

Knowing and Seeing

by Ven. Pa-Auk Sayadaw



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Buddha Dharma Education Association Inc.



KNOWING AND SEEING

**Talks and Questions-and-Answers
at a Meditation Retreat in Taiwan
by Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw**

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Foreword

As most of us know, the three trainings of virtuous conduct, concentration, and wisdom, are the three stages of Buddhist practice. Through the practice of the three trainings, an ordinary person can attain the supreme Nibbāna and become a noble one.

The *Visuddhimagga* compiled by the Venerable Buddhaghosa is an exposition of the three trainings. It is based on the Pāḷi texts and commentaries, and explains the seven stages of purification, and sixteen insight-knowledges. But how to attain them has been a difficult question for all Buddhists for many generations. For this, we are fortunate to have the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw. His teaching is the same as, indeed it is in much more detail than, what is described in the *Visuddhimagga*. Based on the very same sources, the Pāḷi texts, commentaries and the *Visuddhimagga*, the Sayadaw teaches meditators, step by step, how to attain those stages of purification and insight-knowledges.

The goal of the teaching at Pa-Auk Forest Monastery is, in accordance with the orthodox teaching, to realize Nibbanā in this very life. To achieve that end, meditators must comprehend all mentality-and-materiality, also known as the five aggregates, as impermanent, suffering, and non-self. As for the objects of Vipassanā meditation, they are not only the internal and external five aggregates, but also the five aggregates of past, future, present, gross, subtle, superior, inferior, far, and near. Only after comprehending all of them penetratively as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, can meditators attain the

noble paths and fruitions, and gradually eradicate or reduce various defilements. After having seen Nibbanā for first time, meditators can see clearly that they have attained the first path and fruition, what defilements they have abandoned, and what defilements they still need to abandon. Then they continue to practise Vipassanā to attain higher paths and fruitions up to arahantship, whereby they are no longer subject to rebirth, and will attain final Nibbanā after death.

It is very fortunate that I still have the opportunity, in this present age wherein Buddhism is degenerating, to practise the original system of Buddhist meditation. It makes me feel as if I were back in the Buddha time. For this I am very grateful to the Sayadaw, who spent many years practising in the forest, with the Pāli texts and commentaries to guide him, to rediscover this teaching. It is out of compassion, that he sacrifices much of his time to teach meditation for the benefit of humankind. His teaching is markedly clear and detailed throughout the seven stages of purification. This is a rare teaching and hard to come by, not only in Taiwan, but in the whole world.

From April to June, the Sayadaw conducted a two-month meditation retreat for the first time in Taiwan, at Yi-Tung Temple. Among many Taiwanese, his teaching will definitely arouse interest in the original meditation. It is also a great help to fill in some gaps of Mahāyāna meditation. Hopefully the reader will, after reading the profound talks, and answers to questions, given in Taiwan by the Sayadaw, be able to have a deeper understanding of the Buddha teachings.

May the true Dhamma endure long. May the publication of this book provide a refuge for those who wish to know what the rounds of birth-and-death are, and who wish to attain liberation. May this book guide more people onto the right path to liberation, so that they can realize for themselves: 'All formations are impermanent, all dhammas are non-self, and Nibbanā is utterly peaceful.' To see that is certainly not something impracticable, but something absolutely practical. Only one who sees it knows it, and only one who experiences it can enjoy the bliss of the Dhamma.

A Taiwanese Bhikshuni
(Meditator at said retreat,
who then went to Pa-Auk
Forest Monastery to continue.)

**Namo Tassa,
Bhagavato,
Arahato,
Sammā-
Sambuddhassa.**

**Homage to Him,
the Blessed,
the Worthy,
the Perfectly
Self-Enlightened One**

'Bhikkhus, I say that the destruction of the taints is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know and see.'

The Buddha,
Sabbāsava Sutta
(The second sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya).

'One's own opinion is the weakest authority of all...'

Venerable Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa,
Sumaṅgalavilāsinī
(The commentary of the Digha Nikaya. 567-8)

'This is not my method. I have just taken it from the Pāli texts and commentaries.'

Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw,
Pa-Auk Forest Monastery,
Mawlamyine. Myanmar.

Editorial Note

The talks in this book were given by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw of Pa-Auk Forest Monastery, Pa-Auk, Mawlamyine, Myanmar, while he conducted a two-month meditation retreat at Yi-Tung Temple, Sing Choo City, Taiwan. In the course of those two months, apart from giving daily meditation instructions to individual meditators, the Sayadaw read seven main talks, which had been prepared at Pa-Auk prior to the retreat. Those talks were interspersed with seven Question-and-Answer talks; the questions having been given beforehand by the meditators at the retreat, and the answers then having been likewise prepared beforehand by the Sayadaw. The Sayadaw read a further two talks. One was read to the general public on the occasion of Vesākha day (the anniversary of the Buddha's birth, enlightenment and final passing away). The other was read at the end of the retreat, and was the traditional talk on offerings, for the chief donor, the abbess of Yi-Tung Temple, other donors, and the organizers and helpers at the retreat. All sixteen talks had been prepared in English, and then read in English by the Sayadaw. For the benefit of the audience, who were all Chinese, the talks were also translated beforehand into Chinese, and the Chinese read concurrently with the Sayadaw's reading.

The talks are concerned mainly with the Sayadaw's principal approach to insight meditation: to practise tranquillity meditation first, after which to use it as a necessary vehicle for insight meditation. The Sayadaw

teaches also pure-insight meditation, which is why he provides an exposition of the orthodox instructions for both methods.

The talks, as they appear here, are not word-perfect versions of the talks as they were given in Taiwan. This is because the Sayadaw decided that the material should be edited prior to publication. To that end, the Sayadaw requested that the language be changed in any way deemed necessary, and himself added further details etc. The Sayadaw was very frequently consulted during the entire editing process, and his approval secured for changes other than those of only form.

The editing has been mostly of form and not content. Efforts have been made to retain the Sayadaw's particular way of speaking English, when he discusses with and instructs meditators. Since the Sayadaw was addressing Taiwanese and Malaysian-Chinese Mahāyāna Buddhists, there are considerably fewer of his usual copious references from the Theravāda texts and commentaries. It should here be mentioned that, when the Sayadaw translates a Pāḷi quotation, he usually follows the Burmese custom of including a gloss from the commentaries.

Most of the Pāḷi terms used by the Sayadaw have been translated. The Pāḷi has initially been retained in brackets, after which it has usually been omitted; as for example, initially: 'impermanent (*anicca*)', subsequently: 'impermanent'. Conversely, some terms, awkward in English, have been left untranslated, such as: *kaṣiṇa* (totality? device?), *deva* (god? deity?), *brahmā* (supreme being on a very high plane of existence?). Appendix 1

is a glossary which defines rather than translates those terms.

The editorial priorities have been to maintain the required degree of accuracy, and to try to make the talks readable to newcomer, meditator, and scholar alike. Complete uniformity in editing has, for those reasons, been somewhat compromised. In the genesis of this book, diverse helping hands have been involved in the translating, composing, and editing. For any errors or faults in the material, the helping hands alone are responsible.

Editors
Pa-Auk Forest Monastery

Preface to the Second Edition

The first edition of *Knowing and Seeing*, a collection of talks, given in Taiwan, by the Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw, was, in spite of the best intentions, published with regrettably very many flaws and errors. They were almost only of language, which could not, unfortunately, but have an adverse effect on the contents. An attempt has been made, with this second edition, to put things right. The editors beg forgiveness for whatever scratches still remain after this final polish.

May absolutely all parties involved in the production of this material, benefit from their labours.

Editors
Pa-Auk Forest Monastery

HOW YOU DEVELOP MINDFULNESS-OF-BREATHING TO ABSORPTION

Introduction

I am very happy to have come to Taiwan, at the invitation of some Taiwanese monks and nuns who stayed at Pa-Auk Meditation Centre, near Mawlamyine in Myanmar. While in Taiwan I should like to teach you something about the system of meditation taught at Pa-Auk Meditation Centre. It is based upon instructions found in the Pāḷi¹ Buddhist texts and the *Visuddhimagga*, *The Path of Purification*. We believe that the meditation taught in the Pāḷi Buddhist texts is the same as the meditation practised by the Buddha himself, and taught by him to his disciples during his lifetime.

Why Meditate?

First we should ask ourselves, ‘Why did the Buddha teach meditation?’ or, ‘What is the purpose of meditation?’

The purpose of Buddhist Meditation is to attain Nibbāna. Nibbāna is the cessation of mentality (*nāma*) and materiality (*rūpa*). To reach Nibbāna, therefore, we

1. For untranslated Pāḷi terms, please refer to Appendix 1.

must completely destroy both wholesome mental states, rooted in non-greed, non-anger, and non-delusion, and unwholesome mental states, rooted in greed, anger, and delusion, and which produce new birth, ageing, sickness and death. If we destroy them totally with the insight-knowledges and path knowledge (*ariyamagga*), then we will reach Nibbāna. In other words, Nibbāna is release and freedom from the suffering of the round of rebirths (*samsāra*), and the cessation of rebirth, ageing, sickness, and death. We are all subject to the suffering of rebirth, ageing, sickness, and death, and so to free ourselves from the many forms of suffering we need to meditate. Since we wish to be free from all suffering, we must learn how to meditate in order to attain Nibbāna.

What Is Meditation?

So what is meditation? Meditation consists of Samatha and Vipassanā meditation, which must both be based upon virtuous conduct of body and speech. In other words, meditation is the development and perfection of the Noble Eightfold Path.

The Noble Eightfold Path is: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Right view and right thought taken are together called the training of insight or wisdom. This the Buddha called Vipassanā right view (*vipassanā-sammādiṭṭhi*) and path right view (*magga-sammā-diṭṭhi*). Right speech, right action, and right livelihood are together called the training of virtuous conduct. Right effort, right mind-

fulness, and right concentration are together called the training of concentration, which is Samatha meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*).

The Noble Eightfold Path

Now, I would like to explain a little bit more about each of the eight factors of the Noble Eightfold Path.

The first factor is right view. What is right view? Right view consists of four kinds of knowledge. First there is the insight-knowledge of the Truth of Suffering, which is the five aggregates of clinging. Second, there is the insight-knowledge of the Cause for Suffering, which discerns the causes for the five aggregates of clinging. In other words, it is the insight-knowledge of dependent-origination. Third, there is the realisation and knowledge of Nibbāna, which is the cessation of the five aggregates of clinging. And fourth, there is the knowledge of the Noble Eightfold Path, which is the way of practice leading to the realisation of Nibbāna.

The second factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right thought. Right thought is: applied thought to the object of the Truth of Suffering, the five aggregates of clinging; applied thought to the object of the Truth of the Cause for Suffering, the causes for the five aggregates of clinging; applied thought to the object of the Cessation of Suffering, Nibbāna; and finally, applied thought to the object of the Path Leading to the Cessation of Suffering, the Noble Eightfold Path.

Thus, right thought applies the mind to the object of the Truth of Suffering, the five aggregates of clinging, and right view understands it as it really is. These two factors work together to apply the mind to each of the Four Noble Truths, and to understand them. Since they work together in this way, they are called the training of wisdom (*paññā-sikkhā*).

The third factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right speech. Right speech is to abstain from lying, slander, harsh speech, and useless talk.

The fourth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right action. Right action is to abstain from killing, from theft, and from sexual misconduct.

The fifth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right livelihood. This means to abstain from obtaining a living by wrong speech or wrong actions, such as killing, stealing, or lying. For laypeople it includes to abstain from the five types of wrong trade: trade in weapons, humans, animals for slaughter, intoxicants, and poisons.

The three factors of right speech, right action, and right livelihood are called the training of virtuous conduct (*sīla-sikkhā*).

The sixth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right effort. Right effort is of four kinds: the effort to stop the arising of unwholesome states that have not yet arisen; the effort to remove unwholesome states that have already arisen; the effort to arouse the arising of wholesome states that have not yet arisen; and the effort to increase wholesome states that have already arisen. In order to develop these four types of right effort, we

must practise and develop the three trainings of virtuous conduct, concentration, and wisdom.

The seventh factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right mindfulness. Right mindfulness is of four kinds: mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of feelings, mindfulness of consciousnesses, and mindfulness of dhammas. Here, the dhammas are the fifty-one mental-concomitants excluding feeling, or another way, the five aggregates of clinging, the twelve internal and external sense-bases, the eighteen elements, the seven factors of enlightenment, the Four Noble Truths, etc. But the four types of mindfulness can be reduced to just two, mindfulness of materiality and mindfulness of mentality.

The eighth factor of the Noble Eightfold Path is right concentration. Right concentration is the first jhāna (absorption), second jhāna, third jhāna, and fourth jhāna. These are called right concentration according to the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, the Greater Discourse on Foundations of Mindfulness. In the *Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, right concentration is explained in more detail as the four fine-material jhānas (*rūpa-jhāna*), the four immaterial jhānas (*arūpa-jhāna*) and access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*).

Some people have a great accumulation of pāramīs, and can attain Nibbāna by simply listening to a brief or detailed talk on the Dhamma. Most people, however, do not have such pāramī, and must practise the Noble Eightfold Path in the gradual order. They are called person-to-be-led (*neyya-puggala*), and must develop the Noble Eightfold Path step by step, in the order of

virtue, concentration, and wisdom. After purifying their virtue they must train in concentration, and after purifying their mind by way of concentration practice they must train in wisdom.

How You Develop Concentration

How should they develop concentration?

There are forty subjects of Samatha meditation, and a person can develop any of these to attain concentration.

Those who cannot decide which meditation subject to develop should start with mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*). Most people succeed in meditation by using either mindfulness-of-breathing or the four-elements meditation. Therefore, I shall now explain briefly how to practise mindfulness-of-breathing.

How You Develop Mindfulness-of-Breathing

The development of mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*) is taught by the Buddha in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (The Greater Discourse on Foundations of Mindfulness) of Digha Nikaya (Long Discourses). He says:

‘Bhikkhus, here in this Teaching a bhikkhu having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty place, sits down cross-legged and keeps his body erect and establishes mindfulness on the meditation object; only mindfully he breathes in and only mindfully he breathes out.

1. Breathing in a long breath he knows, “I am breathing in a long breath”, or breathing out a long breath he knows, “I am breathing out a long breath”.

2. Breathing in a short breath he knows, “I am breathing in a short breath”, or breathing out a short breath he knows, “I am breathing out a short breath”.

3. “Experiencing the whole breath body I will breathe in”, thus he trains himself, and, “Experiencing the whole breath body I will breathe out”, thus he trains himself.

4. “Calming the breath body I will breathe in”, thus he trains himself, and, “Calming the breath body I will breathe out”, thus he trains himself.’

To begin meditating, sit in a comfortable position and try to be aware of the breath as it enters and leaves the body through the nostrils. You should be able to feel it either just below the nose or somewhere around the nostrils. Do not follow the breath into the body or out of the body, because then you will not be able to perfect your concentration. Just be aware of the breath at the most obvious place it brushes against or touches, either the top of the upper lip or around the nostrils. Then you will be able to develop and perfect your concentration.

Do not pay attention to the individual characteristics (*sabhāva-lakkhaṇa*), general characteristics (*sammañña-lakkhaṇa*) or colour of the nimitta (sign of concentration). The individual characteristics are the characteristics of the four elements in the breath: hardness, roughness, flowing, heat, supporting, pushing, etc. The general

characteristics are the impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), or non-self (*anattā*) characteristics of the breath. This means do not note 'in, out, impermanent', or 'in, out, suffering', or 'in, out, non-self'. Simply be aware of the in-and-out breath as a concept.

The concept of the breath is the object of mindfulness-of-breathing. It is this object you must concentrate on to develop concentration. As you concentrate on the concept of the breath in this way, and if you practised this meditation in a previous life, and developed some *pāramīs*, you will easily be able to concentrate on the in-and-out breath.

If not, the *Visuddhimagga* suggests counting the breaths. You should count after the end of each breath: 'In-out-one, in-out-two,' etc.

Count up to at least five, but not to more than ten. We suggest you count to eight, because that reminds you of the Noble Eightfold Path, which you are trying to develop. So you should count, as you like, up to any number between five and ten, and determine that during that time you will not let your mind drift, or go elsewhere, but be only calmly aware of the breath. When you count like this, you find that you are able to concentrate your mind, and make it calmly aware of only the breath.

After concentrating your mind like this for at least half an hour, you should proceed to the second stage:

1. 'Breathing in a long breath he knows, "I am breathing in a long breath", or breathing out a long breath he knows, "I am breathing out a long breath".'

2. 'Breathing in a short breath he knows, "I am breathing in a short breath", breathing out a short breath he knows, "I am breathing out a short breath".'

At this stage you have to develop awareness of whether the in-and-out breaths are long or short. 'Long' or 'short' here do not refer to length in feet and inches, but length in time, the duration. You should decide for yourself what length of time you will call 'long', and what length of time you will call 'short'. Be aware of the duration of each in-and-out breath. You will notice that the breath is sometimes long in time, and sometimes short. Just knowing this is all you have to do at this stage. Do not note, 'In, out, long - In, out, short', just 'In, out', and be aware of whether the breaths are long or short. You should know this by being just aware of the length of time that the breath brushes and touches the upper lip, or around the nostrils, as it enters and leaves the body. Sometimes the breath may be long throughout the sitting, and sometimes short, but do not purposely try to make it long or short.

At this stage the nimitta may appear, but if you can do this calmly for about one hour, and no nimitta appears, you should move on to the third stage:

3. "'Experiencing the whole breath body I will breathe in", thus he trains himself and, "Experiencing the whole breath body I will breathe out", thus he trains himself.'

Here the Buddha is instructing you to be aware of the

whole breath from beginning to end. As you do this the nimitta may now appear. If it does, do not immediately shift your mind to it, but stay with the breath.

If you are calmly aware of the breath from beginning to end for about an hour, and no nimitta appears, you should move on to the fourth stage:

4. “Calming the breath body I will breathe in”, thus he trains himself and, “Calming the breath body I will breathe out”, thus he trains himself.’

To do this, you should decide to make the breath calm, but go on being aware of the breath from beginning to end, and do nothing else to make the breath calm. If you do, your concentration will break and fall away. The *Visuddhimagga* give four factors that make the breath calm: reflection (*ābhoga*), repeated recollection (*samannāhāra*), attention (*manasikāra*), and investigation (*vīmaṃsa*). So all you need to do at this stage is to decide to calm the breath, and to be continuously aware of it. This way, you will find that the breath becomes calmer, and the nimitta may appear.

Just before the nimitta appears, a lot of meditators encounter difficulties. Mostly they find that the breath becomes very subtle, and not clear; they may think the breath has stopped. If this happens, you should keep your awareness where you last noticed the breath, and wait for it there.

A dead person, a foetus in the womb, a drowned person, an unconscious person, a person in the fourth jhāna, a person in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-*

samāpatti)², and a brahmā: only these seven types of person do not breathe. Reflect on the fact that you are not one of them, that you are in reality breathing, and that it is just your mindfulness which is not strong enough to be aware of the breath.

When it is subtle, you should not change the breath to make it more obvious, as the effort will cause agitation, and your concentration will not develop. Just be aware of the breath as it is, and if it is not clear, simply wait for it where you last noticed it. You will find that, as you apply your mindfulness and wisdom this way, the breath will reappear.

The nimitta of mindfulness-of-breathing varies according to the individual. To some the nimitta is pure and fine like cotton wool, drawn out cotton, moving air or draught, a bright light like the morning star Venus, a bright ruby or gem, or a bright pearl. To others it is like the stem of cotton plant, a sharpened piece of wood. To yet others it is like a long rope or string, a wreath of flowers, a puff of smoke, a stretched out cobweb, a film of mist, a lotus, a chariot wheel, a moon, or a sun.

In most cases, a pure white nimitta like cotton wool is the uggaha-nimitta (taken-up sign or learning sign), which is usually dull and opaque. When the nimitta becomes bright like the morning star, brilliant and clear, it is the paṭibhāga-nimitta (counterpart sign). When like a dull ruby or gem, it is the uggaha-nimitta, but when bright and sparkling, it is the paṭibhāga-

2. When consciousness, mental-concomitants, and materiality produced by consciousness are suspended.

nimitta. The other images should be understood in this way.

The nimitta appears to different people in different ways, because it is produced by perception. The different perceptions of different meditators before the arising of the nimitta produce different types of nimitta. Even though mindfulness-of-breathing is a single meditation subject, it produces various types of nimitta, depending on the individual.

When you have reached this stage it is important to not play with your nimitta. Do not let it go away, and do not intentionally change its shape or appearance. If you do, your concentration will not develop any further, and your progress will stop. Your nimitta will probably disappear. So when your nimitta first appears, do not move your mind from the breath to the nimitta. If you do, you will find it disappears.

If you find that the nimitta is stable, and your mind by itself has become fixed on it, then just leave your mind there. If you force your mind to come away from it, you will probably lose your concentration.

If your nimitta appears far away in front of you, ignore it, as it will probably disappear. If you ignore it, and simply concentrate on the breath at the place where the breath touches, the nimitta will come and stay there.

If your nimitta appears at the place where the breath touches, is stable, and appears as if it is the breath itself, and the breath as if it is the nimitta, then forget about the breath, and be just aware of the nimitta. By moving your mind from the breath to the nimitta, you will be able to make further progress. As you keep

your mind on the nimitta, the nimitta becomes whiter and whiter, and when it is white like cotton wool, it is the uggaha-nimitta.

You should determine to keep your mind calmly concentrated on the white uggaha-nimitta for one, two, three hours, or more. If you can keep your mind fixed on the uggaha-nimitta for one or two hours, it should become clear, bright, and brilliant. This is then the paṭibhāga-nimitta (counterpart sign). Determine and practise to keep your mind on the paṭibhāga-nimitta for one, two, or three hours. Practise until you succeed.

At this stage you will reach either access (*upacāra*) or absorption (*appanā*) concentration. It is called access concentration because it is close to and precedes jhāna. Absorption concentration is jhāna.

Both types of concentration have the paṭibhāga-nimitta as their object. The only difference between them is that in access concentration the jhāna factors are not fully developed. For this reason bhavaṅga mind states still occur, and one can fall into bhavaṅga (life-continuum consciousness). The meditator will say that everything stopped, and may even think it is Nibbāna. In reality the mind has not stopped, but the meditator is just not sufficiently skilled to discern this, because the bhavaṅga mind states are very subtle.

To avoid dropping into bhavaṅga, and to develop further, you need the help of the five controlling faculties: faith (*saddhā*), effort (*vīriyā*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and understanding (*paññā*) to push the mind and fix it on the paṭibhāga-nimitta. It takes effort to make the mind know the paṭibhāga-

nimitta again and again, mindfulness to not forget it, and understanding to know it.

How You Balance the Five Controlling Faculties

The five controlling faculties (*pañcīndriyā*) are the five powers that control the mind, and keep it from straying off the path of Samatha (tranquillity) and Vipassanā (insight) that leads to Nibbāna. If one or more are in excess, this leads to imbalance.

The first one is faith in what one should have faith in, such as the Triple Gem, or faith in kamma and its results. It is important to have faith in the enlightenment of the Buddha, because without it, a person will regress from the work in meditation. It is also important to have faith in the teachings of the Buddha, namely the Four Paths, the Four Fruits, Nibbāna, etc. The teachings of the Buddha show us the way of meditation, so at this stage it is important to have complete faith in that teaching.

Let us say the meditator thinks, 'Can jhāna really be attained by just watching the in-breath and out-breath? Is it really true that the uggaha-nimitta is like white cotton wool, and the paṭibhāga-nimitta like clear ice or glass?' If these kinds of thought persist, they result in views such as, 'Jhāna cannot be attained in the present age,' and the meditator's faith in the teaching will decline, and he will be unable to stop himself from giving up the development of Samatha.

So a person who is developing concentration with a meditation subject like mindfulness-of-breathing needs to have strong faith. He should develop mindfulness-of-breathing without any doubts. He should think, 'Jhāna can be achieved, if I follow the instructions of the Fully Enlightened Buddha systematically.'

If, however, a person lets his faith in objects that he should have faith in become excessive, and here it is the meditation subject of mindfulness-of-breathing, then because excessive faith has decided on the object, wisdom is not clear, and also the remaining faculties, effort, mindfulness, and concentration are weakened: Effort is unable to raise associated mental formations³ to the paṭibhāga-nimitta, and keep them there; mindfulness is unable to establish knowledge of the paṭibhāga-nimitta; concentration is unable to prevent the mind from going to another object; and wisdom is unable to see penetratively the paṭibhāga-nimitta. Because wisdom is unable to understand the paṭibhāga-nimitta, and support the faculty of faith, excessive faith leads actually to a decrease in faith.

If effort is too strong, the remaining faculties, faith, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, will be unable respectively decide, establish, prevent distraction, and discern penetratively. Thus excessive effort causes the mind to not stay calmly concentrated on the paṭibhāga-nimitta, and the enlightenment factors of tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity do not arise with sufficient strength.

3. Mental formations (*nāma-dhammā*) include both consciousnesses (*cittā*) and their mental-concomitants (*cetasikā*).

To balance faith with wisdom, and concentration with effort, is praised by the wise. If, for instance, faith is strong and wisdom is weak, a person will develop faith in, and respect for objects without use and essence. For instance, he will develop faith in, and reverence for objects revered and respected by religions outside orthodox Buddhism, for example, guardian spirits or protective deities.

If, on the other hand, wisdom is strong and faith is weak, a person can become quite crafty. Without meditating, they will spend their time simply passing judgements. This is as difficult to cure, as to cure a disease caused by an overdose of medicine.

If faith and wisdom are balanced, a person will have faith in objects he should have faith in: however, the Triple Gem, kamma, and its effects. He will believe that if he meditates, in accordance with the Buddha's instructions, he will be able to attain the paṭibhāga-nimitta, and jhāna.

Again, if concentration is strong and effort is weak, a person can become lazy. If effort is strong, and concentration weak, however, he can become agitated. But when concentration and effort are balanced, he will become neither lazy, nor agitated, and will be able to attain jhāna.

When a person wishes to cultivate a Samatha subject, it is good to have very strong faith. If he thinks, 'I will certainly reach jhāna, if I develop concentration on the paṭibhāga-nimitta', then by the power of that faith, and by concentrating on the paṭibhāga-nimitta, he will definitely achieve jhāna. This is because jhāna is based primarily on concentration.

For a person developing Vipassanā it is good that wisdom be strong, because when wisdom is strong he will be able to know and see the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self penetratively.

When concentration and wisdom are balanced, mundane jhānas (*lokiya-jhāna*) can arise. Because the Buddha taught to develop Samatha and Vipassanā together, supramundane jhānas (*lokuttara-jhāna*) can also arise only when concentration and wisdom are balanced.

Mindfulness is necessary under all circumstances, because it protects the mind from agitation due to excess faith, effort, or wisdom, and from laziness due to excess concentration. It balances faith with wisdom, concentration with effort, and concentration with wisdom.

So mindfulness is always necessary, as is the seasoning of salt in all sauces, and a prime minister for all the king's affairs. Hence it says in the ancient commentaries, that the Blessed One said, 'Mindfulness is always necessary in any meditation subject.' Why? Because it is a refuge and protection for the meditating mind. Mindfulness is a refuge, because it helps the mind arrive at special and high states, it has never reached or known before. Without mindfulness the mind is incapable of attaining any special and extraordinary states. Mindfulness protects the mind, and keeps the object of meditation from being lost. That is why to one discerning it, with insight-knowledge, mindfulness appears as that which protects the object of meditation, as well as the mind of the meditator. Without mindfulness,

a person is unable to lift the mind up or restrain the mind. That is why the Buddha has said it is necessary in all instances. (See also *Visuddhimagga* Chapter IV, para. 49. *Mahāṭīkā* 1, 150-154.)

How You Balance the Seven Factors of Enlightenment

If one is to achieve jhāna using mindfulness-of-breathing, it is also important to balance the Seven Factors of Enlightenment. They are the Enlightenment Factors of:

1. Mindfulness (*sati*); which remembers the paṭibhāga-nimitta, and discerns it again and again.
2. Investigation of Phenomena (*dhammavicaya*); which understands the paṭibhāga-nimitta penetratively.
3. Effort (*vīriya*); which brings the enlightenment factors together, and balances them on the paṭibhāga-nimitta; and especially reinforces itself, and the Factor of Investigation of Phenomena.
4. Joy (*pīti*); gladness of the mind when experiencing the paṭibhāga-nimitta.
5. Tranquillity (*passaddhi*); calmness of the mind and mental-concomitants, that have the paṭibhāga-nimitta as their object.
6. Concentration (*samādhi*); one-pointedness of the mind on the paṭibhāga-nimitta.

7. Equanimity (*upekkhā*); evenness of mind that neither becomes excited, nor withdraws from the *paṭibhāga-nimitta*.

A meditator must develop and balance all seven enlightenment factors. With insufficient effort, however, the mind will fall away from the object of meditation, which in this case is the *paṭibhāga-nimitta*. Then one should not develop tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity, but develop investigation of phenomena, effort, and joy. This way the mind is raised up again.

When there is too much effort, however, the mind will become agitated and distracted. Then one should do the opposite, and not develop investigation of phenomena, effort, and joy, but tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity. This way the agitated and distracted mind becomes restrained and calmed.

This is how the five controlling faculties, and seven factors of enlightenment are balanced.

How You Attain Jhāna

When the five controlling faculties, faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and understanding are sufficiently developed, concentration will go beyond access, up to absorption concentration. When you reach *jhāna*, your mind will know the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* without interruption. This can continue for several hours, even all night, or for a whole day.

When your mind stays continuously concentrated on the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* for one or two hours, you

should try to discern the area in the heart where the mind-door (bhavaṅga consciousness) rests, that is the heart-base materiality. The bhavaṅga consciousness is bright and luminous, and the commentaries explain that it is the mind-door (*manodvāra*). If you try many times, again and again, you will eventually discern both the mind-door, and paṭibhāga-nimitta as it appears there. You should then discern the five jhāna factors one at a time. With continued practice, you will be able to discern them all together at once. The five jhāna factors are:

1. Applied thought (*vitakka*): directing and placing the mind on the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the in-and-out breath.
2. Sustained thought (*vicāra*): maintaining the mind on the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the in-and-out breath.
3. Joy (*pīti*): liking for the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the in-and-out breath.
4. Bliss (*sukha*): happiness about the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the in-and-out breath.
5. One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*): one-pointedness of mind on the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the in-and-out breath.

The jhāna factors are as a group called jhāna. When you are just beginning to practise jhāna, you should practise to enter jhāna for a long time, and not spend too much

time discerning the jhāna factors. You should practise mastery (*vasī-bhāva*) of the jhānas. There are five kinds of mastery:

1. To advert to the jhāna factors.
2. To enter jhāna whenever desired.
3. To resolve (*adhiṭṭhāna*) to stay in jhāna for a determined duration, and to keep the resolve.
4. To emerge from jhāna at the determined time.
5. To review the jhāna factors.⁴

In the Pabbateyyagāvī Sutta in the Aṅguttara Nikāya (Numerical Discourses), the Buddha says that one should not try going to the second jhāna without mastering the first jhāna. He explains that if one does not master the first jhāna thoroughly, but tries to go to higher jhānas, one will lose the first jhāna, as well as be unable to attain the other jhānas. One will lose all the jhānas.

When you master the first jhāna, you can try to progress to the second jhāna. You need to enter the first

4. Adverting and reviewing occur in the same mind-door thought-process (*manodvāra-vīthi*). Adverting is performed by the mind-door adverting consciousness (*manodvārāvajjana*), which in this case takes as object one of the five jhāna factors, such as applied thought. Reviewing is performed by the four, five, six, or seven reviewing impulsion consciousnesses, that occur immediately after the mind-door adverting consciousness, and which have the same object. See Talk Five for more detailed explanation.

jhāna, emerge from it, and reflect on its faults, and on the advantages of the second jhāna. That is, the first jhāna is close to the five hindrances, has gross jhāna factors of applied and sustained thought, and is thus less calm than the second jhāna, which is without them. So, with no desire now for those two jhāna factors, for only joy, happiness, and one-pointedness, you should again concentrate on the paṭibhāga-nimitta. This way you will be able to attain the second jhāna, possessed of only those three factors, joy, bliss, and one-pointedness. You should then practise the five masteries of the second jhāna.

When you have succeeded, and want to develop the third jhāna, you should emerge from the second jhāna, and reflect on its faults, and on the advantages of the third jhāna. That is, the second jhāna is close to the first jhāna, and has the gross jhāna factor of joy, and is thus less calm than the third jhāna, which is without joy. With the desire now to attain the third jhāna, you should again concentrate on the paṭibhāga-nimitta. This way you will be able to attain the third jhāna, possessed of only happiness and one-pointedness. You should then practise the five masteries of the third jhāna.

When you have succeeded, and want to develop the fourth jhāna, you should emerge from the third jhāna, and reflect on its faults and on the advantages of the fourth jhāna. That is, the third jhāna has the gross jhāna factor of happiness, and is thus less calm than the fourth jhāna, which is without happiness. With the desire now to attain the fourth jhāna, you should again concentrate on the paṭibhāga-nimitta. This way

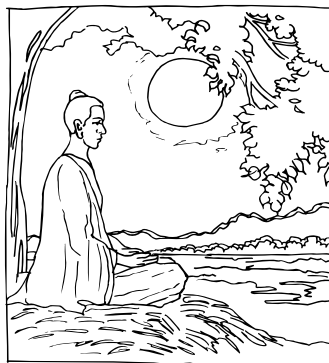
you will be able to attain the fourth jhāna, possessed of only equanimity and one-pointedness. You should then practise the five masteries of the fourth jhāna.

With the attainment of the fourth jhāna, the breath stops completely. This completes the fourth stage in the development of mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*):

4. “Calming the breath body I will breathe in”, thus he trains himself, and, “Calming the breath body I will breathe out”, thus he trains himself.’

This stage began just before the nimitta appeared, and as concentration developed through the four jhānas, the breath became progressively calmer and calmer, until it stopped in the fourth jhāna.

When a meditator has reached the fourth jhāna by using mindfulness-of-breathing, and has developed the five masteries, the light of concentration is bright, brilliant and radiant, and he can, if he wishes, move on to develop Vipassanā meditation. The meditator can, on the other hand, continue to develop Samatha meditation. That will be the subject of my next talk, namely, how to develop the ten kasīnas.



Questions & Answers 1

Question 1.1: How do we, in the four stages of mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*), decide when to go from one stage to another?

Answer 1.1: The Buddha taught mindfulness-of-breathing step by step: long breath, short breath, whole breath and subtle breath, only for easy understanding. At the time of actual practice, all four stages may occur at the same time. For example, when the breath is long, we should try to know the whole breath; when the breath is short, we should try to know the whole breath too. This should be done only when the concentration has improved, for example, when you can concentrate for about half an hour. Then, if you can concentrate on the whole long breath, and the whole short breath for about one hour, the breath will automatically become subtle, and you can change to concentrate on the subtle breath. If the breath does not become subtle, you should just concentrate on the breath. You must not make the breath subtle on purpose nor make it long or short on purpose. In this way, all the four stages are included in a single stage. At the fourth stage, the breath becomes only subtle. It does not cease entirely. The breath ceases entirely only at the fourth jhāna. This is the subtlest stage.

Question 1.2: Is it necessary, in meditation, to have a nimitta?

Answer 1.2: In some meditation subjects (*kammaṭṭhāna*) like mindfulness-of-breathing, kasīṇa-meditation and repulsiveness-meditation (*asubha*), a nimitta is necessary, if one wants to attain jhana in other meditation subjects, like recollection-of-the-Buddha (*Buddhānussati*), a nimitta is not necessary. In lovingkindness-meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*), breaking down the boundaries is called the nimitta.

Question 1.3: Some say that while practising mindfulness-of-breathing their soul goes out of the body. Is that true, or are they on the wrong path?

Answer 1.3: A concentrated mind can usually create a nimitta. When concentration is deep, strong, and powerful, then because of different perceptions, different nimittas appear. For example, if you want the nimitta to be long it will be long; if you want it to be short it will be short; if you want it to be round it will be round; if you want it to be red it will be red. So various perceptions may arise while practising mindfulness-of-breathing. You perceive yourself outside the body. It is simply a mental creation, not because of a soul. This is not a problem. Just ignore it, and return to being mindful of your breath.

Only when you discern ultimate mentality-materiality (*paramattha-nāmarūpa*) internally and externally, can you solve the problem of a soul: you will not find a soul anywhere. So, you need to break down the compactness of mentality and materiality, and realize ultimate mentality and materiality.

'Nānādhātuyo vinibbhujitva ghanavinibbhoge kate anattalakkaṇaṃ yāthāvasarasato upaṭṭhāti': 'When we break down compactness, the perception of non-self (*anatta-saññā*) will arise.' It is because of the perception of compactness, that the perception of a soul occurs.

To break down the compactness of materiality, you must first discern the *rūpa kalāpas* (small particles). Then you must discern the different types of ultimate materiality, which are at least eight in each *rūpa kalāpa*. Without doing this the perception of a soul will not disappear.

Similarly, without breaking down the compactness of mentality, the perception of a soul will not disappear. For example, when your mind wanders, you may think that the wandering mind is your soul. Another example is *visaṅkhāragataṃ citta*. *Visaṅkhāra* means 'without formations', and is Nibbāna. Formations (*saṅkhāra*) are mentality-materiality and their causes. Nibbāna itself has no formations, but the act of seeing Nibbāna requires the formation of consciousness. In the case of the Buddha, it is the arahant-fruiting consciousness (*arahattaphala-citta*), and is associated with mental-concomitants. If it is the first jhāna arahant-fruiting consciousness, there are thirty-seven mental formations. Those who have not yet attained a Path Knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), Fruition Knowledge (*phala-ñāṇa*), and insight-knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), or who have not yet broken down the compactness of mentality, may think consciousness is their soul. But if they break down the compactness of mentality, they will see the rapid arising and passing-away of conscious-

ness and its concomitants. With the perception of impermanence, the perception of non-self will occur. In the Meghiya Sutta the Buddha said: *Aniccaṣāññino Meghiya anattasaññā sañthāti.* 'For those who have powerful insight-knowledge of impermanence, insight-knowledge of non-self will also clearly appear.'

Question 1.4: Where does the [ānāpāna] nimitta come from? What makes it appear?

Answer 1.4: Most mind states which arise dependent upon the heart-base produce breathing. A real ānāpāna-nimitta comes from the breath. Not every mind state, however, produces a nimitta. Only a deeply concentrated mind produces a nimitta. Therefore, the breath produced by a deep and concentrated mind makes an ānāpāna-nimitta appear. If the nimitta is far from the nostrils, it is not a real nimitta. A nimitta may occur because of concentration, but not necessarily the real ānāpāna-nimitta. If the nimitta produces jhāna, we call it an ānāpāna-nimitta. But if it does not produce jhāna, it is not the real ānāpāna-nimitta. If you concentrate on that nimitta, jhāna will not occur. Usually the concentration cannot become strong and powerful. If you meditate on that nimitta, it will very soon disappear.

Question 1.5: What are the seven stages of purification and sixteen insight-knowledges?

Answer 1.5: The seven stages of purification are the purifications (*visuddhi*) of:

1. Virtue (*sīla-visuddhi*),
2. Mind (*citta-visuddhi*),
3. View (*ditṭhi-visuddhi*),
4. Overcoming doubt (*kaṅkhāvita-raṇa-visuddhi*),
5. Knowledge and Vision of What is and What is Not Path (*maggāmaggañāṇadassana-visuddhi*),
6. Knowledge and Vision of the Way (*paṭipadāñāṇadassana-visuddhi*),
7. Knowledge and Vision (*ñāṇadas-sana-visuddhi*).

And the sixteen insight-knowledges are the knowledges (*ñāṇa*) of:

1. Analysing Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*),
2. Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*),
3. Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*),
4. Arising and Passing-away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*),
5. Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*),
6. Terror (*bhaya-ñāṇa*),
7. Danger (*ādīnava-ñāṇa*),
8. Disenchantment (*nibbidā-ñāṇa*),
9. Desire for Deliverance (*muñcitu-kamyatā-ñāṇa*),
10. Reflection (*paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*),
11. Equanimity Towards Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*),
12. Conformity (*anuloma-ñāṇa*),
13. Change-of-lineage (*gotrabhu-ñāṇa*),
14. The Path (*magga-ñāṇa*),
15. The Fruition (*phala-ñāṇa*),
16. Reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*).

Now you know the names of these insight-knowledges, have you experienced them? No. That is why to have only theoretical knowledge is not enough; you must practise with great effort to also realize them.

[Editor's Note: At the end of this talk the Pa-Auk Sayadaw added the following comment on the five hindrances.]

Now I would like to briefly explain the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*). The first hindrance is sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*). It is the attachment to property or to people. It is the desire to get sense objects. For example, you may get attached to your *kuṭi* (hut) or room. While meditating you may think, 'Oh, it would be good if my *kuṭi* were beautiful.' Or you may think, 'Oh, it would be good if the whole bedroom belonged to me.' If you are overwhelmed by sensual desire, you will not be able to concentrate well on your meditation object. You must have strong mindfulness and make effort, to stop the arising of sensual desire.

The second hindrance is ill-will (*byāpāda*). It is hatred for or dissatisfaction with people or things. For example, if the meditator sitting next to you, while sitting down, makes a noise with his or her robes, you may become angry and think, 'Oh, why is he making so much noise.' If your mind is overwhelmed by hatred or dissatisfaction, you will not be able to concentrate well on your meditation object either.

The third hindrance is sloth and torpor (*thina-middha*). If the mind is weak, or not interested in the meditation object, sloth and torpor can occur. Sometimes, however, sleepiness may be due to tiredness, or lack of rest.

The fourth hindrance is restlessness and remorse (*uddhacca-kukkucca*). If your mind is restless, it will be like a heap of ashes hit by a stone, flying about and scattering. Similarly, when there is restlessness, the mind is scattered. While meditating, you must not relax the mind, and let it go away from your meditation object. If you do, restlessness will occur. Remorse is to regret bad deeds done, and good deeds not done in the past. Here too, you must have great mindfulness, and make great effort to stop the arising of restlessness and remorse.

The fifth one is sceptical doubt (*vicikicchā*). It is having doubts about:

1. The Buddha,
2. The Dhamma,
3. The Saṅgha,
4. The three trainings: virtue, concentration, and wisdom,
5. Past five aggregates (*khandha*),
6. Future five aggregates,
7. Both past and future five aggregates,
8. Dependent-Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).

If you have doubts about the training of concentration, you cannot meditate well. For example, you may think: 'Is it possible to attain jhāna through mindfulness-of-breathing? Can jhāna be attained by concentrating on the ānāpāna-nimitta?'

The five hindrances are opposite to jhāna concentration.

How You Develop Absorption on Other Subjects

In my previous talk I explained how to develop the meditation subject of mindfulness-of-breathing up to the fourth jhāna. I ended my talk by saying that when a meditator has reached the fourth jhāna by using mindfulness-of-breathing, and has developed the five masteries, the light of concentration is bright, brilliant and radiant, and he can, if he wishes, move on to develop Vipassanā meditation.

But at this point the meditator can also go on to develop Samatha meditation. Today, I shall explain how to develop other Samatha subjects: meditation on the thirty-two parts of the body, the skeleton, ten kasīnas, etc.

The Thirty-Two Parts of the Body

If you want to develop meditation on the thirty-two parts of the body, you should first re-establish the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna. When the light of concentration is bright, brilliant, and radiant, you should use it to try to discern the thirty-two parts of the body, one at a time.

The thirty-two parts of the body are twenty parts with predominantly the earth-element, and twelve parts with predominantly the water-element. The twenty earth-element parts should be discerned in four sets of five:

- 1-5. Head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin.
- 6-10. Flesh, sinews, bones, bone marrow, kidneys.
- 11-15. Heart, liver, membrane, spleen, lungs.
- 16-20. Intestines, mesentery, undigested food, faeces, brain.

The twelve water-element parts should be discerned in two sets of six:

- 1-6. Bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat.
- 7-12. Tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovial fluid, urine.

Discern the parts in the given order, but one at a time. Try to see each of the parts, as distinctly as you would see your face in a clean mirror.

If, while doing this, the light of concentration should fade, and the part of the body being discerned become unclear, you should re-establish the fourth *ānāpāna-jhāna*. When the light is again bright and strong, you should return to discerning the parts of the body. Do this whenever the light of concentration fades.

Practise so that you are, from head hairs down to urine, or from urine back to head hairs, able to see each one clearly and with penetrating knowledge; keep practising until you become skilful.

Then, again using the light of concentration and with your eyes still closed, you should try to discern,

another being close by. It is especially good to discern someone in front of you. Discern the thirty-two parts of the body in that person, or being, from head hairs down to urine, and from urine back to head hairs. Discern the thirty-two parts forwards and backwards many times. When you have succeeded, discern the thirty-two parts once internally, that is in your own body, and once externally, that is in the other person's body; do this many times, again and again.

