

MN 38 The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving - Mahātanhāsankhaya Sutta

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Includes: SN 12:2 Analysis of Dependent Origination - Vibhaṅgasuttaṃ
and SN 12:3 The Two Ways - Paṭipadāsuttaṃ

BV: This is a real interesting sutta, so please listen attentively and all will become clear.

(SETTING)

MN: 1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvathī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapindika's Park.

2. Now on that occasion a pernicious view had arisen in a monk named Sāti, son of a fisherman, thus: "As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another."

3. Several monks, having heard about this, went to the monk Sāti and asked him: "Friend Sāti, is it true that such a pernicious view has arisen in you?"

BV: You know what a question like that implies? It's like me walking up to you and say: "You know this view that you have that's so incredibly stupid? Are you really saying that?"

And his reply was...

MN: "Exactly so, friends. As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another."

Then those monks, desiring to detach him from that pernicious view, pressed and questioned and cross-questioned him thus: "Friend Sāti, do not say so. Do not misrepresent the Blessed One; it is not good to misrepresent the Blessed One. The Blessed One would not speak thus. For in many ways the Blessed One has stated consciousness to be dependently arisen, since without a condition there is no origination of consciousness."

Yet although pressed and questioned and cross-questioned by those monks in this way, the monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, still obstinately adhered to that pernicious view and continued to insist upon it.

BV: Now, this view is a Brahmin view. When you get right down to it there's no such religion as Hinduism; it's Brahmanism. And if you go to India and you talk to them about Hinduism, they'll look at you, wondering what you're talking about. So this is a Brahmin view.

MN: 4. Since the monks were unable to detach him from that pernicious view, they went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, they sat down at one side and told him all that had occurred, adding: "Venerable sir, since we could not detach the monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, from this pernicious view, we have reported this matter to the Blessed One."

5. Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk thus: "Come, monk, tell the monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, in my name that the Teacher calls him." - "Yes, venerable sir," he replied, and he went to the monk Sāti and told him: "The Teacher calls you, friend Sāti."

"Yes, friend," he replied, and he went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, sat down at one side. The Blessed One then asked him: "Sāti, is it true that the following pernicious view has arisen in you: 'As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another?'"

"Exactly so, venerable sir. As I understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, it is the same consciousness that runs and wanders through the round of rebirths, not another."

"What is that consciousness, Sāti?"

"Venerable sir, it is that which speaks and feels and experiences here and there the result of good and bad actions."

"Misguided man,

BV: This is a real heavy censure, whenever the Buddha would say that.

MN: to whom have you ever known me to teach the Dhamma in that way? Misguided man, have I not stated in many ways consciousness to be dependently arisen, since without a condition there is no origination of consciousness? But you, misguided man, have misrepresented us by your wrong grasp and injured yourself and stored up much demerit; for this will lead to your harm and suffering for a long time."

BV: And we're still talking about Sāti, the son of a fisherman twenty-five hundred years later, so it's really true isn't it?

MN: 6. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: "Monks, what do you think? Has this monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, kindled even a spark of wisdom in this Dhamma and Discipline?"

"How could he, venerable sir? No, venerable sir."

When this was said, the monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, sat silent, dismayed, with shoulders drooping and head down, glum, and without response. Then, knowing this, the Blessed One told him: "Misguided man, you will be recognized by your own pernicious view. I shall question the monks on this matter."

7. Then the Blessed One addressed the monks thus: "Monks, do you understand the Dhamma taught by me as this monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, does when he misrepresents us by his wrong grasp and injures himself and stores up much demerit?"

"No, venerable sir. For in many discourses the Blessed One has stated consciousness to be dependently arisen, since without a condition there is no origination of consciousness."

"Good, monks. It is good that you understand the Dhamma taught by me thus. For in many ways I have stated consciousness to be dependently arisen, since without a condition there is no origination of consciousness. But this monk Sāti, son of a fisherman, misrepresents us by his wrong grasp and injures himself and stores up much demerit; for this will lead to the harm and suffering of this misguided man for a long time.

BV: What happened with Sāti, the son of the fisherman, was right after this he disrobed, and he started heavily criticizing the Buddha for what he considered was wrong view.

(CONDITIONALITY OF CONSCIOUSNESS)

MN: 8. "Monks, consciousness is reckoned by the particular condition dependent upon which it arises. When consciousness arises dependent on the eye and forms, it is reckoned as eye-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the ear and sounds, it is reckoned as ear-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the nose and odours, it is reckoned as nose-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the tongue and flavours, it is reckoned as tongue-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the body and tangibles, it is reckoned as body consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the mind and mind-objects, it is reckoned as mind-consciousness. Just as fire is reckoned by the particular condition dependent on which it burns -

when fire burns dependent on logs, it is reckoned as a log fire; when fire burns dependent on faggots, it is reckoned as a faggot fire; when fire burns dependent on grass, it is reckoned as a grass fire; when fire burns dependent on cow-dung, it is reckoned as a cow-dung fire; when fire burns dependent on chaff, it is reckoned as a chaff fire; when fire burns dependent on rubbish, it is reckoned as a rubbish fire - so too, consciousness is reckoned by the particular condition dependent on which it arises. When consciousness arises dependent on the eye and forms, it is reckoned as eye-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the ear and sounds, it is reckoned as ear-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the nose and odours, it is reckoned as nose-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the tongue and flavours, it is reckoned as tongue-consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the body and tangibles, it is reckoned as body consciousness; when consciousness arises dependent on the mind and mind-objects, it is reckoned as mind-consciousness.

GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE ON BEING

9. "Monks, do you see: 'This has come to be'?" - "Yes venerable sir." - "Monks, do you see: 'Its origination occurs with that as nutriment'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, do you see: 'With the cessation of that nutriment, what has come to be is subject to cessation'?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

BV: What is the nutriment? For the eye, it's the colour and form, for the ear, it's sound, that's what the nutriment is.

MN: 10. "Monks, does doubt arise when one is uncertain thus: 'Has this come to be'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, does doubt arise when one is uncertain thus: 'Does its origination occur with that as nutriment'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, does doubt arise when one is uncertain thus: 'With the cessation of that nutriment, is what has come to be subject to cessation'?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

11. "Monks, is doubt abandoned in one who sees as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'This has come to be'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, is doubt abandoned in one who sees as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'Its origination occurs with that as nutriment'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, is doubt abandoned in one who sees as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'With the cessation of that nutriment, what has come to be is subject to cessation'?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

12. "Monks, are you thus free from doubt here: 'This has come to be'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, are you thus free from doubt here: 'Its origination occurs with that as nutriment'?" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, are you thus free from doubt here: 'With the cessation of that nutriment, what has come to be is subject to cessation'?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

13. "Monks, has it been seen well by you as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'This has come to be?'"

