

MN - 28

The Greater Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint
Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta
Dhamma Talk presented by Bhante Vimalaramsi
23-Nov-08

ST: Okay, this is November 23rd.

Dhamma Sukha.

Majjhima Nikāya Sutta Number 28.

The Greater Discourse on the Simile of the Elephant's Footprint.
Mahāhatthipadopama Sutta [laughs]

MN 28:

1. **THUS HAVE I HEARD.** On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Savatthi in Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's Park. There the Venerable Sariputta addressed the monks thus: "Friends, monks." - "Friend," they replied. The Venerable Sariputta said this:

2. "Friends, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within the elephant's footprint, so the elephant's footprint is declared the chief among them because of its great size; so too, all wholesome states can be included in the Four Noble Truths. What four? In the noble truth of suffering, in the noble truth of the origin of suffering, in the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and in the noble truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.

3. "And what is the noble truth of suffering? Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, death is suffering; sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair are suffering; not to obtain what wants is suffering;

BV: And I add in: getting what you don't want is suffering; the five aggregates affected by clinging are suffering.

What is she doing?

MN:

4. "And what are the five aggregates affected by clinging? They are: the material form aggregate affected by clinging,

BV: Affected by clinging means what?

ST: Attachment.

BV: A little bit. It's when material form arises and you start thinking about it. And we always think in concepts. Clinging is your conceptual thinking. It's... [laughs]

These dogs are really something!

Ah, it's the story about...it's the thinking and it's also the strong identification that these concepts and opinions and ideas are all ours. Okay. So when something is affected by clinging it means it's affected by concepts and when anything is affected by concepts you're not able to see it as it actually is. Okay? Because you're thinking it, you're not experiencing it. Ok?

MN:

...the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the formation aggregate affected by clinging, and the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging.

5. "And what is ... material form aggregate affected by clinging? It is the four great elements, the material form derived from those four great elements. What are the four great elements? They are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element.

{05:05}

BV: That's what material form is, and that means basically all things on the material plane.

MN:
(THE EARTH ELEMENT)

6. "What, friend, is the earth element? The earth element may be either internal or external. What is the internal earth element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to;

BV: Clung-to...clinging. Conceptual thinking, again.

MN:
that is, head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinew, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, mesentery, contents of the stomach, feces, and whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is solid, solidified, and clung-to: this is called the internal earth element. Now both the internal earth element and the external earth element are simply earth element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom ...

BV: What does that mean?

ST: Dependent origination?

BV: That's how you see things with proper wisdom. Seeing the process, seeing it as an impersonal process...no controller.

Sounds like she has a mouse and she's starting to play with it.

ST: (Makes noise.) Excuse me.

MN:
'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.'

BV: The impersonal nature of everything, that the earth element is part of an impersonal process. You don't have any control over whether you have a liver or not, or your stomach, or your spleen. Of course, some doctors like to take it out, but you don't have any control over whether you're born with one or not. It just happens. Part of an impersonal process.

MN:

When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the earth element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the earth element.

BV: What is that really talking about? It's talking about letting it be there by itself and not identifying with it. When you become dispassionate towards it you just see it for what it is; just part of a process. And your mind doesn't grab on and you don't get over excited with anything. Your mind has more and more strong equanimity.

MN:

7. "Now, there comes a time when the water element is disturbed and then the external element vanishes. When even this external element, as great as it is, is seen to be impermanent, subject to destruction, disappearance, and change, what of the body, which is clung to by craving and lasts but for a while? There can be no considering that as 'I' or 'mine' or 'I am'.

8. "So when others abuse, revile, scold, harass a monk who has seen the element as it actually is, he understands thus: 'This painful feeling born of ear-contact has arisen to me. That is dependent, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on contact. There he sees that contact is impermanent, that feeling is impermanent, that perception is impermanent, that formations are impermanent, and that consciousness is impermanent. And his mind, having made an element its objective support, enters into [that new objective support] and acquires confidence, steadiness, and resolution.

