

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 2019-02-03. 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.**

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KEY WORDS

Mind

Five senses

Mind

Brain

See

Rùpa

Vedana

Sanna

Sankhara

Vinnana

Arising

Passing away

Citta

Ignorance

Shopping

Mother

Child

How do you know you are alive?

2019-02-03

How do you know you are alive?

How do we know that you live in this world? How do you know that you are alive?

One way is through your breathing; or you can feel your heartbeat. How else do you know that you are alive? Through your five senses. The eye, ear, nose, tongue and the body. These are your five organs. These are the organs through which you see, hear, smell, taste and touch or feel or sensations. When I ask you the question, 'how do you know whether you are alive', you can say, 'I can breathe'. Which of these senses pick the fact that you are breathing? Even if you close your eyes, you can still feel your lungs expand and your heart beating as well. These are all physical sensations. When you say you are alive because your heart is beating and your lungs are expanding as you take air in and push it out, that's something you sense through the sense of touch. But there are another four there. You can hear someone speak. Therefore, you know you are alive.

Brain is a communications machine

When you put something in your mouth, a chocolate for instance, you can taste it and now you know you are alive. These are your five organs. You also have a pretty neat organ called the brain. The brain is a communicating machine. It's like a communication center. It's responsible for communicating all around the body all those inputs that come in, all the stimuli that come in from the outside world. The brain is responsible for keeping contact, keeping communication between these organs which bring in inputs from the outside world. What are the inputs that come from the outside world? What comes in through the eye? Sight! You can see a flower. That's a sight. What comes in through the ear? Sound! That's a bee. You can hear a bee, so you know you are alive. What comes in through your nose? Smell! What do you like to smell? Flowers, yes? To smell a flower, it has to be closer than when you want to try and see it. So, the flower comes closer, the same flower. That's the fragrance. Then you can smell the flower. With the tongue, one can taste chocolate. Then, touch. Touch is the sensation through which you know that there are things around you. You can feel solid, you can feel soft, you can feel temperature, heat and cold. These are things that you can feel through the sense of touch. Through these five organs you can take inputs from the outside world. All these things that you see, are all part of the world that you live in.

Everything comes in through the five senses

What happens if you fly to the moon? If you fly to the moon, will you find anything different? Is there chocolate on the moon? Are there flowers on the moon, or the bees? You can take one to the moon, yes. What I really mean by this world is, everything that comes in through your senses - everything you see here, every item, every object, every person! The sun, the moon, the stars, the rivers, trees, birds and bees, bats and balls, all these things we see around here, the chair you sit on, the clothes that you are wearing, all these things are part of the world that we live in. So, it's our five organs that help to bring the outside world into the inside world. Now, where is the inside world? That's what we need to find out.

Where is the mind?

Where is the inside world? Where is the mind? We know that there is an organ called the heart. The heart is by the side of your left arm on the left-hand side of your body. The heart is the organ that pumps blood around the body. If one asks where the mind is, the mind is not inside the heart. Any living being always has blood in the heart. The mind is located associating a quantity of blood that is in the heart. That's the best explanation I can give. That's what is written in the book, *The Abhidhamma*. Actually, it doesn't matter where the mind is. But, it's a matter of fact that the mind associates a quantity of blood in the heart. So, what happens if you stand on your head? Now all the blood in the heart will drain. Thankfully, you have your bicuspid valves and tricuspid valves, so there will always be a small quantity of blood in your heart. Just because you stand on your head, doesn't mean your mind is going to flush out and then you will have to go around your body trying to bring your mind back into your heart. Don't worry about that. It really doesn't matter where your mind is. This is just extra information for those among you who are curious.

The five senses

Now, you've got the world. You've got the five senses. This brain, the reason I said this is a translator is because its job is to translate messages from the outside world that come in through your five senses into the mind. The mind only speaks one language, and this language only has five words in it. How many words are there in English? About a million, possibly more. But the mind only speaks one language and there are only five words in this language. That is *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna*. These are the only five words that the mind speaks. The mind does not know any other language. But where is *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna* in the flower? Is there any *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna* in the flower? Is it there in the bee?

