

***Readings in Eastern
Philosophy***

An Open Source Text

Edited by
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Readings in Eastern Philosophy: An Open Source Text

Edited by Lee Archie and John G. Archie

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The current version, Version 0.1, of this open source textbook in philosophy is a work-in-progress and is being released in draft form. The collaborators would be grateful for corrections or other suggestions to this preliminary draft. Please address comments to

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“Preface”

Why Open Source?



Tabulae Rudolphinae: quibus astronomicae... by Johannes Kepler, 1571-1630, NOAA

Many classic works in Eastern philosophy are accessible *via* online sources on the Internet. Fortunately, many of the influential and abiding works are in the public domain; these readings provide a convenient way to produce quality learning experiences for almost anyone seeking information and help. Our present collection of edited readings is free but subject to the legal notice following the title page.

By placing these selections in the public domain under the GFDL, the editors are, in effect, "open-sourcing" this product, in part, to minimize costs to interested students of philosophy and, in part, to make the readings widely available in a form convenient to a variety of readers. Moreover, users themselves can improve the product if they wish to do so. Viewed in this way, the release of these readings is, in a genuine sense, a small test of the Delphi effect in open-source publishing.

This particular edition is not a completed work. It is the first step in the development of the open-source text. The development model of *Readings in Eastern Philosophy* is loosely patterned on the "release early, release often" model champi-

“Preface”

oned by Eric S. Raymond.¹ With the completion of version 1.0, various formats of this work can be made available for distribution. If the core reading and commentary prove useful, the successive revisions, readings, commentary, and other improvements by users can be released in incrementally numbered “stable” versions.

A Note about Selections

Some reading selections in this collection of papers have deletions of text *in passim*; in addition, the ideas are often examined out of their literary and historical context. The main focus for our approach to philosophy, however, is not so much on historical understanding as it is on the use of germinal ideas to spark thinking about some significant issues of life and thought.

In general, as the difficulty of the reading increases, the length of the selection assigned for reading should decrease. For example, the abridged *Bhagavad Gita* and the *Dhammapada* probably should not be read in one sitting. The main consideration for selection and inclusion in this short text is to introduce primary sources accessible to a wide variety of readers, including high school and homeschooling students. In addition to this core set of readings, supplementary readings are in process of publication.

Please send questions or inquiries of interest to the “Editors” at

<philbook@philosophy.lander.edu>

1. Eric Raymond. *The Cathedral and the Bazaar*. Sebastopol, CA: O’Reilly & Associates, 1999. Online at The Cathedral and the Bazaar (<http://www.catb.org/~esr/writings/cathedral-bazaar/>).

Chapter 1

Bhagavad Gita retold by Harry Bhalla



Monkey Temple, Benares, India, adapted from Library of Congress

About the author...

Harry Bhalla provides the following introduction to his summarized version of the *Bhagavad Gita*:

The *Gita* says: “Do your duty to the best of your ability without worrying about the results. A farmer has control over how he works his land, yet no control over the harvest. But, he cannot expect a harvest if he does not work his land.”

Perceive that God is present equally in all beings. Treat all beings equally.

The four goals of human life are:

Doing one’s duty;

Earning wealth;

Material and sensual enjoyment (with senses under control);

Attaining salvation.

The aim of the *Gita* doctrine is to lead one to tranquility, happiness and equanimity. No rituals are prescribed. The *Gita* says that the world needs different religions, cults and deities to meet the vastly different needs of individuals.¹

About the work...

The *Bhagavad Gita*² is a part of the *Mahabharata*. At the beginning of the *Gita*, Arjuna is confronted with the moral decision of regaining his kingdom knowing full well that friends, teachers, and relatives will lose their lives. Krishna, the incarnation of the god *Vishnu* and *Brahman*, disguises himself as Arjuna's charioteer and offers his guidance to Arjuna. Krishna's advice is based on the relation between the individual-self and *Atman* (the ultimate Self) and the relation between nature and *Brahman* (ultimate reality). Indeed, as Krishna explains, *Atman* is *Brahman*. Krishna further traces out the various paths to ultimate knowledge and the consequent realization of *Atman* for the individual. Different paths or *yogas* are shown to be appropriate for different psychological types—personalities predisposed to intellect, action, devotion, or meditation.

From the reading...

"I do not wish to kill my seniors, spiritual leaders, and relatives who are ready to kill us, even for the sovereignty of the three worlds, let alone for this earthly kingdom, O Krishna."

1. *Note:* In the reading selection, the numbers in parentheses are the chapter numbers and verse numbers respectively, of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

2. *Bhagavad Gita*. Summarized by Harry Bhalla. *Gita For Free* (www.gita4free.com).

Ideas of Interest from the *Bhagavad Gita*

1. How does Krishna justify the assertion, “The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead”?
2. In the present fight against Arjuna’s relatives, what reason does Krishna provide for the conclusion that Arjuna is actually a fortunate warrior?
3. According to Krishna, what is the proper attitude we should have while attending to our duty? How can fear of failure be an impediment to success?
4. According to Krishna, what are the two major stumbling blocks to self-realization? Why do you think that this is so?
5. How does Krishna explain why we sin in spite of our best efforts to avoid sin?
6. Compare the path of renunciation with the path of service. Which path, if any, is preferable?
7. Does the path of contemplation preclude a need for work? State supporting reasons for your conclusion.
8. Does it matter, according to Krishna, what gods one believes in? Would Krishna allow for belief in a jealous god who would cause harm to those who believe in other gods?
9. Krishna states, "I am death. . . I have already destroyed all these warriors. You are only an instrument, O Arjuna." Explain what he means.
10. Contrast divine and demonic people. Is the difference in character due only to *karma*? Is there any correlation between these contrasting types of people and the personality types outlined in accordance with the various paths or *yogas*?
11. Explain Krishna’s description of the modes of material nature.
12. Recount Krishna’s summary of how to attain self-realization by means of work, knowledge, devotion, and meditation.



Ruins in Delhi, Caleb Wright

The Reading Selection from *Bhagavad Gita*

Arjuna's Dilemma

Circa 3000 BC, cousins went to war over inheritance of a kingdom. Their armies were made up of relatives, teachers, and respected community leaders. Arjuna was a renowned warrior recognized as a master archer. His childhood friend Lord Krishna agreed to be Arjuna's charioteer.

Arjuna became bewildered upon seeing people he loved and respected ready to battle, and said: "I desire neither victory, nor pleasure or kingdom, O Krishna. What is the use of a kingdom, or enjoyment, or even life because all those for whom we desire kingdom, enjoyment, and pleasure are standing here for battle, ready to give up their lives?" (1.32-33)

"I do not wish to kill my seniors, spiritual leaders, and relatives who are ready

to kill us, even for the sovereignty of the three worlds, let alone for this earthly kingdom, O Krishna.” (1.34-35)

Transcendental Knowledge

“It would be better indeed, to live on alms in this world than to slay these noble personalities, because by killing them I would enjoy wealth and pleasure stained with their blood. (2.05) We do not know which alternative, to fight or to quit, is better for us. Further, we do not know whether we shall conquer them or they will conquer us. We should not even wish to live after killing our relatives.” (2.06)

Lord Krishna said: “You grieve for those who are not worthy of grief, and yet speak words of wisdom. The wise grieve neither for the living nor for the dead. (2.11) There was never a time when these monarchs, you or I did not exist, nor shall we ever cease to exist in the future. (2.12) The soul acquires another body after death. (2.13) The invisible Spirit is eternal. The visible physical body is transitory. (2.16) The Spirit pervades this entire universe and is indestructible. No one can destroy the imperishable Spirit. (2.17) The physical bodies of the eternal, immutable, and incomprehensible Spirit are perishable. Therefore, fight for your right as your duty, O Arjuna. (2.18) The Spirit is neither born nor does it die at any time. It does not come into being, or cease to exist. It is unborn, eternal, permanent, and primeval. The Spirit is not destroyed when the body is destroyed. (2.19-20) Just as a person puts on new garments after discarding old ones, the living entity or the individual soul acquires a new body after casting away the old body.” (2.22)

“Even if you think that the physical body takes birth and dies perpetually, even then O Arjuna, you should not grieve like this. Death is certain for the one who is born, and birth is certain for the one who dies. Therefore, you should not lament over the inevitable but pray for the salvation of the departed soul.” (2.26-27).

From the reading...

“Only fortunate warriors, O Arjuna, get an opportunity of an unsought war that is like an open door to heaven.”

“Considering also your duty as a warrior you should not waver like this. There is nothing more auspicious for a warrior than a righteous war. (2.31) Only fortunate warriors, O Arjuna, get an opportunity of an unsought war that is like an open door to heaven.” (2.32) War fought to reestablish morality is considered righteous, not war fought for dominance.

“If you will not fight this righteous war, then you will fail in your duty, lose your reputation, and incur sin. (2.33) People will talk about your disgrace forever. To the honored, disgrace is worse than death. (2.34) You will go to heaven if killed in the line of duty, or you will enjoy kingdom on earth if victorious. Therefore, get up with determination to fight, O Arjuna. (2.37) Just do your duty to the best of your ability without becoming discouraged by the thought of the outcome which may be success or failure, gain or loss, victory or defeat. By doing your duty with this attitude, you will not incur sin or *Karmic* bondage.” (2.38)

“The resolute determination of Self-realization is not formed in the minds of those who are attached to pleasure and power, and whose judgment is obscured by ritualistic activities. (2.44) Become free from pairs of opposites, be ever balanced and unconcerned with the thought of acquisition and preservation. Rise above the three modes of Material Nature (goodness, passion and ignorance) and be Self-conscious, O Arjuna. (2.45) To a God-realized person scripture is as useless as a river in a flooded area. Scripture is only an aid to God-realization, not needed after one has realized God.” (2.46)

From the reading...

“An uncontrolled mind distracts the intellect as a storm sways a ship from its path.”

“You have control over doing your respective duty, but no control or claim over the result. Fear of failure, from being emotionally attached to the fruit of work, is the greatest impediment to success because it robs efficiency by constantly disturbing the equanimity of mind.” A farmer is responsible for working his land yet has no control over the harvest. But, if he does not work his land he cannot expect a harvest. “The boundary of one’s jurisdiction ends with the completion of one’s duty. Do your duty to the best of your ability, O Arjuna, with your mind attached to the Lord, abandon worry and attachment to the results. Remain calm in both success and failure. Such selfless service brings peace and equanimity of mind.” (2.48)

Lord Krishna further said: “The mind and intellect of a person become steady who is neither elated by getting desired results, nor perturbed by undesired results. (2.57) Restless senses, O Arjuna, forcibly carry away the mind of even a wise person striving for perfection. (2.60) One should fix one’s mind on God with loving contemplation after bringing the senses under control. One’s intellect becomes steady when one’s senses are under complete control.” (2.61)

“A disciplined person, enjoying sense objects with senses that are under control

and free from attachment and aversion, attains tranquility. (2.64) An uncontrolled mind distracts the intellect as a storm sways a ship from its path. (2.67) A person who is not disturbed by the incessant flow of desire, that enter the mind, like rivers into an ocean which is ever being filled but is not disturbed by the rivers, can alone achieve peace, not the one who strives to satisfy such desires.” (2.70)

Self-realization is to know one’s relationship with the Supreme Lord and His true transcendental nature. A Self-realized person does not need rituals to reach God.

Path of Service

Arjuna asked: “If You consider that acquiring transcendental knowledge is better than working, then why do You want me to engage in this horrible war, O Krishna?”

