

Link: <https://youtu.be/zBgcGQuEhw>

FOREWORD

At a time when Buddhism is spreading fast across the globe, it is our intention to make the general public acquainted with the great teachings of the Lord Buddha.

Whilst listening to a sermon is the ideal way of going forward in the path of Dhamma, some may prefer to read it at their leisure and comprehend the teachings at their own pace and time. Then there may be those who are weak in their faculty of listening, so the only way they can understand it is by reading a text or a Dhamma book.

These transliterations are available for all those who wish to have an understanding of the Lord Buddha's teachings in order to find true salvation.

****This work is a transcription of the sermon held in 2017-07-30. There may be the odd omission or inclusion inadvertently due to quality issues of the audio or deliberate editing to make the text more readable.**

This sermon was done for a group of children in Australia. In this the thero explains to them to look at their lives, its purpose, objectives and duties in a different perspective. (perspective of Dhamma)

CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. What is your purpose for today?
3. Who is the expert of your life?
4. My objectives for today
5. Who is Shàsthrun Wahansè?
6. My responsibility
7. My favour to you
8. Your duty towards yourself
9. Your responsibility towards Shàsthrun Wahansè
10. What is the Tripitaka?
11. What is Buddhism?
12. An Eon
13. Why is my happiness dependent on others?
14. Taking control of my happiness
15. Everything we do, is to be happy
16. All the pain your parents go through, is coming for you
17. The greatest gift your parents have given you: Your Life
18. Help your parents to walk the Noble path
19. Can you guarantee that you won't kill your parents?
20. The 4 heinous sins
21. Why becoming a sòtàpanna is so important?
22. What is a sòtàpanna?
23. The 4 apàyas
24. How to become a sotàpanna
25. Cause & Effect
26. Nothing in this world is the way it is
27. Everything in this world is conditioned.

28. Wishing and wanting doesn't change the outcome.
29. Attachment leads to suffering – Example 1
30. The etymology of Tanhà
31. Attachment leads to suffering – Example 2
32. When the causes change, the effects change – Example 1
33. An insurance policy for your mind
34. When the causes change, the effects change – Example 2
35. To what extent can the individual change the conditions?
36. I have no guarantee about my life
37. Reaping the results of good Karma
38. Why become a monk?
39. Help your parents: Start with the little things
40. Ask your parents; are they happy today?
41. Don't be a traitor to Shàshtrun Wahansè
42. Make the most of this human birth

KEY WORDS

Australia

Children

Expert

Purpose

Objectives

Duties

Parents

Tripitakaya

An Eon

Heinous sins

Apàya / hells

2017 – 07-30

So, for the children here, I think it's quite usual these days to have a mobile phone in your hand or in your pockets, please may I ask you to either switch it to silent or switch it off while you're here. If you want to record what we're saying, then that's perfectly fine, just do an audio recording. Please don't take pictures of the *dèshaka thumà* or do any video recordings because there's no need for that. All you need to take today is what is being said and all you need is your ears for that. You could be blind and that's perfectly fine. All you need is to listen, understand what we're saying and then put it into practice. And that should be your objective for today. And if there are people outside, particularly children, can I please ask the parents in particular to send them in because it's really important that you can see me, or at least be in the vicinity so you can hear this quite clearly. Please come forward, because today it's for you. If there's anything you've done in the past however many years you've been alive, perhaps today might be the most important day of your time so far. Make sure you take the time to get the most out of today. We don't have a great deal of time, when we normally do this in the UK, parents bring their children, they say, ok, I'll come and collect them in about one hour, one and a half hours. They'll turn up in about one and a half hours, and we're still talking. And then normally they leave about two, three hours later. Because once you start talking this Dhamma, it's very difficult to actually bring it to a conclusion. And that's the beauty of the Dhamma. It's nothing special about the person that's preaching it. It's the beauty of the Dhamma. It's the grace that is of your Lord Buddha.

So, please pay attention. Do not let anything else distract you. Even if a bomb goes off outside, that shouldn't be your concern for today. Even if you hear someone start to cry or whatever, doesn't matter, don't pay attention to that. Make sure you get the most out of today. And I promise you, that when you leave, you will leave as a different person. You'll look the same. I can't do anything about how you look but hopefully you will leave having gained something into your lives.

What is your purpose for today?

So, I need you to ask yourself a really important question. What is your purpose for today? Ask yourself that question. I have a purpose, but what is your purpose? Now, I can see that there are children of varying ages here. What's the youngest age we have in the audience? Anyone six or younger? Put your hand up for me. Okay, five, four and what's the oldest age we have, I'm not talking about parents, anyone sixteen and above? Seventeen and above? Eighteen? Twenty? Twenty-five, twenty-four? Okay, so twenties. So, my task today then is to try and give you something; when we have an audience, children in the ages between four and five and twenty, that's not going to be easy. But that's okay. Because hopefully, what you will feel at the end of this, is that anything I've said, I have said with you in mind, nobody else and that again is the miracle of the Dhamma, nothing to do with me.

So, what is your purpose for today? That's the question I asked you to ask yourselves. What are you here to achieve? What do you want to learn, *puṭhà*? What is your purpose here today? Anyone else? (AUDIENCE) To learn about *Budu Sàdu*? Very good. That's really good, you will learn about the Lord Buddha, *Budu Sàdu* and you will learn to look at life, your own life in a different way, in a different perspective. Now, this is what I want you to do and I'll tell you what my purpose is in just a moment. As we talk about, whatever we talk about, think about how do you relate what we talk about to your experience in life. You know, who's the expert of your life? Let's put it this way.

Who is the expert of your life?

You go to school, you sit in a classroom and you learn various subjects, like Science okay? If I came and asked you, while the teacher is in the class and they're teaching science, or math's, and I asked you, who's the expert in science, what would you say? What would your answer be? You'd point at the teacher, wouldn't you? That's the expert. So, you learn from the expert, that is the teacher. What about your own life? Who's the expert of your own life? Your own life story and your own life experiences? Exactly, you. You are the expert of your own life. So, all I

can give you, is a perspective, it's a way of looking at things. But you need to apply that into your own lives. Because I don't know what your experiences are. I don't know where you've come from, whether you have brothers and sisters, what sort of family background you come from? I'm not the expert in that, you are. So, all I can do is give you a way to look at life and then to apply that is left with each and every one of you.

My objectives for today

So, what is my purpose for today? I have three things. I have a duty, I have a responsibility and I have a favour to give. I have a duty towards *Shàsthrun Wahansè*, why do I call him *Shàsthrun Wahansè*? Have you heard that word before? So, ***Shàsthraya*, is a doctrine, or a philosophy** in Sinhalese. Now I know this is going to be a little bit challenging for you, particularly if you are not well versed in the Sinhala language and that's perfectly fine because this is why we are doing this *dèshanà* in English, to try and help you understand some of the things that you might have heard in the temple or your parents speaking about, or other *sàdu's* talking about in Sinhala. You know, often times your challenge will be, I'm seated, I'm listening to everything that's said but I don't get a word of it and I know how frustrating that can be. So hopefully, today I'll help you to cross that bridge. To help you to understand some of the things that are normally talked about in Sinhalese, in English. However, I will use some Sinhala words, this is because sometimes to convey the meaning, it's really difficult to do it in English. I'll give you the Sinhala word so that one day you may refer back to it. I'll give you the English word as best I can. It's not going to be a direct translation. I've been trying to do this for about two years now. You know, we do similar programs with children of your age in England and I've been trying to find words in English that give the same meaning as the word in Sinhalese, or in Pali, and every time I come up with a word, it never conveys the same meaning. So, because of that, I'm going to give you the English term and I'm also going to give you the Sinhala term, so that in future you can make a reference to it and when you hear your parents talk about it or *hàmuduruwò* talk about it in the temple, you'll be able to make that link.

Who is Shàsthrun Wahansè?

So, *Shàsthraya* is philosophy or the doctrine. For example, a doctor, I'm not talking about a medical doctor, there are doctors in various fields, doctor in Philosophy, doctor in biology, doctor in geography, in Sinhalese, the word for that is *shàsthrapathi*. So *shàsthra* is doctorate, doctor, doctorate. So, this is my doctor essentially. My *Shàsthrapathi*, *Shàsthrun Wahansè*. Because, I am now a student, a lifelong student of the doctrine that He has given me. And from the moment I understood what His message was, there's never been another teacher for me. I mean, I still learn things from various people but in terms of what do I need to do to end this painful experience that is *samsàra*, I will not find another teacher. Because, the path for me is crystal clear. I may doubt whether the sun might rise tomorrow, but I do not doubt that this is the teacher whose teaching that will take me to the end of *samsàra*. And you'll see why in a moment.

So, I have a duty towards my *Shàsthrun Wahansè*. Because, there was no stone that He left unturned. There was no effort that He didn't go to, to give me this Dhamma. When He preached the Dhamma, it was not for the people who sat in front of Him, it was for me. I may have not been there in front of Him that day, but everything He did, He did for me, not you for me. And why do I say that? It's because I want you, I want all of you to think that way. Anything that *Shàsthrun Wahansè* did, He said, He said for you or for me? It's for me. And that's how I want you all to feel. I have a duty towards Him.