{10:18}

BV: What are we talking about here? When you start to see things as they actually are your mind has more balance. Your mind doesn't go out and grab onto it and say, "No, that's wrong!" Your mind just accepts it as it truly is. When you accept things as they truly are, there is no clinging arising. There can still be craving. You have to consciously, intentionally, and specifically relax. But, as you begin to see more and more clearly how all of these processes work you enter upon a new objective support that acquires confidence. You get confidence as you see this. Your mind gets more and more steadiness and you become more resolved to continue on.

MN:

9. "Now, if others attack that bhikkhu in ways that are unwished for, undesired, and disagreeable, by contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, he understands thus: 'This body is of such a nature that contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives assail it. But this has been said by the Blessed One in his 'advice on the simile of the saw': 'Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching.' So tireless energy should be aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness established, my body shall be tranquil and untroubled, my mind collected and unified. And now let contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail this body; for this is just how the Buddha's teaching is practiced."

10. "When that Monk thus reflects the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, if equanimity supported by wholesome does not become established in him, then he arouses a sense of urgency thus: 'It is a loss for me, it is no gain for me, it is bad for me, it is no good for me, that when I thus recollect the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by that wholesome doesn't become established in me.' Just as when a daughter-in-law sees a father-in-law, she rouses a sense of urgency to please him, so too, when that monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he rouses a sense of urgency. But if, when he recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and the Sangha, equanimity supported by the

wholesome becomes established in him, then he is satisfied with it. At that point, friends, much has been done by that monk.

(The WATER ELEMENT)

11. "What, friends, is the water element? The water element may be either internal or external. What is the internal water element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung-to; that is, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spittle, snot, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is water, watery, and clung-to: this is called the internal water element.

{15:17}

BV: Appetizing, isn't it? [laughs]

MN:

Now, the internal water element and the external water element are simply water element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom: 'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self'. When one sees it as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the water element and makes a mind dispassionate towards the water element.

12. "Now there comes a time when the external element is disturbed. It carries away villages, towns, cities, districts, and countries. There comes a time when the waters in the great ocean sink a hundred leagues, two hundred leagues, three hundred..., four hundred..., five hundred leagues. There comes a time when the waters of the great ocean stand seven palms deep, six palms..., five..., four..., three..., two..., one. There comes a time when the waters of the great ocean stand seven fathoms deep, six fathoms..., five..., four..., three..., two..., one. There comes a time when the waters of the great ocean stands a half a fathom deep, only waist deep, only knee deep, only ankle deep. There comes a time when the waters of the great ocean are not enough to wet even the joint of a finger.

BV: Now, this is when the world cycle, the end of a, asankheyya is happening. Ah, according to Buddhism, there's, ah, fire destroys the earth, ah, wind destroys the earth. It might be water, I just don't remember. Anyway, when that happens, all the beings are gone from the planet. They all die and in this universe, the universe is completely destroyed by the winds or the fire, whatever. And, what happens is, depending on your merit, you're reborn in another universe or if your meditation is good enough, you get above the fourth jhana, and you're not affected by that happening.

ST: ~~

BV: What do you think it means?

ST: If you get above the fourth jhana you're not affected disintegration of the universe?

BV: Right.

ST: ~~

BV: You stay in the fourth jhana. You stay in that brahma loca. Remember, the fourth jhana...one of the reasons the Buddha really praised the fourth jhana was because you will be in a brahma loca that's not affected by this kind of stuff and it last for 500 mahākappas. So, how many people am I helping get there? [laughs] Nice, eh?

But there is a time when there's gonna be more than one sun. And, it'll be, another sun will appear and all of a sudden everything will start drying up and the oceans will start dissipating. And, it gets quite dry.

{20:05}

MN:

When even the external water element, as great as it is, is seen to be impermanent, subject to destruction, disappearance, and change, what of this body, which is clung-to by craving and lasts but a little while? There can be no considering that 'I' or 'mine' or 'I am'.

13. "So when, if others abuse, revile, scold, and harass a monk who has seen this element as it actually is, he understands thus: 'This painful feeling of ear-contact has arisen in me.

BV: Yeah, they abuse, revile, and scold, and harass. Okay?

MN:

That is dependent, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on contact. Then he sees that contact is impermanent, that feeling is impermanent, that perception is impermanent, that formations are impermanent, that consciousness is impermanent. And his mind, having made an element its objective support enters into that new objective support and acquires confidence, steadiness, and resolution.