Lord Krishna said: “I have stated a twofold path of spiritual discipline in the past. The path of Self-knowledge for the contemplative ones, and the path of unselfish work for all others. (3.03) One does not attain freedom from bondage of *Karma* by merely abstaining from work. No one attains perfection by merely giving up work, because no one can remain inactive even for a moment. The forces of Nature drive everyone to action.” (3.04-05)

“People get confused and think that leading a life devoted to scriptural study, contemplation, and acquiring transcendental knowledge may be better for spiritual progress than doing one’s worldly duty. A God-realized person does not consider oneself the doer of any action, but only an instrument in the hands of the Divine for His use. Both metaphysical knowledge and selfless service are means to attain the Supreme Being. These two paths are not separate, but complimentary. O Arjuna, do your duty to the best of your ability as a service to God.” (3.09)

From the reading...

“After knowing the transcendental science, O Arjuna, you shall not again become deluded like this.”

Lord Krishna said: “There is nothing unattained that I should obtain, yet I engage in action. (3.22) For, if I do not engage in action relentlessly, O Arjuna, people would follow My path (example), in every way. These worlds would perish if I do not work, and I shall be the cause of confusion and destruction of all these people. (3.23-24) Do your duty and dedicate all work to God in a spiritual frame of mind; become free from ego, mental grief and the compulsion to satisfy all desires. (3.30)

Likes and dislikes are two major stumbling blocks, on the path to Self-realization.” (3.34) Control over attachment, and aversion, is needed to attain peace of mind and tranquility.

Arjuna said: “O Krishna, what impels one to commit sin as if forced against one’s will?” (3.36)

Lord Krishna said: "It is lust born of passion that becomes anger when unfulfilled. Lust is insatiable and is a great devil. Know it as an enemy. (3.37) The senses, the mind, and the intellect are said to be the abode of lust; with these it deludes a person by veiling Self-knowledge. (3.40) Therefore, O Arjuna, by controlling the senses first, control this devil of material desire that destroys Self-knowledge and Self-realization." (3.41)

"The senses are said to be superior to the body, the mind is superior to the senses, the intellect is superior to the mind, transcendental knowledge is superior to the intellect, and the Self is superior to transcendental knowledge. (3.42) Thus, knowing the Self to be superior to the intellect, and controlling the mind by the intellect that is purified by spiritual practice, one must kill this mighty enemy, lust, O Arjuna." (3.43)

Path of Renunciation with Knowledge

Lord Krishna said: “Both you and I have taken many births. I remember them all, O Arjuna, but you do not. (4.05) Though I am eternal, immutable, and the Lord of all beings, yet I manifest Myself by controlling Material Nature using My own divine potential energy.”

“Whenever there is decline of *Dharma* (Righteousness) and predominance of *Adharma* (Unrighteousness), O Arjuna, then I manifest Myself. I appear from time to time for protecting the good, for transforming the wicked, and for reestablishing world order (*Dharma*).” (4.07-08)

“With whatever motive people worship Me, I fulfill their desires accordingly. People worship Me with different motives. (4.11) The one whose mind and senses are under control, and who understands that he cannot control the outcome of his actions, does not incur sin (*Karmic* reaction) by doing bodily action. (4.21) A renunciant who is content with whatever gain comes naturally by His will, who is unaffected by pairs of opposites, like victory and defeat, free from envy, equanimous in success and failure is not bound by *Karma*.” (4.22)

“People perform sacrifice in many different ways. The one, who considers everything as a manifestation, or an act of God, shall realize God. (4.24) Those who perform selfless service obtain the nectar of Self-knowledge as a result of

their sacrifice and attain the Supreme Being. Acquiring transcendental knowledge is superior to any material sacrifice such as giving charity. Purification of mind and intellect eventually leads to the dawn of transcendental knowledge and Self-realization, which is the sole purpose of any spiritual practice.” (4.33)



Ornate Royal Carriage, adapted from Library of Congress

“After knowing the transcendental science, O Arjuna, you shall not again become deluded like this. With this knowledge you shall see the entire creation within your own higher Self, and thus within Me. (4.35) Even if one is the most sinful of all sinners, one shall yet cross over the ocean of sin by the raft of Self-knowledge alone. (4.36) There is no purifier in this world like the true knowledge of the Supreme Being. One discovers this knowledge from within in due course, when one’s mind is cleansed of selfishness by selfless service. (4.38) The one who has faith in God, is sincere in selfless practice, and has control over the mind and senses, gains this transcendental knowledge. Having gained this knowledge, one quickly attains supreme peace and liberation.” (4.39)

Path of Renunciation

Arjuna asked: “O Krishna, You praise the path of transcendental knowledge, and

also the path of selfless service, which is better of the two?” (5.01)

Lord Krishna said: “The path of Self-knowledge and the path of selfless service both lead to the supreme goal. But, of the two, the path of selfless service is superior to the path of Self-knowledge, because it is easier to practice. (5.02) The wise see no difference between the renunciation of selfish activities, and the performance of one’s worldly duty without attachment to the result. Renunciation does not mean becoming a hermit. (5.04) Selfless service is the goal, and renunciation is the means.”

One is a true renunciant and enlightened who:

1. Does all work as an offering to God abandoning attachment to the results;
2. Enjoys sensual pleasures with mind and senses under control;
3. Sees one and the same Spirit in all beings. Looks at a learned person, an outcast, even an animal with equal eye, and can feel the pain and pleasure of others as one’s own;
4. Neither rejoices on obtaining what is pleasant, nor grieves on obtaining the unpleasant and is tranquil in pleasure and disappointment, in honor and disgrace;
5. Finds happiness with the Supreme Being, who rejoices the Supreme Being within, who is illuminated by Self-knowledge and remains ever steadfast with the Supreme Self;
6. Acts beyond personal selfish motives has neither attachment nor aversion for anything.
7. Has discovered the joy of spiritual knowledge, and whose mind is in union with God.

Such a person is not bound by *Karma* though engaged in work, and attains eternal bliss.

From the reading...

“Perceive the same Self (or spirit) abiding in every being, and all beings abiding in the Self.”

“The Lord neither creates the urge for action, nor the feeling of doership, nor the attachment to the result of action in people. The power of Material Nature does all this.” (5.14)

From the reading...

“Perceive the same Self (or spirit) abiding in every being, and all beings abiding in the Self.”

Path of Meditation

Lord Krishna said: “One does not become a renunciant by merely not lighting the fire, or by abstaining from work. (6.01) For the wise, who seek to attain equanimity of mind, selfless service is said to be the means. Equanimity leads to Self-realization. (6.02) One attains perfection by renouncing attachment to the fruit of work, and to selfish desire. (6.04) One can elevate or degrade oneself by one’s own mind. The mind becomes a friend to the one who has control over it, and an enemy to the one who is controlled by the mind.” (6.05-06)

“Perceive the same Self (or spirit) abiding in every being, and all beings abiding in the Self. (6.29) Those who see Me in everything and see everything in Me, are not separated from Me and I am not separated from them. (6.30) Undoubtedly, O Arjuna, the mind is restless and very difficult to control, but it can be subdued by sincere spiritual practice and by detachment.” (6.35)

Arjuna said: “The faithful one who deviates from the path of meditation due to an un-subdued mind—what is the destination of such a person, O Krishna? (6.37) Does he not perish like a dispersing cloud, O Krishna, having lost both heavenly and worldly pleasures, without support and bewildered on the path of Self-realization?” (6.38)

Lord Krishna said: “There is no destruction, O Arjuna, for the one who tries to attain perfection either here or hereafter. A transcendentalist is never put to grief, My dear friend. (6.40) The less evolved unsuccessful one is reborn in the house of the pious and prosperous after attaining heaven and living there for many years. The highly evolved unsuccessful one does not go to heaven, but is born in a spiritually advanced family. A birth like that is very difficult to obtain in this world. (6.41-2) There, one regains the knowledge acquired in the previous life, and strives again to achieve perfection, O Arjuna. (6.43) The most devoted of all is the one who lovingly remembers Me with faith, and whose mind is ever absorbed in Me.” (6.47)

Self-Knowledge and Enlightenment

Lord Krishna said: “O Arjuna, listen to how you shall know Me fully without any doubt, with your mind absorbed in Me, taking refuge in Me, and trying to reach Me.” (7.01)

“Material Nature or matter is My lower energy. My other higher energy is the Spirit by which this entire universe is sustained, O Arjuna. (7.05) Know that all creatures have evolved from this twofold energy; and the Supreme Spirit is the source of origin as well as dissolution of the entire universe. (7.06) There is nothing higher than the Supreme Being, O Arjuna. Everything in the universe is strung on the Supreme Being, like jewels strung on a necklace.” (7.07)

From the reading...

“Whosoever desires to worship whatever deity—using whatever name, form, and method—with faith, I make their faith steady in that deity.”

“Know that three modes of Material Nature—goodness, passion, and ignorance—also emanate from Me. I am not dependent on, or affected by, the modes of Material Nature; but the modes of Material Nature are dependent on Me. (7.12) Human beings are deluded by various aspects of these three modes of Material Nature; therefore, they do not understand Me, I am eternal and above these modes.” (7.13)

“This divine power (*Maya*) of Mine, consisting of three states of mind or matter, is very difficult to overcome. Only those who surrender unto Me easily cross over this *Maya*. (7.14) Four types of virtuous ones worship or seek Me, O Arjuna. They are:”

- the distressed,
- the seeker of Self-knowledge,
- the seeker of wealth, and
- the enlightened one who has experienced the Supreme Being. (7.16)

“The wise surrender to Me by realizing—after many births—that everything in the universe and the world is nothing but My manifestation. Such a great soul is very rare.” (7.19)

“Whosoever desires to worship whatever deity—using whatever name, form, and method—with faith, I make their faith steady in that deity. Endowed with steady

faith they worship that deity, and obtain their wishes through that deity. Those wishes are granted by Me.” (7.22)

The Eternal Spirit

Arjuna said: “O Krishna, who is the Eternal Being or the Spirit? What is the nature of the Eternal Being? What is *Karma*? Who are mortal beings? And who are Temporal Beings? Who is the Supreme Being, and how does He dwell in the body? How can You, the Supreme Being, be remembered at the time of death by those who have control over their minds, O Krishna?” (8.01-2)

Lord Krishna said: “The eternal and immutable Spirit of the Supreme Being is also called the Eternal Being or the Spirit. The inherent power of cognition and desire of the Eternal Being (Spirit) is called the nature of the Eternal Being. The creative power of the Eternal Being (Spirit) that causes manifestation of the living entity is called *Karma*. (8.03) Various expansions of the Supreme Being are called Temporal Beings. The Supreme Being also resides in the inner psyche of all beings as the Divine Controller. (8.04) Thought of whatever object that predominates during one’s lifetime, one remembers that object at the end of life and achieves it. (8.06) Therefore, always remember Me and do your duty. You shall certainly attain Me if your mind and intellect are ever focused on Me.” (8.07) You will remember your ultimate goal in life at the time of death. Do not just set your mind on The Supreme Being but set Him as your ultimate Goal.

