

MN # 26
The Noble Search
Ariyapariyesanā Sutta

TT: 00:00

BV: Ok, I thought I'd give you a background sutta tonight. I hit you pretty heavy with practical stuff, now we'll do a little bit of fun stuff. This is called The Noble Search. This is sutta number Twenty six in the Middle Length Sayings.

MN: 1. **THUS HAVE I HEARD.** On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvathī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. Then, when it was morning, the Blessed One dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went into Sāvathī for alms. Then a number of bhikkhus went to the venerable Ānanda and said to him: "Friend Ānanda, it is long since we heard a talk on the Dhamma from the Blessed One's own lips. It would be good if we could get to hear such a talk, friend Ānanda."— "Then let the venerable ones go to the brahmin Rammaka's hermitage. Perhaps you will get to hear a talk on the Dhamma from the Blessed One's own lips."— "Yes, friend, they replied."

3. Then, when the Blessed One had wandered for alms in Sāvathī and had returned from his almsround, after his meal he addressed the venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, let us go to the Eastern Park, to the Palace of Migāra's Mother, for the day's abiding."

BV: The Palace of Migāra's Mother was the palace built by Visākhā. She was the female chief supporter for the Buddha and all the monks. And the story about how that came into being is, when she got married, she was so incredibly rich, that she wore a gown that was made of jewels and gold. And they give some fantastic sum of money for this gown in the suttas, it's equivalent to about ten million dollars. There's diamonds, and rubies, and sapphires and all of that

stuff on it. Well, after she had been married for awhile, she wanted to go to visit the Buddha, and she went with five hundred of her attendants out to a pleasure garden, and on the way back, they were going to stop in and see the Buddha, but she was wearing this robe, this gown. And she thought it was very unseemly to wear something like that in front of the Buddha, so she took it off and she gave it to her attendant. And her attendant sat it down and they went and listened to a discourse by the Buddha, and then they immediately forgot it. And after the talk, they went back to the house, the palace where they lived. And Ānanda was cleaning up after everyone, and he saw it, and he picked it up and he put it someplace that would be safe so that they could come and get it. Visākha realized that she'd left the gown there, and she told her attendant to go back and get it, but, if Ānanda had touched it, she said, then I want you to leave it there, I don't want you to bring it back. And of course, the attendant found out that Ānanda had in fact touched it and put it aside. So she said: "I want to make some merit. So I want to sell this gown, and with the money I want to build a palace for the Buddha and the Sangha." But nobody could afford it. So, being the generous person that she was, she bought it back herself, and took that money and used it to make this palace.

TT: 05:08

Her father-in-law was Migāra. And that gets into another story I don't want to go into right now, but he respected her so much that he said that she was his mother from then on out, from what had happened. So when you hear about The Palace of Migāra's Mother, that is Visākhā, always. She really fixed that place up nice, and it was pretty fantastic. And one of the other lady followers wanted to make some merit too, and she went to Visākhā and said: "I want to make some merit, I have these hand woven rugs, that are really nice, can we find some place to put them in the rooms or whatever?" And Visākhā had really thought this out and there wasn't any place they could put it, so they went to Ānanda and asked where they could put these rugs. And Ānanda said: "Put it on the entry way." So this lady got to make all kinds of merit for that.

Anyway. . They went to the Palace of Migāra's Mother for the day's abiding....

MN: {— "Yes, venerable sir," the venerable Ānanda replied. [161] }
Then the Blessed One went with the venerable Ānanda to the Eastern Park, the Palace of Migāra's Mother, for the day's abiding.
Then, when it was evening, the Blessed One rose from meditation and addressed the venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, let us go to the Eastern Bathing Place to bathe. "— "Yes, venerable sir," the venerable Ānanda replied. Then the Blessed One went with the venerable Ānanda to the Eastern Bathing Place to bathe. When he was finished, he came up out of the water and stood in one robe drying his limbs. Then the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One: "Venerable sir, the brahmin Rammaka's hermitage is nearby. That hermitage is agreeable and delightful. Venerable sir, it would be good if the Blessed One went there out of compassion." The Blessed One consented in silence.

BV: That means he shook his head. Ok.