BV: So, you get an idea of...somebody says something you don't like, if you start reflecting on how that process worked then the content of what they're talking about really doesn't matter. What they're saying really doesn't matter at all.

ST: ~~

BV: So, the whole point is learning how to develop your awareness so that you're thinking about dependent origination and observing how it works all the time, not just once in a while, not just while you're sitting. But, you look at these guys, you look at these dogs and you can see dependent origination in them really easily. And, as you see that more and more in everything you see impersonally how everything works. And you see how deep rooted that craving actually is, because that's the start of the "I am". So getting your 6Rs to work all of the time, with all situations and not getting off balance when

somebody says this or that or when a thought comes up and dictates this or that to you. When you start looking at how the process works and start seeing it for what it is, then you really acquire a lot more confidence in your ability to see this impersonal process and you become more resolved. Your mind gets more and more steady.

MN:

14. "Now, if others attack that monk in ways that are unwished for, undesired, and disagreeable, by contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, he understands thus: 'This body is of a nature that contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail it. But this has been said by the Blessed One in his 'advice on the simile of the saw': 'Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching.'

{24:58}

BV: This is pretty radical stuff! It's not something that's easy to do. It's something that takes a lot of practice and seeing how everything works according to dependent origination gives you that balance to be able to see.

MN:

So tireless energy shall be aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness established, my body shall be tranquil and untroubled, my mind collected and unified. And now let contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail this body; for this is just how the Buddha's teaching is practiced."

15. "When that Monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, with equanimity supported by wholesome does not become established in him, then he arouses a sense of urgency thus: 'It is a loss for me, it is no gain for me, it is bad for me, it is not good for me, that when I thus recollect on the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in me.' Just as when the mother-in-law sees her father-

in-law, she rouses a sense of energy to please him, so too, when a monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he rouses a sense of urgency. But if, when he recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome becomes established in him, then he is satisfied with it. At this point, friends, much has been done by that monk.

(The FIRE ELEMENT)

16. "What, friends, is the fire element? The fire element may be internal or external. What is the internal fire element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is fire, fiery, and clung-to: that is, that by which one is warmed, ages, and is consumed, and that by which one has eaten, drunk, and consumed, and tasted gets completely

BV: ...disgusted. And tasted gets completely disgusted, or whatever...digested, excuse me. Not disgusted. [laughs] Makes a difference, doesn't it?! [laughs]

MN:

... or whatever else internally, belonging to oneself is fire, fiery, and clung-to: this is called the internal fire element. Now both internal fire element and external fire element are simply fire element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom: 'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the fire element and makes the mind dispassionate toward the fire element.

17. "Now there comes a time when the external fire element is disturbed. It burns up villages, towns, cities, districts, countries. It goes out due to lack of fuel only when it comes to green grass, or to a road, or to a rock, or to water, or to a fair open space. There

comes a time when they seek to make fire even with a cock's feather or a hide-paring.

{29:39}

BV: Boy, that would smell bad, wouldn't it? Make a...eww...burning leather is not one of my favorite smells. I'd have to say that.

MN:

When even this external fire element, great as it is, is seen to be impermanent, subject to destruction, disappearance, and change, what of this body, which is clung to by craving and lasts but for a while? There can be no considering this as 'I' or 'mine' or 'I am'.

18. "So then, if others come, abuse, revile, scold, and harass a monk who has seen this element as it actually is, he understands thus: 'This painful feeling born of ear-contact has arisen in me. That is dependent, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on contact. When he sees that contact is impermanent, that feeling is impermanent, that perception is impermanent, that formations are impermanent, that consciousness is impermanent. And his eyes, having made an element its objective support enters into that new objective support and acquires confidence, steadiness, and resolution.

19. "Now, if others attack that monk in ways that are unwished for, undesired, disagreeable, by contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, he understands thus: 'This body is of the nature that contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail it. But this has been said by the Blessed One in his 'advice on the simile of the saw': 'Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching.' A tireless energy can be aroused in me, unremitting mindfulness established, my body shall be tranquil and untroubled, my mind collected and unified. And now let contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail this body; for this is just how the Buddha's teaching is practiced."

