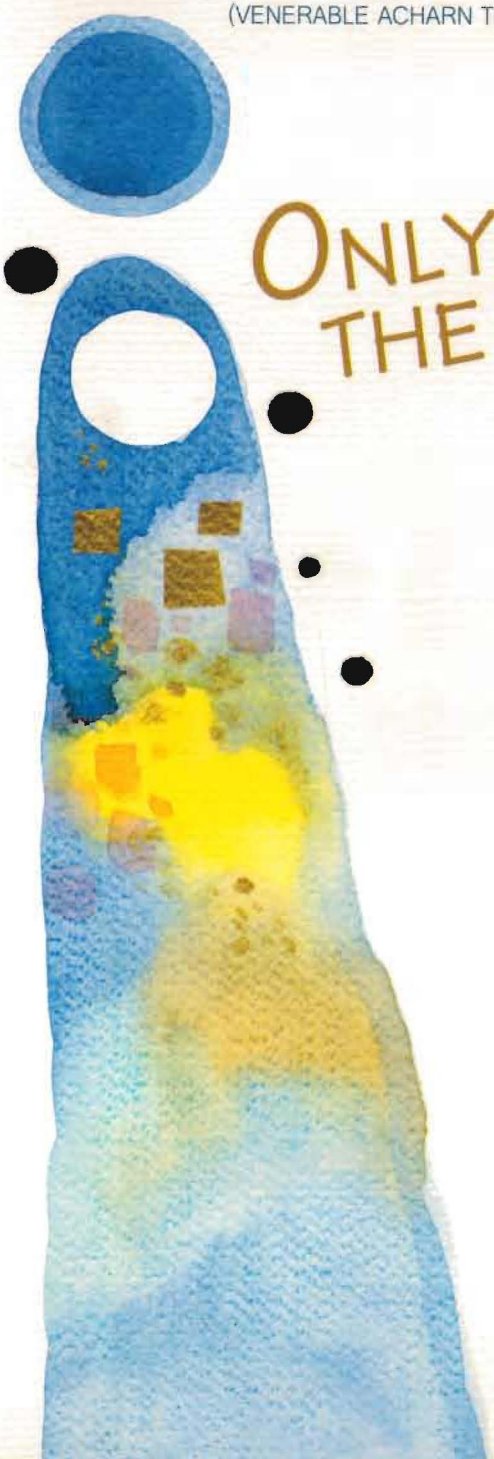
Phra Nirodharṅsī Gambhīrapaññcåriya
(VENERABLE ACHARN THATE DESARAṄSĪ)



ONLY THE WORLD ENDS

Translated from the Thai
by
Jayasāro Bhikkhu

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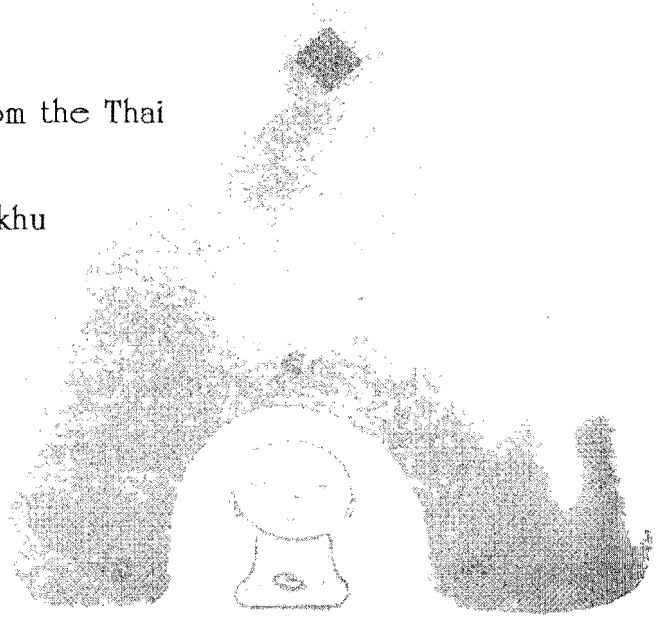

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FOREWORD

The author wrote this slim volume as a guide for wayfarers, those people with the conviction that the Teaching of the Buddha provide results in accordance with causes, that if one studies the Teaching and puts them into practice with firm faith and resolve, one will be able to verify their truth for oneself.

A first printing of 10,000 copies of the Thai edition "สิ้นโลก เหลือธรรม" was issued on the 15th November 1986. The book proved to be of interest to many people, and has been widely disseminated, particularly amongst wayfarers, so that there have been four subsequent reprintings.

Jayasāro Bhikkhu, one of the Western

monks living in the forest monasteries of North-East Thailand, was amongst those who read and were inspired by this book. He formed the wish to make the teachings it contains available for Buddhists of other countries to be used as a guide in their practice of **Dhamma** and so asked permission to produce an English translation. The author considered it a worthy and useful endeavour, and so granted permission accordingly.

(Phra Nirodharṅsī Gambhīrapaññcåriya)
Wat HinMark Peng
The17th July 1987

คำปรารภในการพิมพ์ครั้งที่ ๓

ในมหามงคลสมัยที่พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัวฯ ผู้ทรงพระคุณอันประเสริฐ ทรงเจริญพระชนมายุ ๘๐ พรรษา ในวันที่ ๕ ธันวาคม พ.ศ. ๒๕๕๐ พุทธบริษัทคณะหนึ่งมีกุศลศรัทธาจัดพิมพ์หนังสือ ***สิ้นโลก เหลือธรรม*** *(ภาคภาษาอังกฤษ)* ของพระเดชพระคุณท่านเจ้าคุณพระราชนิโรธรังสี คัมภีรปัญญาวิศิษฏ์ (หลวงปู่เทสก์ เทสรังสี) แจกเป็นธรรมทานแก่ผู้ที่ใคร่ต่อการศึกษาและการปฏิบัติตามพระธรรมวินัยของพระพุทธเจ้า ทั้งชาวไทยและชาวต่างชาติ และเพื่อเป็นการแสดง กตัญญูกตเวทิตารำลึกถึงพระมหาเถระฝ่ายกรรมฐาน ผู้เป็นพระคณาจารย์ของพุทธบริษัทที่ยินดีเลื่อมใสในการปฏิบัติ ๒ รูป คือ

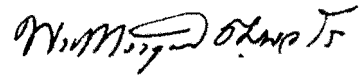
๑. พระเดชพระคุณ ท่านเจ้าคุณพระราชนิโรธรังสี คัมภีรปัญญาวิศิษฏ์ (หลวงปู่เทสก์ เทสรังสี พ.ศ. ๒๔๔๕ - ๒๕๓๗) ผู้รจนาหนังสือเล่มนี้

๒. พระเดชพระคุณ ท่านเจ้าคุณพระโพธิญาณเถระ (หลวงพ่อชา สุภทฺโท พ.ศ. ๒๔๖๑ - ๒๕๓๕) พระอุปัชฌาย์ของท่านพระอาจารย์ ชยสาโรภิกฺขุ ผู้แปลหนังสือนี้

การจัดพิมพ์ครั้งนี้ท่านผู้แปลได้เมตตาตรวจแก้ไขปรับปรุงให้สมบูรณ์ยิ่งขึ้นกว่าการจัดพิมพ์ครั้งก่อน นับเป็นโชคดีอย่างยิ่งแก่

พุทธบริษัทชาวต่างชาติที่จะได้หนังสือธรรมปฏิบัติที่อ่านเข้าใจง่าย ทั้งมีความหมายลุ่มลึกและสามารถปฏิบัติตามได้ เป็นคู่มือและแนวทางศึกษาปฏิบัติกรรมฐานที่ถูกต้องต่อไป

ในนามของคณะผู้จัดพิมพ์ ขออ้างอิงอัญเชิญอำนาจคุณพระพุทธ พระธรรม พระสงฆ์ ตลอดทั้งบารมีธรรมของพระเดชพระคุณ หลวงปู่เทสก์ เทสรังสี และหลวงพ่อชา สุภทฺโท พึงอำนวยสรรพสิริสวัสดิ์พิพัฒมงคล ถวายพระพรชัยมงคลแด่พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัวฯ ผู้ทรงพระคุณอันประเสริฐ ให้ทรงพระเจริญยั่งยืนด้วยพระชนมายุกาล มีพระสุขภาพพลานามัยแข็งแรง ปราศจากโรคาพยาธิภัยอันตรายทั้งปวง ทรงสถิตมั่นอยู่ในสิริราชสมบัติเป็นมิ่งขวัญแก่อาณาประชาราษฎร์แห่งสยามประเทศตลอดจิรัฏฐิติกาล ทั้งขอให้ทุกท่านที่มีส่วนร่วมแห่งความสำเร็จนี้ จงมีความสุขเกษมสำราญโดยทั่วหน้ากันทุกเมื่อเทอญฯ



(พระอธิการทรงวุฒิ ธมฺมวโร)
เจ้าอาวาสวัดอาจาโรรังสี
๕ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐

Preface to the third printing

To commemorate the greatly auspicious occasion that the His Virtuous Majesty the King celebrates his 80th birthday on the 5th December 2007, a Buddhist group has had the wholesome intention to print the book 'Only the World Ends' by Phra Rajanirodharangsee (Luang Boo Thate Desarangsee) for free distribution to all those interested in studying and practising the teachings of the Lord Buddha, both Thais and people from other countries.

Their wish is that the printing of this book is also be an expression of gratitude to two great and respected forest monks

1. Phra Rajanirodharangsee (Luang Boo Thate Desarangsee 1902-1994), the author of this book.
2. Phra Bodhinyana Thera (Luang Por Cha Subhaddo 1918-1992)

The translator of the this book has kindly revised and improved his original work. It is great good fortune for Buddhists from around the world to have a Dhamma

book that is easy to understand, and yet both profound and practical. It may serve as a handbook for the correct study and practice of Dhamma.

In the name of the sponsors of this publication, may the power of the virtues of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, together with the power of the merits of Luang Boo Thate and Luang Por Cha, bestow all blessings on His Virtuous Majesty the King. May he live a long life, healthy and free from all disease, dwelling firmly in his position as an inspiration to all the Thai people. And finally, may all those that have contributed to this publication enjoy long lasting happiness and peace.

(Phra Adhikara Songvuddhi Dhammavaro)
Abbot of Wat Ajarorangsee
5th December 2007

Wat Ajarorangsee
T. Rai, A. Phananikom
Sakhon Nakon 47120

Phra Nirodharnsi Gambhirapaññcåriya
(B.E. 2445 - 2537)

ONLY THE WORLD ENDS

The Buddha appeared in the world as the Supreme Teacher by attaining complete enlightenment through his own unaided efforts. Once awakened, he taught the truths that he had realized to all humanity. The things he taught were marvellous, but rational and free of superstition; they could be understood by all those who dwelt on and contemplated their meaning. The Buddha never forced anyone to believe in him or adopt his teachings. Those who listened to and pondered over his reasoning, feeling satisfied and in agreement with it, freely became his disciples through inspiration and conviction. This is not always the case in other religions and sects, some of which actually forbid analytical assessment of their doctrines. Buddhism

challenges all to scrutinize its teachings to the utmost and examine its arguments until one sees their truth clearly for oneself, and thus may profess to being a Buddhist in freedom. Consequently, the views and practices of all those who have accepted and taken up the teachings will be in concord, not through coercion or prior agreement, but in accordance with the following:

Stage I : Conviction in *Kamma** and its results

"Kammasssakā kammadāyadā kammayonī kammabandhū kammapaṭisaranā yaṁ kammaṁ karissanti kalyāṇaṁ vā pāpakaṁ vā tassa dāyadā bhavissanti" Firm and steadfast conviction in these six points for all one's life is needed.

As soon in our lives as we develop any self-consciousness, we devote ourselves to the performance of *Kammas* - if not by means of the body, then with speech or mind. It is impossible to remain inactive. This is called *Kammasakā.*

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* **Kamma** - any action, speech or mental process characterized by volition, born of ignorance.