MN: 4. Then the Blessed One went to the brahmin Rammaka's hermitage. Now on that occasion a number of bhikkhus were sitting together in the hermitage discussing the Dhamma. The Blessed One stood outside the door waiting for their discussion to end. When he knew that it was over, he coughed and knocked,

BV: See how incredibly polite he was, all the time.

MN: and the bhikkhus opened the door for him. The Blessed One entered, sat down on a seat made ready, and addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Bhikkhus, for what discussion are you sitting together here now? And what was your discussion that was interrupted?"

"Venerable sir, our discussion on the Dhamma that was interrupted was about the Blessed One himself. Then the Blessed One arrived."
"Good, bhikkhus. It is fitting for you clansmen who have gone forth out of faith from the home life into homelessness to sit together to

discuss the Dhamma. When you gather together, bhikkhus, you should do either of two things: hold discussion on the Dhamma or maintain noble silence.

TT: 10:09

5. "Bhikkhus, there are these two kinds of search: the noble search and the ignoble search. And what is the ignoble search? Here someone being himself subject to birth seeks what is also subject to birth; being himself subject to ageing, [162] he seeks what is also subject to ageing; being himself subject to sickness, he seeks what is also subject to sickness; being himself subject to death, he seeks what is also subject to death; being himself subject to sorrow, he seeks what is also subject to sorrow; being himself subject to defilement, he seeks what is also subject to defilement.

6. "And what may be said to be subject to birth? Wife and children are subject to birth, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to birth. These acquisitions are subject to birth; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to birth, seeks what it also subject to birth.

7. "And what may be said to be subject to ageing? Wife and children are subject to ageing, men and women slaves,

BV: Now during the time of the Buddha, it was not any big deal to be a slave. It's like being a common worker for the family. And they did it voluntarily, and the family took care of them because of that. So, when you hear about slaves, a lot of people, back kind of gets stiff. But it was not any big deal to be a slave during the time of the Buddha. Like working for the same company all the time.

S: ~

BV: It's not bondage, definitely not bondage. They're not forced to do things and not get paid for them, they are paid. But at that time they were considered slaves.

OK. .

MN: goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to ageing. These acquisitions are subject to ageing; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to ageing, seeks what is also subject to ageing.

8. "And what may be said to be subject to sickness? Wife and children are subject to sickness, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares are subject to sickness. These acquisitions are subject to sickness; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to sickness, seeks what is also subject to sickness.

9. "And what may be said to be subject to death? Wife and children are subject to death, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares are subject to death. These acquisitions are subject to death; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to death, seeks what is also subject to death.

TT: 14:56

10. "And what may be said to be subject to sorrow? Wife and children are subject to sorrow, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares are subject to sorrow. These acquisitions are subject to sorrow; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to sorrow, seeks what is also subject to sorrow.

11. "And what may be said to be subject to defilement? Wife and children are subject to defilement, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver are subject to defilement. These acquisitions are subject to defilement; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly committed to them, being himself subject to defilement, seeks what is also subject to defilement. This is the ignoble search.

BV: In other words, material possessions. Got to have a car. Got to have TV. Got to have a wife. Got to have children. Got to have possessions of all different kinds. This is what the Buddha called ignoble search.

MN: 12. "And what is the noble search? Here someone being himself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, [163] seeks the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to ageing, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, he seeks the unageing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, he seeks the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, he seeks the deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, he seeks the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, he seeks the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. This is the noble search.

BV: Pretty understandable. Seeing danger in all of these attachments. Letting them go and working towards the unconditioned state.

S: ~

BV: Unconditioned.

BV: 13. "Bhikkhus, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened Bodhisatta, I too, being myself subject to birth, sought what was also subject to birth; being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I sought what was also subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement. Then I considered thus: 'Why, being myself subject to birth, do I seek what is also subject to birth? Why, being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, do I seek what is also subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement? Suppose that, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, I seek the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. Suppose that, being myself subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I seek the unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna.'

TT: 20:30

14. "Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life, though my mother and father wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

BV: That's a big step. People that are very wealthy, as his family was, generally tend to get involved with the sensual pleasures of all that wealth. So for him to turn his back on that was really a major step.

