knowledge, so it will happen in this case, I say, that unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and relinquishes that view, then as [surely as if he had been] carried off and put there he will wind up in hell.

#### (FOUR KINDS OF INTREPIDITY)

22. "Sāriputta, the Tathāgata has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma. What are the four?

23. "Here, I see no ground on which any recluse or brahmin or god or Mara or Brahma or anyone else at all in the world could, in accordance with the Dhamma, accuse me thus: 'While you claim full enlightenment, you are not fully enlightened in regard to certain things.' And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

24. "I see no ground on which any recluse...or anyone at all could accuse me thus: 'While you claim to have destroyed the taints, these taints are undestroyed by you.' And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

25. "I see no ground on which any recluse...or anyone at all could accuse me thus: Those things called obstructions by you are not able to obstruct one who engages in them.' And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

26. "I see no ground on which any recluse..or anyone at all could accuse me thus: 'When you teach the Dhamma to someone, it does not lead him when he practises it to the complete destruction of suffering.' And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

27. "A Tathāgata has these four kinds of intrepidity, possessing which he claims the herd-leader's place, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies, and sets rolling the Wheel of Brahma.

28. "Sāriputta, when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me...he will wind up in hell.

#### (THE EIGHT ASSEMBLIES)

29. "Sāriputta, there are these eight assemblies. What are the eight? An assembly of nobles, an assembly of brahmins, an assembly of householders, an assembly of recluses, an assembly of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings,

BV: Those are the earth bound deities, silk(?), and stuff like that.

MN: an assembly of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three, an assembly of Mara's retinue, an assembly of Brahma. Possessing these four kinds of intrepidity, the Tathāgata approaches and enters these eight assemblies.

30. "I recall having approached many hundred assemblies of nobles...many hundred assemblies of brahmins...many hundred

assemblies of householders...many hundred assemblies of recluses...many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Four Great Kings...many hundred assemblies of gods of the heaven of the Thirty-three...many hundred assemblies of Mara's retinue...many hundred assemblies of Brahmās.

BV: The Brahmās are from the Brahma loca, the Brahmins are the high class in India, in the cast system. And they're also the preachers, the religious guy.

MN: And formerly I had sat with them there and talked with them and held conversations with them, yet I see no ground for thinking that fear or timidity might come upon me there. And seeing no ground for that, I abide in safety, fearlessness, and intrepidity.

31. "Sāriputta, when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me...he will wind up in hell.

(FOUR KINDS OF GENERATION)

32. "Sāriputta, there are these four kinds of generation. What are the four? Egg-born generation, womb-born generation, moisture-born generation, and spontaneous generation.

33. "What is egg-born generation? There are these beings born by breaking out of the shell of an egg; this is called egg-born generation. What is womb-born generation? There are these beings born by breaking out from the caul; this is called womb-born generation. What is moisture-born generation? There are these beings born in a rotten fish, in a rotten corpse, in rotten porridge, in a cesspit, or in a sewer; this is called moisture-born generation. What is spontaneous generation? There are gods and denizens of hell and certain human beings and some beings in the lower worlds; this is called spontaneous generation. These are the four kinds of generation.

34. {....}

(THE FIVE DESTINATIONS AND NIBBĀNA)

35. "Sāriputta, there are these five destinations. What are the five? Hell, the animal realm, the realm of ghosts, human beings, and gods.

36. (1) "I understand hell, and the path and way leading to hell. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, in hell.

(2) "I understand the animal realm, and the path and way leading to the animal realm. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in the animal realm.

BV: There was a lady that was a butcher for a long time, in Burma, and she had her own particular set of knives, and she was very well known for being able to butcher pigs. She got sick, and she was getting close to death, and she started getting on the floor, walking on all fours, squealing like a pig, and she did this for seven days, and the family was going crazy, they didn't know what to do. And they thought,: "Well if she saw something that she's familiar with, then maybe that will help her mind snap out of this." So, in their brilliance, they went and got her knives, and they showed her knives to this lady and she had a heart attack and died right then because of fear. She knew what those knives meant, and what they were going to do – she was going to get cut up, she had a heart attack and died. Where do you think she was reborn?