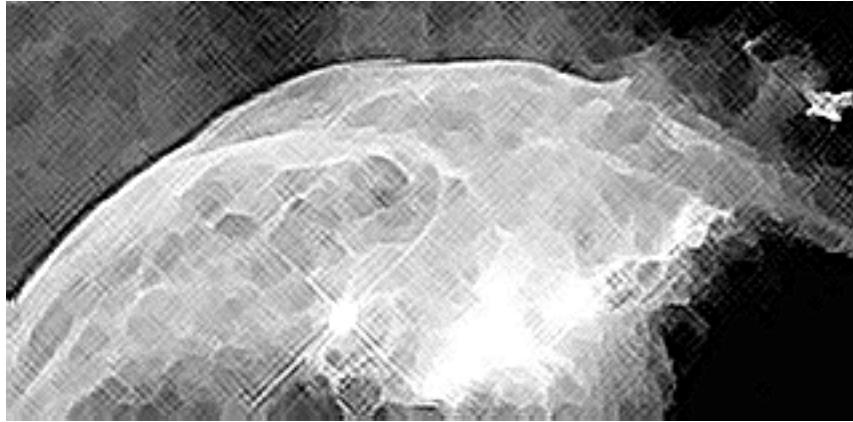
“I am easily attainable, O Arjuna, by that ever-steadfast devotee who always thinks of Me. (8.14) The dwellers of all the worlds up to and including heaven and the world of the creator are subject to the miseries of repeated birth and death. But, after attaining Me, O Arjuna, one does not take birth again.” (8.16)

Supreme Knowledge and the Big Mystery

Lord Krishna said: “I shall reveal to you, who do not disbelieve, the most profound secret transcendental knowledge together with transcendental experience. Having known this you will be freed from the miseries of worldly existence. (9.01) This Self-knowledge is the king of all knowledge, is the most secret, is very sacred, it can be perceived by instinct, conforms to righteousness (*Dharma*), is very easy to practice, and is timeless.” (9.02)

“This entire universe is an expansion of Mine. All beings depend on Me. I do not depend on them, and am not affected by them. (9.04) Perceive that all beings remain in Me—without any contact or without producing any effect—as the mighty

wind moving everywhere, eternally remains in space. (9.06) I create the entire multitude of beings again and again with the help of My Material Nature. These beings are under the control of the modes of Material Nature. (9.08) These acts of creation do not bind Me, O Arjuna, because I remain indifferent and unattached to those acts. (9.09) The divine kinetic energy (*Maya*) with the help of Material Nature creates all animate and inanimate objects under My supervision, and thus the creation keeps on going, O Arjuna.” (9.10)



An Expanding Bubble in Space, adapted from NASA

“I personally take care of both spiritual and material welfare of those ever-steadfast devotees who always remember and adore Me with single-minded contemplation. (9.22) O Arjuna, even those devotees who worship the deities with faith, they also really worship Me. (9.23) Whosoever offers Me a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water with devotion; I accept and eat the offering of devotion by the pure-hearted. (9.26) O Arjuna, whatever you do, eat, give, or sacrifice, do it as an offering to Me.” (9.27) A dedicated heart full of devotion is needed to obtain God’s grace, not rituals.

From the reading...

“O Arjuna, whatever you do, eat, give, or sacrifice, do it as an offering to Me.”

“The Self is present equally in all beings. There is no one hateful or dear to Me. But, those who worship Me with love and devotion are very close to Me, and I am also very close to them. (9.29) Even if the most sinful person resolves to worship Me with single-minded loving devotion, such a person must be regarded as a saint

because of making the right resolution. (9.30) O Arjuna, My devotee shall never perish or fall down.” (9.31) There is no unforgivable sin or sinner.

“Anybody can attain the Supreme Abode by just surrendering unto My will with loving devotion, O Arjuna. (9.32) Always think of Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and bow down to Me. Thus uniting yourself with Me by setting Me as the supreme goal and the sole refuge, you shall certainly come to Me.” (9.34)

Manifestation of the Absolute

“Neither the celestial controllers, nor the great sages know My origin, because I am the origin of celestial controllers and great sages also. (10.02) One who knows Me as the unborn, without a beginning or an end, and the Supreme Lord of the universe, is considered wise among mortals, and becomes liberated from the bondage of *Karma*.” (10.03)

“Discrimination, Self-knowledge, non-delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, control over mind and senses, tranquility, pleasure, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, nonviolence, equanimity, contentment, austerity, charity, fame, disgrace, all these diverse qualities in human beings arise from Me alone. (10.04-05) I am the source of all. Everything originates from Me. Understanding this, the wise ones worship Me with love and devotion. (10.08). I give knowledge and understanding of the metaphysical science to those who are ever united with Me and lovingly adore Me, by which they come to Me.” (10.10)

Arjuna said: “O Krishna, I believe all that You have told me to be true. O Lord, neither the celestial controllers nor the demons comprehend Your glory. (10.14) O Creator and Lord of all beings, God of all celestial rulers, the Supreme person, and Lord of the universe, no one understands You. You alone know Yourself.” (10.15)

Lord Krishna said: “O Arjuna, now I shall explain to you My prominent divine manifestations, because My manifestations are endless.” (10.19) “There is no end to My divine manifestations, O Arjuna. Whatever is endowed with glory, brilliance, and power; know that to be the manifestation of a very small fraction of My splendor. (10.41) I continually support the entire universe by a small fraction of My divine energy.” (10.42)

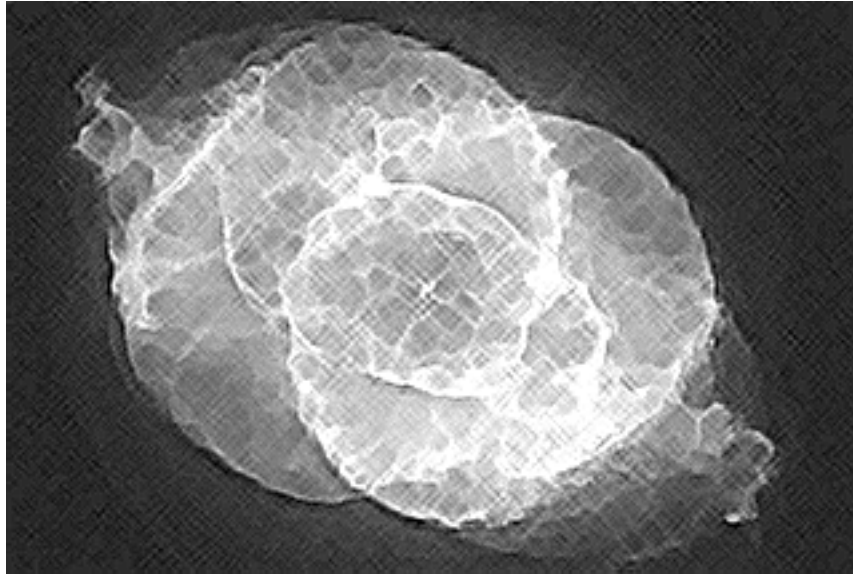
Vision of the Cosmic Form

Arjuna said: “O Lord, You are as You have said; yet I wish to see Your divine cosmic form, O Supreme Being. (11.03) O Lord, if You think it is possible for me

to see Your universal form, then, O Lord of the devotees, show me Your transcendental form.” (11.04)

Lord Krishna said: “O Arjuna, behold My hundreds and thousands of multifarious divine forms of different colors and shapes. Behold all the celestial beings, and many wonders never seen before. Also behold the entire creation animate, inanimate, and whatever else you like to see all at one place in My body. (11.05-07) You will not be able to see Me with your physical eye; therefore, I give you the divine eye to see My majestic power and glory.” (11.08)

Arjuna saw the entire universe, divided in many ways, but standing as all in One, and One in all in the transcendental body of Krishna, the Lord of celestial rulers. (11.13) Arjuna said: “I believe You are the Supreme Being to be realized. You are the ultimate resort of the universe. You are the Spirit, and protector of the eternal order. (11.18) O Lord, You pervade the entire space between heaven and earth in all directions. Seeing Your marvelous and terrible form, the three worlds tremble.” (11.20)



The Cat's Eye Nebula, adapted from NASA

Lord Krishna said: “I am death, the mighty destroyer of the world. I have come here to destroy all these people. Even without your participation in the war, all the warriors standing arrayed in the opposing army shall cease to exist. (11.32) Therefore, get up and attain glory. Conquer your enemies, and enjoy a prosperous kingdom. I have already destroyed all these warriors. You are only an instrument,

O Arjuna.” (11.33)

“O Arjuna, neither by study of scriptures, nor by austerity, nor by charity, nor by ritual, can I be seen in the form as you have seen Me. (11.53) However, through single minded devotion I can be seen in this form, can be known in essence, and also can be reached. (11.54) One who does his worldly duty for Me, to whom I am the supreme goal, who is my devotee, free from attachment and without enmity towards living beings, realizes Me.” (11.55)

Path of Devotion

Lord Krishna said: “Those ever steadfast devotees who worship with supreme faith by fixing their mind on a personal form of God, I consider them to be the best devotees. (12.02) Those who worship the unchangeable, the inexplicable, the invisible, the omnipresent, the inconceivable, the unchanging, the immovable, and the formless impersonal aspect of God; restraining all senses, even-minded under all circumstances, engaged in the welfare of all creatures, also attain God.” (12.03-04)

From the reading...

“I have already destroyed all these warriors. You are only an instrument, O Arjuna”

“Self-realization is more difficult for those who fix their minds on an impersonal, unmanifest, and formless Absolute because comprehension of the unmanifest by embodied beings is attained with difficulty.” (12.05)

“For those who worship the Supreme with unswerving devotion as their personal God, offer all actions to Me, intent on Me as the Supreme, and meditate on Me; I swiftly become their savior from the world that is an ocean of death and transmigration, O Arjuna.” (12.06-07) True devotion is intense love for God.

“Therefore, focus your mind on Me, and let your intellect dwell upon Me alone through meditation and contemplation. Thereafter you shall certainly attain Me. (12.08) If you are unable to focus your mind steadily on Me, then long to attain Me by practice of any spiritual discipline; such as a ritual, or deity worship that suits you. (12.09) If you are unable even to do any spiritual discipline, then be intent on performing your duty just for Me. You shall attain perfection by doing your prescribed duty for Me—without (selfish) attachment—just as an instrument to serve and please Me. (12.10) If you are unable to do your duty for Me, then just

surrender unto My will; renounce the attachment to, and the anxiety for, fruit of all work by learning to accept all results as God's grace, with equanimity." (12.11)

"Transcendental knowledge of the scriptures is better than mere ritualistic practice; meditation is better than scriptural knowledge; renunciation of selfish attachment to the fruit of work is better than meditation; peace immediately follows renunciation of selfish motives." (12.12)

"One who does not hate any creature, who is friendly and compassionate, free from the notion of 'I' and 'my,' even-minded in pleasure and disappointment, forgiving; ever content, who has subdued his mind, whose resolve is firm, whose mind and intellect are engaged on dwelling upon Me, who is devoted to Me, is dear to Me. (12.13-14) The one by whom others are not perturbed and who is not perturbed by others, who is free from joy, envy, fear, and anxiety, is also dear to Me. (12.15) One who is without desire, wise, impartial, and free from anxiety; who has renounced the doership in all undertakings; such a devotee is dear to Me. (12.16) The one who remains the same towards friend or foe, in honor or disgrace, in heat or cold, in pleasure or disappointment; who is free from attachment; who is indifferent to censure or praise; who is quiet, and content with whatever one has; unattached to a place, a country, or a house; equanimous, and full of devotion that person is dear to Me. (12.18-19) But those faithful devotees, who set Me as their supreme goal and follow—or just sincerely try to develop—the above-mentioned nectar of moral values are very dear to Me." (12.20)