BV: Now, what he's doing is he's asking if they have the direct experience.

MN: - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, has it been seen well by you as it actually is with proper wisdom thus; 'Its origination occurs with that as nutriment?'" - "Yes, venerable sir." - "Monks, has it been seen well by you as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'With the cessation of that nutriment, what has come to be is subject to cessation?'" - "Yes, venerable sir."

14. "Monks, purified and bright as this view is, if you adhere to it, cherish it, treasure it, and treat it as a possession, would you then understand that the Dhamma has been taught as similar to a raft, being for the purpose of crossing over, not for the purpose of grasping?" - "No, venerable sir."

BV: If you hold on to this view, you're not following what the Buddha's teaching is – it's just seeing, allowing, letting it be.

MN: - "Monks, purified and bright as this view is, if you do not adhere to it, cherish it, treasure it, and treat it as a possession, would you then understand that the Dhamma has been taught as similar to a raft, being for the purpose of crossing over, not for the purpose of grasping?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

(NUTRIMENT AND DEPENDENT ORIGINATION)

15. "Monks, there are these four kinds of nutriment for the maintenance of beings that already have come to be and for the support of those about to come to be. What four? They are: physical food as nutriment, gross or subtle; contact as the second; mental volition as the third; and consciousness as the fourth.

16. "Now, monks, these four kinds of nutriment have what as their source, what as their origin, from what are they born and produced? These four kinds of nutriment have craving as their source, craving as their origin; they are born and produced from craving.

BV: And how does craving manifest itself? Tightness, tension and tightness in mind and body. That's always how you recognize it. This is why craving is the weak link in dependent origination because it's not something that's... it's particularly persistent, but it's not particularly hard to let go of.

MN: And this craving has what as its source...? Craving has feeling as its source... And this feeling has what as its source...? Feeling has contact as its source... And this contact has what as its source...? Contact has the six-fold base as its source... And this six-fold base has what as its source...? The six-fold base has mentality/materiality as its source... And this mentality/materiality has what as its

source...? Mentality/materiality has consciousness as its source... And this consciousness has what as its source...? Consciousness has formations as its source... And these formations have what as their source, what as their origin; from what are they born and produced? Formations have ignorance as their source, ignorance as their origin; they are born and produced from ignorance.

BV: What is ignorance? Ignorance is not seeing the four noble truths. Ignorance is always not seeing the four noble truths. In other words, there is an ignoring that happens. Why does it happen? Because we take these things personally and think they're ours. And we ignore the fact that there is suffering, there is a cause of suffering, there is cessation of suffering, and the way to the cessation.

(FORWARD EXPOSITION ON ARISING)

MN: 17. "So, monks, with ignorance as condition, formations [come to be]; with formations as condition, consciousness comes to be; with consciousness as condition, mentality/materiality comes to be; with mentality/materiality as condition, the six-fold base comes to be; with the six-fold base as condition, contact comes to be; with contact as condition, feeling comes to be; with feeling as condition, craving comes to be; with craving as condition, clinging comes to be; with clinging as condition, being comes to be;

BV: Now, the 'being', this translation, we'll call it 'habitual tendency' comes to be.

MN: with habitual tendency as condition, birth comes to be; with birth as condition, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(REVERSE ORDER QUESTIONNAIRE ON ARISING)

18. "'With birth as condition, ageing and death': so it was said. Now, monks, do ageing and death have birth as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Ageing and death have birth as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'with birth as condition, ageing and death comes to be.'"

"'With habitual tendency as condition, birth': so it was said. Now, monks, does birth have habitual tendency as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Birth has habitual tendency as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case; 'With habitual tendency as condition, birth comes to be.'"

“With clinging as condition, habitual tendency’: so it was said. Now, bhikkhus, does habitual tendency have clinging as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“Habitual tendency has clinging as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With clinging as condition, habitual tendency.’”

“With craving as condition, clinging’: so it was said. Now, monks, does clinging have craving as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“Clinging has craving as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With craving as condition, clinging comes to be.’”

“With feeling as condition, craving’: so it was said. Now, bhikkhus, does craving have feeling as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“Craving has feeling as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With feeling as condition, craving comes to be.’”

“With contact as condition, feeling’: so it was said. Now, monks, does feeling have contact as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“Feeling has contact as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With contact as condition, feeling.’”

“With the sixfold base as condition, contact’: so it was said. Now, monks, does contact have the six-fold base as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“Contact has the six-fold base as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With the six-fold base as condition, contact.’”

“With the mentality/materiality as condition, the six-fold base’: so it was said. Now, monks, does the six-fold base have mentality/materiality as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?”

“The six-fold base has mentality/materiality as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: ‘With mentality/materiality as condition, the six-fold base comes to be.’”

BV: The mentality/materiality, in Pāli it’s called nāma-rūpa, and it’s most often translated as name and form. And that’s incredibly difficult to understand. When you say mentality and materiality, it makes it a lot different. I’ll go into the definitions of each one of these in just a minute.

MN: "With consciousness as condition, mentality/materiality': so it was said. Now, monks, does mentality/materiality have consciousness as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Mentality/materiality has consciousness as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'With consciousness as condition, mentality/materiality comes to be.'"

"With formations as condition, consciousness': so it was said. Now, monks, does consciousness have formations as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Consciousness has formations as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'With formations as condition, consciousness comes to be.'"

"With ignorance as condition, formations': so it was said. Now, monks, do formations have ignorance as condition or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Formations have ignorance as condition, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'With ignorance as condition, formations come to be.'"

(RECAPITULATION ON ARISING)

19. Good, monks. So you say thus, and I also say thus: 'When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises.' That is, with ignorance as condition, formations come to be; with formations as condition, consciousness comes to be; with consciousness as condition, mentality/materiality comes to be; with mentality/materiality as condition, the six-fold base; with the six-fold base as condition, contact comes to be; with contact as condition, feeling comes to be; with feeling as condition, craving comes to be; with craving as condition, clinging comes to be; with clinging as condition, habitual tendency comes to be; with habitual tendency as condition, birth comes to be; with birth as condition, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

BV: Now, get into the definitions. Huh?