20. "When that Monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he arouses a sense of energy thus: 'It is a loss for me, it is no gain for me, it is bad for me, it is no good for me, that when I thus recollect the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in me.' Just as when the daughter-in-law sees her father-in-law, she arouses a sense of urgency to please him, so too, when the monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he rouses a sense of energy. But if, when he recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome becomes established in him, then he is satisfied with it. At that point, friends, much has been done by that monk.

(AIR ELEMENT)

21. "What, friends, is the air element?"

BV: Now, the air element is probably the biggest element of all of the other elements. You notice this more of the time because that's the vibration and movement. Okay, in all physical things, this is the thing that you would notice most.

MN:

The air element may be either internal or external. What is the internal air element? Whatever internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-to; that is, up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the belly, winds in the bowels,

{34:51}

BV: This morning, winds in the bowels...

MN:

winds that course through the limbs, in- and out-breath, and whatever else internally, belonging to oneself, is air, airy, and clung-

to; This is called the internal air element. Now, both the internal air element and the external air element are simply air element. And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self'.

BV: Now, when you go deeper in your meditation you're noticing the air element by the vibration, okay, and then it grows subtler, and subtler, and subtler until you can't tell it's really there. And then eventually it stops, there's no perception and no feeling. But that's the air element, that craving...it causes that movement. The craving causes the air element and movement in mind's attention and in body. All right?

MN:

And that should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: 'This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self'. When one sees it thus as it actually is with proper wisdom, one becomes disenchanted with the air element and makes the mind dispassionate towards the air element.

BV: As you go deeper in the meditation, the vibration becomes less and less and less. That's how you become dispassionate.

MN:

22. "Now there comes a time when the external air element is disturbed. It sweeps away villages, towns, cities, districts, and countries. There comes a time in the last month of the hot season when they seek wind by means fan and bellows, and even strands of straw in a dipped-fringe of the thatch do not stir. When even this external air element, great as it is, seen to be impermanent, and subject to destruction, and disappearance, and change, what of this body, which is clung to by craving and lasts but for a while? There can be no considering as 'I' or 'mine' or 'I am'.

23. "So when others abuse, revile, scold, and harass a monk who has seen this element as it actually is, he understands thus:

BV: We ought to do this without the...just...what I'm doing right now. (See Footnote 1.)

MN:

'This painful feeling born of ear-contact has arisen in me. That is dependent, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on contact. When he sees that contact is impermanence, that feeling is impermanent, that perception is impermanent, that formations are impermanent, and that consciousness is impermanent. And his mind, having made an element as its objective support enters into that new objective support and acquires confidence, steadfastness, and resolution.

24. "Now, if others attack that monk in ways that are unwished for, undesired, and disagreeable, by contact with fists, clods, sticks, or knives, he understands thus:

BV: I guess we could put in 'guns' now. Lasers. All kinds of stuff.

MN:

'This body is of a nature that contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail it. But this has been said by the Blessed One in 'advice on the simile of the saw': 'Monks, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handed saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching.' So tireless energy shall be aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness established, my body shall be tranquil and untroubled, my mind collected and unified. And now let contact with fists, clods, sticks, and knives assail this body; for it is just how the Buddha's teaching is practiced."

25. "When that Monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become

established in him, then he rouses a sense of urgency thus: 'It is a loss for me, it is no gain for me, it is bad for me, it is no good for me, that when I thus recollect on the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in me.' Just as when a daughter-in-law sees her father-in-law, she rouses a sense of urgency to please him, so too, when the monk thus recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, if equanimity supported by the wholesome does not become established in him, then he rouses a sense of urgency. But if, when he recollects the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, equanimity supported by the wholesome becomes established in him, then he is satisfied with it. At that point, friends, much has been done by that monk.

26. "Just as when a space is enclosed by timber and creepers, grass, and clay, it comes to be termed 'house', so too, when a space is enclosed by bones, sinew, flesh and skin, it becomes to be termed 'material form'.

27. "If, friends, internally the eye is in contact with no external forms comes into its range, and there is no corresponding [consciousness] engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

BV: Do you understand that?