Is it there in the chocolate? No! This is one language and that is another language. So, you need someone to translate between these two languages. It's like I am speaking to you in English and there's a foreigner, speaking Russian. We have to find a translator who can translate every word I say into Russian. Otherwise, he will be sitting here like a duck not knowing what it is I am saying, right? For the mind to understand what is going on in the outside world, this fellow will have to do some translation. Pretty hectic job! He has to do it on the fly! What does it mean to do it 'on the fly'? It means you have to do it right now, not tomorrow. So, you can't see the flower today and he does the translation tomorrow. It has to happen 'live', like live TV. When you see live TV, it is happening right now, wherever it is happening in the world. Similarly, this translator has to translate the sight that came in through the eye or the ear or the nose or tongue or body. All these inputs from the outside world come into the brain which is the communication centre. What this guy does is that it translates all these inputs, sense stimuli to this language that the mind speaks. For example, I see a flower. What does the brain translate this flower into - *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna*. The tongue tastes chocolate. Input signal goes into the brain. What does the brain translate this into - *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna*. So, whatever comes from the outside world, what the brain does is translate into *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna*. That's what is going on here.

There is the outside world and there's the inside world. The inside world is created in the mind, within the mind. I can't show you that world because it is not a physical world. When the brain picks up a sight that comes in through the eye, it is now translated into *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* and that is now a building block of the inside world. We can see a flower. Remember, it's not just the eye doing its job there. The mind is also working. Yes, there is a flower. The eye has to pick up light that is coming from the outside world. And then it leaves an input in the brain, a stimulus on the brain and the brain now does a translation on the fly, live. The mind now picks up *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* and now the mind knows; "Ah! A 'Flower!'", So what you are really seeing is the inside world. Because remember, the mind does not understand 'flower.' The mind only understands *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna*. *Saññā* or this ID is what you've given to this object. Therefore, you call it a flower. If you have called it cake, you'd say, "Look at that cake hanging on the ceiling." This is the label you've given it.

Know your Five Senses

Rūpa

Let's understand a little bit about the *rūpa, vēdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* before we move any further.

This *rūpa* is not the same *rūpa* that the eye sees. But it's a product of it. It's the translation of the outside *rūpa* that the mind can pick up. **It is a sense imprint** on the mind. It is like taking a photocopy. You can take as many copies of the original as you like. Take a flower. You can take as many copies of the flower as you like and all these copies are being created in the mind. But there is only one original. There is only one pen here but every time I keep looking at it, billions of copies are being made inside my mind. One copy is made and it passes away. Another copy and it passes away and so on. That copy that is being made in my mind, is not the original, but it's not very different to the original.

Six types of rūpa

There are six types of *rūpa* – *rūpa rūpa*, *śabda rūpa*, *gandha rūpa*, *rasa rūpa*, *pottabbha rūpa* and *dharmā rūpa*. Why six? Remember we talked about five organs and then we talked about the mind. So *rūpa rūpa* is the *rūpa* that comes in through the eye. Going back to the flower that was in front of the eye, the eye picks up light that comes in from the outside world. The rods and cones that are in your retina have been stimulated and they send an impulse to your brain and your brain translates that, because it was an input that came in through the eye, into *rūpa rūpa*. So, the mind knows that this came through the eye. Next moment, you hear a bee that is flying to the flower- *śabda rūpa*. Then someone brings that flower to your nose – *gandha rūpa*. Hopefully they don't put it on your tongue, but they put a bit of chocolate on it and it is *rasa rūpa* and then you can feel the flower and it's *pottabbha rūpa* or *sparśa rūpa*. *Rūpa rūpa* are the sights that you see, but the imprint of that falls on the mind. *Śabda rūpa* are the sounds that you hear, but the imprint of that goes to the mind. And then finally you have the *dharmā rūpa*. These are memories. Things you've done in the past. If I say, 'home', can you see your house right now in front of you. Not physically, but in your mind, yes. You know exactly where the front door is, the colour of the door, what colour are your keys, you know how big the key hole is, you know how many times you need to turn it, you know all these things and you can picture it. If I say last night's dinner, all that comes rushing back. These are all *dharmas* which you took previously and are left as memories in your memory bank and now you are able to pull them out.