When you are able to discern internally and externally like this, the power of meditation will increase. You should thus gradually extend your field of discernment bit by bit, from near to far. Do not worry that you cannot discern beings far away. Using the brilliant light of the fourth jhāna, you can easily see beings far away; not with the naked eye, but with the eye of wisdom (*ñāṇacakkhu*). You should be able to extend your field of discernment in all ten directions: above, below, east, west, north, south, north east, south east, north west, south west. Take whomever you discern, be they human, animal or other beings, in those ten directions, and discern the thirty-two parts, once internally and once externally, one person or other being at a time.

When you no longer see men, women, or buffaloes, cows, and other animals, as such, but see only groups of thirty-two parts, whenever and wherever you look, internally or externally, then can you be said to be successful, skilful, and expert in discerning the thirty-two parts of the body.

The Three Entrances to Nibbāna

Here, I would like to explain the three entrances to Nibbāna. In the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (The Greater Discourse on Foundations of Mindfulness) of Dīgha Nikāya (Long Discourses), the Buddha teaches that the meditation subject of the four foundations of mindfulness is the only way to Nibbāna. The commentary, on the other hand, explains that there are three ways to Nibbāna, and refers to them as gates. They are the meditation subjects of the colour kasiṇas (*vaṇṇakasiṇa*), repulsiveness (*paṭikūla-manasikāra*), and voidness of self (*suññata*), which is four-elements meditation.

They are, however, referred to as Samatha meditation only, not Vipassanā.

Therefore, when a person has become proficient in discerning the thirty-two parts of the body, internally and externally, he can choose to develop any of the three entrances. First, I shall explain how to develop meditation on repulsiveness of the thirty-two parts of the body.

The Skeleton

You can take either all thirty-two parts as a whole, or only one of them as your object to develop meditation on repulsiveness of the body (*paṭikūla-manasikāra*). I shall explain how to meditate on the skeleton, the bones, which is one of the thirty-two parts of the body.

To develop this meditation, you should once again re-establish the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna. When the light is bright, brilliant and radiant, use it to discern

the thirty-two parts in your own body, then in a being nearby. Discern thus internally and externally once or twice. Then take the internal skeleton as a whole, and discern it with wisdom. When the whole skeleton is clear, take the repulsiveness of the skeleton as object, and note it again and again as either: repulsive, repulsive (*paṭikūla, paṭikūla*); or repulsive skeleton, repulsive skeleton (*aṭṭhikapāṭikūla, aṭṭhikapāṭikūla*); or skeleton, skeleton (*aṭṭhika, aṭṭhika*).

Note it in any language you like. You should try to keep your mind calmly concentrated on the object of repulsiveness of the skeleton for one or two hours. Be careful to see the colour, shape, position and delimitation.

Because of the strength and momentum of the fourth jhāna concentration based on mindfulness-of-breathing, you will find that this meditation will also become deep and fully established: you will be able to produce, sustain and develop the perception and knowledge of repulsiveness.

Once your concentration on the repulsiveness of the skeleton is established, you should drop the perception of 'skeleton', and just be mindful of the repulsiveness.

According to the *Visuddhimagga*, seeing the colour, shape, position, and delimitation of a part is seeing the uggaha-nimitta. Seeing and discerning the repulsiveness of that part is seeing the paṭibhāga-nimitta.

The Five Jhāna Factors

By concentrating on the paṭibhāga-nimitta of the repulsiveness of bones, you can attain the first jhāna, at which time the five jhāna factors will be present. They are:

1. Applied thought (*vitakka*): directing and placing the mind on the repulsiveness of bones.
2. Sustained thought (*vicāra*): maintaining the mind on the repulsiveness of bones.
3. Joy (*pīti*): liking for the repulsiveness of bones.
4. Bliss (*sukha*): happiness associated about the repulsiveness of bones.
5. One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*): one-pointedness of mind on the repulsiveness of bones.

You can, in a similar way, attain the first jhāna on the repulsiveness of one of the other parts of the body.

A question arises: ‘How can joy and happiness arise with the repulsiveness of the skeleton as object?’ The answer is that, although you are concentrating on the repulsiveness of the skeleton, you have undertaken this meditation because you have understood the benefits of it, and understand that it will help you to eventually attain freedom from ageing, sickness, and death. Joy and happiness can arise also because you have removed the defilements of the five hindrances, which make the mind hot and tired.

It is just like a scavenger would be delighted to see a big heap of garbage, thinking, ‘I will earn a lot of money from this.’ Or like a person who is severely ill would be happy and joyful when relieved by vomiting or having diarrhoea.

The Abhidhamma commentary explains that whoever has attained the first jhāna on the repulsiveness of the skeleton, should go on to develop the five masteries of the first jhāna. After which, the meditator here too should take the nearest being, best of all a person sitting in front of him, and with his light of concentration take that person's skeleton as object. He should concentrate on it as repulsive, and develop this perception until the jhāna factors become prominent. Even though they are prominent, it is, according to the commentary, neither access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) nor absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), because the object is living. If, however, you concentrate on the external skeleton as if it were dead, you can, according to the sub-commentary to the Abhidhamma, the *Mūlaṭīkā*, attain access concentration.

When the jhāna factors are clear, should again concentrate on the internal skeleton as repulsive. Do this alternately, once internally then once externally, again and again. When you have meditated like this on the repulsiveness of the skeleton, and it has become deep and fully developed, you should extend your field of discerning the skeleton, in all ten directions. Taking one direction at a time, wherever your light of concentration reaches, develop each direction in the same way. You should apply your penetrating knowledge both near and far, in all directions, once internally and once externally. Practise until wherever you look in the ten directions, you see only skeletons. Once you have succeeded, you are ready to develop the white kasiṇa meditation.

The Ten Kasiṇas

The Colour Kasiṇa

There are four colours used for kasiṇa meditation: blue, yellow, red, and white. 'Blue' (*nīla*) can also be translated as 'black', or 'brown'. All four kasiṇas can be developed up to the fourth jhāna by using as object the colours of different parts of the body.

According to the Abhidhamma commentary, the head hairs, body hairs, and the irises of the eyes can be used for the blue, brown, or black kasiṇa up to the fourth jhāna; fat and urine can be used for the yellow kasiṇa; blood, and flesh can be used for the red kasiṇa. And the white parts, such as the bones, teeth, and nails can be used for the white kasiṇa.

The White Kasiṇa

It says in the suttas, that the white kasiṇa is the best of the four colour kasiṇas, because it makes the mind clear and bright. For that reason, I shall explain how to develop that one first.

To develop the white kasiṇa, you should first re-establish the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna. When the light of concentration is bright, brilliant, and radiant, you should use it to discern the thirty-two parts of the body internally, then the thirty-two parts of the body externally, in a being nearby. Then discern just the skeleton part. If you want to discern it as repulsive you can do so, but if not simply discern the external skeleton.

Then take either the whitest place in that skeleton,

or, if the whole skeleton is white, the whole skeleton, or the back of the skull, and concentrate on it as 'white, white'.

Alternatively, if you want to, and your concentration is really sharp, you can, if you have seen the internal skeleton as repulsive, and reached the first jhāna, take that skeleton as white, and use that as your preliminary object.

You can also discern first the repulsiveness in an external skeleton, and make that perception stable and firm, thus making the white of the skeleton more evident. Then, you can change to the perception of it as 'white, white', and instead develop the white kasiṇa.

With one of the objects of white in the external skeleton as object, you should practise to keep the mind calmly concentrated on that white object for one or two hours.

Because of the strength and momentum of the fourth jhāna concentration based on mindfulness-of-breathing, you will find that your mind will stay calmly concentrated on the object of white. When you are able to concentrate on the white for one or two hours, you will find that the skeleton disappears and only a white circle remains.

When the white circle is white as cotton wool, it is the uggaha-nimitta (taken-up sign). When it is bright and clear like the morning star, it is the paṭibhāga-nimitta (counterpart sign). Before the uggaha-nimitta arises, the skeleton nimitta from which it arises, is the parikamma-nimitta (preparatory sign).

Continue to note the kasiṇa as 'white, white' until

it becomes the paṭibhāga-nimitta. Continue concentrating on the paṭibhāga-nimitta until you enter the first jhāna. You will find, however, that this concentration is not very stable and does not last long. In order to make it stable and last a long time, you need to expand the nimitta.

To do this, you should concentrate on the white paṭibhāga-nimitta for one or two hours. Then determine to expand the white circle by one, two, three, or four inches, depending on how much you think you are able to expand it. See if you succeed, but do not try to expand the nimitta, without first determining a limit: make sure to determine a limit of one, two, three, or four inches.

While expanding the white circle, you may find that it becomes unstable. Then go back to noting it as 'white, white' to make it stable. But as your concentration increases the nimitta will become stable and calm.

When the first expanded nimitta has become stable, you should repeat the process, that is, again determine to expand it by a few inches. This way you can expand the nimitta in stages, until it is one yard in size, then two yards, and so on. Do this until it extends in all ten directions around you, without limit, and so that wherever you look, you see only white. Do it till you see not even a trace of materiality, whether internal or external. If you developed the white kasiṇa in a past life, during this or a previous Buddha's dispensation, that is, if you have white kasiṇa pāramī, then you will not need to expand the paṭibhāga-nimitta, because as you concentrate on it, it will automatically expand in all ten directions. You

should in either case now keep your mind calmly concentrated on the expanded white *kaṣiṇa*, and when it is stable, then just like hanging a hat on a hook, put your mind on one place in that white *kaṣiṇa*. Keep your mind there, and continue to note ‘white, white’.

When your mind is calm and stable, the white *kaṣiṇa* will also be calm and stable, and will be exceedingly white, bright, and clear. This too is a *paṭibhāga-nimitta*, produced by expanding the original white *kaṣiṇa paṭibhāga-nimitta*.

You must continue to meditate, until you can concentrate on that white *kaṣiṇa paṭibhāga-nimitta* continuously for one or two hours. Then the *jhāna* factors will become very prominent, clear, and strong in your mind, and you will have reached the first *jhāna*. The five *jhāna* factors are:

1. Applied thought (*vitakka*): directing and placing the mind on the white *kaṣiṇa*.
2. Sustained thought (*vicāra*): maintaining the mind on the white *kaṣiṇa*.
3. Joy (*pīti*): liking for the white *kaṣiṇa*.
4. Bliss (*sukha*): happiness about the white *kaṣiṇa*.
5. One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*): one-pointedness of mind on the white *kaṣiṇa*.

The *jhāna* factors are together called *jhāna*. In the way described in the talk on mindfulness-of-breathing, practise the five masteries of the first white *kaṣiṇa jhāna*, and then develop the second, third, and fourth *jhānas*.

The four jhānas are also called fine-material-plane jhānas, (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*), because they may cause rebirth in the fine-material realm. But here we do not encourage the development of jhānas for the sake of attaining rebirth in the fine-material realm, but for the sake of using them as a basis for developing Vipassanā meditation.

If you have developed the white kasiṇa meditation up to the fourth jhāna using the white of an external skeleton, then you will also be able to develop the brown, blue, or black kasiṇa using external head hairs, the yellow kasiṇa using external fat or urine, and the red kasiṇa using external blood, etc. You can also use those parts in your own body.

When you have succeeded, you can develop the colour kasiṇas using the colour of also flowers, or other external objects. All blue and brown flowers are calling out, inviting you to develop the blue kasiṇa. All yellow flowers are calling out, inviting you to develop the yellow kasiṇa. All red flowers are calling out, inviting you to develop the red kasiṇa. All white flowers are calling out, inviting you to develop the white kasiṇa. Thus, a skilled meditator can use whatever he sees to develop kasiṇa concentration and insight, be it animate or inanimate, internal or external.

According to the Pāli texts, the Buddha taught ten kasiṇas. They are the mentioned four colour kasiṇas, plus a further six: the earth, water, fire, wind, space, and light kasiṇas.

Now, I would like to explain how to develop the remaining six types of kasiṇa.

The Earth Kasiṇa

To develop the earth kasiṇa, you should find a piece of plain earth, which is reddish brown like the sky at dawn, and with no sticks, stones, or leaves. Then with a stick or some other instrument, draw a circle about one foot across. That is your meditation object, an earth kasiṇa. You should concentrate on it, and note it as 'earth, earth'. Concentrate on it for a while with your eyes open, and then close them, and visualize the earth kasiṇa. If unable to visualize the nimitta in this way, you should re-establish the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna, or the white kasiṇa. Then use the light of concentration to look at the earth kasiṇa. When you see the nimitta of earth as clearly as were you looking at it with your eyes open, you can go and develop it somewhere else.

You should not concentrate on the colour of the earth nimitta, or the characteristics of hardness, roughness etc., of the earth-element, but concentrate on only the concept of earth. Continue to develop this uggahanimitta until it becomes pure and clear, and is the paṭibhāga-nimitta.

You should then expand the paṭibhāga-nimitta a little at a time, in all ten directions, and then develop this meditation up to the fourth jhāna.

The Water Kasiṇa

To develop the water kasiṇa, you should use a bowl, bucket, or well of pure, clear water. Concentrate on the concept of water as 'water, water', and develop the nimitta as you did the earth kasiṇa.

The Fire Kasiṇa

To develop the fire kasiṇa, you should use a fire, a candle, or any other flames you remember seeing. If unable to visualize it, you can make a screen with a circular hole in it about one foot across. Put the screen in front of a wood- or grass-fire, so you see only the flames through the hole.

Ignoring the smoke, and burning wood or grass, concentrate on the concept of fire, as 'fire, fire', and develop the nimitta in the usual way.

The Wind Kasiṇa

The wind kasiṇa is developed through the sense of touch, or sight. You should concentrate on the wind coming in through a window or door, touching the body; or the sight of leaves or branches moving in the wind. Concentrate on the concept as 'wind, wind'. You can do this by re-establish the fourth jhāna with another kasiṇa object, and then using your light of concentration to see this movement externally, and discern the nimitta of the wind. The uggaha-nimitta looks like steam coming off hot milk rice, but the paṭibhāga-nimitta is motionless. Develop the nimitta in the usual way.

The Light Kasiṇa

To develop the light kasiṇa, you should look at rays of light, as they stream into a room through, for example, a crack in the wall, and fall on the floor, or as they stream through the leaves of a tree and fall on the ground. You can also look up through the branches of a tree, at the

light in the sky above. If unable to visualize it, you can put a candle or lamp inside an earthen pot, and place the pot in such a way that rays of light come out of the opening of the pot, and fall upon the wall. Concentrate on the circle of light on the wall as a concept, as 'light, light', and develop the nimitta in the usual way.

The Space Kasiṇa

To develop the space kasiṇa, you should look at the space in a doorway, window, or keyhole. If unable to visualize it, you can make a circular hole in a piece of board, about eight inches to one foot across. Hold the board up so you see only the sky through the hole, no trees or other objects. Concentrate on the space within that circle as a concept, as 'space, space', and develop the nimitta in the usual way.

The Four Immaterial Jhānas

Once you have attained the four jhānas with each of the ten kasiṇas, you can proceed to develop the four immaterial jhānas (*arūpa-jhāna*), also called the four immaterial states. They are:

1. The Base of Boundless-Space,
2. The Base of Boundless-Consciousness,
3. The Base of Nothingness,
4. The Base of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception.

You can develop them with any of the kasiṇas except the space kasiṇa.

The Base of Boundless-Space

To develop the four immaterial jhānas, you should first reflect upon the disadvantages of materiality. The human body produced by the sperm and egg of your parents is called the produced-body (*karajakāya*). Since you have a produced-body, you are open to assault with weapons such as knives, spears, and bullets, and to being hit, beaten, and tortured. The produced body is also subject to many diseases, of, for example, the eyes, ears, and heart. So you should consider with wisdom that, because you have a produced body, made of materiality, you are subject to various kinds of suffering, and that if you can be free of that materiality, you can also be free of the suffering.

Even though a fourth fine-material jhāna surpasses gross physical materiality, it is still based on it. Thus you need to surmount the kasiṇa materiality. Having considered this, and with no desire now for the kasiṇa materiality, you should re-establish the fourth jhāna with one of the nine kasiṇas, such as the earth kasiṇa.

Emerge from it, and reflect on its disadvantages: it is based on materiality which you no longer desire; it has joy of the third jhāna as its near enemy; and it is grosser than the four immaterial jhānas.

You do not need to reflect on the disadvantages of the mental formations in the fourth jhāna, as you did of the previous jhānas, since they are the same as in the immaterial jhānas.

With no desire now for the fourth fine-material jhāna, you should also reflect on the more peaceful nature of the immaterial jhānas.

Then expand your nimitta, say, of the earth kasiṇa, so that it is boundless, or as much as you wish, and replace the kasiṇa materiality with the space it occupies, by concentrating on the space as 'space, space' or 'boundless space, boundless space'. What remains is the boundless space formerly occupied by the kasiṇa.

If unable to do so, you should discern and concentrate on the space of one place in the earth kasiṇa-nimitta, and then expand that up to the infinite universe. As a result, the entire earth kasiṇa-nimitta is replaced by boundless space.

Continue to concentrate on the boundless space nimitta, until you reach jhāna, and then develop the five masteries. This is the first immaterial jhāna, also called the base of boundless-space.

The Base of Boundless-Consciousness

The second immaterial jhāna, also called the base of boundless-consciousness (*viññāṇaṅcāyatana-citta*), has as its object the consciousness of the base of boundless-space jhāna-consciousness (*ākāsāṇaṅcāyatana-jhāna-citta*), which itself had boundless space as its object.

To develop the base of boundless-consciousness, you should reflect on the disadvantages of the base of boundless-space: it has the fourth fine-material jhāna as its near enemy, and is not as peaceful as the base of boundless-consciousness.

With no desire now for the base of boundless-space, you should also reflect on the more peaceful nature of the base of boundless-consciousness. Then concentrate again and again on the consciousness which had boundless space as its object, and note it as 'boundless consciousness, boundless consciousness' or just 'consciousness, consciousness'.

Continue to concentrate on the boundless consciousness nimitta, until you reach jhāna, and then develop the five masteries. This is then the second immaterial jhāna, also called the base of boundless-consciousness.

The Base of Nothingness

The third immaterial jhāna, also called the base of nothingness, has as its object the absence of the consciousness which had boundless space as its object, and which was itself the object of the base of boundless-consciousness.

To develop the base of nothingness, you should reflect on the disadvantages of the base of boundless-consciousness: it has the base of boundless-space as its near enemy and is not as peaceful as the base of nothingness.

With no desire now for the base of boundless-consciousness, you should also reflect on the more peaceful nature of the base of nothingness.

Then concentrate on the absence of the consciousness which had boundless space as its object. There were two jhāna-consciousnesses: first the consciousness of base of boundless-space (*ākāsānañcāyatana-jhāna-citta*)

and then that of the base of boundless-consciousness (*viññāṇaṅcāyatana-jhāna-citta*). Two consciousnesses cannot arise in one mind-moment. When the consciousness of the base of boundless-space was present, the other consciousness could not present too, and vice versa. So, you must take the absence of the consciousness of the base of boundless-space as object, and note it as 'nothingness, nothingness' or 'absence, absence'.

Continue to concentrate on that nimitta, until you reach jhāna, and develop the five masteries. This is then the third immaterial jhāna, also called the base of nothingness.

The Base of Neither-Perception-Nor-Non-Perception

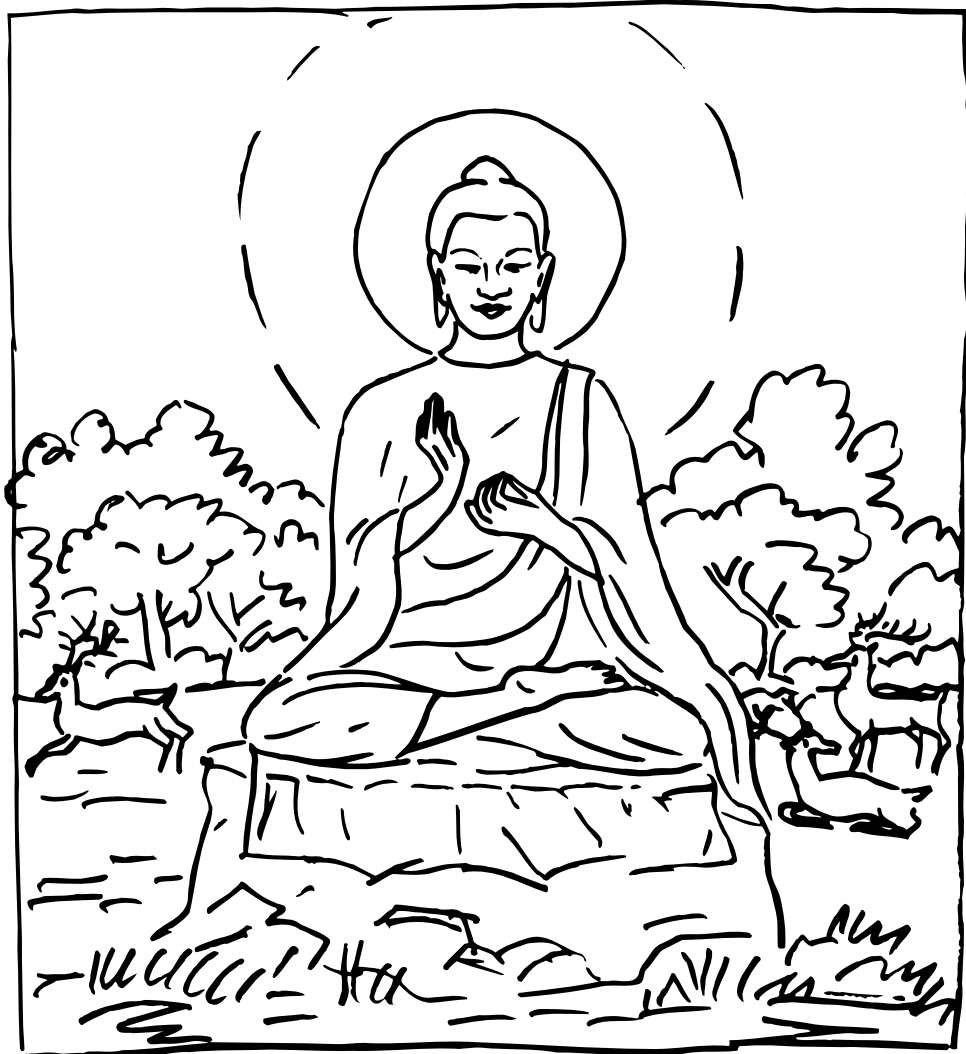
The fourth immaterial jhāna, also called the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, has as its object the consciousness of the base of nothingness. It is called the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception because the perception in it is extremely subtle.

To develop the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, you should reflect on the disadvantages of the base of nothingness: it has the base of boundless-consciousness as its near enemy, and is not as peaceful as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Furthermore, perception is a disease, a boil, and a dart.

With no desire now for the base of nothingness, you should also reflect on the more peaceful nature of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Then concentrate again and again on the consciousness of the base of nothingness as 'peaceful, peaceful'.

Continue to concentrate on the 'peaceful, peaceful' nimitta, until you reach jhāna, and develop the five masteries. This is then the fourth immaterial jhāna, also called the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

Today I have explained how to develop the ten kasīnas, and the eight attainments consisting of the four fine-material jhānas and the four immaterial jhānas. In my next talk, I should like to explain how to develop the four sublime abidings (*brahmavihāra*) of lovingkindness, compassion, appreciative-joy, and equanimity.



Questions & Answers 2

Question 2.1: How should beginners balance the faculties of concentration and wisdom? How should they practise wisdom in mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*)?

Answer 2.1: We already talked about balancing the five controlling faculties in my very first talk, but I can summarize. It is not that important for beginners to balance concentration and wisdom. This is because they are only beginners, and their five controlling faculties are not yet developed. In the beginning of meditation, there is usually much restlessness in the mind. So the faculties are not yet strong and powerful. Only when they are strong and powerful, is it necessary to balance them. But if beginners are able to balance the faculties already at the beginning stage, that is of course also good.

For example, you are now practising *ānāpānasati*; *ānāpānasati* is mindfulness-of-breathing. Knowing the breath is wisdom (*paññā*). Being mindful of the breath is mindfulness (*sati*). One-pointedness of mind on the breath is concentration (*samādhi*). The effort to know the breath clearly is effort (*vīriya*). Having faith that mindfulness-of-breathing can lead to *jhāna* is faith (*saddhā*).

Beginners must try to develop strong and powerful controlling faculties. Their faith in mindfulness-of-breathing must be strong enough. Their effort to know the breath clearly must be strong enough. Their mind-

fulness of the breath must be strong enough. Their concentration on the breath must be strong enough. They must see the breath clearly. They must try to make their five controlling faculties strong and powerful, as well as try to balance them. If one is excessive, the others cannot fulfil their function properly.

For example, if faith is too strong and powerful, it produces emotion. This means that the effort faculty cannot fulfil its function of maintaining associated mental formations on the breath; mindfulness cannot become established on the breath; the concentration faculty too, cannot fulfil its function of concentrating deeply on the breath; and wisdom cannot know the breath clearly.

When, for example, effort is excessive, it makes the mind restless, so the other controlling faculties become again weak, and cannot fulfil their function properly. When mindfulness is weak, you cannot do anything, because you cannot concentrate on the breath, will have little or no effort to discern the breath, and may have no faith.

Now you are practising Samatha. In Samatha meditation, strong and powerful concentration is good, but excessive concentration produces laziness. With laziness, the other faculties become again very weak, and cannot fulfil their function properly.

At this stage wisdom is very dull or inferior. It knows only the natural breath. So for the beginner who is practising Samatha meditation, it is enough to just know the breath clearly. When the uggaha or paṭibhāga-nimitta appears, wisdom is knowing the

uggaha or paṭibhāga-nimitta. Too much other general knowledge apart from this is not good, as you may always be discussing and criticizing. If a meditator discusses and criticizes mindfulness-of-breathing too much, we can say his wisdom is excessive, which also makes the other controlling faculties weak, and unable to fulfil their function properly.

So, even though it is not yet very important, it is still good for a beginner to balance his five controlling faculties. How to balance them? We must practise with strong and powerful mindfulness and effort to know the breath clearly, and concentrate on the breath with faith. However,

Question 2.2: Why don't we, after attaining the fourth jhāna, go straight to discern the five aggregates, their nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self, and attain Nibbāna? Why do we need to practise meditation on the thirty-two parts of body, skeleton, white kasiṇa, four-elements, materiality, mentality, dependent-origination, and Vipassanā, before the attainment of Nibbāna?

Answer 2.2: What are the five aggregates? What is the difference between the five aggregates and mentality-materiality? Do you know the answer?

Before answering the second question, I would like to explain mentality-materiality and the five aggregates. According to the Buddha Abhidhamma, there are four ultimate realities (*paramattha*: consciousnesses (*citta*), mental-concomitants (*cetasika*), materiality (*rūpa*), and Nibbāna.

To attain Nibbāna, the fourth ultimate reality, we must see the impermanent, suffering and non-self nature of the other three. There are eighty-nine types of consciousness, fifty-two mental-concomitants, and twenty-eight types of materiality.

The eighty-nine types of consciousness are called the consciousness-aggregate (*viññāṇa-khandha*). Of the fifty-two mental-concomitants, feeling is the feeling-aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*); perception is the perception-aggregate (*saññā-khandha*); and the remaining fifty mental-concomitants are the formations-aggregate (*saṅkhāra-khandha*).

Sometimes the consciousnesses (*citta*) and mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) together are called mentality (*nāma*). Sometimes they are seen as four aggregates, the feeling-aggregate, the perception-aggregate, the formations-aggregate and the consciousness-aggregate, which together are the mentality-aggregate (*nāma khandha*). The materiality-aggregate (*rūpa-khandha*) is the twenty-eight types of materiality. The consciousnesses, mental-concomitants and materiality together are called 'mentality-materiality' (*nāmarūpa*). They are sometimes also called the five aggregates: materiality, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness. Their causes are also only mentality-materiality.

The Buddha taught the five-aggregate method of practising Vipassanā to three types of people: those who have sharp wisdom, those whose insight-knowledge of mentality is not clear, and those who prefer to practise Vipassanā in the brief way.

Now I shall go on to answer the second question. According to the Theravāda tradition, there are two types of meditation subject (*kammaṭṭhāna*): *pārihāriya-kammaṭṭhāna* and *sabbatthaka-kammaṭṭhāna*. *Pārihāriya-kammaṭṭhāna* is the meditation subject the individual with which meditator develops concentration to be used for Vipassanā. The meditator must always use that meditation subject as his foundation. *Sabbatthaka-kammaṭṭhāna*, on the other hand, are the meditation subjects to be developed by all meditators alike. They are the four protective meditations: lovingkindness-meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*), recollection-of-the-Buddha (*Buddhānussati*), recollection-of-death (*maraṇānussati*), and repulsiveness-meditation (*asubha*).

So a meditator may use mindfulness-of-breathing as his *pārihāriya-kammaṭṭhāna*. But he must also practise the four protective meditations before practising Vipassanā. This is the orthodox method.

To practise lovingkindness-meditation up to the jhāna stage, it is better if the meditator has already developed the white-kasiṇa meditation up to the fourth jhāna. An example of this is the Karaniyamettā Sutta (Discourse on Lovingkindness). It is about five hundred bhikkhus who went to the forest. They were expert in the ten kasiṇas, and eight attainments (*samāpatti*), had developed the four protective meditations, and practiced Vipassanā meditation up to the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*). When resident devas in the forest got annoyed and frightened them, the bhikkhus returned to the Buddha. The Buddha then taught them the Karaniyamettā Sutta (Discourse

on Lovingkindness) as a meditation subject, and as a protective chant (*paritta*).

It has eleven ways to develop lovingkindness, and is for those who have attained lovingkindness jhāna (*mettā-jhāna*), and have broken down the boundaries between different types of people. The eleven ways are practised with the thought '*Sukhino va khemino hontu, sabbasattā bhavantu sukhittā*: May all beings be happy and secure' etc., and must be developed up to the third jhāna. This was very easy for those five hundred bhikkhus because they were expert in the kasiṇa meditation.

Kasiṇa meditation is a very good foundation for developing lovingkindness jhāna. How? In the Aṅguttara Nikāya the Buddha taught that of the four colour kasiṇas, the white-kasiṇa is best. The white-kasiṇa makes the meditator's mind clear and bright. A clear and tranquil mind is superior and powerful. If a meditator practises lovingkindness-meditation with a clear mind, free from defilements, he usually attains mettā jhāna within one sitting. So if one enters the fourth white-kasiṇa-jhāna, and after emerging from it, practises mettā jhāna, it is very easy to succeed.

In order to attain the white-kasiṇa fourth jhāna, a meditator should first practise skeleton-meditation internally and externally, because this makes the white-kasiṇa meditation very easy. Therefore, after the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna we usually teach meditators to do the thirty-two parts of the body, skeleton-meditation and white-kasiṇa meditation. In our experience, most meditators say that the fourth white-kasiṇa-jhāna is better

than the fourth ānāpāna-jhāna, because it produces a clearer, brighter and more tranquil mind, which is also very helpful for practising other meditation subjects. So we usually teach the white-kasiṇa meditation before lovingkindness-meditation.

Here I would like to further point out a common problem for beginners. You may have practised lovingkindness-meditation. Did you attain mettā jhāna? In practice, if a meditator wants to send lovingkindness to someone of the same sex, he should first take the smiling face of that person as object, and then develop lovingkindness towards him with: 'May this good person be free from mental suffering, etc.' With a beginner that smiling face very soon disappears. He cannot continue his lovingkindness-meditation, because there is no object, and so, he cannot attain mettā jhāna or anything.

If he uses the fourth white-kasiṇa-jhāna, it is different. He emerges from the jhāna, and when he develops lovingkindness the smiling face will because of the preceding concentration not fade away. He is able to concentrate deeply on that image, and able to attain up to the third mettā jhāna within one sitting. If he practises systematically up to the breaking down of boundaries between different types of people, he can even practise the eleven ways of the Karaniyamettā Sutta (Discourse on Lovingkindness) and five hundred and twenty-eight pervasions of lovingkindness mentioned in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* Pāli Text. For this reason, we usually teach the white-kasiṇa meditation before lovingkindness-meditation.

You may also have practised recollection-of-the-Buddha (*Buddhānussati*). Did you attain access concentration? When those who have succeeded in mettā jhāna practise recollection-of-the-Buddha, they are able to reach access concentration within one sitting, again because of the preceding concentration supports. Repulsiveness-meditation (*asubha*) too becomes easy. If a meditator practises repulsiveness-meditation up to the first jhāna, and then recollection-of-death (*maraṇānussati*), he is able to succeed within one sitting.

That is why we teach the white-kasiṇa meditation before the four protective meditations. If, however, a meditator wants to go straight to Vipassanā, without practising the four protective meditations, he can do so. There is no problem.

Question 2.3: Why after having discerned materiality and mentality must one practise the first and fifth methods of dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)? What are the first and fifth methods?

Answer 2.3: There are, according to the Theravāda tradition, seven stages of purification (*visuddhi*). I shall here explain the first five. They are:

1. The Purification of Conduct (*sīla-visuddhi*).
2. The Purification of Mind (*citta-visuddhi*). This is access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and the eight attainments (*samāpatti*).

3. The Purification of View (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*). This is the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*).

4. The Purification by Overcoming Doubt (*kaṅkhā-vita-raṇa-visuddhi*). This is the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*), in other words, to see dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).

5. The Purification by Knowledge and Vision of What Is and What Is Not the Path (*maggāmaggañāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*). This is the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), which is the beginning of Vipassanā.

So before Vipassanā there are four purifications. Why? Vipassanā is insight, to comprehend the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of mentality-materiality and their causes. Without knowing mentality-materiality and their causes, how can we comprehend that they are impermanent, suffering, and non-self? How can we practise Vipassanā? It is only after we have thoroughly discerned mentality-materiality and their causes, that we can practise Vipassanā meditation.

Mentality-materiality and their causes are called 'formations' or 'conditioned things' (*saṅkhāra*). They pass away as soon as they arise, which is why they are impermanent; they are subject to constant arising and passing-away, which is why they are suffering; they

have no self (*atta*), or stable and indestructible essence, which is why they are non-self.

Comprehending impermanence, suffering, and non-self in this way is real Vipassanā. So before Vipassanā, we teach meditators to discern mentality, materiality and dependent-origination. The commentary explains it as, '*aniccanti pañcakkhandhā*. That means, 'impermanence is the five aggregates.' The five aggregates are, in other words, mentality-materiality and their causes. So real Vipassanā depends on knowing the five aggregates, and their causes and effects.

The Buddha taught four methods for discerning dependent-origination, according to the character of his listeners. In the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, there is yet another method. Altogether there are five methods. The first method is to discern dependent-origination in forward order: '*avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā, saṅkhārapaccayā viññāṇaṃ, viññāṇapaccayā nāmarūpaṃ...* (lo wisdom) etc'. The first method is popular in Theravāda Buddhism, but may be very difficult for those who have no Abhidhamma knowledge, to practise the first method. But even meditators with good Abhidhamma knowledge may have many difficulties.

The fifth method taught by the Venerable Sāriputta, and recorded in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* Pāli Text, is easy for beginners. It is to discern that five past causes have produced five present effects; and that five present causes will produce five future effects. This is the main principle in the fifth method. If you want to know it with direct experience, you should practise up to this stage.

After practising the fifth method systematically, you will not have much difficulty in practising the first method. For this reason we teach the fifth method before the first method. We teach all five methods to those who have time, and want to practise further. But although the Buddha taught dependent-origination according to the character of his listeners, one method is enough to attain Nibbāna. Even so, because the first method is popular in Theravāda Buddhism, we teach both the fifth and first methods.

One day, the Venerable Ānanda practised dependent-origination in all four ways. In the evening, he went to the Buddha and said, ‘Bhante, although dependent-origination is deep, it is easy to me.’ Then the Buddha replied: ‘*Etassa cānanda, dhammassa ananubodhā, appaṭivedhā evamayam pajā tantākulakajātā, kulāgaṇṭhikajātā, muñjapabbajabhūtā apāyam duggatiṃ vinipataṃ saṃsāraṃ nātivattati.*’ This means that without knowing dependent-origination, with the *anubodha-ñāṇa* and the *paṭivedha-ñāṇa*, one cannot escape the round of rebirths (*saṃsāra*), and four woeful planes (*apāya*). The *anubodha-ñāṇa* is the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*), and Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). The *paṭivedha-ñāṇa* is all the insight-knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). So without knowing dependent-origination with the *anubodha-ñāṇa* and *paṭivedha-ñāṇa*, one cannot attain Nibbāna. With this quotation, the commentary says that without knowing dependent-origination, no one can escape from the round of rebirths, even in a dream.

How You Develop the Sublime Abidings and Protective Meditations

Introduction

Today I should like to explain how to develop the four sublime abidings (*cattāro-brahmavihāra*), and four protective meditations (*caturārakkha-bhāvanā*). The four sublime abidings are the meditation subjects, lovingkindness, compassion, appreciative-joy, and equanimity.

How You Develop the Four Sublime Abidings

Lovingkindness (*Mettā*)

To develop the sublime abiding of lovingkindness, you need first of all be aware that it should not be developed towards a person of the opposite sex (*liṅgavisabhāga*), or a dead person (*kālakatapuggala*).

A person of the opposite sex should not be used as object, because lust towards him or her will probably arise. After you have attained *jhāna*, however, it is possible to develop lovingkindness towards the opposite sex as a group with, for example, 'May all women be happy.'

A dead person should at no time be used, as you cannot attain lovingkindness *jhāna* with a dead person as object.

The persons you should, however, develop loving-kindness towards, are:

1. Yourself (*atta*),
2. A person you like and respect (*piya*),
3. A person you are indifferent to (*majjhatta*),
4. An enemy (*verī*).

Although, in the very beginning, you should develop lovingkindness towards only yourself and the person you like and respect. This means that in the very beginning you should not develop lovingkindness towards the following types of people: a person you do not like (*appiyapuggala*), a person very dear to you (*atippiyasa-hāyaka*), a person you are indifferent to (*majjhattapuggala*), and a person you hate (*verīpuggala*).

A person you do not like is one who does not do what is beneficial to you, or to those you care for. A person you hate is one who does what is detrimental to you and to those you care for. They are in the beginning both difficult to develop lovingkindness towards, as anger may arise. It is in the beginning also hard to develop lovingkindness towards a person to whom you are indifferent. In the case of a person who is very dear to you, you may be too attached to that person, be filled with concern and grief, and even cry if you hear that something has happened to them. So these four should not be used in the very beginning. Later, though, once you have attained lovingkindness *jhāna*, you will be able to develop lovingkindness towards them.

You cannot attain jhāna using yourself as object even if you were to develop that meditation for a hundred years. So why begin by developing loving-kindness to yourself? It is not to attain even access concentration, but because when you have developed lovingkindness towards yourself, you are able to identify yourself with others; to see that just as you want to be happy, do not want to suffer, want to live long, and do not want to die, so too all other beings want to be happy, do not want to suffer, want to live long, and do not want to die.

Thus you are able to develop a mind that desires the happiness and prosperity of other beings. In the words of the Buddha:

‘sabbā disā anuparigamma cetasā,
nevajjhagā piyatara mattanā kvaci.
Evaṃ piyo puthu attā paresaṃ,
tasmā na himse paramattakāmo.’

(Saṃyutta-1-75)

‘Having searched in all directions with the mind, one cannot find anyone anywhere whom one loves more than oneself. In this same way do all beings in all directions love themselves more than anyone else, therefore, one who desires his own welfare should not harm others.’

So in order to make this identification, and make your mind soft and kind, you should first develop lovingkindness towards yourself with the following four thoughts:

1. May I be free from danger (*aham̐ avero homi*),
2. May I be free from mental pain (*abyāpajjo homi*),
3. May I be free from physical pain (*anīgho homi*),
4. May I be well and happy (*sukhī attānaṃ pariharāmi*).

If one's mind is soft, kind, understanding, and has empathy for others, one should have no difficulty developing lovingkindness towards another. So it is important that the lovingkindness you have developed towards yourself be strong and powerful. Once your mind has become soft, kind, understanding, and has empathy for others, you can begin to develop lovingkindness towards others.

Lovingkindness Towards A Person You Like & Respect

If you have attained the fourth jhāna on mindfulness-of-breathing, or the white kasiṇa, you should re-establish it until the light is bright, brilliant, and radiant. It is, with the light of particularly the white kasiṇa fourth jhāna, really very easy to develop lovingkindness-meditation. The reason is that with the concentration of the fourth jhāna the mind is purified of greed, anger, delusion, and other defilements. After having emerged from the fourth jhāna, the mind is pliant, workable, pure, bright, brilliant and radiant, and because of this you will, in a very short time be able to develop powerful and perfect lovingkindness.

So, with the strong and bright light, you should direct your mind towards a person of your own sex,

whom you like and respect: maybe your teacher or a fellow meditator. You will find that the light spreads out around you, in all directions, and that whomever you pick as object becomes visible in it. You then take an image of that person, sitting or standing, and select the one you like most, and that makes you the happiest. Try to recall the time when he was the happiest you ever saw, and choose that image. Make it appear about one yard in front of you. When you can see that image clearly before you, develop lovingkindness towards him with the thoughts:

May this good person be free from danger

(ayaṃ sappuriso avero hotu),

May this good person be free from mental pain

(ayaṃ sappuriso abyāpajjo hotu),

May this good person be free from physical pain

(ayaṃ sappuriso anīgho hotu),

May this good person be well and happy

(ayaṃ sappuriso sukhī attānaṃ pariharatu).

Extend lovingkindness towards that person with these four phrases three or four times, and then select the one you like most, for example, 'May this good person be free from danger'. Then, with a new image of that person, in this case, free from danger, extend lovingkindness using the corresponding thought, in this case, 'May this good person be free from danger, may this good person be free from danger'. Do it again and again, until the mind is calm and steadily fixed on the object, you can discern the jhāna factors. Then, keep practis-

ing until you reach the second, and third jhānas. After that take each of the other three phrases and develop lovingkindness up to the third jhāna. You should have an appropriate image for each of the four phrases, that is when thinking 'May this good person be free from danger' you should have an image of that person as free from danger; when thinking 'May this good person be free from mental pain' you should have an image of that person as free from mental pain, and so on. In this way you should develop the three jhānas, and remember in each case to practise the five masteries (*vasī-bhāva*).

When you have succeeded with one person you like and respect, do it again with another person of your own sex whom you like and respect. Try doing this with about ten people of that category, until you can reach the third jhāna using any of them. By this stage you can safely go on to people, still of your own sex, who are very dear to you (*atippiyasahāyaka*). Take about ten people of that category, and develop lovingkindness towards them one by one, in the same way, until the third jhāna.

Then you can also take about ten people of your own sex whom you are indifferent to, and in the same way develop lovingkindness towards them until the third jhāna.

Finally, you will by now have mastered the loving-kindness jhāna to such an extent that you can in the same way develop it towards about ten people of your own sex whom you hate. If you are a type of Great Being like the bodhisatta when he was Mahakapi, the monkey king, who never hated anyone who harmed, and you

really neither hate, nor despise anyone, then do not look for one to use here. Only those who have people they hate or despise should develop lovingkindness towards that category.

Practising lovingkindness this way, that is, by developing concentration up to the third jhāna on each category of people, progressively from one to the next, the easiest to the more difficult, you make your mind increasingly soft, kind and pliant, until you are finally able to attain jhāna on any of the four categories: those you respect, those dear to you, those you are indifferent to, and those you hate.

Breaking Down the Barriers (*Sīmāsambheda*)

As you continue to thus develop lovingkindness, you will find that your lovingkindness towards those you like and respect, and those very dear to you, becomes even, and you can take them as one. Then you will be left with only these four:

Yourself,
People you like,
People you are indifferent to,
People you hate.

You will need to continue developing lovingkindness towards these four, until it becomes balanced, and without distinction or boundary. Even though you cannot attain lovingkindness jhāna with yourself as object, you still need to include yourself in order to break down the barriers between the four categories.

To do this, you need to re-establish the fourth jhāna with, for example, mindfulness-of-breathing or the white kasiṇa. With the strong and bright light, extend lovingkindness to yourself for about a minute or even a few seconds. Then someone you like, someone you are indifferent to, and someone you hate, each one up to the third jhāna. Then again yourself briefly, but the other three categories must now each be a different person. Remember to develop them with each of the four phrases, 'May this good person be free from danger' etc., each, up to the third jhāna.

Thus you should every time change the person in each of the three categories: a person you like, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate. Do this again and again, with different groups of four, many times, so that your mind is continuously developing lovingkindness without interruption, and with no distinctions. When you are able to develop lovingkindness jhāna towards anyone without distinction, you will have achieved what is called 'breaking down the barriers' (*sīmāsambheda*). With the barriers between categories and individuals broken down, you will be able to further develop your lovingkindness meditation, by taking up the method taught by the Venerable Sāriputta, and recorded in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*.