Every action produces results, if not good then evil; if not productive of merit, then of harm. It is unavoidable. Thus body, speech and mind, having performed Kammas, must experience their results. This is called *kammadāyadā*. The result of our good Kammas will lead our body, speech and mind to be born in a happy condition here and in future lives. The result of our evil Kammas will lead our body, speech and mind to be born in a miserable condition here and in future lives. This is called *kammayonī*. The Kammas performed by body, speech and mind in previous existences dictate the varying circumstances in the present existence. This is called *kammabandhū*.

We are born because of Kammas, and once born we cannot remain motionless and inactive. There must always be action in order

to keep ourselves alive: if not good action, then evil. As we must depend on those actions to sustain our existence, Kamma is called *kammapaṭisaranā*. Thus a person should decide for himself what Kammas to perform, for good and evil Kammas belong to no one but ourselves. It is Kamma alone that causes the diversity among beings: no other person, no other thing possesses that power. Thus it was said *"kalyāṇaṁ vā pāpakaṁ vā tassa dāyadā bhavissanti."*

These six teachings about Kamma must be trusted in resolutely by Buddhists for all their lives.

Human beings are born because Kammas have not yet been terminated. The old Kammas that brought us to birth lead us to perform new Kammas, and these new Kammas in turn are the cause for rebirth and the continued arising

of *Kammas* in future lives. Also, all *Kammas* arises from this single stream of bodily action, speech and mind, and so it is said that *Kammas* are of all the same stock or tribe; they are all related to one another (*kammābandhu*).

One who has conviction in *Kamma* and its results in the ways explained is called a Buddhist, or one who has reached the first stage of the Three-fold refuge.

Stage II : Constant upholding of the Five Precepts

If one has conviction in *Kamma* and its results, then it is extremely easy to keep the Five Precepts.

The Buddha forbade the performance of evil, and in refraining from evil actions, one at the same time upholds the precepts.

The Buddha gathered all the unwholesome *Kammas*, all the different forms of evil, under just five headings. Whatever and whenever an action is performed, it must lie within the sphere of these five categories.

The mind is the initiator of all things and so the Buddha taught mental restraint.

The mind decides to refrain from causing the death of living beings.

The mind decides to refrain from appropriating the belongings of others.

The mind decides to refrain from sexual misconduct.

The mind decides to refrain from lying, coarse and divisive speech.

The mind decides to refrain from the taking of intoxicants.

A person who is able to uphold these five principles is called one who is able to keep the Five Precepts. They embody conduct that contributes to the happiness of all humanity. One who is unable to refrain from those actions is called virtueless, and his conduct contributes to the unhappiness and distress of humanity. Thus all the sages, exemplified by the Buddha, have refrained from every kind of

evil and harmful action and then taught and encouraged mankind to follow their example.

One who believes in kammas and its results as explained, and protects body, speech and mind with the Five Precepts, has penetrated Buddhism to the second level. Now that person must determine subsequently to cleanse his mind through the practice of *samādhi* (firm one-pointedness of mind). But if one has not yet realized the truth of the basic principles of Buddhism, if one's views are not in agreement with the teachings, believing for example that Kammas that one has performed can be passed on to others, or their effects mitigated by others, then how could one possibly expect to cleanse one's mind through meditation?

Some people say that the precepts are concerned with bodily action and speech alone, and that the mind lies within the province of

samadhi; whatever actions are performed or words spoken, one's samadhi is unaffected. In other words they say that body and mind are quite separate. I really can't grasp this point. No matter how much I contemplate it, I just can't understand how it could be so. May I show my ignorance a little here? Suppose a person is going to commit a murder or robbery. Firstly there must be an unwholesome Kamma arising in the mind, then he conceals himself and then when a suitable occasion presents itself, he kills or steals in accordance with his original intention. Now at the time when that person forms the intention to kill or steal, and when he conceals himself, even though he is not breaking any precepts, isn't his mind in an unwholesome state and primed in every way to do evil? If the person's mind is protected by mindfulness and he restrains himself from any

evil action and emerges from his hiding place, then no precepts broken. So we can see that the mind is of central importance. It is the mind that is the fundamental cause for the breaking or upholding of the precepts. That being so, how could one possibly assert that in the maintenance of virtuous conduct one may discount the role of the mind?

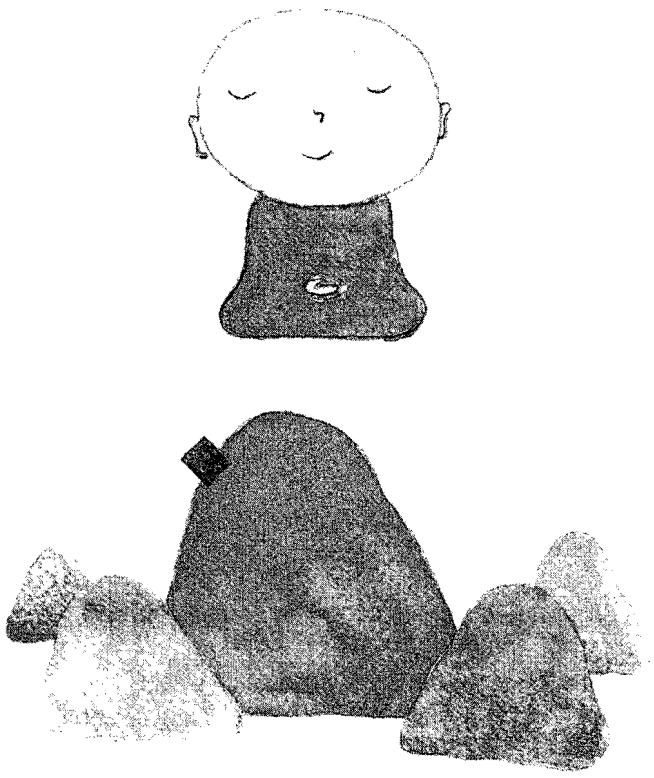
The Buddha taught that "All things (dhammas) have mind as their chief, are preceded by mind, are mind-made." All speech, all conversation arises from the mind. There can be no discussion of *Dhamma** that does not deal with the mind. The phrase "all dhammas are preceded by mind" is particularly clear. The words "all dhammas" cover every kind of action. Good actions are called *kusalā dhamma* and bad actions are called *akusalā*

*The Teaching of the Buddha and the Truth to which they refer.

dhamma. Neutral actions, neither good nor bad, are called *avyākatā dhamma*. These are abbreviated as 'merit', 'harm' and 'neither merit nor harm' (as for this last point, there is not a person in the world who doesn't create harm of one sort or another).

In my investigation of the causal nature of things, nowhere have I ever come across the teaching that precepts are the sole concern of body and speech, and samadhi the sole concern of mind. If my recall of the books is inaccurate or if I've misread them through my stupidity, then I have fallen foul of my own limitations.

There is even a case of a monk who wanted to disrobe because he felt that the disciplinary rules were too numerous to be all kept purely. The Buddha said, "Do not disrobe. If you think there are too many rules then just look after



your mind." There, you see? Not only did the Buddha teach that in maintaining virtuous conduct the mind must not be neglected, but he even said that protection of the mind alone was sufficient. So I'm quite baffled as to how anyone could keep precepts while ignoring the mind.

A layperson may keep five precepts, eight or ten, but the latter may only be kept on occasions*. Similarly with the two hundred and twenty seven precepts (of a monk): a layperson may keep any of the rules he wishes. The Buddha never forbade it, but one shouldn't make any formal vows.

In one of his former existences the Buddha was a potter called Jotika. Jotika's parents were both blind and he supported them by bartering the pots he made for food. One

*It involves the abstention from the use of money.

day, Konagamana Buddha (forgive me if I've remembered it wrongly) sent some monks to ask Jotika for roofing material to repair the Sangha's lodgings. Jotika stripped the roof off of his own home and offered it to them. That year Jotika's house had the sky as its roof for the entire Rainy Season, but not a drop of rain fell into it.

One day the king of the land invited Konagamana Buddha to take his daily meal in the palace and, when the meal was over, he formally invited the Buddha to spend the coming Rain Retreat in a grove in the Royal Park. But the Buddha said, "Your Majesty, I have already accepted an invitation from Jotika the Potter." The king then said, "Am I not the mightiest personage in the realm? For what reason do you refuse my invitation? What has this man Jotika to commend him?" So the

Buddha related to the king the whole story of Jotika's good conduct, and when the king had heard it he was greatly impressed and inspired. He ordered his attendants to load up ox-carts with various goods such as rice, pulses, sesame seeds, ghee, butter and oil, and take them to Jotika. When Jotika saw all the cart-loads of goods arriving he asked who had sent them, and the royal attendants answered that they were a gift from the king. Jotika said, "The king has many burdens and many responsibilities. As for me I only have to make enough to feed three people. It's no great trouble. Please respectfully inform His Majesty that I request permission to return all these things to him."

Jotika was a person of strong conviction. He would not even dig the earth to obtain clay for his pots*. He would take the trouble to look

*Refraining from digging unbroken earth is one of the two hundred and twenty seven precepts of a monk.

for rat mounds and collapsed stretches of river bank (where the earth had already been disturbed). If a virtuous layperson could keep such a refined monastic training rule, then the coarser rules should not be so difficult.

It's as if the Buddha laid down the Five Precepts as a standard for the world. Any good conduct entails abstention from the five prohibited modes of conduct, and any evil conduct must be based on them. These is no escape from these five points.

One who is to attain to the Three-fold Refuge must hold firmly to five basic principles:

1. Being mindful of the Buddha.
2. Being mindful of the Dhamma.
3. Being mindful of the Sangha.
4. Not putting faith in rites and superstitions. Having conviction in *kamma* and its results, believing that good actions have

good results, and evil actions evil results. Not believing that any external supernatural agency can protect one from dangers or disaster.

5. Restricting material support to Buddhism.

The laity can formally resolve to keep five of eight precepts. As for the ten precepts or two hundred and twenty seven, they may keep particular rules but should not make any formal declaration.

The precepts of virtuous conduct consist of a set number of prohibitions against unwholesome actions, but they don't limit the number of such actions that laypeople may refrain from. This applies to monks and novices also. The Buddha laid down that laypeople should keep five or eight precepts, novices ten, and monks two hundred and twenty

seven, merely as a basic standard, as a way of marking the differences in station between laity, novices and monks.

Human beings meet so much evil and unwholesomeness; it seems that we can hardly move an inch without making some bad kamma. The Buddha gave us the following concise instructions, "Go to the mind. Before anything else, take hold of the thinker..."

The mind forms the desire to perform harm with the body and so directs it to kill, steal or commit sexual misconduct. The mind forms the desire to perform harm with the tongue and so directs it to lie, to speak coarsely, to scold or to gossip. The mind forms the desire to perform evil with the body by making it go crazy, so it has the body get alcohol, pour it down the throat and swallow it, allowing it act in various crazy ways.

On the other hand, if the mind shrinks from harmful actions with intelligent shame and fear, if it sees the suffering inherent in the intention to acts in such harmful ways and forms no desire to do so, then body and speech become virtuous.

If a person sees the mind present in bodily action and speech and is able to maintain awareness of it, he or she will see all that all harmful actions, all virtuous conduct, all phenomena in the world arise from this same one mind. If there were no mind there could be no evil, no virtue, nothing at all. To keep all the precepts purely, we must hold to and look after the mind.

I once heard a monk say, "Monks have two hundred and twenty seven precepts. You laypeople have only five. You should look after them well in case they get broken. If you

break one precept, four will remain; if you break two, there will be three left. If three are broken, only two will remain; and if four are broken, only one will be left. If you break all five, that's it! Monks on the other hand have two hundred and twenty seven. Even if a monk breaks as many as ten, he still has loads left." That monk's words show that he was merely keeping the precepts on the level of body and speech, and not on the mind level. He didn't realize that the mind has already become unwholesome through its intention to transgress training rules. Still, it's quite amusing to hear somebody boasting of the number of precepts they keep as evidence of their superior virtue.