I have a responsibility. I have a responsibility to your parents. I arrived in Melbourne the day before and I was amazed to hear how much effort, how much pain, how much grief your parents went through to organize this, to bring us here and to give you this opportunity. I was absolutely amazed. It's because they have listened to this Dhamma and they have experienced that there's something new here, there is something here for them to take and some of them want to take the next step and I'll tell you what that next step is. However, for some of them there's a barrier and that barrier is, their most prized possession, that is you. That barrier is because sometimes there are things that you don't quite understand yet when it comes to

Dhamma. So, when they come and talk to you and say ‘*Puthè or duwè*, I want to do this, I want to take that next step’, sometimes there might be questions from you, “*thàththi*, what do you mean? Or *ammi* what do you mean? How can you leave me and go like that?” So, I have a responsibility towards them and I want to try and fulfill that responsibility and I can only do that if you understand what we’re talking about for yourself.

Therein comes the third bit, the favour. I am doing a favour, for you. This is a favour because, what you take from today is not for me, you know I’ve come here, I’m going to spend the next few days here and then after that I’ll be gone. We’ll probably never ever meet again. So, what do I have to take from you? What is it that you can give me that I don’t already have? I have a well-established profession back in the UK which I’m going to leave pretty soon because I’m going to be taking that next step myself, I’ll tell you what that next step is. You know, I’ve been to University, I’ve done all the things that you’re probably thinking of doing in the next few years. I graduated with a first class at University, in fact I won the best dissertation award from Her Majesty’s Government and Communication Centre; which is a well-established Institution in the UK. The reason I’m telling you this is because I just want to share with you, that there is nothing I’m expecting in return from you. This is why I’m doing you a favour. So, I’ve got everything I need, what is left for me to take is what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* has given me and every day I take a little bit more from Him and this is why I have a duty to repay Him and the only way I can repay Him because He’s not here with us today, is to do what He spent his entire lifetime doing. Which is giving you, giving me what he realized for Himself. However, those three things are my objectives for today.

Your duty towards yourself

For you, it’ll be the same, but in reverse. What do I mean by that? You have a duty towards whom? Yourself. You have a duty towards yourself. This is not the first time you’ve have sat in front of a ***Dèshaka thuma*, a preacher** to try and understand something. This is not the first time you would have done this, even in *samsàra*. You’ll have had previous births where you tried to understand something, you know what is this process of rebirth that the Lord Buddha

talks about? Why does He say it's full of suffering? And if it is, how do I end this process? This is not the first time you would have listened to this kind of talk. However, you know, you and I, we are still here. How much longer do we want to keep doing this? How many more times do you want to be seated in front of this audience? Seated, listening to somebody, saying the same thing and then still not do anything about it.

How many times do you want to be in grade four or grade five? How many years? If you're in grade four, think of whichever class you're in at the moment, from grade 1,2,3,4,5, how many years do you want to spend there? If you're in grade six, how many years do you want to spend in grade six? One. Okay? You only want to spend one year in that class because as soon as you learn what you need to learn from there, you need to move onto the next class. Because if you spend, a second year in there, people are going to go on wondering, *'hmm something is not right with that child'*. If you spend two years there, they're probably thinking, *'that's probably a child with special needs'* or, *'something really is not right, you know what's wrong with them? Is it family background? Is it the fact that they're not going to a good school? What's wrong with them? And if you spend a few years there, people just can't stop talking about you, because it becomes embarrassing. You and I, both, we've both been in that boat.*

What's your duty towards yourself?

Shàsthrun Wahansè, attained *Pari-Nibbàna* 2500 years ago and I'm still here. So, clearly, I haven't done everything I could possibly do to follow Him in His footsteps and complete this realization as He has done. So clearly, I haven't done everything I can and I'm not prepared to make that same mistake again. I'm not prepared to do that and neither should you. So, you have a duty towards yourself. That is to make the most of today, listen to what we're talking about. Pay no attention to anything else that's happening. Even if a phone goes off, don't worry about it. Let someone else worry about it. Today your concern is just what we're talking about. You have a responsibility, who do you have a responsibility towards? You have a responsibility towards *Shàsthrun Wahansè*. Because remember how I said at the start? The Perfect One. He's the Perfect One. He's gone through so much and you know, as you learn about the Lord

Buddha's life, hopefully you'll begin to realize how much He's gone through. When He attained Buddhahood under the Bodhi tree, He had achieved everything He wanted to. There was nothing else for Him to gain after that but then He spent 45 years of His life, giving to you and me what He learnt, what He realized. Why? Out of pure compassion. You know, in the face of all kinds of adversity, He fought all of that, for whom? For him? What did He have to gain from that? He did all of that for you. So, since His time, how do you think we still have His Dhamma? You know, the Buddha doesn't come every morning and preach Dhamma to us now. How do we still have the Dhamma that we talk about?

Tripitakaya

Have you Heard of the *Tripitakaya*? Have you heard of the Bible? So, you've heard almost all of us have heard of the Bible but unfortunately not the *Tripitakaya*. Very good, please go and speak to your parents about this at the end of this. Talk about what you've learnt here with your parents. The *Tripitakaya*, or in English it's called the **Three Cannons**, Cannons because they are a set of books. So, the Bible is one book. The *Tripitakaya*, how many books do you think the Tripitaka is? Three volumes but each volume has a number of books. Any guesses? 54. If you think there's a lot of Dhamma in the Bible or in the Holy Quran, how much Dhamma do you think there is in the *Tripitakaya*? You could stack them up just like you do the Encyclopedia Britannica. That's how much Dhamma my *Shàsthrun Wahansè* gave us. Right, you don't need to know all the Dhamma there is in the *Tripitakaya*. I mean, I never would, not certainly in my lifetime. To gain the fruit that we need, we don't need that much. We need something that is really simple. However, whatever that is really simple, we need to understand clearly, without any shadow of a doubt and hopefully, I'm going to try and give you that today. So, from you, I need absolute hundred per cent attention, because I need to fulfill my responsibility to your parents and I need to fulfill my duty towards *Shàsthrun Wahansè*, those things I am bound to do. I have a responsibility and a duty but the favour? I'll do it if I can, I won't if I can't. So, remember I have a favour to give you. However, you have a duty towards yourself, this is why I try and emphasize that point.

What is Buddhism?

And I'm sure as we continue to talk, you'll have questions and I'm going to try and leave some time at the end to take your questions, to try and help you unravel some of the doubts you might have. So, what do you think Buddhism is about? What do you think *Shàsthrun Wahansè* spent His entire life certainly the first few years going through; if you've been to *Daham Pasal*, you know surely, you will have spent some time listening to and learning about the pain that He went through. Specially, when He left the Castle, where He starved Himself, where He gave as much pain and grief He could to himself to try and achieve Nibbàna and ultimately, He realized, that this is not the way to go but He went through all of that to try and come to some kind of understanding. What is that understanding? (AUDIENCE) The truth of life? yeah, any other answers? What do you think Buddhism is about? What do you think his philosophy is about? (AUDIENCE) yep, it's about following the correct path and remember, I told you there are 54 books in the Tripitaka. However, have any of you heard the names *Sunìta or Sòpàka*? Put your hands up if you have? *Sunìta* and *Sòpàka*? Okay, good, so we have a few people. They were both aged 7 when they attained the state of *sòtàpanna*.

An Eon

What is *sòtàpanna*? Anyone know what *sòtàpanna* is? *Sòtàpanna* is a state of mind. The Buddha comes to this world very infrequently. This is a gift to the Universe. The arrival of a *Buddha, a Sammà Sam Buddha* happens once every few eons. Do you know what an eon is? It's a really long time. When someone asked the Buddha,

"how long is an eon?"

He said,

"I could never give you an answer to that, which is that, I can't give you an exact number.

However, I can give you a simile, an example."

I'm going to try and simplify this. If you take a container that is sixteen yards long, sixteen yards wide, sixteen yards deep, just imagine it was a kilometer, keep it simple right? A container which is one kilometer in length, width and height and you filled it with mustard seeds. Have you seen mustard seeds? How big is a mustard seed? That big? That big? That big? It is tiny isn't it? A mustard seed is tiny. If you fill that container with mustard seeds and you then remove one seed of mustard every hundred years so, that might probably be longer than your lifetime. Anyone here wishing to live up until they're a hundred? Anyone here? Ah good. Great, that's good. A life is measured not in the value of life, is not measured in the number of years you live, however, the service that you can deliver to the world. But to do that, you need to have done service to yourself. So, if you'll have removed all of the mustard seeds but an eon will still be left. There will still be time left in the eon to complete.

Now, the Buddha comes into this universe, into this world, after about 4000, 5000 of these eons; one *Sammà Sam Buddha*. Now, we've been fortunate that actually in this, what they call a *Badra Kalpa*, I'm still looking for the English term for that. So, don't worry about it. It's a really long time. We've had five *Sammà Sam Buddha's* or we've had four. *Gautama Sammà Sam Buddhurajànan Wahansè*, who's number four. There is a number five who will come along but again in a very long time. I mean you've told me a hundred years is more than your lifespan, okay? So, the point I'm trying to make is, do not wait until He comes along. Because the thing is even if He comes along, He's going to teach you the same thing. He's going to say exactly the same as what our *Shàsthrun Wahansè* taught us. So, it's not going to be any different. So, why wait till then?

Why is my happiness dependent on others?

So, what is Buddhism then? We had some really good answers. The Buddha comes into this world to deliver a message. And that message is, there's a problem with this existence. There's a problem and the problem is, that we all live a life expecting to be happy, to be satisfied. However, we keep looking for happiness and satisfaction in places where they don't exist. This

is why we are always looking for it. Think about your parents. I mean I certainly think of mine. When I said, I was preparing to take the next step and the next step is actually to become a monk but my mother still asks me,

“puthà, why do you want to do it so soon? I mean, you’ve been to University, you’ve had a good life. You’ve had a good education, you’ve got a good job. Why do you want to do it so soon? wait until you’re a bit older, you’ve had one or two kids and then do it.”