BV: Well, it's actually the link between feeling and craving. Ah, page #534. Ok. This is called the Analysis of Dependent Origination, in the Samyutta Nikāya. (1)

SN 12:2 Analysis of Dependent Origination (page 534)

At Sāvattthi. "Monks, I will teach you dependent origination and I will analyse it for you. Listen to that and attend closely. I will speak."

"Yes, venerable sir," those monks replied. The Blessed one said this:

“And what, monks, is dependent origination? With ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]; with volitional formations, consciousness...

BV: ... and we go through the whole thing.

SN: Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

“And what, monks, is aging-and-death? The aging of the various beings in the various orders of beings, their growing old, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of vitality, degeneration of the faculties: this is called aging.

BV: And I feel every one of those. Haha!

SN: The passing away of the various beings from the various orders of beings, their perishing, breakup, disappearance, mortality, death, completion of time, the breakup of the aggregates, the laying down of the carcass: this is called death. Thus this aging and this death are together called aging-and-death.

“And what monks, is birth? The birth of the various beings into the various orders of beings, their being born, descent [into the womb], production, the manifestation of the aggregates, the obtaining of the sense bases. This is called birth.

“And what, monks, is existence?

BV: This is your habitual tendency again, but this... when I’m talking about the habitual tendency that is in the sense-sphere existence, because that’s the practical application for seeing it. But there is more to this.

SN: There are these three kinds of existence: sense-sphere existence, form-sphere existence, formless-sphere existence. This is called existence.

BV: The form-sphere existence is the lower jhānas. First jhāna, second jhāna, third jhāna, and the fourth jhāna. And the formless-sphere existence is the arupa jhānas: infinite space; infinite consciousness; nothing; neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

SN: “And what, monks, is clinging? There are these four kinds of clinging: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and vows.

BV: Rites and rituals, believing that rites and rituals will lead you to Nibbāna, or take you to Nibbāna.

SN: clinging to a doctrine of self. This is called clinging.

BV: Now, in this clinging, you've heard me talk about thinking, and that has to do with the views. And also I talk about concepts, and that has to do with the views. I also talk about when you let go of the craving, there is no clinging. That means you've let go of the views for that brief moment. You've let go of concepts for that brief moment. You've let go of the belief that there is a personal self for that moment. As you do this over and over, it starts to sink in.

This is one of the reasons why when restlessness arises, it is your best friend because when you have these thoughts, and concepts, and ideas of what you like and what you don't like, and all of this stuff, when you let go of that and relax, you're letting go of the belief that these thoughts and feelings are yours personally. You're starting to see that this is an impersonal process. The beginning of the "I" belief is in craving, but the building up of that belief and really taking good strong hold of it is in clinging. Now, one of the things that's happening in this country right now, is that a lot of people are putting craving and clinging together and they say: "Well, that's grasping." And on a surface level, they're right. But when you start looking more and more closely, you start to see that they are two separate things, and you can't put them together.

SN: "And what monks, is craving? There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for tactile objects, craving for mental phenomena. This is called craving.

BV: It's the "I like it, I don't like it" at each one of the sense doors. Each one of the sense doors has the feeling and the craving right behind it. So this is why being able to recognize the feeling that arises at each one of the sense doors is incredibly important. And as soon as you recognize a feeling, then you relax right then, you don't have the craving or the rest of... the end of the dependent origination arising. That is why your mind becomes pure. That's why your mind becomes clean. Because you've let go of all concepts, and you're seeing this process as a process. It's not personal. These things all arise because of conditions. And there is no "me", there is no "I" in any of this, when you let go at craving.

SN: "And what, bhikkhus, is feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact, feeling born of nose-contact, feeling born of tongue-contact, feeling born of body-contact, feeling born of mind-contact. This is called feeling.

"And what, monks, is contact? There are these six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-contact, nose-contact, tongue-contact, body-contact, mind-contact. This is called contact.

"And what, monks, are the six sense bases? The eye base, the ear base, the nose base, the tongue base, the body base, the mind base. These are called the six sense bases.

"And what, monks, is mentality/materiality? Feeling, perception, volition, contact, attention: this is called mentality. The four great elements and the form derived from the four great elements: this is called... materiality. Thus this mentality and this materiality are together called mentality/materiality.

BV: Now, when you have a feeling arise, it always seems like that's part of materiality, doesn't it? But it's not, it's mentality. It's a mental feeling, even though it's at each one of the sense doors. That's why these two things are together. You have to have the four elements, in all of their different forms, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element. You have to have these four elements; that's what makes up the physical body; that's what makes up the physical universe. It's just the different degrees of these elements that come together. And this is one of the things that made the Buddha so incredibly unique. He saw that there is a dependence on mentality and materiality. They depend on each other for existence.

When you're practicing meditation, and you're doing absorption concentration, you lose sensation in your body completely. Now, you remember a few nights ago, we went through the 'One by One as it Occurred {MN111}', and all of the way up to the realm of nothingness there was contact. In other words, you had your physical body, and if there was contact, there was feeling arising. When you get up into your arupa jhānas, you won't necessarily feel your body until there would be contact. You would feel the wind blow on your face, or you would feel an ant walk across you. But your equanimity is strong enough that it doesn't make your mind wobble and shake. That's a major difference between what the Buddha is teaching, and what was taught before the time of the Buddha.

Absorption concentration, the concentration gets so deep that you don't even know that there is a body present, because you're focused so deeply on one thing. And when you practice absorption concentration - and I've run across this many, many, many times - people practicing different forms of absorption concentration, they wind up getting a lot of tension and tightness in their head. And it gets so intense, it's like a hot needle that's sticking right in the head. And the instructions are always: "Well, don't pay any attention to it, just keep going, it will disappear", and it does. But that is not what we would call full awareness. You keep on focusing on one point until you don't have any sensation in your body at all, even if I were come up and hit you on the head, you wouldn't feel it. If I take a gun and put it right by your ear, you wouldn't hear it. That is not full awareness. That is what was practiced before the time of the Buddha. Now, with this one extra step that the Buddha put in the meditation, it does not allow your mind to get so incredibly one-pointed. There's still full awareness, you still have the five aggregates in the jhānas; they're still there. So when he started talking

about mind and body, he was talking about that connection that's always there. You don't have one without the other, not in the way the Buddha taught us to practice.

SN: "And what monks, is consciousness? There are these six classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, mind-consciousness. This is called consciousness.