Creation and the Creator

"O Arjuna, know Me to be the creator of all creation. The true understanding of both the creator and the creation is considered by Me to be transcendental knowledge. (13.02) The physical body with all its attributes including intellect, mind, sense organs, abilities, and all human emotions; steadfastness in acquiring knowledge of the Spirit, and seeing the omnipresent Supreme Being everywhere is said to be Self-knowledge. That which is contrary to this is ignorance." (13.09-11)

"The Supreme spirit is all pervading, and omnipresent. (13.13) He is the perceiver of all sense objects without physical sense organs; unattached, and yet the sustainer of all; devoid of the three modes of Material Nature, and yet the enjoyer of the modes of Material Nature by becoming a living entity. (13.14) He is inside as well as outside all beings, animate and inanimate. He is incomprehensible because of His subtlety. He resides in one's inner psyche as well as far away in the Supreme Abode. (13.15) He is undivided, and yet appears to exist as if divided in all beings. He is the object of knowledge, and appears as the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of all beings. (13.16) Know that both the Material Nature and the Spiritual Being are without beginning. All manifestations and the three dispositions of

mind and matter, called modes, are born of Material Nature. Material Nature is said to be the cause of production of physical body and organs of perception and action. Spirit (or Consciousness) is said to be the cause of experiencing pleasure and disappointment.” (13.19-20)

“Spiritual Being enjoys three modes of Material Nature by associating with Material Nature. Attachment to the three modes of Material Nature is caused by previous *Karma*, which also causes birth of living entity in good and evil wombs. (13.21) The Spirit in the body is the witness, the guide, the supporter, the enjoyer, and the controller. (13.22) Whatever is born animate or inanimate, know them to be born from the union of Spirit and matter, O Arjuna.” (13.26)

“The one who sees the same eternal Supreme Lord dwelling as Spirit within all mortal beings truly sees. (13.27) When one beholds one and the same Lord existing equally in every being, one does not injure anybody, because one considers every thing as one’s own self; and thereupon attains Salvation. (13.28) The one who perceives that all work is done by the power of Material Nature truly understands, and thus does not consider oneself as the doer. (13.29) The moment one discovers diverse variety of beings and their different ideas abiding in One, and coming out from ‘That’ alone, one attains the Supreme Being. (13.30) Just as one sun illuminates the entire world, similarly, Spirit gives life to the entire creation, O Arjuna.”(13.33)

“They who perceive—with an eye of Self-knowledge—the difference between creation (or the body) and the Creator (or the Spirit) as well as know the technique of liberation (through Selfless service, Knowledge, Devotion or Meditation) of the living entity from the trap of divine illusory energy (*Maya*), attain the Supreme.” (13.34)

Three Modes of Material Nature

“My Material Nature is the womb of creation wherein I place the seed of Consciousness from which all beings are born, O Arjuna. (14.03) Goodness, passion, and ignorance—these three modes or ropes of Material Nature bind the eternal individual soul to the body, O Arjuna. (14.05) Of these, the mode of goodness is illuminating and good, because it is pure. The mode of goodness attaches the living entity to happiness and knowledge. The mode of passion is characterized by intense craving for sensual pleasure and greed, and is the source of material desire, attachment, and restlessness. The mode of passion binds the living entity to the fruit of work. (14.07) The mode of ignorance, the deluder of living entity, is born of inertia. It binds living entity to carelessness, laziness, and excessive sleep.” (14.08)

“When one perceives no doer other than the power of the Supreme Being in the form of the modes of Material Nature, and know That which is above and beyond these modes; then they attain *Nirvana* or Salvation.” (14.19)

Arjuna said: “What is the mark of those who have transcended the three modes of Material Nature, and what is their conduct? How does one transcend these three modes of Material Nature, O Lord Krishna?” (14.21)

Lord Krishna said: “One who neither hates the presence of enlightenment, activity, and delusion; nor desires for them when they are absent; who remains like a witness without being affected by the modes of Material Nature, and stays firmly attached to the Lord without wavering thinking that the modes of Material Nature only are operating.” (14.22-23)

“The one who depends on the Lord and is indifferent to pleasure and disappointment; to whom a clod, a stone, and gold are alike; to whom the dear and the unfriendly are alike; who is of firm mind, who is calm in censure and in praise. The one who is indifferent to honor and disgrace; who is impartial to friend and foe, and who has renounced the sense of doership and ownership—is said to have transcended the modes of Material Nature.” (14.24-25)

“The one who offers service to Me with love and unswerving devotion transcends three modes of Material Nature, and becomes fit for Salvation (*Nirvana*).” (14.26)

The Supreme Being

“Those who are free from pride and delusion, who have conquered the evil of attachment, who are constantly dwelling on the Supreme Being with senses under control, who understand dualities of pleasure and disappointment. Such wise ones reach My Supreme Abode. (15.05) The individual soul in the body of living beings is the integral part of the universal Spirit, or Consciousness. The individual soul associates with the six sensory faculties of perception including the mind, and activates them.” (15.07)

From the reading...

“I am seated in the inner psyche of all beings.”

“Just as air takes aroma away from a flower; similarly, the individual soul takes the six sensory faculties from the physical body it casts off during death to a new physical body it acquires. (15.08) The living entity enjoys sensual pleasure using

six sensory faculties of hearing, touch, sight, taste, smell, and mind. The devotees striving for perfection behold the living entity abiding in their inner psyche as consciousness.”

“I am seated in the inner psyche of all beings. Memory, Self-knowledge, and the removal of doubt and wrong notions about God come from Me. I am verily that which is to be known by the study of all the *Vedas*. I am, indeed, the author as well as the student of the *Vedas*(Scriptures).” (15.15)

“There are two entities in the cosmos: The changeable Temporal Beings, and the unchangeable Eternal Being (the Spirit). All created beings are subject to change, but the Spirit does not change. (15.16) The Supreme Being (or the Absolute) is beyond both the Temporal Beings and the Eternal Beings. That Supreme Being is also called the Absolute Reality that sustains both the Temporal and the Eternal by pervading everything. (15.17) Because the Supreme Being is beyond both Temporal and Eternal Beings; therefore, He is known in this world and in the scriptures as the Supreme Being (Absolute Reality, Truth, Super-soul). (15.18) The wise who truly understand the Supreme Being, worship Him whole-heartedly. (15.19) Thus this most secret transcendental science of the Absolute has been explained by Me. Upon understanding this, one becomes enlightened, and all of one’s duties are accomplished, O Arjuna.”(15.20)



Golden Temple, adapted from Library of Congress

Divine and the Demonic Qualities

Lord Krishna said: “Fearlessness, purity of inner psyche, perseverance in devotion of Self-knowledge, charity, sense restraint, sacrifice, study of scriptures, austerity, honesty, nonviolence, truthfulness, absence of anger, renunciation, equanimity, abstaining from malicious talk, compassion for all creatures, freedom from greed, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness, splendor, forgiveness, fortitude, cleanliness, absence of malice, and absence of pride are some of the qualities of those endowed with divine virtues, O Arjuna.” (16.01-03)

“Basically, there are only two types of human beings in this world, the divine, and the demonic. (16.06) People of demonic nature do not know what to do and what not to do. They neither have purity nor good conduct nor truthfulness. (16.07) They think the world is unreal, without a substratum, without a God, and without an order. (16.08) Adhering to this wrong atheist view, these degraded souls—with small intellect and cruel deeds—are born as enemies for the destruction of the world. (16.09) Filled with insatiable desires, hypocrisy, pride, and arrogance; holding wrong views due to delusion; they act with impure motives. (16.10) Obsessed with endless anxiety lasting until death, considering sense gratification their highest aim, convinced that sensual pleasure is everything. (16.11) Bound by hundreds of ties of desire and enslaved by lust and anger; they strive to obtain wealth for the fulfillment of sensual pleasure.”

“They think: ‘I have gained this today, I shall fulfill this desire; I have this much wealth, and will have more wealth in the future. (16.13) That enemy has been slain by me, and I shall slay others also. I am the Lord. I am the enjoyer. I am successful, powerful, and happy. (16.14) I am rich and born in a noble family. No one is equal to me. I shall perform sacrifice, I shall give charity, and I shall rejoice.’ Thus deluded by ignorance, bewildered by many fancies, entangled in the net of delusion, and addicted to the enjoyment of sensual pleasure, they fall into foul hell. (16.16) Self-conceited, stubborn, filled with pride and intoxication of wealth; they perform religious services only in name, for show, and not according to scriptural injunction.” (16.17)

“These malicious people cling to egoism, power, arrogance, lust, and anger; and hate Me who dwells in their own bodies and those of others. (16.18) I hurl these haters, cruel, sinful, and mean people into cycles of rebirth in the wombs of demons again and again. (16.19) O Arjuna, entering the wombs of demons birth after birth, the deluded ones sink to the lowest hell without ever attaining Me” (until their minds change for the better, by the causeless mercy of the Lord). (16.20)

“Lust, anger, and greed are the three gates of hell leading to the downfall (or bondage) of an individual. Therefore, one must learn to give these up. (16.21) Speaking ill of others is a terrible sin, because, it pollutes the mind of the speaker without any beneficial effect. Perform your duty following scriptural injunction.”

(16.24).

Threefold Faith

Arjuna said: “What is the mode of devotion of those who perform spiritual practice with faith but without following scriptural injunction, O Krishna? Is it in the mode of goodness, passion, or ignorance?” (17.01)

From the reading...

“One can become whatever one wants to be, if one constantly contemplates on the object of desire with faith.”

Lord Krishna said: “The natural faith of embodied beings is of three kinds: goodness, passion, and ignorance. Now hear about these from Me. (17.02) O Arjuna, the faith of each is in accordance with one’s own natural disposition that is governed by *Karmic* impressions. A person is known by faith. One can become whatever one wants to be, if one constantly contemplates on the object of desire with faith.” (17.03)

People in the mode of goodness:

- Like healthy, juicy foods;
- Undertake selfless work without attachment to results (austerity of deed);
- Worship celestial controlling forces (guardian angels, Devas or Gods);
- Speak inoffensively, in a pleasant, beneficial, and truthful manner (austerity of speech) (17.15);
- Study scriptures;
- Are gentle, equanimous, think pure thoughts, exercise self control (austerity of thought);
- Give charity as a matter of duty, to deserving candidates, without any expectation.

In the mode of passion, people:

- Like food that is extreme in taste (overly spicy, salty, or sweet);

Chapter 1. Bhagavad Gita retold by Harry Bhalla

- Worship supernatural rulers and demons;
- Perform selfless service (austerity) for show, to gain respect, honor, or reverence that yields uncertain and temporary results (17.18);
- Give charity with expectation of something in return.
- People in the mode of ignorance:
- Enjoy unhealthy foods and drinks;
- Worship ghosts and spirits;
- Are hypocritical and egoistic;
- Perform austerity with self-torture, or for harming others;
- Give charity to the unworthy.