Vēdanā

So, *rūpa*, *vēdanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna* and I said there are six of them. Then there's ***vēdanā***. There are four types of *vēdanā*. ***Vēdanā* is 'feeling' or rather a 'sensation'**. It's knowing that something's happened. It's like there's an alarm system at home. You've set the alarm system. Nowadays you have smart alarm systems which send alerts to your mobile phone. Let's say your

alarm system is triggered. It could have been a burglar or a cat, but you don't know what it is, yet. You just know that something has happened, but not what's happened. There's a difference between the two – something's happened, but not quite sure what it is, yet. This is what *vedanā* picks up. Something's going on. When something's going on, this comes in four forms. One of these is exclusively experienced only by an *Arahant*. You will never experience this until you become an *Arahant*. And that is called *upèkshā thara upèkshā*. I don't know the English word for that. It is equanimity that goes beyond the equanimity that you and I can experience. Although we call *upèkshā* to be equanimity, this *upekshā* really lies within vexation. It is the feeling of vexation. That is what that *upèkshā* is. The sensations that anyone apart from an *Arahant* experiences is *upekshā*. Then you have good and bad. These are all sensations that we experience but they are fabrications of our mind. So, you have pleasant and unpleasant, equanimous or *upèkshā* sensation and then *upèkshā thara upèkshā* which is equanimity that goes beyond the equanimity that is only experienced by *Arahants*.

Sannā

Then you have *saññā*. This is perception. This is the label you give to anything. You call a flower, a flower, because that's the label you've given to the object. Because when you asked your mother she said that is a flower. So, you gave that *rūpa* a label called 'flower.' Quite simply that's what it is - a label.

Sankhāra

Then you've *sankhāra*. **These are formations.** The job of *sankhāra* is to put all these together. That's one task of *sankhāra*. The English word for it is 'formations.' It's to execute this. Making this happen - in other words, identifying that it is *rūpa rūpa, shabda rūpa, ganda rūpa, rasa rūpa, pottabbha rūpa and dhamma rūpa*. It has to be identified. Then you have to come up with one type of sensation, you give it a label. Not particularly in that order, but all this has to be given in one go essentially. All that activity is run by 'formations.' And there is also another meaning behind *sankhāra* and that is the 'doing' or verb-noun. For example, if I say 'pen' what verb comes to mind? Write. That's the *sankhāra*. Writing is a verb not a noun. When I say pen, writing is the *sankhāra* that is associated with that *rūpa*. Let's say broom? Sweep. What about water? Drink, wash, cook. These are all *sankhāra* that's associated with particular types of *rūpa*. It could be *rūpa rūpa, shabda rūpa, ganda rūpa, rasa rūpa, pottabbha rūpa and dhamma rūpa* and so on. That's one aspect of it. And then doing all this is the other aspect of it.

Vinnàna

Finally, you have **viññāna**. It's the final decision that comes out. What *viññāna* does is that it wraps all this up. For instance, when I draw a flower, the reason you know that it is a flower which can be smelt, which can be touched, which can be seen, is because, all this has happened and there is a wrapper around it. You have made the decision that this is a flower, it can be smelt, it's probably a lovely smell. All that is thanks to *viññāna*. This is the wrapper that goes around all this.

How do you see things?

We are all sure that we are alive because we have an eye, ear, nose, tongue and body which brings in inputs from the outside world. We all have a good pal called the brain which does the job of translation. When the brain translates whatever comes in through the eye, it leaves an imprint on the mind and the mind knows that I have just seen something. When this cycle has been executed, you can say, "*I have seen something*". And when you say, I have seen something three things have happened. There's the outside world, there's the eye and in the mind *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna* have arisen and passed away. This is one cycle, one oscillation. Arise and pass away. When that has happened, one of these cycles have been executed one can say, "*I have seen something*." Take away the flower, have you seen anything? Take away the eye, have you seen anything? Take away the mind, have you seen anything? Take away *saññā*, have you seen anything? No. Put back *saññā* and take away *rūpa*, have you seen anything? No. Put back *rūpa* and take away *viññāna*, have you seen anything? No. These five have to arise together and they pass away together. You will never find a *citta* (mind) where you find only two of the five or three or four of the five. If a *citta* is going to arise, it's always going to be with the five together. If not, none of them will come along. It's five or nothing. This is the process of seeing. There is a process that runs in the mind - seeing, smelling, hearing, tasting, feeling, thinking. These are all processes. Very similar to the seeing process, if you put a sound in front of the ear, thanks to the brain *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *sankāra*, *viññāna* will arise and pass away. That's one cycle. Arising is not sufficient. It has to pass away. When all of that has happened, it is one cycle. You can say, "*I have now heard something*." In fact, because of *viññāna*, you can say, "*I have heard a bee*" or whatever. This is what's going on.