SN: "And what, monks, are the volitional formations? There are these three kinds of volitional formations: the bodily volitional formation, the verbal volitional formation, the mental volitional formation. These are called the volitional formations.

BV: By the way, when Bhikkhu Bodhi wrote this book, he added the word 'volitional' to the formations. And you could say that's ok, and you could say it's not ok. The Pāli word is sankhāra. Sankhāra is one of the biggest words in the Pāli language because it covers so much; there's so many different kinds of definitions you can give to sankhāra. So in a way volitional formations is good, in a way it's a little bit misleading. I think it's better to leave the word volitional out with this definition.

SN: "And what, monks, is ignorance?"

BV: I bet we know what that one is...

SN: Not knowing suffering, not knowing the origin of suffering, not knowing the cessation of suffering, not knowing the way leading to the cessation of suffering. This is called ignorance.

"Thus monks, with ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]; with volitional formations as condition, consciousness comes to be; with consciousness as condition, mentality/materiality comes to be; with mentality/materiality as condition, the six sense doors; with the six sense doors as condition, contact comes to be; with contact as condition, feeling comes to be; with feeling as condition, craving comes to be; with craving as condition, clinging comes to be; with clinging as condition, habitual tendency comes to be; with habitual tendency as condition, birth comes to be; with birth as condition, aging-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair comes to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. But with the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance comes the cessation of volitional formations; ...

BV: And we'll let that go right now because we're going to go back to... oh. This is an interesting thing too, this is the next sutta in the Samyutta Nikāya, it's number three, it's called "The Two Ways".

SN 12:3 The Two Ways (Page 536)

AT Sāvatti. "Monks, I will teach you the wrong way and the right way. Listen to that and attend closely, I will speak."

"Yes venerable sir." those monks replied. The Blessed One said this:

"And what monks, is the wrong way? With ignorance as condition, volitional formations [come to be]; with volitional formations as condition, consciousness comes to be...

BV: Why is that the wrong way?

SN: This, monks, is called the wrong way.

"And what, monks, is the right way? With the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance comes cessation of volitional formations; {misses} with the cessation of volitional formations, cessation of consciousness... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering. This bhikkhus, is called the right way."

BV: The one way is talking about the arising of these conditions, one way is talking about the cessation of these conditions. He says the proper way to practice is with **the cessation** of these conditions.

Now, when you're sitting in meditation and you have a wandering thought and you let go, and you relax, and you come back, and your mind does that again, the last thing right before getting caught with those thoughts is you'll notice that there's something right before that. And when you see that, then you let that go, and then you go along a little bit more and you'll see something right before that. You're seeing the cessation of these different things. Oh, wow!

So when we're practicing seeing how these things arise, and we become familiar, more and more familiar with the process, and we start letting go, a little bit, and a little bit, and a little bit, you are practicing the cessation, and that's the right way.

(FORWARD EXPOSITION ON CESSATION)

MN: 20. "But with the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance comes cessation of formations; with the cessation of formations, cessation of consciousness; with the cessation of consciousness, cessation of mentality/materiality; with the cessation of mentality/materiality, cessation of the six-fold base; with the cessation of the six-fold base, cessation of contact; with the cessation of contact, cessation of feeling; with the cessation of feeling, cessation of craving; with the cessation of craving, cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of habitual tendency; with the cessation of habitual tendency, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, ageing and

death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

(REVERSE ORDER QUESTIONNAIRE ON CESSATION)

BV: So you get to hear this a lot.

MN: 21. "With the cessation of birth, cessation of ageing and death': so it was said. Now, monks, do ageing and death cease with the cessation of birth or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Ageing and death cease with the cessation of birth, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'With the cessation of birth, cessation of ageing and death.'"

"With the cessation of habitual tendency, cessation of birth'... 'With the cessation of clinging, cessation of habitual tendency' ... 'With the cessation of craving, cessation of clinging' ... 'With the cessation of feeling, cessation of craving' ... 'With the cessation of contact, cessation of feeling' ... 'With the cessation of the sixfold base, cessation of contact' ... 'With the cessation of mentality-materiality, cessation of the sixfold base' ... 'With the cessation of consciousness, cessation of mentality-materiality' ... 'With the cessation of formations, cessation of consciousness' ... 'With the cessation of ignorance, cessation of formations': so it was said. Now, monks, do formations cease with the cessation of ignorance or not, or how do you take it in this case?"

"Formations cease with the cessation of ignorance, venerable sir. Thus we take it in this case: 'With the cessation of ignorance, cessation of formations.'"

(RECAPITULATION ON CESSATION)

22. "Good, monks. So you say thus, and I also say thus: 'When this does not exist, that does not come to be; with the cessation of this, that ceases.' That is, with the cessation of ignorance comes cessation of formations; with the cessation of formations, cessation of consciousness; with the cessation of consciousness, cessation of mentality-materiality; with the cessation of mentality-materiality, cessation of the sixfold base; with the cessation of the sixfold base, cessation of contact; with the cessation of contact, cessation of feeling; with the cessation of feeling, cessation of craving; with the cessation of craving, cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of habitual tendency; with the cessation of habitual tendency, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

BV: When you are doing your meditation, and this can happen any time when you are coming out of a jhāna, there can be the cessation of perception and feeling. When that happens, it's like somebody turns the lights out, it's just

“click”. There’s no perception, there’s no feeling at all in this state. When the perception and feeling arise again, you will see all of these different links of dependent origination. You will see it forwards, and then you’ll see it, the arising, and then you’ll see the cessation. And when you finally let go of ignorance, completely, there is the experience of Nibbāna at that time. That is how you experience Nibbāna. It is the deep, true, not only understanding, but also realization of dependent origination. When you realize it, everything changes. The fetters don’t arise anymore, ever again. Doesn’t that sound nice? Think about it. I mean your five lower fetters at least are going to disappear. And this is why you need to do the meditation, so that you can see very clearly how this process works.