And then I ask them a question in return. So, I ask them, okay, so my mother is now 60 and my father is 65 and they’re both in the same boat. So, they both ask me the same question and I tell them,

“Okay. So, all these things that you are asking me to do now, you’ve done them. They got married, had kids, had good jobs etc. etc. So, are you happy now? Are you fulfilled? Are you happy with your lives as it is? Is there anything that still bothers you? Anything that you think is still not satisfying?”

And they say,

“Well, yeah, there’s plenty of it. There’s lots of it.”

So, then I ask them,

“Okay, so if you’ve tried a certain system, a certain way of living life,”

I give them an example, I say, right, if I saw fire for the first time, imagine there was a candle that’s lit and I’m seeing it as a child for the first time. I walk towards it and I try to touch it. What do you think my mother would do? Exactly. She’d stop me. She’d pull me away from it.’ Why? Exactly, to stop me from getting burnt or hurt. So, if she thinks that’s going to hurt me, then surely and this is what she’s doing she’s stopping me from getting hurt. Clearly, she would have burnt her fingers in the past either while she was cooking or lighting a candle or a matchstick or whatever the case might be, she would have hurt herself and now she wants to stop me from going through that and experiencing the same pain. This is what parents do. This is what your parents would do.

Why do they try and give you good education? Why do they try and send you to the best school that they can afford and the best school that they can get you into? Why do they make sure, that you associate with the right people, with the right friends and keep your distance from people they think that you shouldn't be with? It's because they want you to have the best. Best of whatever they can afford. My parents are no different. So, if they would do that for something as simple as me going and touching a candle, or fire, getting my fingers burnt, and they've experienced a way of living life for 65 years and they're still not happy with it, I ask my mother,

“why do you want me to try the same thing? You've lived 65 years of your life, your parents have done the same, their parents have done the same. Why do you want me to do the same thing? Have you already not made a mistake, and learnt from it? Isn't it your duty, your responsibility to stop me from making the same mistake?”

Unfortunately, they don't have an answer to that question. Not yet anyway and so I tell them,

“well, thanks to my Shàsthrun Wahansè, I have found a way to remain happy, when everything around me falls apart. When the whole world is against me, when people come and shout at me,”

I mean, believe me, before I came across this *Dhamma*, I didn't want people to come and shout at me. Obviously, none of us do. We want people to talk to us nicely. We want people to be kind to us.

Taking control of my happiness

But now I'm quite the opposite. Every day I look for people to come and say bad things to me, be nasty to me, to shout at me, to find faults with me. Why? Because they're all my teachers. What do I mean by that? A teacher is someone who tells you that you've got a problem somewhere and then help you fix it. Isn't that what a teacher does? Isn't that what your

teachers do? When you're in the class, you do your homework, you make a mistake somewhere with something and they tell you, that's not how you should have done, do it like this. Now, these teachers that I come across, these people that I talk about, the people who shout at me or be nasty to me they can't necessarily tell me what I need to do but that's what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* did for me. However, they give me experiences in life to apply what I've learnt from *Shàsthrun Wahansè*. That's the lab, that's the laboratory where I practice what I've learnt and hopefully, you will be able to do the same.

Think about when your friends take something that you really like and they don't give it back to you? What does that do to you? Makes you sad, exactly. What about if your friend calls you a name that you don't like? How does that make you feel? Angry. But what if someone gives you something that you like, say, presents. How does that make you feel? Happy. So, this is the thing, our happiness and sorrow, happiness and sadness, depends on what other people do to us. So, my happiness and how I feel internally, is a function or is dependent on how people treat me, how the world around me behaves, how people talk to me, how people do things to me, whether they are nice to me, whether they're bad to me. Something's wrong with that. Why is my happiness dependent on other people? Why can't I be happy when everyone and everything around me works against me? Why is dependency there? There's a problem there. This is the problem that I talk to my parents about. So, I tell them,

"your happiness is very much dependent on how your friends, your relatives, your children treat you."

I mean today, when I tell my mother,

"mother, I want to go become a monk,"

she becomes sad but she's lived 60 years of her life trying to look for nothing but happiness and yet today she fails. So, if 60 years of practice and study isn't working for her, surely, she shouldn't ask me to do the same thing. This is why I tell her,

"I have found a different way. I found a way to remain happy even when everyone around me is nasty to me, is bad to me. Doesn't talk nicely to me."

How would you feel if you were able to do that? How would you feel if when you went to school or you're with friends, someone takes something that belongs to you and you don't feel hurt about it? How would you feel about that? happy, exactly. So, you would always be happy. This is what we're all trying to do. Why do you go to school? (AUDIENCE - to learn), to learn, why do you learn? How do you sustain a life? (AUDIENCE), – by getting money, yeah. This is what your parents are doing. So, you don't need to think far, there's not much you need to think before you can find an answer to some of these questions; to earn money. Why do you need to earn money? yes, to buy food, things you need, clothes, things like that. Why do you need that? To survive, yeah and to be happy generally. So, you do all these things, so you can live a happy life. So, if you need to do all of these things to be happy, wake up at whatever time you wake up in the morning, what time do you wake up in the morning to get to school? Mmm .. six? Okay, well trust me and you can check this with your parents, if you wake up at six, they probably wake up at four. They probably wake up at four to make sure you're up at six. Because they have to keep waking you up, 'come on, come on *puthà*, wake up, your school bus is here, start getting ready' and also, you know, they need to cook for you. They need to cook for themselves. They need to clean the house, all of these things.

Remember, all of this is coming for you. You think you can wake up at six today isn't going to happen for long. All the things that they are doing today, watch and learn because you're going to have to do all of those things to sustain yourselves and your children, if you end up having children. All of the pain that they need to go through. You will have heard, you will have listened to your parents at home talk about, "*I've got this bill that I need to pay, a credit card bill or a tax bill or water bill or electricity bill, how do we pay this?*" Mother and father talking about it at home and I encourage parents to bring children in when you talk about this at home so your children can learn from your experiences so that they don't have to make the same mistakes that you did. We take it on ourselves because this is the only method we've ever known;

You're born, they raise you to an age when you can start school, you go and learn at school, you go to tuition classes. How many of you go to tuition classes? I mean, listening to some of the people I've been talking with, apparently tuition is a big thing in Australia. So, you need to do all of that why? So, you can try and have a good life. Do you enjoy waking up at six in the morning? Who prepares your food at the moment? You said your parents. For how long do you think they're going to keep preparing your food? (AUDIENCE – Forever...), *'if your mother or father has said that to you puthà, you're very fortunate.'*

The thing is our parents aren't going to be with us forever. As much as our parents love us and they'll do anything they can for us and I mean anything and absolutely everything. I talked to some parents and some, they commit sins so that their children can have good and happy lives. This reminds me of the responsibility I have towards your parents. They would commit sins. A mother I was talking to tells me, this in Australia, so, probably someone you already know. She tells me, 'when my son was a young child;' and you have ants and insects in Australia? We don't get a lot of them in England maybe it's just because they can't bear the cold. Ants around the house, she used to go and spray whatever the insecticide, we'll call it that. She'll spray at the ants and the ants would die. Why? So, your child doesn't get hurt. What are they doing? Aren't they committing a sin? Has the Buddha ever said that if you kill an animal you can go to heaven? What has the Buddha said? (AUDIENCE), yeah, so the Buddha has clearly said, if you do bad things, bad things will happen to you but your parents will still do that for you and one day you end up being a parent, you're going to do the same. Unless, you understand what I'm talking about today and you take it in and process it. Because, are you prepared to go to hell?

I encourage you to speak to your parents. There are some really nice videos on YouTube. I don't think any of you are foreign to YouTube. Someone who came here said, apparently iPads are quite prevalent in Australia. It's become a bit of a problem. Because you're on your iPads all the time. So, surely YouTube is something that you're not new to. Just type the word 'hell' into YouTube and watch some of those videos. Watch with your parents around. Ask them to

show you some of the things that would happen to you in hell and your parents are willing to sacrifice that for you.

See, I asked my mother, if they spent their entire lifetime, which is what they're doing, they spend their entire lifetime trying to accrue wealth, money, whatever they think is of value, property, houses and money for their children, i.e.; myself. How would they expect me to use that? They would expect me to be very careful with it, wouldn't they? Particularly if they've gone through a lot of pain and suffering to accrue that, to gather that. They would expect me to be very careful with that. But without being careful, if I just go and spend it on, going out, clubbing or drinking with friends or just wasting money, if I just wasted everything that they gave me, how would that make them feel? (AUDIENCE – miserable?), miserable exactly. They would think how ungrateful I am.

Now, the reason I say this is because, wealth ie. money and property are things that you can see that they give you. But what about all the things that you don't see? What about all the hours that they put in to enrich your lives? What about all the hours that they spend, sleepless nights that they spent to bring you up? To give you everything that they can do for you? I mean after all they bought you into this world, you think that was easy? As you learn more about the world, you'll understand how much pain a mother goes through to bring a child into this world. How much pain a father goes through to bring a child into this world. I'm not here to talk about treating your parents because you will have heard plenty of that before but the reason, I'm bringing this point up is because you have a debt of gratitude to them. I told you about the money, the properties, if you think you'll be very careful with that, how careful do you think you need to be with your life? Because that's the greatest gift that they've given you.