In fact, the Monastic Discipline that the Buddha laid down pertains to body, speech and mind. The bodily and verbal expressions indicate the mind, that which thinks and

conceives and then compels body and speech to act accordingly. The Buddha established the Monastic Discipline as a path of practice for the monks and novices to follow, and it is a great blessing to us. He forbade the performance of actions bad, unsightly or inappropriate for contemplatives, for the benefit of the monks themselves, not for anyone else's, not even his own. The Buddha having become a refuge for those of us who had been unable to find a refuge, points out the way. It is an immeasurable blessing!

It is difficult for anyone who has not penetrated to an awareness of the mind to keep the precepts. If they are kept, it will be as a burden, in the way that a cowherd looks after his cows, merely looking forward to nightfall when he can herd them into the shed and go to relax and have a good rest. Such a person

doesn't realize that we keep precepts for the purity of body, speech and mind. The more precepts we keep and the longer we keep them, the greater the purity. If we can keep them for as long as we live, then that's excellent. We will be able to abandon all evil actions in this life alone.

Not being aquainted with the virtue (*sīla*) that is our nature and not understanding the virtue that consists of the acts of abstention, which prohibit the performance of evil, we blame the Buddha for laying down more rules that we can keep. Some people say, "The longer you remain in the robes and the more you study the Discipline, the more prohibitions you run up against- this is an offence, that is an offence- and so the more you accumulate bad kamma. It would be better to ordain for just three or seven days, then you wouldn't have

the chance to break too many rules." It is truly saddening to hear that sort of opinion expressed. Buddhism has been promulgated in Thailand for more than two thousand years now, and yet the light of the Dhamma has still not shone into such people's hearts at all. It's really pathetic. They are like tortoises guarding a lotus, impervious to its beauty.

When it penetrates to the heart, we no longer have to look after our virtue; it looks after us. Whatever posture we are in, whether standing, walking, sitting or lying down, virtue is alert, restraining, preventing transgression. Even if the thought to do something evil arises in the mind, there is the knowing of that thought, and a feeling of shame and shrinking from the proposed action, before anyone else is aware of what is happening. How could feelings of anger, ill-will and vindictiveness arise in the

heart when it has become brimful of kindness and compassion?

Virtue is normality of body, speech and mind. Once the mind loses its normality, then bodily action and speech must also, because they are under the sway of mind. Therefore those who truly wish to attain virtue and penetrate the Buddhist Teachings, must train their minds in meditation.

Stage III : The Practice of meditation

The practice of meditation does not go beyond this same training of bodily action, speech and mind. Whatever method is employed to develop samadhi, it must encompass the training of all these three things for it to be authentic Buddhist meditation. The sole concern of Buddhism is body, speech and mind. They are the foundation-and teachings on virtue, samadhi and wisdom do not transcend it. Whether we're speaking of Buddhism in general, the three-fold training, or the stages of enlightenment and *nibbāna*, we do not go beyond body, speech and mind. As long as we

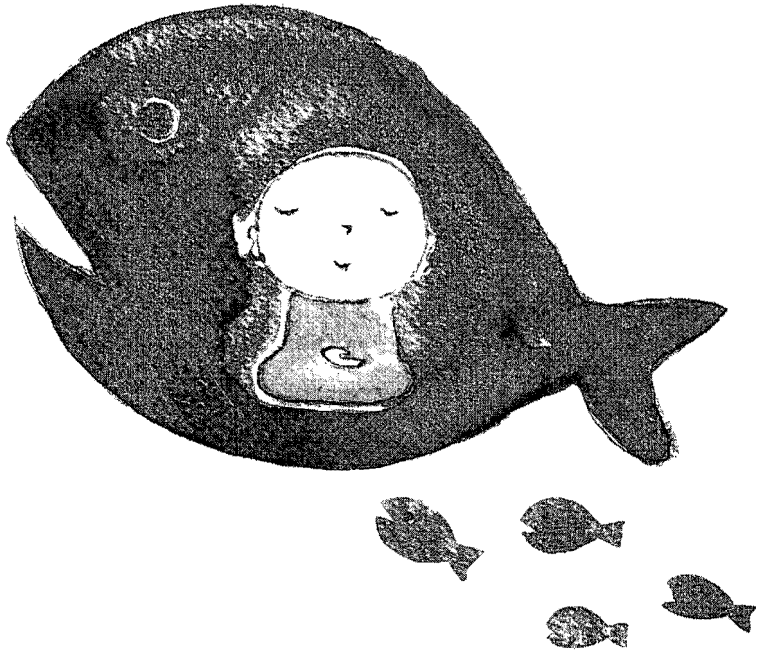
are dealing with the conventional level of reality, everything short of the unmediated nibbana of the arahant after death, it is inevitable.

In the practice of meditation, take up *maraṇasati* (the recollection of death) as the preliminary object. Consider death thus: "One day or another I will certainly die, because all life is ended by death. When I die I will have to leave everything behind, including all that I love and cherish." Using the recollection of death as the preliminary meditation object is the ultimate skillful means, because contemplation of the breath eventually merges into death meditation, as does the contemplation on unattractiveness.

After contemplating death, we feel no attachment to things. All that remains is the mind itself, in the state that we call 'cleansed'.

There comes a moment when the mind merges into the state of samadhi, that is to say it stops motionless, devoid of all thoughts and ideation, but aware. The duration of the state has no fixed limit. It will depend on the strength of the mind.

Sometimes in the course of cleansing the mind, when it has become divorced from all mental activity as I have explained, it will suddenly drop into a state in which all kinds of vision arise. If so, don't grasp onto them- they are a serious obstacle. If you grasp at then, samadhi will degenerate. But most people grasp at them anyway because they take those visions to be strange and marvellous. Some teachers even advise adopting them as one's meditation object. I don't know whether this is because they have never seen or experienced these things themselves, or whether they just don't realize their destructiveness.



Some people practice meditation using *ānāpānasati* as their preliminary object, contemplating the in-and-out breaths. If, at the end of an inhalation we didn't exhale we would die; if at the end of an exhalation we didn't inhale, we would die. Our death is such a small thing, just an in-breath or an out-breath.

Then taking hold of the mind, the breath disappears by itself without the meditator realizing it, leaving the mind in solitude, radiantly clear. If mindfulness is strong, that clear, bright mind will last for a long time. But if mindfulness is weak it will last for a shorter time and may merge into *bhavanga*.*

There are many variations in the way the mind enters bhavanga. In one case as the mind begins to unify, it indulges in the bliss and

*life continuum, the functional state of subconciousness.

tranquillity that arise, and so enters bhavanga where it loses all self-awareness and experiences a state like deep sleep. Awareness just completely disappears and the condition may endure for many hours. Some people, at the moment of entering bhavanga see all kinds of visions, some of them true, some of them false; on emerging from that state, some they can remember and some they cannot. Other people experience an abrupt shift into that passive state. There are many variations depending on the character of the meditator.

Although it is true that bhavanga is not the path leading to freedom from suffering, it may lie on the path to purity. Those who are training the mind are bound to enter it in the initial stages of samadhi development. There is nothing anyone can do to prevent it happening if mindfulness becomes weak. If it

happens frequently until you become familiar with it and see that its not the right path, things rectify themselves. Sitting unconsciously isn't so bad anyway -- at least it stops mental agitation for a while! It's better than sitting thinking about this and that, day and night.

If we don't see a thing for ourselves, we don't know what it is. Having acquired a thorough knowledge of something, we don't get fooled by it again.

Some meditators focus on *asubha* (unattractiveness) as their preliminary object. They may contemplate the whole body from head to foot as begin unattractive, or else particular external features such as head hair, body hair or nails, or else one of the internal organs such as the liver, intestines or mesentery. In every case the contemplation is continued until one clearly perceives the object as unattractive, putrescent

and offensive. To begin with, one should contemplate by means of comparison. Taking an external object, such as the swollen corpse of an animal or a dead human being, one reflects that one's own body will reach that same state. Following from this reflection there ensures a progressively clearer perception of the nature of the body that culminates in a calm and sobering sadness at which the mind converges in samadhi, motionless and one-pointed. If mindfulness is weak, the mind, taking delight in the tranquillity and bliss of the state, will enter bhavanga where it will exhibit the states that I have mentioned in the sections on maranasati and anapanasati.

When the preliminary object is discarded and the mind becomes still and impassive, some people experience various kinds of *nimitta**

*mind-made phenomena, devoid of any external referent.

- vision: a bright light like that of the sun or moon, or else celestial beings, ghosts and spirits. Out of delusion, some meditators grasps onto these visions, causing the state of samadhi to degenerate and disappear.

When nimitta-visions arise, certain Ajahns teach their disciples to consider them as stages of attainment, as the four levels of the Noble Path commencing with 'Stream Entry'. They say that to see the nimitta-vision of a small light the size of a firefly is to attain the *'Sotapanna'* stage, a slightly larger light the size of a star is to achieve the *'Sakadāgāmi'* stage. To see a larger light than that, one the size of the moon, is to become an *'Anāgāmi'* and to see a large light, the size of the sun, is *'Arahatship'*.

Taking an external light as one's standard rather than the degree of purity in the heart is to be far from the truth. When the disciple who

has the desire to achieve different levels of attainment speaks with the Ajahn, he is asked about those lights, and so takes himself to have actually realized those attainments. However, the Ajahn doesn't ask about defilements and the disciple has no idea how much defilement is present in him, or how much has been brought to an end. Then, in a moment of anger, his face goes beetroot-red and his 'enlightenment' vanishes completely.

For some people who have been taught to concentrate on nimitta-visions, they arise in the beginning of practice but subsequently not at all. That being so, how could they be anything real? Most nimittas arise from bhavanga. And how could bhavanga be the path when it is specifically obstructive to it?

It is true that non-Buddhists, rishis and yogis for instance, practice samadhi and they

have been doing so since before the Buddha appeared in the world, but they are able to attain merely mundane absorption (*lokiyajhāna*). Only the Buddha is able to teach supra-mundane (*lokuttara*) samadhi.Those who have attained *jhana* assume it to be samadhi, and so becoming pleased and satisfied with it, they become attached.

Jhana and samadhi have similar characteristics. If a meditator's contemplation of them is not truly thorough they will perceive them as being the same thing because one can change into the other and because they share the same object. They differ only in that with jhana the mind absorbs into feelings of tranquillity and bliss that arise, and so enters bhavanga; whereas with samadhi mindfulness is constant: the mind is strong and resilient and refuses to indulge in pleasant feeling. The meditator is unconcerned

whether or not the mind unifies, devoted only to maintaining the contemplation of the meditation object.

Although it is true that nimittas are not the path to purity, every meditator must eventually pass through the experience of them, because when the mind converges or enters bhavanga they are bound to occur. Formerly, when gifted meditators experienced these nimittas whether they freed themselves or not depended on their own mindfulness and wisdom, or else the correctness of their teacher's counsel, for when encountering these phenomena one needs the advice of a teacher. Without a teacher, one may get bogged down in the quagmire of a nimitta for a very long time, as did *Alāra Kālāma* and *Uddaka Rāmaputta*.*

*Two meditation masters who taught the wayfarer Gotama before his enlightenment.

Gnosis* and the various kinds of nimittas are generated from the preliminary meditation object after the mind has merged into bhavanga. There are a great number of these meditation objects: the forty mentioned in the scriptures include the Ten Recollections, the Ten Cemetery Contemplations and the Ten *Kasāna* Contemplations.** There are many more that are not listed in the books but by means of which disciples of the Buddha became fully enlightened. For example, one monk attained arahatship while sitting on the shore of a lake, by contemplating the sight of a heron swooping down to catch fish. The effectiveness of a meditation object depends on the individual's disposition. Any object is permissible if it

*Knowledge which presents itself spontaneously to the mind and is of a spiritual nature.