You can just by mentally understanding dependent origination, you can become a sotāpanna, the first stage of enlightenment or a sakadāgāmi, the second stage of enlightenment. You will never get any deeper than that if you do not do the meditation, and you can also realize these first two states through meditation. And that’s what a very interesting sutta, number seventy {MN70} in the Majjhima Nikāya is all about. And I’m currently writing a book about this and how the fruition occurs, which is basically the same way. But when fruition occurs, say you become an anāgāmi, then at some time later, it can happen the next day, it can happen the next sitting, it just depends on you personally. What will happen is, you’ll be, say it happens the next day, and you’re in and you’re preparing a meal and you’re cutting vegetables, and you start feeling your mind become very, very clear and very, very alert, and you know it’s time to sit. So you go down and you sit and all of a sudden there’s the cessation of perception and feeling again. When that fades away and the perception and feeling comes back, you will see the dependent origination, the arising and the ceasing, three times, very quickly. And then you will have another experience of the Nibbāna, and that is called the fruition of that state.

If you’ve only gotten to the first stage, you will only see that one time. When you sit a second time, you will only see dependent origination arise and pass away that one time, and then you’ll have another experience which is the fruition of the Nibbāna. With the fruition at that stage, you forever leave alone doubt, it will never come up in your mind again, doubt that this is the right path. You will never have any belief that rites and rituals will lead to Nibbāna. That means chanting and all that other sort of thing too. And you will never again truly believe that there is a permanent self anywhere, you’ll see things as being impermanent.

If it happens that you get to the second stage, when the fruition occurs, there is the cessation of perception and feeling, and then you will see dependent origination two times. You’ll see the arising and the cessation, and the arising and cessation. It happens very quickly. And then that second experience of Nibbāna. When that happens, lust and hatred are very much weakened.

When you have that happen a third time, you see it three times, then not only these first three fetters have disappeared, but lust and hatred never arise in your mind again. Yeah, think about that, I mean that's really something. I've only met one person that was like that.

When you have the experience of arahatship, the fruition happens in the same way, but you see everything four times. And with that the last five fetters disappear. Pride, restlessness, desire for realms of form, desire for immaterial realms, and ignorance. Now, think about that one, no more, ever again, will ignorance arise. You'll see everything so clearly, and that's one of the reasons that it was so nice being around the time of the Buddha because you could go and talk to these men and these women that had that experience. And their mind was so clear, that when you talk to them, you would be able to have deep experiences, because they were so clear without having any fetter arise in their mind again. That's worth working for, to my way of thinking. You think so?

S: Did you say there is still restlessness in the non-returner?

BV: Yes, little bit, and there's still a taste of dullness. You're still learning that super fine balance. That's what we're doing here. Got one more day guys. Couple of you got a shot at it, more than that, actually.

S: Is there any way to tell somebody is an Arahant?

BV: In every country that has Buddhism, you have a lot of people that talk about this monk or that monk being arahants. I spent a lot of time looking for one. And it's very difficult to know when someone is an arahant; you have to spend time with them.

Now, there's a story about these two monks, that they went out on alms round and the senior monk, somebody gave him some hot rice soup in his bowl, that was the first thing that was put in his bowl, and he sat down and he started drinking it. And the junior monk started criticizing him pretty heavily, because you're not supposed to do that, but the senior monk said: "I have a problem with my stomach, and taking this while it's hot will help settle my stomach. That's why I'm doing it." And then the senior monk looked at him and said: "Friend, have you ever had any attainment in your spiritual path?" And the junior monk said: "Yes, I am a sotāpanna." And the senior monk said: "Don't look forward to any more progress in your meditation in this lifetime." And the junior monk was shocked, and he said: "Why?" And the senior monk said: "Because you criticized an arahant."

S: But isn't that pride on the senior monk's part?

BV: No, it's stating a fact.

S: Isn't that from commentaries?

BV: Now, now, now. Not all commentaries are bad or wrong, because I'm giving you commentary all the time here. Ok? And you can take it or leave it, it's up to you, it's just whether it agrees with most of the suttas that you've run across. That's the way you tell.

But I don't think that I've run across an arahat yet. I know that there was a lot of talk about Taungpulu Sayadaw being an arahat. When I was with U Silananda, there were people that when he was giving a retreat they were going around talking to the other Burmese saying: "You got to go practice with him, he's an arahat." And U Silananda took me aside and he said: "It's impossible for him to be an arahat." And I said: "How do you know that?" He said that Taungpulu Sayadaw, in one of his talks, said that he had taken a bodhisatta vow.

Now, when you take a bodhisatta vow, that will stop you from attaining Nibbāna in this lifetime. That's how strong this vow is. And if you have taken the bodhisatta vow and you want to obtain Nibbāna in this lifetime, I strongly recommend that you renounce that vow. The Tibetans and a lot of Mahayana rather insist that everybody that practices with them, they take the bodhisatta vow. And they're going to be of service and not attain Nibbāna until everybody attains Nibbāna. Which really sounds great, but the Buddha couldn't do it. If he could, we wouldn't be here. So it's not a realistic kind of vow.

And that's the vow that the Bodhisatta took to become the Bodhisatta. He had the potential, when he saw the Buddha that was around at that time; he had the potential to become an arahat in seven days. If he would have stayed without that bodhisatta vow, he would have become an arahat in that dispensation. But in front of a Buddha, he took that vow, and said: "I want to become a future Buddha." And that Buddha looked into the future with his divine eye, and saw that, yes, in fact he will become a Buddha. So he confirmed that this bodhisatta vow is very good and it will happen.

Now, what happens when people on their own take a bodhisatta vow, is after five hundred, or a thousand, or five thousand, or twenty five thousand lifetimes, they start realizing: "Hey, this is tough." And they'll renounce the bodhisatta vow. And when they renounce the bodhisatta vow, it cannot be in a Buddha era, so they're losing the chance of attaining Nibbāna until they happen to run across another Buddha sometime in the future. How long will that take to happen? Who knows? I mean with the bodhisatta vow, it took the Buddha four mahakappas and a hundred thousand lifetimes.

Now, a mahakappa is a big span of time. There's four parts to the mahakappa; they're called asankheyya. Each one of these asankheyyas lasts ten to the hundred and sixtieth power in years. So you've got to figure, it's really long time. But you think of it this way: there's four asankheyyas, and during that

asankheyya, there's the expansion of the universe, for one asankheyya, it stops for one asankheyya. There's the contraction of the universe for one asankheyya, and that's when everything gets bound to a little tiny black hole, for one asankheyya. And then there's an expansion of an asankheyya. The only time that beings are in this universe is when we're in the expansion. Now, you think about four mahakappas; you're talking about a lot of lifetimes. You're talking about more than a million; you're talking about a lot of lifetimes!