“Whatever is done without faith whether it is sacrifice, charity, austerity, or any other act is useless. It has no value here or hereafter, O Arjuna.” (17.28)



Village in Punjab, adapted from Library of Congress

Salvation through Renunciation

Arjuna said: “I wish to know the nature of renunciation and sacrifice, and the difference between the two, O Lord Krishna.” (18.01)

Lord Krishna said: “The sages define renunciation as abstaining from all work for personal profit. The wise define sacrifice as the sacrifice of, and the freedom from, selfish attachment to the fruit of all work. (18.02) Giving up one’s duty is not proper. The abandonment of obligatory work is due to delusion, and is declared to be in the mode of ignorance. (18.07) The embodied beings are unable to completely abstain from work; therefore, one who renounces the selfish attachment to the fruit of work is considered a renunciant.” (18.11)

The five causes, for the accomplishment of all actions are: (18.13-14)

- The physical body, the seat of *Karma*
- The modes of Material Nature, the doer;
- The eleven organs of perception and action, the instruments;
- Various bio-impulses, or life forces;
- The presiding controlling forces or deities of the eleven organs.

“Whatever action, whether right or wrong, one performs by thought, word, and deed; these are the five causes.” (18.15)

Threefold driving force to an action are:

- The subject;
- The object;
- The knowledge of the object.

Three components of action are: (18.18)

- The eleven organs (six sense organs: ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose, and the mind; and five organs of action: mouth, hand, leg, anus, and urethra);
- The act;
- The agent or the modes of Material Nature.

The four goals of human life designed for gradual and systematic growth of the individual and progress of society are (18.34):

- Doing one’s duty;

Chapter 1. Bhagavad Gita retold by Harry Bhalla

- Earning wealth;
- Material and sensual enjoyment (with senses under control);
- Attaining salvation.

In the mode of goodness one:

- Possesses the knowledge by which one sees a single (undivided) immutable Reality in all beings;
- Performs obligatory duty without likes and dislikes, or attachment to the result;
- Enjoys sensual pleasure with senses under control
- Is free from attachment, non-egotistic, has resolve and enthusiasm, and is unperturbed in success or failure;
- Has intellect by which one understands the path of work and the path of renunciation, right and wrong action, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation;
- as the resolve by which one manipulates functions of the mind and senses for God-realization;
- Enjoys pleasure from spiritual practice resulting in cessation of all sorrows;
- Enjoys pleasure that comes by the grace of Self-knowledge.

In the mode of passion one:

- Sees different realities of various types among all beings as separate from one another;
- Abandons duty merely because it is difficult, or because of fear of bodily trouble; (18.08)
- Performs action with ego, selfish motives, and with too much effort;
- Is impassioned, attached to the fruit of his work, greedy, violent, impure, and is affected by joy and sorrow;
- Cannot distinguish between righteousness (*Dharma*) and unrighteousness (*Adharma*), and right and wrong action;
- Craves for the fruit of work, clings to duty, accumulating wealth and enjoyment with great attachment;
- Enjoys sensual pleasure without control over the senses.

In the mode of ignorance one:

- Has worthless knowledge by which one clings to one single effect (such as the body) as if that is everything;
- Abandons obligatory work due to delusion; (18.07)
- Undertakes action because of delusion; disregarding consequences, loss, or injury to others;
- Is undisciplined, vulgar, stubborn, wicked, malicious, lazy, depressed, and procrastinating;
- Accepts unrighteousness (*Adharma*) as righteousness (*Dharma*), has intellect which is covered by ignorance;
- Does not give up sleep, fear, grief, despair, and carelessness;
- Considers the body or oneself as the sole agent due to imperfect knowledge.

“There is no being, either on earth or among the celestial controllers in heaven, who can remain free from these three modes of Material Nature.” (18.40)

“Human labor is categorized as intellectuals, administrators (or protectors), businessmen, and unskilled workers based on the qualities inherent in people’s nature and their make up. (18.41) One can attain the highest perfection by devotion to one’s natural work. Listen to Me how one attains perfection while engaged in one’s natural work.” (18.45)

“One attains tranquility, freedom from bondage of *Karma*, and attains the Supreme Being by:”

- Renouncing selfish attachment to the fruit of work;
- Performing one’s natural duty, to the best of one’s ability, for the Supreme Being;
- Purifying the intellect by spiritual practice;
- Subduing the mind and senses with firm resolve;
- Giving up likes and dislikes;
- Enjoying solitude;
- Eating lightly;
- Controlling mind, speech, and organs of action;
- Taking refuge in detachment;
- Relinquishing egotism, violence, pride, lust, anger, and proprietorship;
- Becoming free from the notion of “I, me, and my.”

“Absorbed in the Supreme Being, the serene one neither grieves nor desires; becoming impartial to all beings, one obtains the highest devotional love for the Supreme Being. (18.54) By devotion one truly understands Me in essence and merges into Me. (18.55) Mentally offer all actions to Me and be devoted to Me. Be calm and always fix your mind on Me. (18.57)”

“If due to ego you think: ‘I shall not fight’; this resolve of yours is in vain. Your own nature will compel you to fight. (18.59) O Arjuna, you are controlled by your own nature-born *Karmic* impressions. Therefore, you shall do even against your will what you do not wish to do out of delusion.” (18.60)

“The Supreme Lord—as the controller abiding in the inner psyche of all beings—causes them to work out their *Karma*. We are puppets of our own *Karma*.” (18.61)

“Set aside all meritorious deeds and religious rituals, and just surrender completely to My will with firm faith and loving devotion. I shall liberate you from all sin, the bond of *Karma*. Do not grieve.” (18.66)

“This knowledge should never be spoken to one who is devoid of austerity, who is without devotion, who does not desire to listen, who speaks ill of Me, or does not believe in God.”

“The one who shall propagate this supreme secret philosophy, the transcendental knowledge of the *Gita*, amongst My devotees, shall be performing the highest devotional service to Me, and shall certainly come to Me. No other person shall do more pleasing service to Me, and no one on earth shall be dearer to Me. (18.68-69) I promise the study of this sacred dialogue of ours will be equivalent to worshipping Me with knowledge-sacrifice.” (18.70)

“Whoever hears this sacred dialogue with faith and without cavil becomes free from sin, and attains salvation.” (18.71)

“O Arjuna, did you listen to this with single-minded attention? Has your delusion born of ignorance been completely destroyed?” (18.72)

Arjuna said: “By Your grace my delusion is destroyed, I have gained Self-knowledge, my confusion with regard to the body and the Spirit is dispelled and I shall obey Your command.”; (18.73)

Epilogue—Lord Krishna’s Last Sermon

At the end of another long sermon comprising of more than one thousand verses, disciple Uddhava said: “O Lord Krishna, I think the pursuit of God as You narrated to Arjuna, and now to me, is very difficult indeed, for most people; because it entails control of unruly senses. Please tell me a short, simple, and easy way

to God-realization.” Lord Krishna upon Uddhava’s request gave the essentials of Self-realization as follows:

- Do your duty, to the best of your ability, for Me without worrying about the outcome.
- Remember Me at all times.
- Perceive that God is within every living being. Mentally bow down to all beings and treat all beings equally.
- Perceive through the activities of mind, senses, breathing, and emotions that the power of God is within you at all times, and is constantly doing all the work using you as a mere instrument and a trustee.

From the reading . . .

“There is no unforgivable sin or sinner.”



Jammu Temples at a Distance, adapted from Library of Congress

Topics Worth Investigating

1. What do you suppose is the rationale behind Krishna's declaration "Only fortunate warriors, O Arjuna, get an opportunity of an unsought war that is like an open door to heaven"? Can you locate evidence that this same belief is a tenet of Christianity, Islam, or Buddhism?
2. Krishna relates, "The senses are said to be superior to the body, the mind is superior to the senses, the intellect is superior to the mind, transcendental knowledge is superior to the intellect, and the Self is superior to transcendental knowledge." Explicate the use of the term "superior" in this passage. Is this sense of "superior" a non-naturalistic use of the word? Explain.

Does the found sense of "superior" illuminate the meaning of the phrase "[t]he mind becomes a friend to the one who has control over it"—as if there is something else that controls the mind?

3. On the one hand, an important tenet of the path of renunciation is, in Krishna's words, "Do all work as an offering to God abandoning attachment to the results." On the other hand, an important tenet of modern psychology is the visualization of results as an aid to improvement. Can these two ways of understanding actions be made logically consistent and practically helpful?
4. If all work were to be done, as the path of renunciation implies, "as an offering to God abandoning attachment to the results," then would it follow that no task is any more important than any other task? Would it also follow that we should not so much seek to help others for their own sake as we should seek to help others as an offering?
5. How are sacrifice and self-defeating behavior to be distinguished? Is the main difference in worship?
6. Explain as clearly as possible what Krishna means when he states, "O Arjuna, you are controlled by your own nature-born *Karmic* impressions." When Krishna continues with "We are puppets of our own *karma*," does this imply that we do not have free will?
7. As described in the *Gita*, what is self-realization and how is it attained?

Chapter 2

“Paper on Hinduism” by Swami Vivekananda



Swami Vivekananda, (detail)

About the author . . .

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902), humanist and social reformer, attended Calcutta University and later studied the *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, Sufism, the Bible, Sikhism and Buddhism with Sri Ramkrishna Paramhansa. Perhaps, more than any other individual, Vivekananda is credited with introducing and explaining the universal teachings of the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* to the unacquainted Western World.

About the work...

Vivekananda’s “Paper on Hinduism,”¹ was read at the World Parliament on Religions in 1893. Vivekananda’s addresses at this congress emphasized the belief that no one religion is superior to another. In his opening address, He quoted the *Gita*: “As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee.” He taught that all religions are different ways of undersanding and different paths to the same goal and strongly opposed bigotry and fanaticism.

From the reading...

“Where is the common basis upon which all these seemingly hopeless contradictions rest?”

Ideas of Interest from “Paper on Hinduism”

1. According to Vivekananda what is the cosmology expressed in the *Vedas*?
2. What are the reasons Vivekananda offers for the belief that the universe was not created?
3. How does Vivekananda explain reincarnation and past lives? What is his explanation for why we cannot remember past lives?
4. Why does Hinduism reject the notion that we are all sinners?
5. According to Vivekananda, what is the main goal of Hinduism?
6. How does the use of mental imagery and physical representation give rise to the charge of idolatry, superstition, and bigotry in world religions?
7. How does Hinduism account for the major differences among the world religions?

1. Swami Vivekananda. “Paper on Hinduism,” World’s Parliament on Religions, 1893.

The Reading Selection from “Paper on Hinduism”

[Introduction]

Three religions now stand in the world which have come down to us from time pre-historic—Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Judaism. They have all received tremendous shocks, and all of them prove by their survival their internal strength. But while Judaism failed to absorb Christianity and was driven out of its place of birth by its all-conquering daughter, and a handful of Parsees is all that remains to tell the tale of their grand religion, sect after sect arose in India and seemed to shake the religion of the *Vedas* to its very foundations, but like the waters of the seashore in a tremendous earthquake it receded only for a while, only to return in an all-absorbing Hood, a thousand times more vigorous, and when the tumult of the rush was over, these sects were all sucked in, absorbed and assimilated into the immense body of the mother faith. From the high spiritual flights of the Vedanta philosophy, of which the latest discoveries of science seem like echoes, to the low ideas of idolatry with its multifarious mythology, the agnosticism of the Buddhists and the atheism of the Jains, each and all have a place in the Hindu’s religion.

Where then, the question arises, where is the common center to which all these widely diverging radii converge? Where is the common basis upon which all these seemingly hopeless contradictions rest? And this is the question I shall attempt to answer.

[The Vedas]

The Hindus have received their religion through revelation, the *Vedas*. They hold that the *Vedas* are without beginning and without end. It may sound ludicrous to this audience, how a book can be without beginning or end. But by the *Vedas* no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery, and would exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forgot them.