**See the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi Magga*) translated by Ven. *Nānamoli*. for a detailed explanation of these meditations.

agrees with one's personality. The forty meditation objects found in the texts are not comprehensive, but they do form a basic framework. Similarly, I have given a summary exposition of only three of the most important objects. If a meditator should find that none of them suits him then it's quite alright to use something else. But do take just one object: if many are taken the mind will become restless and full of doubts, concentration will be unsteady.

When the contemplation has been sustained for some time, the mind will merge into a solitary stillness. Here the meditation object should be discarded and attention focussed on that still and impassive mind. If the meditation object is not put down, discursive thought will soon reappear and the meditator will be prevented from focussing on the mind.

This principle applies to both jhana and samadhi. If rather than watching the knower the meditator grasps at a nimitta or at gnosis when it arises, then when the phenomenon ceases he is unable to focus on the mind.

Closely observe these three things: the mind, the nimitta and the act of perceiving the act of perceiving the nimitta. When nimittas or gnosis arise, these three things will be present simultaneously. If one is unable to focus on the mind, 'the one who knows,' then when the nimitta or gnosis disappear, the 'one who knows' will disappear with it and will never be apprehended.

The role of the meditation object is to enable the mind to converge into the unified state. When that one-pointedness has been achieved, then the meditation object should be discarded and attention focussed solely on the

sense of knowing. Any meditation object that produces convergence is valid, but whichever is used, let meditators investigate thoroughly how the same object may, on producing unification of the mind, result in bhavanga or samadhi.

For example with maranasati as the object, one contemplates death until one sees clearly that sooner or later death is inevitable, that it must be faced alone, that all one's possessions must be abandoned, even one's loved ones left behind. When one sees this clearly, the mind focuses exclusively on the subject of death, lets go of all else, and merges into bhavanga and may disappear completely for a time. Otherwise, consciousness may switch off and disappear for a moment, rather as when falling asleep, and then awaken in another world, the world of the mind. In this other world one

experiences and perceives in the same way as in this world, but everything is more intense and cannot really be compared with this world; it can only be appreciated by the mind experiencing it. In other cases the mind enters a state of impassive stillness. In both cases the process is called 'merging into bhavanga'.

When contemplating death, the mind will evolve into samadhi if as the mind unifies, vigorous and resolute mindfulness is established to prevent it from entering bhavanga. The meditator contemplates how birth comes about, how death comes about and what follows death, until a clear and lucid knowing arises in the mind, accompanied by a buoyant sense of well-being. (There is no rapture (*pīti*), as rapture is a factor of jhana). This state is called samadhi.

The states of samadhi and jhana arise

through contemplation of the same preliminary object, but the mind that enters jhana and the mind that enters samadhi differ. With jhana, the mind dwells on the object of death motivated by the desire to experience the bliss of tranquillity, and so enters bhavanga. With samadhi mindfulness is strongly and firmly established, and one contemplates death in order to clearly understand every aspect of it. One gives no thought as to whether or not the mind will converge: the aim is to see clearly. However, the unswerving nature of the contemplation of a single object ensures that it naturally evolves into the state of samadhi, a state of clear knowing and joy in the contemplation of the object. Although initial reflections on the object are not one-pointed, clarity and illumination of understanding are experienced in one point at which all doubts

vanish.

Whatever meditation object or technique is employed, the passage into jhana and samadhi is always differentiated at the moment of convergence. In fact, the best thing would be not to bother with the terms jhana, samadhi and bhavanga at all, but simply to observe the mind as it converges, then one will very clearly see the differences for oneself.

The adept, one who is fluent enough in jhana to enter or leave it at will, may, if he has developed it in former lives, choose to exercise various supernormal powers. For instance he may see visions of himself and others who have, in previous lives, been fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters, or those who had harmed him and were enemies. In some cases there is the ability to remember

the names of the people and places in question. This is called *atitaṁsañāṇa*.

Some meditators might see a vision and the knowledge arises that oneself or another, perhaps a family member, will die on such and such a day, or in such and such a year, or will endure some kind of suffering, or will receive some good fortune or wealth, and when the day arrives, the event occurs as was foreseen. This is called *anāgataṁsañāṇa*.

The third gnosis, *āsavakkhayañāṇa*, is usually rendered as the knowledge and understanding that destroy the *āsavas*.* I would like to analyse this point a little because it has been the source of doubts for a long time. If this phrase is translated as the knowledge and understanding of the one who has destroyed

*Taints, pollutions, cankers. A synonym for defilement. Three asavas are usually listed, namely those of sensuality, being and ignorance.

the asavas, it would be clearer. All gnosis, all supernormal powers (*abhiññā*), are born of jhana but if asavakkhayanana is considered to destroy asava, then it is tantamount to saying that mere attainment of jhana can fulfill the function of *maggasamaṅgī*. Such a contention would directly contradict the teaching that it is maggasamangi alone (i.e. the simultaneous manifestation of all eight factors of the Eightfold Path) that destroys defilements at each moment of Insight.

The three kinds of gnosis are born of jhana and jhana can only provide knowledge of things outside the mind; it is incapable of knowing the defilements within the heart. The Buddha never spoke of any one of the various forms of gnosis as destroyers of defilement. That was an epithet reserved exclusively for the Path, which makes the

translation of the phrase asavakhayanana as the gnosis that causes the destruction of the asava, all the more perplexing. May all the wise people who read this book contemplate the matter and if your conclusions do not agree with the one that I am offering, please write and let me know. I will be most grateful.

Asavakkhayanana is not a form of gnosis that is born of jhana : it is exceptional. All jhanas up to and including the 'cessation of feeling and perception' are mundane. I have never seen a passage in which the Buddha describes the factors of a transcendent or supra-mundane jhana. However if a those meditators who has attained the supra-mundane stage of understanding enters a jhana then that jhana is considered supra-mundane. It's like the king's sword, which is given the special name, 'prakan'. In fact a 'prakan' is just an ordinary

sword, albeit a very fine one, but because it belongs to the king, we give it a special name. Similarly, one may understand this term asavakkhayanana more easily if one interprets it as the knowledge of one who has already put an end to defilements.

Jhana is also described in terms of three forms of bhavanga: *bhavanguppāda*, *bhavangacarana* and *bhavangupaccheda*, while samadhi is divided into *khanika*, *upacāra* and *appanā*. In jhana, defilements are merely suppressed. There is no abandonment of defilement in jhana.

With samadhi, the progressive abandonment of defilement is described as follows:

The *Sotapanna* (Stream Enterer) is able to abandon three defilements: embodiment view, sceptical doubt and attachment to external observances.

The *Sakadāgāmi* (Once-Returner) abandons the above three defilements, and in addition attenuates sensual desire and aversion.

The *Anāgāmi* (Non-Returner) is able to abandon all of the above five defilements.

This clearly demonstrates that jhana is mundane and samadhi, through abandoning defilements, is supramundane.

Although it's true that jhana is mundane, a meditator training in samadhi must as a matter of course first pass through it, as the two states of jhana and samadhi are interchangeable using skilful means. Given that they both arise from a single source it is inevitable that sooner or later, no one training the mind can avoid experiencing both of them. Jhana and the initial stages of samadhi are the meditator's training ground. Then, having disciplined himself in both jhana and samadhi until he

is proficient, able to discriminate finely between what is correct and what is not, the meditator may effectively develop *vipassanā* (insight). Vipassana is not at all the easy thing that most people imagine. Some meditators experience on occasions the passage of the mind into jhana and samadhi and then assume that they have reached this or that stage of attainment. In fact they don't really know what stage they've reached, whether it's jhana or samadhi or whatever, but just go ahead and brag about it. Subsequently that state of concentration declines and becomes inaccessible to them.

Samadhi has great poise and gracefulness, but in a different way to jhana. It's the difference between one who plays a sport for health and one who plays for the sheer delight of it.

When the mind merges into samadhi, one is aware that it is doing so - - there is a constant

knowing. Mindfulness notes the coarseness or subtlety of the mind at every moment of consciousness. When the mind is still coarse, the knowing is restricted to the 'outer', but as it becomes more refined there is knowing of both 'inner' and 'outer'. One is undeceived by the different states of mind: one knows both the mind that is Dhamma and the mind that is still caught up in the world. One is not restricted to a single perspective. The mind of one who sees in this way will be equanimous, able to let go of all mental states. He may or may not act in any given circumstance, but if he does choose to act, his actions will invariably be measured, appropriate and beneficial. Samadhi is characteristic of one mature in conduct, jhana of one still immature.

In samadhi i, apart from the same *nimittas* and forms of gnosis that I have already described

as arising in jhana, one many also attain knowledge of some matter through the manifestation of a verse or a voice, sometimes embodied, sometimes not. In every case, such phenomena consist of warnings, either of some looming danger or else of the correctness or incorrectness of some action one has committed. Thus the nimittas and gnosis that arise during the development of samadhi are most important and have been tools for teachers and those in spiritual authority since the time of the Buddha himself. Such nimittas and knowledge arise on the level of *upacāra* (access) samadhi, although the perceiver of them may not realize he is in that stage. They may appear at any time, when standing up, sitting in formal meditation, lying in a meditation posture or even while walking around.

There have been many people who, before they ever visited my monastery, had foreknowledge that the place was of such and such a terrain and appearance. When they actually came here and saw the place, it did not differ in a single respect from their vision. Whether this is due to the attainment of jhana and samadhi, to their accumulated merit or to having been here in a former time, cannot be ascertained. However if any of these people are asked if they have ever meditated to the level of samadhi and jhana, they always say no.

All these nimittas and knowledges arise intermittently. The knowledge they convey is not always true in the case of one who is not yet adept at entering samadhi, for he encounters them as soon as he enters the state of upacara. However one who is adept

will first enter samadhi to the level of appana (absorption) and then withdraw to upacara. When he wishes to know about some event, he will consciously turn his mind towards it and then dwell in equanimity. If there is something to be known, the knowledge will spontaneously arise; if not, it will not. If it should happen that some knowledge arises in the mind at this point, it will be completely trustworthy and true in every respect.

That is not the way people go about it these days. Before we've even experienced jhana or samadhi once, craving arises, wanting to see this and know that. When our desires are not fulfilled, we give up all our efforts and seek to excuse ourselves in various ways: we have too little merit to progress or we don't have what it takes and so on. Actually we were on the right track; the results we obtained were

in fact fine. If you can be at peace with whatever results you have achieved you will be alright.

You cannot pit your accumulated merit and purity of character against that of a person who has been practising for a long time. You may be able to compete with him rowing a boat down the river, but where merit is concerned, it is utterly impossible.

No matter how much effort they put forth, some people never experience any nimittas or gnosis, but providing they do not relent in their efforts, they are able to realise the fruit of practice just the same. A person who has the Four *Paṭisambhidā* (Analytical Knowledges) and the Six *Abhiññā* (Supernormal Knowledges) and the person who has none of them, become one in their realization of nibbana.

The meditator who is not yet proficient must take the preliminary meditation object as his

stay. Whenever he meditates, he begins by concentrating on it: it is indispensable to him. The best preliminary object is the recollection of death. After contemplating death nothing remains in the mind. Any object will suffice for the adept, or he may disregard the preliminary object altogether and directly contemplate the distinctive mood of that object from the start. The mind converges naturally.

When one has been concentrating on the meditation object for some time, one will begin to feel lazy and reluctant to contemplate. One becomes enamoured of the peace that has arisen, is content with what has already been achieved. In fact this is heedlessness. Not even vipassana transcends this contemplation of death. But whereas in vipassana the contemplation provides a clear perception

of the arising and passing away of all phenomena, together with their relevant causes and conditions, in samadhi and jhana, although there is also contemplation, one sees only certain aspects of the process - it's not a clear vivid perception that encompasses the causes and conditions. However, meditators tend to take this partial knowing to be complete, and take themselves to have seen the whole thing.