A life where, you're fully formed, you've eyes and ears, all your organs are working fine because they would have taken pain to take medicines to make sure that they were ready to bring you into this world? Okay? So, they've done all of this for you to give you a life, a fully functioning healthy life and to keep you that way, that's the biggest gift that they could afford to give you. How do you spend that life? if that's the biggest gift that they could give you. How do you

spend that life? Do you spend that life in a way which at the end, however long you live, whether that's until you're thirty, who knows? Can anyone here guarantee that they're going to be alive tomorrow? Can you put your hand up and say, *'I'm absolutely sure I'm going to be alive tomorrow?'* No. So, we don't know how long we're going to be alive for. So, whether that's thirty, whether that's fifty, whether that's eighty, if at the end of that time, you gained nothing out of this existence, I think that's the most atrocious thing you could do with the gift that your parents have gifted you. So, remember, this life, particularly you, I mean I can't imagine how fortunate and how gifted you guys are.

When I was your age, I didn't get to hear any of this. So, I spent my life, trying to be the best I could at school. Try and get the best grades I could, try and get into a good University, try and get a good job, try and become a millionaire, these were some of the goals I had in my life. I've still got a book in which I've listed all the goals that I wanted to do, every goal I just write them down. I had financial goals, I had family and relationship goals, I had holiday goals. Goal setting, it's a really important skill if you want to survive in this life. In a lay life. So, I had all of these goals but then, I now ask myself, the day when I'm on my deathbed, when I'm ready, and within the next few minutes I'm going to be gone. What have I gained? What's left for me to take with me? Absolutely nothing. So, what if I spent my fortune what my parents have given me in this life and I did nothing with it? There's no bigger scandal than that.

So, what I'm trying to help you understand is, this system that your parents have gone through and are going through, there's something wrong with it. There's something wrong with what my parents did, in terms of the system that they followed. Because they didn't know any different. However, when your parents listened to this Dhamma, the Dhamma that we talk about, they have come to an understanding that there's a different way in life. there's a different path to life. There's a different way that can bring us happiness no matter what happens and they're now trying to take that journey. However, they have this barrier which is, well, what's going to happen to you then, the apple of their eyes. So, this is why you need to have some kind of understanding of what we talk about. So that you can then go to them and

say, *'ammi or thàthi, I understand why you are now looking to take this journey and I'm going to be supportive of that and I'm going to help you and in fact, if possible, I'm going to come with you.'* But that only comes through understanding.

Can you guarantee that you won't kill your parents?

So, what is this understanding that we talk about? This is the important bit, so pay attention. We live our lives thinking that happiness exists outside of us. We talked about this before, it's the friends that bring us happiness. It's the kind of food that we eat that brings us happiness, the presents that we get that brings us happiness. So, the thing is when those things change, your happiness changes with that. How you feel, changes with that. The reason I'm going to talk to you about this for the next few minutes is because of all the things I said before about your parents. I have one more thing I want to say at this point. Because I think it's really very important. I know for a fact that none of you yet, can put your hand up and say,

"my parents are not going to die because of me."

You're probably thinking,

" what the hell, are you talking about!"

Can you absolutely guarantee me and put your hand up and say,

"my parents are never going to die because of me. I'm never going to kill my parents?"

Okay, so, probably a few of you thinking, *'no... yeah... I'm never going to do that'* and your parents are probably thinking, *'my children are never going to do that to me because I love them so much and they love me lots in return.'* Fair enough. Have you ever heard or in particular from the parents, when they read newspapers, see articles about how sometimes parents have been killed by their own children? These things happen. Unfortunately, this is the world. You know some of you sitting here may not have been exposed to it yet but these things happen. Children kill their parents. Doesn't happen a lot but it does happen. Well at least it doesn't get reported a lot even if it does happen a lot but it does happen. Could you even think of doing something like that to your parents? I mean I don't need to tell you how your parents

look after you, right? The thing is this, so when your parents read that newspaper; Imagine you are, your mother, or you are your father. If you're a boy, imagine, you are your father. If you're a girl, imagine, I'm my mother. Okay? They read a newspaper or see on TV, a child has killed their mother or a child has killed their father, how do you think they feel about you? Because that mother or father that died, do you think they ever thought their child would kill them? When they brought them into this world, when they gave them birth, when they sent them to the best schools that they could afford to, when they gave them the best food that they could afford to, when they helped shaped an entire life around them, the best whatever they could. When they committed those sins for their children, do you think they would have thought,

'my child is going to kill me some day?'

No, they would never, ever have thought about that. But then they see it on TV, do you think that doubt never comes into their mind?

'mmm what if this happens to me by my child?'

The 4 heinous sins

The problem is this, *Shàsthrun Wahansè* has taught us that if you commit something, a sin such as killing your mother or father, with no question of a doubt, you go to hell and it's not any kind of a hell we're talking about, it's the worst kind of hell you can imagine. There are four sins that *Shàsthrun Wahansè* talks about. **If you commit any one of these four, you go to the worst kind of hell you can imagine; killing your mother, killing your father, killing a *Ràhàtan Wahànse* or hurting the Buddha.** Now, fortunately you can't hurt the Buddha. I mean, that's the downside, that's the good side of not having the Buddha around today, you can't hurt him. Killing a *Ràhàtan Wahànse*, it's rare to find a *Ràhàtan wahanse* these days but they do exist. Believe me they do exist, even to this day. But what about your parents? You live with them every day. So, you're living this life and you live with your parents every day. How do you know what might trigger?

In the UK, I mean, in newspapers in the UK, at least two or three times a year, you see a girl or a boy has killed; I mean even in Sri Lanka, a boy kills his mother just because mother has not allowed him to go and see his girlfriend. A boy pushes t mother into a train or something, just because he was not given some money to go and get a gift for the girlfriend. What is the fate that they bring on themselves for something as silly as getting a gift for a girlfriend? Going to the apàyas? Now think about your parents, your parents, reading that newspaper article or watching on TV, how can they guarantee themselves, this is not going to happen from my child. And if you agree with me that they do everything they can for you and they even commit sins for your benefit, can you at least not give them the guarantee,

'ammi, thàththi, magè athin ammai thàththai maren na', kiyalà?

'ammi, thàththi, I am never going to kill you', 'you're never going to be murdered by me'.

Can you? They're not asking for much. All they are saying is,

"duwè, puthè can you come to me and tell me, I am never going to die because of you. You're never going to kill me, for everything that I do for you. That's all I ask you. You don't have to look after me when I'm older. You don't have to give me money, you don't have to give me food. Just tell me you're never going to kill me."

Is that so much to ask for? But the problem is, *Shàsthrun Wahansè* says, there's only one kind of person that *Shàsthrun Wahansè* gives that guarantee to and that is a *sòtàpanna*.

Why becoming a sòtàpanna is so important?

So, then the question is, 'what is a *sòtàpanna*?' *Shàsthrun Wahansè* says, a *sòtàpanna* will never, ever, commit that crime, commit that sin, which is to kill their mother or kill their father. So, from your parents' perspective, unless you're a *sòtàpanna*, well you can fill in the rest. They have no guarantee that they are not going to die from something that you do. So, what do you

need to do then to repay the gratitude that you have for them, or the debt that they do for you? To try and become a *sòtàpanna*. Cause that's the only way you can guarantee,

*“ammi, thàththi, mage athin nan ammai thàthai maren na. vena kohoma hari marei.
Mage athin nam maren na.”*

That's not a lot to ask for, is it? And to become a *sòtàpanna* is not that difficult. Regardless of what you might have heard in the past from other *dèshanà*, it's not difficult to become a *sòtàpanna* and I'll tell you how you become one. I'll tell you now. But, first, I want you to understand why becoming a *sòtàpanna* is so important. Because once you become a *sòtàpanna*, you never go to hell, never ever.

And I remind you again, and parents particularly, when you get home, go on YouTube, type *apàya* or hell into YouTube and let your kids watch them. Show that to your children so they know what's coming. I reminded you what's coming for you, when you grow older and become parents and start to do jobs. How you have to get up at four in the morning? You know, right now, you don't have to do night shifts, night duty. Your parents probably do that as well. Why? It's for you. You're probably going to have to do some of that as well. You know, paying the mortgages, paying loans, paying credit cards, paying bills. None of that is fun. Trust me, I've done it. None of that is fun. But when you have this existence, this survival, you have to do it, okay?

What is a *sòtàpanna*?

But anyway, coming back to the point that I was making before, how do you then become a *sòtàpanna*? What is a *sòtàpanna*, before you know how to become a *Sòtàpanna*? **A *sòtàpanna* is someone who has understood, who has realized Nibbana.** Now, there's a difference between realizing *Nibbana* and achieving *Nibbana*, they're two different things. What I'm telling you now is, it's really easy to realize *Nibbana*. It's difficult to achieve it. So, how do you realize it? You could realize it now, in the next few minutes and it is for that, that I'm going to spend the next few minutes talking to you about.

Sunitha and Sòpaka were only 7 years of age when they realized *Nibbana*. So, if you are 7 years or over, there's no excuse. If you are under that age, I have no evidence to say that they have achieved, I haven't so far seen examples in the *tripitaka*. So, *tripitaka* are the books in Buddhism as we said at the start, that show, young children under the age of 7 that have achieved *sòtàpanna*. But that's only because I have no evidence. That's not to say you can't. So, each and every one of you, make a firm determination, *"if there's nothing else I do today, I'm going to listen to what dèshakathumà is going to say for the next few minutes, very attentively and try and achieve this state of sòtàpanna."*

The 4 apàyas

Shàsthrun Wahansè has taught us that there's a problem with this rebirth cycle. Why? We just talked about it just a few minutes ago. You are, only children at the moment but you grow old, you become adults, parents and then, you don't need to go into the hells to see the suffering that you're going through at the moment. I mean, ask your mother and father,

'ammi, thàththi, dan vidina duka àyi vidinna òneda kiyala poddak ahàlà balanna'.