[The Concept of Creation]

The discoverers of these laws are called *Rishis*, and we honor them as perfected beings. I am glad to tell this audience that some of the very greatest of them were women.

From the reading...

"Then, if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy?"

Here it may be said that these laws as laws may be without end, but they must have had a beginning. The *Vedas* teach us that creation is without beginning or end. Science is said to have proved that the sum total of cosmic energy is always the same. Then, if there was a time when nothing existed, where was all this manifested energy? Some say it was in a potential form in God. In that case God is sometimes potential and sometimes kinetic, which would make Him mutable. Everything mutable is a compound and everything compound must undergo that change which is called destruction. So God would die, which is absurd—Therefore, there never was a time when there was no creation.

If I may be allowed to use a simile, creation and creator are two lines, without beginning and without end, zoning parallel to each other. God is the ever-active providence, by whose power systems after systems are being evolved out of chaos, made to run for a time, and again destroyed. This is what the Brahmin boy repeats every day:

The sun and the moon, the Lord created like the suns and the moons of previous cycles.

[Soul, *Karma*, and Reincarnation]

And this agrees with modern science. Here I stand and if I shut my eyes, and try to conceive my existence, "I," "I," "I," what is the idea before me? The idea of a body. Am I, then, nothing but a combination of material substances? The *Vedas* declare, "No" I am a spirit living in a body: I am not the body. The body will die, but I shall not die. Here I am in this body; it will fall, but I shall go on living. I had also a past. The soul was not created, for creation means a combination, which means a certain future dissolution. If then the soul was created, it must die. Some are born happy, enjoy perfect health with beautiful body, mental vigor, and all wants supplied. Others are born miserable; some are without hands or feet; others again are idiots, and only drag on a wretched existence. Why, if they are all created, why

does a just and merciful God create one happy and another unhappy, why is He so partial? Nor would it mend matters in the least to hold that those who are miserable in this life will be happy in a future a one. Why should a man be miserable even here in the reign of a just and merciful God?

In the second place, the idea of a creator God does not explain the anomaly, but simply expresses the cruel fiat of an all-powerful being. There must have been causes, then, before his birth, to make a man miserable or happy and those were his past actions.

Are not all the tendencies of the mind and the body accounted for by inherited aptitude? Here are two parallel lines of existence - one of the mind, the other of matter. If matter and its transformations answer for all that we have, there is no necessity for supposing the existence of a soul. But it cannot be proved that thought has been evolved out of matter; and if a philosophical monism is inevitable, spiritual monism is certainly logical and no less desirable than a materialistic monism; but neither of these is necessary here.

From the reading...

"why does a just and merciful God create one happy and another unhappy, why is He so partial?"

We cannot deny that bodies acquire certain tendencies from heredity, but those tendencies only mean the physical configuration through which a peculiar mind alone can act in a peculiar way. There are other tendencies peculiar to a soul caused by his past actions. And a soul with a certain tendency would, by the laws of affinity, take birth in a body which is the fittest instrument for the display of that tendency. This is in accord with science, for science wants to explain everything by habit, and habit is got through repetitions. So repetitions are necessary to explain the natural habits of a new born soul. And since they were not obtained in this present life, they must have come down from past lives.

There is another suggestion. Taking all these for granted, how is it that I do not remember anything of my past life? This can be easily explained. I am now speaking English. It is not my mother tongue; in fact, no words of my mother tongue are now present in my consciousness; but let me try to bring them up, and they rush in. That shows that consciousness is only the surface of mental ocean, and within its depths are stored up all our experiences. Try and struggle, they would come up, and you would be conscious even of your past life.

This is direct and demonstrative evidence. Verification is the perfect proof of a theory, and here is the challenge thrown to the world by the Rishis. We have dis-

covered the secret by which the very depths of the ocean of memory can be stirred up—try it and you would get a complete reminiscence of your past life.

So then the Hindu believes that he is a spirit. Him the sword cannot pierce—him the fire cannot burn—him the water cannot melt—him the air cannot dry. The Hindu believes that every soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere but whose center is located in the body, and that death means the change of the center from holy to body. Nor is the soul bound by the conditions of matter.

[Soul and Nature]

In its very essence, it is free, unbounded, holy, pure, and perfect. But somehow or other it finds itself tied down to matter and thinks of itself as matter. Why should the free, perfect, and pure be thus under the thralldom of matter, is the next question. How can the perfect soul be deluded into the belief that it is imperfect? We have been told that the Hindus shirk the question and say that no such question can be there—Some thinkers want to answer it by positing one or more quasi-perfect beings, and use big scientific names to fill up the gap. But naming is not explaining. The question remains the same. How can the perfect become the quasi-perfect; how can the pure, the absolute change even a microscopic particle of its nature? But the Hindu is sincere. He does not want to take shelter under sophistry. He is brave enough to face the question in a manly fashion; and his answer is: "I do not know. I do not know how the perfect being, the soul, came to think of itself as imperfect, as Joined to and conditioned by matter." But the fact is a fact for all that. It is a fact in everybody's consciousness that one thinks of oneself as the body. The Hindu does not attempt to explain why one thinks one is the body. The answer that it is the will of God is no explanation. This is nothing more than what the Hindu says, "I do not know."

Well, then, the human soul is eternal and immortal, perfect and infinite, and death means only a change of center from one body to another. The present is determined by our past actions, and the future by the present. The soul will go on evolving up or reverting back from birth to birth and death to death. But here is another question: Is man a tiny boat in a tempest, raised one moment on the foamy crest of a billow and dashed down into a yawning chasm the next, rolling to and from at the mercy of good and bad actions—a powerless, helpless wreck in an ever-raging, ever-rushing, uncompromising current of cause and effect—a little moth placed under the wheel of causation, which rolls on crushing everything in its way and waits not for the widow's tears or the orphan's cry? The heart sinks at the idea, yet this is the law of nature.



City on the Mountains—India, Library of Congress

[The Goal of Hinduism]

Is there no hope? Is there no escape?—was the cry that went up from the bottom of the heart of despair. It reached the throne of mercy, and words of hope and consolation came down and inspired a Vedic sage, and he stood up before the world and in trumpet voice proclaimed the glad tidings: "Hear, ye children of immortal bliss! even ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One who is beyond all darkness, all delusion: knowing Him alone you shall be saved from death over again." "Children of immortal bliss"—what a sweet, what a hopeful name! Allow me to call you, brethren, by that sweet name—heirs of immortal bliss—yea, the Hindu refuses to call you sinners. We are the Children of God, the sharers of immortal bliss, holy and perfect beings. Ye divinities on earth—sinners! It is a sin to call a man so; it is standing libel on human nature. Come up, O lions, and shake off the delusion that you are sheep; you are souls immortal, spirits free, blest and eternal; ye are not matter, ye are not bodies; matter is your servant, not you the servant of matter.

Thus it is that the *Vedas* proclaim not a dreadful combination of unforgiving laws, not an endless prison of cause and effect, but that at the head of all these laws, in and through every particle of matter and force, stands One, "by whose command

the wind blows, the fire burns, the clouds rain and death stalks upon the earth."

And what is His nature?

He is everywhere, the pure and formless One, the Almighty and the All-merciful. "Thou art our father, Thou art our mother, Thou art our beloved friend, Thou art the source of all strength; give us strength. Thou art He that beareth the burdens of the universe; help me bear the little burden of this life." Thus sang the *Rishis* of the *Veda*. And how to worship Him? Through love. "He is to be worshiped as the one beloved, dearer than everything in this and the next life."

From the reading...

"The present is determined by our past actions, and the future by the present. The soul will go on evolving up or reverting back from birth to birth and death to death."

This is the doctrine of love declared in the *Vedas*, and let us see how it is fully developed and taught by Krishna whom the Hindus believe to have been God incarnate on earth.

He taught that a man ought to live in this world like a lotus leaf, which grows in water but is never moistened by water; so a man ought to live in the world—his heart to God and his hands to work.

It is good to love God for hope of reward in this or the next world, but it is better to love God for love's sake; and the prayer goes: "Lord, I do not want wealth nor children nor learning. If it be Thy will, I shall go from birth to birth; but grant me this, that I may love Thee without the hope of reward—love unselfishly for love's sake."

One of the disciples of Krishna, the then Emperor of India, was driven from his kingdom by his enemies and had to take shelter with his queen, in a forest in the Himalayas and there one day the queen asked how it was that he, the most virtuous of men, should suffer so much misery. Yudhishtira answered, "Be hold, my queen, the Himalayas, how grand and beautiful they are; I love them. They do not give me anything but my nature is to love the grand, the beautiful, therefore I love them. Similarly, I love the Lord. He is the source of all beauty, of all sublimity. He is the only object to beloved; my nature is to love Him, and therefore I love. I do not pray for anything; I do not ask for anything. Let Him place me wherever He likes. I must love Him for love's sake. I cannot trade in love."

The *Vedas* teach that the soul is divine, only held in the bondage of matter; perfection will be reached when this bond will burst, and the word they use for it

is, therefore, *Mukti*—freedom, freedom from the bonds of imperfection, freedom from death and misery—And this bondage can only fall off through the mercy of God, and this mercy comes on the pure. So purity is the condition of His mercy. How does that mercy act? He reveals Himself to the pure heart; the pure and the stainless see God, yea, even in this life; then and then only all the crookedness of the heart is made straight. Then all doubt ceases. He is no more the freak of a terrible law of causation. This is the very center, the very vital conception of Hinduism. The Hindu does not want to live upon words and theories, If there are existences beyond the ordinary sensuous existence, he wants to come face to face with them. If there is a soul in him which is not matter, if there is an all-merciful universal Soul, he will go to Him direct. He must see Him, and that alone can destroy all doubts. So the best proof a Hindu sage gives about the soul, about God, is: "I have seen the soul; I have seen God." And that is the only condition of perfection. The Hindu religion does not consist in struggles and attempts to believe a certain doctrine or dogma, but in realizing—not in believing, but in being and becoming.

Thus the whole object of their system is by constant struggle to become perfect, to become divine, to reach God, and see God; and this reaching God, seeing God, becoming perfect even as the Father in Heaven is perfect, constitutes the religion of the Hindus.

And what becomes of a man when he attains perfection? He lives a life of bliss infinite. He enjoys infinite and perfect bliss, having obtained the only thing in which man ought to have pleasure, namely God, and enjoys the bliss with God.

So far all the Hindus are agreed. This is the common religion of all the sects of India; but then perfection is absolute, and the absolute cannot be two or three. It cannot have any qualities. It cannot be an individual. And so when a soul becomes perfect and absolute, it must become one with *Brahman*, and it would only realize the Lord as the perfection, the reality, of its own nature and existence, the existence absolute, knowledge absolute, and bliss absolute. We have often and often read this called the losing of individuality and becoming a stock or a stone.

"He jests at scars that never felt a wound."

I tell you it is nothing of the kind. If it is happiness to enjoy the consciousness of this small body, it must be greater happiness to enjoy the consciousness of two bodies, the measure of happiness increasing with the consciousness of an increasing number of bodies, the aim, the ultimate of happiness, being reached when it would become a universal consciousness.