The Twenty-Two Categories

The method in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* involves twenty-two categories by which to extend one's lovingkindness: five unspecified categories (*anodhiso-pharaṇā*), seven

specified categories (*odhiso-pharaṇā*), and ten directional categories (*disā-pharaṇā*).

The five unspecified categories are:

1. All beings (*sabbe sattā*)
2. All breathing things (*sabbe pāṇā*)
3. All creatures (*sabbe bhūtā*)
4. All people (*sabbe puggalā*)
5. All individuals (*sabbe attabhāvapariyāpannā*)

The seven specified categories are:

1. All women (*sabbā itthiyo*)
2. All men (*sabbe purisā*)
3. All enlightened beings (*sabbe ariyā*)
4. All unenlightened beings (*sabbe anariyā*)
5. All devas (*sabbe devā*)
6. All human beings (*sabbe manussā*)
7. All beings in the lower realms (*sabbe vinipātikā*)

The ten directional categories are:

1. To the East (*puratthimāya disāya*)
2. To the West (*pacchimāya disāya*)
3. To the North (*uttarāya disāya*)
4. To the South (*dakkhiṇāya disāya*)
5. To the South East (*puratthimāya anudisāya*)
6. To the North West (*pacchimāya anudisāya*)
7. To the North East (*uttarāya anudisāya*)
8. To the South West (*dakkhiṇāya anudisāya*)
9. Below (*hetṭhimāya disāya*)
10. Above (*uparimāya disāya*)

The Unspecified and Specified Categories

To develop this method of lovingkindness-meditation, you should as before re-establish the fourth jhāna with the white kasīṇa, and develop lovingkindness towards yourself, a person you respect or who is dear to you, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate until there are no barriers between you. Then use your bright and brilliant light to see all the beings in as big an area as possible around you, around the building or monastery. Once they are clear, you can develop lovingkindness towards them by way of the five categories of unspecified pervasion, and seven of specified pervasion: twelve in total. You should at each category pervade lovingkindness in four ways:

1. May they be free from danger,
2. May they be free from mental pain,
3. May they be free from physical pain,
4. May they be well and happy.

‘They’ is in each case your given category, all beings, all devas, etc.

Thus you will be pervading lovingkindness in a total of forty-eight ways $[(7+5) \times 4]$.

The beings in each category should at each pervasion be clearly visible in the light of concentration and understanding. For example, when you extend lovingkindness to all women, you should actually see, in the light, all the women within the determined area. You should actually see all the men, devas, beings in lower

realms etc., in the determined area. You must develop each pervasion up to the third jhāna, before moving on to the next. You should practise in this way until you become proficient in pervading lovingkindness in all the forty-eight ways.

Once proficient, you should expand the determined area to include the whole monastery, the whole village, the whole township, the whole state, the whole country, the whole world, the whole solar system, the whole galaxy, and the whole of the infinite universe. Develop each of the expanded areas in the forty-eight ways until you reach the third jhāna.

Once proficient in this total pervasion of lovingkindness, you may proceed to the ten directional categories.

The Ten Directional Categories

The ten directional categories of lovingkindness involve the previously discussed forty-eight categories in each of the ten directions. This gives a total of (10×48) four hundred and eighty ways to extend lovingkindness. When we add the original forty-eight categories of total pervasion, we get $(480 + 48)$ five hundred and twenty-eight ways to extend lovingkindness.

To develop the directional categories of lovingkindness, you should see all beings in the whole universe to the east of you, and extend lovingkindness to them in the forty-eight ways. Then do the same thing to the west of you, and so on in all the other directions.

Once you master these five hundred and twenty-eight ways of pervading lovingkindness, you will ex-

perience the eleven benefits of practising lovingkindness, which the Buddha taught in the Aṅguttara Nikāya.

‘Bhikkhus, when the mind-deliverance of lovingkindness is cultivated, developed, much practised, made the vehicle, made the foundation, established, consolidated, and properly undertaken, eleven benefits can be expected. What are the eleven? A man sleeps in comfort; wakes in comfort; and dreams no evil dreams; he is dear to human beings; he is dear to non-human beings; devas guard him; fire, poison and weapons do not affect him; his mind is easily concentrated; his complexion becomes bright; he dies unconfused; and if he penetrates no higher he will be reborn in the Brahma World.’

Compassion (*Karuṇā*)

Once you have developed lovingkindness as just described, it should not be difficult to develop the sublime abiding of compassion. To develop compassion, you should first select a living person of your own sex who is suffering. You should arouse compassion for him by reflecting on his suffering.

Then re-establish the fourth jhāna with the white kasiṇa, and when the light is bright and clear, use it to see that person, and then develop lovingkindness jhāna. Emerge from it, develop compassion towards that suffering person with the thought, ‘May this person be released from suffering’ (*ayaṃ sappuriso dukkhā muccatu*). Do this many times, again and again, until you attain the first, second, and third jhānas, and the five masteries of each one. After that, you should

develop compassion as you did lovingkindness, that is, towards a person you like, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate; each one up to the third jhāna until you have broken down the barriers between them.

To develop compassion towards beings who are not suffering in any apparent way, you should reflect on the fact that all unenlightened beings are liable to experience the results of the evil they have done while wandering through the round of rebirths, and to therefore also be reborn in the lower realms. Furthermore, every being is worthy of compassion, because they are not free from the suffering of ageing, sickness, and death.

After reflecting thus, you should also here develop compassion as you did lovingkindness, that is, towards yourself, a person you respect or who is dear to you, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate up to the third jhāna, until you have broken down the barriers between you.

After that you should develop compassion in the same hundred and thirty-two ways you developed lovingkindness, namely: five unspecified categories, seven specified categories, and one hundred and twenty directional categories [$5 + 7 + (10 \times 12) = 132$].

Appreciative-Joy (*Muditā*)

To develop the sublime abiding of appreciative-joy, you should select a living person of your own sex who is happy, the sight of whom makes you happy, and whom you are very fond of and friendly with.

Then re-establish the fourth jhāna with the white kasiṇa, and when the light is bright and clear, use it to see that person, and then develop lovingkindness jhāna. Emerge from it and develop compassion jhāna. Emerged from that, and develop appreciative-joy towards the happy person with the thought: 'May this good man not be separated from the prosperity he has attained,' (*ayam sappuriso yathāladdhasampattito māvigacchatu.*), until the third jhāna.

After that develop appreciative-joy towards towards a person you respect or who is dear to you, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate. Again towards towards yourself, a person you respect or who is dear to you, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate up to the third jhāna, until you have broken down the barriers between you. Finally develop appreciative-joy towards all beings in the infinite universe in the hundred and thirty-two ways.

Equanimity (*Upekkhā*)

To develop the sublime abiding of equanimity, you should first re-establish the fourth jhāna with the white kasiṇa, and use a living person of your own sex, towards whom you are indifferent, to develop loving-kindness, compassion, and appreciative joy each up to the third jhāna. Then arise from the third jhāna and reflect on the disadvantages of those three sublime abidings, namely their closeness to affection, to like and dislike, and to elation and joy. Afterwards reflect on the fourth jhāna based on equanimity as peaceful.

Then develop equanimity towards a person you are indifferent to with the thought: 'This good man is heir to his own actions.'*(āyaṃ sappuriso kammaṣako)*

With the support of the third jhānas of loving-kindness, compassion, and appreciative-joy, it should not take you long to develop that fourth jhāna of equanimity. After that develop it towards a person you respect or who is dear to you, one who is very dear to you, and one you hate. Then again towards yourself, a person you respect or who is dear to you, one you are indifferent to, and one you hate up to the third jhāna, until you have broken down the barriers between you. Finally develop equanimity towards all beings in the infinite universe in the above hundred and thirty-two ways.

This completes the development of the Four Sublime Abidings.

How You Develop the Four Protective meditations

The four meditation subjects of lovingkindness, recollection-of-the-Buddha, repulsiveness meditation and recollection-of-death are called the 'Four Protections', or the 'Four Protective Meditations'. This is because they protect the meditator from various dangers. It is, for this reason, worthwhile to learn and develop them before proceeding to Vipassanā meditation. I have already described how to develop loving-kindness, so I would now like to talk about

how to develop the other three protective meditations, beginning with the recollection-of-the-Buddha.

Recollection-of-the-Buddha (*Buddhānussati*)

This meditation subject can be developed by looking at the nine qualities of the Buddha, using a formula frequently given in the suttas:

'Itipi so bhagavā araham̐ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇa-sampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānam̐ buddho bhagavāti.'

This can be explained as: This Blessed One, having destroyed all defilements, is a worthy one (*araham̐*); he has attained perfect enlightenment by himself (*sammāsambuddho*); he is perfect in knowledge and moral conduct (*vijjācaraṇasampanno*); he speaks only what is beneficial and true (*sugato*); he knows the worlds (*lokavidū*); he is the unsurpassable tamer of men fit to be tamed (*anuttaro purisadammasārathi*); he is the teacher of devas and men (*satthā devamanussānam̐*); he is an Enlightened One (*buddho*); he is the most fortunate possessor of the results of previous meritorious actions (*bhagavā*).

I shall give an example of how to use the first quality, *araham̐*, to develop concentration. According to the *Visuddhimagga*, the Pāli word *araham̐* has five definitions:

Since he has removed totally, without remainder, all defilements and habitual tendencies, and has thereby distanced himself from them, the Buddha is a worthy one: *araham̐*.

Since he has cut off all defilements with the sword of the Arahant Path, the Buddha is a worthy one: *araham*.

Since he has broken and destroyed the spokes of the wheel of dependent-origination, beginning with ignorance and craving, the Buddha is a worthy one: *araham*.

Since his virtue, concentration, and wisdom are unsurpassable, the Buddha is paid the highest reverence by brahmās, devas, and men, and is a worthy one: *araham*.

Since he does not, even when in seclusion and unseen, do any evil by body, speech, or mind, the Buddha is a worthy one: *araham*.

To develop this meditation, you should memorise these five definitions well enough to recite them.

Then re-establish the fourth jhāna with either the white kasiṇa or mindfulness-of-breathing. When the light is bright and clear, use it to visualize a Buddha image you remember, like, and respect. When it is clear, see it as the real Buddha and concentrate on it as such.

If you were in a past life fortunate enough to meet the Buddha, his image may re-appear. If so you should concentrate on the qualities of the Buddha, and not just his image. If the image of the real Buddha does not arise, then simply see the visualized image as the real Buddha, and recollect his qualities. You can choose the definition of *araham* you like most, take the meaning as object, and recollect it again and again as, '*araham, araham*'.

As your concentration develops and becomes stronger, the image of the Buddha will disappear, and you should simply remain concentrated on the chosen quality. Continue to concentrate on that quality until jhāna factors arise, although you can with this meditation subject attain only access-jhāna (*upacāra-jhāna*). You can concentrate on the remaining qualities of the Buddha too, and develop the five masteries.

Repulsiveness Meditation (*Asubha*)

To develop the repulsiveness meditation on a corpse, you should re-establish the fourth jhāna with either the white kasiṇa or mindfulness-of-breathing. When the light is bright and clear, use it to visualize the most repulsive corpse of your own sex, that you remember seeing. Use the light to see the corpse exactly as it was when you really saw it in the past. When it is clear, make it appear as repulsive as possible. Concentrate on it, and note it as, 'repulsive, repulsive' (*paṭikūla, paṭikūla*).

Concentrate on the object of the repulsiveness of the corpse until the uggaha-nimitta (taken-up sign) becomes the paṭibhāga-nimitta (counterpart sign).

The uggaha-nimitta is the image of the corpse as you really saw it in the past, and is a hideous, dreadful, and frightening sight, but the paṭibhāga-nimitta is like a man with big limbs, lying down after having eaten his fill.

Continue to concentrate on that nimitta, until you reach the first jhāna, and develop the five masteries.

Recollection-of-Death (*Marañānussati*)

According to the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (Greater Discourse on Foundations of Mindfulness) and the *Visuddhimagga Commentary*, the recollection-of-death can also be developed using a corpse you remember seeing. Therefore, you should re-establish the first jhāna with the repulsiveness of a corpse, and with that external corpse as object, reflect: ‘This body of mine too is of a nature to die. Indeed, it will become dead just like this one. It cannot avoid becoming like this.’ By keeping the mind concentrated on and mindful of your own mortality, you will also find that the sense of urgency (*samvega*) develops. With that knowledge, you will probably see your own body as a repulsive corpse. Perceiving that the life-faculty has in that image been cut off, you should concentrate on the its absence with one of the following thoughts:

1. I am certain to die, life is impermanent (*marañam me dhuvaṃ, jīvitam me adhuvaṃ*),
2. I will certainly die (*marañam me bhavissati*),
3. My life will end in death (*marañapariyosānam me jīvitam*),
4. Death, death (*marānam, marānam*).

Choose one and note it in any language. Continue to concentrate on the image of the absence of the life faculty in your own corpse, until the jhāna factors arise, although you can with this meditation subject attain only access concentration.

Summary

The four meditation subjects of lovingkindness, recollection-of-the-Buddha, repulsiveness, and recollection-of-death are called the Four Protections, or the Four Protective meditations, because they protect the meditator from various dangers.

In the Meghiyasutta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya (Numerical Discourses) it says:

‘For the removal of lust, meditation on repulsiveness should be developed; for the removal of anger, lovingkindness should be developed; and mindfulness-of-breathing should be developed for the cutting off of discursive thought.’

According to this sutta, repulsiveness meditation is the best weapon for removing lust. If you take a corpse as object, and see it as repulsive, it is called ‘repulsiveness of a lifeless body’ (*aviññāṇaka-asubha*). To take the thirty-two parts of the body of a living being, and see them as repulsive, as taught in the Girimānanda Sutta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya (Numerical Discourses), is called ‘repulsiveness of a living body’ (*saviññāṇaka-asubha*). Both these forms of repulsiveness meditation are weapons for removing lust.

The best weapon for removing anger is to develop lovingkindness, and for removing discursive thought mindfulness-of-breathing is the best weapon.

Furthermore, when meditation and faith slacken, and the mind is dull, the best weapon is to develop recollection-of-the-Buddha. When the sense of urgency is

lacking, and you are bored with striving in meditation, the best weapon is recollection-of-death.

Today I have explained how to develop the Four Sublime Abidings and Four Protective meditations. In my next talk, I shall explain how to develop Vipassanā meditation, beginning with the four-elements meditation, and analysis of the various kinds of materiality.

Before I end this talk, I would like to explain the relation between Samatha and Vipassanā.

In the Samādhi Sutta (Discourse on Concentration) of the Khandha-vagga (Section on Aggregates) in the Saṃyutta Nikāya (Kindred Discourses), the Buddha said: 'Bhikkhu, you should practise concentration. A bhikkhu who is concentrated, bhikkhus, knows dhammas as they really are. And what does he know as it really is? The arising of materiality and the passing-away thereof; the arising of feelings, of perception, and of formations, and the passing away of feelings, of perception and formations; the arising of consciousness and the passing away thereof.'

Therefore, a bhikkhu who is concentrated knows the five aggregates and their causes, and their arising and passing away. He sees clearly that because of the arising of their causes the five aggregates arise, and because of the complete cessation of their causes, the five aggregates also completely cease.

The Samatha I discussed in the first two talks and today produces strong concentration. It is the light of this concentration which lets you see ultimate mentality-materiality for Vipassanā. With that deep, strong and powerful concentration, you can see clearly

the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of mentality-materiality and their causes. This clarity is a great benefit coming from Samatha.

Samatha also gives you a place to rest in. There is much to discern in Vipassanā and tiredness may occur. In that case, you can stay in one of the jhānas for a long time. That rests and refreshes your mind, and then you can go back to Vipassanā. Whenever tiredness occurs, you can again enter jhāna to rest.

It is good to remember these benefits of Samatha, when I, in the following talks, explain Vipassanā.



Questions & Answers 3

Question 3.1: In mindfulness-of-breathing, there are the parikamma-nimitta, the uggaha-nimitta, and the paṭibhāga-nimitta: What is the parikamma-nimitta? Is the parikamma-nimitta always grey? What is the difference between the parikamma-nimitta and the uggaha-nimitta?

Answer 3.1: In mindfulness-of-breathing, there are three types of nimitta, three types of concentration (*samādhi*) and three types of meditation (*bhāvanā*). The three types of nimitta are: the parikamma-nimitta, the uggaha-nimitta and the paṭibhāga-nimitta; the three types of concentration are: preparatory concentration (*parikamma-samādhi*) sometimes called momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*), access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*), and absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*); the three types of meditation are: preparatory meditation, access meditation, and absorption meditation.

The object of preparatory concentration can be the parikamma-nimitta, the uggaha-nimitta, and occasionally the paṭibhāga-nimitta. Preparatory meditation is the same as preparatory concentration.

Real access concentration, and real access meditation are very close to jhāna concentration, absorption concentration, this is why they are called 'access'. But sometimes deep and strong concentration before absorption-jhāna (*appanā-jhāna*), with the paṭibhāga-

nimitta as object, is as a metaphor also called 'access concentration' or 'access meditation'. When preparatory concentration, or momentary concentration, is fully developed it leads to access concentration. When access concentration is fully developed, it leads to absorption or jhāna concentration.

We already discussed the nimitta in previous talks. There are three types of nimitta: the parikamma-nimitta, the uggaha-nimitta, and the paṭibhāga-nimitta.

(1) The parikamma-nimitta: The natural breath is a nimitta. The touching point is also a nimitta. Here the nimitta is the object of concentration. The Commentary mentions that the nostril nimitta (*nāsika-nimitta*), and upper lip nimitta (*mukha-nimitta*) are the parikamma-nimitta for beginners. When concentration is a little stronger, a smoky grey usually appears around the nostrils. This smoky grey is also called the parikamma-nimitta. The concentration is called preparatory concentration, and the meditation too is called preparatory. All the meditation and concentration up to this stage, is called 'preparatory'. At this stage, the nimitta may be not only smoky grey, but also other colours.

(2) The uggaha-nimitta: When the previous concentration increases in strength and power, the smoky grey usually changes to white, like cotton wool. But it may become another colour, owing to a change in perception. When the perception changes, the colour and shape of the nimitta may also change. If the colour and shape change very often, the concentration will gradually fall down. This is because the meditator's perception changes. Whenever it changes, his object thereby also

changes, and he has different objects. So the meditator should ignore the colour and shape of the nimitta. He should pay attention to it as only an ānāpāna-nimitta.

Concentration on the uggaha-nimitta is also called preparatory concentration, and the meditation preparatory meditation.

(3) The paṭibhāga-nimitta: When the concentration has become even stronger and more powerful, the uggaha-nimitta changes to the paṭibhāga-nimitta. Usually the paṭibhāga-nimitta is clear, bright and radiant, like the morning star. In this case too, if the perception changes, the nimitta may also change. If, when the concentration is strong and powerful, the meditator wants the nimitta to be long it will become long; if he wants it to be short it will become short; if he wants it to be ruby red it will become ruby red. This is because the meditator changes his perception, and this the Visuddhimagga says one should not do. If one does so, then even though the concentration is deep, it will gradually decrease. This is because one has different perceptions, and thereby different objects. So a meditator should not play with the nimitta. If he plays with it he cannot attain jhāna.

The beginning stage of concentration on the paṭibhāga-nimitta is also called preparatory concentration, and the meditation preparatory meditation. But close to jhāna they are called access concentration, and access meditation. When absorption arises, the nimitta is still the paṭibhāga-nimitta, but the concentration is now absorption concentration and the meditation absorption meditation.

Question 3.2: What is the difference between access concentration and absorption concentration?

Answer 3.2: When the *paṭibhāga-nimitta* appears, concentration is powerful. But at this stage, which is the stage of access concentration, the *jhāna* factors are not fully developed, and *bhavaṅga* mind states (life-continuum consciousness) still occur; one falls into *bhavaṅga*. The meditator will say that everything stopped, or may think it is *Nibbāna*, and say: 'I knew nothing then.' If he practises in this way, he can eventually stay in *bhavaṅga* for a long time.

In any kind of practice, be it good or bad, one will achieve one's aim, if one tries again and again. 'Practice makes perfect.' In this case too, if he tries again and again, in the same way, he may fall into *bhavaṅga* for a long time. Why does he say he knows nothing? Because the *bhavaṅga* takes the object at the time near death in the past life. That object may be *kamma*, a *kamma* sign (*kamma-nimitta*) or a rebirth sign (*gati-nimitta*). But a meditator cannot see this, because he has not yet discerned dependent-origination. It is only once they have discerned dependent-origination that meditators see that the *bhavaṅga* takes one of these objects.

If a meditator thinks it is *Nibbāna*, this idea is a very big 'rock' blocking the way to *Nibbāna*. If he does not remove this big 'rock', he cannot attain *Nibbāna*. Why does this idea occur? Many meditators think that a disciple (*sāvaka*) cannot know mentality-materiality as taught by the Buddha. So they do not think it is necessary to develop sufficiently deep concentration in order

to discern mentality-materiality, and their causes, as taught by the Buddha. Thus their concentration is only weak, and bhavaṅga mind states still occur, because the jhāna factors too are weak. The concentration cannot be maintained for a long time. If one purposely practises to fall into bhavaṅga, one will achieve one's aim, but it is not Nibbāna. To attain Nibbāna we must practise the seven stages of purification step by step. Without knowing ultimate mentality, ultimate materiality, and their causes, one cannot attain Nibbāna.

So, when the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta appears, the meditator's mind may fall into bhavaṅga, because the jhāna factors are not yet strong. Just like, when learning to walk, a small child who is too weak to stand by himself, will fall down again and again. In the same way, at the access concentration stage, the jhāna factors are still not fully developed, and one may fall into bhavaṅga: it is not Nibbāna.

To avoid falling into bhavaṅga, and to develop concentration further, you need the help of the five controlling faculties: faith (*saddhā*), effort (*vīriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*), to push the mind, and fix it on the paṭibhāga-nimitta. It takes effort to make the mind know the paṭibhāga-nimitta again and again, mindfulness to not forget it, and wisdom to know it.

At the absorption-jhāna stage, the jhāna factors are fully developed. Just like a strong and powerful man can stand up straight the whole day, a meditator can, taking the paṭibhāga-nimitta as object, stay in absorption-jhāna for a long time, without falling into bhavaṅga.

Complete and uninterrupted absorption may occur for one, two, three hours, or more. At that time he does not hear a sound. His mind does not go to other objects. Apart from the paṭibhāga-nimitta, he knows nothing.

Question 3.3: Under what conditions, or in what state, can we say that a meditation experience is access concentration or absorption concentration?

Answer 3.3: If many bhavaṅga states occur during concentration, one can say that it is access concentration. But the nimitta must be the paṭibhāga-nimitta. Only if one is able to stay in complete absorption for a long time, without interruption, with also the paṭibhāga-nimitta as object, can one say that it is absorption jhāna, absorption concentration.

How does a meditator know his mind is falling into bhavaṅga? When he notices that he has very often been unaware of the paṭibhāga-nimitta, he knows there were bhavaṅga states. His mind may also for brief moments have thought of an object other than the paṭibhāga-nimitta. This does not happen in absorption jhāna. In absorption jhāna there is only complete absorption without interruption.

Question 3.4: Is there access concentration, as well as absorption concentration at each of the four jhānas? What are their characteristics?

Answer 3.4: Let us take the example of the ānāpāna jhānas, which take the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta as object. There are four levels of access concentration,

access jhāna, and four levels of absorption concentration, absorption jhāna. At each level there is first access jhāna, and then absorption jhāna. Both take the same ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta as object. So it is the level of concentration which is different.

In the first, second, and third access-jhāna, there are five jhāna factors. But in the fourth access-jhāna, there is no bliss (*sukha*), only applied thought (*vitakka*), sustained thought (*vicāra*), equanimity (*upekkhā*) and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). Although they take the same nimitta as object, the jhāna factors become increasingly powerful at each access-jhāna.

The jhāna factors at the first access-jhāna suppress physical pain (*kāyika-dukkha-vedanā*); at the second, mental suffering (*domanassa-vedanā*); at the third, physical pleasant feeling (*kāyika-sukha-vedanā*); and at the fourth, mental pleasant feeling or happiness (*somanassa-vedanā*). This is how we distinguish between the different levels of access concentration, especially the fourth. At that level, the breath is the subtlest, and has nearly stopped. It stops completely at the fourth absorption-jhāna.

We distinguish between the absorption-jhānas also by looking at the jhāna factors. In the first absorption jhāna, five jhāna factors are present: applied thought, sustained thought, joy, bliss and one-pointedness; in the second, three: joy, bliss and one-pointedness; in the third, two: bliss and one-pointedness; and in the fourth, also two: equanimity and one-pointedness. By looking at the jhāna factors, we can say, 'This is the first absorption jhāna', 'This is the second absorption jhāna',

etc. Also, here the concentration increases level by level. Fourth jhāna concentration is the highest. How is it the highest? You should try for yourself. Many meditators report that the fourth jhāna is the best and the quietest.

Question 3.5: Under what conditions does a meditator drop, or regress from absorption to access concentration? Under what conditions does a meditator in access concentration attain absorption concentration?

Answer 3.5: If the meditator does not respect his meditation, but respects objects other than the paṭibhāganimitta, many hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) will arise. Many thoughts of sensual pleasure and hatred will arise. They are unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). Those objects reduce the concentration, because wholesome dhammas and unwholesome dhammas are always in opposition. When wholesome dhammas are strong and powerful, unwholesome dhammas are far away, and when, because of unwise attention, unwholesome dhammas are strong and powerful, wholesome dhammas are far away. Wholesome and unwholesome dhammas cannot arise simultaneously in one mind-moment or thought-process.

Here I would like to explain wise attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) and unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). When a meditator practises mindfulness-of-breathing, and concentrates on the natural breath, his attention is wise attention. When the uggaha-nimitta or paṭibhāganimitta appears, and the meditator concentrates on

it his attention is still wise attention. If, in Vipassanā meditation, a meditator sees: 'this is materiality', 'this is mentality', 'this is cause', 'this is effect', 'this is impermanent', 'this is suffering', or 'this is non-self', his attention is also wise attention.

But if he sees: 'this is a man, a woman, a son, a daughter, a father, a mother, a deity, a brahmā, an animal, etc.'; 'this is gold, money, etc.' then his attention is unwise attention. Generally speaking, we can say that because of wise attention many wholesome dhammas arise, and because of unwise attention many unwholesome dhammas arise. If, while you are practising meditation, unwise attention arises, then hindrances or defilements will certainly follow; they are unwholesome dhammas. Those unwholesome dhammas reduce the concentration, or cause it to regress and drop.

If you look at your meditation object with wise attention, again and again, then wholesome dhammas will arise and increase. Jhāna wholesome dhammas, for example, are among those wholesome dhammas. So, if you concentrate on the nimitta, such as the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta, again and again, this is wise attention. If you develop this wise attention to full strength, then from access concentration you will attain absorption concentration.

Question 3.6: When a person dies, a kamma-nimitta may arise because of past wholesome or unwholesome kamma. Is this phenomenon similar to that which occurs during meditation, when images of past events, which the meditator had forgotten, appear?

Answer 3.6: There may be some similarity, but only in some cases. It may be some similarity to the arising of a kamma-nimitta in those whose death took place quickly.

Question 3.7: While meditating, images of events from more than thirty years back, which the meditator had forgotten, appear. Is this due to lack of mindfulness, which lets the mind leave the object?

Answer 3.7: It could be. But it also could be because of attention (*manasikāra*). Many meditators do not know about attention. It is only once they have practised meditation on mentality that they understand it. Thought-processes occur very quickly, so they do not understand that these images appear because of attention. According to the Buddha Abhidhamma, no dhamma occurs by itself, without cause. This is because all formations are conditioned.

Question 3.8: If, when dying, a person has strong mindfulness, can he prevent a kamma sign (*kamma-nimitta*) of previous unwholesome or wholesome kamma from arising?

Answer 3.8: Strong, powerful mindfulness can prevent such nimittas from arising; but what is strong, powerful mindfulness? If a meditator enters jhāna, and keeps it completely stable right up to the time of death, you can say that the mindfulness of that jhāna is strong and powerful. That type of mindfulness can prevent an un-

wholesome sign or sensual-plane wholesome sign from arising. It takes only the jhāna object, for example, an ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta or white-kasiṇa paṭibhāga-nimitta.

Another type of strong, powerful mindfulness is the mindfulness associated with insight-knowledge. If a meditator's insight-knowledge is the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhāñāṇa*), then the mindfulness is strong and powerful, and the meditator's sign is wholesome. That type of mindfulness can also prevent unwholesome signs from appearing, as well as prevent other wholesome signs from replacing his Vipassanā sign. The Vipassanā sign is the impermanent, suffering, or non-self nature of a chosen formation. He may die with that insight-knowledge as the object of his near-death impulsion (*maraṇāsanna-javana*). It can produce a deva rebirth-linking consciousness (*deva-paṭisandhi*), so that he is spontaneously reborn as a deva.

Referring to this type of meditator, in the Sotanugata Sutta of the Aṅguttara Nikāya Catukka Nipāta (Numerical Discourses, the Book on the Fours), the Buddha says: '*So muṭṭhassati kālaṃ kurumāno aññatarāṃ devanikāyaṃ upapajjati. Tassa tattha sukhino dhammapadā plavanti. Dandho bhikkhave satuppādo, atha so satto khippariṇyeva visesagāmī hoti.*'; 'Bhikkhus, if a worldling (*puthujjana*) dies, he may be reborn in one of the deva realms, where all formations appear clearly in his mind. He may be slow to reflect on the Dhamma or to do Vipassanā, but he attains Nibbāna very quickly.' Why do formations appear clearly in his mind? Because the near-death impulsion consciousness

of the previous life, and the bhavaṅga of the following deva life take the same object, in this case the impermanent, suffering, or non-self nature of formations. So the host, bhavaṅga, already knows the Vipassana object. According to that Sutta, strong mindfulness associated with Insight-knowledge is capable of preventing unwholesome signs from appearing, as well as the other wholesome signs, which may replace his Vipassanā sign. You should try to possess this type of mindfulness before death takes place.

An example of this is the Sakkapañha Sutta (Sakka's Questions), about three bhikkhus who practised Samatha and Vipassanā. They had good conduct and good concentration, but their minds inclined towards life as female gandhabbas (musicians and dancers in the deva realm). When they died they went to the deva realm. They were reborn as very beautiful and shiny gandhabbas, who looked sixteen years old. During their lives as bhikkhus, there had also been a laywoman. The three bhikkhus had gone to her house every day for almsfood, and taught her Dhamma. She had become a stream-enterer, and when she died, she was reborn as Gopaka, the son of Sakka. The three gandhabbas performed for the son of Sakka, and he saw that they were very beautiful and shiny. He thought: 'They are very beautiful and shiny. What was their kamma?' He saw they were the three bhikkhus who had come to his house when he was a laywoman. He knew that their virtue, concentration and wisdom had been very good. So he reminded them of their past lives. He said: 'When you listened to the teachings and practised the Dhamma, what were your eyes and ears

directed at?’ Two of the gandhabbas remembered their past lives and were ashamed. They developed Samatha and Vipassanā again, quickly attained the non-returning path and fruition, and died. They were reborn in the pure abodes, and attained arahantship there. The third bhikkhu was not ashamed, and remained a gandhabba.

So, it is not necessary to contact a life insurance company. This type of mindfulness is the best insurance.

Question 3.9: When practising the four-elements meditation, and discerning the twelve characteristics, is it necessary to start with hardness, roughness, and heaviness in that sequence? Can one choose to start with any one of the characteristics?

Answer 3.9: In the beginning we can start with a characteristic that is easy to discern. But once we can discern all the characteristics easily and clearly, we must follow the sequence given by the Buddha: earth-element (*paṭhavīdhātu*), water-element (*āpodhātu*), fire-element (*tejodhātu*), and air-element (*vāyodhātu*). This is because that sequence produces strong, powerful concentration. When we see the kalāpas, and are able to easily discern the four elements in each one, the sequence is not so important; what is very important then is to discern them simultaneously.

Why? The life span of kalāpas is very short. It may be less than a billionth of a second. When discerning the four elements in a kalāpa there is not enough time to recite ‘earth, water, fire, air’, so we must discern them simultaneously and yet in sequence.

Question 3.10: Practising the four-elements meditation enables one to balance the four elements in the body. One may at some time get sick because the four elements are out of balance. When one is sick, can one practise the four-elements meditation with strong mindfulness to cure the sickness?

Answer 3.10: There are many types of affliction. Some afflictions are due to previous kamma, such as the Buddha's back pain. Some afflictions are due to unbalanced elements. The afflictions produced by previous kamma cannot be cured by balancing the four elements. But some of the afflictions which occur because of unbalanced elements, may disappear when the meditator balances them.

There are also afflictions which occur because of food, temperature (*utu*) or the mind (*citta*). If an affliction arises because of the mind, and we can cure the mind, the affliction may disappear; if the affliction arises because of temperature, fire-element, as with cancer, malaria, etc., it can be cured only by taking medicine, not by balancing the elements. This is the same for afflictions produced by unsuitable food.

Question 3.11: Before we attain the fourth jhāna, and eradicate⁵ ignorance (*avijjā*), many unwholesome thoughts still arise due to bad habits. For example, in our daily life (outside a meditation retreat) we know that greed or hatred arises. Can we use repulsiveness-

5. The fourth jhāna does not eradicate ignorance; it only suppresses ignorance.

meditation (*asubha*), or lovingkindness-meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*) to remove them? Or should we ignore them and just concentrate on our meditation subject, and let them disappear automatically?

Answer 3.11: Unwholesome kamma has ignorance (*avijjā*) as a latent cause, and unwise attention as the proximate cause. Unwise attention is very important. If you are able to replace unwise attention with wise attention, the greed or hatred will disappear for a while, or maybe forever, if the wise attention is very strong and powerful. We already discussed wise and unwise attention in a previous question.

You can use repulsiveness-meditation or loving-kindness-meditation to remove them. They are also wise attention. Vipassanā is the best weapon to destroy defilements. But Vipassanā is the best wise attention.

Question 3.12: How does the bhavaṅga function in the sensual realms, fine-material realms, immaterial realms and the supramundane realm? Would the Sayadaw please explain with examples?

Answer 3.12: The function of the bhavaṅga is the same in the first three types of realms. That is, it arises so the mind-moments in a life do not stop. This is because the kamma which produces this life is not yet exhausted. The object of the bhavaṅga may be a kamma, kamma sign (*kamma-nimitta*) or rebirth sign (*gati-nimitta*). In the fine-material and immaterial realms, there are usually only kamma or kamma signs, and no rebirth

signs. For example, the object of one being's bhavaṅga may be the Kyaikthiyo Pagoda, while another's may be the Shwedagon Pagoda. When we say 'supramundane realm' (*lokuttara-bhūmi*) 'realm' is only a metaphor. It is, in fact, not a place at all. By 'supramundane realm' we mean only the four paths, four fruitions, and Nibbāna; not a place.

The four path and four fruition consciousnesses are not bhavaṅga. Since there is no mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa*) in Nibbāna, there cannot be any bhavaṅga there either.

The object of the bhavaṅga for fine-material-sphere resultant jhānas (*rūpāvacara-vipāka-jhāna*) like an ānāpāna jhāna, is the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta. The bhavaṅga of the base of boundless-consciousness immaterial realm (*viññāṇaṅcāyatana-arūpāvacara*) has as object the base of boundless-space jhāna consciousness (*ākāsanaṅcāyatana-jhāna-citta*). This is kamma. There is no rebirth sign.

Question 3.13: What is the difference between mundane jhānas (*lokiya-jhāna*) and supramundane jhānas (*lokuttara-jhāna*)?

Answer 3.13: the mundane jhānas are the four fine-material-sphere jhānas and four immaterial-sphere jhānas (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*), that is, the eight attainments (*samāpatti*). The supramundane jhānas are the jhāna factors associated with the Path Knowledge and Fruition Knowledge. When you discern the mental formations of, for example, the mundane fine-material-sphere first

jhāna as impermanent, suffering or non-self, and if you see Nibbāna, your Path Knowledge is the first jhāna. This is a supramundane jhāna.

Why? In the mundane fine-material-sphere first jhāna, which was the object of Vipassanā, there are the five jhāna factors: applied thought, sustained thought, joy, bliss and one-pointedness. In the supramundane first jhāna there are the same five. This is way the path and fruition are the first jhāna path, and first jhāna fruition. The other jhānas can in the same way become the object for path and fruition.



How You Discern Materiality

Introduction

Today, I shall explain how to develop Vipassanā meditation, beginning with four-elements meditation, and the analysis of the various kinds of materiality. There are two paths to Vipassanā meditation. One part is to first develop a Samatha subject of meditation, such as mindfulness-of-breathing, up to the attainment of jhāna, and to then develop Vipassanā. The other is to develop four elements meditation, which leads to only up to access concentration, and without the attainment of jhāna to then develop Vipassanā. Both paths require, however, that the meditator develops four-elements meditation prior to Vipassanā. I teach both paths at my meditation centres in Myanmar.

How You Develop Four-Elements Meditation

In the Pāli texts, there are two ways to develop four-elements meditation: in brief and in detail. The brief is for those of quick understanding, and the detailed for those who have difficulty with the brief one. The Buddha taught the brief method in the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta (Greater Discourse on Foundations of Mindfulness):

‘A bhikkhu reviews this very body, however it be positioned or placed, as consisting of just elements, thus, “There are in this body just the earth-

element, the water-element, the fire-element, and the air-element.”

The *Visuddhimagga* (Ch.XI, para.41-43) explains further:

‘So firstly, one of quick understanding who wants to develop this meditation should go into solitary retreat. Then he should advert to his entire material body, and discern the elements in brief in this way, “In this body what is hard or rough is the earth-element; what is flowing or cohesion is the water-element; what is maturing (ripening) or heat is the fire-element; what is pushing or supporting is the air-element,” and he should advert and give attention to it, and review it again and again as “earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element,” that is to say, as mere elements, not a being, and soulless. As he makes effort in this way, it is not long before concentration arises in him, which is reinforced by understanding that illuminates the classification of the elements, and which is only access and does not reach absorption because it has states with individual essences as its object.

Or alternatively, there are these four [bodily] parts mentioned by the Elder Sāriputta, for the purpose of showing the absence of any living being in the four great primary elements thus: “When a space is enclosed with bones, sinews, flesh, and skin there comes to be the term material form (*rūpa*)”. And he should resolve each of these, separating them out by the hand of knowledge, and then

discern in the way already stated thus (above):
“In these what is hard... as its objects.”

As taught at Pa-Auk Meditation Centre, discern the four elements in the whole body as twelve characteristics:

Earth-element: hardness, roughness,
heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness.

Water-element: flowing, cohesion.

Fire-element: heat, coldness.

Air-element: supporting, pushing.

To develop this meditation, you must learn how to discern each of the twelve characteristics, one at a time. Usually, the beginner is taught the characteristics easier to discern first, and the more difficult ones later. They are usually taught in this order: pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, supporting, softness, smoothness, lightness, heat, coldness, flowing, cohesion. Each characteristic must be discerned in first one place in the body, and then throughout the body.

1. To discern pushing, begin by being aware, through the sense of touch, of pushing in the centre of the head as you breathe in and out. When you can feel it, concentrate on it until it becomes clear to your mind. Then move your awareness to a part of the body nearby, and look for pushing there. This way you will slowly be able to discern pushing first in the head, then the neck, the trunk of the body, the arms, and the legs and feet. Do it again and again, many times, until wherever you place your awareness in the body you see pushing easily.

If the pushing of the breath in the centre of the head is not easy to discern, then try to feel the pushing as the chest expands, or the abdomen moves when breathing. If that is not clear, try to feel the pulse, or any other obvious form of pushing. Wherever there is movement, there is pushing. Wherever you begin, you must slowly develop your understanding, so that you discern pushing throughout the body, from head to feet. In some places it will be obvious, in other places subtle, but it is present throughout the body.

2. When you are satisfied that you see this, look for hardness. Begin by being aware of hardness in the teeth. Bite them together, and feel how hard they are. Relax your bite, and feel their hardness. When you can feel this, try to discern hardness throughout the body systematically from head to feet, in the same way as you did to discern pushing. Do not deliberately tense the body.

When you can discern hardness throughout the body, again look for pushing throughout the body. Alternate between these two, pushing and hardness, again and again, discerning pushing throughout the body, and then hardness throughout the body, from head to feet. Repeat this many times until you are satisfied that you can do it.

3. Then look for roughness. Rub your tongue over the edge of your teeth, or brush your hand over the skin of your arm, and feel roughness. Now try to discern roughness throughout the body systematically as before. If you cannot feel roughness, try looking at pushing and hardness again, and you may discern it

with them. When you can discern roughness, go back and then to discern pushing, hardness, roughness, one at a time, again and again, throughout the body, until you are satisfied.

4. Then look for heaviness. Place one hand on top of the other in your lap, and feel the heaviness of the top hand, or that of the head by bending it forward. Practise systematically until you discern heaviness throughout the body. Then look for the four: pushing, hardness, roughness, and heaviness, in turn, throughout the body, until you are satisfied.

5. Then look for supporting. Relax your back, so your body bends forward. Then straighten it, and keep it straight. The force which keeps the body straight is supporting. Practise systematically until you discern supporting throughout the body. If it is not clear, try to discern it together with hardness, as this can make it easier. Then, when you can discern supporting easily, look for pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, and supporting throughout the body.

6. When you can discern those five, look for softness by pressing your tongue against the inside of your lip to feel its softness. Then relax your body, and practise systematically until you can discern softness easily throughout the body. Now look for pushing, hardness, roughness, heaviness, supporting, and softness throughout the body.

7. Next look for smoothness by wetting your lips and rubbing your tongue over them from side to side.

Practise until you can discern smoothness throughout the body. Then look for the seven characteristics throughout the body.

8. Next look for lightness by wagging a finger up and down, and feeling its lightness. Practise until you can discern lightness throughout the body, and then look for the eight characteristics.

9. Next look for heat (or warmth) throughout the body. This is usually very easy to do.

10. Next look for coldness by feeling the coldness of the breath as it enters the nostrils, and then discern it systematically throughout the body. You can now discern ten characteristics.

Note: The above ten characteristics are all known directly through the sense of touch, but the last two characteristics, flowing and cohesion, are inferred from the other ten characteristics. That is a good reason to teach them last.

11. To discern cohesion, be aware of how the body is held together by the skin, flesh, and sinews. The blood is held inside by the skin, like water in a balloon. Without cohesion the body would fall into separate pieces and particles. The force of gravity which keeps the body stuck to the earth is also cohesion. If this is not clear take all ten qualities again and again, one at a time throughout the body. When you have become skilled in this, you will find that the quality of cohesion also becomes clear. If cohesion is still not clear, discern just the qualities of pushing and hardness again and again.

Then you should feel as if the whole body was wound up in rope. Discern this as cohesion, and develop it as you developed the other characteristics.

12. To discern flowing be aware of the saliva flowing in the mouth, the blood flowing through the blood vessels, the air flowing into the lungs, or heat flowing throughout the body. If this is not clear, look at it together with coldness, heat, or pushing, and you may discern flowing.

When you can discern all twelve characteristics clearly throughout the body, from head to feet, you should continue to discern them again and again in this same order. When you are satisfied that you can do this, you should rearrange the order to the one first given above: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness, flowing, cohesion, heat, coldness, supporting, and pushing. In that order try to discern each characteristic, one at a time from head to feet. You should try to develop this until you can do it quite quickly, at least three rounds a minute.

While practising this way, the elements will for some meditators not be balanced, some elements may become excessive and unbearable. Particularly hardness, heat, and pushing can become excessive. If this occurs, you should concentrate more on the opposite quality, and continue to develop concentration in that way. This may balance the elements again, and it is for this reason twelve characteristics were taught in the first place. When the elements are balanced, it is easier to attain concentration.

The opposites are: hardness and softness, roughness and smoothness, heaviness and lightness, flowing and cohesion, heat and coldness, and supporting and pushing.

If a characteristic is in excess, balance it by concentrating on its opposite. For example, if flowing is in excess concentrate more on cohesion, or if supporting is in excess concentrate more on pushing. The rest can be balanced in a similar way.

Having now become skilled in the discernment of the twelve characteristics in the whole body, and those characteristics having become clear, you should discern the first six together at one glance as the earth-element, the next two together at one glance as the water-element, the next two as the fire-element, and the last two as the air-element. You should thus continue to discern earth, water, fire, and air, in order to calm the mind and attain concentration. You should do this again and again hundreds, thousands, or millions of times.

At this point, a good method to use is to take an overview of the body all at once, and to continue to perceive the four elements. In order to keep the mind calm and concentrated, you should not move the awareness from one part of the body to another as before. Instead, take an overall view of the body. It is usually best to take the overview as if you were looking from behind the shoulders. It can also be done as if looking from above the head down, but this may lead to tension and imbalance of the elements in some meditators.