Just ask them,

'do you want to grow through the pain you're going through now, again?'

I'm not going to give you the answer. You go and find the answer, find the answer out from themselves, okay? So, that itself is **'dukai', is suffering**. What about the hells? I mean, that's beyond comparison. What about animals you see? That is a type of hell. Who here has pets at home? Dogs, cats, rabbits? What do you do when you have a headache? Mmm? or when you have a tummy ache? What do you do? (AUDIENCE) Get medicine for it. How do you do that? (AUDIENCE), you go to the doctor. So, you probably tell *ammi* and *thàthhti*, and you know, say, *'ammi, thàththi, bada ridenava, oluvè kakkumai, can I have some paracetamol, or can you take me to the doctor?'* What do you think your dog does? Or your rabbit? Your pet hamster? Whatever pets you have at home, pet kangaroo? Do you have kangaroo's? pet kangaroo's? your pet can't speak. It's probably going to cry and you're thinking, it's hungry, you give it some food, it's still crying because it's got a headache. Can't even tell you what's wrong with him. That's the *apàya*, that's the **animal hell**.

But there are three other hells that you can't even see. There's a '**Perètha lòke**'. That's where you can't see these things unfortunately right now but one day you will be able to when you develop your state of mind, you cultivate your mind where you can see the unseen worlds, the *peretha*'s. I mean, watch these things on YouTube. There's plenty of stuff in them. Obviously, they're not videos of *peretha*'s but there'll be animations of it, animations based on stories that people have told once they've seen them.

Then there's the **Niraya lokaya**. What's the hottest it's been in Australia in the time you've been around? 40? How do you feel when it's 40 outside? Tired, exhausted, sweating, thirsty? Now, how would you feel if it were 3000 degrees centigrade? (AUDIENCE), exactly. Very good. The unfortunate problem is, when you're in those *apaya*'s, you don't die because of the heat. You just experience the pain. You don't die until you've expended all the bad karma's you've done to go into the *apàya*. Until all of that has expended you don't leave the *apàya loka*. You're in *apàya*, in hell but at 3000 degrees. 40 is bad, trust me you don't want to go there. But the problem is, I've been there, not in this birth, I have been in the past and I don't want to go back there. If you trust in *Shàsthrun Wahansè*, He's telling you what He's seen from his Samadhi. If you trust in Him then, this is going back to your parents. Your mother said don't touch the fire because it's going to hurt you. Your response could have been, "*ammi, I'm not going to trust what you're saying. I'm going to go touch it and then experience it for myself,*" you can try that. So, if you want, you can go into the *apàya*, experience that and then come back out. In *apàya*'s, your lifespan, I think someone said they want to live up to a 100, if you're lucky but in *apàya*'s, these are many thousands and thousands and thousands of years. So, imagine, 3000 degree for that long time. Even if you die, you are reborn again in the *apàya* and they don't let you just be there. Watch these videos, and you'll die. I remind you again, I have been there and I don't want to go back there. This is why *Shàsthrun Wahansè* comes into this world, to teach us the way to stop going into the *apàya*'s because of the compassion that He has. I told you, under the Bodhi tree when He realized Enlightenment, He could have just said,

'that's it, I'm done. You worry about yourself.

but no, He went through *samsàra* because of the compassion He had towards us to try and give us this Dhamma.

How to become a *sotàpanna*?

So, a *Sòtàpanna* is someone who never goes into *apàya*. So, it should be your duty to yourself to try and become a *Sòtàpanna*. What you need to understand to become a *Sòtàpanna*, is the reality of this life, I think someone said, when I asked the question earlier, what do you want to get out of today and they said it was about the nature of life or something similar. *Shàsthrun Wahansè* says,

“whatever you see around you, including yourself is ‘Anicca, Dukkai, Anattai’.

What does this mean? So, these are Pali terms. I’ll try and explain them in English. Have you heard of the expression, cause and effect? Dependant origination, *Paticca Sammuppàda*, you

Cause & Effect - Example

Let’s do an experiment. Everyone likes an experiment. I want all of you to think of; and don’t tell the person next to you, don’t shout it out loud, just think to yourself. Think of a random number. I’ll give you five seconds. Think of a random number. Okay, times up. So, you’ll have a random number in mind. Now, I’m sure each of you’ll have different numbers in mind. I’ll ask for a volunteer to tell me what that number is. Yes *duwa*? Five. Okay. Question for you then. Why was it five and not four? Because it’s your favourite number, good. Why is it your favourite number? You’ve been through that age. Is that how old you are at the moment? Oh, you’ve been through that age, okay. Good, very good I’ll come back to that. Another volunteer? Yes *puthà*, (AUDIENCE) 100, why 100? Why is it not 200? (AUDIENCE) why do you like 100 more? (AUDIENCE) because what? because it’s more did you say? (AUDIENCE) more less (AUDIENCE - than 200). Okay, okay any others? (AUDIENCE) four, four, why is it not five? (AUDIENCE) okay,

and why was it not three may be? Why was it the first thing that came to mind? (AUDIENCE)
good, okay.

So, what I want you guys to think about now is when I ask that *duwa* over there, 'why was it five and not four,' she said it was her favourite number and then we asked, 'why was that?' and then she said it's because she's been through that age. For each and every one of you, if you think, why was it, why was that number the number you thought of, add one or take one away and think why was it not that number. There would be a reason for it. The point I'm trying to make is everything is cause and effect. No matter what we see as random in this universe, it's still conditioned by a number of things. The reason that you would have selected a particular number; let me relate you a story, that when I did this experiment with some children back in the UK. Here's a story that I got.

Nothing in this world is the way it is

So, there was a boy and a girl, brother and sister and I asked for a random number from the sister and she said it was number 7. So, I said,

"why was it number 7? Why was it not number 8?"

and she said,

"it was because when I was on my way coming here, my brother was talking about something that was 8. I don't like him very much, so I went for number 7."

So, I said,

"okay, so why did you not like him very much?"

and then she said,

"well, he always comes into my bedroom, I tell him not to, but he always comes into my bedroom and that really annoys me."

Why does he come into your bedroom? And she said,

"because he wants to come and take my pencils away or take my colour pens away"

or whatever. So,

"why does he do that?"

“well, because he doesn’t have his own.”

“Why does he not have his own?”

So, we went all the way back. I kept asking the question, ‘why, why, why, why?’ I became a little bit annoying, I could understand but I kept asking the question, why did you, why was it? Why was that the case? Why wasn’t it the other? And we kept going back until she said,

‘well it’s because I’m right handed’.

So, we went all the way back. I know, you’re probably – how did it go from there to that? Right? But I just kept annoying her, okay? We went way back to the point where she said, ‘because I’m right handed’. I said,

“why were you right handed?”

“well because I was laid down in my cot a certain way at home and my mother always approached me from the right-hand side and she would always come and approach me from that side. when sometimes people come and give me things it would always be toward my right hand.”

So, I said,

“why was that?”

“It’s because the cot was laid that way.”

What if the cot was laid the other way? and then the question was,

“well why was it not like that?”

It’s because their house was in such a way that the cot that they got did not fit that way. It would only fit in the other way. So,

“why was the house designed that way?”

Everything in this world is conditioned

The point I’m trying to make and hopefully you can see is, nothing in this world is the way it is because we want it to be that way. Question for you, I’m sure you work really hard for your exams, I don’t know what your parents might say but let’s go with that. You probably work really hard at school to try and do the best you can in your school tests. When you pass your

school exams, whether that's the mid-term or end of term or your government exams, why do you think that happens? What are the factors that contribute to that happening? (AUDIENCE) mmm, exactly. It's because you put in the work to do that right? Now imagine, how many of you here would like to be a doctor? I'm very surprised. We've only got two arms, three going up, or four, okay, actually few more here as well. Now, if I asked your parents the question, how many of you would like your children to be doctors, I think all of them would probably put their hands up but the point being this, if you put in the effort, if you put in the study, if you read all the right books, if you go to all the right classes, if you pass all the right exams, you become a doctor whether you like it or not. I have heard, I have come across some people who tell me, now why did you become a doctor?

"Oh, because my parents wanted me to."

"What! you don't like to do it?"

"No, I don't like it."

"But you became one."

"yeah, I became a doctor but I never wanted to, I wanted to become a lawyer, or I wanted to be a musician, or a dancer or an athlete. But no, my parents wanted me to become a doctor and so I became one."

What are they telling me there? What they're saying is, what happened in my life was all of the things that needed to come into play, come into play for me to become a doctor, came into place and therefore I am today a doctor but it had nothing to do with whether I wanted it or not.