Arising and passing away of a citta

Now, let's take a closer look at the mind. This is the nasty fellow. This is what we are trying to tame. It's futile trying to tame the body because the mind is the master of the body. For some people it is the other way around. They use mind to please the body. We'll come to that. Let's

take a closer look at the mind. Let's zoom in. The eye has just been opened and a flower has been put in front of it. The brain just picks up the input and the brain has passed over a pack of five; *rūpa, vèdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna*. A *citta* has arisen and has passed away. Each of those is one oscillation, one cycle. Another one has arisen and passed away. So, with the *citta* you have *rūpa, vèdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* arise and the same passes away. This is what happens in your mind every moment. When did it start? Whenever you started your journey in *sansāra*. This is what happens in the mind of a human being. What happens in the mind of a rabbit? And a cow? The same. Dog? Pig? the same. What about a *dèva*? *Brahma*? Same. What about beings in the four great hells? Same. *Asuras*? Same. No matter where you are, if you are alive, if you have a mind, this is what is happening inside? *Rūpa, vèdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* arises and *rūpa, vèdanā, saññā, sankāra, viññāna* passes away at the same rate. The speed is no different whether you are a *dèva*, a *brahma*, a human or an animal. Whoever the being, it's the same speed.

Why is there no attachment in an Arahant?

Why is there no attachment in an *Arahant*? Because there is no ignorance. It's ignorance that leads to attachment. You can't eradicate attachment and leave ignorance behind. You have to work on ignorance. When you work on ignorance, attachment will be eradicated. That's how it happens. This is why we preach the *dhmma*. It is to remove ignorance. When you have gained wisdom then ignorance is removed. Along with ignorance, attachment goes away. This is the nature of the mind of an *Arahant*.

Chanda-ràga

Now let's look at the nature of us. In ourselves and rabbits and all these other beings, this is running on a platform. This platform is called '*chanda rāga*' in Pāli. In English, it's called ignorance and attachment. '*Chanda*' is ignorance, '*rāga*' is attachment. This process is running on a platform of ignorance and attachment in all those who are not *Arahants*. Ignorance is ignorance of the Four Noble Truths. Ignorance tells us that this world is pleasurable. This is what ignorance is. There are two types of ignorance. One ignorance is, not knowing how a flower has been formed; not knowing how the eye has been formed; not knowing how the brain is formed. This is what a lot of scientists try and work on. What is the composition of a flower? What is the composition of the eye? What is the composition of the brain? What's the composition of the mind? But the greatest scientist comes along and says, '*leave ignorance out. That's not what you need to worry about. Leave that ignorance out because that's not something you're ever going to figure out.*

Become a Buddha one day, then you'll figure that out. So, leave that out and just work on what is within your remit'.

What is 'ignorance'?

Our remit is a different kind of ignorance. And that ignorance is the ignorance that tells us that a flower is beautiful. 'Beautiful flower'; there is a composition to 'flower,' as in how a flower has been made up. There is also a composition to 'beautiful.' Where did 'beautiful' come from? How is 'beautiful' made up? Which of these two is the ignorance that we are trying to treat? Beautiful. The other type of ignorance is 'flower.' To figure out or to come out of that ignorance all you have to do is become a Supreme Buddha. If you can become a Supreme Buddha you can treat both of these in one go. Buy one, get one free. In fact, what really happens is, you treat one, you get the other for free as a Supreme Buddha. If all you are trying to do is, how to stop the rebirth process, I don't care whether it's by becoming a Buddha or a *Paccèka* Buddha or an *Arahant*. I just want to stop the rebirth process, that's it. Then all you need to do is treat ignorance. You can treat this by becoming an *Arahant*. But, even an *Arahant* is still ignorant of the composition of a flower. Unless he goes and asks The Buddha what the composition is. But then, The Buddha may or may not share that or He might probably say, "What's the point? Actually, an *Arahant* will probably say, "what's the point of me even asking?" Because although you are curious, an *Arahant* is not curious. The reason you are curious is because you haven't treated this problem yet. Because you are still thinking this world is pleasurable. 'Beautiful' is another term for what? It's a kind of pleasure, delightful, yummy. It's a way you express pleasure. 'Delightful' is a kind of pleasure. 'Yummy' is a way you express pleasure. 'Yummy cake' means that cake is pleasurable. Beautiful music - what does that mean? The music is pleasurable.