The sub-commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* also says to develop concentration in ten ways: in sequence,

not too fast, not too slow, warding off distractions, going beyond concepts, discarding what is not clear, discerning the characteristics, and developing according to the Adhicitta Sutta (Discourse on the Higher Mind), Anuttarasītibhāva Sutta, and Bojjhaṅga Sutta (Discourse on Enlightenment Factors).

1. In sequence (*anupubbato*): Earth, water, fire, and air, as given by the Buddha.

2. Not too fast (*nātisīghato*): Otherwise the four elements will not be seen clearly.

3. Not too slow (*nātiṣaṇikato*): Otherwise you will not reach the end.

4. Warding off distractions (*vikkhepapaṭibāhanato*): Keep the mind with only the object of meditation, the four elements, and do not let it wander.

5. Going beyond concepts (*paññattisamatikkamanato*): Do not just mentally note, 'earth, water, fire, air', but be aware of the actual realities they represent: hardness, roughness, heaviness, softness, smoothness, lightness, flowing, cohesion, heat, coldness, supporting, and pushing.

6. Discarding what is unclear (*anupaṭṭhānamuñcanato*): Once you can discern all twelve characteristics, you may temporarily leave out characteristics which are unclear, but not if it leads to pain or tension, because of an imbalance in the elements. You need also keep at least one characteristic for each of the four elements. You cannot work on just three, two, or one element. It is best if all twelve characteristics are clear, and none left out.

7. Discerning the characteristics (*lakkhaṇato*): When

you begin to meditate, and the characteristics of each element are not yet clear, you can also concentrate on their function. When the concentration gets better, however, you should concentrate on only the natural characteristics (*sabhāva-lakkhaṇa*): the hardness and roughness of the earth-element, the flowing and cohesion of the water-element, the heat and coldness of the fire-element, and the supporting of the air-element. At this point you will see only elements, and not see them as a person or self.

8-9-10. The sub-commentary further recommends to develop according to the (8) Adhicitta Sutta (Discourse on the Higher Mind), (9) Anuttarasītibhāva Sutta, and (10) Bojjhaṅga Sutta (Discourse on Enlightenment Factors). In these three suttas the Buddha advises balancing the five faculties (*indriya*): faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and understanding; and balancing the seven factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅga*): mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, effort, joy, tranquility, concentration and equanimity.

As you continue to develop concentration on the four elements, and approach access concentration (*upacārasamādhi*), you will see different kinds of light. For some meditators the light appears as a smoke-like grey. If you continue to discern the four elements in this grey light, it will become whiter like cotton wool, and then bright white, like clouds, and your whole body will appear as a white form. Continue to discern the four elements in the white form, and it will become transparent like a block of ice or glass.

This transparent materiality is the five sensitivi-

ties (*pasāda*), which we also call the five ‘transparent-elements’: the body, eye, ear, nose, and tongue transparent-elements. They are seen as one transparent form or block, because you have not yet seen through moved the three kinds of compactness (*ghana*): compactness of continuity, group and function.

If you continue to discern the four elements in that transparent form or block, it will sparkle and emit light. When you can concentrate on this light continuously for at least half an hour, you have reached access concentration. With that light, discern the space-element in that transparent form, by looking for small spaces in it. You will find that the transparent form breaks down into small particles, which are called *rūpa kalāpas*. Having reached this stage, which is purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*), you can proceed to develop purification of view (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*), by analysing the *rūpa kalāpas*. That is the beginning of Vipassanā meditation.

Before explaining how to develop Vipassanā meditation, I should like to say something about a practical benefit of both the access concentration which a pure-insight meditator has here reached, and the *jhāna* concentration of a Samatha meditator. There is much to discern in Vipassanā meditation, and tiredness will usually occur. When this happens, it is good to take a rest. There is a simile in the commentary to the *Dvedhāvitakka Sutta* (Two Kinds of Thought) of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (Middle Length Discourses), which explains how a meditator can rest in *jhāna*. During a battle, sometimes the warriors feel tired. The enemy may be strong, and many arrows flying. So the warriors retreat to their fort.

Inside the fort they are safe from the enemy's arrows, and can rest. Then, when they feel strong and powerful again, they leave the fort and return to the battle-field. Jhāna is like a fort, and can be used as a place to rest in during Vipassanā meditation. Pure-insight meditators, who have no jhana, and have started directly with four-elements meditation, can use their access concentration as a fort to rest in. In both cases, the meditator can then return to the battle-field of Vipassanā clear and refreshed. There is great benefit in having a place to rest in.

Now I shall explain how to develop Vipassanā meditation, starting with the analysis of rūpa-kalāpas.

How You Analyse Rūpa Kalāpas

Rūpa kalāpas fall into two groups: a transparent group and an opaque group. Rūpa kalāpas which contain one of the five material transparent-elements (*pasāda-rūpa*) are transparent. All other rūpa kalāpas are opaque.

You should first discern the four elements, earth, water, fire, and air, in individual transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas. You will find that the rūpa kalāpas arise and pass away very, very quickly, and will be unable to analyse them, because you still see them as small particles with size. Since you have not yet seen through the three kinds of compactness: compactness of continuity (*santati-ghana*), of group (*samūha-ghana*), and of function (*kicca-ghana*), you are still in the realm of concepts (*paññatti*), and have not arrived at ultimate reality (*paramattha*).

It is because you have not seen through the concept of group and shape, that the particles, small lumps, remain. If you do not go any further, and attempt to do

Vipassanā by contemplating the arising and passing-away of the rūpa kalāpas, you would be trying to do Vipassanā on concepts. So you must analyse the rūpa kalāpas further, until you can see the elements in single ones: this is in order to reach ultimate reality.

If you are unable to discern the four elements in single kalāpas, because of they arise and pass away very, very quickly, then ignore their arising and passing away; just like pretending to not see, or notice someone whom you do not want to meet, but have met by accident. Ignore the arising and passing-away and simply concentrate on the four elements in single rūpa kalāpas. The power of your concentration will allow you to ignore their arising and passing-away.

If you are still unsuccessful, you should concentrate on the earth-element alternately in the whole body at once, and then in a single kalāpa. Then do the same with the water-element, the fire-element, and the air-element. This way, you will discern the four elements in both the transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas.

When you have succeeded, discern the four elements in both the transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas of the six sense-bases: the eye-base, ear-base, nose-base, tongue-base, body-base, and heart-base in turn.

A rūpa kalāpa contains at least eight types of materiality: earth, water, fire, air, colour, odour, flavour, and nutritive-essence. Therefore, after you have discerned the four elements in both the transparent and opaque rūpa kalāpas of the six sense-bases, you should also discern the remaining elements of colour, odour, flavour, and nutritive-essence.

Colour (*vaṇṇa*) is found in all rūpa kalāpas, and is the object of sight (*rūpārammaṇa*). It is very easy to discern.

Odour, or smell (*gandha*) is also found in all rūpa kalāpas. You should begin by discerning both the nose transparent-element and the bhavaṅga mind. First discern the four elements in the nose to find the nose transparent-element. The nose transparent-element must be seen in the appropriate rūpa kalāpas in the nose.

If you have successfully discerned the four elements in the transparent kalāpas and opaque kalāpas of the six sense-bases, you will easily be able to discern the bright, luminous bhavaṅga mind, the mind-door (*manodvāra*). It is located in the heart, and depends on the heart-base (*hadayavatthu*), which is made up of opaque kalāpas called heart-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas or heart-decad kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*).

Having thus discerned the nose transparent-element and bhavaṅga mind, proceed to discern the odour of a rūpa kalāpa. Odour can be known by either the nose or mind consciousness. The nose consciousness arises resting on the nose transparent-element. The mind consciousness arises attracted by the bhavaṅga mind which itself rests upon heart-base materiality. This is why when you wish to discern odour in rūpa kalāpas, both the supporting transparent-elements must be discerned.

Flavour (*rasa*) is found in all rūpa kalāpa. Having discerned both the tongue transparent-element and bhavaṅga mind, discern the taste of a rūpa kalāpa. You can discern the taste of saliva on the tongue. As with

odour, flavour of an object can be known by either the tongue or mind consciousness, and both their supporting elements must be discerned.

The Dispeller of Delusion, an Abhidhamma commentary, says: '*Sabbopi panesa pabhedo manodvārikajavaneyeva labhati.*' This explains that the colour, odour, and flavour of a rūpa kalāpa, can be known by the mind consciousness alone. Before your meditation becomes strong, you use the nose and tongue consciousness to help you learn how taste and odour is known by the mind consciousness. Once your meditation is strong and powerful, you can know flavour and odour of rūpa kalāpas with the mind consciousness alone.

Nutritive-essence (*ojā*) is found in all rūpa kalāpas. It is of four types: nutritive-essence produced by kamma, by consciousness (*citta*), by temperature (*utu*), and by nutriment (*āhāra*). Look into any rūpa kalāpa, and you will find nutritive-essence, from which rūpa kalāpas are seen to multiply forth again and again.

After having discerned the basic eight types of materiality in rūpa kalāpas, you should try to discern the remaining types of materiality in specific rūpa kalāpas

The life-faculty (*jīvita*) is the materiality which sustains the life of materiality produced by kamma. It is not found in rūpa kalāpas produced by consciousness, temperature, or nutriment, but in those produced by kamma, that is, the transparent rūpa kalāpas. You should discern them, and then look for the life-faculty

in them. The life-faculty materiality sustains the life of other materiality in its own kalāpa only, not in other kalāpas.

Having discerned the life-faculty in a transparent rūpa kalāpa, you should also try to discern it in an opaque rūpa kalāpa. There are three types of opaque kalāpa in the body which contain life-faculty. One type, heart-decad kalāpas, or heart-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*) is found in only the heart. The other two, sex-decad kalāpas or sex-as-the-tenth-factor kalāpas (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*), and life-nonad kalāpas or life-faculty-as-the-ninth-factor kalāpas (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*), are found throughout the body. Therefore, if you discern the life-faculty in an opaque kalāpa in the body somewhere beside the heart, you know it must be either a sex-decad kalāpa or life-nonad kalāpa. To tell these two apart, you need to discern sex-determining-materiality.

Sex-determining-materiality (*bhāva-rūpa*) is found in opaque kalāpas throughout the body, in all six sense-bases. After you have discerned the life-faculty in both transparent and opaque kalāpas, you should look for sex-determining-materiality in the opaque kalāpa where you found the life-faculty. If there is sex-determining-materiality, the kalāpa is a sex-decad kalāpa (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*), and not a life-nonad kalāpa (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*). In a male there is only male sex-determining-materiality, and in a female only female sex-determining-materiality. Male sex-determining-materiality is the quality by which you know, 'This is a man.' Female sex-determining-materiality is the quality

by which you know, 'This is a woman.' When you are able to discern sex-determining-materiality, look for it in each of the six bases: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart.

Heart-base materiality (*hadayavatthu-rūpa*) is the materiality which supports all consciousnesses arisen in the mind-door; this means except those consciousnesses arisen in the five sense-doors: eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body.

To discern heart-base materiality, concentrate on the bhavaṅga mind. Then discern the rūpa kalāpas which support the bhavaṅga mind. You will find these rūpa kalāpas in the lower part of the bhavaṅga mind. They are opaque, heart-decad kalāpas.

How You Analyse Transparent-Elements Materiality

The organ of the eye contains several kinds of rūpa kalāpa, like rice flour and wheat flour mixed together. In the eye there are two kinds of transparent-element mixed together, the eye transparent-element and body transparent-element. This means that the eye-decad-kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*), and body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*) are mixed. The body-decad kalāpas contain the body transparent-element, and are spread throughout the six sense-bases. They are mixed with the eye-decad kalāpas in the eye, with the ear-decad kalāpas (*sota-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the ear, with the nose-decad kalāpas (*ghāna-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the nose, with the tongue-decad kalāpas (*jivhā-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the tongue, and with the heart-decad kalāpas (*hadaya-dasaka-kalāpa*) in the heart. Sex-decad kalāpas too are spread throughout the six

sense-bases, and also mixed with the transparent kalāpas. To see this, you need to analyse the materiality of the five types of transparent kalāpas. They are:

(1) The eye transparent-element (*cakkhu-pasāda*): It is sensitive to colour, whereas the body transparent-element is sensitive to touch, that is, tangible objects. This difference allows you to know which is which. First discern the four elements in the eye, and a transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then look at the colour of a rūpa kalāpa some distance away from the eye. If the colour impinges on the transparent-element, it is an eye transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is an eye-decad kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*). If the colour does not do this, it is not an eye transparent-element, but a body transparent-element, as there are only two types of transparent-element in the eye.

(2) The body transparent-element (*kāya-pasāda*): It is sensitive to tangible objects, which are the earth-, fire-, and air-elements. Discern a transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then look at the earth, fire, or air-element of a rūpa kalāpa nearby. If one of the three elements impinges on the transparent-element, it is a body transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*). In the same way as you did in the eye, discern the body-decad kalāpas in the ear, nose, tongue, body, and heart.

(3) The ear transparent-element (*sota-pasāda*): It is sensitive to sound. Discern the four elements in the ear and discern a transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then listen to a sound. If it impinges on the transparent-element, it is

an ear transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is an ear-decad kalāpa (*sota-dasaka-kalāpa*). The discernment of the body-decad kalāpa follows the same method as for the eye.

(4) The nose transparent-element (*ghāna-pasāda*): It is sensitive to odour. Discern the four elements in the nose and discern a transparent rūpa kalāpa. Then smell the odour of a rūpa kalāpa nearby. If it impinges on the transparent-element, it is a nose transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a nose-decad kalāpa (*ghāna-dasaka-kalāpa*).

(5) The tongue transparent-element (*jivhā-pasāda*): It is sensitive to taste. Discern the four elements in the tongue and discern a transparent-element. Then taste the flavour of a rūpa kalāpa nearby. If it impinges on the transparent-element, it is a tongue transparent-element, and the rūpa kalāpa which contains it is a tongue-decad kalāpa (*jivhā-dasaka-kalāpa*).

The body-decad kalāpa and sex-decad kalāpa are found in all six sense-bases, and must be seen in each place in turn.

The Fifty-Four Types of Materiality in the Eye

If you analyse the materiality in the eye, you will find there are fifty-four kinds of materiality in six types of rūpa kalāpa. The six types of rūpa kalāpa are:

1. The eye-decad kalāpa (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*), which is sensitive to the colour, transparent, and produced by kamma.

2. The body-decad kalāpa (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*), which is sensitive to tangible objects (earth-, fire-, and air-elements), transparent, and produced by kamma.
3. The sex-decad kalāpa (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*), which is opaque and is produced by kamma.
4. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa produced by consciousness (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).
5. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa produced by temperature (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).
6. The nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa produced by nutriment (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*).

I have already explained how to discern the first three of these six types of rūpa kalāpa. The last three all consist of eight types of materiality. The only difference between them is their origin: consciousness, temperature, or nutriment. So I will now give examples of how to discern which is produced by consciousness, which by temperature, and which by nutriment.

How You See Materiality Produced by Consciousness

All consciousnesses dependent on heart-base materiality that occur during one whole life produce consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*cittaja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*). Every single consciousness produces a great number of these nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, which spread throughout the body.

If you concentrate on the bhavaṅga mind, you will see that many consciousnesses dependent on heart-base materiality continuously produce rūpa kalāpas. If this

is not clear, then having concentrated on the bhavaṅga mind, wiggle one of your fingers. You will see a large number of rūpa kalāpas being produced because the mind wants to wiggle the finger. You will also see them spread throughout all six sense-bases. These are the nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas, which are opaque and produced by consciousness.

How You See Materiality Produced by Temperature

The fire-element is called 'temperature' (*utu*). It is found in all rūpa kalāpas. It produces a first generation temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamakakalāpa*). They too contain the fire-element, which also reproduces a second generation of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. The fire-element in a kamma-produced kalāpa, such as the eye-decad kalāpa, produces in the same way four or five generations of temperature-produced kalāpas. This happens only once the temperature has reached its standing phase (*ṭhiti-kāla*). It is a law of materiality, that it has strength only once it has reached its standing phase.

(Sy: kammaja → 1st utuja → 2nd → 3rd → 4th → 5th.)

How You See Materiality Produced by Nutriment

Four parts of the body, namely, undigested food, faeces, pus, and urine, consist of only nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas produced by temperature (*utu*). Assisted by the fire-element in the life-nonad kalāpas (*jīvita-navaka-kalāpa*), which make up the kammically produced digestive heat, the nutritive-essence (*ojā*) in these nutritive-essence-

octad kalāpas produces many generations of nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. They are nutriment-produced kalāpas (*āhāraja-kalāpa*), and spread throughout the six sense-bases. Nutriment taken in one day produces nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*āhāraja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*) for up to seven days. Divine nutriment does this for up to one or two months. Assisted by kammically produced digestive-heat, the nutriment taken in one day also supports the nutritive-essence in kamma-produced, consciousness-produced, temperature-produced, and succeeding nutriment-produced kalāpas for up to seven days.

To see these things you can meditate at the time of eating, when the nutriment-produced kalāpas can be seen to spread throughout the body, from the mouth, to the throat, stomach, and intestines. Discern the four elements in the newly eaten food in the mouth, throat, stomach, and intestines, and see the rūpa kalāpas there. Continue to look until you see that, assisted by the kammically produced digestive heat, the nutritive-essence in the rūpa kalāpas in the food produces new rūpa kalāpas, which spread throughout the body.

Alternatively, you can see these things if you meditate after having eaten. Discern the four elements in the newly eaten food in the stomach, or in the intestines. Continue to look until you see that, assisted by kammically produced digestive heat, the nutritive-essence in the rūpa kalāpas in the food produces new rūpa kalāpas, which spread throughout the body. See that these kalāpas are opaque, analyse them, and discern the eight types of materiality in each.

Discern these nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas spreading out through the body, and reaching the eye. Discern the eight types of materiality in those in the eye, and see that the nutritive-essence in those kalāpas is nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*). When this nutriment-produced nutritive-essence meets with the nutritive-essence in the eye-decad kalāpas (*cakkhu-dasaka-kalāpa*), it helps the kamma-produced nutritive-essence in the eye-decad kalāpas to produce four or five generations of rūpa kalāpas. The number of generations depends on the strength of assistance of both the kamma-produced nutritive-essence and nutriment-produced nutritive-essence. Again, in those four or five generations of rūpa kalāpas, there is fire-element, temperature, which at its standing phase, produces many generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. Try to discern this here too.

Also try to discern that, assisted by nutriment-produced nutritive-essence (*āhāraja-ojā*), the nutritive-essence of the body-decad kalāpas, and sex-decad kalāpas, produce four or five generations of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. The fire-element, temperature, in also these many generations, again produces many more generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas.

In every consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpa in the eye there is nutritive-essence. When assisted by the nutriment-produced nutritive-essence, this consciousness-produced nutritive-essence (*cittaja-ojā*) produces two or three generations of nutriment-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas. The fire-element (*utu*) in

also these produces many generations of temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas.

When a consciousness is a Samatha, Vipassanā, Path, or Fruition Consciousness, it produces many generations of consciousness-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas within the body. The fire-element (*utu*) in these kalāpas produces temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas both inside and outside the body. Light is the brilliance of the colour-materiality in those consciousness and temperature-produced kalāpas.

You should discern all types of materiality in the other five bases as you did in the case of the eye-base.

Summary

Today, I have given a very brief outline of how to analyse rūpa kalāpas. The actual practice involves much more, which I do not have time to describe here. For example, the detailed method, which involves analysing what are called the forty-two parts of the body: twenty earth-element parts, twelve water-element parts, four aspects of the fire-element, and six aspects of the air-element. They are mentioned in the Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta (Analysis on Elements) in the Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourses). If you wish to know how to develop this, you should approach a proper teacher. By practising systematically, you will gradually become proficient in the discernment of kalāpas produced by the four causes: kamma, consciousness, temperature, and nutriment. To summarise:

1. To see the rūpa kalāpas, you must develop concentration up to access concentration, by seeing the four elements: earth, water, fire, and air.

2. When you can see the rūpa kalāpas, analyse them to see all the materiality in single kalāpas, for example: in one kalāpa see earth, water, fire, air, colour, odour, taste, nutriment, life-faculty, and eye transparent-element.

3. For the brief method, discern all the types of materiality in a single sense-base, and then in all six sense-bases. For the detailed method, discern all the types of materiality in all forty-two parts of the body. This completes my talk on the discernment of materiality. In my next talk I shall explain how to discern mentality.



Questions & Answers 4

Question 4.1: Is a bodhisatta, including Arimetteyya bodhisatta, a worldling (*puthujjana*)? If Arimetteyya bodhisatta is a worldling like us, then at the time for him to come down to become Metteyya Buddha, what is the difference between the conditions for him to become a Buddha and for us?

Answer 4.1: the difference is that his *pāramīs* have matured, like for our Sakyamuni Buddha as the bodhisatta Prince Siddhattha. Such bodhisattas will for many live have been fulfilling their *pāramīs*, such as the *pāramīs* of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*), virtue (*sīla-pāramī*), lovingkindness (*mettā-pāramī*), and wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*). Although they enjoy sensual pleasures, their matured *pāramīs* push them on to renounce the world. In the last life of every bodhisatta, he marries and has a son; this is a law of nature. I forget the names of Metteyya bodhisatta's wife and son. According to the Theravāda Tipiṭaka, no arahant including the Buddha is reborn after his Parinibbāna. Parinibbāna is the end of his round of rebirths. They will not be reborn anywhere.

Take our Sakyamuni bodhisatta: in his last life, before his enlightenment, he was a worldling. How? When he was sixteen years old, he became prince Siddhattha and married princess Yasodharā. They had a son. He enjoyed sensual pleasures for more than thirteen years. He did not have five hundred

female deities on his left, and five hundred female deities on his right, but was surrounded by twenty thousand princesses. This is *kāmasukhallikanuyogo*: enjoyment of sensual pleasures, or indulgence in sensual pleasures.

After he had renounced those sensual pleasures, he practised self-mortifications in the Uruvela forest. After six years of this futile practice, he abandoned it, practised the middle way, and before long, attained enlightenment. After his enlightenment, in his first sermon, the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta (Turning the Wheel of Dhamma), he proclaimed: ‘...*kāmesu kāmasukhallikanuyogo hīno, gammo, puthujjaniko, anariyo, anatthasaṃhito*.’: ‘this enjoyment of sensual pleasures is inferior (*hīno*), the practice of villagers (*gammo*), the practice of worldlings (*puthujjaniko*); it is not the practice of the enlightened ones (*anariyo*); this practice cannot produce any benefit such as Path, Fruition, and Nibbāna (*anatthasaṃhito*).’

So, in his first sermon the Buddha proclaimed that anyone who enjoys sensual pleasures is a worldling. When he was still a bodhisatta, he too had enjoyed sensual pleasures, that is, with Yasodharā in the palace. At that time, he too was a worldling, because enjoyment of sensual pleasures is the practice of a worldling.

This is not only for our bodhisatta, but for every bodhisatta. There may be many bodhisattas here among the present audience. You should consider this carefully: are these bodhisattas here worldlings or noble ones (*ariya*)? I think you may know the answer.

Question 4.2: After finishing the meditation course, can a meditator attain Path and Fuition Knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa* and *phala-ñāṇa*)? If not, why not?

Answer 4.2: Maybe he can; it depends on his *pāramīs*. Take, for example, the case of Bāhiya Dāruciriya. He practised Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) in the time of Kassapa Buddha's dispensation. He had about twenty thousand years of practice, but he did not attain any Path and Fuition Knowledges, because he had received a definite prophecy from Padumuttara Buddha, that he was to be the *khippābhiñña*, the quickest to attain arahantship in Sakyamuni's dispensation. In the same way, other disciples (*sāvaka*), who attained the Four Analytical Knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) in this Sakyamuni Buddha's dispensation, had also practised Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations in the dispensation of previous Buddhas; this is a law of nature. The four analytical knowledges are:

1. The analytical knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*): the insight-knowledge of effect which is the Noble Truth of Suffering.
2. The analytical knowledge of dhamma (*dhamma-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*): the insight-knowledge of cause, which is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering.
3. The analytical knowledge of enunciation of language (*nirutti-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*): knowledge of grammar, especially Pāḷi grammar.

4. The analytical knowledge of the kinds of knowledge (*paṭibhāna-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*): the insight-knowledge which knows the above three analytical knowledges.

There are five causes for attaining these four analytical knowledges:

1. Achievement (*adhigama*): this is the attainment of the Arahant Path and Fruition, or any other Path and Fruition.
2. Mastery of scriptures (*pariyatti*): learning the Dhamma scriptures.
3. Hearing (*savana*): listening to Dhamma explanations attentively and respectfully.
4. Inquiry (*paripucchā*): discussing the knotty passages and explanations in the texts and commentaries.
5. Prior effort (*pubbayoga*): the practice of Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*) during the dispensation of former Buddhas.

If those who do not have a definite prophecy from a previous Buddha practise in this dispensation, but do not attain Nibbāna, it is because their pāramīs have not matured enough. It is also possible that they did in fact receive a definite prophecy, or made an aspiration to escape from the round of rebirths (*saṁsāra*) in the future dispensation of Arimetteyya Buddha. For example, there were two thousand bhikkhunīs who attained Parinibbāna on the same day as Yasodharā.

During Dīpaṅkara Buddha's time, they had made an aspiration to escape from the round of rebirths (*saṃsāra*) in the dispensation of Sakyamuni Buddha. Due to this, they remained in the round of rebirths, from the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha up to the time of Sakyamuni Buddha. They had not received a definite prophecy, but had made an aspiration only.

Question 4.3: A meditator who has finished the meditation course, but not yet attained the Path Knowledge (*maggañāṇa*) and Fruition Knowledge (*phalañāṇa*), if his concentration drops, will his insight-knowledge also drop? Can he get reborn in a woeful state (*apāya*)?

Answer 4.3: Maybe it will drop, but it is very rare. If he does not practise for a long time, his Samatha-Vipassanā may slowly weaken. The force of kamma, however, remains as latent energy.

Regarding this, there was an occasion in Sri Lanka when sixty bhikkhus and novices (*sāmaṇera*) were going somewhere. On the way they met a layman, who was carrying charcoal and half-burnt firewood. His skin was the colour of charcoal. Some of the novices joked with each other, saying, 'That is your father', 'That is your uncle', etc., and the layman got upset. He put down the charcoal and half-burnt firewood, and paid respect to the Mahāthera in order to detain him for a while. He then said: 'Bhante, you think you are a bhikkhu just because of your robes. You do not have enough concentration and insight. Once I too was a bhikkhu, with strong and powerful concentration, and strong powerful psychic powers.'

Then pointing to a tree, he said further, 'Sitting under that tree I could hold the sun and the moon with my hand. I used the sun and moon to rub my foot. But because I neglected (*pamāda*) Samatha-Vipassanā wholesome dhammas, my jhāna concentration dropped. Defilements overwhelmed my mind. So now I do this work. Take me as an example, and do not neglect (*pamāda*) Samatha-Vipassanā wholesome dhamma. Please try to not become like me.'

Then those bhikkhus felt the sense of urgency to practise (*saṁvega*). Standing in that place, they practised Samatha-Vipassanā and attained arahantship. So Samatha-Vipassanā may drop temporarily, because of negligence (*pamāda*). But the force of kamma remains and does not perish.

There are three routes towards the life in which one attains Nibbana. I shall not discuss the case of Paccekabuddhas. The three courses of development are the courses of: (1) a bodhisatta, (2) a chief disciple (*aggasāvaka*) or great disciple (*mahāsāvaka*) and (3) an ordinary disciple (*pakatisāvaka*).

(1) Our bodhisatta had the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) and five mundane psychic powers during Dīpaṅkara Buddha's time. He had also practised Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations. At that time, if he had really wanted to attain Nibbāna, he could have attained arahantship quickly, after listening to a short stanza about the Four Noble Truths by Dīpaṅkara Buddha. But he did not want to only attain Nibbāna, so he made an aspiration to be

a Buddha in the future, and then received a definite prophecy from Dīpaṅkara Buddha.

During the four incalculables (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and one hundred thousand aeons (*kappa*) which followed, that is from Dīpaṅkara Buddha's time to Kassapa Buddha's time, our bodhisatta was ordained as a bhikkhu in nine lives, under the guidance of other Buddhas. In each life as a bhikkhu, our bodhisatta's training included the following seven practices:

1. Study of the Three Piṭakas by recitation,
2. Purification of the four types of moral conduct,
3. The thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*),
4. Always the forest-dweller practice (*āraññaṅga-dhutaṅga*),
5. The eight attainments (*samāpatti*),
6. The five mundane psychic powers,
7. Vipassanā meditation up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations.

This is the nature of bodhisattas. These pāramīs must be fulfilled for the attainment of Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). But before his pāramīs had matured, that is, from the time of his definite prophecy till his birth as Prince Siddhattha, our bodhisatta was sometimes reborn in the animal kingdom because of previous unwholesome kamma. The lives as a bhikkhu, and the lives as an animal were, however, very far apart. This is the course of a bodhisatta.

(2) Some chief disciple arahants, like Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, had also received a definite prophecy; they received it from Anomadassī Buddha. But from then till the time of our Buddha, they too were sometimes reborn in the animal kingdom because of unwholesome kamma, and sometimes together with our bodhisatta. In our Buddha's time they became arahants possessed of the Four Analytical Knowledges. This type of arahants must have been skilful in Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, in times of previous Buddhas; this is a law of nature. But, although they had practised Samatha-Vipassanā in many previous lives, they were sometimes reborn in the animal kingdom together with our bodhisatta. This is the course of a chief or great disciple.

(3) As for ordinary disciples; if they have practised Samatha-Vipassanā thoroughly up to the Knowledge of Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāna*) or the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (*udayabbaya-ñāna*), or the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, they will not be reborn on one of the four woeful planes (*apāya*) after death, even though they may not have attained Path and Fruition in this life. They may, however, be reborn in a deva realm like, for example, Samaṇa-devaputta.

Samaṇa-devaputta was a bhikkhu who practised Samatha-Vipassanā earnestly. He died while practising, and was reborn in the deva realm. He did not know he had died, so he continued meditating in his mansion in

the deva realm. When the female devas in his mansion saw him, they realized he must have been a bhikkhu in his previous life, so they put a mirror in front of him, and made a noise. He opened his eyes, and saw his image in the mirror. He was very disappointed, because he did not want to be a deva; he wanted only Nibbāna.

So immediately he went down to the Buddha to listen to the Dhamma. The Buddha was teaching the Dhamma related to the Four Noble Truths. After having listened to it, he attained Stream-Entry Path Knowledge (*sotāpatti-maggañāṇa*) and Stream-Entry Fruition Knowledge (*sotāpatti-phalañāṇa*). This is explained in the Commentary as: ‘...*laddhassāso laddhapatittho niyatagatiko cūlasotāpanno nāma hoti*’: he has found relief, he has found a secure place, he has a sure, good destination, so he is called a Lesser Stream-Enterer (*cūlasotāpanna*).’

Four things can happen to one who has become a Lesser Stream-Enterer while in the **human** realm.

In the Sotānugata Sutta, the Buddha taught which four:

1. As soon as he attains rebirth in the deva realm, if he reflects on the Dhamma, then the Dhamma will be clear to his insight-knowledge, and he can attain Nibbāna quickly.
2. If he does not attain Nibbāna by reflecting on the Dhamma with insight-knowledge, he can attain Nibbāna while listening to the Dhamma in the deva realm as taught by a bhikkhu who has psychic powers, and has come to the deva realm to teach it.

3. If he does not get the chance to listen to the Dhamma from a Bhikkhu, he may get the chance to listen to it from Dhamma-teaching devas (*Dhamma-kathika-deva*), like Sanaṅkumāra Brahmā, etc., and attain Nibbāna by listening to them.
4. If he does not get the chance to listen to the Dhamma from Dhamma-teaching devas, he may get the chance to meet friends who were fellow meditators in his past human life in a dispensation. Those fellow meditators may say, for example: 'Oh friend, please remember this and that Dhamma which we practised as bhikkhus in the human world.' He may then remember the Dhamma, and if he practises Vipassanā, he can attain Nibbāna very quickly.

So for an ordinary disciple, if he does not attain path and fruition in this life, he will certainly attain Nibbāna in the future.

At the time of death, a meditator may not have strong Vipassanā or Samatha, but because of the powerful Samatha-Vipassanā meditation wholesome kamma, a good nimitta appears at his mind door. Death may take place with that good nimitta as object, and because of this wholesome kamma, he will definitely reach a good place, and can in that life attain Nibbāna.

However, if he practises Vipassanā up to the moments of the near-death impulsion (*maraṇāsanna-javana*), he will be of the first type of person mentioned in the Sotānugata Sutta. Otherwise he may, as I explained before, be of the second, third or fourth type of person also mentioned in the Sotānugata Sutta.

Question 4.4: Can a meditator who has finished the course, but not yet attained Nibbāna, attain the Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena (*dhammatthitīñāṇa*)? If so, can it regress?

Answer 4.4: Yes, he can. *'Pubbe kho Susīma dhammatthitīñāṇaṃ pacchā nibbāne ñāṇaṃ:* 'The Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena (*dhammatthitīñāṇa*) comes first, the Path Knowledge taking Nibbāna as object comes next.' This was the Buddha's instruction to Susīma. Susīma was a wanderer (*paribbājaka*), who ordained to 'steal' the Dhamma. But the Buddha saw that he would attain Nibbāna within a few days, so He accepted him.

Susīma had heard that many arahants came to the Buddha, and reported that they had attained arahantship. So Susīma asked them whether they had the eight attainments and five psychic powers. They answered 'No'. 'If you do not have the eight attainments and five psychic powers, how did you attain arahantship?' Then they answered *'Paññāvimuttā kho mayaṃ āvuso Susīma:* 'Oh, friend Susīma, we are free from defilements, and attained arahantship by the pure-insight vehicle (*suddhāvipassanā-yānika*).' He did not understand so he asked the Buddha the same question. The Buddha said, *'Pubbe kho Susīma dhammatthitīñāṇaṃ pacchā nibbāne ñāṇaṃ:* 'The Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena comes first, the Path Knowledge taking Nibbāna as object comes next.'

What does this mean? The Path Knowledge is not the result of the eight attainments and five psychic

powers, it is the result of insight-knowledges. So the Path Knowledge can occur only after insight-knowledges have occurred; not after only the eight attainments and five psychic powers. In this *Susīma Sutta*, all insight-knowledges are referred to as the Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena. The Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena is the insight-knowledge of the impermanent, suffering and non-self nature of all formations, conditioned things (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*), which are mentality, materiality, and their causes. This is how the Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena is first, and the Path Knowledge which takes *Nibbāna* as object is second.

Afterwards, the Buddha gave a Teaching on the Three Rounds⁶ (*teparivaṭṭadhamma-desanā*) which is like the *Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta*, the Discourse on the Characteristic of Non-self. When the discourse was finished *Susīma* attained arahantship, even though he did not have the eight attainments or five psychic powers. He too became a pure-insight vehicle person. At that time he understood clearly the meaning of the Buddha's discourse.

If a meditator attains this knowledge, that is, the Knowledge of the Relations of Phenomena, then although he does not attain *Nibbāna* in this life, his insight-knowledge will not decrease. His latent *Vipassanā* kammic force is still powerful. If he is an ordinary disciple, he may attain *Nibbāna* in his coming future life.

6. The three rounds refer to the characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self.

Question 4.5: Can one attain supramundane states with only access concentration?

Answer 4.5: Yes, one can. At access concentration there is also bright, brilliant and radiant light. With that light, one can discern kalāpas, ultimate materiality, ultimate mentality, and their causes. One can then continue with Vipassanā meditation stage by stage.

Question 4.6: Can one with only momentary concentration (*khaṇika-samādhi*), practise mindfulness of feeling (*vedanānu-passanā-satipaṭṭhāna*) to attain supramundane states?

Answer 4.6: Here we need to define momentary concentration. What is momentary concentration? There are two types of momentary concentration: momentary concentration in Samatha meditation, and momentary concentration in Vipassanā meditation. In Samatha meditation there are three types of concentration: momentary concentration (a type of preparatory concentration), access concentration, and absorption concentration. The momentary concentration refers in particular to the concentration which takes a paṭibhāga-nimitta as object, like the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta. This is the concentration before access concentration. This is for a serenity vehicle person (*samatha-yānika*).

There is another type of momentary concentration for a pure-insight vehicle person (*suddha-vipassanā-yānika*). A pure-insight vehicle person must begin usually with the four-elements meditation to attain access concentration or momentary concentration, and see

the kalāpas, and the four elements in each kalāpa. The *Visuddhimagga* says this is access concentration. But the sub-commentary to the *Visuddhimagga* says it is not real access concentration, but only a metaphor, because real access concentration is close to jhāna concentration.

If a meditator practises the four-elements meditation, he will not attain jhāna, because to see the four elements in each kalāpa is very difficult. One cannot concentrate thoroughly on the four elements in each kalāpa, because the kalāpas pass away as soon as they arise. So one cannot concentrate deeply. The four elements in each kalāpa are ultimate materiality (*paramattha-rūpa*). It is deep and profound and not easy to see them clearly with insufficient concentration. So the four-elements meditation does not produce jhāna. Because of this, the access concentration which takes the four elements in each kalāpa as object is not real access concentration. It is in fact momentary concentration.

There is also momentary concentration in Vipassanā. It is discussed in the section on mindfulness-of-breathing of the *Visuddhimagga*. When he wants to practise Vipassanā, a serenity vehicle meditator who has attained ānāpāna jhāna enters the first jhāna. This is Samatha. He emerges from it, and discerns the thirty-four mental formations of the first jhāna, and then impermanence, suffering or non-self by seeing the arising and passing-away nature of those jhāna formations (*jhāna-dhamma*). He does the same with the second jhāna, etc.

At the time of discerning there is still concentration. He concentrates on the impermanent, suffering, or

non-self nature of those jhāna formations. His concentration is at that time deep and profound, and does not go to other objects. This is momentary concentration, because the object is momentary; as soon as it arises, it passes away.

In the same way, when a meditator is practising Vipassanā to see either the impermanent, suffering, or non-self nature of ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes, then usually his mind does not leave the object. His mind has sunk into one of the characteristics. This is also called momentary concentration. Here you should know that Vipassanā momentary concentration is seeing thoroughly the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes. Without seeing ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes, how can there be Vipassanā momentary concentration. It is impossible. So, if a meditator can see ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes thoroughly and clearly, without having done any Samatha meditation, it is of course not necessary for him to practise Samatha meditation. But if he cannot see ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes, he should cultivate one of the Samatha meditation subjects, to develop sufficient concentration to be able to do so.

In the Khandha Saṃyutta and Sacca Saṃyutta the Buddha also said: *‘Samādhiṃ bhikkhave bhāvētha, samāhito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti.’*: ‘Bhikkhus, you should cultivate concentration. With enough concentration, you will be able to see ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes as they really

are.’ Then you will be able to see the five aggregates and their causes. You will be able to see their nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. You will be able to see their cessation at the time of the arahant path and Parinibbāna.

So, to know the five aggregates, their causes and cessation, one should cultivate concentration. In the same way, to know the Four Noble Truths one should cultivate concentration. That is stated in the Sacca Saṃyutta.

If a meditator wants to discern only feeling, he should be aware of the following facts: ‘*Sabbam bhikkhave anabhijānaṃ apari-jānaṃ avirājayam appajahaṃ abhabbo dukkhakkhayāya ... (P)... Sabbañca kho bhikkhave abhijānaṃ parijānaṃ virājayam pajahaṃ bhabbo dukkhakkhayāya.*’: ‘Bhikkhus, if a bhikkhu does not know all mentality, materiality, and their causes with the three types of full-understanding (*pariññā*), he cannot attain Nibbāna. Only those who know them with the three types of full understanding can attain Nibbāna.’ This is from the Aparijānana Sutta (Not Fully Understand) in the Saḷāyatana Vagga (Section on the Six Sense-Bases) of the Saṃyutta Nikāya (Kindred Discourses).

In the same way, it is taught in the Kūtāgāra Sutta in the Sacca Vagga that, without knowing the Four Noble Truths with insight-knowledge and Path Knowledge, one cannot reach the end of the round of rebirths (*saṃsāra*). So if a meditator wants to attain Nibbāna, he must try to know all mentality, materiality, and their causes with the three types of full-understanding.

What are the three types of full understanding?
They are:

1. The Full-Understanding as the Known (*ñāta-pariññā*), this is the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). They are the insight-knowledges which know all ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes.
2. The Full-Understanding as Investigation (*tīraṇa-pariññā*), this is the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) and Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*). These two Insight-knowledges comprehend clearly the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes.
3. The Full-Understanding as Abandoning (*pahāna-pariññā*), this is the upper insight-knowledges from the Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*) to the Path Knowledge.

The teaching in those two suttas, the Aparijānana Sutta and Kūtāgāra Sutta, is very important. So, if a meditator wants to practise Vipassanā beginning with mindfulness of feeling, he should remember the following: He must have discerned ultimate materiality; Discerning feeling alone is not enough. He must also discern the mental formations associated with feeling in the six-door thought-processes.

Why? The Buddha said that if a bhikkhu does not

know all mentality-materiality and their causes with the three types of full-understanding, he cannot attain Nibbāna. Therefore, it is not enough if a meditator tries to discern feeling alone, such as unpleasant feeling without discerning ultimate mentality-materiality thoroughly. Here 'not enough' means he will not attain Nibbāna.

Question 4.7: The Buddha was a great arahant. What was the difference between Him, and disciples like the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna who were also arahants?

Answer 4.7: A Buddha's Arahant Path is always associated with Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), but this is not the case with Arahant Path of disciples. That is, the Enlightenment of a Chief Disciple (*aggasāvaka-bodhi*), the Enlightenment of a Great Disciple (*mahāsāvaka-bodhi*), or the Enlightenment of an Ordinary Disciple (*pakatisāvaka-bodhi*). They are sometimes associated with the Four Analytical Knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*); sometimes with the Six Direct Knowledges (*abhiññā*); sometimes the three Direct Knowledges; or are sometimes a pure Arahant Path, but are not associated with Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). For example, Venerable Sāriputta's and Mahāmoggallāna's Arahant Paths were not associated with Omniscient Knowledge. The Buddha's Arahant Path, on the other hand, is not only associated with Omniscient Knowledge, but also all the other knowledges as well as all the Buddha's qualities.

Another thing is that Buddhas have, because of

their matured pāramīs, attained the Path, Fruition, and Omniscient Knowledges by themselves, without a teacher. But a disciple can only attain the Path and Fruition Knowledges by listening to Dhamma related to the Four Noble Truths from a Buddha, or a Buddha's disciple. They cannot practise by themselves, without a teacher. These are the differences.

Question 4.8: What is the 'intermediate life' (*antara-bhava*)?

Answer 4.8: According to the Theravāda Piṭaka there is no such thing as an intermediate life (*antara-bhava*). Between a death-consciousness (*cuti-citta*) and its subsequent rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*), there are no thought moments, or anything resembling an intermediate life. If a person were to reach the deva world after death, then between his death-consciousness and the deva's rebirth-linking consciousness, there would be no thought moment or anything like an intermediate life. As soon as death takes place, the deva rebirth-linking consciousness occurs. In the same way, if a person were to reach hell after death, then between his death-consciousness and the rebirth-linking consciousness in hell, there would be no such thing as an intermediate life. He would go to hell directly after death.

The idea of an intermediate life usually arises when someone dies, inhabits the peta world for a short time, and is then reborn as a human being again. They may think their peta life was something like an intermediate life, even though it was, in fact, nothing

like an intermediate life. What really happened is this: after the human death-consciousness, the peta rebirth-linking consciousness occurred; after the peta death-consciousness, a human rebirth-linking consciousness occurred again. The person suffered in the peta world for only a short time, because of his unwholesome kamma. When the kammic force of that unwholesome kamma finished, he took a human rebirth-linking consciousness again, because of wholesome kamma which matured.

That short life in the peta world is mistaken for an intermediate life, by those who cannot see the reality of the round of rebirths or dependent-origination. If they could discern dependent-origination with insight-knowledge, then this misbelief would disappear. So I would like to suggest that you discern dependent-origination with your own insight-knowledge. Then the question about an intermediate life will disappear from your mind.

Question 4.9: Are the methods for mindfulness-of-breathing and four-elements meditation the same? Why must we practise four-elements meditation only after mindfulness-of-breathing?

Answer 4.9: No, the methods are not the same.

If you want to practise Vipassanā, you must first discern materiality and mentality. Secondly, you must discern their causes. To discern materiality, you must practise four-elements meditation. In Vipassanā there are two types of meditation: discernment of materiality and discernment of mentality.

When the Buddha taught discernment of materiality, he always taught four-elements meditation, either in brief or in detail. So if you want to discern materiality, you must practise according to the Buddha's instructions. It is better to practise four-elements meditation with deep concentration like the fourth ānāpāna jhāna, because it helps us see ultimate materiality, ultimate mentality, and their causes clearly.