And each one of those lifetimes he had some pretty heavy-duty lessons to let go of. He had a lot to learn; he suffered a lot. There was one time he was reborn as a nāga, a snake, and he was very powerful. And if he got angry and he looked at you, you would turn into a cinder. Ok, this is the way the story goes. And in that lifetime he was practicing two of the pāramīs. The pāramīs are the perfections. He was practicing loving kindness, and he was practicing patience. There were some boys in a village that saw this big snake, and they took sharp sticks and they stabbed him a bunch of times all the way through, and then carried him into the village. Now, because he was practicing his patience and his loving kindness, he didn't do anything to these boys. He used that as his lesson, learning through his direct experience this lesson. That's just one lifetime.

Another lifetime – he was born as a young prince, and his mother loved him very much. He was about a year, year and a half old, and the mother was playing with the young prince and really having a great time with him. And the king walked into the room and said something to the mother, and the mother, the queen, didn't respond at all. And the king got jealous. And he started thinking: "Ah, what's going to happen in the future? She's so attached to this prince that they're going to conspire against me in the future and they're going to assassinate me, and I'm not going to allow that to happen, so the prince can become king. So I'm not going to allow that to happen." So he called the executioner. And he went and he picked up the young boy, and of course the mother is crying and all of this sort of stuff, and he tells the executioner: "Cut off his hands." So the executioner lopped off his hands. The bodhisatta at that time realized that this was his challenge for learning how to protect his loving kindness. He looked around the room; he saw that there were four different kinds of beings. There was himself, there was his mother that he loved very dearly, there was a neutral person, that was the executioner, he didn't know him that well. And there was his enemy, the father. So he started focusing his loving kindness on these four different beings, and he didn't cry. And the king got furious with that, and he said: "Cut off his legs." So the executioner cut his legs off. And still he didn't give into that pain, he didn't cry out. He was practicing his loving kindness very much. And finally the king said: "He's so disgusting, just cut off his head!", and he cut off the prince's head.

The prince was immediately born in a heavenly realm because his mind was very pure, he didn't entertain one thought of dissatisfaction, which is something you might think about when a hindrance arises. He just focused on his object of

meditation and he was reborn in a heavenly realm. Right after the prince had his head cut off - his mother was holding the hands and feet - she died right then of a broken heart, and she was reborn in a heavenly realm right alongside the prince because of her deep love for her son. And the king took one step and died. He had a heart attack, and he was reborn in one of the hell realms. The only one that got out without dying that day was the executioner. Why? He wasn't doing it out of hatred; he was just doing what he was told to be doing. Of course, that's not a good profession to be in, I would think. He eventually died and went to a nasty place, one of the hell realms.

But when you take a bodhisatta vow, these are the kind of tests that happen all along the way. So if you haven't had the assurance from a living Buddha, that you're going to be reborn as a Buddha, it's very hard to keep that vow. During the time of Buddha, there were people that tried to take the bodhisatta vow and they were told not to. So even today there are people that take a bodhisatta vow that are Theravādan, but they don't go advertising it. It's a very personal thing. And they feel like they have the strong enough faith in the Buddha that they will go ahead and take that. But to me, personally, it doesn't make sense to take a bodhisatta vow and stop from having the attainment of Nibbāna. Even if you only get to the first stage of Nibbāna, at least you're assured that you're going to get off the wheel of samsāra; you don't have to put up with all of this dukkha.

One of the biggest incentives for me to get off the wheel of samsāra is so that I don't have to be a teenager again. I mean, think about all the emotional ups and downs, and the craziness that happens, and the hard lessons. Falling in love and out of love every other week, and finding out you have a body and wondering: "What is this thing?" All of this, it's real suffering. So to me it makes more sense while we're in a Buddha era, and the Buddha's teaching is in relatively good shape, that we should go ahead and try to follow what he says and get off the wheel as fast as we can. That's what would make him the happiest. The more people that can experience Nibbāna, the happier the Buddha would be if he were still here teaching.

And the interesting thing about taking the bodhisatta vow, is the next time you're reborn as a human being, when you're fairly young, you can be eight or ten or a young teenager, you will have a dream. And in that dream you will see an image of the Buddha. And you will see yourself enter into the Buddha, into that Buddha image, and that way you know that you've taken the vow. And it's a very personal thing and there's no doubt in your mind that you've taken that vow. And if you enter into his feet, he's sitting right here, and you enter into either his knee or his feet, then that means that you're just beginning. If you enter into the navel, that means you've gone along, but you still got a long ways to go. If you enter into the heart, this is like... you still got a long ways to go but you're really getting there and you're starting to understand very deeply. When you enter into the third eye, that means you've only got a few hundred thousand lifetimes to go. They will have a dream and they know beyond the shadow of a doubt that that's

what they're doing, they're working towards the final stage. And they will not be reborn in a Buddha era again. They do it all on their own.

There are lots of stories about the adversity that the Buddha went through; that's what the Jātaka tales were all about. They were the challenging lifetimes that he went through and that's why the Jātaka tales, each one of them is like: "And the moral of the story is he perfected this part of the pāramīs", whatever that happened to be; his determination, or his patience, or his honesty, or whatever it happened to be. Consciously working on something, on one of the pāramīs, sometimes he works on two at one time. Like the last Jātaka tale - it's quite long - it's about seventy pages or something like that, is a story about how he knew that he was working on his final perfection of generosity. And he was a king and he started giving away everything, and he gave away the white elephant and it got everybody upset with him, and they took his throne away and they threw him out. And then somebody came along and said: "Well, I like your wife", so he gave his wife away. And then somebody came along and said: "I like your kids", and he gave the kids away. And the kids didn't like that, so they came back to him, and then he forced them to go back because he was practicing his generosity. And in the end, they all came back together and they lived happily ever after.

Anyway, let's get back to some dependent origination.

(PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE)

MN: 23. "Monks, knowing and seeing in this way, would you run back to the past thus: 'were we in the past? Were we not in the past? What were we in the past? How were we in the past? Having been what, what did we become in the past?'" - "No venerable sir." - "Knowing and seeing dependent origination in this way, would you run forward to the future thus: 'Shall we be in the future? Shall we not be in the future? What shall we be in the future? How shall we be in the future? Having been what, what shall we become in the future?'" - "No, venerable sir." - "Knowing and seeing in this way, would you now be inwardly perplexed about the present thus: 'Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where will it go?'" - "No, venerable sir."

BV: When you see dependent origination these questions won't even arise.