Therefore, to gain this infinite universal individuality, this miserable little prison—individuality must go. Then alone can death cease when I am one with life, then alone can misery cease when I am one with happiness itself, then alone can all errors cease when I am one with knowledge itself; and this is the necessary scientific conclusion. Science has proved to me that physical individuality is a delusion, that really

my body is one little continuously changing body in an unbroken ocean of matter, and *Advaita* (unity) is the necessary conclusion with my other counterpart, Soul.



Delhi—Ruins of Shershak, Library of Congress

[The Unity of the Universe]

Science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity, it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal. Thus chemistry could not progress farther when it would discover one element out of which all others could be made. Physics would stop when it would be able to fulfill its services in discovering one energy of which all the others are but manifestations, and the science of religion become perfect when it would discover Him who is the one life in a universe of death, Him who is the constant basis of an ever-changing world, One who is the only Soul of which all souls are but delusive manifestations. Thus is it, through multiplicity and duality, that the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no farther. This is the goal of all science.

All science is bound to come to this conclusion in the long run. Manifestation, and not creation, is the word of science today; and the Hindu is only glad that what he has been cherishing in his bosom for ages is going to be taught in more forcible language and with further light from the latest conclusions of science.

[Hinduism and World Religions]

Descend we now from the aspirations of philosophy to the religion of the ignorant. At the very outset, I may tell you that there is no polytheism in India. In every temple, if one stands by and listens, one will find the worshipers applying all the attributes of God, including omnipresence, to the images. It is not polytheism, nor would the name henotheism explain the situation.

"The rose, called by any other name, would smell as sweet." Names are not explanations.

I remember, as a boy, hearing a Christian missionary preach to crowd in India. Among other sweet things he was telling them was, that if he gave a blow to their idol with his stick, what could it do? One of his hearers sharply answered, "If I abuse your God, what can He do?" "You would be punished," said the preacher, "when you die." "So my idol will punish you when you die," retorted the Hindu.

The tree is known by its fruits. When I have seen amongst them that are called idolaters, men, the like of whom, in morality and spirituality and love, I have never seen anywhere, I stop and ask myself, "Can sin beget holiness?"

Superstition is a great enemy of man, but bigotry is worse. Why does a Christian go to church? Why is the cross holy? Why is the face turned toward the sky in prayer? Why are there so many images in the Catholic Church? Why are there so many images in the minds of Protestants when they pray? My brethren, we can no more think about anything without a mental image than we can live without breathing. By the law of association the material image calls up the mental idea and vice versa. This is why the Hindu uses an external symbol when he worships. He will tell you, it helps to keep his mind fixed on the Being to whom he prays. He knows as well as you do that the image is not God, is not omnipresent. finer all, how much does omnipresence mean to almost the whole world? It stands merely as a word, a symbol. Has God superficial area? If not, when we repeat that word "omnipresent," we think of the extended sky, or of space—that is all.

From the reading . . .

"Therefore, to gain this infinite universal individuality, this miserable little prison—individuality must go."

As we find that somehow or other, by the laws of our mental constitution, we have to associate our ideas of infinity with the image of the blue sky, or of the sea, so we naturally connect our idea of holiness with the image of a church, a mosque, or a cross. The Hindus have associated the ideas of holiness, purity, truth,

omnipresence, and such other ideas with different images and forms. But with this difference that while some people devote their whole lives to their idol of a church and never rise higher, because with them religion means an intellectual assent to certain doctrines and doing good to their fellows, the whole religion of the Hindu is centered in realization. Man is to become divine by realizing the divine. Idols or temples or churches or books are only the supports, the helps, of his spiritual childhood; but on and on he must progress.

He must not stop anywhere. "External worship, material worship" so say the scriptures, "is the lowest stage," struggling to rise high, mental prayer is the next stage, but the highest stage is when the Lord has been realized. Mark, the same earnest man who is kneeling before the idol tells you, "Him the sun cannot express, nor the moon, nor the stars, the lightning cannot express Him, nor what we speak of as fire; through Him they shine." But he does not abuse anyone's idol or call its worship sin. He recognizes in it a necessary stage of life. "The child is father of the man." Would it be right for an old man to say that childhood is a sin or youth a sin?

If a man can realize his divine nature with the help of an image, would it be right to call that a sin? Nor, even when he has passed that stage, should he call it an error. To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite, each determined by the conditions of its birth and association, and each of these marks a stage of progress; and every soul is a young eagle soaring higher and higher, gathering more and more strength till it reaches the Glorious Sun.

Unity in variety is the plan of nature, and the Hindu has recognized it. Every other religion lays down certain fixed dogmas and tries to force society to adopt them. It places before society only one coat which must fit Jack and John and Henry, all alike. If it does not fit John or Henry he must go without a coat to cover his body. The Hindus have discovered that the absolute can only be realized, or thought of, or stated through the relative, and the images, crosses, and crescents are simply so many symbols—so many pegs to hang spiritual ideas on. It is not that this help is necessary for everyone, but those that do not need it have no right to say that it is wrong. Nor is it compulsory in Hinduism.

One thing I must tell you. Idolatry in India does not mean anything horrible. It is not the mother of harlots. On the other hand, it is the attempt of undeveloped minds to grasp high spiritual truths. The Hindus have their faults, they sometimes have their exceptions; but mark this, they are always for punishing their own bodies, and never for cutting the throats of their neighbors. If the Hindu fanatic burns himself on the pyre, he never lights the fire of Inquisition. And even this cannot be laid

at the door of his religion any more than the burning of witches can be laid at the door of Christianity.



Riverfront, Library of Congress

To the Hindu, then, the whole world of religions is only a travelling, a coming up, of different men and women, through various conditions and circumstances, to the same goal. Every religion is only evolving a God out of the material man, and the same God is the inspirer of all of them. Why, then, are there so many contradictions? They are only apparent, says the Hindu. The contradictions come from the same truth adapting itself to the varying circumstances of different natures.

It is the same light coming through glasses of different colors. And these little variations are necessary for purposes of adaptation. But in the heart of everything the same truth reigns. The Lord has declared to the Hindu in His incarnation as Krishna: "I am in every religion as the thread through a string of pearls. Wherever thou seest extraordinary holiness and extraordinary power raising and purifying humanity, know thou that I am there." And what has been the result? I challenge the world to find, throughout the whole system of Sanskrit philosophy, any such expression as that the Hindu alone will be saved and not others. Says Vyasa, "We find perfect men even beyond the pale of our caste and creed." One thing more. How, then, can the Hindu, whose whole fabric of thought centers in God, believe in Buddhism which is agnostic, or in Jainism which is atheistic?

The Buddhists or the Jains do not depend upon God; but the whole force of their religion is directed to the great central truth in every religion, to evolve a God out of man. They have not seen the Father, but they have seen the Son. And he that

hath seen the Son bath seen the Father also.

This, brethren, is a short sketch of the religious ideas of the Hindus. The Hindu may have failed to carry out all his plans, but if there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place or time; which will be infinite like the God it will preach, and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahminic or Buddhistic, Christian or Mohammedan, but the sum total of all these. and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in infinite arms, and find a place for, every human being from the lowest grovelling savage, not far removed from the brute, to the highest man towering by the virtues of his head and heart almost above humanity, making society stand in awe of him and doubt his human nature. It will be a religion which will have no place for persecution or intolerance in its polity, which will recognize divinity in every man and woman, and whose whole scope, whose whole force, will be centered in aiding humanity to realize its own true, divine nature.

Offer such a religion and all the nations will follow you. Asoka's council was a council of the Buddhist faith. Akbar's, though more to the purpose, was only a parlor meeting. It was reserved for America to proclaim to all quarters of the globe that the Lord is in every religion.

May He who is the *Brahman* of the Hindus, the Ahura-Mazda of the Zoroastrians, the Buddha of the Buddhists, the Jehovah of the Jews, the Father in Heaven of the Christians, give strength to you to carry out your noble idea! The star arose in the East; it travelled steadily towards the West, sometimes dimmed and sometimes effulgent, till it made a circuit of the world, and now it is again rising on the very horizon of the East, the borders of the Sanpo², a thousand fold more effulgent than it ever was before.

Hail Columbia, motherland of liberty! It has been given to thee, who never dipped her hand in her neighbor's blood, who never found out that the shortest way of becoming rich was by robbing one's neighbors, it has been given to thee to march at the vanguard of civilization with the flag of harmony.

From the reading..

"To the Hindu, man is not travelling from error to truth, but from truth to truth, from lower to higher truth. To him all the religions from the lowest fetishism to the highest absolutism, mean so many attempts of the human soul to grasp and realize the Infinite.."

2. A Tibetan name for the Bramaputra River.



Cashmere Gates, Library of Congress

Topics Worth Investigating

1. What are the common features of the world religions discussed by Vivekananda?
2. Alfred North Whitehead writes about the relation between religion and science:

Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science. Its principles may be eternal, but the expression of those principles requires continual development... The great point to be kept in mind is that normally an advance in science will show that statements of various religious beliefs require some sort of modification. It may be that they have to be expanded or explained, or indeed entirely restated. If the religion is a sound expression of truth, this modification will only exhibit more adequately the exact point which is of importance.³

3. Alfred North Whitehead. *Science and the Modern World*. New York: Macmillan, 1925.

Chapter 2. "Paper on Hinduism" by Swami Vivekananda

Explain whether Vivekananda would agree or disagree with Whitehead's assessment.

3. Samuel Taylor Coleridge observes the following relationships between philosophy, history, and religion. Contrast Vivekananda's view and your view with Coleridge's.

A religion, that is, a true religion, must consist of ideas and facts both; not of ideas alone without facts, for then it would be mere Philosophy; nor of facts alone without ideas, of which those facts are symbols, or out of which they arise, or upon which they are grounded: for then it would be mere History.⁴

4. Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Table Talk, November 20, 1831" in *Collected Works*. Ed. Kathleen Coburn, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990.

Chapter 3

Buddha's "The Four Noble Truths"



Yogi, detail from *The Land of the Veda*

About the author...

In his *Buddha, The Word*,¹ Paul Carus (1852-1919) compiled some of the fundamental teachings of the Buddhist Canon. The selection here, "The Four Noble Truths," is briefly abridged and composes an excellent introduction to Buddhist thought. At the World Parliament of Religions in 1893, Carus became deeply influenced by Eastern philosophies and published a number of works seeking to bridge Western and Eastern thought.

1. Paul Carus. *Buddha, The Word*. 1915.

About the book...

After his enlightenment, Buddha elucidated the "Four Noble Truths" in his first instruction to his disciples; briefly stated, these truths explain how (1) all who live suffer, (2) suffering is a result of self, (3) suffering can be avoided, and (4) suffering can be extinguished by the "Eightfold Path." The reading selection after this one continues Carus' compilation of Buddha's teaching with the "Eightfold Path."

From the reading...

"Inconceivable is the beginning of this *Samsara*; not to be discovered is any first beginning of beings, who, obstructed by ignorance, and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths."

Ideas of Interest from "The Four Noble Truths"

1. Describe in general terms the Four Noble Truths.
2. Name and describe the groups of consciousness. Is the Consciousness Group, itself, one of the groups of consciousness or is it dependent upon the other groups? Explain.
3. If the self or Ego-entity is not real, then how does the illusion of it arise and of what kind of phenomena is it composed? Explain Buddha's comparison of the self to an ocean wave.
4. What are the Three Warnings? Of what is it that they warn?
5. What is *Samsara* and how is it related to the First Noble Truth? Describe "the Wheel of Existence."
6. Name and describe the kinds of craving that form the origin of suffering? What is the cause of evil choices and actions?
7. Describe how one escapes from the "Wheel of Existence." How is suffering to be overcome?