Two types of ignorance

There are two types of ignorance. One is not knowing the composition of the 'flower'. The other is not knowing the composition of 'beautiful'. The ignorance that we are trying to treat is not knowing the composition of the flower. But why is it that we see the flower as beautiful? That is what we are trying to treat. Why do we try to fix that problem? Why are we not trying to address this problem? For one, to fix this problem you have to become a Supreme Buddha. To come out of this ignorance, you have to become a Supreme Buddha. The second point and the more important point is, it's the ignorance of this that keeps us going around in *sansāra*. Because even if you were to find the composition of the flower, if you still say that's beautiful, you will still go

around in *sansāra*. But figure out the composition of why you call something 'beautiful', then you will realise that this is just fake beauty and at that point you will no longer find this flower beautiful. At that point you will no longer attach yourself to the flower. At that point you stop attachment. Stop rebirth. No more suffering.

So, this is the process that runs within your mind. Now here is the problem. The eye has just seen a flower. The brain has just translated that sight into a pack of five. This is the pack of five that has just arisen. Remember, there is attachment throughout this cycle. It's nonstop for as long as there is ignorance, there is attachment throughout this process. There's not a point anywhere in this process where there is no attachment. Wherever you look at, there is always ignorance and attachment. Do you like to lose something you are attached to? Do you like the death of something or someone you are attached to? If you are not attached to it, it makes no difference. As long as you are attached to it if you lose something, if it dies, if it decays then there is a problem. So, are you beginning to see the problem here? A pack of five has arisen but what happens immediately afterwards? It passes away. It is passing away, but nothing has happened to ignorance and attachment. It's still there. You are still attached. You are attached to it throughout this process. Attach, attach, attach, attach, all the way through. But attachment remains and that pack of five which arose, passes away.

Where's my five?

Now you are going; 'where's my five'?

Let me put this into a real-life situation so you can understand. A mother goes to the shopping mall with her child. She leaves home holding the child's hand in and now she is walking in the shopping mall. It is a busy day. So, she goes around window shopping and at one moment the child pulls his hand away from the mother's, but because the mother is too busy observing what is going on outside, she does not react to this. She does not realize that the child has just let go of her hand. She is still walking in the mall and at one point she realizes, "*hang on! Where's my child?*" and turns her head to look at the child. But there is no child! As a mother you'll have been in this situation many a time. As a child, you may have also been in this situation where you have gone somewhere with your mother - it could be a carnival, it could have been to the supermarket or wherever; you were holding onto your mother's hand for safety and comfort and somehow or the other, your mother got too busy, she lets go of your hand and now you can't find your mother. Haven't you all experienced this? We've all experienced this at some point in our lives in whatever situation and this is just an example. Now imagine, this child that the mother is frantically looking for, suddenly appears. He comes running from somewhere and says, "*Mother, I am here, I am here.*" How does the mother feel at that point? A sigh of relief! "*Thank goodness!*"

Now she looks again at the windows doing her shopping and she looks back to where the child was and he's gone again. How does the mother feel again? Pretty tensed! Pretty nervous! Worried? Vexed, right? This is vexation all over! Now again she is looking – "*where is my child? Where's he gone*"? Again, the child comes and says, "*Mother, I am here! Don't worry! Don't worry!*" How does the mother feel again? Relief! "*Thank goodness! Don't do that again,*" the mother says and she turns away in the hope that this child is not going to do that again. But the moment she turns her head again what happened to the child? He's gone again. Now what happens to the mother again? She is tensed, she is worried, she is vexing – where is my child? Once again he comes running from afar, "*Mother, I am here! Don't worry!*" Again, a sigh of relief!

Now imagine this happening at ten times a minute. This is like a mother going through life and death ten times a minute, is it not? Because, for a mother to lose her child or for a child to lose his or her mother at such a young age is similar to death. That feeling of fear, worry, vexation is a very uncomfortable feeling. It's like feeling between life and death for the mother. At ten times a minute this is happening, because at ten times a minute the child's appearing and disappearing, and appearing and disappearing. Imagine that happening at hundred times a minute. This child appearing, disappearing, appearing, disappearing, appearing, disappearing at hundred times a minute. Now imagine that at billion times a minute. This mother is going through hell. Experiencing the feeling of life and death, pleasurable feeling and the feeling of intense pressure, intense nervousness, intense anxiety, intense pain, at a billion times a minute.