ST: Can you read it again ?

{43:11}

BV: [Repeats] "Friends, internally the eye is intact but no external form comes into its range, and there is no corresponding consciousness engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

I've been telling you that for I don't know how long. Got it? Got it?

SK: Remember the part where the eyes meets color and form and eye contact arises and eye contact happens? Well, all this is this...there's the eye and there's no color and form then no eye consciousness arises and there is no eye contact. That's what he just said. [laughs] Okay?

MN:
If internally the eye is intact

{44:09}

BV: That means good working eye.

MN:
and external forms come into ... range,

BV: Color and form...

{44:17}

MN:
but there is no corresponding consciousness engagement, there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

BV: How can that be?

ST: Hmm. Maybe you had a stroke. ~~...I mean, the eye meets ~~

BV: If you don't have...Go outside, take a good look. You have good working eye, there is color and form but that consciousness isn't going to see it. So it doesn't arise. Do you have to have light, too.

ST: Oh, okay, ~~ I see. ~

{45:14}

MN:

But when internally the eye is intact and external forms come into its range

BV: You go out and you walk into a tree it's so dark. It's in your range of seeing but there's no eye consciousness that arises then you got some problem there! If you don't see it you can bump into it, scrape your nose!

[Repeats] But when the internal eye is intact and external forms come into range

MN:

there is the corresponding consciousness engagement, then there is the manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

BV: Got it?

ST: What is "the corresponding class of consciousness"? Another word for contact?

BV: No, no. It's not contact. It's consciousness. You have ear consciousness, you have eye consciousness...it's the corresponding...

ST: Oh...But...but

BV: ...consciousness.

ST: ...Why does it mention it twice? Consciousness..~~Read it again so, I mean, I don't understand.

BV: [Repeats] "But when the internal eye is intact and external forms come into range there is the corresponding consciousness...consciousness engagement. Then there is the manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness."

No!

ST: What is "the manifestation of the corresponding consciousness"?

BV: You do it.

ST: It means the consciousness arises. It's like when there's sound...what you hear then...

ST: ~ it said it twice. Why does it say it twice? Because he just said, "When there's a working eye..."

BV: Listen again. "...when the internal eye is intact..."

ST: Right!

BV: "...and external form come into range..."

ST: Got it!

BV: "...there is the corresponding consciousness engagement."

ST: Yes!

BV: "...Then there is the manifestation..." It manifests. It comes into being. "...of the corresponding class of consciousness."

ST: Okay. It's tied together. Thank you.

MN:

28. "The material form in what has thus come to be is included in the material form aggregate affected by clinging. The feeling in what has thus come to be included in the feeling aggregate affected by clinging. The perception in what has thus come to be is included in the perception aggregate affected by clinging. The formations in what has thus come to be in are included in the formations

aggregate affected by clinging. The consciousness in what has thus come to be is included in the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. He understands thus: This, indeed is how there comes to be the inclusion, gathering, and amassing of things into these five aggregates affected by clinging.

BV: Okay? You're not giving me a yes or no. Give me a yes or no.

ST: ~~ I need a little help. ~~

BV: [repeats] The material form in what has thus come to be is included in the material form aggregate affected by clinging. Everything that's affected by clinging is conceptual. Right?

[repeats] The feeling in what has come to be is included in the feeling aggregate affected by clinging.

ST: Oh, I see. Okay

BV: [repeats] The perception in what has thus come to be is included in the perception aggregate affected by clinging. We're just talking about the five aggregates and how they're affected by clinging and how you saw the eye and how it worked came to be. So...

[repeats] The formations and what has thus come to be are included in the formation aggregate affected by clinging. The consciousness in what has thus come to be is included in the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. He understands thus: This, indeed is how there comes to be the inclusion, gathering, and amassing of things into these five aggregates affected by clinging. Okay?

{50:50}

MN:

Now this has been said by the Blessed One: "One who sees

dependent origination sees the Dhamma; one who sees the Dhamma sees dependent origination.”

ST: Is this 28? 28?

BV: Nope.

ST: Different, huh?

BV: Uh, yes it is. Sorry. I'm sorry. I thought I was in 27.