MN: 24. "Monks, knowing and seeing in this way, would you speak thus: 'The Teacher is respected by us. We speak as we do out of respect for the Teacher?'" - "No, venerable sir."

BV: No, they wouldn't say that. Why? Because they know and see it for themselves what dependent origination is and how it is. They wouldn't merely say something out of respect; they're taught from direct knowledge.

MN: - "Knowing and seeing in this way, would you speak thus: 'The Recluse says this, and we speak thus at the bidding of the Recluse?'" - "No, venerable sir." - "Knowing and seeing in this way, would you acknowledge another teacher?" - "No, venerable sir." - "Knowing and seeing in this way, would you return to the observances, tumultuous debates, and auspicious signs of ordinary recluses and brahmins, taking them as the core [of the holy life]?"

BV: Of course not.

MN: - "No, venerable sir." - "Do you speak only of what you have known, seen, and understood for yourselves?" - "Yes, venerable sir."

25. "Good, monks. So you have been guided by me with this Dhamma, which is visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting inspection, onward leading, to be experienced by the wise for themselves. For it was with reference to this that it has been said: 'Monks, this Dhamma is visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting inspection, onward leading, to be experienced by the wise for themselves.'

(THE ROUND OF EXISTENCE CONCEPTION TO MATURITY)

26. "Monks, the descent of the embryo takes place through the union of three things. Here, there is the union of the mother and father, but the mother is not in season, and the coming being is not present - in this case no descent of an embryo takes place. Here, there is the union of the mother and father, and the mother is in season, but the coming being is not present - in this case too no descent of the embryo takes place. But when there is the union of the mother and father, and the mother is in season, and the coming being is present, through the union of these three things the descent of the embryo takes place.

27. "The mother then carries the embryo in her womb for nine or ten months with much anxiety, as a heavy burden. Then, at the end of nine or ten months, the mother gives birth with much anxiety, as a heavy burden. Then, when the child is born, she nourishes it with her own blood; for the mother's breast-milk is called blood in the Noble One's Discipline.

28. "When he grows up and his faculties mature, the child plays at such games as toy ploughs, tipcat, somersaults, toy windmills, toy measures, toy cars,

MN: and a toy bow and arrow.

29. "When he grows up and his faculties mature [still further], the youth enjoys himself provided and endowed with the five cords of sensual pleasure, with forms cognizable by the eye... sounds cognizable by the ear... odours cognizable by the nose... flavours cognizable by the tongue... tangibles cognizable by the body that

are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire, and provocative of lust.

(THE CONTINUATION OF THE ROUND)

30. "On seeing a form with the eye, he lusts after it if it is pleasing; he dislikes it if it is unpleasing. He abides with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand, as it actually is the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom wherein those evil unwholesome states cease without remainder. Engaged as he is in favouring and opposing, whatever the feeling he feels - whether pleasant or painful or neither-painful-nor-pleasant - he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding to it. As he does so, delight arises in him. Now, delight in feelings is clinging. With his clinging as condition, habitual tendency [comes to be]; with habitual tendency as condition, birth comes to be; with birth as condition ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

"On hearing a sound with the ear... On smelling an odour with the nose... On tasting a flavour with the tongue... On touching a tangible with the body... On cognizing a mind object with the mind, he lusts after it if it is pleasing; he dislikes it if it is unpleasing... Now, delight in feelings is clinging. With his clinging as condition, habitual tendency [comes to be]; with habitual tendency as condition, birth; with birth as condition, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(THE ENDING OF THE ROUND: GRADUAL TRAINING)

31. "Here, monks, a Tathāgata appears in the world, 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. He declares this world with its gods, its Māras, and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its princes and its people, which he has himself realized with direct knowledge. He teaches the Dhamma good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing, and he reveals a holy life that is utterly perfect and pure.

32. "A householder or householder's son or one born in some other clan hears that Dhamma. On hearing the Dhamma he acquires faith in the Tathāgata. Possessing that faith, he considers thus: 'Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open. It is not easy, while living in a home, to lead the holy life utterly perfect and pure as a polished shell. Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness.' On a later occasion, abandoning a small or a large fortune,

abandoning a small or a large circle of relatives, he shaves off his hair and beard, puts on the yellow robe, and goes forth from the home life into homelessness.

33. "Having thus gone forth and possessing the monk's training and way of life, abandoning the killing of living beings, he abstains from killing living beings; with rod and weapon laid aside, conscientious and merciful, he abides compassionate to all living beings. Abandoning the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given, taking only what is given, expecting only what is given, by not stealing he abides in purity. Abandoning incelibacy, he observes celibacy, living apart, abstaining from the vulgar practice of sexual intercourse.

"Abandoning false speech, he abstains from false speech; he speaks truth, adheres to truth, is trustworthy and reliable, one who is no deceiver of the world. Abandoning malicious speech, he abstains from malicious speech; he does not repeat elsewhere what he has heard here in order to divide [those people] from these, nor does he repeat to these people what he has heard elsewhere in order to divide [these people] from those;

BV: That's called slander.

MN: thus he remains one who reunites those who are divided, a promoter of friendships, who enjoys concord, rejoices in concord, delights in concord, a speaker of words that promote concord. Abandoning harsh speech, he abstains from harsh speech; he speaks such words as are gentle, pleasing to the ear and loveable, as go to the heart, are courteous, desired by many and agreeable to many. Abandoning gossip, he abstains from gossip; he speaks at the right time, speaks what is fact, speaks on what is good, speaks on the Dhamma and the Discipline; at the right time he speaks such words as are worth recording, reasonable, moderate and beneficial.

"He abstains from injuring seeds and plants. He practices eating only one meal a day, abstaining from eating at night and outside the proper time. He abstains from dancing, singing, music, and theatrical shows. He abstains from wearing garlands, smartening himself with scent, and embellishing himself with unguents. He abstains from high and large couches. He abstains from accepting gold and silver. He abstains from accepting raw grain. He abstains from accepting raw meat. He abstains from accepting women and girls. He abstains from accepting men and women slaves. He abstains from accepting goats and sheep. He abstains from accepting fowl and pigs. He abstains from accepting elephants, cattle, horses, and mares. He abstains from accepting fields and land. He abstains from going on errands and running messages. He abstains from buying and selling. He abstains from false weights, false metals, and false measures. He abstains from accepting bribes, deceiving, defrauding, and trickery. He abstains from wounding, murdering, binding, brigandage, plunder and violence.