MN: 15. "Having gone forth, bhikkhus, in search of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and said to him: 'Friend Kālāma, I want to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline.' Āḷāra Kālāma replied: 'The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man [164] can soon enter upon and abide in it, realising for himself through direct knowledge his own teacher's doctrine.' I soon quickly learned that Dhamma. As far as mere lip-reciting and rehearsal of his

teaching went, I could speak with knowledge and assurance, and I claimed, I know and see’—and there were others who did likewise.

BV: This is what happens with Buddhist monks, a lot. They study what the Buddha talks about, and then they say: “I know and see” because they believe so heavily in what they’re reading.

MN: “I considered: ‘It is not through mere faith alone that Āḷāra Kālāma declares: “By realising for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and abide in this Dhamma.” Certainly Āḷāra Kālāma abides knowing and seeing this Dhamma.’ Then I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: ‘Friend Kālāma, in what way do you declare that by realising for yourself with direct knowledge you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma?’ In reply he declared the base of nothingness. “I considered: ‘Not only Āḷāra Kālāma has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom.

BV: These are called the five facilities. And we’ll get into that at some other point.

MN: Suppose I endeavour to realise the Dhamma that Āḷāra Kālāma declares he enters upon and abides in by realising for himself with direct knowledge?’

TT: 24:15

“I soon quickly entered upon and abided in that Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge. Then I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: ‘Friend Kālāma, is it in this way that you declare that you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for yourself with direct knowledge?’—That is the way, friend.’—‘It is in this way, friend, that I also enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.’—‘It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a venerable one for our companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realising for myself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself

with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realising for myself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that I know and I know the Dhamma that you know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come, friend, let us now lead this community together.'

BV: So he's asking him to co-teach.

MN: "Thus Āḷāra Kālāma, my teacher, placed me, his pupil, on an equal footing with himself and awarded me the highest honour. But it occurred to me: This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna, but only to reappearance in the base of nothingness. Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

BV: When someone gets to this realm of nothingness, when they die they're reborn in a Brahma loca which is, this particular realm is only a mental realm. Now you've heard me talk of mahakappas, that's expansions, contractions of the universe. Ok, you make so much merit by getting to the realm of nothingness, that if you die and don't get any further, you will be reborn in this realm, and it lasts for sixty thousand mahakappas. Long time. And you want to know something that's interesting? We've all experienced that. That gives you an idea how long we've been around. We've all experienced the highest that you can possibly get to, and the lowest, which can last that long too.

MN: 16. "Still in search, bhikkhus, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and said to him: 'Friend, I want to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline.' Uddaka Rāmaputta replied: The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon enter upon and abide in it, himself realising through direct knowledge his own teacher's doctrine.' I soon quickly learned that Dhamma. As far as mere lip-reciting and rehearsal of his teaching went, I could speak with knowledge and assurance, and I claimed, 'I know and see'—and there were others who did likewise.

"I considered: 'It was not through mere faith alone that Rāma ...

BV: Now Rāmaputta was the son of Rāma. Rāmaputta had gotten to the realm of nothingness, but he learned from his father how to get into the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, but he didn't like that realm so much, he didn't want to experience it, because you get up to the realm of nothingness, there's still perception and feeling, and there's still the belief that God is in everything. When you go deeper, you lose that belief. So when he's saying: "It was not through mere faith alone that Rāma declared", it was not Rāmaputta, but Rāma, his father.

TT: 30:36

MN: "By realising for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and abide in this Dhamma." Certainly Rāma abided knowing and seeing this Dhamma.' Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Friend, in what way did Rāma declare that by realising for himself with direct knowledge he entered upon and abided in this Dhamma?' In reply Uddaka Rāmaputta declared the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

"I considered: 'Not only Rāma had faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavour to realise the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising for himself with direct knowledge.'

BV: By this time Rāma had already died.

MN: "I soon quickly entered upon and abided in that Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge. Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Friend, was it in this way that Rāma declared that he entered upon and abided in this Dhamma by realising for himself with direct knowledge?'— That is the way, friend.'—'It is in this way, friend, that I also enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.'—'It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a

venerable one for our companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising for himself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising for himself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that Rāma knew and Rāma knew the Dhamma that you know. As Rāma was, so are you; as you are, so was Rāma. Come, friend, now lead this community.'

BV: He was willing just to give over the whole community and let the Bodhisatta be the teacher.