MN:

And these five aggregates affected by clinging are dependently arisen. The desire, indulgence, inclination, and holding based on these five aggregates affected by clinging is the origin of suffering.

BV: Got it? Want it again?

[repeats] And these five aggregates affected by clinging are dependently arisen. The desire, indulgence, inclination, and holding based on these five aggregates affected by clinging is the origin of suffering.

MN:

The removal of desire and lust, the abandonment of desire and lust for these five aggregates affected by clinging is the cessation of suffering. At that point too, friends, much has been done by that monk.

BV: We can see that!

MN:

29. "If, friends, internally the ear is intact with no external sounds come into its range, and there is no corresponding conscious engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness. If internally the ear is intact and external forms come into its range, but there is no corresponding conscious engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness. But when internally the ear is intact and external sounds come into its range and there is the corresponding conscious engagement, then there is the manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

30. "The material form in what has thus come to be included in the material form aggregate affected by clinging. The feeling in what has thus come to be included in the feeling aggregate affected by clinging. The perception in what has thus come to be included in the perception aggregate affected by clinging. The formation in what has thus come to be included in the formations aggregate affected by clinging. The consciousness in what has thus come to be included in the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. He understands thus: 'This, indeed is how there comes to be the inclination, gathering, and amassing of things into the five aggregates affected by clinging. Now this has been said by the Blessed One: "One who sees dependent origination sees the Dhamma; one who sees the Dhamma sees dependent origination." And these five aggregates affected by clinging are dependently arisen. The desire, indulgence, inclination, holding based on the five aggregates affected by clinging is the origin of suffering. The removal of desire and lust, the abandonment of desire and lust for these five aggregates affected by clinging is the cessation of suffering. At that point too, friends, much has been done by that monk.

{55:39}

BV: And then we're gonna go through all of the other sense doors, and I'm not gonna read that every time. I've been reading for a long time. But it's the same thing that happens.

MN:

31-32. ...internally the nose is intact but no external smell come into its range...

33-34. "If, friends, internally the tongue is intact but no external flavor come into range...

35-36. "If, friends, internally the body is intact but no external tangibles come into its range...

37. "If, friends, internally the mind is intact but no external mind-object comes into its range, there is no corresponding conscious engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness. If internally the mind is intact and external objects come into its range, but there is no corresponding conscious engagement, then there is no manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness. But when internally the mind is intact and externally mind-objects come into its range and there is the corresponding conscious engagement, then there is the manifestation of the corresponding class of consciousness.

38. "The material form in what has thus come to be is included in the material form aggregate affected by clinging. The feeling what has thus come to be is included in the feeling aggregate affected by clinging. The perception in what has thus come to be is included in the perception aggregate affected by clinging. The formations in what has thus come to be are included in the formations aggregate affected by clinging. The consciousness in what has thus come to be is included in the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. He understands thus: 'This, indeed is how there comes to be the inclusion, gathering, amassing of things into these five aggregates affected by clinging. Now this has been said by the Blessed One: "One who sees dependent origination sees the Dhamma; one who sees the Dhamma sees dependent origination.'" And these five aggregates affected by clinging are dependently arisen. The desire, indulgence, inclination, and holding based on these five aggregates affected by clinging is the origin of suffering. The removal of desire and lust, the abandonment of desire and lust for these five

aggregates affected by clinging is the cessation of suffering. At that point too, friends, much has been done by that monk.”

That is what the venerable Sariputta said. The monks were satisfied and delighted in the venerable Sariputta’s words.

{59:20}

BV: And there you go!

That pretty well lays it all out, doesn’t it? That’s why it’s called The Larger Discourse On The Elephant’s Footprint. It’s the whole of the teaching, the whole thing! Isn’t that something? It includes the 37 Requisites of Enlightenment. It includes Dependent Origination. It includes the Four Noble Truths. It includes everything that Buddha taught...everything that’s necessary that the Buddha taught.

I think we’re going to take this...make out a long version of it. Because this is a very particularly good sutta for getting people to see how everything works. And the thing is, every time you start talking about aggregates affected by clinging, you’re talking about the identification with those aggregates as being ‘me’, ‘mine’ and ‘my self’. It’s really moving right along.