34. "He becomes content with robes to protect his body and with alms food to maintain his stomach, and wherever he goes, he sets out taking only these with him. Just as a bird, wherever it goes, flies with its wings as its only burden, so too the monk becomes content with robes to protect his body and with alms food to maintain his stomach, and wherever he goes, he sets out taking only these with him. Possessing...

BV: And a pickup truck for all of the other stuff that needs to come along. The library, the library, yeah. That used to be the hardest thing for me when I was in Asia because I was travelling a lot and I always had at least fifty kilos of books. It's hard to travel without the books, because there were so few English books over there that when I got them, I didn't want to let them go.

MN: {repeats} Possessing this aggregate of noble virtue, he experiences within himself a bliss that is blameless.

35. "On seeing a form with the eye, he does not grasp at its signs and features.

BV: What are the signs and features?

S: Identifying what it is.

BV: That's it. Identifying what it is and then getting involved with it.

MN: Since, if he left the eye faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and grief might invade him, he practices the way of its restraint, he guards the eye faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the eye faculty.

BV: How do you restrain the eye faculty?

S: Close your eyes?

BV: No, when you're sitting, you close your eyes.

S: Don't look at it?

BV: But, it's ok to look, but let it be without the craving, no clinging (thinking), that's the key.

MN: On hearing a sound with the ear... On smelling an odour with the nose... On tasting a flavour with the tongue... On touching a tangible with the body... On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, he does not grasp at its signs and features.

BV: Getting involved in the story when we're talking about mind.

Since, if he left the mind faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and grief might invade him, he practices the way of its restraint, he guards the mind faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the mind faculty. Possessing this noble restraint of the faculties, he experiences within himself a bliss that is unsullied.

36. "He becomes one who acts in full awareness when going forward and returning; who acts in full awareness when looking ahead and looking away; who acts in full awareness when flexing and extending his limbs; who acts in full awareness when wearing his robes and carrying his outer robe and bowl; who acts in full awareness when eating, drinking, consuming food, and tasting; who acts in full awareness when defecating and urinating; who acts in full awareness when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, and keeping silent.

BV: Full awareness of what?

S: Your object of meditation?

BV: And how mind's attention moves.

MN: 37. "Possessing this aggregate of noble virtue, and this noble restraint of the faculties, and possessing this noble mindfulness and full awareness, he resorts to a secluded resting place: the forest, the root of a tree, a mountain, a ravine, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle thicket, an open space, a heap of straw.

38. "On returning from his almsround, after his meal he sits down, folding his legs crosswise, setting his body erect, and establishing mindfulness before him. Abandoning covetousness for the world he abides with a mind free from covetousness; he purifies his mind from covetousness. Abandoning ill-will and hatred, he abides with a mind free from ill-will, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings; he purifies his mind from ill-will and hatred. Abandoning sloth and torpor, he abides free from sloth and torpor, percipient of light, mindful and fully aware; he purifies his mind from sloth and torpor. Abandoning restlessness and remorse, he abides unagitated with a mind inwardly peaceful; he purifies his mind from restlessness and remorse. Abandoning doubt, he abides having gone beyond doubt, unperplexed about wholesome states; he purifies his mind of doubt.

39. "Having thus abandoned these five hindrances, imperfections of the mind that weaken wisdom, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, he enters upon and abides in the first jhāna... With the stilling of thinking and examining thought, he enters upon and abides in the second jhāna... With the fading away as well of joy... he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna... With the abandoning of pleasure and pain... he enters upon

and abides in the fourth jhāna... which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

(THE ENDING OF THE ROUND: FULL CESSATION)

40. "On seeing a form with the eye, he does not lust after it if it is pleasing; he does not dislike it if it is unpleasing. He abides with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind,

BV: What is an immeasurable mind?

MN: {repeats} with an immeasurable mind, and he understands as it actually is the deliverance of mind...

BV: Immeasurable mind is the Brahma Vihāras.

MN: {repeats} he understands as it actually is the deliverance of mind and deliverance by wisdom

BV: How do you have deliverance by wisdom?

S: Dependent origination.

BV: Seeing dependent origination.

MN: wherein those evil unwholesome states cease without remainder. Having thus abandoned favouring and opposing, whatever feeling he feels, whether pleasant or painful, or neither-painful-nor-pleasant, he does not delight in that feeling, welcome it, or remain holding to it. As he does not do so, delight in feelings ceases in him. With the cessation of his delight comes cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of habitual tendency; with the cessation of habitual tendency, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

"On hearing a sound with the ear... On smelling an odour with the nose... On tasting a flavour with the tongue... On touching a tangible with the body... On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, he does not lust after it if it is pleasing; he does not dislike it if it is unpleasing.With the cessation of his delight comes cessation of clinging; with the cessation of clinging, cessation of habitual tendency; with the cessation of habitual tendency, cessation of birth; with the cessation of birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair cease. Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.

(CONCLUSION)

41. "Monks, remember this [discourse] of mine briefly as deliverance in the destruction of craving, {as taught in brief by me} but [remember] the bhikkhu Sāti, son of a fisherman, as caught up in a vast net of craving, in the trammel of craving."

That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

BV: Ok. Any questions?

Now, tomorrow is going to be the last full day of the retreat. Please let go of the planning mind. That is part of restlessness. And you can plan, and plan, and plan, and figure it out exactly, and it "ain't" going to happen that way anyway, so just a waste of time. And I'll tell you first hand this story: when I was in Burma, I knew that the government was going to be kicking me out of the country because of the social unrest; all the foreigners had to leave. And I knew about a week and a half before that was going to happen. So I sat down and I started planning. And I had this monk friend in Thailand - he was an Englishman - and I had devised in my mind this great idea of how we could get a body and film it as it was decaying. And I pictured that and I knew exactly that the first thing I was going to do when I got to Thailand, was I was going to look him up and we were going to arrange this, and it was really going to be helpful for a lot of monks, to have a time-exposure of body decay. And I spent a week and a half planning that. And I left Burma, and I went to Thailand, and the monk had disrobed and married somebody! Spent a week and a half with this great plan, and it was all a waste of time. So beware of the planning mind. Ok? Let it go, it's not worth it, I promise.

Ok, let's 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 . . .

1. The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, A Translation of the Samyutta Nikāya, by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Part II: The Book of Causation (Nidānavagga), Chapter I (12 Nidānasamyutta, Connected Discourses on Causation), I The Buddhas, 2(2) *Analysis of dependent origination* Page 534

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