MN: "Thus Uddaka Rāmaputta, my companion in the holy life, placed me in the position of a teacher and accorded me the highest honour. But it occurred to me: This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna, but only to reappearance in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.' Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

BV: Now if you get to the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and don't go any higher, and this is as high as you can go when you're practicing one-pointed concentration, you can't get to an unconditioned state when you still have conditions that are pushed down and not seen correctly, you would be reborn in a Brahma loka that lasts for eighty four thousand mahakappas. Long time.

S: Perceptions and non perceptions?

TT: 35:00

BV: Neither-perception-nor-non-perception. It's described like this: There's two monks that are walking in a forest. The senior monk is walking in front. And they step over this little tiny stream, and the junior monk that's following, goes up to the senior monk and says: "Please wait for one moment, I want to go get a drink." And the

senior monk says: "Ah, there's water. Then why don't you go back and get my towel, I want to take a bath?" But the junior monk says: "There's water, but there's not enough for that." Ok. Now that's what neither-perception-nor-non-perception is. There's still feeling, but the perception is so fine it's hard to tell if it's there or not. And when you come out of that state, and you start reflecting on what happened while you were in that state, then you understand what neither-perception-nor-non-perception is about.

Ok?

S: ~

BV: Sort of, be patient, you'll get there.

MN: 17. "Still in search, bhikkhus, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages through the Magadhan country until eventually I arrived at Senānigama near Uruvelā. There I saw an agreeable piece of ground, a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. I considered: This is an agreeable piece of ground, this is a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. This will serve for the striving of a clansman intent on striving.' And I sat down there thinking: This will serve for striving.'

18. "Then, bhikkhus, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeking the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to ageing, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, seeking the unageing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unageing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, seeking the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, seeking the

deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, seeking the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, seeking the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'My deliverance is unshakeable; this is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being.'

TT: 40:22

19. "I considered: This Dhamma that I have attained is profound, hard to see and hard to understand, peaceful and sublime, unattainable by mere reasoning, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. But this generation delights in worldliness, takes delight in worldliness, rejoices in worldliness. It is hard for such a generation to see this truth,

BV: Kind of sounds like right now, doesn't it? (Laughs)

MN: namely, specific conditionality, dependent origination.

BV: Sounds like what I've been talking about, last few days, doesn't it?

S: ~

BV: Hum.

MN: And it is hard to see this truth, namely, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nibbāna. [168] If I were to teach the Dhamma, others would not understand me, and that would be wearying and troublesome for me.' Thereupon there came to me spontaneously these stanzas never heard before:

'Enough with teaching the Dhamma
That even I found hard to reach;
For it will never be perceived
By those who live in lust and hate.
Those dyed in lust, wrapped in darkness
Will never discern this abstruse Dhamma
Which goes against the worldly stream,
Subtle, deep, and difficult to see.'

Considering thus, my mind inclined to inaction rather than to teaching the Dhamma.

20. "Then, bhikkhus, the Brahmā Sahampati knew with his mind the thought in my mind and he considered: 'The world will be lost, the world will perish, since the mind of the Tathāgatha, accomplished and fully enlightened, inclines to inaction rather than to teaching the Dhamma.' Then, just as quickly as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, the Brahmā Sahampati

BV: I love these names.

MN: vanished in the Brahmā-world and appeared before me. He arranged his upper robe on one shoulder, and extending his hands in reverential salutation towards me, said: 'Venerable sir, let the Blessed One teach the Dhamma, let the Sublime One teach the Dhamma. There are beings with little dust in their eyes who are wasting through not hearing the Dhamma. There will be those who will understand the Dhamma.' The Brahmā Sahampati spoke thus, and then he said further:

'In Magadha there have appeared till now
Impure teachings devised by those still stained.
Open the doors to the Deathless! Let them hear
The Dhamma that the Stainless One has found.
Just as one who stands on a mountain peak
Can see below the people all around,
So, O Wise One, All-seeing Sage,

Ascend the palace of the Dhamma.
Let the Sorrowless One survey this human breed,
Engulfed in sorrow, overcome by birth and old age.
Arise, victorious hero, caravan leader,
Debtless one, and wander in the world.
Let the Blessed One teach the Dhamma,
There will be those who will understand.'