To give an example, there was a certain lady in the monastery who said she'd seen the whole thing, she'd seen the impermanence of all things, how our bodies are doomed to break up and disintegrate. Her meditation reached the point that she would enter bhavanga at the meal time and, just sitting there in a trance, forget to eat. On one occasion she was in charge of making a hot drink to offer to the monks and sat in front of the pot absorbed, until all the

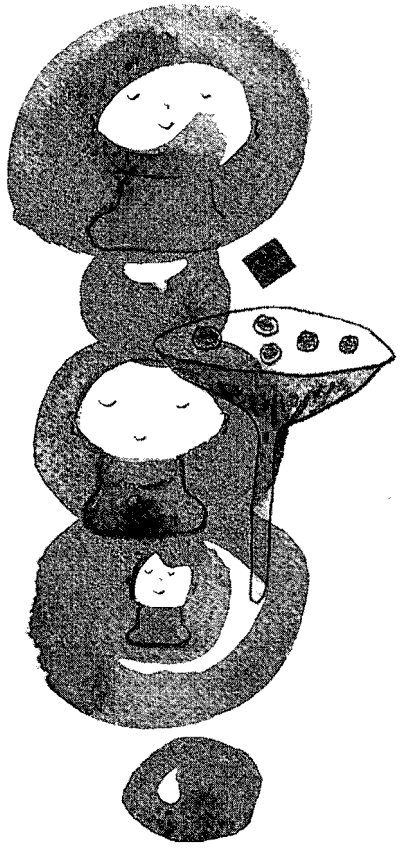
water had boiled away. Then one day while sitting in meditation, her body rose up and lay down by the side of the road. Just then a car happened to be rapidly approaching. The thought came to the old lady that she was going to die, but a voice in her heart said, "What of it? Death is just death. Here is as good a place as any." The car continued towards her, getting closer and closer and just as it was about to reach her, she suddenly jumped up! You see - the clinging to self was lurking away deep inside. Even though her meditation had reached the stage where she could dwell totally unaware of her body and senses, the grasping within still remained.

You must contemplate death frequently until you are skilled, until you see arising and passing away and the outcome of it. You must contemplate death until you see it in its true

light as a perfectly natural phenomenon, until you are firmly confident that when faced with death you will not waver.

Name and form, i.e. the mind and the body, arise and pass away separately. Thus when experiencing a physical pain, sages such as the Buddha, separate the mind from the body and so remain at ease.

At conception, firstly the *sambhāvadahātu* (or what is nowadays referred to as the sperm and the egg) of the parents combine, and then rebirth-consciousness enters that compound and adheres to it. If the parents' *dhātu* combine abnormally, as for instance in the case of deficiency on one side, such as a red or abnormal colouring, then the combination will not gel and the rebirth-consciousness will find nowhere to establish itself. Thus it is said that material form arises first and mind enters it and



takes rebirth afterwards.

At the time of death, the mind ceases first, followed by the body. One may see in a dead person that although the mind has ceased all its activity, the body is still warm; the cells and organs, the nervous system still remain. Those people who revive after doctors have pronounced them 'dead' resume using the same cells.

When the mind enters and inhabits this body, it grasps at every single part of it as being 'mine' and goes on doing so until the last moment of life, when the body is about to perish. After death, beings experience the results of the actions they performed while still in the human realm, and may be reborn as disembodied beings, perhaps as a kind of spirit or hungry ghost, or as a deity. If then they show themselves to people, it can be seen that

they exhibit the characteristics they formerly possessed. Those who formerly committed evil, had defiled minds and soiled bodies, appear in that way; whereas those who did good, were pure-minded and had attractive appearances, look that way.

Even beings who fall into hell-realms after death can show those realms clearly and vividly to human beings. However, the average person lacks the faculties to see them, for after death all that remains of those beings is the mind and the energy of the volitional actions they have performed.

Having taken birth in the human realm, we grasp onto this human body as being 'mine' with great tenacity. The intelligent person cleanses his mind of its impurities with the practice of samadhi until he realizes the heart and attains the state of equanimity which is

devoid of past and future. It is in this way that the liberation from all defilement may be known.

Samadhi pertains to the mind, but I hold it to be matter of body and speech also, because body and speech are always implied by the presence of mind. When there is mind there is thought, which is internal speech. With the very arising of thought, there is speech. When speech is present, the mind goes out roaming amongst the material forms of beings and people and the world of objects. Without those things the mind would have nothing to latch onto. However coarse or subtle the mind is, whether it is dwelling in the realm of sensuality, form or formlessness, it must always have a tangible base; there must be the internal and external sense-fields, contact between them, and a constant sense of knowing. Even

formless-realm consciousness has the formless mind itself as its dwelling place: the person who enters the formless levels of meditative absorption, perceives the formless mind with the internal sense-fields.

The term 'internal sense-fields' does not, in this case, have the customary meaning of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind, but refers to the internal sense-fields of the heart. When one has detached oneself from the coarse sense-fields of eyes, ears, etc. a further set remains intact - the eyes, ears, etc. that are called *dibba* (heavenly or divine). For instance, in the case of 'seeing' it is not the normal material eye that sees, but the eye of the heart; and the form perceived is not of the kind seen by the ordinary eye, but one specific to the heart's eye. The same principle applies in the same way to the other senses and their objects.

The contact between these internal sense-fields and their respective objects is a great deal more intense an experience than that between their coarser counterparts, and it is a private contact, one unperceivable by other people. These internal sense-fields of the heart are difficult things to talk about. Those who have never meditated to the point of reaching the heart cannot understand them. Our everyday language does not lend itself to such matters; the best that one can do is to employ similes.

There is no complete agreement in the ways of practice amongst those who are still not adept, even those who use the same meditation object. In the case of senior monks with many disciples this disparity can have serious consequences. So we should take the basis principles of the Buddha's teachings as

our foundation. Are we or are we not practicing correctly in accordance with the teachings of Buddhism? The scriptures are to be used as a measuring stick of our practice. We shouldn't just do as we see fit. There is only one Teaching, only one Buddha - but nowadays his disciples are following different paths. It is a great shame and disgrace.

The internal sense-fields that I have been talking about are also deceptive: one can't take them too seriously. All things that exist in the world are a mixture of the true and the false. Every single worldly condition, whether an object, a creature or a human beings, is deceptive. The mind enmeshed in the world deceives itself into taking things to be substantial. However all things are illusory : having arisen, their nature is to degenerate and disappear. Human beings, for example, are born from

a combination of the four elements*. The mind grasps onto that 'lump of elements' and labels it as human being, man, woman. Then there is marriage and children are born. There is love and hate, envy, harm and killing. It's the same with making a living: having been born into this world, we have to work to stay alive. We work in a shop or on a farm or as a civil servant, but even if we work until the day we die, we don't finish anything. When we die, someone else takes our place and before they can get anything done they die as well.

As long as this world still exists, we human beings are all born into it to keep doing the same things over and over again. When we die, not one of us can take the fruits of our labours with us: even our bodies are left behind. Only the good and evil actions we have performed

*Earth (solidity), Water (cohesion), Fire (heat), Air (vibration)

survive the body's death.

It is nothing strange that the perceived animate world is able to deceive the mind when even the inanimate world can do so. We can see this with woods and forests, the many species of trees growing lushly green, branches garlanded with blossoms and clusters of fruit, pleasingly arrayed with a beauty and order beyond human artifice. Anyone who sees such a scene admires it and praises its beauty. Then there are the cliff-faces, the overhangs, caves and grottoes, strangely ordered as if carefully sculpted by an unknown hand. There are rivers and streams flowing down from the highlands to the plains, with their ox-bows and bends, gorges and cliff, eddies and whirlpools and with circling shoals of darting fish. These are impressive sights, and as one keeps dwelling on their beauty, one loses oneself in the

enjoyment of them and they come to seem substantial and real. But after a while they disappear from our memory or if not, we become separated from them. Nothing survives. All is impermanent.

This power to deceive that is possessed by the things of the world is shared by the dhamma that is still of the world. One can observe this in the practice of sitting meditation. As the mind converges into samadhi there can be a feeling as if one has been given a shove and one is suddenly stricken with fear, or sometimes there may be a loud cracking sound like a peal of thunder, or perhaps the body seems to break into pieces, or else a clear bright light appears illuminating all sorts of objects. We believe these things to be real, but as soon as we open our eyes they disappear. Anything can happen- sometimes, as the mind unifies, one

sees spirits and ghosts, the faces of ogres and devils, and frightened, one flees. Some people go crazy. The Dhamma that is still mundane can deceive us in exactly the same way as other worldly things.

Perhaps we contemplate this body as being unattractive.When we develop a firm conviction that is the true nature of the body, the perception of asubha manifests - the whole body is seen as bloated and rotting. But in fact the body in its normal everyday state, unbloated and unrotting, is already unattractive. We are misled into believing the mind's deceptions and take loathsomeness to be ultimately true. We cling to the perception until everything seems to stink. Wherever we go, we smell the odour of decay.

The mind that we are training to realize Dhamma can still be deceived by the Dhamma

that is still mundane, and so the Buddha said, 'The mind deceives the mind,' How can we observe if that is true? It is difficult if we do not know the difference between the 'mind' and the 'heart'.

The mind and the heart are two different things. The 'heart' here means, as it does in everyday usage, that which lies at the center. The 'mind' is thought, ideation, conceptualization, imagination, memory and perception, all the myriad mental phenomena. Although people generally take the heart and mind to be identical, and in the Thai language the words are often used interchangeably, the mind and heart can be separated.

Sometimes the Buddha said that the mind (*citta*) is naturally radiant but is sullied by adventitious defilements, and in other places that the mind is defiled. He spoke in many

different ways and the students of heart and mind have become quite confused.

Looked at on a basic level, 'mind' is thought, imagination, conceptualization, all the different kinds of mental process. It is difficult to bring under our control. Even when we are asleep, the mind still roams about creating the worlds for itself that we call dreams. It imagines us doing our daily tasks of farming, buying and selling and so on or perhaps quarrelling, fighting and killing.

If we train this restless mind of ours to experience the tranquillity of one-pointedness, we will see that the one-pointed mind exists separately from the defilements such as anger and so on. The mind and the defilements are not identical. If they were, purification of mind would be impossible. Through its fabrications the mind brings defilements into itself, and then

becomes unsure as to exactly what is the mind and what defilement.

The Buddha taught *'Cittam pabhassaraṁ āgantukehi kilesehi'*. 'The mind is unceasingly radiant; defilements are alien entities that enter into it.' This saying shows that his teaching on the matter is in fact clear.

For the world to be the world, every one of its constituent parts must be present. The only thing that stands by itself is Dhamma, the teaching of the Buddha. Anyone who considers Dhamma to be manifold or composite has not yet penetrated it thoroughly. Water is in its natural state a pure, transparent fluid, but if dyestuff is added to it, it will change colour accordingly: if red dye is added it will turn red; if black dye, black. But even though water may change its colour in accordance with the substances introduced into it, it does not

forsake its innate purity and colourlessness. If an intelligent person is able to distil all the coloured water, it will resume its natural state. The dyestuff can only cause variation in outer appearance.