S: In an animal realm.

BV: Probably as a pig, in the animal realm.

Ok –

MN: (3) "I understand the realm of ghosts, and the path and way leading to the realm of ghosts. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in the realm of ghosts.

BV: The last minute before death is real important, and if people have a thought of dissatisfaction, or a thought of lust, chances are very good, that they will be either reborn in a hell realm, or they will be reborn as a ghost, depending on the strength of the thought, that sort of thing.

MN: (4) "I understand human beings, and the path and way leading to the human world. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear among human beings.

BV: What happens is, there are visions that come to people right before they die, and the visions that they have, would be of past family members coming to visit them, and if they die at that time, when that vision is there, then they'll be reborn as a human being.

MN: (5) "I understand the gods, and the path and way leading to the world of the gods. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, on the dissolution of the body, after death, reappear in a happy destination, in the heavenly world,

BV: And the vision that people have ... my uncle, he was a farmer, and he was a pretty good man, he really was, he was very helpful and kind to a lot of people and went out of his way to help. As he was dying, he said: "I'm going home." And my aunt said: "What are you talking about?" He said ... he just pointed up, he said: "I'm going home." She said: "How do you know?" He said: "There are some angels here that are taking me." So when he died, he went to a heavenly realm, chances are.

MN: (6) "I understand Nibbāna, and the path and way leading to Nibbāna. And I also understand how one who has entered this path will, by realising for himself with direct knowledge, here and now enter upon and abide in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.

BV: The people that practice straight vipassana, they take this to mean, that the deliverance by wisdom is deliverance by vipassana. And through the studies that I've done, I've seen that the deliverance

by wisdom, wisdom is always talking about Dependent Origination, so there's some slight change in that.

MN: 37. (1) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he will reappear in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, in hell.' And then later on, with the' divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, I see that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he has reappeared in a state of deprivation, in an unhappy destination, in perdition, in hell, and is experiencing exclusively painful, racking, piercing feelings.

BV: When Devadatta died, the Buddha, somebody asked him what realm he was born in and the Buddha told him about this kind of hell, where it's a huge pot of molten lead, and for thirty thousand years he goes down 'til he gets the bottom, and for thirty thousand years, he comes up, when he breaks the surface, he has enough time to utter one syllable, and then he heads back down again. We called that, doing your rounds. (Laughs) So that's not, that's... we didn't never want to be doing the rounds, that was for sure.

S: Must have been a pretty bad character ~

BV: Well he caused a schism in the order, he tried to wound the Buddha, he tried to take the order over from the Buddha, he did all kind of nasty things. But an interesting thing with Devadatta, is, he was always the tormentor of the Bodhisatta, he was always the tester of the Bodhisatta when he was developing his good qualities, his ten pāramīs. And the Bodhisatta needed him, to do all of these things, so he could become a Buddha. And what the Buddha said was: "Yeah, he's going to suffer for a long time, but eventually he is going to get out of that hell realm, and he will become a pacceka-buddha." He'll become a silent Buddha, at some point in the future, because, he really did help the bodhisatta to become the Buddha, although he tormented a lot. Every Buddha needs somebody like that. So, who's your biggest tormentor? You should thank them for that.

MN: Suppose there were a charcoal pit deeper than a man's height full of glowing coals without flame or smoke; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only and directed to that same charcoal pit. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path, that he will come to this same charcoal pit'; and then later on he sees that he has fallen into that charcoal pit and is experiencing exclusively painful, racking, piercing feelings. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...piercing feelings.

38. (2) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he will reappear in the animal realm.' And then later on, with the divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, I see that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he has reappeared in the animal realm and is experiencing painful, racking, piercing feelings. Suppose there were a cesspit deeper than a man's height full of filth; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only and directed to that same cesspit. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: This person so behaves...that he will come to this same cesspit'; and then later on he sees that he has fallen into that cesspit and is experiencing painful, racking, piercing feelings. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...piercing feelings.