TT: 45:24

21. "Then I listened to the Brahmā's pleading, and out of compassion for beings I surveyed the world with the eye of a Buddha. Surveying the world with the eye of a Buddha, I saw beings with little dust in their eyes and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and hard to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear in blame and in the other world. Just as in a pond of blue or red or white lotuses, some lotuses that are born and grow in the water thrive immersed in the water without rising out of it, and some other lotuses that are born and grow in the water rest on the water's surface, and some other lotuses that are born and grow in the water rise out of the water and stand clear, unwetted by it; so too, surveying the world with the eye of a Buddha, I saw beings with little dust in their eyes and with much dust in their eyes, with keen faculties and with dull faculties, with good qualities and with bad qualities, easy to teach and hard to teach, and some who dwelt seeing fear in blame and in the other world. Then I replied to the Brahmā Sahampati in stanzas:

'Open for them are the doors to the Deathless,
Let those with ears now show their faith.
Thinking it would be troublesome, O Brahmā,
I did not speak the Dhamma subtle and sublime.'

Then the Brahmā Sahampati thought: 'I have created the opportunity for the Blessed One to teach the Dhamma.' And after paying homage to me, keeping me on the right, he thereupon departed at once.

22. "I considered thus: 'To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will understand this Dhamma quickly?' It then occurred to me: 'Āḷāra Kālāma is wise, intelligent, and discerning; he has long had little dust in his eyes. Suppose I taught the Dhamma first to Āḷāra Kālāma. He will understand it quickly.' Then deities approached me and said: 'Venerable sir, Āḷāra Kālāma died seven days ago.' And the knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Āḷāra Kālāma died seven days ago.' I thought: 'Āḷāra Kālāma's loss is a great one. If he had heard this Dhamma, he would have understood it quickly.'

23. "I considered thus: 'To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will understand this Dhamma quickly?' It then occurred to me: 'Uddaka Rāmaputta is wise, intelligent, and discerning; he has long had little dust in his eyes. Suppose I taught the Dhamma first to Uddaka Rāmaputta. He will understand it quickly.' Then deities approached me and said: 'Venerable sir, Uddaka Rāmaputta died last night.'

BV: So close, but no cigar.

MN: And the knowledge and vision arose in me: 'Uddaka Rāmaputta died last night.' I thought: 'Uddaka Rāmaputta's loss is a great one. If he had heard this Dhamma, he would have understood it quickly.'

TT: 50:06

24. "I considered thus: 'To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will understand this Dhamma quickly?' It then occurred to me: "The bhikkhus of the group of five who attended upon me while I was engaged in my striving were very helpful. Suppose I taught the Dhamma first to them.' Then I thought: 'Where are the bhikkhus of the group of five now living?' And with the divine eye, which is purified and surpasses the human, I saw that they were living at Benares in the Deer Park at Isipatana.

25. "Then, bhikkhus, when I had stayed at Uruvelā as long as I chose, I set out to wander by stages to Benares. Between Gaya and the Place of Enlightenment the Ājīvaka Upaka saw me on the road

and said: 'Friend, your faculties are clear, the colour of your skin is pure and bright. Under whom have you gone forth, friend? Who is your teacher? Whose Dhamma do you [171] profess?' I replied to the Ājīvaka Upaka in stanzas:

'I am one who has transcended all, a knower of all,
Unsullied among all things, renouncing all,
By craving's ceasing freed. Having known this all
For myself, to whom should I point as teacher?
I have no teacher, and one like me
Exists nowhere in all the world
With all its gods, because I have
No person for my counterpart.
I am the Accomplished One in the world,
I am the Teacher Supreme.
I alone am a Fully Enlightened One
Whose fires are quenched and extinguished.
I go now to the city of Kāsi
To set in motion the Wheel of Dhamma.
In a world that has become blind
I go to beat the drum of the Deathless.'

BV: Now, you meet somebody on the road, and you say: "Wow, your face is really clear and your skin is really bright. Who are you practicing with?" And he comes across with these four or three stanzas, it would make you raise your eyebrows, at least. Now these are pretty big claims that he's talking about

MN: 'By your claims, friend, you ought to be the Universal Victor.'
'The victors are those like me
Who have won to destruction of taints.
I have vanquished all evil states,
Therefore, Upaka, I am a victor.'
"When this was said, the Ājīvaka Upaka said: 'May it be so, friend.'
Shaking his head, he took a bypath and departed.