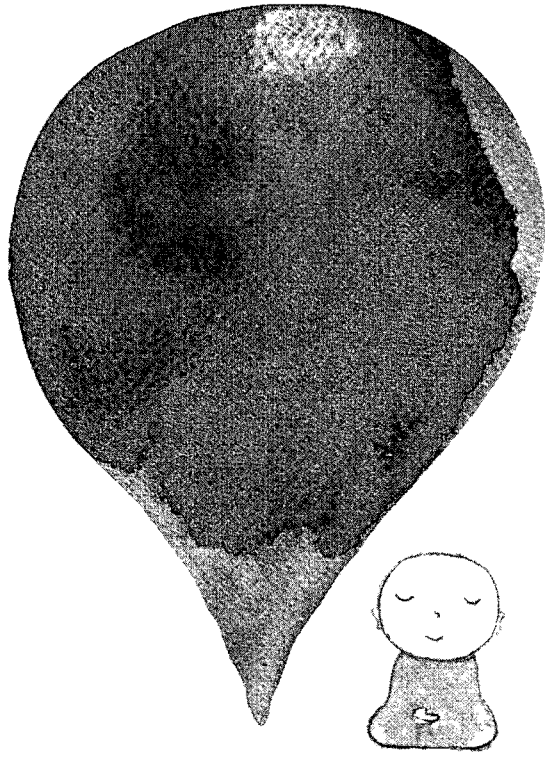
Water is a very useful substance: it is capable of cleansing all sorts of soiled things, and similarly one's own purity can permeate all despoiling agents and wash them away. The wise are able to distil or filter the mind so as to remove the defilements with which it is adulterated.

Now let me explain the differences between the heart and the mind, before talking about the defilements that arise from the mind.

The term 'mind' refers to mental activity. All volitions and perceptions arise from the mind. The mind is unable to remain motionless: even during sleep it is creating and imagining

a host of different things in dream. It can't stay and it cannot sleep. It makes no discrimination in its workings of night and day. It is the body, not the mind, which being weary rests. The mind is formless: it can penetrate any place, it can even pass all the way through a large mountain. The mind has more powers than can be fully described.

The heart is that which lies at the centre of things, and is also formless. It is simple awareness, devoid of movement to and fro, of past and future, within and without, merit and harm. Wherever the centre of a thing lies, there lies its heart, for the word 'heart' means centrality. In conversation, if a person is asked about his heart he will point to the centre of his chest. In fact that is not the heart itself, it is merely the 'heart-base', the organ that recycles blood and pumps it back into circulation so as



to nourish and maintain the various parts of the body. The heart I am referring to is not a material object, it is formless.

Usually in the scriptures the terms the 'mind' and the 'heart' signify the same thing. The Buddha said, "However the mind is, so is the heart. However the heart, so the mind." That the two terms are synonymous can be seen in such saying as *'cittaṁ dantaṁ sukhāvahaṁ'*, 'The well-trained mind brings forth happiness; and *'manopubbaṁgamā dhammā* 'All things are preceded by the heart'; in most cases the Buddha used the word 'mind', and in the Abhidhamma 'mind' and mental objects' (*citta* and *cetasika*) are the only terms used. This is probably because the mind plays a more prominent role than the heart, both the defilements and the cleansing of defilements (wisdom) being functions of the mind.

The defilements are not the mind, the mind is not defilement. The mind grasps onto defilements and causes them to proliferate. If the mind and defilements were one and the same thing, who in the world could possibly cleanse the mind completely?

The mind and defilements are without tangible form. When there is seeing or hearing, for example, the defilements that appear are not inherent properties of the eyes and ears: they arise in dependence on the contact between the mind and the sense-field. When for instance a form comes into contact with the eye, that contact gives birth to a feeling which after a while disappears. The mind, seeking to retain that feeling in consciousness, causes the defilements of good and evil, love and hate to appear. One who doesn't understand this process is misled into thinking that the mind

and defilements are identical and so applies remedies to the mind rather than to defilements themselves. Consequently, however many remedies one applies, one meets with no success because one's effort are wrongly directed.

It is through deludedly grasping onto all kinds of objects and supports as being 'mine', through becoming firmly attached to things, that the mind becomes defiled. Gardens and fields, wealth and possessions, husband and wife, sons and daughters, all the members of our family are taken to be 'mine' and so the mind becomes defiled. But all those things exist in accordance with their own nature. They are not affected by our deluded clinging. For example, from delusion we cling to our spouse, assuming him or her to be really ours. We feel as if we have taken their heart and placed it within our own. But if they decide to commit adultery, they don't

say a word to us and when we find out we are heartbroken and almost die from the anguish. This suffering arises from delusion, not perceiving the ways things actually exist.

It is even more the case with inanimate objects. We put precious stones, diamonds and sapphires away in a sturdy safe, afraid that thieves will steal them. The stones themselves are completely indifferent: they would feel nothing at all if they were stolen. The one who would be frantic and upset would be their owner, the one who clings. The defilement of clinging is really malevolent. There is nothing that may not be clung to. Having grasped hold of something, the clinging imbeds itself immovably within it.

The mind, the heart and defilements have the meanings I have explained above. The mind that has not been well-trained will be

continually overwhelmed by defilements, while conversely the mind that has been well-trained will become an immense treasure-trove. The mind is both that which searches for defilement and that which seeks out wisdom.

The birth-place of the mind's defilements is no other than the six-sense-fields which the mind make regular use of. The six-sense-fields are the priceless wealth of the mind, as much one could say, as if they were its wish-fulfilling gem. The eyes can be used to enjoy even the most beautiful and attractive forms without hesitation, and even if they become damaged or deficient in some way, you can still wear glasses. The ears are even better servants : when the eyes are closed the ears can carry on listening and hearing quite comfortably. The nose is the same- it doesn't need to borrow the services of eyes and ears to smell odours for it,

it can manage by itself. The tongue doesn't need to bargain with the eyes, ears nose to come and taste flavours for it. As soon as something is put into the mouth, whatever it is, the tongue immediately performs the function of discriminating whether the taste is spicy or salty, sweet or sour, delicious or not. The body acknowledges whether contact is soft, hard or whatever. The heart is especially independent: it knows what thoughts are going on without having to concern itself with any of the other sense-fields or consciousness. Its functions are specific to the heart.

These things are old now, they have been serving the mind for so long that they are completely fluent. But be a little careful, becaue old things that we have been using for a long time, things that have provided us with pleasure and comfort over a long period, may

still turn against us at any time. As the old saying warns, "Never trust and old slave, a cobra or a loving wife. They may turn on you at any time."

Having understood the explanations of 'heart', 'mind' and 'defilements', a person who wishes to extirpate the defilements from the mind must first practise samadhi until he is adept. Only then will he be able to separate the two, for without samadhi, the attempt to cleave the mind from the defilements will be ineffectual, and the two will remain fused. Samadhi means the state in which the mind is firmly established on a single object, at rest from external wandering, and it is the ground for the battle with the defilements. The mind that is darting out in search of sense-experience is darting out in search of defilements.

If we are simply aware, not allowing the

mind to attach undue importance to sense-experience, not interpreting and discoursing mentally upon it, if there is merely the bare knowing of it, defilement will not occur. For the mind to become defiled, it must take note of the sense-datum, dwell on it and proliferate. If there is simply the knowing, there is no defilement. However, if the eye sees a form and there is perception of it as 'man', woman', 'black', 'white', 'attractive', 'unattractive' and so on and then the mind thinks and proliferates in various ways on these perceptions, then defilements will follow in their train, blanketing the mind's natural luminosity. Consequently the state of samadhi degenerates and the defilements envelop the heart. When the ears hear a sound it is exactly the same. If there is merely hearing, no labelling, thinking about or proliferating on that sound, just letting the

sound arise and pass away without adding to it, then as when a forest-dweller hears the sound of birds or a waterfall, no defilement takes place. This same principle applies to the other sense-fields.

The mind of the one who has become adept can enter samadhi at the moment of sense-contact and is able to relate to phenomena in the above manner, free of proliferation and subsequent defilement. But such a cleansing of mind is of only temporary duration: it is dependent on the strength and fluency of samadhi. If samadhi is weak it will be completely ineffectual; for true purification of mind, insight is required.

Jhana, samadhi and science all use the immaterial to investigate materiality, but they differ in significance and purpose. I would like to recap the explanations of the first two

terms a little, to refresh your memories.

In jhana, the immaterial i.e. the mind, concentrates on the material: for instance, it looks intently at the body in terms of the four elements. The mind develops a firm conviction that our body truly is a compound of those things, until a nimitta of one of them appears. Sometimes in the course of the contemplation the meditator may perceive some compelling vision and be deceived into taking it for real, thus taking fright or in a small number of cases even becoming mentally deranged. There are a great deal more possible experiences. They all lie within the province of jhana.

In samadhi the contemplation proceeds in the same way, but encompasses both the 'internal' and 'external' aspects of the object, unlike jhana in which one perceives only the

'internal'. In samadhi i one sees the body as being asubha - - rotting, putrescent and offensive - - but at the same time retains the feeling that ultimately there is nothing truly repulsive about it at all. The unattractive aspects of the body are merely natural phenomena. It is just the nature of the body to be that way.

In science, to understand something, you have to contemplate it until there develops a steady concentration on the way it exists. For instance, from the contemplation of anatomical structure, seeing the nature of the different parts of the body, how they combine and co-operate to perform the necessary movements and functions, text-books are written and studies perpetuated. This is science and it has its place: without it the world would be poorer, for technology born of science is the tool by which the modern world has been

created. Those people who hold the tools of technology are those who are still attached to the world and fascinated by it. Some people reach a hundred years of age and still desire fifty or sixty more. Scientists don't complete their building of an ideal world. They die first. They are replaced by others who also in their turn meet death. Deaths and births, births and deaths, there is no end to it.

The majority of scientists tend to be of the opinion that physical death is the end; or if not, then whatever realm we are born in this life will be our destination in the next: there can be no change of station. They don't believe in kamma or its results even though they are performing kamma continuously. Scientists tend to believe that man is a product of society, science, material conditions. They do not accept the teaching of kamma, of merit and

harm. They do not believe that such immaterial forces can be the cause of material realities.

However, the Buddha and all the sages have conviction in kamma and its results. We have all been revolving on the wheel of birth and death for a countless number of existences through kamma. In our lives, before we have finished working out the old kamma, we make more. It's like this every lifetime. The Buddha described it in terms of three *Vaṭṭas*. Birth is *vipākavaṭṭa*. We are born due to the results (*vipāka*) of old kamma, and once born we are compelled to perform kammic actions, if not good then evil., which is called *kammavaṭṭa*. The performance of kamma demands volition, and when that volition is defiled it is call *kilesavaṭṭa*. The result of defiled volition is vipakavatta and vipakavatta means rebirth. The sages see the painful implications of birth and

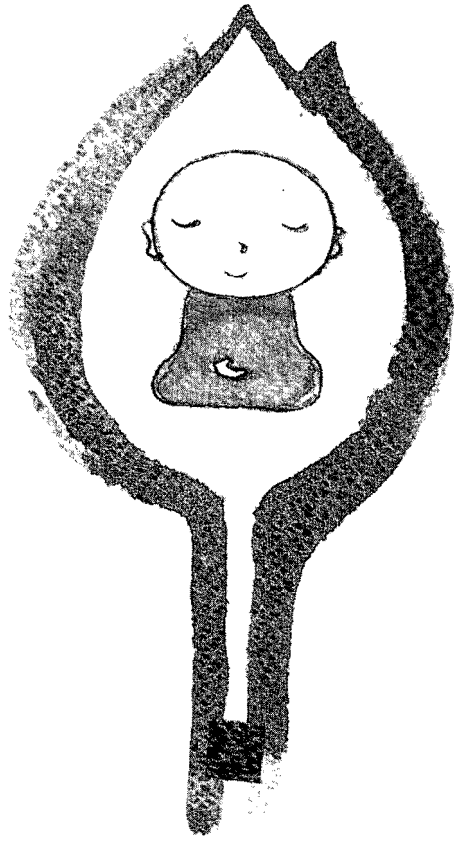
become disillusioned with it. They look for a means to arrest further birth and so to that end they practice jhana and samadhi and develop wisdom and vipassana, the clear and penetrative seeing of things as they actually exist until they let go of all clinging. Then the mind, now purified, becomes the heart and all defilements are left behind.