39. (3) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he will reappear in the realm of ghosts.'

BV: One of the ghost realms is the hungry ghost realm, and the hungry ghost is a being that has a mouth, that's so small they can't get anything in it. But the torture of it being that kind of ghost, is they're around food all the time. This is one of the realms, that, if you do a very virtuous act of generosity of giving food to the sangha, and you share merit, with a relative that happens to be reborn in the

ghost realm, then they will be able to get benefit and eat that food. It makes their mind very uplifted and happy. This is one of the reasons that on the anniversary of the death of somebody in your family, that you invite sangha members over to the house and give them food and clothing and requisites. There was a Burmese man that did that for U Silananda and his father had died, and his father was quite an intellectual, and he was a writer. So one of the things that they gave to U Silananda was a big stock of notepads, pencils and pens and things like that, and then shared the merit so that if he was reborn in the ghost realm, he would benefit from that, and be able to write things down, whatever.

S: Did they know where he was going?

BV: Sometimes you do, sometimes you don't. I don't know how to answer that. Definitively, the Buddha knows. Somebody that is very, very good with their psychic abilities, they would know. For a lot of people, it's a guess. The Chinese have this thing with time, that if they die at this particular time, on this particular day of this particular month of this particular year, they have a chart that they go down, and they say: "Oh, he's reborn in this realm or that realm." It's not as accurate as it could be, let's say you can say that. But the Chinese people absolutely believe it. They pay this guy to come and do a ceremony and then tell them where they're reborn.

MN: And then later on...I see that...he has reappeared in the realm of ghosts and is experiencing much painful feeling. Suppose there were a tree growing on uneven ground with scanty foliage casting a dappled shadow; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only and directed to that same tree. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: This person so behaves...that he will come to this same tree'; and then later on he sees that he is sitting or lying in the shade of that tree experiencing much painful feeling. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...much painful feeling.

40. (4) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken

such a path that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he will reappear among human beings.' And then later on...I see that...he has reappeared among human beings and is experiencing much pleasant feeling. Suppose there were a tree growing on even ground with thick foliage casting a deep shade; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only and directed to that same tree. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: This person so behaves...that he will come to this same tree'; and then later on he sees that he is sitting or lying in the shade of that tree experiencing much pleasant feeling. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...much pleasant feeling.

41. (5) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: 'This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path that on the dissolution of the body, after death, he will reappear in a happy destination, in the heavenly world.' And then later on...I see that...he has reappeared in a happy destination, in the heavenly world, and is experiencing exclusively pleasant feelings.

BV: One of the things that I think is not quite correct, is, even though you're in a heavenly realm, there's still disappointments that happen, there's still things come up that you would like to see happen, that don't. And that's a form of dukkha. But if you're in a hell realm, you don't experience pain, hundred percent of the time. There are times when it's not as bad as others, and it's not ... it's still forms of dukkha, and it's still painful feeling, but painful feeling is more intense sometimes than others. So it's not that you're going to only experience a happy feeling like it's inferring here. There are times when you go to a heavenly realm, that you want to play with somebody else's mints, or whatever, and they don't want you to do that, so you don't. But you still have that desire, and the desire is not met. So, it's not hundred percent of the time that you feel pleasant feeling when you're in a heavenly realm.

MN: Suppose there were a mansion, and it had an upper chamber plastered within and without, shut off, secured by bars, with shuttered windows, and in it there was a couch spread with rugs,

blankets, and sheets, with a deerskin coverlet, with a canopy as well as crimson pillows for both [head and feet]; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only and directed to that same mansion. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: 'This person so behaves...that he will come to this same mansion'; and then later on he sees that he is sitting or lying in that upper chamber in that mansion experiencing exclusively pleasant feelings. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...exclusively pleasant feelings.