But the thing that you’re working towards is seeing just the aggregate not affected by clinging and the way you do that is through seeing dependent origination. It’s real easy to get side stepped with meditation because you want to get to a certain stage, “I want this to happen and that to happen.” And who is wanting this to occur in a particular way and what happens when it doesn’t? You try harder. And what happens when that doesn’t work? You get restless and then you get frustrated.

Now, the whole point of this entire sutta is trying to show you that you need to carry the meditation with you. If you don’t carry it into your daily activities your mind is going to get frustrated. And that frustration is going to make you want to quit. “That doesn’t work!” It does work! But you’re just not using your mindfulness with your daily

activities. You're getting caught up in your thinking this and that, just like you always get caught up in your thinking this and that. You're not being mindful of smiling. You're not being mindful of having a light mind. You're getting caught by the frustration of "I want my meditation to be the way I want it when I want it to be that way!"

Now, when it's talking about reflecting on the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha, there is the meditations. There are six good qualities of the Dhamma and I don't remember how many for the Sangha, but there's nine for the Buddha. And just reflecting on that when your mind is a little bit agitated all of a sudden your mind will become calm. But it takes real strong mindfulness to remember to do that. And if your mindfulness isn't strong, it don't work. You forget about things for hours and hours on end and get caught in liking this and disliking that and getting all caught up in identifying with those thoughts and feelings, look at how much suffering you cause yourself. And you can't blame anybody else. There is no blame. There's just a lack of remembering what you're doing while you're doing it and looking and seeing how dependent origination works in everything and how truly impersonal all of this stuff really is.

It's not a maybe, it's a real thing. This is impermanent. And that's how you develop your equanimity in your daily life.

{1:05:20}

So, you got any questions?

ST: On my meditation, a question of I want just to be sure that I'm doing this correctly. I...since I'm going in all directions...metta in all directions...first off, the way I start is I ~~~. Then I verbally say ~~~.

BV: Just start doing it. You don't need to verbalize it at all.

ST: So, say nothing about...

BV: Don't internally verbalize anything. Just do it. Just point your

mind in that direction. You know what the feeling is like. You don't have to...because all of the thoughts are concepts and by the time you get into the fourth jhana you should be leaving those concepts alone and just doing what you do with your meditation.

ST: I think my mistake...I was trying very hard asking for the lessons of my past lives...

BV: But, when you're working on the past lives, start right now and go back.

ST: ...And then ~~

BV: Until your mind gets real used to it. And then it'll start doing it on its own. But you've forgotten that you're developing your memory.

ST: It's been a while.

BV: [laughs] It's okay. It's not a problem. It just means that there has to be an adjustment.

ST: When you're older you have more memories.

BV: Boy, ain't that the truth! More memories that get in the way!
[laughs]

ST: ~~

BV: Oh, Geez! What are you doing that for?

ST: ~~

BV: Memories are just memories. That's all it is.

ST: They're like pictures...

BV: For some people.

ST: Well, I mean they're the same as looking at a bunch of pictures...

~~

BV: Well, for some people it's pictures, for other people it's not.

ST: Some people ~~

BV: What you do is you try to be a little bit over-cautious and you can be lighter with it, have more fun with it. Okay? It's like you're on the tight rope and you've taken one step and you don't really know whether you want to take the next one or not. Just have more fun with it! The equanimity will protect you.

ST: I really think I've been tip toeing around it...

BV: Yep.

ST: ~

BV: And instead of developing your memory you've just kind of hummed through it.

ST: ...Because it's work.

BV: Yeah, of course it is.

ST: ~

BV: Don't we all! And that's good, that's not bad.

It looks like a dog graveyard in here. [laughs]

ST: They're so peaceful.

ST: They're so worn out. [laughs]

BV: Any other question?

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 . . .

BV: The other thing that does get lost with a lot of people that do meditation is that they don't realize that they want to be developing more and more wholesomeness instead of when a feeling comes up I act this way instead of being light with it and have a tendency to get heavy.

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Footnote:

1. Bhante is going back and reading the the sections where the book

has: "... (repeat §§8-10)..."

Transcribed Brent Hagwood 07-Mar-11