Science concentrates its investigations on a subject until the subject's true nature is clearly perceived by the intellect and then the findings are recorded in text-books for posterity. Science deals with materiality, with the external. In the practice of Dhamma, one develops jhana and samadhi, and vipassana wisdom until one perceives the true nature of the subject under investigation. If differs from science in that the subject (ourselves) is both material and immaterial and the instrument of perception

is not intellect but pure mind. You are unable to record your findings in a tangible way, but may communicate them to fellow wayfarers.

Those who give dhamma discourses should be careful that they do not unintentionally allow talk of jhana to become talk of samadhi or science, or talk of samadhi to become talk of jhana or science. These three things are very similar.

People who practice Dhamma are often impatient: they want to run before they can walk, they die before they are born. While still at the stage of concentration on a preliminary object, even before the state of samadhi has been reached, they want to experience all sorts of things, and so start imagining and cooking up ideas on the basis of their own limited understanding, and then they begin to perceive the things they expect to. Even in the case of



a person who has reached the level of samadhi, if he is still not an adept, he can interpret and proliferate about his experience and then take himself to have derived some true knowledge from his meditation. A true meditator will be free of that desire for knowledge and will single-mindedly dedicate himself to the task of pacifying the mind. He will not worry whether or not any kind of gnosis arises during his practice, but will only be interested in the tranquility of samadhi. When that tranquil state of samadhi is firm and steady, wisdom will naturally arise, just as light and heat are inevitably produced by fire.

A person who has developed firm and steady samadhi one who interests himself only in diligently practicing night and day, giving no thought to tiredness and difficulties, one who considers the attainment of samadhi worth all

hardships- such a person is entitled to be called a wayfarer

At this point I would like to go into the differences between jhana and samadhi more, to give something of a basic definition.

Jhana and samadhi are not identical. The sages declare them to be different because they exposition of the factors of jhana is given separately from the exposition of the abandonment of defilements. Although jhana and samadhi share the same preliminary meditation objects, the mode of contemplation varies, as do the resultant knowledges that may arise. To take the contemplation of death as an example once more: in the case of jhana there is a single-minded contemplation on the theme of death until the mind becomes motionless and firm and merges in bhavanga. Sometimes it may be a blank sort of stillness, devoid of

self-awareness like the state of deep sleep, and may last for a long time, perhaps many hours. Other times there may survive a sense of pleasure in the tranquility and bliss of that state. To put it simply, the mind that concerns itself solely with the meditation object and then absorbs into bhavanga whether accompanied by a complete loss of selfawareness or not, is called jhana. To enable the mind to merge into bhavanga and enjoy its undiluted tranquility and bliss is the sole aim of the meditation. The word 'jhana' means to 'gaze fixedly', 'to stare at' or 'concentrate on'. One may concentrate on something 'external' such as the four elements as one's object, or something inside the body, or the mind itself. In every case when the concentration is single-minded and free of all other concerns, there is the jhanic supression of defilements. When the mind withdraws

from jhana, the defilements spring up as before.

The Buddha explained unequivocally that jhana has five possible factors: *vitakka* (initial application), *vicāra* (sustained application), *pīti* (rapture), *sukha* (bliss) and *ekaggatā* (singleness). Jhana is described in terms of the arising, existence and passing away of the bhavanga consciousness. Having entered jhana, five defilements are suppressed: sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt. However, the Buddha never spoke of defilements. being abandoned at different levels of jhana. I invite other wayfarers to investigate this point and if you come across any such passage in the scriptures kindly let me know.

The meditator who has practiced in former lives may realize many different types of gnosis,

but they will tend to be concerned with external matters, and are unable to focus attention on the knower of those things, just as the eye can see forms but cannot see itself. For instance, the meditator sees future events and past lives of himself and other, knows details of names, places and relationships, but is ignorant of the chronology of rebirth, or of the rebirth process. His gnosis is not subtle enough to discern which kammic actions have been performed to condition those births. This kind of gnosis arises in flashes. Its arising necessitates entry into bhavanga which is characterized by a fuzziness similar to that preceding sleep, or else by the complete vanishing of self-consciousness and the sudden arising of a new awareness.

In samadhi practice, you may take up the same preliminary subject as with jhana or perhaps some theme of Dhamma that arises

naturally in the mind. For example, walking along the road, you see someone cruelly ill-treating an animal or another human being and feels great compassion arising. Then you reflects on the matter until you see clearly that the lives of sentient beings are inevitably fraught with violence and cruelty. The small and weak fall prey to the aggression of the large and powerful. There will be no end to it as long as the world exists. Seeing this, one feels a profound and sobering sadness for all beings including oneself. The mind shrinks as does a chicken feather when singed by fire, and merges into the state of samadhi.

In summary, jhana entails the steadfast contemplation of a meditation object in order to achieve absorbtion. Once that has occurred the meditator takes delight in the resultant tranquility and bliss, and is reluctant to further

the contemplation. Samadhi entails a similar contemplation but is guided by the wish to see the true nature of the object, without giving thought as to whether or not absorbtion will occur. There is merely the undeviating contemplation of the object for the purpose of seeing it clearly, and the integrity of that contemplation generates a spontaneous transition into the state of samadhi. It is rather like the freshness and brightness, the abatement of distraction that a meditator suffering from mental agitation may feel when shifting his seat to an airy, spacious place.

Any gnosis that might arise in the state of samadhi does so in the same manner as in jhana, but awareness is not deceived by it. The meditator perceives the phenomenon as a man might observe fish swimming in a glass tank. One who is adept at entering samadhi at any

time, irrespective of posture, whether standing, sitting, walking or lying down, is constantly primed for such knowledge to arise. There is the story of Venerable Moggallana seeing an enormous *peta* (hungry ghost), with a mouth the size of a needle's eye, as he descended from *Gijjhakūṭa* Mountain. At the sight of such a being, a smile appeared on his lips. The other monks who were with him could not see the hungry ghost, and noticing Venerable Moggallana's smile asked him the reason for it. Venerable Moggallana refused to answer, but said that the matter would be made clear to them when they reached the dwelling place of the Buddha. Having arrived and paid their respects, Venerable Moggallana related his encounter with the hungry ghost to the Buddha. The Buddha said, "I saw that hungry ghost myself when I was newly enlightened. Good.

Today Venerable Moggallana has become my witness".

In talking about samadhi, we use its duration as the measure. When the meditator is still unproficient, the mind will enter samadhi weakly and intermittently; this is called *khaṇika* (momentary). With practice, as one becomes more skilled, the mind will merge into samadhi for a longer time which is called upacata (access). When one has trained the mind to an optimum level, and the mind enters samadhi to its limit, it is called appana (full). Only upacara will give rise to gnosis, which will tend to take the form of teachings or cautions. For example, if there should appear a vision of a large convocation hall, with many monks gathered together inside, it would indicate that practice is proceeding correctly. If there appeared an uneven, overgrown path and

a monk walking along it slovenly dressed or else naked, it would indicate that practice has taken a wrong turn of is lacking in some way.

In relation to the abandonment of defilements, the Buddha taught that the Stream-Enterer abandons the three fetters of self-view, sceptical doubt and attachment to external observances. The Once-Returner abandons the three initial fetters and in addition attenuates sensual desire and aversion. The Non-Returner cuts off all five lower fetters. The *Arahant*, as well as abandoning the five lower fetters, also rids himself of the craving for fine material existence, the craving for fine immaterial existence, conceit, unrest and ignorance.

To repeat, although both jhana and samadhi arise from the same meditation objects, the contemplation of them, the experience of entry

into jhana and samadhi, and the kinds of gnosis that arise from them are all different.

Meditators cannot prevent the arising of either jhana or samadhi - they form a pair and one may change into the other. Sometimes the mind, having converged and entered jhana, perceives the inherent unsatisfactoriness of it and thus enters samadhi. At other times, while dwelling in samadhi over a period of time, mindfulness weakens and the mind moves into jhana. Jhana and samadhi cause and condition each other in this way. The Buddha said, "Where there is no jhana there is no samadhi, and where is no samadhi there is no jhana." This is because they follow the same route - - the difference lies only in the meditator. Some people harbour a deep fear that if their minds attain jhana, after death they will reborn among the Brahma gods who lack perception,

but those people usually have no idea what jhana actually is, or what sort of mind takes such a rebirth.

One who wishes to purify his heart and mind of all defilements must cleanse the mind. It is not necessary to cleanse the heart. When the mind has been cleansed, the heart becomes pure as a matter of course. The mind goes out in search of defilements to pollute itself, but when it has been cleansed it becomes the heart.

When wayfarers have realized their hearts and minds, even though they may not have learned the names of all the various defilements, they know for themselves the extent to which different actions and thoughts sully the mind. When they see the inherent unsatisfactoriness of the polluted mind, they are impelled to find skilful means to cleanse it. You don't need not know all about every possible defilement

before starting.

In the first period after the Buddha's enlightenment, he and his disciples set out to disseminate the teaching. It is unlikely that very many of those who became enlightened as a result of their instructions had studied the teaching to any great extent. Venerable Sariputta instance, merely heard a summary of the doctrine from Venerable Assaji- "All things arise from causes; The Buddha teaches the extinguishing of the root cause."- and it was enough for him to realise the 'Eye of Dhamma'. As the number of teaching the Buddha gave increased, disciples memorised more and more of them and the tradition of study came into being. Consequently Buddhism was able to gradually spread over a huge area.

Venerable Ananda, the Buddha's younger cousin and personal attendant, was unrivalled

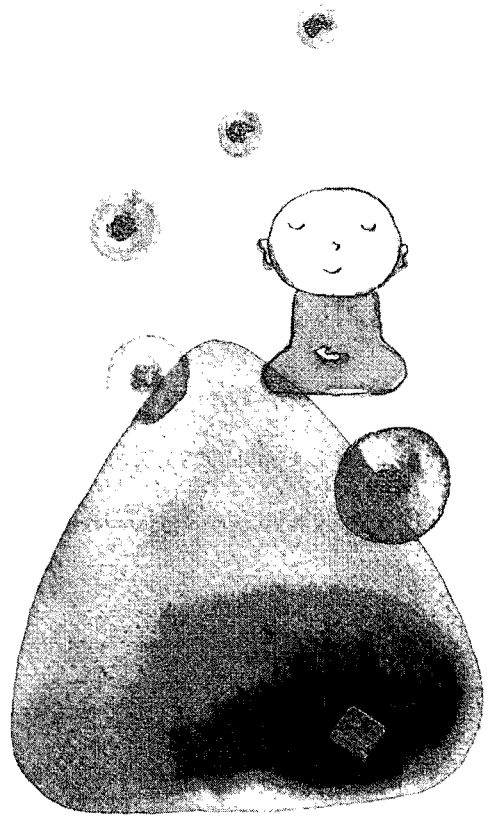
in his ability to memorise the teachings and was given the title of '*Bahūsūta*' (greatly learned). Although he was able to teach many people to the level of full enlightenment, he himself at the time of the Buddha's final nibbana was still only a Stream-Enterer. A great Sangha council was convened for all the arahant disciples to decide on what was and what was not the authentic teaching of the Buddha, and the presence of Ananda with his superb memory, was deemed imperative. However, Venerable Ananda was not yet an arahant and so was precluded from attendance. On the day before the meeting, the leaders of the Sangha urged Venerable Ananda to intensify his efforts and so he practiced ardently the whole night, but although he contemplated and examined every point of Dhamma he had heard in the Buddha's presence, his efforts bore\ no fruit. As dawn

approached, exhausted, Venerable Ananda thought, "Never mind. If I don't realize arahantship, it's alright," and laid down to take a rest. However, before his head reached the pillow, Venerable Ananda's mind converged into *maggasamangī,** and he knew without a shadow of a doubt that he was enlightened!