42. (6) "By encompassing mind with mind I understand a certain person thus: This person so behaves, so conducts himself, has taken such a path that by realising for himself with direct knowledge, he here and now will enter upon and abide in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints.' And then later on I see that by realising for himself with direct knowledge, he here and now enters upon and abides in the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom that are taintless with the destruction of the taints, and is experiencing exclusively pleasant feelings. Suppose there were a pond with clean, agreeable, cool water, transparent, with smooth banks, delightful, and nearby a dense wood; and then a man scorched and exhausted by hot weather, weary, parched, and thirsty, came by a path going in one way only towards that same pond. Then a man with good sight on seeing him would say: 'This person so behaves...that he will come to this same pond'; and then later on he sees that he has plunged into the pond, bathed, drunk, and relieved all his distress, fatigue, and fever and has come out again and is sitting or lying in the wood experiencing exclusively pleasant feelings. So too, by encompassing mind with mind...exclusively pleasant feelings. These are the five destinations.

43. "Sāriputta, when I know and see thus, should anyone say of me: 'The recluse Gotama does not have any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The recluse Gotama teaches a Dhamma [merely] hammered out by reasoning, following his own line of inquiry as it occurs to him'—unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and

relinquishes that view, then as [surely as if he had been] carried off and put there he will wind up in hell. Just as a bhikkhu possessed of virtue, [collectedness], and wisdom would here and now enjoy final knowledge, so it will happen in this case, I say, that unless he abandons that assertion and that state of mind and relinquishes that view, then as [surely as if he had been] carried off and put there he will wind up in hell.

BV: Now this is where it gets real interesting, because now we're starting to talk of the bodhisatta's austerities, the things that he did, before he became a Buddha.

MN: (THE BODHISATTA'S AUSTERITIES)

44. "Sāriputta, I recall having lived a holy life possessing four factors. I have been an ascetic—a supreme ascetic; I have been coarse—supremely coarse; I have been scrupulous—supremely scrupulous; I have been secluded—supremely secluded.

45. "Such was my asceticism, Sāriputta, that I went naked, rejecting conventions, licking my hands, not coming when asked, not stopping when asked; I did not accept food brought or food specially made or an invitation to a meal; I received nothing from a pot, from a bowl, across a threshold, across a stick, across a pestle, from two eating together, from a pregnant woman, from a woman giving suck, from a woman lying in the midst of men, from where food was advertised to be distributed, from where a dog was waiting, from where flies were buzzing; I accepted no fish or meat, I drank no liquor, wine, or fermented brew. I kept to one house, to one morsel; I kept to two houses, to two morsels;...I kept to seven houses, to seven morsels. I lived on one saucerful a day, on two saucerfuls a day...on seven saucerfuls a day; I took food once a day, once every two days...once every seven days; thus even up to once every fortnight, I dwelt pursuing the practice of taking food at stated intervals. I was an eater of greens or millet or wild rice or hide-parings

BV: Leather.

MN: or moss or ricebran or rice-scum or sesamum flour or grass or cowdung. I lived on forest roots and fruits; I fed on fallen fruits. I

clothed myself in hemp, in hemp-mixed cloth, in shrouds, in refuse rags, in tree bark, in antelope hide, in strips of antelope hide, in kusa-grass fabric,

BV: Kusa grass, is so incredibly ... it's like razor blades. And if you don't handle kusa grass just right, you wind up getting cut, all over the place. And thinking of having clothing made out of kusa grass, pheew, that's something.

MN: in bark fabric, in wood-shavings fabric, in head-hair wool, in animal wool, in owls' wings.

BV: How would you like to live in some owl's wings?

MN: I was one who pulled out hair and beard, pursuing the practice of pulling out hair and beard.

BV: He's talking of tweezers.