But if you do not want to practise Samatha meditation like mindfulness-of-breathing, you can practise the four-elements meditation directly; no problem. We discussed this in a previous question.

Question 4.10: Could the Sayadaw please explain the light experienced in meditation scientifically?

Answer 4.10: What is the light seen in meditation? Every consciousness (*citta*) which arises dependent upon the heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) produces consciousness-produced materiality (*cittaja-rūpa*), also called kalāpas. One consciousness produces many consciousness-produced kalāpas. Of the heart-base-dependent consciousnesses, Samatha meditation-consciousnesses (*samatha-bhāvanā-citta*) and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses (*vipassanā-bhāvanā-citta*) are very strong and powerful; they produce very many kalāpas. When we analyse those kalāpas, we find there are eight types of materiality. They are: earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, odour, flavour, and nutritive-essence. The materiality of colour is bright. If the Samatha and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses are more powerful the colour is brighter. Because kalāpas arise simultaneously as well as succes-

sively, the colour of one kalāpa and the colour of another kalāpa arise closely together like in an electric bulb, which is why light appears.

Again, in each kalāpa produced by the Samatha and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses there is the fire-element, which also produces many new kalāpas. They are called temperature-produced materiality, because they are produced by the fire-element, which is temperature (*utu*). This occurs not only internally but also externally. When we analyse these kalāpas we find there are the same eight types of materiality: the earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, odour, flavour, and nutritive-essence. Colour is again one of them. Because of the power of the Samatha and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses, that colour is also bright. So the brightness of one colour, and the brightness of another colour arise closely together, like in an electric bulb.

The light of consciousness-produced materiality and temperature-produced materiality appear simultaneously. Consciousness-produced colour-materiality arises internally only, but temperature-produced colour-materiality arises both internally and externally and spreads in all directions up to the whole world system or universe (*cakkavala*) or farther, depending on the power of the Samatha and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses. A Buddha's Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality produces light in up to ten thousand world systems. The Venerable Anuruddha's divine-eye consciousness (*dibba-cakkhu-citta*) produced light in up to one thousand world systems. Other disci-

ples' insight-knowledge produces light going up to one league (*yojana*), two leagues, etc., in every direction depending on the power of their Samatha and Vipassanā meditation-consciousnesses.

Usually many meditators realize that this light is a group of kalāpas, when they have reached the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away. While practising Samatha meditation, they do not yet understand that this light is a group of kalāpas, because the kalāpas are very subtle. It is not easy to understand, and see the kalāpas when practising only Samatha meditation. If you want to know with certainty you should try to acquire the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away. That is the most scientific way to understand the light experienced in meditation.

Question 4.11: Can those who have discerned the thirty-two parts of the body see the internal parts in someone else, with their eyes open?

Answer 4.11: It depends. Beginners can with their eyes open only see the external parts. They can see the internal parts only with their insight-knowledge eyes. If you want to know this scientifically, please try to see it yourself with your insight-knowledge.

A Mahāthera, however, may because of previous practice, be able to see the skeleton with his eyes open, like the Venerable Mahā Tissa, who was an expert in skeleton-meditation. He always practised internal skeleton-meditation as repulsiveness up to the first jhāna, and then Vipassanā. He discerned mentality-

materiality, their causes, and nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. This was his usual practice.

One day he went for alms (*piṇḍapāta*), from Anuraddhapura to Mahāgāma village. On the way, he met a woman who tried to attract his attention with loud laughter. When he heard the sound he looked her way, saw only her teeth, and then used them for skeleton-meditation. Because of his previous constant practice he saw her as a skeleton, and not as a woman. He saw only a skeleton. Then he concentrated on his own skeleton, attained the first jhāna, and practised Vipassanā quickly. He attained the arahant path standing in the road.

The woman had quarrelled with her husband, and left home to go to her parents' house. Her husband followed her, and also met Mahā Tissa Mahāthera. He asked him, 'Bhante, did you see a woman go this way?' The Mahāthera answered, 'Oh, lay-supporter (*dāyaka*), I saw neither man nor woman, I saw only a skeleton going this way.' This story is mentioned in the *Visuddhimagga* in the Virtue Chapter.

This is an example of how a bhikkhu who has, like Mahā Tissa Mahāthera, practised skeleton-meditation thoroughly may be able to see another's skeleton with his eyes open.



How You Discern Mentality

Introduction

In my last talk, I explained how to develop four-elements meditation, and also how to analyse the particles of materiality called 'rūpa kalāpas'. In this talk, I would like to explain a little about how to discern mentality (*nāma-kammaṭṭhāna*), which is the next stage in Vipassanā meditation.

Let me begin by explaining briefly the basic facts of Abhidhamma necessary to understand the discernment of mentality.

As explained in the Abhidhamma, the mind consists of a consciousness (*citta*) which knows its object, and mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) which arise with that consciousness. There are fifty-two such mental-concomitants, for example: contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), intention (*cetanā*), one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*), life-faculty (*jīvitindriya*), and attention (*manasikāra*).

There are a total of eighty-nine types of consciousness, which can be classified according to whether they are wholesome, unwholesome, or indeterminate, or according to their plane of existence, the sensual plane (*kāmāvacara*), fine-material plane (*rūpāvacara*), immaterial plane (*arūpāvacara*), or supramundane plane (*lokuttarā*). We may, however, speak of just two basic types of consciousness: the consciousness of the thought-

process (*cittavīthi*) and, the consciousness outside the thought-process (*vīthi-mutta*), as at rebirth, bhavaṅga, and death.

There are six types of thought-process. The first five are the eye-door-, ear-door-, nose-door-, tongue-door-, and body-door thought-processes, whose respective objects are visible forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangibles. They are together called the 'five-door thought-process' (*pañcadvāra-vīthi*). The sixth type of thought-process has mental objects as its objects and is called the 'mind-door thought-process' (*manodvāra-vīthi*). Each thought-process comprises a series of different types of consciousness. The consciousnesses in any one thought-process occur in due order according to the 'natural order of consciousness' (*cittaniyāma*). If you want to discern mentality, you must see them as they occur in that natural order.

To do so, you must first have developed concentration with either mindfulness-of-breathing, another Samatha meditation subject, or the four-elements meditation. You must also have finished the discernment of materiality (*rūpa-kammaṭṭhāna*) if you are a pure-insight meditator. Only then should you attempt to discern mentality (*nāma-kammaṭṭhāna*).

Mentality is discerned in four stages. They are to discern:

1. All the types of consciousness that occur internally.
2. Each and every mental formation in all the types of consciousness.

3. The sequences of consciousnesses, that is, the thought-processes (*vīthi*), that occur at the six sense-doors.
4. External mentality.

How You Discern Jhāna Thought-Processes

If you have attained jhāna with, for example, mindfulness-of-breathing, then the best place to start to discern mentality is the consciousness and mental-concomitants of that jhāna.

There are two reasons for this. The first reason is that when developing jhāna, you discerned the five jhāna factors, which means you have some experience in discerning those mental-concomitants. The second reason is that the jhāna impulsion-consciousnesses (*jhāna-javana-citta*) occur many times in succession, and are therefore prominent, and easy to discern. This is in contrast to a normal sensual plane thought-process (*kāmāvacara-vīthi*), in which impulsion (*javana*) occurs only seven times before a new thought-process takes its place.

So re-establish the first jhāna with, for example, ānāpāna. Emerge from it and discern the bhavaṅga, mind-door, and ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta together. When the nimitta appears in the bhavaṅga, discern the five jhāna factors.

1. Applied thought (*vitakka*): directing and placing the mind on the object, the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.

2. Sustained thought (*vicāra*): maintaining the mind on the object, the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.
3. Joy (*pīti*): liking for the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.
4. Bliss (*sukha*): happiness about the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.
5. One-pointedness (*ekaggatā*): one-pointedness of mind on the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.

Practise until you can discern all five at once in each first-jhāna impulsion consciousness (*javana-citta*). Then discern other mental formations, starting with either consciousness (*viññāṇa*), contact (*phassa*), or feeling (*vedanā*); whichever is most prominent. Discern the remaining mental formations by adding one at a time: first one type, then two, then three, etc., until eventually you see all thirty-four types of mental formation in each first-jhāna impulsion consciousness.

After this, discern all the types of mental formation in each and every consciousness, that occurs in a mind-door thought-process (*manodvāra-vīthi*), using again the first jhāna.

A mind-door thought-process of the first jhāna consists of a sequence of six types of consciousness: The first is the mind-door-adverting consciousness (*manodvārāvajjana*), with twelve mental formations. The remaining five, each with thirty-four mental formations, are: the preparatory consciousness (*parikamma*); the access consciousness (*upacāra*); the conformity consciousness (*anuloma*); the change-of-lineage consciousness (*gotrabhū*); and finally the uninterrupted sequence of jhāna impulsion consciousnesses (*jhāna-javana-citta*).

To discern these, you must again re-establish the first jhāna, such as the first ānāpāna-jhāna, emerge from it, and again discern the bhavaṅga and ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta together. When the nimitta appears in the bhavaṅga, discern the jhāna mind-door thought-process that just occurred. You discern each of the different consciousnesses in the first-jhāna mind-door thought-process, and their twelve or thirty-four types of mental formation.

After this, discern the characteristic common to all mentality (*nāma*), all thirty-four mental formations, which is to bend towards and adhere to the object.

You need to thus discern and analyse the mentality of also the second, third, and fourth ānāpāna-jhānas, as well as any other jhāna of other meditation subjects which you are able to attain, for example, repulsiveness, white kasiṇa, and lovingkindness.

If, however, you have only access concentration, with four-elements meditation, you must begin your discernment of mentality there: you cannot discern the mentality of a jhāna consciousness without jhāna. In that case, you must with four-elements meditation re-establish access concentration, where the transparent form of your body sparkles and emits light. After resting there for some time, turn to Vipassanā, with a refreshed and clear mind and discern the mentality of that concentration. Having now discerned the different thought-processes in all your previous Samatha practice, be it access or jhana concentration, you now move on to discern the different mental formations of a thought-process of the sensual plane (*kāmāvacara-vīthi*).

How You Discern Sensual Plane Thought-Processes

Wise and Unwise Attention

A thought-process of the sensual plane is either wholesome or unwholesome. It depends on wise attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) or unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). Attention is the most important factor to determine whether a sensual-plane consciousness is wholesome or unwholesome.

If you look at an object and know it as materiality, mentality, cause or effect, impermanence, suffering, non-self, or repulsiveness, then your attention is wise attention, and the impulsion consciousness is wholesome.

If you look at an and see it as a concept, such as a person, man, woman, being, gold, silver, or permanence, happiness, or self, then your attention is unwise attention, and the impulsion consciousness is unwholesome.

In exceptional cases, however, an impulsion consciousness connected with a concept may be wholesome, for example, when practising lovingkindness and making offerings. You will see the difference when you discern those thought-processes.

How You Discern Mind-Door Thought-Processes

To discern sensual plane thought-process, you should start by discerning a mind-door thought-process, because there the types of consciousness are fewer.

To discern the mentality associated with a wholesome mind-door thought-process of the sensual plane (*kāmāvacara-kusala-manodvāra-vīthi*) you should first

discern the mind-door, and look at the eye transparent-element (*cakkhu-pasāda*). When it appears in the mind-door, a mind-door thought-process has taken place.

A wholesome mind-door thought-process of the sensual plane consists of a sequence of three types of consciousnesses. First, there is a mind-door-adverting consciousness (*manodvārāvajjana*), with twelve mental formations; then seven impulsion consciousnesses (*javanacitta*), with either thirty-four, thirty-three, or thirty-two mental formations; and then two registration consciousnesses (*tadārammaṇa-citta*), with thirty-four, thirty-three, thirty-two, twelve, or eleven mental formations.

You should discern repeatedly the mental formations in the consciousness of that mind-door thought-process. As you did the jhāna mind-door thought-process, begin with either consciousness, feeling, or contact. Discern the mental formations by adding one at a time: first one type, then two, then three, etc., until eventually you are able to see all the thirty-four, thirty-three or thirty-two types of mental formations in each consciousness of a wholesome mind-door thought-process of the sensual plane.

You need to thus discern the mind-door thought-processes which take place when you look at each of the eighteen types of real materiality, and ten types of artificial materiality examined when you discerned materiality (*rūpa-kamaṭṭhāna*).

How You Discern Five-Door Thought-Processes

Once you have finished discerning the mind-door thought-processes, you should go on to discern the

five-door thought-processes, and start with the eye-door thought-process.

To discern the mental formations of each consciousness in an eye-door thought-process, you first discern the eye-door, then the mind-door, and then both at once.

Then concentrate on the colour of a nearby group of kalāpas as it appears in both doors. At this point you will discern first an eye-door-, and then a mind-door thought-process, both with the same object.

The eye-door thought-process consists of a sequence of seven types of consciousness.

1. A five-door-adverting consciousness (*paññcadvārāvajjana*) with eleven mental formations.
2. An eye consciousness (*cakkhuvīññāṇa*) with eight mental formations.
3. A receiving consciousness (*sampaṭicchana*) with eleven mental formations.
4. An investigating consciousness (*santīraṇa*) with eleven or twelve mental formations.
5. A determining consciousness (*voṭṭhapana*) with twelve mental formations.
6. Seven impulsion consciousnesses (*javana-citta*) with thirty-four, thirty-three, or thirty-two mental formations.
7. Two registration consciousnesses (*tadārammaṇa-citta*) with thirty-four, thirty-three, thirty-two, twelve, or eleven mental formations.

After this follows a sequence of bhavaṅga consciousnesses, and then the three types of consciousness of the mind-door thought-process, as described before: the mind-door-adverting-, seven impulsion-, and two registration consciousnesses.

Having discerned the above two series, discern all the mental formations, beginning again with either consciousness, contact, or feeling. Add one at a time, until you see all the mental formations in each consciousness.

You then discern the thought-processes of the other four doors: the ear, nose, tongue, and body.

By this stage, you will have developed the ability to discern mentality associated with wholesome consciousnesses, and now need to discern it in unwholesome consciousnesses. To do this, you simply take the same objects as you did for the wholesome consciousnesses, and instead pay unwise attention to them.

I do not have time to explain this in detail, but hope the examples given here will be sufficient for you to at least understand what is involved in discerning mentality internally.

To summarise; you have so far completed the first three stages of discerning mentality, and have thus discerned:

1. All the types of consciousness that occur internally.
2. Each and every mental formation in all the types of consciousness.
3. The sequences of consciousnesses, that is, the

thought-processes (*vīthi*) that occur at the six sense-doors.

How You Discern External Mentality

The fourth stage is to now discern mentality also externally. Begin by discerning the four elements internally, and then externally, in the clothes you are wearing. You will see that your clothes break down into kalāpas, and that you are able to discern the eight types of materiality in each. They are temperature-produced nutritive-essence-octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*), and the temperature they arise from is the fire-element in each external kalāpa.

You should alternate between the internal and external materiality three or four times, and then with the light of concentration, discern the external a little farther away, such as the floor. You will also there be able to discern the eight types of materiality in each kalāpa, and should again alternate between the internal and external three or four times.

Gradually expand your field of discernment to the materiality in the building in which you are sitting, the area around it, including the trees, etc., until you discern all inanimate materiality externally.

You will see also transparent materiality in the inanimate objects. It is the insects and other small animals in the trees, buildings, etc.

Then you go on to discern the external materiality of animate beings: the materiality of other living beings.

You are thus discerning only their materiality, and see that they are not a man, a woman, a person, or a being, but only materiality. Discern all external materiality at once, then all the different types of materiality both internally and externally.

To do this, you should see the six basic types of kalāpa in an eye, the eye-decad-, body-decad-, sex-decad-, and three nutritive-essence octad kalapas, both internally and externally. As when you analysed materiality, discern the fifty-four types of materiality, but now both internally and externally. Do the same for the remaining five sense-bases, the remaining types of materiality.

Having now discerned materiality completely, you proceed to discern mentality internally and externally.

You discern mentality internally by again starting with the mind-door, and then five-door thought-processes. Discern all their wholesome and unwholesome mental formations.

To do this externally, you instead discern another being's eye- and mind-door. Then discern the thought-processes that occur at both doors when the colour of a group of kalāpas appears in them. Do this many times, internally and externally, and again for each of the other four sense-doors.

If you are able to attain jhāna, you should also discern the external jhāna mind-door thought-processes.

Thus, you gradually extend your range of discernment, until you can see materiality throughout the infinite universe. You should discern likewise mentality, until you can see it throughout the infinite universe.

Then you should discern them together throughout the infinite universe.

Lastly, you define all that mentality and materiality with wisdom, seeing no beings, men, or women, only mentality and materiality throughout the infinite universe. This concludes the discernment of mentality (*nāma-kammaṭṭhāna*).

Having reached this stage in your meditation, you will have developed concentration, and used it to discern all twenty-eight kinds of materiality, and all fifty-three kinds of mentality throughout the infinite universe. My next talk will be about the next stage of insight, which is the discernment of dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*).



Questions & Answers 5

Question 5.1: The eight attainments (*samāpatti*) make it possible to attain the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*), and to see their subtle arising and passing-away, so as to become disgusted with them, and attain the Path Knowledge (*maggañāṇa*). Are there, apart from this, other benefits to the eight attainments?

Answer 5.1: There are five benefits to jhāna concentration:

As a blissful abiding here and now (*ditṭhadhamma-sukha-vihāra*): Enjoying jhāna happiness in this very life. This refers especially to pure Vipassanā arahants (*suddha-vipassanā-yānika-arahant*). A bhikkhu's duty is to learn the scriptures (*pariyatti*), to practise Vipassanā meditation, and to attain the four paths and four fruitions. That is what those pure Vipassanā arahants have done, so there is no more work for them to do. They practise jhāna concentration for no reason other than the enjoyment of jhāna bliss (*jhāna-sukha*) in this very life. This is the first benefit of concentration.

Insight (*vipassanā-nisaiṃsa*): Jhāna concentration is a support for insight-knowledge. With it, one can see ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes clearly, and discern their impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature. This is the second benefit of concentration.

Psychic powers (*abhiññā-nisaiṃsa*): If one wants to master the mundane psychic powers, like the recollection of past lives (*pubbenivāsānussati-abhiññā*), the divine

eye (*dibbacakkhu*), the divine ear (*dibba-sota*), knowing the mind of others (*paracitta-vijānana*), and the supernormal powers (*iddhividha*), flying, walking on water, etc., one must develop the ten kasiṇas and eight attainments (*samāpatti*) in fourteen ways. This is the third benefit of concentration.

A specific existence (*bhavavisesa-vahānisarisa*): If one wants rebirth in a brahma realm after death, one must develop concentration such as the ten kasiṇa, ānāpāna, lovingkindness jhānas. To be sure of rebirth in a brahma realm means, however, that the jhāna must be maintained up to the moment of death. This is the fourth benefit of concentration.

The benefit of cessation (*nirodhānisarisa*): The attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), which is the temporary cessation of consciousness (*citta*), mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) and consciousness-produced materiality (*cittaja-rūpa*). ‘Temporary’ means for a day up to seven days, depending on one’s prior determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*).

Only non-returners (*anāgāmi*) and arahants can attain cessation. Apart from when they are asleep, non-returners and arahants never stop seeing the arising and passing-away, or just passing-away of mentality-materiality and their causes: all day, all night, for days, months, and years. Sometimes they get disenchanted and bored, and just do not want to see those ‘passing-away phenomena’ (*bhaṅga-dhamma*) anymore. But it is not time for their Parinibbāna yet, because their life span is not over. Therefore, to stop seeing those phenomena, they enter cessation.

Why do they never stop seeing those phenomena. They have destroyed the hindrances opposite the jhāna factors, and have superior concentration. The concentrated mind sees ultimate phenomena (*paramattha-dhamma*) as they really are, so it always sees ultimate mentality-materiality as they really are, which is the ‘passing-away phenomena’. When one enters cessation, let’s say for seven days, one does not see the passing-away phenomena, because the consciousness and mental-concomitants, which would have known the passing-away phenomena, have now ceased.

To enter cessation, one must establish the first jhāna, emerge from it, and discern the first jhāna formations as impermanent, suffering, or non-self. One must do the same progressively up to the base of boundless-consciousness, the second immaterial jhāna (*viññāṇancāyatana-jhāna*). Then they must enter the base of nothingness, the third immaterial jhāna (*ākāṅkhaṇāyatana-jhāna*). Then one emerges from that jhāna to make four determinations:

1. To emerge from the attainment of cessation after a fixed time, for example, seven days.
2. To emerge from the attainment of cessation should one be wanted by a Buddha.
3. To emerge from the attainment of cessation should one be wanted by the Saṅgha.
4. That one’s requisites not be destroyed by, for example, fire.

After this, one enters the base of neither-perception-nor-

non-perception, the fourth immaterial jhāna (*nevasaññānāsaññāyatana-jhāna*). After only one or two thought moments in that attainment, one enters cessation for the determined period, for example, seven days. One does not see anything while in the attainment, because all consciousness and mental-concomitants have ceased. This is the fifth benefit of concentration.

While it is true that the concentration of the eight attainments is a support to discerning mentality-materiality and their causes, those eight attainments are also themselves mentality, included under that section. So if a meditator has discerned mentality-materiality and their causes, including the eight attainments, as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations (*sañkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*), he can keep his discernment of the jhāna formations to only one of the eight attainments. This is yoking (*yuganaddha*) Samatha and Vipassanā together, like two bullocks pulling one cart. It is another support for the attainment of the Path, Fruition, and Nibbāna.

Question 5.2: Which is easier and quicker for the attainment of Nibbāna: using theory to perceive impermanence, suffering, and non-self, or using concentration to discern ultimate phenomena (*paramattha-dhamma*)?

Answer 5.2: What is impermanence? Impermanence is the five aggregates (*aniccanti pañcakkhan-dhā*). This definition is mentioned in many commentaries. If a meditator sees the five aggregates clearly, he can perceive impermanence, suffering, and non-self: no

problem. But without seeing the five aggregates, how can he perceive impermanence, suffering and non-self? If he tries to do so without seeing the five aggregates, his Vipassanā will be only reciting Vipassanā; not true Vipassanā. Only true Vipassanā produces the Path and Fruition Knowledges.

What are those five aggregates? The materiality-aggregate, the feeling-aggregate, the perception-aggregate, the formations-aggregate and the consciousness-aggregate. The materiality-aggregate is the twenty-eight types of materiality (*rūpa*). The feeling, perception and formations-aggregates are the fifty-two mental-concomitants (*cetasika*). The consciousness-aggregate is the eighty-nine types of consciousness (*citta*). The twenty-eight types of materiality are what is called materiality, and the fifty-two mental-concomitants and eighty-nine types of consciousness are what is called mentality. So, the five aggregates and mentality-materiality are then one and the same thing.

These are all ultimate mentality-materiality. If a meditator sees those ultimate mentality-materiality, he can practise to see the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of these mentality-materiality. But if he cannot discern ultimate mentality-materiality, how can he practise Vipassanā, since they and their causes are the necessary objects of insight-knowledge? This is true Vipassanā. Only true Vipassanā produces the Path and Fruition Knowledges.

In the Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta the Buddha taught that to attain Nibbāna there is only one way (*ekāyana*): no other way. What is the way? The Buddha said to practise

concentration first, because a concentrated mind can give rise to the seeing of ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes. Again, a concentrated mind can give rise to the seeing of impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes. But we cannot say which is the easier way. To attain Nibbāna quickly depends on pāramīs.

For example, the Venerable Sāriputta worked hard for about two weeks to attain the arahant path and fruition, whereas the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna worked hard for only seven days to attain the arahant path and fruition. Again, Bāhiya Daruciriya attained the arahant path and fruition by merely listening to a very short discourse, *‘Diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattari...’*: ‘In the seeing there is only the seeing...’ The speed with which they attained arahantship was because of their pāramīs. The Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna had developed their pāramīs for one incalculable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and a hundred thousand aeons (*kappa*), and Bāhiya Daruciriya had fulfilled his pāramīs for about one hundred thousand aeons. The Venerable Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna’s arahant paths were associated with the Knowledge of Enlightenment of a Chief Disciple (*aggasāvaka-bodhi-ñāṇa*), whereas Bāhiya Daruciriya’s arahant path was associated with only the Knowledge of Enlightenment of a Great Disciple (*mahāsāvaka-bodhi-ñāṇa*). The Knowledge of Enlightenment of a Chief Disciple is higher than the Knowledge of Enlightenment of a Great Disciple. The speed with which they attained arahantship did not depend on their aspirations, since there is only one way to attain Nibbāna.

Question 5.3: The round of rebirths (*saṃsāra*) is without beginning or end. Living beings are also infinite in number, so those who have been our mother are infinite too. How can we develop lovingkindness by contemplating that all beings have been our mother? Can we attain lovingkindness jhāna (*mettā-jhāna*) by contemplating that all beings have been our mother?

Answer 5.3: Lovingkindness meditation does not concern the past and future. It concerns only the present. So if we extend lovingkindness to the dead, we cannot attain jhāna. In the endless round of rebirths (*saṃsāra*), there may very well be no one who has not been our father or mother, but lovingkindness meditation is not concerned with the endless round of rebirths.

In the Karaniyamettā Sutta, the Buddha said, *‘Mātā yathā niyaṃputtamāyusā ekaputtamanurakkhe; evampi sabbabhūtesu, mānasam bhāvaye aparimāṇam’*. This means that just as a mother with an only son would give up even her life for him, so a bhikkhu should extend lovingkindness to all beings. This is the Buddha’s instruction. Only an object of the present can produce lovingkindness jhāna (*mettā-jhāna*); not the past or future. It is not necessary to consider that this was our mother, this our father. If we extend lovingkindness with the thought, ‘May this person be well and happy’ it will produce jhāna. The attitude of a son or mother cannot alone lead to jhāna.

Question 5.4:

(The following questions are all covered by the same answer.)

1. Was there a bodhisatta during the Buddha's time? If so, did he attain any path or was he just a worldling (*puthujjana*)?
2. Why can a noble one (*ariya*) not become a bodhisatta?
3. Can a disciple (*sāvaka*) change to become a bodhisatta? If not, why not?
4. When by following the Sayadaw's teaching one is able to attain the Path and Fruition Knowledges of Stream-Entry (*sotāpatti-maggañāṇa* and *sotāpatti-phalañāṇa*), can one choose to not do so, because of a desire and vow to practise the bodhisatta path?

Answer 5.4: One can change one's mind before attaining a path or fruition. One cannot change one's mind after attaining a path or fruition, because as taught by the Buddha in many suttas the path is a law of nature (*sammatta-niyāma*). The fixed law says: the Stream-Entry Path (*sotāpatti-magga*) produces the Stream-Entry Fruition (*sotāpatti-phala*); after which one can progress to the once-returner stage (*sakadāgāmi*), but not regress to the worldling stage (*puthujjana*); once-returner can progress to the non-returner stage (*anāgāmi*), but not regress to the stream-enterer or worldling stage; a non-returner can progress to the arahant stage, but not regress to the once-returner, stream-enterer or worldling stage; an arahant attains Parinibbāna at death, and cannot regress to the lower noble stage, worldling stage, or any other stage. Arahantship is the end. This is a law of nature (*sammatta-niyāma*). Referring to the arahantship, the Buddha said many times: *Āyamantimā*

jāti natthidani puna bhavāti: 'This is the last rebirth, now there is no new rebirth.'

This means that one cannot change one's mind and decide to become a bodhisatta after having attained a path or fruition.

Moreover, one cannot change one's mind after having received a definite prophecy from a Buddha or arahant. But not after receiving a definite prophecy from a Buddha or arahant. The *Visuddhimagga* gives an example of a Mahāthera who changed his mind. He was expert in the four foundations of mindfulness, had practised Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, and had never performed bodily or verbal action without mindfulness. At the time near his death, a large number of people gathered, because they thought he was going to attain Parinibbāna, but he was in fact still a worldling. The Mahāthera wanted to see Arimetteyya Buddha, and become an arahant in Arimetteyya Buddha's dispensation. He had developed Samatha-Vipassanā pāramīs up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations. Then his disciple informed him that many people had gathered, because they thought he was going to attain Parinibbāna. So the Mahāthera said, 'Oh, I had wanted to see Arimetteyya Buddha. But if there is a large assembly, then let me meditate.' So he practised Vipassanā, and now that he had changed his mind, he very soon attained arahantship.

During the Buddha's time there was no mention of a definite prophecy to a bodhisatta except for Arimetteyya bodhisatta, who was a bhikkhu named

Ajita. The Tipiṭaka does not say either when the Buddha who follows Arimetteyya Buddha will arise, so we cannot say how many bodhisattas there were during the Buddha's time.

Question 5.5: Is it possible to practise the path to liberation (*vimuttimaggā*) and the path of bodhisatta at the same time? If so, what is the method?

Answer 5.5: Liberation (*vimutti*) means escape from defilements or the round of rebirths. So when a bodhisatta becomes a Buddha, he escapes from the round of rebirths at his Parinibbāna. If you try to attain arahantship and succeed, you will, as a disciple (*sāvaka*), also escape from the round of rebirths at your Parinibbāna.

So a person cannot become a Buddha as well as a disciple. He must choose either one or the other, but they both escape from the round of rebirths when they attain arahantship. The way to attain the arahant path is the final path to liberation (*vimuttimaggā*).

Question 5.6: Is this method [of meditation] for liberation only, or is it also for the bodhisatta way?

Answer 5.6: It is for both. In a previous talk, I explained that Sakyamuni Buddha was a bhikkhu in nine of his past lives. If we look at his practice in those nine lives, we see the three trainings: virtuous conduct (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*). The bodhisatta was able to practise the eight attainments, five mundane psychic powers, and Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations.

Now you are also developing Samatha-Vipassanā meditation based on virtuous conduct. When you have practised the three trainings up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, you can choose either way. If you want liberation you can choose to go to Nibbāna; if you want to become a bodhisatta you can choose the bodhisatta way: No problem.

Question 5.7: Do all the good and bad kammās of an arahant mature prior to his Parinibbāna?

Answer 5.7: Not all. Some good and bad kamma may produce their results when they mature. If they do not mature they do not produce a result, and are lapsed kamma (*ahosi-kamma*), kamma that no longer bear any fruit. For example, the unwholesome kamma of one of the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna's past lives produced its results just before his Parinibbāna. In one of his past lives he had tried unsuccessfully to kill his blind parents. Due to that unwholesome kamma, he suffered in hell for many thousands of years, and when he escaped from hell, he was killed in about two hundred lives. In each of those lives his skull was crushed. In his last life too, every bone in his body was crushed, including his skull. Why? The unwholesome kamma had matured. Unless unwholesome and wholesome kammās have matured, they do not produce any result. They are kamma by name only.

Question 5.8: After his enlightenment, did the Buddha say, 'Originally all beings have the Tathāgata's wisdom and other qualities'?

Answer 5.8: Now you have accepted that Sakyamuni Buddha attained enlightenment. You should consider whether the Tathāgata's qualities of enlightenment are present in all beings, especially in yourself. Do you possess any of the Tathāgata's qualities?

Question 5.9: Is the arahant's perception of voidness (*suññata*) in his own five aggregates the same as his perception of voidness in outside inanimate things? Is Nibbāna the same as entering voidness?

Answer 5.9: The perception of voidness in one's five aggregates and in outside inanimate things is the same.

Nibbāna was given the name voidness (*suññatā*) because of the path. When a meditator knows formations (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*) as non-self, and if at that time he sees Nibbāna, his Path Knowledge is called the void liberation (*suññatā-vimokkha*). Just like the path is called the void liberation, so the object of the path, which is Nibbāna, is also called voidness. Here the void liberation is to escape from the defilements by seeing the non-self nature of formations.

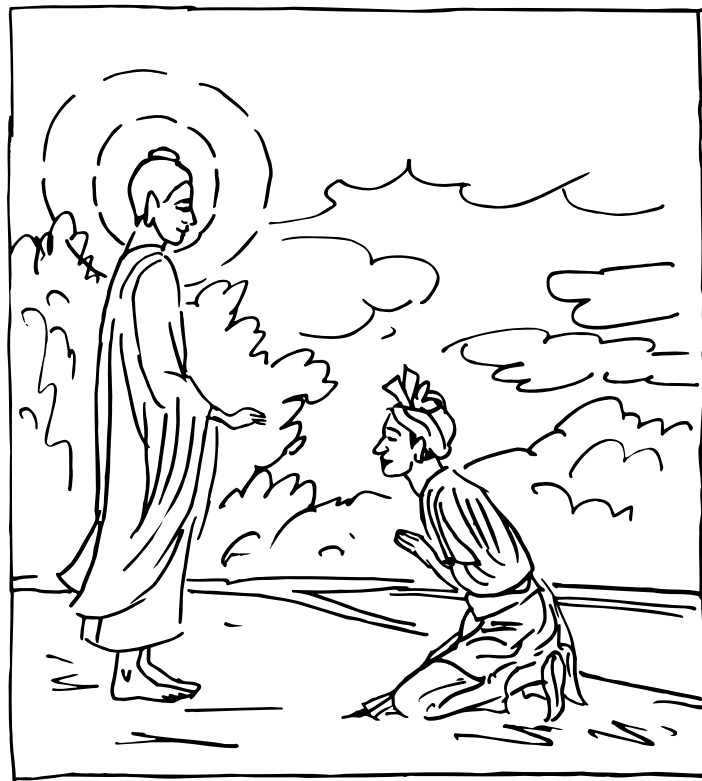
Question 5.10: Are all suttas taught by the Buddha only?

Answer 5.10: Most of the suttas in the Tipiṭaka are taught by the Buddha. A few suttas are said to be taught by disciples like the Venerable Sāriputta, the Venerable Mahākaccāyana, and the Venerable Ānanda. But the suttas taught by disciples have the same meaning as had they been taught by the Buddha. This is evident when the Buddha in some of the suttas gives his approval

by uttering: 'It is good (*sādhu*)...', for example, in the Mahākaccāyana Bhaddekaratta Sutta (Mahākaccāyana and One Fortunate Night), of the Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourses).

Question 5.11: Since we cannot see the Buddha while in concentration, can we see the Buddha by psychic powers to discuss Dhamma with him?

Answer 5.11: No, you cannot. One of the psychic powers is called recollection of past lives (*pubbenivasanussati*). If a meditator possesses this psychic power, and met a Buddha in one of his past lives, he can see that as a past experience only, not as a new experience. If Dhamma was discussed, there will be only old questions and answers; there cannot be new questions and answers. This is the psychic power of recollecting past lives.



How You See the Links of Dependent-Origination

Introduction

In my last talk, I explained how to discern mentality (*nāma*), and in the talk before that, how to discern the different types of materiality (*rūpa*). If you are able to discern mentality and materiality in the way I described, you will also be able to discern the causes of mentality and materiality. This means discerning dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). Dependent-origination is about how causes and effects operate over the three periods of past, present, and future.

The Buddha taught four methods to discern dependent-origination, according to the character of his listeners, and there is a fifth method taught by the Venerable Sāriputta, and recorded in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (*Path of Discrimination*). It would take some time to explain the many methods in detail, so I shall illustrate only the two methods I teach most often to meditators. They are the Venerable Sāriputta's fifth method, and then what is called the first method, taught by the Buddha, in for example, the Section on Causation (Nidāna-Vagga) in the Kindred Sayings (Saṃyutta Nikāya), and the Greater Discourse on Causation (Mahānidāna Sutta) in the Long Discourses (Dīgha Nikāya).

Both methods involve discerning the five aggregates (*khandha*) of the present, of the past, and of the

future⁷, discerning which of them is cause and which is effect. When you can do this, you can also learn how to discern dependent-origination in the other ways taught in the suttas and commentaries.

The Three Rounds of Dependent-Origination

The twelve links of dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) can be said to comprise three rounds (*vaṭṭa*):

1. The round of defilements (*kilesavaṭṭa*):
 - ignorance (*avijjā*)
 - craving (*taṇhā*)
 - clinging (*upādāna*)
2. The round of kamma (*kammaavaṭṭa*):
 - volitional formations (*saṅkhārā*)
 - kamma-process becoming (*kammabhava*)
3. The round of results (*vipākavaṭṭa*):
 - consciousness (*viññāna*)
 - mentality-materiality (*nāmarūpa*)
 - six sense-bases (*saḷāyatana*)
 - contact (*phassa*)
 - feeling (*vedanā*)

7. Editor: The psychic power, Recollection of Past Lives (*Pubbenivāsānussati Abhiññā*) enables you to see: 1) Supramundane states (*lokuttaradhamma*), the four path consciousnesses and the four fruition consciousnesses; 2) The five aggregates of clinging (*pañcupādānakkhandhā*); 3) Clan, appearance, food, pleasure and pain etc.; 4) Concepts such as names and race. The Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw is not speaking here of that psychic power. He is speaking of insight (*Vipassanā*) power, which enables you to see only the five aggregates of clinging. (ref. *Khandhavagga Aṭṭhakathā*, §79)

(The Sayadaw says that ‘birth, and ageing and death’ are the same as ‘consciousness, mentality-materiality, six sense-bases, contact and feeling’.) The round of defilements is the cause for the round of kamma, which causes the round of results. The discernment of dependent-origination involves seeing this sequence, and starts with discernment of the past.

How You Discern the Past

To discern the past, you begin by making an offering of either candles, flowers, or incense at a pagoda, or to a Buddha image. You should make a wish for the rebirth you desire, for example, to become a monk, nun, man, woman, or deva.

Afterwards, you should go and sit in meditation, develop concentration, and discern in turn internal and external mentality and materiality. This is necessary, because if you cannot discern external mentality and materiality, you will have great difficulty discerning past mentality and materiality. That is because the discernment of external mentality and materiality is similar to the discernment of past mentality and materiality.

Then you should discern the mentality and materiality that occurred at the time of making the offering at the pagoda or Buddha image, as if they were an external object. When doing this, an image of yourself at the time of offering appears. You should discern the four elements in that image.

When the image breaks into kalāpas, discern all

the types of materiality in the six doors, especially the fifty-four types in the heart-base. Then you will be able to discern the bhavaṅga consciousnesses, and the mind-door thought-processes that arise in-between. You should discern those mind-door thought-processes backwards and forwards, and find the defilement-round (*kilesavattā*) mind-door thought-process with twenty mental formations, and kamma-round (*kammavattā*) mind-door thought-process (*manodvāra-vīthi*) with thirty-four mental formations.

Let me illustrate with a practical example: the case of making an offering of candles, flowers, or incense to a Buddha image, and making a wish to be reborn to become a monk.

In this case, ignorance is to deludedly think that 'a monk' is an ultimate reality; craving is the desire and longing for life as a monk; and clinging is the attachment to life as a monk. These three, ignorance, craving, and clinging, are all found in the consciousness that makes up the round of defilements (*kilesa-vattā*).

If, instead of making a wish to be reborn to become a monk, you had made a wish to be reborn to become a woman, then the ignorance would be to deludedly think that 'a woman' is an ultimate reality; craving would be the desire and longing for life as a woman; and clinging the attachment to life as a woman.

In the examples, volitional formations (*saṅkhāra*) are the wholesome intentions (*kusala-cetanā*) of the offering, and kamma is their force of kamma. Both are found in the consciousnesses that make up the kamma round of dependent-origination.

When you are thus able to discern the mentality and materiality of the defilement- and kamma-round of the recent past, you should go back to the more distant past time previous to the offering, and in the same way discern the mentality and materiality. Then go back a little further again, and repeat the process. In this way, you discern the mentality and materiality of one day ago, one week ago, one month ago, one year ago, two years ago, three years ago and so on. Eventually you will be able to discern right back to the mentality-materiality of the rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*) which arose at the conception of this life.

By looking for the causes of conception, you go back even further, and see either the mentality-materiality of the time near death in the previous life, or the object of the near-death impulsion-consciousness (*maraṇāsanna-javana-citta*).

There are three possible objects for the near death impulsion:

1. Kamma; again having the thoughts that produced a particular good or bad action in the past, for example, an offering.
2. Kamma sign (*kamma-nimitta*); for example, a pagoda, a monk, flowers, or an object offered.
3. Rebirth sign (*gati-nimitta*); the place where you will be reborn. For a human rebirth it is the future mother's womb, and is usually red like a red carpet.

If you discern the mentality-materiality near death, you

will also discern the object of the near death impulsion, be it kamma, kamma sign, or rebirth sign. This object appears because of the force of kamma which produced the rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*). When you discern this, you are able to discern also the volitional formations and kamma that produced the resultant aggregates of this life, and the preceding ignorance, craving, and clinging. After that, you should discern the other mental formations of that kamma- and defilement-round.

Examples

To make this clearer, let me give an example of what one meditator was able to discern. When she discerned the mentality-materiality at the time near death, she saw the kamma of a woman offering fruit to a Buddhist monk. Then, beginning with the four elements, she further examined the mentality-materiality of that woman, and found that the woman was a very poor and uneducated villager, who had reflected on her state of suffering, and had made an offering to the monk, with the wish for life as an educated woman in a large town.

In this case, ignorance (*avijjā*) is to deludedly think that ‘an educated woman in a large town’ is an ultimate reality; the desire and longing for life as an educated woman is craving (*taṇhā*); the attachment to life as an educated woman is clinging (*upādāna*). The wholesome intentions (*kusala-cetanā*) to offer fruit to a Buddhist monk are the volitional formations (*saṅkhāra*), and the kamma is their force of kamma.

In this life the meditator is an educated woman in a large town in Myanmar. She was able to directly

discern with right view, how the kammic force of offering fruit in her past life produced the resultant five aggregates of this life.

The ability to discern causes and effects in this way is called the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*).

Here is a slightly different example. A man discerned that around the time of the near death impulsions (*maraṇāsanna-javana-citta*), there were four competing kammās. One was the kamma of teaching Buddhist texts, another teaching dhamma, another practising meditation, and finally one teaching meditation. When he investigated which of the four kammās had caused the resultant five aggregates of this life, he found that it was the kamma of practising meditation. When he further investigated, to discern which meditation subject had been practised, he saw it was Vipassanā meditation, seeing the three characteristics, impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*) in mentality-materiality. With further investigations, he saw that before and after each meditation sitting, he had made the wish to be reborn as a human male, to become a monk, and be a monk who disseminates the Buddha's teachings.

In this case, ignorance is to deludedly think that 'a man, a monk', or 'a monk who disseminates the Buddha's teachings' is an ultimate reality. Craving is the desire and longing for it, and clinging is the attachment to it. Volitional formations are the acts of practising Vipassanā meditation, and kamma is their force of kamma.

When you are able to discern your immediate past life in this way, and are able to see the five causes in the past life, ignorance, craving, clinging, volitional formations, and kamma, and their five results in the present life, the rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*), mentality-materiality, the six sense-bases, contact, and feeling, you need to in the same way discern progressively back to the second, third, fourth, and as many lives back as you can. Should you discern a past-, or future life, in the brahma realm, you will see only three sense-bases, eye, ear and mind, in contrast to the six sense-bases you see in the human-, and deva realms.

How You Discern the Future

Once the power of this insight-knowledge has been developed by discerning the causes and effects through those past lives, you can, in the same way, discern the causes and effects in future lives. The future you will see, and which may still change, is the result of both past and present causes, one of which is the meditation you are doing. To discern the future, you begin by discerning the present materiality-mentality, and then look into the future until the time of death in this life. Then either the kamma, kamma sign, or rebirth sign will appear, because of the force of a particular kamma you performed in this life. You will then be able to discern the rebirth-linking mentality-materiality to be produced in the future life.

You must discern as many lives into the future as it takes till ignorance ceases without remainder. This happens with the attainment of the arahant path

(*arahatta-magga*), that is, your own attainment of arahantship. You should then continue discerning into the future, until you see that the five aggregates, mentality-materiality, cease without remainder, that is, at the end of the arahant life, at your own Parinibbāna. Thus you will have looked into the future, and seen the complete cessation of phenomena (*dhamma*).

Discerning the five aggregates of the past, present, and future, and also discerning their causal relation, is what I call the fifth method. Having completed the fifth method, you can now learn what is called the first method, the one taught by the Buddha.

The first method of discerning dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) goes over three lives, and in forward order. It begins with the causes in the past life, that is, ignorance and volitional formations. They cause the results in the present life: the rebirth-linking consciousness, mentality-materiality, the six sense-bases, contact, and feeling. There are then the causes in this life, craving, clinging, and becoming, which cause the results of birth, ageing, death, and all forms of suffering in the future life.

You have to look for ignorance, craving and clinging in the defilement round, see how it causes the kamma round, and how the kammic force of the kamma round in turn causes the five aggregates of conception.

That concludes my brief explanation of how to discern dependent-origination according to the fifth and first methods. There are many more details which you can learn by practising with a proper teacher.

Questions & Answers 6

Question 6.1: How should a meditator who practises mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*) but cannot see a nimitta check himself physically and mentally, so that he can improve and enter jhāna? In other words, what are the conditions needed to have a nimitta?