26. "Then, bhikkhus, wandering by stages, I eventually came to Benares, to the Deer Park at Isipatana, and I approached the

bhikkhus of the group of five. The bhikkhus saw me coming in the distance, and they agreed among themselves thus: 'Friends, here comes the recluse Gotama who lives luxuriously, who gave up his striving, and reverted to luxury.

TT: 54:44

BV: Now, he'd gone so radically into his own practice for enlightenment, and the thinking at that time was fasting leads to enlightenment. And he did it as far as anybody could go; his skin had turned black, if he touched his stomach, he was touching his backbone, spine. Other people can go to that, but nobody can go any further and stay alive. So, when he decided this doesn't lead to enlightenment he said: "Well, my body is real weak, I've got to start eating some and gain some strength." So these five monks, they said: "Oh, you gave up your striving now, You're taking so much food, you're really living luxuriously, and they left."

MN: We should not pay homage to him or rise up for him or receive his bowl and outer robe. But a seat may be prepared for him. If he likes, he may sit down.' However, as I approached, those bhikkhus found themselves unable to keep their pact. One came to meet me and took my bowl and outer robe, another prepared a seat, and another set out water for my feet;

BV: The Buddha walked around barefooted, his feet were dirty all the time, so they always put water out so he could wash his feet.

MN: however, they addressed me by name and as 'friend.'
27. "Thereupon I told them: 'Bhikkhus, do not address the Tathāgatha by name and as "friend." The Tathāgatha is an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One. Listen, bhikkhus, the Deathless has been attained. I shall instruct you, I shall teach you the Dhamma. Practising as you are instructed, by realising for yourselves here and now through direct knowledge you will soon enter upon and abide in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which clansmen rightly go forth from the home life into homelessness.'

“When this was said, the bhikkhus of the group of five answered me thus: ‘Friend Gotama, by the conduct, the practice, and the performance of austerities that you undertook, you did not achieve any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. Since you now live luxuriously, having given up your striving and reverted to luxury, how will you have achieved any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones?’ When this was said, I told them: ‘The Tathāgatha does not live luxuriously, nor has he given up his striving and reverted to luxury. The Tathāgatha is an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One. Listen, bhikkhus, the Deathless has been attained. I shall instruct you, I shall teach you the Dhamma. Practising as you are instructed, by realising for yourselves here and now through direct knowledge you will soon enter upon and abide in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which clansmen rightly go forth from the home life into homelessness.’

“A second time the bhikkhus of the group of five said to me: ‘Friend Gotama,

BV: And they went through the whole thing again.

MN: how will you have achieved any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones?’ A second time I told them: ‘The Tathāgatha does not live luxuriously ...’ A third time the bhikkhus of the group of five said to me: ‘Friend Gotama how will you have achieved any superhuman states, any distinction in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones?’

TT: 59:52

28. “When this was said I asked them: ‘Bhikkhus, have you ever known me to speak like this before?’—‘No, venerable sir.’—‘Bhikkhus, the Tathāgatha is an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One. Listen, bhikkhus, the Deathless has been attained. I shall instruct you, I shall teach you the Dhamma. Practising as you are instructed, by realising for yourselves here and now through direct knowledge you will soon enter upon and abide in that supreme goal of the holy

life for the sake of which clansmen rightly go forth from the home life into homelessness.'

29. "I was able to convince the bhikkhus of the group of five. Then I sometimes instructed two bhikkhus while the other three went for alms, and the six of us lived on what those three bhikkhus brought back from their almsround. Sometimes I instructed three bhikkhus while the other two went for alms, and the six of us lived on what those two bhikkhus brought back from their almsround.

30. "Then the bhikkhus of the group of five, thus taught and instructed by me, being themselves subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeking the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, attained the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being themselves subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, seeking the unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, they attained the unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. The knowledge and vision arose in them: 'Our deliverance is unshakeable; this is our last birth; there is no renewal of being.'

31. "Bhikkhus, there are these five cords of sensual pleasure. What are the five? Forms cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desired, agreeable and likeable, connected with sensual desire, and provocative of lust. 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. These are the five cords of sensual pleasure.