Let's go to the three things that has to happen - there has to be a child, there has to be a mother, and the mother's brain which leaves an imprint on the mother's mind. The child has to be there which is the object, the body has to be there which picks up sensations from the outside world and then you've to have the mind and, of course, the brain does the translation. Now imagine this. This was happening, we said initially at ten times a minute. So, at ten times a minute the brain is picking up signals from the outside because the mother's holding onto the child's hand and the pack of five is arising and passing away. But what we know now is that this happens at billion times a second. The mother's holding on to the child's hand but still the only way the mother's mind knows that the child is there with her is when five has arisen. It's at this point that the mother knows that the child is holding onto her hand. But what happens to whatever arises? Passes away. Now that five which arose is passing away. At this point, she's physically holding onto the child's hand, but this five which was translated from the outside world by the brain using an input from the outside world is passing away. Now the mother's going, "*where's my child*"? Physically she's holding onto the child's hand. But in her mind, she is going - "*where's my child*"? But we know there's a platform on which this process is running, ignorance and attachment. At this point, there is attachment, but no child. Now the mother's attached to the child, but there's no child. How does the mother feel at this point? Intense vexation! This is what's happening in the mother's mind. She is physically holding the child's hand but the mind is now not able to pick

up that because the mind only speaks one language and there are only five words in that language. Those five words arose at this point, but now they passed away. Now she's going – "where's my child"? And again body, object is present and what the brain does is another input comes in, another five just arose. Attachment is still there, nothing's happened to the attachment and at this point the missing child has returned. What happens when the missing child returns? Intense pleasure this time. But intense pleasure always came after intense vexation.

"Where's my child"? "Thank goodness there is my child"!

"Where's my child"? "Thank goodness there is my child"!

"Where's my child"? "Thank goodness there is my child"!

Imagine that happening at a billion times a second.

Pain and pleasure

So you see, for there to be pleasure, there has to be pain beforehand. Because, it's not whether the child is arising or passing away that matters in this situation. This is why we say that ignorance is two-fold. The composition of 'child' and the composition of 'my'. Which of this leads to suffering? Ignorance of course. Because this is what ignorance and attachment is. In an *Arahant's* mind, there is no attachment, there is no ignorance, there is no 'my' there's only 'child.' When there's only 'child' it doesn't matter whether I am holding onto his hand or not. Why? There is no attachment. It doesn't matter whether the child is there and it doesn't matter whether the child is not there. Who cares? Because it is not my child. I am not attached to the child. Then it really doesn't matter.

Now that's happening at a billion times a second for all sentient beings. Do you see why arising and passing away is the reason this world is vexatious? When you possess a mind that arises and passes away in this way, how can you even think of being happy with attachment? Because attachment's there throughout. If this were the case with no attachment, that'd be great. Let's say, there is only attachment when the child is with you. That's alright then. Again, at this point there's attachment but at this point there is no attachment. So, non-Arahant, *Arahant*, non-Arahant, *Arahant*! Have you heard of any being like that? Either you are an *Arahant* or a non-Arahant. For as long as you are not an *Arahant*, this attachment runs all the way through.

Can you change the nature of the mind arising and passing away?

Can you change the nature of the mind arising and passing away? What about The Buddha? Can The Buddha change it? No. There's no one who can stop this arising, passing away unless you enter *nirōdha samāpatti* which is the furthest you can get in terms of *Samādhi* through meditation; deep meditation. But, you have to be an *Arahant* to get there even still or you have to enter *Parinibbāna* which is the cessation of all life; full stop - body and mind. At that point, the mind does not arise again. These are the only two states in which you can stop this from happening.