Wishing & wanting doesn't change the outcome

Whether you want something to happen or not is the same as adding a zero to that equation. Think about when your parents make a dish at home. I'm sure you all would have had dhal curry. So, what does your mother do when she cooks dhal at home? She'll take some dhal into the container. She'll wash it, keep it on the cooker, put turmeric powder, put chilli powder, put

this powder, put that powder, salt, water, *pol kiri* (coconut milk) all of these things and let it simmer in the fire for a few minutes. What is she doing? She's creating all the right conditions for the dhal curry to come, to be created. Whether she likes it to be a dhal curry or not has got nothing to do with that. If she does the same things again, but wishing, *'oh, I wish this didn't become a dhal curry. I'm going to add the turmeric powder, I'm going to add the chilli powder, I'm going to add umbalakada, Maldive fish, this and that and this and that but I don't want this to be dhal curry'*, do you think it's still going to be a dhal curry or do you think it's going to be something else? It's still going to be a dhal curry. What is she doing there? All she's doing is, she's creating all the right conditions for a certain effect to take place and this is exactly what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* taught us. Whatever you see in this universe is just cause and effect.

Attachment leads to suffering – Example 1

Question for you, think of your best friend and think of your friend at school that you really don't like. No, you don't need to tell me who they are. There's a chance they could be here (AUDIENCE) sorry, (AUDIENCE) that's true, yeah, so it's not a friend, it's just someone you really don't like. So, your best friend and someone you really don't like at school, okay? Now, if something bad happened to your best friend, how would that make you feel? Yes? It would make you feel sad but what if something really bad happened to this person that you really don't like? (AUDIENCE - you would feel good?), okay, I think he's being honest right? Okay, so, you feel good. At least you don't care that much about it, okay? What's the difference here then? So, the difference here is, the friend that you really like, you have a strong attachment to them and this person you don't like, you have a dislike towards that person, you don't like them. So, you don't really care what happens to them. So, if something has made you unhappy, it's not the fact that somethings happened to a person. Again, go back to your best friend. Imagine your best friend, at school, you get together, you go out and you do all these things and one day you break up, you go your own ways. He is no longer your best friend. Now there's actually someone you really don't like. Because they've said or done something to hurt you or you've said or done something to hurt them and now you don't even talk to each other. You don't even like, you don't like each other's presence. Now what happens if something happens

to that person? Something bad happens to that person? You either feel good or you don't care about it. But when they were your best friend, you cared a lot about them and that hurt you as well when they were in pain. So, what was the difference? It's the same person, what's changed? When they were your best friend you had an attachment to them.

Etymology of tanhà

Shàsthrun Wahansè calls this *tanhà*. This is why I said I'm going to use some terms which may sound new to you but they're important. Now I don't know what you might have learnt in *Daham Pàsala* for the word *tanhà* but I'm going to give you a meaning for you to think about. I'm not personally challenging what you've learnt, I just want you to think about this. Words that particularly in Buddhism, each word has a meaning. Have you heard of the word etymology? do you know what etymology means? So, anything that has the phrase 'ology' at the end is a science. So, like biology, technology etc. Etymology is actually, how the word has come into being. What makes up that word? Now **Etymology** deals with the science of the construction of a word, how a word has come into being. *tanhà*, the reason *tanhà* is called *tanhà* is, if you break that word up, it's 'tan'-'ha'. 'Tan'- 'ha' become 'tanhà'. What is 'than'? *thanak kiyanne mokakda*? A place, right? 'hà' *kiyanne*? 'hà *venavà*' *kiyanne*? Mm? (AUDIENCE) *hà kiyanne ow, kiyana adahasak thiyenavà duwa, 'hà venavà'* *kiyanne*, attach *venavà kiyana eka*. To be attached. So, if you are attached to something, that is *tanhà*'. What Lord Buddha says is, '*tanhàya jàyathì sòkò*'- '*tanhàva hindà duka athi venavà*'. It's *tanhà* that creates suffering.

So, going back to your friends, your best friend, who when they were your best friend and now they are no longer your best friend; it's the same person, you are the same person, what's changed? Your attachment that you had towards that person. So, when something bad happened to them while they were your friend, you really didn't like it because of the *tanhà* but when something bad happens to them when they were not your friend, you don't care about it. So, going back to the point we talked about before, if it's the things around us that make us

happy or make us sad, well then, every time, and also remember we talked about how things are cause and effect. How things are all conditioned. So, your random number, there was a reason why you came up with that random number.

Attachment leads to suffering – Example 2

If you attach yourself to something but then the conditions for that changes, what happens then? The attachment changes. So, say you've drawn a really nice picture and you've coloured it, okay. This is something you're going to take to an art competition. So, it's next day, you spent a lot of time drawing it, and it's now ready to be taken. You wake up the next morning and you see, your *malli* or *nangi* or if you have a small younger brother or sister, they've come and spilt some water on it. How would that make you feel? (AUDIENCE - sad?), it'll make you feel really sad, yes. So, that would make you feel really sad but what is it that caused you to be sad? I mean, think about it, what was it that created that picture? All the conditions that you put in drawing the circles in a certain way, drawing those lines in a certain way, colouring it in a certain way, all of those conditions gave rise to that picture and then you attached yourself to it, *'oh, this is my picture, I really like it. It looks really nice and I'm going to take it to the competition tomorrow,'* okay. Or say the competition got cancelled or it's not going to happen now, it's going to happen next year. That would make you feel really disappointed. This is what happens when you attach yourself to something. You've got to be ready to be disappointed.

When the causes change, the effects change – Example 1

How many of you have cars at home? Or your mother or father owns a car? Okay majority of you. What do you think is one of the first things they do before they put the car out onto the road? (AUDIENCE – wash it?), wash it, okay. There's also something called insurance. Clearly you've not had the pain of having to go through that but it's coming, trust me. You have to get it insured. Why do you get insurance? So, insurance is something that covers you in the event that your car is damaged. So, what are they doing? They're preparing themselves for when the conditions for the car to be the way it is changes. That's what insurance is. The moment you put the car out, you don't know what might happen. Another car might come and hit you, someone

might jump in front of you as you're driving down the street that might damage the car, it might hurt the person and then you have to pay for it. The reason you take insurance is, so you don't have to pay for it, the insurance company pays for it. But you pay the insurance company for that. There's a premium you pay for them.

But think about this, why am I talking about insurance here? It's because, we take insurance out for our cars but we don't take insurance out for our minds. When you set an expectation on something, you are setting yourself up for disappointment. Why? Because things are conditions and effects, it's cause and effect. Everything is cause and effect. When the causes change, the effect changes. But when you attach yourself to whatever that effect is and the causes change in the background, the effect has now changed and whatever you attached yourself to before, you don't have any longer and so, you're disappointed. But this is the problem, this is what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* says,

“when you set yourself up with expectation, ensure you expect disappointment.”

Taking an insurance policy for the mind

Take out an insurance policy for your minds and that insurance policy is the philosophy that *Shàsthrun Wahansè* taught us, ‘*Anicca, Dukka, Anatta*’ and that is to understand that this is the nature of the world. Because when you expect it, what is it that causes disappointment? What is that called? expectations. So, disappointed is when you, say that out loud *puthà* – (AUDIENCE), did you all hear that? When you want something to happen but it doesn't happen, that's what causes disappointment. As an expectation doesn't realize itself, you have a disappointment. So, what if you expected that to go wrong? What happens then? Are you disappointed? If you expect something to go wrong and then it goes wrong? Well you're not disappointed because that was the expectation. This is what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* says,

“realize that everything in this world is cause and effect, when the causes change, the effect changes.”

When your mother is cooking that dhal curry, no matter how much she expects that dhal curry, if she adds a little bit more salt to it than she normally does, you're probably not going to be able to eat it. She'll serve it to the guests, the guests come along, they start eating it, and they spit it out, 'what is this?', she wanted to cook a nice dish that everyone in the family could share but you can't eat it now because the causes have changed. You added a little more salt or a little bit more of this or a little less of that. Something really simple, you don't need lots to change for the effect to change. A very small change in the cause can change the effect. But you attach yourself to it, that's where the problem is. But if you understand that as soon as the causes change the effect changes.

When the causes change, the effects change – Example 2

Let me give you an example that you will be able to relate to in your lives pretty soon, I imagine. In life we go through relationships, okay? You see your parents in relationships. Your relatives, chances are, as you grow older, you will get into a relationship with somebody, okay? That could be a girl or a boy. What is that relationship a result of? Think about this. Think really long and hard because this is usually a point of frustration for your parents just as much as it is for you. Cause when you come home crying, *'anè thàththi, arayà mata karapu dè balanna, kiyalà'*, or *'anè thaththi, look at what she did to me, she left me'*, *'anè thaththi or anè ammi, my girlfriend left me.'* It's going to cause disappointment for you and it's probably going to cause disappointment for your parents as well. But what is a relationship? A relationship exists for as long as you can give each other what you expect from that relationship. So, if what you really like about the girl or the boy that you get into a relationship is the colour of their hair or the way they speak or the way they give you things to make you happy, what if that stops? What if they change the colour of their hair? What if it's, you know really simple things. What if they say something to you and that hurts you, because your expectation was something else? You're disappointed. All you need to understand though is, a relationship only exists for as long as there are conditions for that relationship to exist. Otherwise, why do people get divorced and go their own ways? I've read stories in the UK where young couples, they've gotten together with each other, they spent a long time getting to know each other for years and years, ten

fifteen years, getting to know each other, get married, the next day they get divorced. And you wonder, what! What were you thinking? Why? Because, that relationship was based on a number of conditions, as soon as a condition change, it could have been something like

'I don't like what you said there',

and the other person goes,

'what do you mean, you don't like what I said there? I've been saying that forever.'

And then she goes,

'well, you know, now you're my husband, or now I'm your wife, you shouldn't be saying that to me, not particularly in front of my friends.'