MN: I was one who stood continuously, rejecting seats. I was one who squatted continuously, devoted to maintaining the squatting position. I was one who used a mattress of spikes; I made a mattress of spikes my bed. I dwelt pursuing the practice of bathing in water three times daily including the evening. Thus in such a variety of ways I dwelt pursuing the practice of tormenting and mortifying the body. Such was my asceticism.

46. "Such was my coarseness, Sāriputta, that just as the bole of a tinduka tree, accumulating over the years, cakes and flakes off, so too, dust and dirt, accumulating over the years, caked off my body and flaked off.

BV: Didn't take a bath.

MN: It never occurred to me: 'Oh, let me rub this dust and dirt off with my hand, or let another rub this dust and dirt off with his hand'—it never occurred to me thus. Such was my coarseness.

47. "Such was my scrupulousness, Sāriputta, that I was always mindful in stepping forwards and stepping backwards. I was full of pity even in regard to a drop of water thus: 'Let me not hurt the tiny

creatures in the crevices of the ground.' Such was my scrupulousness.

48. "Such was my seclusion, Sāriputta, that I would plunge into some forest and dwell there. And when I saw a cowherd or a shepherd or someone gathering grass or sticks, or a woodsman, I would flee from grove to grove, from thicket to thicket, from hollow to hollow, from hillock to hillock. Why was that? So that they should not see me or I see them. Just as a forest-bred deer, on seeing human beings, flees from grove to grove, from thicket to thicket, from hollow to hollow, from hillock to hillock, so too, when I saw a cowherd or a shepherd...Such was my seclusion.

49. "I would go on all fours to the cow-pens

BV: You'll love this one.

MN: when the cattle had gone out and the cowherd had left them, and I would feed on the dung of the young suckling calves. As long as my own excrement and urine lasted, I fed on my own excrement and urine.

BV: (Laughs)

S: ~

BV: Yeah.

MN: Such was my great distortion in feeding.

50. "I would plunge into some awe-inspiring grove and dwell there—a grove so awe-inspiring that normally it would make a man's hair stand up if he were not free from lust. When those cold wintry nights came during the 'eight-days interval of frost,'<sup>1</sup> I would dwell by night in the open and by day in the grove. In the last month of the hot season I would dwell by day in the open and by night in the grove. And there came to me spontaneously this stanza never heard before:

'Chilled by night and scorched by day,  
Alone in awe-inspiring groves,  
Naked, no fire to sit beside,  
The sage yet pursues his quest.'

51. "I would make my bed in a charnel ground with the bones of the dead for a pillow. And cowherd boys came up and spat on me, urinated on me, threw dirt at me, and poked sticks into my ears. Yet I do not recall that I ever aroused an evil mind [of hate] against them. Such was my abiding in equanimity.

BV: These are powerful things that he was doing, even to some of it is pretty disgusting.

MN: 52. "Sāriputta, there are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through food.' They say: 'Let us live on kola-fruits,' and they eat kola-fruits, they eat kola-fruit powder, they drink kola-fruit water, and they make many kinds of kola-fruit concoctions. Now I recall having eaten a single kola-fruit a day. Sāriputta, you may think that the kola-fruit was bigger at that time, yet you should not regard it so: the kola-fruit was then at most the same size as now. Through feeding on a single kola-fruit a day, my body reached a state of extreme emaciation. Because of eating so little my limbs became like the jointed segments of vine stems or bamboo stems. Because of eating so little my backside became like a camel's hoof. Because of eating so little the projections on my spine stood forth like corded beads. Because of eating so little my ribs jutted out as gaunt as the crazy rafters of an old roofless barn. Because of eating so little the gleam of my eyes sank far down in their sockets, looking like a gleam of water that has sunk far down in a deep well. Because of eating so little my scalp shrivelled and withered as a green bitter gourd shrivels and withers in the wind and sun. Because of eating so little my belly skin adhered to my backbone; thus if I wanted to touch my belly skin I encountered my backbone, and if I wanted to touch my backbone I encountered my belly skin. Because of eating so little, if I wanted to defecate or urinate, I fell over on my face right there. Because of

eating so little, if I tried to ease my body by rubbing my limbs with my hands, the hair, rotted at its roots, fell from my body as I rubbed.