Answer 6.1: Constant practice is necessary in all types of meditation. In mindfulness-of-breathing you should be mindful of the breath in every bodily posture, and be so with respect. Walking, standing or sitting, take no objects apart from the breath; that is, you should watch only the breath. Try to stop thinking; try to stop talking. If you try continuously in this way, your concentration will slowly improve. Only deep, strong and powerful concentration can produce a nimitta. Without a nimitta, especially the paṭibhāga-nimitta, one cannot attain jhāna, because the ānāpāna jhāna's object is the ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta.

Question 6.2: Does the sitting posture affect the ability for beginners to concentrate, and enter jhāna? There are many meditators who sit on a small stool to meditate; can they enter jhāna?

Answer 6.2: The sitting posture is best for beginners. But those who have enough pāramīs in mindfulness-of-breathing can enter jhāna in any posture. A skilled meditator can also enter jhāna in any posture. So they can go into jhāna sitting on a stool or chair.

The Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Subhūti are examples of this. The Venerable Sāriputta was expert in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*). When he went for alms in the village, he always entered the attainment of cessation at every house, before accepting their offerings. He accepted the offerings only after having emerged from the attainment of cessation. That was his nature.

The Venerable Subhūti was expert in loving-kindness meditation. He entered the lovingkindness jhāna also at every house before accepting the offerings. After emerging from the lovingkindness jhāna he accepted the offerings. Why did they do this? They wanted the donor to get maximum benefit. They knew that if they did this, immeasurable and superior wholesome kamma would occur in the donor's thought-process. They had such lovingkindness for the donors to want to do this. Thus they were able to enter an attainment while in the standing posture.

Question 6.3: What is the object of the fourth ānāpāna jhāna? If there is no breath in the fourth jhāna, how can there be a nimitta?

Answer 6.3: There is still a paṭibhāga-nimitta in the fourth ānāpāna jhāna, although there is no in-and-out-breath. That ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta arose from the ordinary, natural breath. This is why the object is still the in-and-out-breath (*assāsa-passāsa*). It is explained in the Paṭisambhidāmagga commentary, and Visuddhimagga sub-commentary.

Question 6.4: Can one enter an immaterial jhāna attainment (*arūpa-jhāna-samāpatti*), or practise lovingkindness meditation directly from mindfulness-of-breathing?

Answer 6.4: One cannot enter an immaterial jhāna attainment directly from the fourth ānāpāna jhāna. Why not? Immaterial jhānas, especially the base of boundless-space jhāna (*ākāsānañcāyatana-jhāna*), are attained by removing a kasiṇa object. One cannot attain the base of boundless-space jhāna without removing a kasiṇa object. After removing the kasiṇa object and concentrating on the space (*ākāsa*), the object of the base of boundless-space jhāna will appear. When one sees the space, one must extend it gradually, and when it extends in every direction, the kasiṇa object will have disappeared. One must extend the space further out to the boundless universe. That is the object of the base of boundless-space jhāna; which in its turn is the object of the base of boundless-consciousness jhāna (*viññānañcāyatana-jhāna*); the absence of the base of boundless-space jhāna is the base of nothingness jhāna (*ākiñcaññāyatana-jhāna*); which is finally the object of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception jhāna (*nevasaññānāsaññāyatana-jhāna*). So the four immaterial jhānas are based on a fourth kasiṇa jhāna, and its object. Without removing the kasiṇa one cannot go to the immaterial jhānas. So if a meditator practises mindfulness-of-breathing up to the fourth jhāna, and then wants to go to immaterial jhānas, he should first practise the ten kasiṇas up to the fourth jhāna. Only then can he go on to the immaterial jhāna.

If he wants to practise lovingkindness meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*) from the fourth ānāpāna jhāna he can do so; no problem. He must see the person who is the object of lovingkindness with the light of the fourth ānāpāna jhāna. If his light is not strong enough it may be a little bit problematic. But that is exceptional. If after the fourth kasiṇa jhāna, especially the fourth white kasiṇa jhāna, he practises lovingkindness he may succeed quickly. That is why we teach white kasiṇa meditation before lovingkindness meditation.

Question 6.5: How can one decide oneself when to die, that is, choose the time of one's death?

Answer 6.5: If you have practised mindfulness-of-breathing up to the arahant path, you can know the exact time of your Parinibbāna. The *Visuddhimagga* mentions a Mahāthera who attained Parinibbāna while walking. First he drew a line on his walking path, and then told his fellow-meditators that he would attain Parinibbāna when reaching that line, and it happened exactly as he had said. For those who are not arahants, if they have practised dependent-origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), the relationship between causes and effects of the past, present and future, they can also know their life span, but not exactly like the Mahāthera I just mentioned. They do not know the exact time, maybe only the period in which they will die.

But these people die, and attain Parinibbāna, according to the law of kamma; not according to their own wish. There is a stanza uttered by the Venerable Sāriputta:

‘Nābhinandāmi jīvitam nābhinandāmi maraṇam; kālāñca paṭikañkhāmi, nibbisam bhatako yathā.’: ‘I do not love life, I do not love death, but await the time of Parinibbāna, like a government servant who waits for pay-day.’

To die when one desired to do so is called ‘death by desire’ (*adhimutti-maraṇa*). This can usually brought about by matured bodhisattas only. Why they do so? When they are reborn in the celestial planes, where there is no opportunity to develop their pāramīs, they do not want to waste time, so sometimes they decide to die, and take rebirth in the human world, to develop their pāramīs.

Question 6.6: If one day we were to die in an accident, for example in an air crash, could our mind at that time ‘leave’ so that we would not have any bodily pain? How? Can one, depending on the power of one’s meditation, be without fear at that time, and be liberated? What degree of concentration is required?

Answer 6.6: The degree of concentration required is that of the psychic power of supernormal powers (*iddhividha-abhiññā*). With those powers you can escape from danger, but not if you have a matured unwholesome kamma ready to produce its result. You should remember the case of Venerable Mahāmoggallāna. He was expert in psychic powers, but on the day when his unwholesome kamma matured he could not enter jhāna. This was not because of defilements or hindrances, it was only because of his matured unwholesome kamma.

That is why the bandits were able to crush his bones to the size of rice grains. Thinking he was dead, the bandits left, and only then could he enter jhāna again, and regain his psychic powers. He made a determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*) that his body should become whole again, and then went to request the Buddha for permission to attain Parinibbāna. Then he returned to his Kalasila Monastery, and attained it there. His matured unwholesome kamma had first produced their result, after which they lost their power, and only then could he regain his psychic powers.

Thus, if you have no unwholesome kamma about to mature, and have psychic powers, you can escape from an air crash. But ordinary jhāna concentration, and insight-knowledge, cannot save you from such danger. We can in fact say that the reason why one meets with this type of accident in the first place may be that one's unwholesome kamma is about to mature.

The mind cannot leave the body, because the mind arises dependent upon one of the six bases. The six bases are the eye transparent-element, the eye-base; the ear transparent-element, the ear-base; the nose transparent-element, the nose-base; the tongue transparent-element, the tongue-base; the body transparent-element, the body-base; and the bhavaṅga mind door, the mind-base. These six bases are in your body. A mind cannot arise in this human world without a base. This is why the mind cannot leave the body.

We can, however, suggest that if you have jhāna, you should at the time of danger quickly enter it. That means you need to have fully developed the mastery of

entering jhāna. If you enter jhāna at the time of danger, then that wholesome kamma may save you, but we cannot say for sure. If you die while in jhāna, if you are in jhāna at the moment of death, you may go up to one of the brahma realms.

If you are skilled at Vipassanā, then you should practise it at the time of danger. You should discern the impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*) nature of formations (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*). If you can practise Vipassanā thoroughly before death takes place, you may attain one of the paths (*magga*) and fruitions (*phala*), and reach a happy plane after death. But if you attain arahantship, you attain Parinibbāna. Should you, however, not have psychic powers, nor jhāna, nor be able to practise Vipassanā, you can still escape, due to good kamma alone. If you have good enough kamma, which ensures a long life, there may also be a chance to escape from this danger, just like Mahājanaka bodhisatta.

Question 6.7: After attaining the path and fruition, a noble (*ariya*) does not regress to be a worldling (*puthujjana*), this is a law of nature (*sammatta-niyāma*). Similarly, one who has received a definite prophecy cannot abandon his bodhisatta practice. This too is a law of nature. But the Buddha proclaimed that everything is impermanent⁸. Are these laws of nature in accordance with the law of impermanence?

8. Editor's note: The Buddha did not say: 'Everything is impermanent'; the Buddha said: 'All **conditioned** things are impermanent.' (*The Dhammapada*. verse 277)

Answer 6.7: Here you should understand what is fixed and what is permanent. The law of kamma says unwholesome kammas (*akusala-kamma*) produce bad results, and wholesome kammas (*kusala-kamma*) produce good results. This is a fixed law, an eternal law of nature. Does that mean that the wholesome kamma and unwholesome kammas are permanent (*nicca*)? Please think about it.

If the wholesome kammas are permanent then consider this: Now you are listening to Dhamma concerning the Buddha Abhidhamma. This is called wholesome kamma of listening to Dhamma (*Dhamma-sāvana-kusala-kamma*). Is it permanent? Please think about it.

If it were permanent, then during your whole life you would have only this kamma, no other. Do you understand? Wholesome kammas produce good results and unwholesome kammas produce bad results. This is a fixed law, but it does not mean that the kammas are permanent. Wholesome intentions (*kusala-cetanā*) and unwholesome intentions (*akusala-cetanā*) are kamma. As soon as they arise they pass away; that is their impermanent nature. That is their nature. But the force of kamma, the capacity to produce the results of kammas, still exists in the mentality-materiality process.

Suppose there is a mango tree. Now there is no fruit on the tree, but it is certain that one day it will bear fruit. This is a fixed law, an eternal law of nature. You can say the capacity to produce fruit exists in the tree. What is that capacity? If we study the leaves, branches, bark and stems we cannot see it, but that does not mean

it does not exist, because one day that tree will produce fruits. In the same way we do not say wholesome and unwholesome kammās are permanent. We say the force of kamma exists in the mentality-materiality process as a capacity, and that one day, when the force has matured, it will produce its result.

Let us now discuss the fixed law (*sammatta-niyāma*). We say path and fruition dhammas are dhammas of a fixed law, but we do not say they are permanent (*nicca*). They are also impermanent (*anicca*), but the force of Path Knowledge exists in the mentality-materiality process of those who have attained a path, fruition, and Nibbāna. The existence of that force is called a fixed law. That force can produce higher and higher fruits, but cannot produce lower fruits. This is also a fixed law. Here you should think about this: To attain arahantship is not easy. You have to practise with great effort; strong, powerful perseverance is necessary. For example, in his last life our Sakyamuni bodhisatta practised very hard, for over six years to attain arahantship associated with Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). You can imagine how hard it was. So if after attaining arahantship with enormous difficulty, he became a worldling (*puthujjana*) again, what would be the fruit of the practice? You should think about this carefully.

In this connection, I would like to explain when a bodhisatta can receive a definite prophecy.

*Manussattaṃ liṅgasampatti, hetu satthāradassanaṃ;
pabbajjā guṇasampatti, adhikāro ca chandatā;
Aṭṭhadhammasamodhānā abhinīhāro samijjhatī.*

He can receive a definite prophecy when the following eight conditions are fulfilled:

1. *Manussattamī*: he is a human being.
2. *Liṅgasampatti*: he is a male.
3. *Hetu* (cause or root): he has sufficient pāramīs to attain arahantship while listening to a Buddha utter a short stanza related to the Four Noble Truths. That means, he must have practised Vipassanā thoroughly up to the Knowledge of Equanimity of Formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*).
4. *Satthāradassanamī* (sight of the Master): he meets a Buddha
5. *Pabbajjā* (going forth): he has gone forth as a hermit or a bhikkhu.
6. *Guṇasampatti* (possession of qualities): he has acquired the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) and five mundane psychic powers (*abhiññāṇa*).
7. *Adhikāro* (extreme dedication): he has sufficient pāramīs to receive a definite prophecy from a Buddha. That means he must in previous lives have practised the pāramīs necessary for attaining Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbāññuta-ñāṇa*). In other words, he must have sowed the seeds of knowledge (*vijjā*) and conduct (*carāṇa*) for Omniscient Knowledge in a previous Buddha's dispensation. According to the Yasodharā Apadāna, the future prince Siddhattha had made the wish to attain, and the future princess Yasodharā had made the

wish to help him attain, Omniscient Knowledge in the presence of many billions of Buddhas, and had developed all the pāramīs under their guidance.

8. *Chandatā* (strong desire): he has a sufficiently strong desire to attain Omniscient Knowledge. How strong is that desire? Suppose the whole world were burning charcoal. If someone told him that he would attain Omniscient Knowledge by crossing the burning charcoal from one end to the other, he would go across the burning charcoal without hesitation. Here I ask you: Would you go across that burning charcoal? If not the whole world, then if just from Taiwan to Pa-Auk it were all burning charcoal, would you go across it? If it were certain that one could attain Omniscient Knowledge that way, the bodhisatta would go across that burning charcoal. That is the strength of his desire for Omniscient Knowledge.

If these eight factors are present in a bodhisatta he will certainly receive a definite prophecy from a Buddha. They were present in our Sakyamuni bodhisatta, when he was the hermit Sumedha, at the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha. That is why he received a definite prophecy from Dīpaṅkara Buddha with the words: 'You shall attain Omniscient Knowledge after four incalculables (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and a hundred thousand aeons (*kappa*), and shall bear the name of Gotama.'

Now, what does it mean that the prophecy is 'definite'? It is definite because it cannot be changed. That does not mean it is permanent. Dīpaṅkara Buddha's

mentality-materiality were impermanent. Sumedha's mentality-materiality were also impermanent. This is a fact, but the force of kamma, especially the kammic force of his pāramīs, could not perish so long as he has not attained Omniscient Knowledge. Dīpaṅkara Buddha's words, that is the definite prophecy, also could not be changed, and could not be false. If those words were changed so that the definite prophecy was not true, then there would be another problem, namely that a Buddha would have uttered false speech. A Buddha gives a definite prophecy only when he sees that the above eight conditions have been fulfilled. For example, if a person skilled in agriculture saw a banana tree under the right conditions, he would be able to tell you that the tree was going to bear fruit in four months. Why? Because he was skilled in agriculture, and he saw flowers and small leaves growing out from the tree. In the same way, when someone has fulfilled the eight conditions, a Buddha can see that he will attain the fruit of Omniscient Knowledge, that is why he can make a definite prophecy.

At the time of Dīpaṅkara Buddha, our Sakyamuni bodhisatta was the hermit Sumedha, and a worldling (*puthujjana*). As Prince Siddhattha, before attaining enlightenment he was still a worldling. Only after his enlightenment did he become Sakyamuni Buddha. After attaining the arahant path associated with Omniscient Knowledge, he could not change his arahant path; this is a law of nature (*sammatta-niyāma*). Here the law of nature means that the result of that arahant path cannot change. This does not mean that the arahant path is per-

manent. It means that its result comes because of a force of kamma which cannot change. What does this mean exactly? It means that it is certain the arahant path will produce arahant fruition, and certain that it will destroy all the defilements, all the unwholesome kamma and all the wholesome kamma, which would otherwise have produced their result after the Parinibbāna. This law of kamma is called a law of nature and cannot be changed. So a law of nature and a definite prophecy are not contrary to the law of impermanence.

Here again, I wish to make a further comment. Making an aspiration or wish alone is not enough to attain Omniscient Knowledge. When bodhisattas receive a definite prophecy, the eight conditions must already be fulfilled. Moreover, a definite prophecy alone cannot produce Buddhahood. Even after the definite prophecy, they must continue to perfect the ten pāramīs on the three levels: as ten basic pāramīs (*pāramī*), giving up sons, daughters, wives and external property; as ten medium pāramīs (*upapāramī*), giving up their limbs and organs, such as eyes and hands; and as ten superior pāramīs (*paramattha-pāramī*), giving up their lives: altogether there are thirty pāramīs. If we summarise them we have just: giving (*dāna*), virtuous conduct (*sīla*), and mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*) through Samatha and Vipassanā. They are superior wholesome kammās. Bodhisattas must perfect them by giving up animate and inanimate property, their limbs, and their lives. If you believe you are a bodhisatta, can you and will you perfect these pāramīs? If you can, and if you also have received a definite prophecy from a Buddha,

then you shall one day attain Omniscient Knowledge. But according to the Theravāda teachings, only one Buddha can appear at one given time. And for how long must they perfect their pāramīs? After he had received his definite prophecy, our Sakyamuni bodhisatta fulfilled the pāramīs for four incalculables and a hundred thousand aeons. This is the shortest time. But we cannot say exactly how long it takes prior to the definite prophecy. So you should remember: making an aspiration or wish alone, is not enough to become a Buddha.

Question 6.8: When an ordinary disciple has practised Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition, the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away, or the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, he will not be reborn on any of the four woeful planes. Even if he loses his Samatha-Vipassanā due to negligence, the kamma of having practised Samatha-Vipassanā still exists. The Sotānugata Sutta says also that he will attain Nibbāna quickly. So, why did the Sayadaw, in the Question-and-Answer session of June 2nd, say that a bodhisatta who has received a definite prophecy from a Buddha can, even if he has practised meditation up to the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, be reborn in a woeful state? In which sutta is this mentioned?

Answer 6.8: This is because the bodhisatta way, and ordinary disciple way are not the same. You can find this in the Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyapitaka Pāli Texts.

How are the two ways different? Although a bodhisatta has received a definite prophecy from a Buddha,

his pāramīs have at that time not yet matured enough for him to attain Omniscient Knowledge. He must cultivate his pāramīs further. In the case of, for example, our Sakyamuni bodhisatta, he had to, after receiving the definite prophecy from Dīpaṅkara Buddha, continue cultivating his pāramīs for four incalculables and a hundred thousand aeons before matured. Between the definite prophecy and the penultimate life, a bodhisatta is sometimes reborn in the animal kingdom, because of previous unwholesome kamma. At this time he is still unable to totally destroy that unwholesome force of kamma. So when those unwholesome kammas mature, he cannot avoid their results. This is an eternal law.

But ordinary disciples, who have attained the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition, the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away, or the Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations, have pāramīs mature enough to attain the Path Knowledge and Fruition Knowledge. For this reason, they attain path and fruition, that is, see Nibbāna, in this life or in their subsequent future life. This is also an eternal law.

Question 6.9: An arahant can also give a definite prophecy; what is the definition of definite prophecy here? In which sutta or other source can this information be found?

Answer 6.9: For that please refer to the Buddhavaṃsa Pāḷi (Chronicle of Buddhas) and Apadāna Pāḷi. But only arahants who possess particularly the Knowledge of Discerning the Future (*anāgataṃsa-ñāṇa*) which is a

power secondary to the divine eye psychic power (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*), can give a definite prophecy. They can see only a limited number of lives into the future, and not many incalculables (*asaṅkhyeyya*), or aeons (*kappa*), as can a Buddha.

Question 6.10: Can one practise Vipassanā while in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception attainment (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-samāpatti*)? In which sutta or other source can the answer be found?

Answer 6.10: One cannot practise Vipassanā while in any jhāna attainment, and the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is a jhāna. Only after having emerged from the jhāna can one practise Vipassanā meditation on, for example, the jhāna-consciousness and its mental-concomitants, in this case the thirty-one mental formations. It is mentioned in the Anupada Sutta (One by One as They Occurred) in the Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourses). There the Buddha describes in detail the Venerable Sāriputta's meditation in the fifteen days after he had attained stream-entry.

The Venerable Sāriputta entered, for example, the first jhāna. He emerged from it, and discerned the thirty-four first-jhāna mental formations, one by one, as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, by seeing their arising-, static- and passing-away stages. He discerned in this manner up to the base of nothingness jhāna. This is Vipassanā of Individual Dhammas (*anupadadhamma-vipassanā*), in which the mental formations are discerned one by one. But when he reached the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he could only discern

the mental formations as a group. This is Vipassana of Comprehension in Groups (*kalāpa-sammasana-vipassanā*). Only a Buddha can discern the jhāna dhammas of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception one by one. Because those mental formations are extremely subtle: a disciple, like the Venerable Sāriputta, cannot discern them one by one, only a Buddha can.

Question 6.11: Can a person who is mentally abnormal, hears voices, has schizophrenia, a brain disease, stroke or malfunction of the brain and nerves, practise this type of meditation? If he can, what kinds of precaution should he take?

Answer 6.11: Such people can practise this type of meditation, but usually they do not succeed, because they cannot concentrate long enough. By 'long enough' I mean that when concentration is strong and powerful, it must be maintained for many hours, and many sittings. Usually, such people's concentration is inconstant. This is a problem. They may succeed, if they can maintain their concentration over many successive sittings, over many days or many months.

There is one famous example, the case of Paṭācārā. Her husband, two children, parents, and brothers all died on the same day. She went mad with grief, and wandered about with no clothes on. One day she came to the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatti where the Buddha was teaching Dhamma. Her pāramīs of previous lives were ready to mature. Due to this, as well as to the lovingkindness and compassion of the Buddha, she was able to listen to the Dhamma with respect.

Slowly her mind became quiet, and she understood the Dhamma. Very soon she became a stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*). She ordained as a bhikkhunī, and continued her meditation. She could maintain her concentration and insight-knowledge, and one day her meditation matured. She became an arahant with the five mundane psychic powers, and Four Analytical Knowledges. Of the bhikkhunīs who were expert in the monastic rule, she was first. She observed the rule very strictly and learnt it by heart, including the commentaries.

She had been developing her pāramīs from Padumuttara Buddha's dispensation till Kassapa Buddha's dispensation, and particularly during Kassapa Buddha's dispensation. At that time she was the daughter of a King Kikī. She practised *komāri-brahmacariya* for twenty thousand years. *Komāri-brahmacariya* is to observe the five precepts, but in place of the ordinary precept of abstinence from sexual misconduct, abstinence from any whatsoever sexual activity is observed. She cultivated the three trainings, virtuous conduct (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*), as a lay devotee, for twenty-thousand years. Those pāramīs matured in this Gotama Buddha's dispensation. So, although she had gone mad, she was able to practise the three trainings well, and became an arahant.

When they practise meditation, such people need *kalyāna-mitta*, which is good teachers, good friends, and spiritual friends. Proper medicine and proper food also helps. From my experience, I know that most of them cannot maintain their concentration for a long time. Usually they do not succeed.

Question 6.12: If a person, who does not have good human relations, succeeds in attaining the fourth jhāna, will this improve his skill in communicating with others? Can attaining jhāna correct such problems?

Answer 6.12: These problems occur usually because of hatred (*dosa*). This is one of the hindrances. As long as a person is unable to remove this attitude, he cannot attain jhāna. But if he can remove this attitude, he can not only attain jhāna, but also the paths and fruitions up to arahantship. A famous example is the Venerable Channa Thera. He was born on the same day as our bodhisatta, in the palace of King Suddhodana in Kapilavatthu. He was the son of one of King Suddhodana's female slaves. He became one of the bodhisatta prince Siddhattha's playmate, when they were young. This gave later rise to much conceit in him. He thought things like: 'This is my King; the Buddha was my playmate; the Dhamma is our Dhamma; when he renounced the world, I followed him up to the bank of the Anomā River. No one else did. Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna etc., are flowers that blossomed later, etc.' Because of this, he always used harsh language. He did not show respect to Mahātheras like the Venerable Sāriputta, the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna and others. So no one had friendly relations with him. He could not attain jhāna or path and fruition in the Buddha's lifetime, because he was unable to remove his conceit and hatred.

On the night of the Parinibbāna, the Buddha told the Venerable Ānanda to mete out the noble punishment (*brahmadanda*) on the Venerable Channa. It means

that no one was to talk to the Venerable Channa, even if he wanted to talk. When nobody talked with the Venerable Channa, his conceit and hatred disappeared. This act of the Saṅgha (*saṅgha-kamma*) took place in the Ghositārāma monastery in Kosambī, five months after the Buddha's Parinibbāna.

The Venerable Channa left Ghositārāma, and went to the Isipatana monastery in the deer park near Benares. He worked hard on meditation but was, in spite of great effort, not successful. So one day, he went to the Venerable Ānanda and asked him to help him. Why was he not successful? He discerned the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of the five aggregates, but did not discern dependent-origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). So the Venerable Ānanda taught him how to discern dependent-origination, and taught him the Kaccanagotta Sutta. After listening to the Venerable Ānanda's dhamma talk, he attained stream-entry. He continued his practice and very soon became an arahant. So if a person can change his bad character, and practise Samatha-Vipassanā in the right way, he can attain jhāna, path and fruition.



How You Develop the Insight-Knowledges to See Nibbāna

Introduction

In my last talk, I explained briefly how to discern dependent-origination according to the fifth and first methods. Today, I would like to explain briefly how to develop insight-knowledges to see Nibbāna.

There are sixteen insight-knowledges (*ñāṇa*) which need to be developed progressively in order to see Nibbāna.

The first insight-knowledge is the Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-Materiality (*nāmarūpa-pariccheda-ñāṇa*). I explained this knowledge in my previous talks when I explained how to discern mentality and materiality.

The second insight-knowledge is the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). I explained this knowledge in my last talk, when I explained how to discern mentality-materiality and their causes in the past, present, and future, and how to discern dependent-origination.

After you have developed those two knowledges, you need to complete them, by again discerning all mentality, all materiality, and all the factors of dependent-origination, according to their individual characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. It is not really possible to explain this in a brief way, so if you

wish to know the details, it is best to learn them at the time of actually practising.

Now I would like to explain briefly the remaining knowledges.

The Knowledge of Comprehension (*Sammasana-Nāṇa*)

The third insight-knowledge is the Knowledge of Comprehension (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) which comprehends formations by categories. To develop it you divide formations into categories: two categories, as mentality and materiality; five categories, as the five aggregates; twelve categories, as the twelve bases or the twelve factors of dependent-origination; and eighteen categories, as the eighteen elements. You take those categories, and see the three characteristics, impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*) in each one.

For example, in the Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta, the Buddha teaches to discern with right understanding the five aggregates; to discern all materiality, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness as ‘not me’ (*anicca*), ‘not mine’ (*dukkha*), and ‘not myself’ (*anatta*). He explains, ‘all’ as ‘past, future, and present; internal and external; gross and subtle; inferior and superior; far and near.’

You should begin by re-establishing the fourth jhāna. If you, as a pure-insight individual, have developed only the four-elements meditation, you should re-establish concentration until the light is bright and strong. Then discern the real materiality (‘real’ is mentioned because artificial materiality is not the object of vipassana meditation) of each of the six sense-doors.

You take that materiality as a group (the Sayadaw usually teaches meditators to discern the categories of mentality-materiality, five aggregates and twelve factors of dependent-origination, again and again, for many times.), see its arising and passing-away, and know it as impermanent (*anicca*). You need to do this internally and externally, alternately, again and again. While doing this externally, you should gradually extend your range of perception from near to far, to the infinite universe.

Then, following the same procedure, see the pain and suffering one has to constantly experience because of that materiality's arising and passing-away, and know it as suffering (*dukkha*).

Lastly, see the materiality as devoid of a permanent self, and know it as non-self (*anatta*).

You need to see the three characteristics in also mentality. First discern all the mentality at the six sense-doors. This includes the consciousness and mental-concomitants in each mind-moment of each sense-door thought-process (*vīthi*), and the bhavaṅga consciousnesses that occur between them. The procedure is the same as with materiality.

You take mentality as a category, see its arising and passing-away, and know it as impermanent (*anicca*). You do this internally and externally, alternately, again and again, and while doing it externally, you gradually extend your range of perception from near to far, to the infinite universe. Then you see the mentality as suffering (*dukkha*), and as non-self (*anatta*).

Having seen the materiality and mentality of the six sense-doors, you now need to see the three charac-

teristics in the materiality and mentality of this entire life, from the rebirth-linking consciousness up to the death-consciousness. Here again, you see the three characteristics one at a time, repeatedly, both internally and externally.

After doing this life, you need to do the past, (again the present [from the past to the future]), and future lives that you have discerned. Here too, you see the three characteristics one at a time, repeatedly, both internally and externally, in all materiality and mentality of the past, (present,) and future.

While doing this, you may find that you develop the higher insight-knowledges quickly, stage by stage, up to the attainment of arahantship. If not, there are several exercises to promote your insight.

The Forty Perceptions (*Cattārīsākāraanupassanā*)

The first exercise is to see the impermanence, suffering, and non-self of mentality and materiality, internally and externally, in the past, present, and future according to forty different perceptions. In Pāli they all end with the suffix 'to', so we call them the forty 'to'.

There are ten perceptions of impermanence:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Impermanent | <i>aniccato</i> |
| 2. Disintegrating | <i>palokato</i> |
| 3. Fickle | <i>calato</i> |
| 4. Perishable | <i>pabhaṅgato</i> |
| 5. Unenduring | <i>addhuvato</i> |
| 6. Subject to change | <i>vipariṇāmadhammato</i> |
| 7. Having no core | <i>asārakato</i> |

8. Subject to annihilation	<i>vibhavato</i>
9. Subject to death	<i>marañadhammato</i>
10. Formed	<i>sañkhatato</i>

There are twenty-five perceptions of suffering:

1. Suffering	<i>dukkhato</i>
2. A disease	<i>rogato</i>
3. A calamity	<i>aghato</i>
4. A boil	<i>gaṇḍato</i>
5. A dart	<i>sallato</i>
6. An affliction	<i>ābādhato</i>
7. A disaster	<i>upaddavato</i>
8. A terror	<i>bhayato</i>
9. A plague	<i>ītito</i>
10. A menace	<i>upasaggato</i>
11. No protection	<i>atāṇato</i>
12. No shelter	<i>aleṇato</i>
13. No refuge	<i>asaraṇato</i>
14. Murderous	<i>vadhakato</i>
15. The root of calamity	<i>aghamūlato</i>
16. A danger	<i>ādīnavato</i>
17. Subject to taints	<i>sāsavato</i>
18. Māra's bait	<i>mārāmisato</i>
19. Subject to birth	<i>jātidhammato</i>
20. Subject to ageing	<i>jarādhammato</i>
21. Subject to illness	<i>byādhidhammato</i>
22. Cause of sorrow	<i>sokadhammato</i>
23. Cause of lamentation	<i>paridevadhammato</i>
24. Cause of despair	<i>upāyāsadhammato</i>
25. Subject to defilement	<i>saṅkilesikadhammato</i>

There are five perceptions of non-self:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Non-self | <i>anattato</i> |
| 2. Void | <i>suññato</i> |
| 3. Independent | <i>parato</i> |
| 4. Empty | <i>rittato</i> |
| 5. Vain | <i>tucchato</i> |

While applying the forty 'to' to mentality and materiality, internally and externally, in the past, present, and future, some people's insight progresses to the attainment of arahantship.

If not, there are the exercises called the seven ways for materiality, and the seven ways for mentality.

The Seven Ways for Materiality (*Rūpa-Sattaka*)

The seven ways for materiality are:

1. To see the three characteristics in the materiality of this entire lifetime, from rebirth-linking to death, both internally and externally.

2. To see the three characteristics in the materiality of different periods in this lifetime, both internally and externally. You consider this lifetime to be a hundred years, and divide it into three periods of (approximately) thirty-three years. Then see the three characteristics in each period, by seeing that the materiality in one period arises and ceases there, and does not pass on to the next period.

You then divide this lifetime into progressively smaller periods, and do the same. Divide the hundred-year of this lifetime into: ten periods of ten years, twenty periods of five years, twenty-five periods of four years,

thirty-three periods of three years, fifty periods of two years, and one hundred periods of one year; three hundred periods of four months, six hundred periods of two months, and two thousand four hundred periods of half-a-month; each day into two periods, and then six periods. In each case see that the materiality in one period arises and ceases there, does not pass on to the next period, and so is impermanent, suffering and non-self.

You reduce the periods further to the duration of each movement of the body: the periods of going forth and going back, looking ahead and looking away, bending a limb and stretching a limb, and you divide each footstep into six periods: lifting, raising, moving forward, lowering, placing and pressing. Again see the three characteristics in each period every day in this hundred-year lifetime.

3. To see the three characteristics in the materiality produced by nutriment. That is, at the times when hungry, and when satisfied, every day in this hundred-year lifetime.

4. To see the three characteristics in the materiality produced by temperature. That is, at the times when hot, and when cold, every day in this hundred-year lifetime.

5. To see the three characteristics in the materiality produced by kamma. That is, every day in this hundred-year lifetime, in the six sense-doors. You know the three characteristics by seeing that the materiality in one door arises and ceases there, and does not pass on to another door.

6. To see the three characteristics in the materiality produced by consciousness. That is, at the times when happy and pleased, and when unhappy and sad, every day in this hundred-year lifetime.

7. To see the three characteristics in present inanimate materiality. That is the materiality with none of the six internal sense bases, such as plastic, steel, iron, copper, gold, silver, pearls, gemstones, shells, marble, coral, rubies, soil, rocks, and plants. That type of materiality is found only externally.

These are the seven ways for materiality.

The Seven Ways for Mentality (*Arūpa-Sattaka*)

In the seven ways for mentality, you see the three characteristics in the insight-minds, the mentality, which have seen the three characteristics in the seven ways for materiality. This means, your object is in each case an insight-mind. You see it with a subsequent insight-mind. The seven ways for mentality are:

1. To see the three characteristics in the materiality of the seven ways for materiality, but to see that materiality as a group. You then see the three characteristics in the mentality which saw this. That means, you see the grouped materiality as impermanent, and then see the three characteristics in that insight-mind itself with in each case a subsequent insight-mind. You do the same with the grouped materiality seen as suffering and non-self.

2. To see the three characteristics in the mentality for each of the seven ways for materiality. That means,

you see the materiality in each of the seven ways for materiality as impermanent, and then see the three characteristics in that insight-mind itself with in each case a subsequent insight-mind. You do the same with the materiality seen as suffering and non-self, and do it with each of the insight-minds for the given periods in each day of this hundred-year lifetime.

3. To again see the three characteristics in the mentality for each of the seven ways for materiality, but to do so four times in succession. That means, you see again the materiality in each of the seven ways for materiality as impermanent, and then see the three characteristics in that first insight-mind with a second insight-mind, and the second with a third etc., until you with a fifth insight-mind see the three characteristics in the fourth insight-mind.

4. To do as before, but to continue until you with an eleventh insight-mind see the three characteristics in the tenth insight-mind.

5. To see the three characteristics in mentality for the removal of views. Here again, you see the insight-minds that have seen the seven ways for materiality, but intensify the perception of non-self, so as to overcome views, especially the view of self.

6. To see the three characteristics in mentality for the removal of conceit. Again you see the insight-minds that have seen the seven ways for materiality, but intensify the perception of impermanence, so as to overcome conceit.

7. To see the three characteristics in mentality for the ending of attachment. Again you see the insight-minds that have seen the seven ways for materiality, but intensify the perception of suffering, so as to overcome attachment.

It is best to have done these exercises for the materiality and mentality of the present [not of the past and future], internally and externally. With the exercises completed, materiality and mentality will have become very clear to you.

I have now explained how to develop the knowledge of formations in categories. Now I would like to explain how to develop the knowledge of arising and passing-away of formations.

The Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away (Udayabbaya-Ñāṇa)

The Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away of formations consists of two: the causal (*paccayato*) and the momentary (*khaṇato*) arising and passing-away of formations. That is, of mentality-materiality, the five aggregates, the twelve bases, the eighteen elements, the Four Noble Truths, dependent origination, internally and externally, in the present, past and future.

To see the causal is, for example, to see it according to the fifth method of dependent origination, as described in my previous talk. It is to see the five causes in your past life, as for example ignorance, which produced the arising of the five aggregates in this life. It is also to see the cessation of those causes in the future, when you attain arahantship, and to see the final ces-

sation of the five aggregates at your Parinibbāna.

To see the momentary nature of formations is to see how the five aggregates arise and pass away in every mind-moment [from the *paṭisandhi citta* moment to the *cuti citta* moment]. It is to see the five aggregates which were present at the time of the arising and passing-away of the rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi citta*), bhavaṅga consciousness and death consciousness (*cuti citta*), all of which are process-freed consciousnesses (*vīthi-mutta-citta*). The momentary is also the five aggregates at each mind-moment in any of the six sense-door thought-processes (*vīthi*).

There are two methods for developing this knowledge, the brief and the detailed methods.

Brief Method

To develop the brief method, you should see only the momentary nature of formations. That is, mentality-materiality, the five aggregates, the twelve bases, the eighteen elements, the Four Noble Truths, and dependent-origination, internally and externally, in the past, present, and future. You see their momentary arising and passing-away, and then see the three characteristics in them.

Detailed Method

The detailed method is developed in three stages. First you examine only the arising of formations, causal and momentary, then only the passing-away, and then both their arising and passing-away.

The Observation of the Nature of Arising *(Samudayadhammānupassī)*

To begin the detailed method you should see again and again only the momentary arising of formations, and the cause for their arising.

For example, in the case of materiality, you discern the causal arising of materiality according to the fifth method of dependent-origination, as described in my previous talk. This means you look back again to the near death moments of your past life, to see the five past causes, which caused the arising in this life of materiality produced by kamma. One by one, you see that the arising of ignorance, of craving, of clinging, of volitional formations, and of kamma, each cause the arising of materiality produced by kamma.

Then you discern only the momentary arising of materiality produced by kamma.

You then need to, one after the other, see both the causal and momentary arising of materiality produced by mind, by temperature, and by nutriment. You see that: mind causes the arising of materiality produced by mind, temperature causes the arising of materiality produced by temperature, and nutriment causes the arising of materiality produced by nutriment. In each case, you discern also the momentary arising of that particular type of materiality.

After this you have to in the same way see the causal and momentary arising of mentality. It would, however, take some time to list the details, so I shall pass them over, and in each instance explain the details for only materiality.

The Observation of the Nature of Passing-Away (*Vayadhammānupassī*)

After discerning the causal and momentary arising of materiality and mentality, you now see again and again only their passing-away.

In the case of materiality, you discern the causal cessation of materiality again according to the fifth method of dependent-origination. This means, you look forward to the future life in which you become an arahant, to see that when you attain the Arahant Path and Fruition (*arahattamagga* and *arahattaphala*), all defilements cease [here the defilements do not arise and pass away], and that at the end of that life all formations cease [here the formations too do not arise and pass away]: this is directly seeing your Parinibbāna, after which no new materiality or mentality arises. One by one, you see that the cessation of ignorance, of craving, of clinging, of volitional formations, and of kamma respectively, each cause the cessation of materiality produced by kamma.

Having in that way seen the causal cessation of materiality produced by kamma, you now see only its momentary passing-away.

You need to see, one after the other, both the causal and momentary passing-away of materiality produced by mind, by temperature, and by nutriment. You see that: the cessation of mind causes the cessation of materiality produced by mind, the cessation of temperature causes the cessation of materiality produced by temperature, and the cessation of nutriment causes the cessation of materiality produced by nutriment [this happens after parinibbana]. In each case you discern

also the momentary cessation [this happens before parinibbana] of that particular type of materiality.

After this you have to see the causal and momentary cessation of mentality.

The Observation of the Nature of Arising And Passing-Away (*Samudayavayadhammānupassī*)

Once you have seen both the causal and momentary cessation of materiality and mentality, you now see again and again both their arising and passing-away. This involves seeing first their causal arising and passing-away, and then their momentary arising and passing-away. You see each one in three ways successively: the arising of the cause and its result; their cessation; and the impermanent nature of both.

In the case of materiality you see one by one that: the arising of each cause, i.e. of ignorance, of craving, of clinging, of volitional formations, and of kamma, causes the arising of materiality produced by kamma; the cessation of each same cause, causes the cessation of the arisen materiality (the Sayadaw says that it is not the cessation of the 'arisen' materiality, because after Parinibbana there is no materiality produced by kamma at all); and that each cause, as well as the arisen materiality are impermanent.

Likewise, the causes mind, temperature and nutriment each cause the arising of materiality, the cessation of the causes cause the cessation of the arisen materiality, and both the causes and the materiality produced by them are impermanent.

This is how you see both the causal and momentary arising and passing-away of materiality.

After that, you have to see the causal and momentary arising and passing-away of mentality.

So in the way I have just outlined, you discern the causal and momentary arising and passing-away of the five aggregates, and see the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self in them. You should do this for the five internal aggregates, the five external aggregates, and the five aggregates of the past, present, and future.

Having done this for the five aggregates, you need to develop this insight, with also the first method of dependent-origination. In which case, when you discern the casual arising of formations, you discern each factor of dependent-origination in forward order, to see that:

‘Ignorance causes volitional formations, volitional formations cause consciousness, consciousness causes mentality-materiality, mentality-materiality cause the six sense-bases, the six sense-bases cause contact, contact causes feeling, feeling causes craving, craving causes clinging, clinging causes becoming, becoming causes birth, birth causes ageing, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair.’

(Middle Length Discourses, 38)

To discern the causal cessation of formations at arahantship, and the resultant Parinibbāna, you discern each factor of dependent-origination in forward order, to see that:

‘With the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance volitional formations cease, with the cessation of volitional formations consciousness ceases, with the cessation of consciousness mentality-materiality cease, with the cessation of mentality-materiality the six sense-bases cease, with the cessation of the six sense-bases contact ceases, with the cessation of contact feeling ceases, with the cessation of feeling craving ceases, with the cessation of craving clinging ceases, with the cessation of clinging becoming ceases, with the cessation of becoming birth ceases, with the cessation of birth, ageing, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair cease. It is in this way that all forms of suffering cease.’

(Middle Length Discourses, 38)

As before, you discern the causal and momentary arising and passing-away of formations. You then combine these two methods. For example, with ignorance you would see that: ignorance causes volitional formations; with the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance, volitional formations cease; ignorance is impermanent, volitional formations are impermanent.

The other factors of dependent-origination are discerned in the same way. You need to discern dependent-origination in this way, internally and externally, in the past, present, and future.

This is a very brief outline of the development of the knowledge of arising and passing-away of formations.

The Ten Imperfections of Insight (*Dasa-Upakkilesa*)

It is at this stage that, as you apply these methods, and your insight becomes stronger, the ten imperfections of insight can arise.

The ten imperfections are: light (*obhāsa*), insight (*ñāṇa*), joy (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passaddhi*), bliss (*sukha*), confidence (*adhimokkha*), effort (*paggaha*), mindfulness (*upatthāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and attachment (*nikanti*). Of these ten imperfections, only light [light cannot be unwholesome] and attachment are not wholesome mental states. Whereas the remaining eight are wholesome mental states, not in themselves imperfections. They can, however, become the objects of unwholesome states, if you become attached to them. Should you experience any of the ten imperfections of insight, you need to see each of them as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, so that you are able to overcome the attachment and desire that may arise with those states, and thus continue to make progress.

The Knowledge of Dissolution (*Bhaṅga-Ñāṇa*)

After you have developed the Knowledge of Arising and Passing-Away of formations, your insight concerning formations is steadfast and pure. Then you have to develop the Knowledge of Dissolution of Formations (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*). To do this, you ignore the arising of formations, and concentrate on only their momentary cessation and dissolution (*khaṇika nirodha*). You see neither the arising-phase (*uppāda*) of formations, nor the standing-phase (*thiti*) of formations, nor the signs

(*nimitta*) of individual formations, nor the occurrence (*pavatta*) of the origination of formations. Due to the power of your insight-knowledge, you see only the dissolution of formations.

To see the three characteristics, you see the destruction, fall, and dissolution of formations, to see first impermanence; then see the incessant dissolution of formations as fearful, to see suffering; and finally see the absence of any permanent essence, to see non-self.

You have to see the three characteristics in not only the dissolution of mentality-materiality, but also in the dissolution of the insight-minds themselves. That means, you see the dissolution of materiality and know it is impermanent. Then, with a second insight-mind you see the dissolution of the first insight-mind, and know it too is impermanent. You do this for mentality too, and likewise see the dissolution of materiality and mentality to know them as suffering and non-self. You repeat these exercises again and again, alternating between internal and external, materiality and mentality, causal formations and resultant formations, past, present and future.

The Remaining Knowledges

As you continue to discern the passing-away and ceasing of formations in this way, your strong and powerful insight will progress through the remaining insight-knowledges. That is:

The Knowledge of Terror (*bhayañāṇa*);

The Knowledge of Danger (*ādīnavañāṇa*);

The Knowledge of Disenchantment (*nibbidāñāṇa*);
The Knowledge of Desire for Deliverance
(*muñcitukamyatāñāṇa*);
The Knowledge of Reflection, (*paṭisankhāñāṇa*); and
The Knowledge of Equanimity Towards Formations
(*saṅkhārupekkhāñāṇa*).

Since you have developed the first five insight-knowledges thoroughly, these last insight-knowledges develop quickly. There are a few instructions for them, but I do not have time to explain.

After these insight-knowledges, as you continue to discern the passing-away and vanishing of each formation, with a wish for release from them, you will find that eventually all formations cease. Your mind sees directly, and is fully aware of the unformed Nibbāna as object.