The person who wisely contemplates phenomena and searches out the cause-and-effect relationships conditioning them, who can let go and who can maintain equanimity in the midst of all things, is bound to penetrate the Dhamma to some extent, as did Venerable Ananda

In Buddhism there are two tasks that those who have ordained and forsaken the responsibilities of the householder must

*The simultaneous manifestation of all eight factors of the Noble Eightfold path.



perform: *samatha* (i.e. jhana/samadhi) and vipassana.

The meditator who has gained proficiency in jhana/samadhi to the extent that the mind lies in his control, can enter these states at will and dwell in them for as long as is desired; he can change the mode of contemplation from jhana to samadhi and vice versa, so that they become like playthings. This skill in contemplation carries the training in vipassana within it, because jhana/samadhi entails contemplation of this same *nāma-rūpa* that is the object of vipassana. There is a similar observation of dissolution, of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and impersonality, but in the case of jhana/samadhi, the contemplation lacks comprehensiveness and only a weak understanding ensues. After a glimpse of the nature of things, the mind merges into a

tranquillity that precludes the complete and thorough knowledge of vipassana.

Vipassana may be compared to a sweet, ripe mango. When it first appears, the mango fruit has a bitter flavour, but as it gets a little bigger the taste becomes astringent and with further growth becomes sour. Bigger still it has a rich flavour which finally becomes sweet. The final sweetness of the mango is the consummation of all the tastes that have preceded it and so is considered delicious. Similarly it is fitting that vipassana has always been spoken of separately from jhana which is subject to degeneration.

Whether contemplating one of the preliminary objects, or the four elements, the five aggregates or six sense-fields, vipassana entails a clear knowing of the true nature of its objects, a letting go of attachment to it and entrance into a state of equanimity. Vipassana

means the clear perception of the true characteristics of things.

When vipassana contemplation has become skilled and proficient, the meditator perceives forms, sounds, odours, flavours, tangibles and mental objects, both internal and external, as impermanent: arising, changing and finally disappearing according to their nature. Sentient beings take on the weight of transitory phenomena and so are subject to continous suffering and discomfort.

All things, whether material or immaterial, exist according to natural laws. However we may seek to coerce them into following our will, it is beyond our power to do so. Anatta does not mean that nothing really exists, but that they exist in a way that is not subject to coercion.

When the internal and external sense-fields

come into contact and give rise to feeling, those developing vipassana should at every moment and in every posture contemplate the process in terms of the three signs of experience, as outlined above. For one who is adept at this form of contemplation, it will become spontaneous, leaving no gap for defilements such as sensual desire to arise in the mind. The power generated by the development of jhana/samadhi and vipassana to a sufficient level of proficiency produces magasamangi.

Magasamangi is not the same state as that of jhana or samadhi but shares with them the process of the mind merging into a unified state. When vipassana contemplation has investigated inner and outer cause-effect relationships and has clearly seen their nature so as to be free of all doubts and uncertainties in regards to them, the mind will gather all eight

factors of the Path (in short, sila, samadhi and panna) together in the one place of Right View in a single thought moment. Subsequently there will be a withdrawal into the realm of the sense, but experience in that realm will now will be constantly accompanied by a clear knowing of the true nature of sense objects, and the mind will not be deluded by them in the same way as before. The Buddha taught that each Path consciousness (*maggacitta*) arises once and once only. After attaining the first magga, one continues to develop vipassana in the same manner as before, but however clearly things are seen, if the insight does not exceed the penetration of that first magga, it is not called maggasamangi. It is just as if on waking up from sleep you are able to accurately relate a dream you have just had: you do not take the relating of it to be the dream itself.

The progressively higher maggasamangi occur naturally as the wisdom faculty, strongly developed, becomes fluent and skilled. The consciousness of each level of the 'Noble Path' will be an indisputable indication of that attainment, but the knowledge that one derives is a private one. No one else can share it until they too reach that stage. Knowledge of the attainments of another through psychic powers, by one on higher level of attainment, or else by close observation is possible, but in the last analysis remains unreliable.

Whether the wayfarer studies as lot or a little or if he studies only the particular meditation object that he has chosen, if he wishes to attain one-pointedness then he must discard everything extraneous and concentrate single-mindedly on the contemplation of his object. In the case of one developing vipassana

even though there is a continuation of the mental activity that is natural to a living human being, the wayfarer knows it for what it is, sees it in the light of the three Characteristics (impermanence, suffering,not-self), and is not deluded by it.

The sense-data that are experienced, whether by eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body or mind, are invariably an obstacle to jhana/ samadhi and imperil the attainment of them. One who sees the unsatisfactoriness inherent in sensory experience will of a sudden lose interest in it, will see the virtue of the mind at peace, devoid of sensory impingement, and so will converge into a hermetic and tranquil motionlessness. On withdrawal from that state, the mind resumes its old activities until, perceiving again the unsatisfactory nature of those experiences, it renounces them and

returns to unity. This process repeats itself until there is a fluency and skill, until one sees that all sensory experience is merely that - - phenomena appearing and disappearing in accordance with their nature. One sees that the mind is separate from it, sufficient unto itself. The mind is not experience. Experience is not the mind, but experience depends for its existence on the mind's grasping at sense objects. When this distinction is made the mind becomes solitary and secluded and turns into the heart.

Buddhist knowledge appears profound and extensive only to one who has not realised the heart itself, but knows only of its expressions- the mind. Such a person speaks of the thoughts and concepts of the mind but fails to intuit the heart, the hub of equanimity. It is like someone following the tracks of a cow. Until he sees the

cow and catches hold of it, he has to just keep on following the tracks. Once the cow has been caught, however, the tracks lose their significance for him. It is the same with the Buddha's teachings. They seem to be complex and difficult to understand as long as we haven't taken the mind into the heart. Merely following the mind, the expressions of the heart, we reach no end.

The Abhidhamma has its exposition of cittas: the various kinds of consciousness in the form realm, the formless realm and the transcendent consciousness. The states of mind are divided, classified and numbered in great detail, in order that they may be recognised and understood, and delude us. But those who memorise all those categories tend to get attached to that level of understanding and never reach the heart. Consequently, for them

Buddhism becomes an extensive and profound subject, the study of which never reaches an end.

It is as if the Buddha were to say to us, "I followed the cow's tracks for countless lifetimes. Even in this lifetime, as Siddhartha, I followed them for another six years until I came across the cow (the heart)." So it may be said that on realisation of the heart, Buddhism becomes 'narrow'; not 'narrow' in the sense of a constriction or a deficiency of any sort, but in that we come to dwell on only the most cogent or essential points of a vast subject. For instance, our minds are churned up by our own and other people's mental states, and the range of experience so produced may be called 'wide'. However, one who sees the inherent unsatisfactoriness in mental disquiet, sees the suffering of it, contemplates that the mental

state and the mind that is agitated by it are different, and so separates them. When the mind has been separated from the mental state, dwelling alone, it becomes the heart. The mental state vanishes by itself. At this point we may see particularly clearly that mankind's experience of defilement and mental suffering is invariably due to the mind's own actions in venturing out and appropriating them. If the mind does not do so, then it becomes the heart and, freed of concerns, it enjoys unalloyed happiness.

A banana tree has no heart-wood. However much you chop away at one all you will find is layer after layer of stem. Meditators, on the other hand, are chopping away the layers that surround the true heart-wood of Dhamma. Those who seek the essence of Dhamma, but have not yet seen it, are those

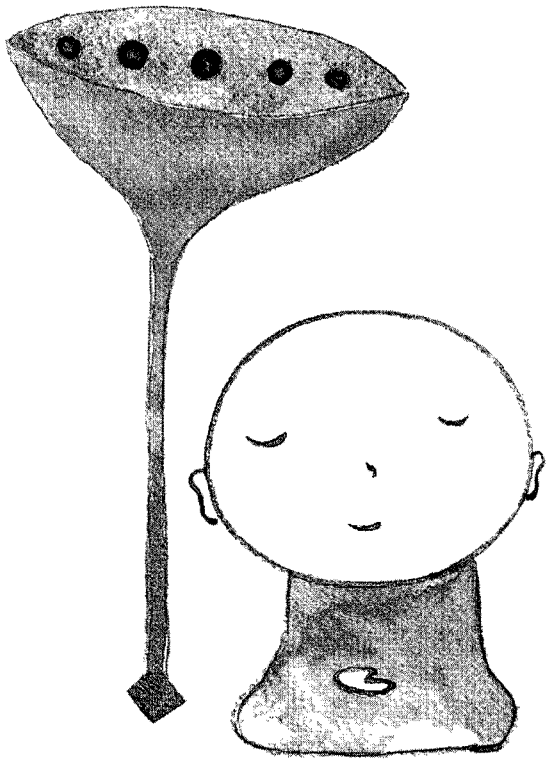
that have not yet cut through the layers that surround it.

Meditators who have not yet penetrated to the heart, often have a deep fear that should the mind reach the heart, no insight will arise and, without insight, there can be no end of suffering, only continued ignorance. Even senior monks have spoken to me in this vein. I explain to them that the mind seeks out experiences to occupy itself. When the mind sees the unsatifactoriness inherent in such activity, it converges into a unitary state and becomes the heart. It is not that this transformation occurs without a thoroughly circumspect reflection preceding it. There is a contemplation of every aspect of the matter until one perceives the three signs. The mind enters the heart because it has nowhere else to go. That being so, how could there be an

absence of wisdom? There is the wisdom that corresponds to one's level of attainment.

The mind is the cause of defilement: defilement could not take place if the mind did not exist. The mind is also the cause of wisdom: without it, one would be unable to use the thinking process to generate wisdom. The mind is the cause of defilement while its restless wandering prevents it from realising the neutrality of the heart. The mind becomes the cause of wisdom when, roving around the sensory world, it gathers all its experience within the three characteristics and stopping motionless, equanimous and self-aware, reaches the heart.

Silk worms are fed on mulberry and gradually change into caterpillars. When mature as caterpillars, they spin out cocoons for themselves and become chrysalises, and



when their time in that state is over they emerge and are called insects, whereupon they lay eggs in cast quantities, tens or hundreds of thousands. The mind is the same. When it is absorbed in the heart, it is devoid of activity, but once it has emerged, its expressions are uncountable. The sages do not allow the mind to wander out and be reborn again; they eliminate it at a single stroke.

In summary, all the defilements of mankind arise solely from the mind when it embroils itself in the contact between the six external sense-fields such as forms, sounds, etc. and the six internal sense-fields such as eyes, ears and so on. The 'children and grandchildren' born of these liaisons spread throughout the world, causing like and dislike, love and hate, anger and abhorrence, violence and killing, bringing utter turmoil to the world.

Recognising this danger, those who practice Dhamma should beware of letting their minds become embroiled in the process of sense contact. Make the heart neutral and impassive. Even if the mind uses the sense-fields as a vehicle for its travels, one should watch over the heart and not let it be misled. When the heart remains undeceived by the mind, through knowing the mind's nature, how it proliferates sense-data into states of turmoil, the heart will dwell alone in its natural way. When the heart thus accords with its true nature, the imaginings of the mind will abate, for the heart is without coming or going, inner of outer, pleasure or displeasure. Grasping at nothing, it is impassive in the midst of all things, and in its presence the mind will fall down abashed.

When the wayfarer clearly sees the true nature of things in this way, he will see that

there is nothing, either material or immaterial, that is anything more that a mere phenomenon, arising in dependence on causes and conditions and disappearing when those causes and conditions no longer obtain. He sees that there is absolutely nothing substantial. He sees this little country which is our body, a fathom long, a cubit wide and a few inches thick, as a container filled full of dhammas. The eye sees a form and it is perceived as merely a dhamma of form, nothing else. The ear hears a sound and it is perceived as simply a dhamma. The nose smells an odour, the tongue tastes a flavour, the body contacts a tangible object and the heart contacts a mental object, and in every case they are seen to be merely dhammas, not a being, not a self, a personality or anything at all.

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THE WORLD
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