32. "As to those recluses and brahmins who are tied to these five cords of sensual pleasure, infatuated with them and utterly committed to them, and who use them without seeing the danger in them or understanding the escape from them, it may be understood of them: 'They have met with calamity, met with disaster, the Evil

One may do with them as he likes.' Suppose a forest deer who was bound lay down on a heap of snares; it might be understood of him: 'He has met with calamity, met with disaster, the hunter can do with him as he likes, and when the hunter comes he cannot go where he wants.' So too, as to those recluses and brahmins who are tied to these five cords of sensual pleasure...it may be understood of them: 'They have met with calamity, met with disaster, the Evil One may do with them as he likes.'

33. "As to those recluses and brahmins who are not tied to these five cords of sensual pleasure, who are not infatuated with them or utterly committed to them, and who use them seeing the danger in them and understanding the escape from them, it may be understood of them: 'They have not met with calamity, not met with disaster, the Evil One cannot do with them as he likes.' Suppose a forest deer who was unbound lay down on a heap of snares; it might be understood of him: 'He has not met with calamity, not met with disaster, the hunter cannot do with him as he likes, and when the hunter comes he can go where he wants.' So too, as to those recluses and brahmins who are not tied to these five cords of sensual pleasure...it may be understood of them: They have not met with calamity, not met with disaster, the Evil One cannot do with them as he likes.'

TT: 1:05:50

34. "Suppose a forest deer is wandering in the forest wilds: he walks confidently, stands confidently, sits confidently, lies down confidently. Why is that? Because he is out of the hunter's range. So too, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thinking and examining thought, with joy and happiness born of seclusion. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra, to have become invisible to the Evil One by depriving Māra's eye of its opportunity.

BV: So, let's get back to the sensual pleasures. How do you not get tied to the five cords of sensual pleasure?

S: ~

BV: When the eye hits color and form, that consciousness arises that is called contact. Right after contact feeling arises. Right after feeling, craving arises. Craving manifests as: "I like it, I don't like it" and tightness in your body and in your mind. Right after that clinging arises – all of the thoughts about why you like that sight or why you don't like that sight. The best meditation you can do is silent observation. That means, that when a sight arises, the feeling is there, it's pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, and as soon as you see that sight you relax. Now this relaxing is real important. You not only let go of craving, you don't have any clinging arise after that. But every time you relax the tightness in your head becomes less, and less and less. And you feel yourself go deeper into the brain as you're relaxing. At first it's just on the surface, and then it's like opening up new pathways, and as you go deeper and deeper, you feel different places that you've never felt before open up and expand and relax. You feel tensions and tightnesses that you never realized were there. Now you've heard me talk about the movement of mind[^s attention]. Ok, as you relax more and more, you're letting go more and more of the movement. Until it turns into vibration. And as you continue to relax more and more, that vibration becomes less and less and less until finally you become completely relaxed, and that's when you experience the cessation of perception and feeling.

TT: 1:10:00

So it doesn't matter with the taste, with the smell, with the touch of the body, with what hits the ear, what hits the eye, your mindfulness has to be good enough to see that craving arise, to see the feeling arise, so you can let go of the craving. Not the easiest thing to do in the world, but also not the most difficult. The most difficult is just ignoring, and letting yourself get caught with sights or sounds or taste or touch, smells.

S: ~

BV: Five cords of sensual pleasure. We're not talking about the six sense doors now, we're just talking about the cords of sensual pleasure. Why is it difficult? Because you see a beautiful sight, and then you start thinking about it, and then you start thinking about something else, and thinking about something else, and before long, you're a thousand miles away from whatever you're doing in the present moment. You're not aware of what's happening in the present moment at all, and that is the cause of massive amounts of suffering. So, if you can catch the feeling of that eye consciousness when it arises, you can see that and relax into it, then you stay in the present moment. You're not pulled away by your thoughts. Easy, right? Now does this mean that you can't enjoy a sight that's beautiful? It doesn't mean that at all. You're there more fully to really see it because you're not thinking about seeing, you're just seeing. So this relaxing is absolutely necessary, and needs to be done more with your daily activities. Staying with your meditation. Now you can't expect your daily activities to be successful if you see one of the sense cords arise and then you relax and then keep staying with the sense, if you don't come back to your object of meditation. All kinds of hindrances arise. Let it be, relax, come back to what? Smiling. Feeling that happy feeling not only in your heart, but in your mind. Keep coming back to that. Now, I was telling somebody today, somebody wrote me an e-mail from Korea, it was a monk that wrote to me and he said: "My friend wants to do some meditation, but she doesn't live near a meditation center so she went to a Zen monastery, and it was much too hard for her, but they gave her some practices to do. They gave her the practice of bowing in front of the Buddha image." They do it a hundred times a day.