And then the other person goes,

'well, if I've said this to you for this long, what's wrong with me saying it again?'

now, immediately you're seeing a conflict there. Why? Because whatever the conditions were for you to be together had now changed and the result is going to be either one person changes again to adapt to the other person or they go their separate ways. The reason I'm telling you this is because you're probably going to find yourself in this situation and when you do, think about this, a relationship only exists for as long as there are conditions for that relationship to last. As soon as those conditions change, that's the end of that relationship and that is the same with everything else. Why do you think they let you come into school? Because you behave yourself, you do your homework on time, you respect your teachers. What do you think is going to happen if you stop doing those things? They're going to kick you out of school. Are they not? At least they are going to give you detention a few times before they kick you out. Why? Because there are certain conditions that you must fulfil to remain in school to be regarded as a student that obeys the discipline at school. As soon as that changes, the result changes. So, if you attach yourself to that, the result, you're going to be disappointed.

So, we've talked a lot about cause and effect. I know some of these concepts would be very new to you. I wish we had more sessions like this to talk about this. But it's just unfortunate I

think we have very little time. I mean, what your parents have asked me to do is to talk to you. We're already half an hour over our allotted time. To talk to you about what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* spent forty-five years trying to explain, it was never a feat that I was going to achieve. Perhaps we might get another opportunity, I don't know. If the conditions are right the cause will happen and the effect will come into play, okay?

To what extent can the individual change the conditions?

But let me pause there for a second and see if you have any questions because before we move any further, if we have the time, it's important to check that you understand what we've talked about so far. Questions? (AUDIENCE – to what extent can the individual change the conditions?), that's a very good question.

'To what extent can the individual change the conditions?'

An individual can change conditions to a large extent. I know the reason you're asking me that question, it's because then again you feel like you're in control of that situation and it's not something outside your control. However, what do you need to influence a condition? You need to think about it. You need to be influenced yourself to make an influence. What is it that influenced you? It could be things that someone has said, for example, today could be influential to you. It might influence the way you might treat your parents. It might influence the way you conduct your life from today, potentially, I don't know. Or you might think, what a waste of time that was, whatever. Remember, I'm not expecting anything in return from you. This was a favour for you, okay? But it's conditions that caused for you to think in a certain way which then you go and make an effect on a certain entity; which then gives you a different result. Does that make sense at all? But please, ask me it in a different way if that didn't quite answer the question, okay.

I think that was a very good question and I'd like to add another example to that just to make it a little bit more clear. So, how many of you here like football? Do you call it football here or

soccer? (AUDIENCE) soccer? Football? (AUDIENCE) what's that? (AUDIENCE) Thank you very much. See, I didn't know that. You learn something new every day; here's a teacher. You, sir, are my teacher. So, football and soccer are two different games- okay. Who likes football? Wave, Okay, we have someone there. Okay, two. So, imagine you're in the middle of a game. There's a net, you want to kick the ball into it. Now, there are many conditions that need to come into play, into place for a result which is a goal and the player that's running towards the net, kicking the ball along, is thinking, *'well, I'm going to influence this. I am the one that's going to make this choice. I'm going to kick this goal and I'm going to get a goal and I am going to help my team win. So, that is all dependent on me. I'm the master, I'm in control.'* Now, what are the conditions that need to come into place for that ball to be kicked at the right time, at the right speed, for no other players to be in between for this ball to get into the goal? What about the training? The amount of training that he's had. What about the weather? How damp it is? What about how wet the grass is? What about if someone else jumps in the middle? What about the wind? Is that not going to have an influence? So, how many conditions are there, that we can't necessarily influence? It's quite easy for us to think, *'yeah, I'm going to influence this'*. and there are somethings that we can influence. But, even that influence you're making on it, has been influenced by something else. So, even you're thinking, *'actually, I'm going to use this strategy here and not that, I'm going to kick this ball in a certain direction, I'm going to use my left leg instead of my right leg'*, that choice was influenced by something, it could be that, you know, for all the training you've done on the pitch, that's your best leg. So, what was that influenced by? How you were laid down in the cot. Whether you were left or right handed. Again, it keeps going back, keeps going back. Where do you stop this? This is why, if we were to take one thing, just one thing, say this tissue, why is this tissue a certain way? Why is it crushed in a certain way? Why not another way? You could go back, years and years and years talking about, why did that happen? Okay, so, why did that happen? Why did the other thing happen? You could never end.

I have no guarantee about my life?

This is why I feel I'm helpless. I have no guarantee about my own life. Because my life is conditioned by a number of different things. There are lots of causes that give the result, which is I am alive. But I am alive this moment, this moment, the next moment, the next moment. When people talk about death and they say, "*àh kohomada dan àchchita ehema? Kohomada seeyata?*" You hear your parents talk about this. And they go, '*yeah, they're doing well. They're doing alright.*' Shouldn't you be surprised? "What? They're still okay?" Or should you be surprised when they say, "*actually no my grandmother passed away,*" "*ah okay.*" That can't be surprising. Why? How many conditions do you think need to come into play for somebody to be alive? How hard, how fast your heart beats? How many blood vessels do you think are inside you? And how many blood vessels do you think need to get clotted? Do you know what a blood clot is? Yeah? How many blood vessels do you think needs to get clotted before someone dies? Or gets a heart attack? How many heart attacks does one need to go through, before that's their last one. You might have heard stories where people just go about their own business and then before you know it, they're gone. How many things need to come into play for someone to be alive?

This is why I'm saying, I have no guarantee that I'm going to be alive, by the time I walk out of this hall. If I'm so doubtful about my existence and I know what I need to do to end this rebirth cycle, is that something I'm willing to wait for another day to do or is that something I need to do now? See, guys the thing is your parents are in a similar situation. At least, you have the luxury of life, a number of years left in you. You are youth. Okay, so we have between the ages of 5 and 20 odd. What about your parents? They could be in their 30's, 40's 50's 60's, some may be even in their 70's. You might feel, '*I'm quite youthful provided nothing happens to me, I'll be alive till I'm 60.*' This is why I said I feel envious of you guys that you have actually listened to this Dhamma at such a young age. When I was your age? I had different plans. My parents didn't know any better. They didn't bring me to a place like this to listen to this Dhamma. Because, I didn't have the conditions that gave me that result. I hadn't done enough good karma to earn that merit, to earn that result but you have. In your past births, you must have

helped someone to attain Nibbana. You must have helped someone to understand the Dhamma and today you are reaping the result of that. I'm under no delusion that for some of you, a lot of what we just talked about might take you a while to understand. It'll take you a while to digest this. Particularly if they were the very young people here. Because some of this can be new concepts, it's a new way of looking at life. But for your parents, who've been listening to this Dhamma for a long time, a lot of them have come to the realization, *'you know, I am in such a late stage in my life, I have no guarantee I'm going to be around for the next few years. Because my brother passed away, my mother passed away, my father passed away and they were half my age when that happened to them. How long do I think I'm going to be around?'* and some of them want to take that next step. The next step that I said I was prepared to take. To become a monk or to become a nun. Why become a monk? What's the point? Well, the point is, all the things that we talked about, the things that they have to do today for survival, the things that they have to do to survive, like do a job, earn money, pay bills drive a car, get car insurance, all of these things that you have to do, you've got no choice. If you want to live a lay life, you have to do these things, there's no other way. Cause that's the way the world is formed. You've got to fight for your existence. It's a fight for survival.

The thing is when you do that, you have very little time to spend your life to understand *Shàsthrun Wahansè's Dhamma* and to apply that to your lives. But you do get the time to do that full time, except for when you're having some food but actually that's a lie because you can do it while you're having food as well. They can do this fulltime when they become a monk. They want to make sure that they don't go into the *apàya's*. Think about the example I gave you at the start. This mother that told me *'I am worried, I'm really worried because I killed lots of ants to protect my son when he was a baby. I'm really worried what might happen to me.'* You know what *Shàsthrun Wahansè* has said?

He said,

'if you do something to someone, the payback is going to be very similar'.

How many times, how many mosquitos have you squashed? You're probably counting. I didn't ask the question, have you squashed a mosquito. Because that's almost a pointless question to ask. I've done it. I've killed ants. I've killed mosquitos. But I know the *vipàka* for that *karma* is coming, it's coming. If you squash a mosquito, that's how you are bound to die. You'll probably be crushed to death. Maybe while you're in a car, a container falls on top of your car as you're driving along and that crushes you to death. You think that's going to be fun? If you do something to someone the payback is going to be very similar.

But this is the thing, we've all committed sins and these sins we will have to pay for. This is why your parents are thinking, well,

'I've done so much for my children. I've done all in the hope that it'll bring them good and, leave them in a happy place. However, I've committed all these sins and I'm now going to suffer for it. Before that happens, I need to stop this rebirth cycle.'

Because it's only if you go through the rebirth cycle, will you be born again, to then be subject to the *vipàka* of those *karma*. So, I need to stop this and to do that, they need the time. They need the time to focus on that and you need to help them to do that.

So, whether it's at home; start with little things, you don't have to walk up to them and go today, "*ah ammi, thàthhti, hari, gihillà mahana venna*". You don't have to do that. Start with little things. If you can help do the dishes at home do that. Tell *ammi and thàththi*, "*ammi, thàththi, gihillà ada ònnanan banak àhàganna*", "*go and listen to some Dhamma.*" Because there's lots of this on YouTube, the Dhamma that we talk about. "*Ammi, thàthhti, you go and listen to Dhamma, I'll do the dishes today*" or "*I'll clean the house today, you go and listen to Dhamma*" or "*I'll make my own sandwich today to take to school, you go and listen to Dhamma. You do something for yourself. You've spent your entire life doing things for me and my brother or my sister. Now go and do something for yourself.*" This is the only thing you can give back to your parents, the gift of Dhamma and if you can't preach the Dhamma, at least allow them the time to go and take the Dhamma from wherever they can and put it into their lives. So, try and do that.