Then you will have attained true knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, and will for yourself have realised Nibbāna. With this realisation, your mind will have become purified and free from wrong views. If you continue this way, you will be able to attain arahantship and Parinibbāna.

There are many more details about this development of insight, but I have had to leave them out, so as to make this explanation as brief as possible. The best way to learn about this practice is by undertaking a meditation course with a competent teacher, because then you can learn in a systematic way, step by step.⁹

9. For centres teaching the Pa-Auk system, please refer to Appendix 2

Questions & Answers 7

Question 7.1: What is the difference between perception (*saññā*) and the perception-aggregate (*saññā-khandha*), and between feeling (*vedanā*) and the feeling-aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*)?

Answer 7.1: The eleven types of perception (*saññā*) together are called the perception-aggregate (*saññā-khandha*). The eleven types of feeling (*vedanā*) together are called the feeling-aggregate (*vedanā-khandha*). What are the eleven? Past, present, future, internal, external, gross, subtle, inferior, superior, near, and far. All five aggregates should be understood in the same way. Please refer to the Khandha Sutta of the Khandha Vagga in the Saṃyutta Nikāya for the explanation.

Question 7.2: To which mental-concomitants do memory, inference and creativity belong? They are part of the five aggregates, but how do they become suffering (*dukkha*)?

Answer 7.2: What is memory? If you remember, or can discern past, present, and future ultimate mentality-materiality (*paramattha-nāmarūpa*) and their causes, and discern them as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*), this is right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*); the mindfulness associated with insight-knowledge. This mindfulness is associated with thirty-three mental formations, which together are the four mentality aggregates (*nāma-khandha*). Remembering

the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, and offerings made in the past is also right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*). When the remembering of actions produces wholesome dhammas (*kusala-dhammā*), it is also right mindfulness, but not when it produces unwholesome dhammas (*akusala-dhammā*). This is unwholesome perceptions (*akusala-saññā*), perceptions associated with unwholesome dhammas; they are also the four mentality aggregates.

The wholesome and unwholesome mentality aggregates are impermanent. As soon as they arise, they pass away; they are subject to constant arising and passing-away, which is why they are suffering.

Question 7.3: Which mental-concomitant does 'Taking an object' involve?

Answer 7.3: All consciousnesses (*citta*) and mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) take an object. Without an object they cannot occur. Consciousness and mental-concomitants are the subject. The subject, *ārammaṇika-dhamma*, cannot arise without an object (*ārammaṇa*). *Ārammaṇika* is the dhamma or phenomenon which takes an object. In other words, the dhamma which knows an object. If there is no object to be known, then there is no dhamma which knows. Different groups of consciousness and mental-concomitants take different objects. There are eighty-nine types of consciousness (*citta*), and fifty-two types of mental-concomitant (*cetasika*); they all take their respective object. For example, the path and fruition consciousnesses and mental-concomitants

(*magga-citta-cetasika* and *phala-citta-cetasika*) take one object, Nibbāna; an *ānāpāna jhāna* consciousness, and mental-concomitants take one object, the *ānāpāna paṭibhāga-nimitta*; the earth-*kasiṇa jhāna* takes the earth-*kasiṇa paṭibhāga-nimitta* as object. But a sensual-plane consciousness (*kāmāvacara-citta*) takes many objects, good or bad. If you want to know in detail, you should study the *Abhidhamma*; more exactly the *Ārammaṇa* section of the *Abhidhammattha-Sangaha*.

Question 7.4: Does work for the Saṅgha affect one's meditation? Does it depend on the individual, or can one achieve a certain degree of concentration, after which work has no effect?

Answer 7.4: In many suttas the Buddha criticizes bhikkhus who practise the following:

1. *Kammārāmatā*: pleasure in working.
2. *Bhassārāmatā*: pleasure in talking.
3. *Niddārāmatā*: pleasure in sleeping.
4. *Saṅghanikārāmatā*: pleasure in company.
5. *Indriyesu aguttadvāratā*: not controlling the faculties.
6. *Bhojane amattaññutā*: not knowing the proper amount of food to take.
7. *Jāgariye ananuyuttā*: not trying to practise Samatha-Vipassanā with moderate sleep.
8. *Kusita* or *kosajja*: laziness in Samatha-Vipassanā practice.

So if there is any work you have to do for the Saṅgha or yourself, try to do it as quickly as possible, and then return to your meditation, with a peaceful mind. But if you enjoy working too much, it is a hindrance to meditation. That enjoyment cannot produce good concentration, because strong and powerful mindfulness on the meditation object cannot be attained with such enjoyment.

Question 7.5: Are there any benefits to attaining jhānas for a person who harbours evil intentions in attain them? Or for a person who has, for example, spent the money of a Saṅgha¹⁰ for his personal use, and does not think it is wrong. When such a person attains jhāna up to the fourth jhāna, does his mind or view change?

Answer 7.5: In this case you should distinguish between a layman and a bhikkhu. If a bhikkhu has committed an offence (*āpatti*), it is a hindrance to attain jhāna. For example, if he has spent the money of a Saṅgha for his personal use, it is not easy for him to attain jhāna, unless he corrects that offence (*āpatti*). That means he must pay it back with requisites equal to the amount of money spent. Then he should confess his offence in front of the Saṅgha, or to another bhikkhu. That means he should do a confession of offence (*āpattidesanā*). After correcting his fault, if he practises Samatha-Vipassanā,

10. Editor's note: The Buddha made it an offence against a monk's vows to receive, possess, or handle money. This prohibition is observed by only a very small minority in the Saṅgha worldwide; *the Pa-Auk Sayadaw belongs to that minority.*

he can attain jhāna, path, and fruition. If, without correcting his fault he really did attain jhāna, then maybe he is not a real bhikkhu, and so the offence was in fact not an offence.

If the person is a layman the case is different. For lay-people, purification of conduct is needed when they meditate. While they are meditating if their conduct is pure they can attain jhāna, although they were evil before meditation. For example, in the Dhammapada Commentary, there is a story about the servant Khujjuttarā. She was a servant for King Udena's wife Queen Sāmāvatī. Every day King Udena gave her eight coins to buy flowers for the queen. Every day Khujjuttarā put four of the coins into her pocket, and bought flowers with the other four. One day, the Buddha came with the Saṅgha for almsfood at the florist's house. Khujjuttarā helped the florist give the almsfood. After the meal the Buddha gave a Dhamma-talk, and Khujjuttarā became a stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*). On that day she did not put four coins in her pocket, but bought flowers for all eight coins. When she gave the flowers to Queen Sāmāvatī, the queen was surprised because there were more flowers than usual. Then Khujjuttarā confessed.

Also consider the case of the Venerable Aṅgulimāla. He was a famous murderer. But as a bhikkhu, he purified his virtue and strove hard in meditation. So he attained arahantship. Consider also this fact: In the round of rebirths everybody has done good and bad actions. There is no one who is free from bad actions. But if they purify their conduct prior to meditating, then previous bad actions cannot prevent them from

attaining jhāna. That is, however, only as long as those past actions are not any of the five immediate kammās (*anantariya-kamma*)¹¹.

The five immediate kammās are:

1. Killing one's mother,
2. Killing one's father,
3. Killing an arahant,
4. Shedding with evil intention the blood of a Buddha,
5. Causing a schism in the Saṅgha.

If any of these evil actions have been done one cannot attain any jhāna, path, and fruition, just like King Ajātasattu. King Ajātasattu had enough pāramīs to become a stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*) after listening to the Sāmaññaphala Sutta (Discourse on the Fruit of Reclusership). But he had killed his father, King Bimbisāra. This evil action prevented him from attaining a noble (*ariya*) state.

You asked whether after attaining jhāna, such people's mind or concept changes. Jhāna can remove the hindrances for a long time. By a long time I mean, if they enter jhāna for about an hour, then within that hour the hindrances do not occur. When they emerge from jhāna, the hindrances may recur because of unwise attention. So we cannot say for certain whether when such a person attains jhāna, his mind will change

11. These five kammās are called 'immediate', because they will definitely ripen in the present life, and give rise to the rebirth in Avici Hell.

or not. We can say only that when he is in jhāna, the hindrances cannot occur.

There are exceptions, as for example, with the Mahānāga Mahāthera. He was the teacher of an arahant called Dhammadinna, practised Samatha and Vipassanā meditation for more than sixty years, but was still a worldling (*puthujjana*). Although he was still a worldling, no defilements appeared in those sixty years, because of strong, powerful Samatha and Vipassanā practices. Due to this, he thought he was an arahant. But his disciple Dhammadinna arahant knew he was still a worldling, so Dhammadinna made him realise indirectly, that he was still a worldling. When Mahānāga Mahāthera discovered that he was still a worldling, he practised Vipassanā, and within a few minutes attained arahantship. But this is a most exceptional case.

You should remember another thing too: he was expert in the scriptures (*pariyatti*) as well as practice (*patipatti*). He was also a meditation teacher (*kammaṭṭhānācariya*), and there were many arahants who, like Dhammadinna, were his disciples. Although he was expert in Samatha and Vipassanā, sometimes misunderstandings occurred in his mind, because of a similarity in experiences. So if you think to yourself, 'I have attained the first jhāna, etc.', you should examine your experience thoroughly over many days, and many months. Why? If it is real jhāna and real Vipassanā, then they are beneficial to you, as they can help you attain real Nibbāna, which is the 'Pureland' of Theravāda Buddhism. But artificial jhāna and artificial Vipassanā cannot give rise to this benefit. Do you want the real

benefit or the artificial benefit? You should ask yourself this question.

So I should like to suggest, that you do not say to others, 'I have attained the first jhāna, etc.' too soon, because there may be someone who does not believe you. It could be that your experience is genuine, but it could also be false like with Mahānāga Mahāthera. You should be aware of this problem.

Question 7.6: What is the difference between kalāpas and ultimate materiality (*paramattha-rūpa*)?

Answer 7.6: Kalāpas are small particles. When a meditator analyses those kalāpas, he sees ultimate materiality (*paramattha-rūpa*). In a kalāpa, there are at least eight types of materiality, the element of: earth, water, fire, air, colour, odour, flavour, and nutritive-essence. These eight elements are ultimate materiality. In some kalāpas there is a ninth element too: life-faculty materiality (*jīvita-rūpa*). In other kalāpas there is even a tenth: sex-determining materiality (*bhāva-rūpa*) or transparent-element materiality (*pasāda-rūpa*). These eight, nine or ten elements are all ultimate materiality.

Question 7.7: When a meditator is able to discern kalāpas or ultimate materiality, will his mind (*citta*) and views (*ditṭhi*) change?

Answer 7.7: When he with insight-knowledge sees ultimate materiality in each kalāpa, his mind and views change, but only temporarily, because insight-knowledge removes wrong views and other defilements only temporarily. It is the noble path (*ariyamagga*) which

stage by stage destroys wrong views and other defilements totally.

Question 7.8: How does concentration purify the mind (*citta-visuddhi*)? What kinds of defilements are removed by concentration?

Answer 7.8: Concentration practice is directly opposite the five hindrances. Access- and first jhāna concentration remove the five hindrances for a long time. Second jhāna concentration removes applied thought (*vitakka*) and sustained thought (*vicāra*). Third jhāna concentration removes joy (*pīti*). Fourth jhāna concentration removes bliss (*sukha*). In this way, the mind is purified by concentration and that is called purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*).

Question 7.9: How does Vipassanā purify views (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*)? What kinds of defilements are removed by Vipassanā?

Answer 7.9: Before seeing ultimate mentality-materiality, their causes, and nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self, a meditator may have wrong views or wrong perceptions, such as, 'this is a man, a woman, a mother, a father, a self, etc.' But when he has seen ultimate mentality-materiality, their causes, and nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self clearly, this wrong view is removed temporarily. Why only temporarily? He sees that there are only ultimate mentality-materiality and their causes. He sees also that as soon as they arise, they pass away, which is their nature of impermanence. They are always subject to arising and

passing-away, which is their nature of suffering. There is no self in these mentality-materiality and causes, which is their nature of non-self. This is insight-knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). It is right view (*sammā-dit̥ṭhi*), and removes wrong views (*micchā-dit̥ṭhi*). Insight-knowledge also removes defilements such as attachment and conceit, which are 'partners' to wrong view. So while a meditator is practising Vipassanā, right view is present. But when he stops meditating, wrong view recurs because of unwise attention (*ayoniso-manasikāra*). He again perceives: 'this is a man, a woman, a mother, a father, a self, etc.,' and the associated defilements such as attachment, conceit, and anger, will also recur. But, when he goes back to Vipassanā meditation, this wrong view again disappears. So insight-knowledge removes wrong views and other defilements only temporarily. When he reaches the path and fruition, however, his Path Knowledge (*maggā-ñāṇa*) will destroy those wrong views and other defilements completely, stage by stage.

Question 7.10: What is the difference between *citta* and *dit̥ṭhi*?

Answer 7.10: *Citta* means mind, but in *citta-visuddhi* (purification of mind), it refers especially to consciousness: an access-concentration consciousness (*upacāra-samādhi-citta*) or absorption-jhāna consciousness (*appanā-jhāna-citta*). *Dit̥ṭhi* means wrong view, and is a mental-concomitant (*cetasika*). It arises together with the four consciousnesses rooted in greed and associated with wrong view (*dit̥ṭhi-sampayutta-lobhamūla-citta*).

One wrong view is the perception of self (*atta-saññā*). There are two types of perception of self. One is the perception that there is a man, woman, father, mother, etc. This is wrong view as a consequence of convention. We call this ‘the world’s general perception of self’ (*loka samañña attavāda*). The other perception of self is of an indestructible self (*atta*). We call this ‘wrong view of self’ (*atta-dit̥hi*). There is also the perception that the indestructible self is created by a creator (*parama-atta*), which is also called ‘wrong view of self’ (*atta-dit̥hi*).

In the thirty-one realms there is no self, only mentality-materiality and their causes. They are always impermanent, suffering, and non-self. Outside the thirty-one realms there is no self either. This insight-knowledge is Vipassanā right view (*vipassanā-sammā-dit̥hi*). It destroys wrong view (*micchā-dit̥hi*) temporarily, including wrong view of self. But the Path Knowledge (*magga-ñāna*), which is path right view (*magga-sammā-dit̥hi*), destroys wrong view completely. So what we have is in fact three types of view: wrong view (*micchā-dit̥hi*), Vipassanā right view (*vipassanā-sammā-dit̥hi*) which is mundane (*lokiya*), and path right view (*magga-sammā-dit̥hi*) which is supramundane (*lokuttara*).

In the Brahmajāla Sutta, all sixty-two types of wrong view are discussed. They all go under wrong view of self. This wrong view of self is also called ‘personality wrong view’ (*sakkāya-dit̥hi*). Personality (*sakkāya*) is the five aggregates, so wrong view of personality is to see the five aggregates as self. There are also many types of right view, such as ‘jhāna right view’ (*jhāna-sammā-dit̥hi*), which is jhāna wisdom associated with jhāna

factors; ‘discernment-of-mentality-materiality right view’ (*nāmarūpa-pariggaha-sammā-diṭṭhi*), which is the insight-knowledge of ultimate mentality-materiality; ‘kamma and kamma-result right view’ (*kammasakatā-sammā-diṭṭhi*), which is the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition; ‘Vipassanā right view’ (*vipassanā-sammā-diṭṭhi*), which is the insight-knowledge of the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of mentality-materiality and their causes; ‘path right view’ (*magga-sammā-diṭṭhi*) and ‘fruition right view’ (*phala-sammā-diṭṭhi*), which know Nibbāna. All these right views are called ‘Right Views About the Four Noble Truths’ (*catusacca-sammā-diṭṭhi*).

Question 7.11: How should a meditator practise wise attention (*yoniso-manasikāra*) in his daily life, and how in his Samatha-Vipassanā practice?

Answer 7.11: The best wise attention is Vipassanā. If you practise up to the Vipassanā level, you will have the truly best wise attention. If you then practise Vipassanā in your daily life, it will produce good results, such as path and fruition which see Nibbāna. But if you cannot practise up to the Vipassanā level, you should consider the fact that all conditioned things are impermanent (*sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā*). This is also wise attention, but very weak, and only second-hand.

You can also practise the four sublime abidings (*brahma-vihāra*), and especially the sublime abiding of equanimity (*upekkhā-brahmavihāra*). That is superior wise attention, because to practise the sublime abiding of equanimity is to see the law of kamma in ‘*sabbe sattā*

kammasakā': 'All beings are the owners of their kamma'. You can also sometimes reflect on the effects of unwise attention. Unwise attention causes many unwholesome kammās to come one by one. These unwholesome kammās will produce many sufferings in the four woeful planes (*apāya*). To know this is wise attention. You should practise it in your daily life.

Question 7.12: What is the difference between attention (*manasikāra*) and practising the seven enlightenment factors (*bojjhaṅga*)?

Answer 7.12: The seven enlightenment factors are usually at the head of thirty-four mental formations with attention as one of them. Sometimes the thirty-four mental formations are called 'insight-knowledge', because the thirty-fourth mental-formation, wisdom (*paññā*) is the main factor.

In this connection, you should know the three types of attention:

1. Attention as the basic cause for the object (*ārammaṇa-paṭipādaka-manasikāra*)
2. Attention as the basic cause for the thought-process (*vīthi-paṭipādaka-manasikāra*)
3. Attention as the basic cause for the impulsion (*javana-paṭipādaka-manasikāra*)

(1) Attention as the basic cause for the object is the mental-concomitant of attention. Its function is to make the object clear to the meditator's mind.

(2) Attention as the basic cause for the thought-process is the five-door-adverting consciousness (*pañcadvārāvajjana*) in the five-door thought-process (*pañcadvāra-vīthi*). Its function is to enable all five-door thought-processes to take their respective object.

(3) Attention as the basic cause for the impulsion is the mind-door-adverting consciousness (*manodvārāvajjana*) in the mind-door thought-process (*manodvāra-vīthi*), and determining consciousness (*voṭṭhapana*) in the five-door thought-process. It is either wise attention or unwise attention. Its function is to make the impulsion (*javana*) occur. If it is wise attention, the impulsion (*javana*) is for worldlings (*puthujjana*) and learners (*sekkha*) wholesome, and for arahants only functional (*kiriya*). When it is unwise attention, the impulsion is always unwholesome, and cannot occur in arahants.

Question 7.13: Could the Sayadaw please explain the diagram? Is it necessary, in this system of meditation, to practise the more than thirty types of meditation subject (*kammatthāna*)? What are the benefits in doing so?

Answer 7.13: I am not interested in diagrams. It is based on a diagram drawn by a school teacher, who is very interested in diagrams. I teach many types of Samatha meditation to those who want to practise them. If they do not want to practise all of them, but only one, such as mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*), then I teach only that Samatha meditation. When they have jhāna, I take them straight to Vipassanā, systematically, stage by stage. While practising Samatha-Vipassanā, there

may sometimes be hindrances such as lust (*rāga*), anger (*dosa*), and discursive thought (*vitakka*), which will disturb their concentration and Vipassanā meditation. The following meditation subjects are the best weapons to remove these hindrances.

The Buddha gives them in the Meghiya Sutta (Discourse to Meghiya):

1. *Asubhā bhāvetabbā rāgassa pahānāya*: you should practise repulsiveness-meditation (*asubha-bhāvanā*) to remove lust (*rāga*).
2. *Mettā bhāvetabbā byāpādassa pahānāya*: you should practise lovingkindness-meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*) to remove hatred or anger (*dosa*).
3. *Ānāpānasati bhāvetabbā vitakkupacchedāya*: you should practise mindfulness-of-breathing (*ānāpānasati*) to remove discursive thought (*vitakka*).

Furthermore, a concentrated mind can see ultimate dhammas (*paramattha-dhamma*) as they really are. Of the concentration practices, the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) are very high and powerful; so to those who want to practise the eight attainments thoroughly, we teach kasiṇa meditation too. If you want to understand the diagram thoroughly, you need to practise Samatha-Vipassanā up to the Path and Fruition Knowledges. Only then will you fully understand the diagram.

Why am I not interested in diagrams? Because it is not enough to show the whole system on one page. I have explained the whole system in more than three

thousand six hundred pages in Burmese: one page is not enough.

Question 7.14: Can a hating mind produce many generations of temperature-produced octad kalāpas (*utuja-ojaṭṭhamaka-kalāpa*), and make the eyes flash?

Answer 7.14: To say ‘a consciousness produces light’ is only a metaphor, because in fact, apart from the rebirth-linking consciousness (*paṭisandhi-citta*), all consciousnesses which arise dependent upon the heart-base (*hadaya-vatthu*) produce consciousness-produced kalāpas (*cittaja-kalāpa*). Among these kalāpas there is always colour (*vaṇṇa*). It is brighter if the consciousness is a Samatha, or Vipassanā consciousness. This is discussed in the Pāli Texts, Commentaries, and Sub-commentaries. But it does not say that consciousness-produced materiality produced by a hating mind also produces light.

Question 7.15: Is the discerning mind which discerns mentality-materiality itself included in mentality-materiality? Is it included in wisdom?

Answer 7.15: You can discern the discerning mind at all the stages of Vipassanā, especially at the stage of Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*). It is mentioned in the *Visuddhimagga*, ‘*Nātañca ñāṇañca ubhopi vipassati*’: ‘We must practise Vipassanā on both the known (*nāta*) and knowledge (*ñāṇa*).’ ‘The known’ means the five aggregates and their causes, which should be known with insight-knowledge. ‘Knowledge’ means the insight-knowledge which knows the impermanent,

suffering, and non-self nature of the five aggregates and their causes, which are all conditioned things (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*). The insight-knowledge is wisdom, Vipassanā right view. Usually, Vipassanā right view arises together with thirty-three or thirty-two mental formations, so we have a total of thirty-four or thirty-three mental formations respectively. They are called 'insight-knowledge'. They are mentality dhammas, because they incline towards the object of the impermanent, suffering or non-self nature of formations.

Why do you need to discern the insight-knowledge itself as impermanent, suffering, and non-self? Because some meditators may ask, or think about whether insight-knowledge itself is permanent or impermanent, happiness or suffering, self or non-self. To answer this question, you need to discern the Vipassanā thought-process itself as impermanent, suffering, and non-self, and especially the thirty-four mental formations in each impulsion moment, headed by that insight-knowledge. Furthermore, some meditators may be attached to their insight-knowledge. They may become proud, because they can practise Vipassanā well and successfully. It is also to remove and prevent these defilements that you need to discern the insight-knowledge or Vipassanā thought-process itself as impermanent, suffering, and non-self.

Question 7.16: How to overcome the uninterested and bored mind state which occurs during long periods of meditation, or staying alone in the forest? Is this kind of mind state an unwholesome dhamma?

Answer 7.16: This type of mind state is called indolence (*kosajja*), and is usually a weak unwholesome dhamma associated with greed or hatred, etc. This type of mind state occurs because of unwise attention. If a person's unwise attention is changed to and replaced with wise attention, then he may succeed in his meditation. To overcome this mind state you should sometimes recall that our Sakyamuni bodhisatta's success was due to his perseverance. You should also recall the stories of arahants who had striven hard, and with great difficulty, to succeed in their meditation, to eventually attain arahantship. No one can have great success without striving. It is necessary especially in meditation to persevere. Wise attention too is very important. You should try to pay attention to the nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self in conditioned things. If you do this, you may one day succeed.

Question 7.17: Could the Sayadaw please give an example of a wish which is not associated with ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*) and clinging (*upādāna*)?

Answer 7.17: If you practise Vipassanā when performing wholesome kammās, and if you also discern the impermanent, suffering, or non-self nature of those wholesome kammās, then ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*) and clinging (*upādāna*) do not arise. If you cannot practise Vipassanā, then make the following wish:

'Idaṃ me puññaṃ nibbānassa paccayo hotu': 'May this merit be a supporting cause for the realisation of Nibbāna.'

Question 7.18: If the five aggregates are non-self, then who, Sayadaw, is giving a Dhamma talk? In other words, if the five aggregates are non-self, no Sayadaw is giving a Dhamma talk. So is there a relationship between the five aggregates and the self?

Answer 7.18: There are two types of truth: conventional truth (*sammuti-sacca*) and ultimate truth (*paramattha-sacca*).

You should differentiate clearly between these two types of truth. According to conventional truth there is a Buddha, a Sayadaw, a father, a mother, etc. But according to ultimate truth, there is no Buddha, no Sayadaw, no father, no mother, etc. This you can see if you have strong enough insight-knowledge. If you look at the Buddha with insight-knowledge, you see ultimate mentality-materiality, which are the five aggregates. They are impermanent, suffering, and non-self. There is no self. In the same way if you look at me, or at father, or at mother etc., with insight-knowledge, you see only ultimate mentality-materiality, the five aggregates, which are impermanent, suffering, and non-self. There is no self. In other words, there is no Buddha, Sayadaw, father, mother, etc. The five aggregates and their causes are called 'conditioned things'. So, conditioned things are talking about conditioned things, sometimes about Nibbāna. There is no self at all. So how can we speak of a relationship?

For example, if someone were to ask you, 'Are rabbit horns long or short?', how should you answer?

Or then asked, 'Is the body hair on a tortoise black or white?', how should you answer? If the self does not exist at all, we cannot speak of a relationship between it and the five aggregates. Even the Buddha did not answer this type of question. Why? Suppose you said rabbit horns are long; that would mean you accept that rabbits have horns. And if you said rabbit horns are short; that too would mean you accept that they have horns. Again, if you said a tortoise has black body hair, that would mean you accept that a tortoise has hair. If you said tortoise hair is white, that too would mean you accept that it has hair. In the same way, if the Buddha said the five aggregates and the self are related, it would mean he accepted that there is a self. And if he said the five aggregates and the self are not related, it would also mean he accepted that there is a self. That is why the Buddha did not answer this type of question. So I would like to suggest that you try to practise meditation up to the Vipassanā level. Only then can you remove this view of self.

Question 7.19: The Buddha taught the Snake Mantra to bhikkhus. Is chanting the Snake Mantra the same as loving-kindness? Is chanting a mantra a Brahmanist tradition brought into Buddhism?

Answer 7.19: What is a mantra? What is the Snake Mantra? I do not know whether mantras have been handed down from Hinduism. But in the Theravāda

Texts there is a protective sutta (*paritta-sutta*) called the Khandha Paritta (Group Protection?). The Buddha taught this protective sutta for bhikkhus to recite every day. There is a disciplinary rule (*vinaya*), which states that if a bhikkhu or bhikkhunī does not recite this protective sutta at least once a day, he or she will have committed an offence. Once, in the Buddha's time, a bhikkhu was dwelling in the forest when a venomous snake bit him. He died. Because of this, the Buddha taught the Khandha Paritta. The purpose of this protective sutta is similar to lovingkindness meditation. In that sutta there are different ways of sending lovingkindness to different types of snake or serpent. There is also an assertion of truth concerning the Triple Gem, and the qualities of the Buddha and arahants. I shall recite this protective sutta tonight. It is very powerful. You may call it a Snake Mantra. The name is not important. You can call it whatever you like. Some bhikkhus in Burma use this protective sutta for those who have been bitten by a venomous snake. It is effective. When they chant this protective sutta many times, and when the victims drink the protective water, the venom slowly decreases in them. Usually they recover. But the effect is not the same in every case. The Buddha taught this protective sutta to prevent bhikkhus from being bitten by venomous snakes. If a bhikkhu recites this protective sutta with respect, and sends lovingkindness to all beings, including snakes, there will be no danger to him. Usually, if he also observes the monastic code, there will be no harm.

The Buddha's Wishes for His Disciples and His Teachings

(Talk given on Vesākha Day)

The Buddha spent his last rains (*vassa*) in the village of Beluva. At that time there arose in him a severe affliction. On the full-moon day of Vassa, a sharp and deadly back pain came upon him, because of previous kamma.

In one of his past lives, the bodhisatta, who was to become Sakyamuni Buddha, was a wrestler. Once he threw down an opponent and broke the opponent's back. When mature, that unwholesome kamma (*akusala-kamma*) produced its result, which was ten months before the Buddha's Parinibbāna. The effect of that kamma was so powerful that it would last until death. That type of affliction is called 'feeling ending with death' (*maraṇantika-vedanā*). It ceases only when death occurs.

The Buddha prevented that affliction from arising through determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*). This was no ordinary determination. First the Buddha entered the Arahant Fruition Attainment (*arahattaphala-samāpatti*) based on the Seven Ways for Materiality (*rūpa-sattaka-vipassanā*) and Seven Ways for Mentality (*arūpa-sattaka-vipassanā*). Arahant fruition attainment means that the arahant fruition consciousness, with Nibbāna as object, occurs successively for a long

time. After those Vipassanā practices he entered the arahant fruition attainment. Because the Vipassanā practices were strong and powerful, the arahant fruition attainment too was strong and powerful. After emerging from it, the Buddha determined, 'From today until Parinibbāna day, may this affliction not occur.' Because of the power of the kamma, however, he had to make this determination every day.

This type of fruition attainment is called *āyusañkhāra-phala-samāpatti*, *āyupālaka-phala-samāpatti*, or *jīvitasañkhāra-phala-samāpatti*. *Āyusañkhāra-phala-samāpatti* is the life-span-maintenance fruition attainment. *Āyupālaka-phala-samāpatti* is the life-span-protection fruition attainment. *Jīvitasañkhāra-phala-samāpatti* is the life-faculty-maintenance fruition attainment. The Buddha did this every day.

After the vassa, he wandered about from place to place, and eventually reached Vesālī. Three months before Vesākha full moon day, that is on the full moon day of February, at the place of the Cāpāla Cetiya, the Buddha decided to relinquish the will to live (*āyusañkhāra-ossajjana*). What does that mean? On that day he decided: 'From today until the full moon day of Vesākha I shall practise this fruition attainment. Then I shall no longer practise it.' This decision is called 'relinquishing the will to live'.

So, on that day, in front of the assembled Bhikkhu Saṅgha, in the assembly hall of the Mahāvana monastery, the Buddha declared he had relinquished the will to live. He declared: '*Tasmātiha bhikkhave ye te mayā dhammā abhiññā desitā, te vo sādhuḥkaṃ uggahetva āsevi-*

tabbā bhāvetabbā bahulīkātabbā: ‘Bhikkhus, you, to whom I have made known the Truths about which I have direct knowledge, having thoroughly learnt them, should cultivate them, develop them, and frequently practise them.’ The Buddha taught only the Dhamma about which he had direct experience. Here the Buddha declared his wishes for his teachings and Saṅgha as follows:

1. They should learn the Buddha’s teachings (*Dhamma*) thoroughly by heart, but learning by heart alone is not enough. This was the Buddha’s first wish.
2. He instructed them to cultivate the Buddha’s teachings (*Dhamma*). In Pāli it is called *āsevitabbā*, and means that we must try to know this Dhamma in practice again and again. It is translated as cultivation. This was the Buddha’s second wish.
3. Finally, he instructed them to develop (*bhāvetabbā*) the truths. When we cultivate, growth and progress are necessary. What does that mean? When we practise the Dhamma, only wholesome dhamma (*kusala-dhamma*) must occur in our thought-processes. That is, wholesome conduct dhammas (*sīla-kusala-dhamma*), wholesome concentration dhammas (*samādhi-kusala-dhamma*) and wholesome wisdom dhammas (*paññā-kusala-dhamma*). These wholesome dhammas must occur successively without a break until arahantship. If a disciple (*sāvaka*) of the Buddha attains arahantship, his practice (*bhāvanā*) is over. So a disciple of the Buddha must practise the Buddha’s teach-

ings until he attains that goal, and the cultivation must be developed until arahantship. To reach arahantship we must practise again and again. For that reason the Buddha gave the instruction of *bahulīkātābbā*, which means we must practise frequently. This was the Buddha's third wish.

These wishes occurred in the Buddha's thought-process. Why? '*Yathayidam brahmacariyam addhaniyam assa ciraṭ-ṭhitikam*': 'So that the pure teaching may be established and last long.' That is, to maintain the pure teaching so that it can last for a long time. It is very important that every Buddhist maintains the pure teaching, so that it is not lost. We must try. What should we try to do? I repeat:

1. We should try to learn the Buddha's teachings (*Dhamma*) thoroughly by heart.
2. We should try to practise the Buddha's teachings so as to know them through personal experience.
3. We should try to practise the Buddha's teachings until arahantship.

These are the duties of all Buddhists. If one is a Buddhist one must follow these three instructions. If one does not follow them then one is a Buddhist in name only. Not a real Buddhist. If one follows these three instructions thoroughly, then one is a real Buddhist. So you can today determine:

1. We will try to learn the Buddha's teachings thoroughly by heart.

2. We will try to practise the Buddha's teachings so as to know them through personal experience.
3. We will try to practise the Buddha's teachings until arahantship.

If we do that, it can be said that we breathe according to the Buddha's instructions. Why should we do that? *'Tadassa bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ'*: 'For the welfare and happiness of the multitude, out of compassion for the world, for the welfare and happiness of devas and humans.' If we practise according to the Buddha's instructions, we will be able to give the Dhamma to future generations as an inheritance. We will be able to teach devas and humans the following:

1. To try to learn the Buddha's teachings thoroughly by heart.
2. To practise the Buddha's teachings, so as to know them through personal experience.
3. To practise the Buddha's teachings until arahantship.

By doing that, those devas and humans will receive benefits and happiness in this world, up to the attainment of Nibbāna. But if we do not learn the teachings by heart, and do not practise those teachings, how can we teach devas and humans to learn the teachings of the Buddha, and teach them how to practise those teachings, since we have no knowledge of them. So, if we

have strong enough faith (*saddhā*) in the teachings of the Buddha, we Buddhists should try to learn those teachings by heart, cultivate them in practice, and develop them until the arahant stage.

Do you have strong enough faith in the teachings of the Buddha?

There is a statement in the Samaññaphala Sutta commentary: *‘Pasanno ca pasannākāraṃ kātuṃ sakkhissati’*: ‘Real devotees of the Triple Gem can show their devotion through practice.’ If a man or woman cannot show devotion then we cannot say that he or she is a real devotee. If you have real faith in the Buddha’s teachings, you should learn those teachings thoroughly, practise them, and not stop before attaining arahantship. These are important words of the Buddha before he passed away. If we have faith in the Buddha we should obey those words. If we have faith in our parents we should obey their instructions. In the same way we should obey our Father’s words, that is Lord Buddha. So, what are those teachings? They are:

1. The Four Foundations of Mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*)
2. The Four Right Efforts (*cattāro sammappadhānā*)
3. The Four Bases of Success (*cattāro iddhipādā*)
4. The Five Controlling Faculties (*pañcīndriyāni*)
5. The Five Powers (*pañca balāni*)
6. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅgā*)
7. The Noble Eightfold Path. (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*)

There are altogether Thirty-Seven Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyadhamma*). I would like to briefly explain them. In the Pāli Canon, the Buddha taught the Thirty-Seven Requisites of Enlightenment in different ways, according to the inclination of his listeners. The teachings in the Pāli Canon can be reduced to only the Thirty-Seven Requisites of Enlightenment. If again, they are condensed, there is only the Noble Eightfold Path. If it is condensed, there are only the three trainings: virtuous conduct, concentration, and wisdom.

We must first learn the training of virtuous conduct to practise. If we do not know the training of virtuous conduct, we cannot purify our conduct. We must learn Samatha meditation to control and concentrate our mind. If we do not know about Samatha meditation, how can we cultivate concentration? If we do not practise concentration, how can we control our mind? Then we must learn how to cultivate wisdom. If we do not know the training of wisdom, how can we cultivate wisdom?

So, to purify our conduct, to control our mind, and to develop our wisdom, we must first learn the Dhamma by heart. Secondly, we must cultivate and develop it up to arahantship.

Therefore, in the Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta, the Buddha urged his disciples many times:

Iti sīlaṃ, iti samādhiṃ iti paññā, sīlaparibhāvito samādhi mahapphalo hoti mahānisaṃso, samādhiparibhāvito paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā, paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammadeva āsavehi vimuccati, seyyathidaṃ kāmāsavā bhavāsavā diṭṭhāsavā avijjāsavā:

‘Such is virtue; such is concentration; such is wisdom. Great is the result, great is the gain of concentration when it is fully developed based on virtuous conduct; great is the result, great is the gain of wisdom when it is fully developed based on concentration; the mind that is fully developed in wisdom, is utterly free from the taints of lust, becoming, wrong views and ignorance.’

We all have a mind. If we can, based on virtue, control our mind, then the power of that concentrated mind is wonderful. That mind can penetrate into ultimate materiality. Materiality arises as kalāpas. The kalāpas are smaller than atoms. Our body is made of those kalāpas. The concentrated mind can analyse those kalāpas. The concentrated mind can penetrate into the ultimate reality of mentality. The concentrated mind can penetrate into their causes. The concentrated mind can penetrate into the nature of arising and passing-away of those mentality, materiality, and their causes. This insight-knowledge is called wisdom. This wisdom progresses because of concentration based on virtue. The concentrated mind and wisdom are will-power. This will-power can lead to the attainment of Nibbāna, the destruction of all attachment, all defilements and all sufferings.

Everybody has a mind. When the mind is fully developed through concentration based on virtue, the insight-knowledge, or wisdom can free one from the taints of lust and the round of rebirths completely. But that concentration must be based on virtue. For lay-people, the five precepts are necessary. They are:

1. To abstain from killing any beings,
2. To abstain from stealing,
3. To abstain from sexual misconduct,
4. To abstain from telling lies,
5. To abstain from taking intoxicants.

These five precepts are necessary for all lay-Buddhists. If one breaks any of these five precepts, one is automatically not a real lay-Buddhist (*upāsaka*). One's refuge in the Triple Gem has been made invalid. Buddhists must also abstain from wrong livelihood. They must not use possessions acquired by killing, theft, sexual misconduct, lies, slander, harsh speech, and frivolous speech. They must not engage in the five types of wrong trade: trading in weapons, humans, animals for slaughter, intoxicants, and poisons.

So virtue is very important for all Buddhists, not only to attain Nibbāna, but also to reach a happy state after death. If one's conduct is not purified, it is not easy to reach a happy state after death, because at the time of death, those misdeeds usually stick to one's mind; appear in one's mind. By taking one of those misdeeds as the object of the mind, usually one goes to one of the four woeful planes after death.

Virtuous conduct is also important in the present life to find happiness and peace. Without purification of conduct, one cannot find happiness or peace. Someone with a bad character is naturally surrounded by enemies. One who has many enemies cannot get any happiness.

So the Buddha taught the following:

*yo ca vassasataṃ jīve, dussīlo asamāhito;
ekāhaṃ jīvitaṃ seyyo, sīlavantassa jhāyino.*

‘Though one should live a hundred years without virtue and without concentration, one’s life is not worthy of praise; it is better to live a single day with the practice of virtue and concentration.’

Why? Because the mind which is fully developed through concentration can produce great wisdom, which can see Nibbāna, the end of the round of rebirths, and can destroy all defilements and suffering.

So we must practise Samatha and Vipassanā meditation based on virtue. When we practise Samatha and Vipassanā meditation, we must practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness:

1. Mindfulness of body (*kāyānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*)
2. Mindfulness of feeling (*vedanānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*)
3. Mindfulness of consciousness (*cittānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*)
4. Mindfulness of dhammas (*dhammānupassanā-satipaṭṭhāna*)

What is ‘body’ (*kāya*)? There are two types of body in Vipassanā; they are the materiality body (*rūpa-kāya*) and the mentality body (*nāma-kāya*). The materiality body is a group of twenty-eight types of materiality. The mentality body is a group of a consciousness and

its mental-concomitants. In other words, these are the five aggregates (*khandha*): materiality, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness.

But Samatha meditation objects such as mindfulness-of-breathing, thirty-two parts of the body, repulsiveness-meditation and four-elements meditation, are also called body. Why? They are also compactness of materiality. For example, breath is a group of kalāpas produced by consciousness. If we analyse those kalāpas, we see that there are nine types of materiality in each kalāpa. They are: earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, smell, taste, nutritive-essence, and sound. A skeleton is in the same way compactness of kalāpas. If a skeleton is animate, there are a total of five types of kalāpa. If we analyse those kalāpas we see that there are forty-four types of materiality.

Under the section of mindfulness of body, the Buddha taught two types of meditation: Samatha and Vipassanā. In mindfulness of body, the Buddha mentioned mindfulness-of-breathing, thirty-two parts of the body, repulsiveness-meditation, etc. So, if you are practising mindfulness-of-breathing, you are practising mindfulness of body. All those Samatha practices go under the section of mindfulness of body. After a meditator is successful in Samatha practice, he changes to Vipassanā meditation, and discerns the twenty-eight types of materiality. That is also practising mindfulness of body. At the time of practising discernment of mentality (*nāma-kammaṭṭhāna*), when he discerns feeling it is mindfulness of feeling; when he discerns consciousness

it is mindfulness of consciousness; when he discerns contact it is mindfulness of dhammas. But discerning only feeling, consciousness, and contact is not enough to attain insight-knowledges. So we must discern the remaining associated mental formations. After having discerned mentality and materiality, we must discern their causes in the past, present, and future. This is the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition (*paccaya-pariggaha-ñāṇa*). After the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition, when you have reached Vipassanā, you can emphasize either materiality, feeling, consciousness or contact. 'Emphasize' does not mean you should discern one state only. You can emphasize materiality, but you must discern also mentality. That is, you must discern feeling, consciousness, and dhammas too.

You may emphasize feeling instead. But feeling alone is not enough. You must also discern its associated mental formations, its sense-base, and object. The sense-base and object are materiality. It is the same for consciousness and dhammas.

So here, Vipassanā is contemplating the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of those mentality-materiality and their causes. Those dhammas pass away as soon as they arise, so they are impermanent. They are oppressed by constant arising and passing-away, so they are suffering. In those dhammas there is no soul, nothing is stable, permanent and immortal, so they are non-self. Discernment of the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of mentality-materiality, and their causes and effects, is called Vipassanā meditation.

When you practise Samatha and Vipassanā meditation, we can say you are practising the Four Foundations of Mindfulness.

When you practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness you must have enough of the Four Right Efforts. They are:

1. The effort to prevent unwholesome states from arising,
2. The effort to eradicate unwholesome states which have arisen,
3. The effort to produce wholesome states which have not yet arisen (concentration wholesome-dhammas, Vipassanā wholesome-dhammas, path wholesome-dhammas, etc.),
4. The effort to develop those wholesome states up to arahantship.

How should you practise? You must practise the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. When practising you must have enough of the four types of effort just mentioned. 'Even if my flesh and blood were to dry up, leaving bones and sinews only, I will not give up my meditation.'

When you practise those things you should have the Four Bases of Success. They are:

1. Desire (*chandā*): strong and powerful desire to reach Nibbāna,

2. Effort (*vīriya*): strong and powerful effort to reach Nibbāna,
3. Consciousness (*citta*): strong and powerful consciousness to reach Nibbāna,
4. Investigation (*vīmaṃsa*): strong and powerful insight-knowledges to reach Nibbāna.

If we have strong enough desire we will attain our goal. There is nothing we cannot achieve if we have enough desire. If we make strong enough effort we will attain our goal. There is nothing we cannot achieve if we make enough effort. If we have strong enough consciousness we will attain our goal. There is nothing we cannot achieve if we have a strong and powerful mind. If we have strong enough insight-knowledge we will attain our goal. There is nothing we cannot achieve if we have enough wisdom.

When we practise Samatha and Vipassanā based on virtuous conduct, we should also possess the Five Controlling Faculties. They are:

1. Faith (*saddhā*): we must have strong enough faith in the Buddha and his teachings.
2. Effort (*vīriya*): we must make strong enough effort.
3. Mindfulness (*sati*): we must have strong enough mindfulness on the meditation object.
4. Concentration (*samādhi*): we must have strong enough concentration on the Samatha and

Vipassanā objects. If it is a Samatha object, it must be an object like the ānāpāna-nimitta or kasiṇa-nimitta. If it is a Vipassanā object, it must be mentality, materiality, and their causes.

5. Wisdom (*paññā*): we must have enough understanding about Samatha and Vipassanā objects.

These five controlling faculties control the meditator's mind, so it does not go away from the Noble Eightfold Path, which leads to Nibbāna. If you do not have any of these controlling faculties, you cannot reach your goal. You cannot control your mind. These controlling faculties have the power to control your mind, so that it does not go away from your meditation object. This power is also called will-power (*bala*). When we emphasize this will-power, those five faculties are called the five powers.

As well as the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, there are the Seven Factors of Enlightenment which are also very important. They are:

1. Mindfulness (*sati*)
2. Investigation of Phenomena (*dhammavicaya*):
This is insight-knowledge.
3. Effort (*vīriya*)
4. Joy (*pīti*)
5. Tranquility (*passaddhi*)
6. Concentration (*samādhi*)
7. Equanimity (*upekkhā*)

There is also the Noble Eightfold Path. It is:

1. Right View (*sammā-diṭṭhi*)
2. Right Thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*)
3. Right Speech (*sammā-vācā*)
4. Right Action (*sammā-kammanta*)
5. Right Livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*)
6. Right Effort (*sammā-vāyāma*)
7. Right Mindfulness (*sammā-sati*)
8. Right Concentration (*sammā-samādhi*)

It is, in other words, virtuous conduct (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*): the three trainings. We must practise these three trainings systematically.