53- 55. "Sāriputta, there are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through food.' They say: 'Let us live on beans,'... 'Let us live on sesamum,'... 'Let us live on rice,' and they eat rice, they eat rice powder, they drink rice water, and they make many kinds of rice concoctions. Now I recall having eaten a single rice grain a day. Sāriputta, you may think that the rice grain was bigger at that time, yet you should not regard it so: the rice grain was then at most the same size as now. Through feeding on a single rice grain a day, my body reached a state of extreme emaciation. Because of eating so little...the hair, rotted at its roots, fell from my body as I rubbed.

56. "Yet, Sāriputta, by such conduct, by such practice, by such performance of austerities, I did not attain any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. Why was that? Because I did not attain that noble wisdom which when attained is noble and emancipating and leads the one who practises in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering.

57. "Sāriputta, there are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through the round of rebirths.' But it is not easy to find a realm in the round that I have not already passed through in this long journey, except for the gods of the Pure Abodes;

BV: That's the ones where the anāgāmīs go to.

MN: and had I passed through the round as a god in the Pure Abodes, I would never have returned to this world.

58. "There are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through [some particular kind of] rebirth.' But it is not easy to find a kind of rebirth that I have not

been reborn in already in this long journey, except for the gods of the Pure Abodes...

59. "There are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through [some particular] abode.' But it is not easy to find a kind of abode that I have not already dwelt in...except for the gods of the Pure Abodes..."

60. "There are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes about through sacrifice.' But it is not easy to find a kind of sacrifice that has not already been offered up by me in this long journey, when I was either a head-anointed noble king or a well-to-do brahmin.

61. "There are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'Purification comes through fire-worship.' But it is not easy to find a kind of fire that has not already been worshipped by me in this long journey, when I was either a head-anointed noble king or a well-to-do brahmin.

62. "Sāriputta, there are certain recluses and brahmins whose doctrine and view is this: 'As long as this good man is still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life, so long is he perfect in his lucid wisdom. But when this good man is old, aged, burdened with years, advanced in life, and come to the last stage, being eighty, ninety, or a hundred years old, then the lucidity of his wisdom is lost.' But it should not be regarded so. I am now old, aged, burdened with years, advanced in life, and come to the last stage: my years have turned eighty. Now suppose that I had four disciples with a hundred years' lifespan, perfect in mindfulness, retentiveness, memory, and lucidity of wisdom. Just as a skilled archer, trained, practised, and tested, could easily shoot a light arrow across the shadow of a palm tree, suppose that they were even to that extent perfect in mindfulness, retentiveness, memory, and lucidity of wisdom. Suppose that they continuously asked me about the four foundations of mindfulness and that I answered them when asked and that they remembered each answer of mine and never asked a subsidiary question or paused except to eat, drink,

consume food, taste, urinate, defecate, and rest in order to remove sleepiness and tiredness. Still the Tathāgata's exposition of the Dhamma, his explanations of factors of the Dhamma, and his replies to questions would not yet come to an end, but meanwhile those four disciples of mine with their hundred years' lifespan would have died at the end of those hundred years. Sāriputta, even if you have to carry me about on a bed, still there will be no change in the lucidity of the Tathāgata's wisdom.

63. "Rightly speaking, were it to be said of anyone: 'A being not subject to delusion has appeared in the world for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.' it is of me indeed that rightly speaking this should be said."