And one day, when you come to a realization, perhaps I need to do the same thing, you know, I don't want to go through the same process, studying, going to school, going to university, finding a job, trust me, I've done it and there's no satisfaction to gain out of it. Otherwise why would I be going away today? I told you, I've got a good job, I've got a home, I've got a car. I've got all the things you could possibly imagine that people seek in a good, prosperous, happy life but that doesn't satisfy me. Because I'm not happy enough just to be happy when things around me make me happy and be disappointed when things around me disappoint me. I'm not going to settle for that. I want to be happy no matter what happens around me and that I can only get through *Shàsthrun Wahanse*. If I practice the Dhamma, apply what I have learnt, understand this concept of *Anicca*, which is everything is cause and effect, when the causes change, the effect changes and therefore I'm not going to attach myself to that effect which exists now because that's going to change, right? My wife is not going to be as young as she is today, forever. She's not as pretty as she was when I got married to her. Which is the truth. She probably doesn't find me as attractive as when we got married. Today we both have decided to go into the Monastery to become a monk and a nun. Why? Because we realized, and came to the understanding that we spend a life, our parents have gone through this, before them, before us, our grandparents and go back any number of generations as you want.

And now, go and speak to your parents, ask them,

'ammi, thàththi, you've spent all your life trying to make yourself happy, trying to make us happy. Are you happy today? Are you satisfied today?'

Ask, see what answer you get back from them. If they tell you,

'yes puthà, I'm really happy. Nothing ever disappoints me, I'm perfectly fine.'

Then do as they say. If, however, they tell you,

'I have done all this so far, I'm tired, I'm exhausted and yet even tomorrow I need to go to work. Why? Because I still have to pay a mortgage. I still have to do this. I still have to do that. I have my parents to look after. I have this, that and the other and I'm still not happy about it. I'm still disappointed. I'm still not quite content with life',

then ask them the question,

'do you want me to go through the same thing and come to your age and then come to that realization or do you want me to try something different?'

Then they'll help you come to an answer. And if that answer is,

"yes, duwè, puthè what you understood today, we weren't able to understand until we are the age we are today. You've been so fortunate to understand what you understand now at such a young age. We want to help you to find a different way, a different path to find a happiness that is forever lasting, that is not dependent on the things that happen around you."

Then let them make that change in your lives and you help them in return by doing the things that I said. Take on some of the things at home. Allow them the time because that's the one thing that they don't have. They don't have the time because they've spent their entire lives on you and they still do. Every moment that they're awake, they spend on you, give them some time back. Do the things that you can at home. Release them from some of those duties and responsibilities. If not the duties, at least the responsibilities. Help each other out. That's the biggest gift that you can give them. It's not looking after them when they're old. I mean, certainly do that but there is something you can do for them right now. Help them do that.

Any other questions? Yes puthà, (AUDIENCE – When you're talking about the apàya...), exactly, if you kill an animal, that could take you to apàya and you would feel the pain, that animal suffered when you killed it. That's what you said, right? Yeah and you know, think about it, have you never killed an animal? An insect? Ah good, if you haven't. I mean you're still quite young and perhaps you haven't had the opportunity to do that. When I say, what I mean by that is, you haven't been in the situation where you are having to do it. Say, you were seated somewhere and your mother or father sees a snake approaching you, do you think they'll just let the snake come and attack you? They'll either take you and runaway as fast as they can or they're going to hurt the animal. If they go and hurt the animal, they will do a 'pina' and they'll do a 'pawa', they'll do a good deed and a bad deed, a sin as well. The good deed will be saving another human being. The bad, will be killing that animal. What have they done? They've just

sacrificed themselves for you. At the moment of their death, if that deed, killing that animal is what comes into their mind, they will be born in a place in *apàya* where they're going to suffer for it and they've done that for whom? For you. So there, this is what I'm saying, they're committing their entire life for you. This is, they're giving you a gift you can't put a price tag on. There's no one in this entire planet that will do anything more than your parents for you, except *Shàsthrun Wahansè*. So, don't be a traitor to *Shàsthrun Wahansè* and how can you not be a traitor to *Shàsthrun Wahansè*? By understanding the Dhamma. Because that's what He did, He spent his entire life trying to teach us this Dhamma, trying to teach me this Dhamma. I can't be a traitor to my *Shàsthrun Wahansè* and I can't be a traitor to my parents and neither should you.

So, I think at the start I mentioned, in the UK when we get together like this, parents bring their children for about an hour and then they come back in an hour and say, it's not finished yet and we go on for about two, three hours. It's because, how can I try and explain to you something so profound in such a short time? It's just completely impossible. However, hopefully I've given you something to think about. What I'm going to suggest to you is, I've asked you to do a few things. Can you remind me the few things I've asked you to do today? (AUDIENCE) yes, well done *duwa*. On the internet, go and search for *apàya*, ask your parents for help and permission maybe, to do that and watch with them and then, you'll have questions, 'what's happening here' then they'll explain to you, okay? Do that.

Second thing? (AUDIENCE) exactly *puthà*. Help your parents. Release them from some of the things they're doing for you right now. Simple things, cleaning your bedroom, making your bed. Why do they have to do that for you, if they're doing so much for you already? They've given their entire life to you; can you not make your own bed? They're prepared to go to *apàya* for you. Can you not make your own bed? Do that for your parents. Wash the dishes if you can, sweep the house if you can and when you do that, tell them, '*ammi, thàththi*', you'll see them doing the work at home, "*ammi, thàththi, man òka karannan,*" "*I'll do this, you go and listen to some Dhamma or you go and do some meditation.*" Because otherwise, what are they doing for

themselves? Nothing. Because their whole life is committed to you, okay? So, that's the second thing. Anything else? What's the other thing? Remember what I said, when your parents look at the newspapers, watch TV, yes? (AUDIENCE) exactly.

Right now, you've just not had the opportunity or the situation where your parents can be killed or murdered by you. Take that worry away from them. That's not so much to ask for. Give your parents the assurance that they're never going to die by your hands and you can only do that by becoming a *Sòtàpanna*. For that, you need to listen to this Dhamma.

Now I know we've only been able to talk very little today. It feels like a few hours, but I've only covered very little. However, in the UK we get together like this with children your age, and we talk about this Dhamma, what we haven't started to do yet, is actually try and collate with other children around the world. So, we can start doing that, on Skype. So, speak to your parents. If they believe that this is of benefit to you and to them as well. Ask them, '*ammi, thàththi*, can I also join some of those *dèshanà*?' and we can come together, we can talk more like this over Skype and you can listen to it, you can ask your questions and try and make a difference to your life because we don't know when our last breath is. I have no guarantee I'm going to walk out this hall alive. I don't think you have either. What you have today is a gift. This human birth which is so precious you can't even believe it, you can't imagine. But make the most of it, okay. I think there's another program after this particularly for the adults, so we'll bring this *deshanà* to an end. Think about the things we talked about. Think about the things you promised to do today. Make sure you do them. Your parents will hold you responsible, they'll come and ask you, "*what did you promise to do? Have you done them?*" Okay. And, try and see if you can connect over Skype to these *deshanà* in future.



00.01.24 Introduction

00.04.17 What is your purpose for today?

00.07.06 Who is the expert of your life?

00.08.12 My objectives for today

00.10.37 Who is Shàsthrun Wahansè?

00.12.46 My responsibility

00.14.24 My favour to you

00.04.17 Your duty towards yourself

00.18.37 Your responsibility towards Shàsthrun Wahansè

00.20.52 What is the Tripitaka?

00.23.14 What is Buddhism?

00.25.28 An Eon

00.29.33 Why is my happiness dependent on others?

00. 35.08 Taking control of my happiness

00.38.24 Everything we do, is to be happy

00.40.29 All the pain your parents go through, is coming for you

00.46.33 The greatest gift your parents have given you: Your Life

00.50.35 Help your parents to walk the Noble path

00.51.41 Can you guarantee that you won't kill your parents?

00.55.14 The 4 heinous sins

00.58.28 Why becoming a sòtàpanna is so important?

01.00.42 What is a sòtàpanna?

01.02.31 The 4 apàyas

01.08.32 How to become a sotàpanna

01:09:51 Cause & Effect

01.13.15 Nothing in this world is the way it is

01.15.29 Everything in this world is conditioned.

01.17.54 Wishing and wanting doesn't change the outcome.

01.19.29 Attachment leads to suffering – Example 1

- 01.22.04 The etymology of Tanhà
- 01.24.43 Attachment leads to suffering – Example 2
- 01.26.23 When the causes change, the effects change – Example 1
- 01.27.33 An insurance policy for your mind
- 01.30.30 When the causes change. the effects change – Example 2
- 01.35.20 To what extent can the individual change the conditions?
- 01.40.10 I have no guarantee about my life
- 01.42.54 Reaping the results of good Karma
- 01.45.17 Why become a monk?
- 01.47.50 Help your parents: Start with the little things
- 01.48.59 Ask your parents; are they happy today?
- 01.50.47 Don't be a traitor to Shàshtrun Wahansè
- 01.56.10 Make the most of this human birth

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