TT: 1:15:01

The only reason they bow like that is because of the exercise they get in their body. "But she's turned into a kind of fanatic, and she's bowing three thousand times a day." And my monk friend said: "What do you think of that?" And I said: "Tell her to stop, she's going to hurt herself. If she's not in really, really good shape, she's going to wind up with all kinds of aches and pains in her body that might not go away." So I sent that e-mail to him and a little while later another

e-mail came back and she wasn't real wild about that but she – ok. "What kind of practice should she do?" And I wrote back and said: "She's got to practice smiling. She has to have joy coming up." She's trying to force nibbāna to occur. It don't work that way. She's got to let go of that tight mental grip, and I've been around a lot of Koreans and I really do understand how tightly they hold on to certain ideas, and "This is the way it has to be." So I told him that she has to be gentle, she has to soften her approach so that she can see what's happening in her mind. Haven't gotten an answer to that one, but I'm sure there's going to be resistance. We'll see.

MN: 35. "Again, with the stilling of thinking and examining thought, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind without thinking and examining thought, with joy and happiness]born of collectedness. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...

36. "Again, with the fading away as well of joy, a bhikkhu abides in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware, still feeling pleasure with the body, he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna, on account of which noble ones announce: 'He has a pleasant abiding who has equanimity and is mindful.' This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...

37. "Again, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and grief, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...

38. "Again, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of form, with the disappearance of perceptions of sensory impact, with non-attention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of infinite space. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...39. "Again, by completely surmounting the base of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite,' a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of infinite consciousness. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...

40. "Again, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing,' a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of nothingness. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra...

41. "Again, by completely surrounding the base of nothingness, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra, to have become invisible to the Evil One by depriving Māra's eye of its opportunity.

42. "Again, by completely surmounting the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the cessation of perception and feeling. And his taints are destroyed by his seeing with wisdom.

TT: 1:20:17

BV: Remember what that is?

S: ~

BV: What?

S: ~

BV: (Sighs) By seeing with wisdom, what is he seeing?

S: ~

BV: Thank you

S: ~

MN: This bhikkhu is said to have blindfolded Māra, to have become invisible to the Evil One by depriving Māra's eye of its opportunity, and to have crossed beyond attachment to the world. He walks

confidently, stands confidently, sits confidently, lies down confidently. Why is that? Because he is out of the Evil One's range."

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

BV: So you have the cessation of perception and feeling. Or you have the cessation of perception and feeling, and you see, and your taints are destroyed by your seeing with wisdom. What does that mean?

S: ~

BV: That you see Dependent Origination and the cessation of Dependent Origination. You see karma in its finest degree. You see karma, because its cause and effect relationship, and how they cease to be. That is the end of karma.

Yeah?

S: ~

BV: She's paying attention. That little dog knows a lot.

Ok, anybody have any questions? You bet.

S: ~

BV: He was practicing with other people to start off, and he found out their way didn't lead to nibbāna.

S: ~

BV: Right

S: ~

BV: No, they're not the same.

S: ~

BV: Because the Brahmins like to do that sort of thing. They take on the words . . . when you look into yoga practice and meditation, they talk about Samādhi a lot. That's a word that was made up by the Buddha.

S: ~

BV: Well, to the people that are practicing yoga, it means one-pointed absorption concentration. Sama means tranquil, dhi means wisdom. The Buddha was talking about a completely different kind of observation, so he made up this word to describe it. And it became so popular that the Brahmins took it and changed the meaning back to suit their own practice.

TT: 1:25:01

S: ~

BV: You absorb into one point. You go into that one thing. If they're practicing and they don't relax the craving, a lot, they are practicing one-pointed absorption concentration. Ok, let's share some merit.

*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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