Altogether, there are Thirty-Seven Requisites of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyadhamma*).

It was the Buddha's wish that his disciples learn these Thirty-Seven Requisites of Enlightenment by heart, and practise them until arahantship. If we do that, we can give this inheritance to future generations. If so, we, as well as future generations, will receive benefits and happiness in this world, up to the attainment of Nibbāna.

The Buddha said further: *'Handa dāni bhikkhave āmantayāmi vo, vayadhammā saṅkhārā appamādena sampādeṭṭhā*. All mentality-materiality and their causes are called compounded things (*saṅkhāra*), because they are produced by their respective causes. These compounded things are always impermanent.

You should not forget about the nature of impermanence. It is because you forget about the nature of impermanence, that you aspire for yourself, for sons, daughters, family, etc. If you know anything of the nature of impermanence, then throughout your life you will try to escape from it. So you should not forget how the Buddha exhorted us: 'Bhikkhus, all compounded things are subject to dissolution; therefore strive with diligence.'

The Buddha then said, '*Na ciram Tathāgatassa parinibbānam bhavissati. Ito tinnam māsānam accayena Tathāgato parinibbā-yissati*': 'The time of the Tathāgata's Parinibbāna is near. Three months from now the Tathāgata will attain Parinibbāna.' That means he would pass away completely. Those words were really sad words to hear.

The Buddha also said: '*Paripakko vayo mayham, parittam mama jīvitam*': 'My years are now full ripe; the life span left is short,' and the Buddha described his old age to the Venerable Ānanda: 'Now I am frail, Ānanda, old, aged, far gone in years. This is my eightieth year, and my life is spent. Even as an old cart, Ānanda, is held together with much difficulty, so the body of the Tathāgata is kept going only with supports. It is, Ānanda, only when the Tathāgata, disregarding external objects, with the cessation of certain feelings, attains to and abides in the signless concentration of mind, that his body is comfortable.'

The Buddha said further: '*Pahāya vo gamissāmi, kataṃ me saraṇamattano*': 'Departing, I go from you, relying on myself alone.' That means he would attain

Parinibbāna, and depart from them. He had made his own refuge up to the arahant stage. That is why the Buddha also said: 'Therefore, Ānanda, be islands unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves, seeking no external refuge; with the Dhamma as your island, the Dhamma as your refuge, seeking no other refuge. And how, Ānanda, is a bhikkhu an island unto himself, a refuge unto himself, seeking no external refuge, with the Dhamma as his island, the Dhamma as his refuge, seeking no other refuge?'

The answer is as follows: *'Appamattā satīmanto susīlā hotha bhikkhavo. Susamāhitasāṅkappā sacittamanurakkhatha'*: 'Be diligent, then, O bhikkhus, be mindful and of virtue pure. With firm resolve, guard your own minds.' So we must be mindful and diligent. Mindful of what? Mindful of the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, or mentality-materiality, or in other words, mindful of compounded things. '*Susīlā hotha bhikkhavo*', means, 'Bhikkhus, you should try to purify your conduct. You should try to be a bhikkhu who has complete purification of conduct.' This means we must cultivate the training of virtuous conduct, that is, right speech, right action and right livelihood.

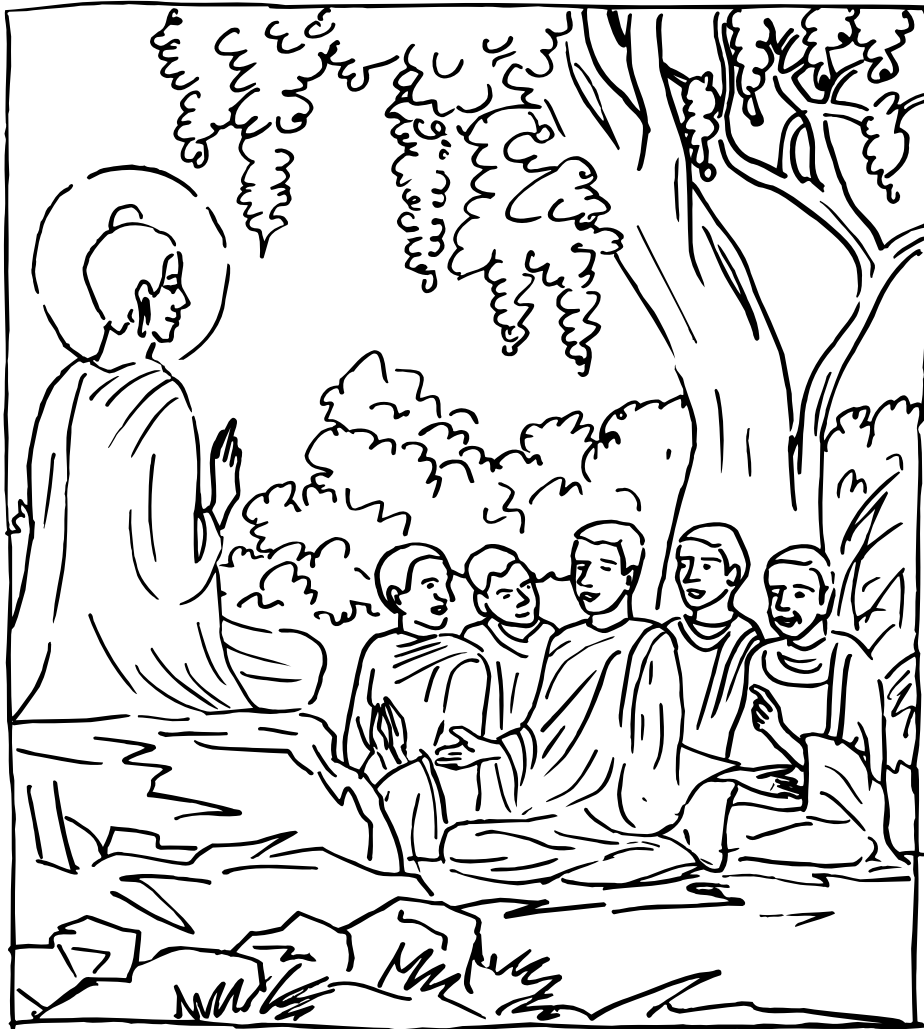
The Buddha also said: '*Susamāhitasāṅkappā*'. '*Susamāhita*' means we must practise the training of concentration, that is right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. '*Sāṅkappā*' means the training of wisdom, that is right thought and right view.

Then, '*appamattā*' means to see with insight-knowledge the nature of impermanence, suffering, and non-self in compounded things. '*Satīmanto*' means

that when we practise the three trainings of virtuous conduct, concentration, and wisdom, we must have enough mindfulness.

Finally, the Buddha said: *'Yo imasmim dhamma-vinaye appamatto vihessati. Pahāya jāti-samsāram dukkhasantam karissati'*: 'Whoever earnestly pursues the Dhamma and the Discipline shall go beyond the round of births, and make an end of suffering.' So, if we want to reach the end of the round of rebirths, we must follow the Buddha's teachings; that is, the Noble Eightfold Path. Let us strive with effort before death takes place.

May all beings be happy.



The Most Superior Type of Offering

(Traditional End-of-Retreat Talk to Donors, Organizers and Helpers)

There are two types of offering:

1. The offering which produces full fruition, and
2. The offering which produces no fruition.

Which type of offering do you prefer? Please answer.

I would like to explain the Buddha's wishes for his disciples (*sāvaka*), regarding offering in this dispensation. Your wish and the Buddha's wish may be the same or different. Let us look at the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*:

'On one occasion the Buddha was living in the Sakyan country, at Kapilavatthu in Nigrodha's Park. Then Mahāpajāpatigotamī went to the Buddha with a new pair of cloths, which she had had made by skilled weavers. After paying homage to the Buddha, she sat down at one side, and said to the Buddha: "Bhante, this new pair of cloths has been spun by me, and woven by me, specially for the Buddha. Bhante, let the Buddha out of compassion accept it from me."

The Buddha then said: "Give it to the Saṅgha, Gotamī. When you give it to the Saṅgha, the offering will be made both to me and to the Saṅgha."

She asked the Buddha in the same way three times, and the Buddha answered in the same way three times. Then Venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha: “Bhante, please accept the new pair of robes from Mahāpajāpatigotamī. Mahāpajāpatigotamī has been very helpful to the Buddha. Although she was your mother’s sister, she was your nurse, your foster mother, and the one who gave you milk. She suckled the Buddha when the Buddha’s own mother died.

The Buddha has been very helpful towards Mahāpajāpatigotamī. It is owing to the Buddha that Mahāpajāpatigotamī has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha. It is owing to the Buddha that Mahāpajāpatigotamī abstains from killing living beings, from taking what is not given, from misconduct in sensual pleasures, from false speech, and from wine, liquor and intoxicants which are the basis of negligence. It is owing to the Buddha that Mahāpajāpatigotamī possesses perfect confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and that she possesses the virtue loved by noble ones (*ariya*). It is owing to the Buddha that Mahāpajāpatigotamī is free from doubt about the Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), about the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*samudaya-sacca*), about the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (*nirodha-sacca*), and about the Noble Truth of the Way Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*magga-sacca*). So the Buddha too has been very helpful towards Mahāpajāpatigotamī.”

Then the Buddha replied as follows, “That is so, Ānanda, that is so. (*Evametam Ānanda; evametam*

Ānanda.) When a disciple, owing to a teacher, has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, I say that it is not easy for that disciple to repay the teacher by paying homage to him, rising up for him, according him reverential salutation and polite services, and by providing the four requisites.

When a disciple, owing to the teacher, has come to abstain from killing living beings, from taking what is not given, from misconduct in sensual pleasures, from false speech, and from wine, liquor and intoxicants which are the basis of negligence, I say that it is not easy for that disciple to repay the teacher by paying homage to him, rising up for him, according him reverential salutation and polite services, and by providing the four requisites.

When a disciple, owing to the teacher, has come to possess perfect confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and to possess the virtue loved by noble ones (*ariya*), I say that it is not easy for that disciple to repay the teacher by paying homage to him, rising up for him, according him reverential salutation and polite services, and by providing the four requisites.

When a disciple, owing to the teacher, has become free from doubt about the Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), about the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*samudaya-sacca*), about the Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (*nirodha-sacca*), and about the Noble Truth of the Way Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*magga-sacca*), I say that it is not easy for that disciple to repay the teacher by paying homage to him, rising up for him, according him reverential

salutation and polite services, and by providing the four requisites.””

Here, I would like to explain further. If a disciple knows the Four Noble Truths through the guidance of a teacher, his insight-knowledge of the Four Noble Truths is comparatively more beneficial than his acts of respect, and providing of the four requisites to the teacher. If he knows the Four Noble Truths through Stream-Entry Path Knowledge (*sotāpatti-maggañāṇa*), and Stream-Entry Fruition Knowledge (*sotāpatti-phalañāṇa*), then that insight-knowledge will help him escape from the four woeful planes (*apāya*). This result is wonderful. Those who neglect to perform wholesome deeds, usually wander the four woeful planes. The four woeful planes are like their home: *‘Pamattassa ca nāma cattāro apāyā sakagehasadisā.’* They have only sometimes visited good planes. So it is a great opportunity to be able to escape from the four woeful planes. It cannot be compared to the disciple’s acts of respect, and providing of four requisites to the teacher. Again, if a disciple knows the the Four Noble Truths through Once-Returner Path Knowledge (*sakadāgāmi-maggañāṇa*) and Once-Returner Fruition Knowledge (*sakadāgāmi-phalañāṇa*), he will come back to this human world once only. But if he knows the Four Noble Truths through Non-Returner Path Knowledge (*anāgāmi-maggañāṇa*), and Non-Returner Fruition Knowledge (*anāgāmi-phalañāṇa*), his insight-knowledge will help him escape from the eleven sensual realms. He will definitely be reborn in a brahma realm. He will never return to this sensual realm. Brahma bliss is far superior to sensual pleasure. In the brahma realm there is no man,

no woman, no son, no daughter, no family. There is no fighting and quarrelling. It is not necessary to take any food. Their lifespan is very long. There is no one who can spoil their happiness. They are free from all dangers. But they are subject to decay; subject to death; subject to rebirth again if they do not attain arahantship.

Again, if a disciple knows the Four Noble Truths through the Arahant Path (*arahatta-magga*) and Arahant Fruition (*arahatta-phala*), his insight-knowledge will lead to his escape from the round of rebirths. After his Parinibbāna he will definitely attain Nibbāna, and he will have no more suffering at all, no more rebirth, decay, disease, death, etc.... So these benefits are more valuable than the disciple's acts of respect, and providing the four requisites to the teacher. Even if a disciple offers a pile of requisites as high as Mount Meru, that offering is not enough to repay his debt, because the escape from the round of rebirths, or the escape from rebirth, decay, disease, and death is more valuable.

What are the Four Noble Truths?

1. The Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha-sacca*): this is the five aggregates. If a disciple knows the Noble Truth of Suffering, dependent upon a teacher, this insight-knowledge is more valuable than acts of respect, and providing the four requisites to the teacher.
2. The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering (*samudaya-sacca*): this is dependent-origination. If a disciple knows dependent-origination dependent upon a teacher, this insight-knowledge is

also more valuable than acts of respect, and providing the four requisites to the teacher.

3. The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering (*nirodha-sacca*): this is Nibbāna. If a disciple knows Nibbāna dependent upon a teacher, this insight-knowledge is also more valuable than acts of respect, and providing the four requisites to the teacher.
4. The Noble Truth of the Way Leading to the Cessation of Suffering (*magga-sacca*): this is the Noble Eightfold Path. In other words, this is insight-knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and Path Knowledge (*maggañāṇa*).

If a disciple possesses insight-knowledge and Path Knowledge dependent upon a teacher, these insight-knowledges are more valuable than acts of respect, and providing the four requisites to the teacher, because these insight-knowledges lead to one's escape from the round of rebirths, whereas acts of respect, and providing the four requisites, cannot be a direct cause for escape from the round of rebirths. Indirectly, however, the four requisites can be a supporting cause for one who is practising Samatha-Vipassanā to reach Nibbāna.

Here again I would like to explain further. The five aggregates are the Noble Truth of Suffering. In the five aggregates is included the materiality-aggregate (*rūpa-khandha*). Materiality (*rūpa*) arises as kalāpas (small particles). When they are analysed, one sees that there are generally twenty-eight types of materiality. Please

consider this problem. Outside the Buddha's dispensation, there is no teacher who can teach about these types of materiality, and how to classify them. Only a Buddha and his disciples can discern these types of materiality, and teach how to classify them. Again, in the five aggregates are included also the four mentality-aggregates (*nāma-khandha*). Apart from bhavaṅga, these mental formations arise according to thought-processes. The Buddha taught exactly how many mental-concomitants (*cetasika*) are associated with one consciousness (*citta*) in a mind-moment, and he taught how to discern and classify them. There is no teacher outside the Buddha's dispensation who can show and teach these mental formations clearly, because there is no other teacher who fully understands. But if a disciple of this Sakyamuni Buddha practises hard and systematically, according to the instructions of the Buddha, he can discern these mental formations clearly. This is a unique opportunity for Buddhists. You should not miss this opportunity.

Again, dependent-origination is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering. The Buddha also taught his disciples how to discern dependent-origination. When a disciple of the Buddha discerns dependent-origination according to the instructions of the Buddha, he fully understands the relationship between cause and effect. He can gain the insight-knowledge which knows that the past cause produces the present effect, and that the present cause produces the future effect. He knows that within the three periods, past, present and future, there is no creator to create an effect, and that there is nothing which occurs without a cause. This knowledge can

also be gained only in the Buddha's dispensation. You should not miss this opportunity either.

Again, when a disciple discerns dependent-origination, he sees past lives and future lives. If you discern many past lives, you gain the insight-knowledge of knowing which type of unwholesome kamma produces rebirth in the woeful planes, and which type of wholesome kamma produces rebirth in good planes. Knowledge of the thirty-one planes, and the Law of Kamma, can be found in the teachings of only the Buddha. Outside the Buddha's dispensation, there is no one who can come to know the thirty-one planes, and the Law of Kamma, that produces rebirth in each plane. You should not miss this opportunity either.

Again, if a disciple discerns cause and effect in future lives, he also sees the cessation of mentality-materiality. He knows fully when his mentality-materiality will cease. This is the Noble Truth of Cessation of Suffering. This knowledge can be gained only in the Buddha's dispensation. You should not miss this opportunity either.

Again, the Buddha also taught the way, that is Samatha-Vipassanā, to reach that state of cessation. Samatha-Vipassanā means the Noble Eightfold Path. The Knowledge of Analysing Mentality-materiality and the Knowledge of Discerning Cause and Condition is right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). The Knowledge of the Cessation of Mentality-materiality is also right view. The Knowledge of the Noble Eightfold Path is also right view. Application of mind to the Four Noble Truths is right thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*). These two are Vipassanā. To practise Vipassanā we must have Samatha concentration,

which is right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*), right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*), and right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*). When we cultivate Samatha-Vipassanā, we should have purification of conduct, that is right speech (*sammā-vācā*), right action (*sammā-kammanta*), and right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*). Cultivating Samatha-Vipassanā based on virtuous conduct (*sīla*) is to cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path. This Noble Eightfold Path can be seen only in the Buddha's dispensation. You should not miss this opportunity either. Why? Insight-knowledge of the Four Noble Truths leads to a disciple's escape from the round of rebirths.

In the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta, mentioned in the beginning of this talk, the Buddha explains the fourteen types of personal offerings (*pāṭipuggalika-dakkhina*). 'Ānanda, there are fourteen types of personal offerings:

- One makes an offering to a Buddha; this is the first type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to a Paccekabuddha; this is the second type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to an arahant, a disciple of the Buddha; this is the third type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of an arahantship; this is the fourth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to a non-returner (*anāgāmi*); this is the fifth type of personal offering.

- One makes an offering to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of non-return; this is the sixth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to a once-returner (*sakadā-gāmi*); this is the seventh type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of once-return; this is the eighth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to a stream-enterer (*sotāpanna*); this is the ninth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of stream-entry; this is the tenth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to one outside the dispensation who is free from lust for sensual pleasures due to attainment of jhāna; this is the eleventh type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to a virtuous ordinary person (*puthujjana*); this is the twelfth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to an immoral ordinary person; this is the thirteenth type of personal offering.
- One makes an offering to an animal; this is the fourteenth type of personal offering.'

The Buddha then explained the benefits of these fourteen types of offerings: 'By making an offering to an animal, with a pure mind, the offering may be expected to repay a hundredfold.' That means it can produce its result in a hundred lives. Here 'pure mind' means offering without expecting anything in return, or help from the receiver. One makes the merit to accumulate wholesome kamma only, with strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma. Suppose someone feeds a dog with the thought: 'This is my dog'; that is not a pure mind state. But if someone gives food to the birds, such as pigeons, then the offering is pure, because he does not expect anything from the birds. This applies also to the instances mentioned later. For example, if a person offers requisites to a bhikkhu, with the thought that it will bring about success in his business, or other commercial activities, this is not offering with a pure mind. This type of offering does not produce superior benefits.

The Buddha explained further: 'By making an offering with a pure mind to an immoral ordinary person, the offering may be expected to repay a thousandfold. By making an offering to a virtuous ordinary person, the offering may be expected to repay a hundred-thousandfold. By making an offering to one outside the dispensation who is free from lust for sensual pleasures due to attainment of jhāna, the offering may be expected to repay a hundred-thousand times a hundred-thousandfold. By making an offering to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of stream-entry, the offering may be expected to repay incalculably, immeasurably. What then should be

said about making an offering to a stream-enterer, or to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of once-return, or to a once-returner, or to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of non-return, or to a non-returner, or to one who has entered upon the way to the realisation of the fruit of arahantship, or to an arahant, or to a Paccekabuddha, or to a Buddha, Fully Enlightened One?’

Here, an offering means one offers food enough for once only. If a giver offers many times, such as, over many days or many months, there are no words to describe the benefits of those offerings. These are the different types of personal offerings (*pāṭipuggalika-dakkhina*).



Offerings to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-Dāna*)

The Buddha then explained to the Venerable Ānanda: 'There are seven kinds of offerings made to the Saṅgha, Ānanda.

- One makes an offering to a Saṅgha of both bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs headed by the Buddha; this is the first kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering to a Saṅgha of both bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs after the Buddha has attained Parinib-bāna; this is the second kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering to a Saṅgha of bhikkhus; this is the third kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering to a Saṅgha of bhikkhunīs; this is the fourth kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering, saying: "Appoint so many bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs to me from the Saṅgha"; this is the fifth kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering, saying: "Appoint so many bhikkhus to me from the Saṅgha"; this is the sixth kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.
- One makes an offering, saying: "Appoint so many bhikkhunīs to me from the Saṅgha"; this is the seventh kind of offering made to the Saṅgha.'

These are the seven types of offering to the Saṅgha. The Buddha then compared personal offerings to offerings to the Saṅgha:

‘In future times, Ānanda, there will be members of the clan who are “yellow-necks”, immoral, of evil character. People will make offerings to those immoral persons on behalf of the Saṅgha. Even then, I say, an offering made to the Saṅgha is incalculable, immeasurable. And I say that in no way does an offering to a person individually, ever have greater fruit than an offering made to the Saṅgha.’ This means that offerings made to the Saṅgha (*saṅghika-dāna*) are more beneficial than personal offerings (*pāṭipuggalika-dakkhiṇa*). If Mahāpajāpatigotamī offered the robes to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha it would be far more beneficial. The result would be incalculable and immeasurable. So the Buddha urged her to offer them to the Saṅgha too.

The Buddha also explained the four kinds of purification of offering:

‘There are four kinds of purification of offering. What are the four? They are:

1. There is the offering that is purified by the giver, but not the receiver.
2. There is the offering that is purified by the receiver, but not the giver.
3. There is the offering that is purified by neither the giver nor the receiver.
4. There is the offering that is purified by both the giver and the receiver.

(1) What is the offering that is purified by the giver, but not the receiver? Here the giver is virtuous, of good character, and the receiver is immoral, of evil character. Thus, the offering is purified by the giver, but not the receiver.

(2) What is the offering that is purified by the receiver, but not the giver? Here the giver is immoral, of evil character, and the receiver is virtuous, of good character. Thus, the offering is purified by the receiver, but not the giver.

(3) What is the offering that is purified by neither the giver nor the receiver? Here the giver is immoral, of evil character, and the receiver is immoral, of evil character. Thus, the offering is purified by neither the giver nor the receiver.

(4) What is the offering that is purified by both the giver and the receiver? Here the giver is virtuous, of good character, and the receiver is virtuous, of good character. Thus, the offering is purified by both the giver and the receiver. These are the four kinds of purification of offering.'

The Buddha explained further:

(1) An offering is purified by the giver's virtue, but not the receiver when:

(a) The giver is virtuous.

(b) What is offered has been righteously obtained.

- (c) The giver has at the time of offering a clear and taintless mind. He should have no attachment, anger, etc.
- (d) The giver has strong enough faith in that the fruit of that kamma is great,

but the receiver is immoral. If the giver wants superior benefits, there should be these four factors. In this case, although the receiver is an immoral person, the offering is purified by the giver. The commentary mentions the case of Vessantara. Our bodhisatta in a past life as Vessantara, offered his son and daughter (the future Rāhula and Uppalavaṇṇā) to Jūjaka Brāhmaṇa, who was immoral, of evil character. That offering was the final generosity pāramī for Vessantara. After fulfilling this last pāramī, he was ready to attain enlightenment; he had only to wait for the time to mature. Because of this generosity pāramī, and other previous pāramīs, he was certain to attain Omniscient Knowledge (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). So we can say that this offering was a support for his attaining enlightenment. It was purified by Vessantara. At that time Vessantara was virtuous, of good character. What he offered was also rightly obtained. He had a clear and taintless mind because he had only one desire: to attain enlightenment. He had strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its results. So the offering was purified by the giver.

(2) An offering is purified by the receiver, when an immoral person, with an unclear mind full of attachment, hatred, etc., without faith in the Law of

Kamma, makes an offering of what is unrighteously obtained to a virtuous person. The commentary mentions the case of a fisherman. A fisherman living near the mouth of the Kalyāṇī River in Sri Lanka, had three times offered almsfood to a Mahāthera who was an arahant. At the time near death, the fisherman remembered his offering to that Mahāthera. Good signs of a deva plane appeared in his mind, so before he died he said to his relatives, 'That Mahāthera saved me.' After death he went to a deva plane. In this case the fisherman was immoral and of bad character, but the receiver was virtuous. So that offering was purified by the receiver.

(3) An offering is purified by neither the giver nor the receiver, when an immoral person, with an unclear mind full of attachment, hatred, etc., without faith in the Law of Kamma, makes an offering of what is unrighteously obtained to an immoral person. The commentary mentions the case of hunter. When that hunter died, he went to the peta realm. Then his wife offered almsfood on his behalf, to a bhikkhu who was immoral, of bad character; so the peta could not call out, 'It is right (*sādhū*)'. Why? The giver too was immoral, and not virtuous, because she, as the wife of a hunter, had accompanied him when he killed animals. Also, what she offered was unrighteously obtained, as it was acquired through killing animals. She had an unclear mind, because had she had a clear understanding mind, she would not have accompanied her husband. She did not have enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its

results. Had she had enough faith in the Law of Kamma, she would never have killed living beings. Since the receiver too was immoral, of bad character, the offering could be purified by neither giver nor receiver. She offered almsfood in the same way three times, and no good result occurred; so the peta shouted, 'An immoral person has three times stolen my wealth.' Then she offered almsfood to a virtuous bhikkhu. At that time the peta could call out 'It is good', and escape from the peta realm.

Here I would like to say to the audience; if you want good results from offering you should fulfil the following four factors:

- (a) You must be virtuous,
- (b) What you offer must be righteously obtained,
- (c) You must have a clear and taintless mind,
- (d) You must have strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its results.

Furthermore, if you are the receiver, and have strong enough loving-kindness and compassion for the giver, you should also be virtuous. If your virtue is accompanied by jhāna and insight-knowledge, it is much better. Why? This type of offering can produce good results for the giver. Please note the next type of offering, the fourth kind of purification of an offering.

(4) An offering is purified by both the giver and the receiver, when the giver has the four factors:

- (a) He is virtuous,
- (b) What he offers is righteously obtained,
- (c) His mind is clear and taintless,
- (d) He has strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its results,

and the receiver too is virtuous. As for this type of offering, the Buddha said: ‘...Ānanda, I say, this type of offering will come to full fruition.’ This offering can produce incalculable, immeasurable results. If the receiver’s virtue is accompanied by jhāna, insight-knowledge, or Path and Fruition Knowledges, then that virtue is superior.

Here I would like to relate another sutta. This is the Nandamātā Sutta in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, Chakka Nipāta. Once the Buddha was living near Sāvatti, at Jetavana in Anāthapiṇḍika’s Park. Then Nanda’s mother, a lay disciple of the Buddha, who lived in Velukandaka, offered almsfood. Her offering was endowed with six factors, and the receiver was the Bhikkhu Saṅgha, headed by the Venerable Sāriputta and the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna. The Buddha saw the offering with his divine eye, and addressed the monks thus: ‘Bhikkhus, the lay disciple of Velukandaka has prepared an offering endowed with six factors to the Saṅgha, headed by Sāriputta and Mahāmoggallāna. How, bhikkhus, is an offering endowed with six factors? Bhikkhus, the giver should be endowed with three factors, and the receiver also should be endowed with three factors.’

What are the giver's three factors? Bhikkhus,

- He is glad at heart before giving,
- His heart is satisfied in giving,
- He is joyful when he has given.

These are the three factors of the giver. What are the three factors of the receiver? Bhikkhus,

- The receiver is free from attachment or trying to destroy attachment,
- The receiver is free from anger or trying to destroy anger,
- The receiver is free from delusion or trying to destroy delusion.

These are the three factors of the receiver.'

Altogether there are six factors. If the offering is endowed with these six factors, it produces immeasurable and noble results.

The Buddha explained further: 'Bhikkhus, it is not easy to grasp the measure of merit of such an offering by saying: "This much is the yield in merit, the yield in goodliness, accumulated for wholesome kamma hereafter, ripening to happiness, leading to heaven, leading to happiness, longed for and loved." Verily the great mass of merit, wholesome kamma, is just reckoned unreckonable, immeasurable. Bhikkhus, just as it is not easy to grasp the measure of water in the great ocean, and to say: "There are so many pailfuls,

so many hundreds of pailfuls, so many thousands of pailfuls, so many hundreds of thousands of pailfuls"; for that great mass of water is reckoned unreckonable, immeasurable; even so bhikkhus, it is not easy to grasp the measure of merit in an offering endowed with the six factors. Verily the great mass of merit is reckoned unreckonable, immeasurable.'

Why? The giver was endowed with the four factors of the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta. They are:

- (a) She was virtuous,
- (b) Her offering had been righteously obtained,
- (c) Her mind was clear and taintless,
- (d) She had strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its results.

The three factors mentioned in the Nandamātā Sutta were also fulfilled. They are:

- She was glad at heart before giving,
- Her heart was satisfied in giving,
- She was joyful when she had given.

These factors are very important for a giver, whether male or female. If he or she expects incalculable and immeasurable good results, he or she should try to fulfil those factors. But according to the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta, the receiver too must be virtuous. According to the Nandamātā Sutta, it should be a bhikkhu or bhikkhunī who has cultivated Samatha-Vipassanā meditation up to the arahant stage, or who is cultivating Samatha-

Vipassanā meditation to destroy attachment (*rāga*), anger (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*).

Now in Yi-Tung Temple, there are many bhikkhus and bhikkhunīs who are practising Samatha and Vipassanā meditation to destroy attachment, anger, and delusion totally. They are also virtuous. So we may say that now there are worthy receivers here. The givers too may be virtuous. Their minds may be clear and taintless. What they have offered has been righteously obtained. They may have strong enough faith in the Triple Gem, and the Law of Kamma and its results. They were glad before giving, and were satisfied in giving. They were joyful after having given. So we can say that the offerings made in these two months have been in accordance with the Buddha's wishes. They are noble offerings. If the givers expect good results in the future, certainly this wholesome kamma will fulfil their desire. Why? The Buddha said in the Saṅkhārupapatti Sutta: *'Ijjhati bhikkhave sīlavato cetopaṇidhi visuddhattā'*: 'Bhikkhus, a virtuous person's wish will certainly be fulfilled by purification of conduct.' So, a virtuous person's wholesome kamma can produce the result of his desire:

- If he wants to become a Buddha he can become a Buddha,
- If he wants to become a Paccekabuddha he can become a Paccekabuddha,
- If he wants to become a Chief Disciple (*aggasāvaka*) he can become a Chief Disciple,

- If he wants to become a Great Disciple (*mahāsāvaka*) he can become a Great Disciple,
- If he wants to become an Ordinary Disciple (*pakatisāvaka*) he can become an Ordinary Disciple.

This is only when his pāramīs have matured. Wishing alone is not enough to attain one of those types of enlightenment (*bodhi*). Again:

- If he wants human happiness after death, he can get human happiness in the human realm.
- If he wants to go to the deva realm, he can go to the deva realm.
- If he wants to go to the brahma realm after death, this wholesome kamma can be a support for him to go to the brahma realm.

How? If his offering fulfils the previously mentioned factors, the receiver is his mind's object. He has strong enough loving-kindness and compassion for the receiver. If he at that time practises lovingkindness meditation (*mettā-bhāvanā*), his loving-kindness jhāna will take him to the brahma realm after death. In this way his offering is a support for him to go to the brahma realm. So, if the giver wants to go to the brahma realm after death, he should practise lovingkindness meditation up to the lovingkindness jhāna stage. If he has practised lovingkindness jhāna, and offers almsfood, his wholesome kamma is a very superior and powerful support for him to go to the brahma realm. So, if you want good results in the future, you should also practise loving-

kindness meditation up to the lovingkindness jhāna stage. Among the three types of happiness; human happiness, deva happiness, and brahma happiness, brahma happiness is the highest. There is no mundane happiness higher than brahma happiness. It is the most superior happiness in the thirty-one planes.

This is the first type of offering mentioned in the beginning of this talk, namely, the offering which produces full fruition. Do you prefer this type of offering? If you do, then please listen to the following stanza from the Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta:

*‘Yo vītarāgo vītarāgesu dadāti dānaṃ
Dhammena laddhaṃ supasannacitto
Abhisaddahaṃ kammaphalaṃ ulhāraṃ
Taṃ ve dānaṃ āmisadānanamagganti’*

‘Bhikkhus, I say that when an arahant, with clear and taintless mind, placing faith in that the fruit of kamma is great, offers to an arahant what is righteously obtained, then that offering indeed is the most superior of all worldly offerings.’

In this case, the four factors present in the giver are:

1. The giver is an arahant,
2. What is offered is righteously obtained,
3. He has a clear and taintless mind,
4. He has strong enough faith in the Law of Kamma and its results.

One more factor is necessary, namely:

5. The receiver also must be an arahant.

The Buddha taught that this type of offering is the most superior type of worldly offering. He praised this type of offering as the most superior. Why? This offering produces no result. Why? The giver has destroyed delusion and all attachment to any life. Ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving (*taṇhā*), are the main causes for kamma, that is volitional-formations (*saṅkhāra*). In this case, volitional-formations means good actions like making an offering to the receiver. But this kamma cannot produce any result, because there are no supporting causes; there is no ignorance (*avijjā*), and no craving (*taṇhā*). If the root of a tree is totally destroyed the tree cannot produce any fruit. In the same way, an arahant's offering cannot produce any result, because he has totally destroyed those roots; ignorance and craving. He has no expectation of a future life. In the Ratana Sutta the Buddha taught the following stanza:

*'Khīnaṃ purāṇaṃ nava natthi sambhavaṃ
virattacittā'yatike bhavasmiṃ
te khīṇabijā avirūhichandā
nibbanti dhīrā yathāyaṃ padīpo
idampi sanghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.'*

'Arahants have exhausted all old wholesome and unwholesome kamma. New wholesome and unwholesome kamma do not occur in them. They have exhausted the seeds of rebirth, that is, ignorance, craving, and force of

kamma. They have no expectation of a future life. All their mentality-materiality will cease like a lighted oil lamp, when the oil and wick are exhausted. By this truth may all beings be happy and free from all dangers.'

This is an assertion of truth. By the assertion of this truth all the people in Vesāli became free from dangers. Vesāli was a city visited by drought, famine, evil yakkhas (lower devas), and epidemic diseases. The people of Vesāli asked the Buddha to help them, and he taught them the Ratana Sutta as a way to become free from dangers.

An arahant's offering is the most superior because it produces no result in the future. If there is no future life, there will be no rebirth, decay, disease and death. This is the most superior. This is the second type of offering mentioned at the beginning of this Dhamma talk: an offering which produces no fruition.

On the other hand, if due to an offering there is a good result, such as happiness in the human realm, happiness in the deva realm, or happiness in the brahma realm, then there is still suffering. The very least is that they are still subject to rebirth, subject to disease, subject to decay, and subject to death. If the giver still has attachment to sensual objects, animate and inanimate, then when those objects are destroyed or have died, there will be in him sorrow, lamentation, physical suffering, mental suffering, and despair.

Please consider this question: Can we say that an offering is superior when it produces rebirth, decay, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, physical suffering, mental suffering, and despair? Please consider also this

question: Can we say that an offering is superior when it produces no result: no rebirth, no decay, no disease, no death, no sorrow, no lamentation, no physical suffering, no mental suffering, and no despair? This is why the Buddha praised the second type of offering as the most superior. Now you may understand the meaning of this Dhamma talk. At the beginning of this Dhamma talk I mentioned two types of offering:

1. The offering which produces full fruition,
2. The offering produces no fruition.

Which type of offering do you prefer? Now you know the answer.

But if the giver is not an arahant, how can he then make the second type of offering? In the Nandamātā Sutta mentioned before, the Buddha taught that there are two ways he can do this: when the receiver is free from attachment, anger, and delusion, or when he is trying to destroy attachment, anger, and delusion. You can say that the offering is also most superior, if the giver too is trying to destroy attachment, anger, and delusion; if he at the time of offering practises Vipassanā, that is, if:

- He discerns his own mentality-materiality, and discerns their impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*) nature;
- He discerns the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of external mentality-materiality, especially the receiver's mentality-materiality.

- He discerns the ultimate materiality (*paramattha-rūpa*) of the offerings.

When he looks at the four elements in the offerings, he sees the kalāpas easily. Then when he analyses the kalāpas, he discerns eight types of materiality: earth-element, water-element, fire-element, air-element, colour, smell, taste and nutritive-essence. They are materiality produced by temperature (*utuja-rūpa*). They are produced by the fire-element in each kalāpa. They are the generations of the fire-element. Furthermore, he discerns the impermanent, suffering, and non-self nature of the materiality produced by temperature (*utuja-rūpa*). If he is able to do this type of Vipassanā, his attachment, anger and delusion are suppressed at the time of offering, and also, his offering will usually produce any result, and so we can say that this type of offering also is the most superior.

He can do this type of Vipassanā before, after, or while offering. But his Vipassanā must be strong and powerful. He must have practised up to the stage of at least Knowledge of Dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*). Only then can he practise this type of Vipassanā. We should not miss this opportunity either. This opportunity exists only in this dispensation. But you may ask, how can we make this type of offering if we have no insight-knowledge? I would like to suggest that you then make your offering with the following thought: ‘May this offering be the supporting cause to reach Nibbāna.’ This is because the Buddha many times taught to make offerings with the wish for Nibbāna.

I would like to conclude my Dhamma talk by repeating the stanza from the Ratana Sutta:

*'Khīnaṃ purāṇaṃ nava natthi sambhavaṃ
virattacittā'yatike bhavasmiṃ
te khīṇabijā avirūhichandā
nibbanti dhīrā yathāyaṃ padīpo
idampi sanghe ratanaṃ paṇītaṃ
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.'*

'Arahants have exhausted all old wholesome and unwholesome kamma. New wholesome and unwholesome kamma do not occur in them. They have exhausted the seeds of rebirth, that is, ignorance, craving, and force of kamma. They have no expectation of a future life. All their mentality-materiality will cease like a lighted oil lamp, when the oil and wick are exhausted. By this truth may all beings be happy and free from all dangers.'

May all beings be well and happy.



Glossary of Untranslated Pāli Terms

This glossary contains the Pāli terms left untranslated in the text. They have been left untranslated because the English translation has, in some way or other, been considered awkward or inadequate, if not misleading. The definitions have been kept as concise as at all possible, and refer to the meaning of the terms as they are used in the text of this book: according to the Theravāda tradition. For more extensive explanations, the reader is referred to the text itself, where most of the terms are, at some time or other, discussed. (An asterisk indicates which of the terms are discussed.)

Some of the terms in this glossary do have an adequate translation, but have been retained in the Pāli when in compounds, as in for example, ‘ānāpāna-jhāna’, rather than ‘in-and-out-breath jhāna’, for obvious reasons.

Abhidhamma the third of what are called the Three Baskets (Tipiṭaka) of the Theravāda Canon; teachings of the Buddha on a far deeper level than in the suttas; deals with only ultimate reality; seen in Vipassanā meditation. (cf. sutta)

ānāpāna* in-and-out-breath; subject for Samatha meditation and later Vipassanā. (cf. Samatha)

arahant* person who has attained ultimate in meditation, i.e. eradicated all defilements, at his or her death (Parinibbāna) there is no rebirth. (cf. kamma)

Bhante Venerable Sir.

bhavaṅga* continuity of identical consciousnesses, broken only when thought-processes occur, the object is that of near death consciousness in past-life. (cf. Abhidhamma)

bhikkhu/bhikkhunī Buddhist monk/nun; bhikkhu with two hundred and twenty-seven main precepts, and hundreds of lesser precepts to observe; in Theravāda bhikkhunī lineage no longer extant.

bodhisatta* a person who has vowed to become a Buddha; the ideal in Mahāyāna tradition; he is a bodhisatta for innumerable lives prior to his enlightenment, after which he is a Buddha. (cf. Buddha)

brahmā* inhabitant of one of twenty in thirty-one realms described in Buddhist cosmology, invisible to human eye, visible in light of concentration; the realms are very much higher than human realm. (cf. deva, peta)

Buddha* a person fully enlightened without a teacher, who has by himself discovered and teaches the Four Noble Truths. (cf. bodhisatta, Paccekabuddha)

deva inhabitant of realm just above human realm; invisible to human-eye, visible in light of concentration. (cf. brahmā, peta)

Dhamma* (capitalized) the Teachings of the Buddha; the noble truth.

dhamma* (uncapitalized) phenomenon; state; mind-object.

jhāna* eight increasingly advanced and subtle states of concentration on a specific object, with mind aware and increasingly pure. (cf. Samatha)

kalāpa* small particle; the smallest unit of materiality seen in conventional reality; invisible to human eye, visible in light of concentration.

kamma* (Sanskrit: *karma*) action; force from volition which makes good actions produce good results, and bad actions produce bad results.

kaṣiṇa* meditation object which represents a quality in conventional reality, e.g. earth, colour, space and light; used for Samatha meditation. (cf. Samatha)

Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition prevalent in China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Nepal, and Bhutan, and the Tibetan tradition. (The majority of the listeners at these talks were Mahāyāna monks and nuns.) (cf. Theravāda)

Mahāthera Buddhist monk of twenty years standing or more.

Nibbāna* (Sanskrit: *Nirvana*) final enlightenment; the cessation element; an ultimate reality, attained after discerning and surpassing the ultimate realities of mentality-materiality; it is seen after

the insight knowledges have been matured; it is non-self and uniquely permanent and peaceful: not a place. (Language is at a loss to describe Nibbāna, because Nibbāna is beyond the range of concepts upon which language relies.)

nimitta* sign; image upon which meditator concentrates; product of the mind, which depends on perception and level of concentration. (cf. kasiṇa)

parikamma-nimitta preparatory sign in meditation.

uggaha-nimitta taken-up sign, image which is exact mental replica of object of meditation.

paṭibhāga-nimitta purified and clear version of uggaha-nimitta, appears at stable perception and concentration.

Paccekabuddha person enlightened without a teacher, who has by himself discovered the Four Noble Truths, but does not teach. (cf. Buddha)

Pāḷi ancient Indian language spoken by the Buddha; all Theravāda texts are in Pāḷi, language is otherwise not extant.

pāramī ten pāramīs: generosity, virtue, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, truthfulness, determination, loving-kindness, and equanimity; qualities developed always for the benefit of others.

Parinibbāna death of a Buddha, a Paccekabuddha, and all other Arahants, after which no more rebirth, no more materiality or mentality. (cf. arahant, Nibbāna)

peta inhabitant of realm lower than human realm, but higher than animals, invisible to human eye, visible in light of concentration.

rūpa/arūpa* materiality/immaturity.

Samatha* serenity; practice of concentrating the mind on an object, to develop higher and higher states of concentration, whereby the mind becomes increasingly serene. (cf. jhāna, Vipassanā)

saṅgha multitude, assembly; bhikkhus of past, present and future, worldwide, as a group; separate group of bhikkhus, e.g. bhikkhus in one monastery. (cf. bhikkhu)

sīla moral factors of the Noble Eightfold Path: right speech, right action, right livelihood; to be observed and cultivated by all Buddhists to varying degrees. (cf. bhikkhu)

sutta single discourse in the second basket of what is called the Three Baskets (Tipiṭaka) of Pāli Canon; teachings of the Buddha on a practical level; deals with only conventional truth. (cf. Abhidhamma)

Tathāgata one who has gone thus; the epithet used by the Buddha when referring to himself.

Theravāda Buddhist tradition prevalent in Sri-Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Laos, Cambodia. (The Pa-Auk Sayadaw is a Theravāda monk.) (cf. Mahāyāna)

Vipassanā insight, discernment of specific characteristics of materiality and mentality, causes and

results, in ultimate reality, and their general characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. (cf. Abhidhamma, arahant, Nibbāna)

Visuddhimagga (*The Path of Purification*) authoritative and extensive treatise on Buddhist meditation, compiled from ancient, orthodox texts, by Indian scholar monk, Venerable Buddhghosa.

Appendix 2

For Information Regarding Centres Teaching the Pa-Auk System

MYANMAR

Contact:

The Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw,
Pa-Auk Meditation Centre,
c/o Major Kan Saing (Rtd),
653, Lower Main Road,
Mawlamyine, Mon State.
Myanmar.

SRI LANKA

Contact:

The Venerable N. Ariyadhamma Mahāthera,
Sri Gunawardana Yogasramaya,
Galduwa, Kahawa, 80312
Sri Lanka.

MALAYSIA

Contact:

The Venerable Vajiradhamma,
Bhaddekaratta Hermitage,
c/o 43, Jalan Bahagia Satu,
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Johor, Malaysia.