Cause of suffering

So, if you are attached to the voice you are hearing right now, at a billion times a second, you're going deaf. At a billion times a second, you're going blind. At a billion times a second you can't sense anything in this world. It's like you're in a dark room and you can't even sense the floor you are on. Now, how are you going to feel? You are so attached to sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touch, but now these things are coming to you. It's like a coma. You can't sense anything going on in the outside world. But that doesn't mean you're not attached to them. Attachment does not arise and pass away along with the mind. Attachment is constant. What arises and passes away is the mind that runs on this platform of attachment. But imagine this happening to this mother. How sorry do you feel for this mother? Again, at this point, the mother is with the child. Again, at this point, the mother's going- where's my child? But physically she's holding on to the child's hand. Now tell me, is the cause of suffering not having a child? Because people say, "*I don't have a child, therefore, I am sad and I am suffering.*" But what about people who do have a child? Are they also not going through this? Mother's holding the baby in her arms. She's standing next to a mother who just lost her child in pregnancy. Or she was about to be a mother, but she's no longer a mother now. They're both having a conversation. One's going, "*Oh! You have a child. You're so blessed! You're so lucky! I don't have a child therefore, I am suffering! I am so sad!*" True or false? Absolute false. Completely false! They are both suffering because even if you have a child in your arms, you can only feel a child at the point this five has arisen. This pack of five passes away. Physically there's a child in your arms, but you can't feel it. You don't know it. Your mind does not understand that. So, the mind's going – "*where's my child*"? This is ***udāveema* and *vayaveema*: Arising and passing away**. This is what *anicca* is. You can't stop this from happening. This is why this world is vexatious. Not vexing but vexatious. In other words, it's prone to leaving the mind vexing but the mind has to have an attribute – ignorance and attachment. Remove this and now does it matter whether it has arisen or passed away and not arising again? Problem? Arising but not going to pass away, problem? No. Arising and passing away is not the cause of suffering. If it were the case, then The Buddha would have said, "*Monks,*

I proclaim that the cause of suffering is arising and passing away.” He said what? Attachment is the cause of suffering. In other words, it’s the platform on which this process is running. That is the cause for suffering. You can’t change this. This is a fixed nature.

Cause and Effect

The three different ways of eradicating suffering is either you have to keep the *anicca* world and get rid of attachment, then there is no longer suffering; or you can keep your suffering, change the fact that the world is *anicca*, turn it into a *nicca* world and still there is no suffering; or you can do both of them and then you can make it zero. Which one of them do you think is feasible? Keep attachment and change the world into *nicca*. In other words, stop the arising and passing away. Why did the five arise? Is it because you wanted it? Why did it pass away? Is it because you wanted it? Then why? For as long as there are causes, they will arise. For as long as there are causes, they’ll prevail and when the causes cease to exist the result will decay and pass away. This is what cause and effect is. That is the nature of an *anicca* world. It arises and passes away because of the causes that determine or underlie this result, this nature of it. This is the underlying nature of it. Therefore, the only feasible thing to do, the only practical thing to do is to work on attachment. That is to change attachment to a zero and then there is no suffering.

This doctrine is only ever proclaimed by the Buddha. Every other religious leader, every other philosopher, wherever was, wherever is or wherever will be, will say don’t worry about attachment. Keep your attachment. They’ll say love thy neighbour. Just make sure you’ve got good neighbours. Keep your attachments. Keep your affections. Keep your connections. Just go and change the world to your liking and everything will be fine. Except for The Buddha. The Buddha says ‘no’. Because this is the outside world. Who are you trying to fix now? You’re trying to fix the outside world. Attachment happens where? In the outside world? Is it in the flower? Is it in the eye? Or is it in the mind? It’s in the mind. Attachment arises in the mind. Fix attachment. Eradicate attachment. Now does it matter whether there is a flower or not? There is a flower. Is that a problem? There is no flower. Is that a problem? There is an eye. Is that a problem? There is no eye. You go blind. Is that a problem? No. Why? No attachment.



00.01.58 Start

00.02.58 Paying homage to the Supreme Buddha

00.05.31 Observing the five precepts

00.09.13 Inviting all beings to participate in this meritorious deed

00.31.46 How do you know you are alive?

00.36.36 Brain is a communications machine

00.41.42 Everything comes in through the five senses

00.42.50 Where is the mind?

00.45.47 The five senses

00.51.52 Rùpa

00.53.21 Six types of rùpa

00.55.50 Vèdanà

00.58.39 Sannà

00.59.07 Sankàra

01.01.18 Vinnàna

01.05.59 How do you see things?

01.09.40 Rising and passing away of a citta

01.15.32 Why is there no attachment in an Arahant?

01.16.12 Chanda-raga

01.18.05 What is 'ignorance'?

01.20.56 Two types of ignorance

01.24.19 Where is my five?

01.34.44 Pain and pleasure

01.37.25 Can you change the nature of the mind arising and passing away?

01.38.19 Cause of suffering

01.45.54 Cause and effect

01.52.47 Meditation

Proof read by C.P