64. Now on that occasion the venerable Nāgasamāla was standing behind the Blessed One fanning him. Then he said to the Blessed One: "It is wonderful, venerable sir, it is marvellous! As I listened to this discourse on the Dhamma, the hairs of my body stood up. Venerable sir, what is the name of this discourse on the Dhamma?" "As to that, Nāgasamāla, you may remember this discourse on the Dhamma as 'The Hair-Raising Discourse.'" That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Nāgasamāla was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

BV: Nobody could ever accuse the Buddha of not having a sense of humor. But it is a very interesting discourse on the kind of austerities that he ... everybody would say: "This is the way to enlightenment." And he would go as far as anybody could possibly go with that practice. Nobody could go further, they might be able to come up to the same as him, but nobody could go further. And he would say: "Nope, this isn't the one." Now, that means that some of the things he was doing, I mean, eating cow dung, and things like that, like eating his own excrement, that was done because that he was told by people that that's the way to gain enlightenment, that's how you purify your body by doing this kind of thing. When you purify your body, you purify your mind. But there was always a separation between mind and body, when you are doing that. Mind is one thing

and body is something else. What he came to the conclusion was nāma-rūpa, mind and body, they are intimately connected. Now this comes through, in the instructions that he gives you in the Mindfulness of Breathing sutta – on the in-breath, you tranquilize your bodily formation. When you tranquilize your bodily formation, you automatically tranquilize your mental formations. You can't help but do that. So these are... it's incredibly brilliant, instructions, that are so right on that there's not an instant, that it doesn't work this way, that I've ever found, anyway. It always works. See, this relaxing of the tightness of your head, is relaxing of your body, and you get to see the subtleties of mind, right down to exactly how craving arises, and what that craving of the finest little part of that craving. And when you can see that, and you practice it, your practice is going to be deep, and it's going to be incredibly profound, because your understanding of this process, without identification, is, right there. If you relax before the craving arises, there is no identification. There's only this pure awareness and, (sighs) there's this, unshakable, absolutely unshakable, experience, that there is no "I". When you have seen that often enough, and turn that into a habit, you've seen all of Dependent Origination. You will have experienced the cessation of perception and feeling and seen Dependent Origination, and that's what ... That's the thing that a lot of Buddhists talk about, yeah, you have to experience the Four Noble Truths, and you have to realize the Four Noble Truths, but they don't really see exactly what that means. And it is seeing Dependent Origination and the Four Noble Truths: you see each one of the links; you see the cause of the link; you see the cessation of the link; and the way to the cessation of the link. You see that. And this is how the realization becomes such a big: "Oh, wow", that nibbana, occurs. I mean it's such deep, deep understanding of : "Yeah, this is a process." And there's no doubt in your mind at all. So this is what the Buddha was trying to show us, and when you go to The Samyutta Nikāya, and you see eighty-four discourses on basically saying the same thing, over and over again, about Dependent Origination, and yeah, some little tweaks in it here and there. But it's still Dependent Origination. Dependent Origination, you got to know Dependent Origination. If you don't know this, you ain't going to be enlightened, is basically what he comes out and says.

S: How do you ~ (Laughs)

BV: Relax more, take more interest, have fun doing it, smiling into the whole process. The joy is absolutely necessary, because that's your balancing factor, and, when your mind gets a little bit restless, then you focus on the last three factors of, the enlightenment factors. You focus on tranquility, stillness of mind, and equanimity. Because the feeling of restlessness is painful. It's there, and it's painful. And the way to get balance into that and stop identifying with that, is through the equanimity and the other things. As you practice your joy, you start seeing everything more as an impersonal process, because the joy helps put things in perspective. So, it's easy, piece of cake. (Laughs) Try sitting a little bit longer than you have been, just an extra ten minutes, and watch, what your mind does with that, and develop your equanimity with that, ok? Ok, anybody have any questions? Lets share some merit then.

May suffering ones, be suffering free  
And the fear struck, fearless be  
May the grieving shed all grief  
And may all beings find relief.

May all beings share this merit that we have thus acquired  
For the acquisition of all kinds of happiness.

May beings inhabiting space and earth  
Devas and nagas of mighty power  
Share this merit of ours.

May they long protect the Buddha's dispensation.

Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . . Sadhu . . .

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Footnote

1. The 'eight-days interval of frost' refers to a regular cold spell that occurs in northern India in late December or early January.