8. What exactly is being sought in Buddhism? Is awakening or realization just annihilation of the self? What, then, is *Nirvana*? Can one experience *Nirvana* while living?

The Reading Selection from "The Four Noble Truths"

[Introduction]

Thus has it been said by the Buddha, the Enlightened One: It is through not understanding, not realizing four things, that I, Disciples, as well as you, had to wander so long through this round of rebirths. And what are these four things? They are the Noble Truth of Suffering, the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering, the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering, the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the Extinction of Suffering.

As long as the absolutely true knowledge and insight as regards these Four Noble Truths was not quite clear in me, so long was I not sure, whether I had won that supreme Enlightenment which is unsurpassed in all the world with its heavenly beings, evil spirits and gods, amongst all the hosts of ascetics and priests, heavenly beings and men. But as soon as the absolutely true knowledge and insight as regards these Four Noble Truths had become perfectly clear in me, there arose in me the assurance that I had won that supreme Enlightenment unsurpassed.

From the reading...

And did the thought never come to you that also you are subject to death, that also you cannot escape it?

And I discovered that profound truth, so difficult to perceive, difficult to understand, tranquilizing and sublime, which is not to be gained by mere reasoning, and is visible only to the wise.

The world, however, is given to pleasure, delighted with pleasure, enchanted with pleasure. Verily, such beings will hardly understand the law of conditionality, the Dependent Origination of every thing; incomprehensible to them will also be the end of all formations, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth, the fading away of craving; detachment, extinction, *Nirvana*.

Yet there are beings whose eyes are only a little covered with dust: they will understand the truth.

First Truth: The Noble Truth of Suffering

What, now, is the Noble Truth of Suffering?

Birth is suffering; Decay is suffering; Death is suffering; Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief, and Despair, are suffering; not to get what one desires, is suffering; in short: the Five Groups of Existence are suffering.

What, now, is Birth? The birth of beings belonging to this or that order of beings, their being born, their conception and springing into existence, the manifestation of the groups of existence, the arising of sense activity—this is called Birth.

And what is Decay? The decay of beings belonging to this or that order of beings; their getting aged, frail, grey, and wrinkled; the failing of their vital force, the wearing out of the senses—this is called Decay.

And what is Death? The parting and vanishing of beings out of this or that order of beings, their destruction, disappearance, death, the completion of their life-period, dissolution of the groups of existence, the discarding of the body—this is called Death.

And what is Sorrow? The sorrow arising through this or that loss or misfortune which one encounters, the worrying oneself, the state of being alarmed, inward sorrow, inward woe—this is called Sorrow.

And what is Lamentation? Whatsoever, through this or that loss or misfortune which befalls one, is wail and lament, wailing and lamenting, the state of woe and lamentation this is called Lamentation.

And what is Pain? The bodily pain and unpleasantness, the painful and unpleasant feeling produced by bodily contact—this is called Pain.

And what is Grief? The mental pain and unpleasantness, the painful and unpleasant feeling produced by mental contact—this is called Grief.

And what is Despair? Distress and despair arising through this or that loss or misfortune which one encounters, distressfulness, and desperation—this is called Despair.

And what is the "suffering of not getting what one desires?" To beings subject to birth there comes the desire: "O that we were not subject to birth! O that no new birth was before us!" Subject to decay, disease, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, the desire comes to them: "O that we were not subject to these

things! O that these things were not before us!" But this cannot be got by mere desiring; and not to get what one desires, is suffering.

The Five Groups of Existence

And what, in brief, are the Five Groups of Existence? They are Corporeality, Feeling, Perception, [mental] Formations, and Consciousness.

From the reading...

"... the belief in an Ego-entity is merely an illusion"

Any corporeal phenomenon, whether one's own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near, belongs to the Group of Corporeality; any feeling belongs to the Group of Feeling; any perception belongs to the Group of Perception; any mental formation belongs to the Group of Formations; all consciousness belongs to the Group of Consciousness.

[Our so-called individual existence is in reality nothing but a mere process of these "bodily and mental" phenomena, which since immemorial times was going on before one's apparent birth, and which also after death will continue for immemorial periods of time. In the following, we shall see that these five Groups, or *Khandhas*—either taken separately, or combined—in no way constitute any real "Ego-entity," and that no Ego-entity exists apart from them, and hence that the belief in an Ego-entity is merely an illusion. Just as that which we designate by the name of "chariot," has no existence apart from axle, wheels, shaft, and so forth: or as the word "house" is merely a convenient designation for various materials put together after a certain fashion so as to enclose a portion of space, and there is no separate house-entity in existence:—in exactly the same way, that which we call a "being," or an "individual," or a "person," or by the name is nothing but a changing combination of physical and psychical phenomena, and has no real existence in itself.]—

Dependent Origination of Consciousness

Now, though one's eye be intact, yet if the external forms do not fall within the field of vision, and no corresponding conjunction takes place, in that case there occurs no formation of the corresponding aspect of consciousness. Or, though one eye be intact, and the external forms fall within the field of vision, yet if no cor-

responding conjunction takes place, in that case also there occurs no formation of the corresponding aspect of consciousness. If, however, one's eye is intact, and the external forms fall within the field of vision, and the corresponding conjunction takes place, in that case there arises the corresponding aspect of consciousness.

Hence, I say: the arising of consciousness is dependent upon conditions; and without these conditions, no consciousness arises. And upon whatsoever conditions the arising of consciousness is dependent, after these it is called.

Consciousness whose arising depends on the eye and forms, is called "eye-consciousness."

Consciousness whose arising depends on the ear and sound, is called "ear-consciousness."

Consciousness whose arising depends on the olfactory organ and odors, is called "nose-consciousness."

Consciousness whose arising depends on the tongue and taste, is called "tongue-consciousness."

Consciousness whose arising depends on the body and bodily contacts, is called "body-consciousness."

Consciousness whose arising depends on the mind and ideas, is called "mind-consciousness."

Whatsoever there is of "corporeality" in the consciousness thus arisen, that belongs to the Group of Corporeality. There is of "feeling"—bodily ease, pain, joy, sadness, or indifferent feeling—belongs to the Group of Feeling. Whatsoever there is of "perception"—visual objects, sounds, odors, tastes, bodily impressions, or mind objects—belongs to the Group of Perception. Whatsoever there are of mental "formations" impression, volition, *etc.*—belong to the Group of Mental Formations. Whatsoever there is of "consciousness" therein, belongs to the Group of Consciousness.

And it is impossible that any one can explain the passing out of one existence, and the entering into a new existence, or the growth, increase, and development of consciousness, independent of corporeality, feeling, perception, and mental formations.

The Three Characteristics of Existence

All formations are "transient"; all formations are "subject to suffering"; all things are "without an Ego-entity." Corporeality is transient, feeling is transient, perception is transient, mental formations are transient, consciousness is transient.

And that which is transient, is subject to suffering; and of that which is transient, and subject to suffering and change, one cannot rightly say: "This belongs to me; this am I; this is my Ego."



A View of Benares, from The Land of the Veda

Therefore, whatever there be of corporeality, of feeling, perception, mental formations, or consciousness, whether one's own or external, whether gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near, one should understand, according to reality, and true wisdom: "This does not belong to me; this am I not; this is not my Ego."

Suppose, a man who is not blind, were to behold the many bubbles on the Ganges as they are driving along; and he should watch them, and carefully examine them. After carefully examining them, they will appear to him empty, unreal, and unsubstantial. In exactly the same way, does the monk behold all the corporeal phenomena, feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and states of consciousness—whether they be of the past, or the present, or the future, far, or near. And he watches them, and examines them carefully; and, after carefully examining them, they appear to him empty, void, and without an Ego.

Whoso delights in corporeality, or feeling, or perception, or mental formations, or consciousness, he delights in suffering; and whoso delights in suffering, will not be freed from suffering. Thus I say

How can you find delight and mirth,

Where there is burning without end?
In deepest darkness you are wrapped!
Why do you not seek for the light?

Look at this puppet here, well rigged,
A heap of many sores, piled up,
Diseased, and full of greediness,
Unstable, and impermanent!

Devoured by old age is this frame,
A prey of sickness, weak and frail;
To pieces breaks this putrid body,
All life must truly end in death.

The Three Warnings

Did you never see in the world a man, or a woman, eighty, ninety, or a hundred years old, frail, crooked as a gable roof, bent down, resting on crutches, with tottering steps, infirm, youth long since fled, with broken teeth, grey and scanty hair, or bald-headed, wrinkled, with blotched limbs? And did the thought never come to you that also you are subject to decay, that also you cannot escape it?

Did you never see in the world a man, or a woman, who being sick, afflicted, and grievously ill, and wallowing in his own filth, was lifted up by some people, and put to bed by others? And did the thought never come to you that also you are subject to disease, that also you cannot escape it?

Did you never see in the world the corpse of a man, or a woman, one, or two, or three days after death, swollen up, blue-black in color, and full of corruption? And did the thought never come to you that also you are subject to death, that also you cannot escape it?

Samsara, The Wheel of Existence

Inconceivable is the beginning of this *Samsara*; not to be discovered is any first beginning of beings, who, obstructed by ignorance, and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths.

From the reading...

"Long time have you suffered the death of father and mother, of sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters. And whilst you were thus suffering, you have, verily, shed more tears upon this long way than there is water in the four oceans."

[*Samsara*—the Wheel of Existence, lit., the "Perpetual Wandering"—is the name by which is designated the sea of life ever restlessly heaving up and down, the symbol of this continuous process of ever again and again being born, growing old, suffering, and dying. More precisely put: *Samsara* is the unbroken chain of the fivefold *Khandha*-combinations, which, constantly changing from moment to moment, follow continuously one upon the other through inconceivable periods of time. Of this *Samsara*, a single lifetime constitutes only a vanishingly tiny fraction; hence, to be able to comprehend the first noble truth, one must let one's gaze rest upon the *Samsara*, upon this frightful chain of rebirths, and not merely upon one single lifetime, which, of course, may be sometimes not very painful.]

Which do you think is the more: the flood of tears, which weeping and wailing you have shed upon this long way—hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths, united with the undesired, separated from the desired this, or the waters of the four oceans?

Long time have you suffered the death of father and mother, of sons, daughters, brothers, and sisters. And whilst you were thus suffering, you have, verily, shed more tears upon this long way than there is water in the four oceans.

Which do you think is the more: the streams of blood that, through your being beheaded, have flowed upon this long way, or the waters in the four oceans?

Long time have you been caught as dacoits, or highwaymen, or adulterers; and, through your being beheaded, verily, more blood has flowed upon this long way than there is water in the four oceans.

But how is this possible?

Inconceivable is the beginning of this *Samsara*; not to be discovered is any first beginning of beings, who, obstructed by ignorance, and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths.

And thus have you long time undergone suffering, undergone torment, undergone misfortune, and filled the graveyards full; verily, long enough to be dissatisfied with all the forms of existence, long enough to turn away, and free yourselves from them all.

Second Truth: The Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering

What, now, is the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to fresh rebirth, and, bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight.

[In the absolute sense, it is no real being, no self-determined, unchangeable, Ego-entity that is reborn. Moreover, there is nothing that remains the same even for two consecutive moments; for the Five *Khandhas*, or Groups of Existence, are in a state of perpetual change, of continual dissolution and renewal. They die every moment, and every moment new ones are born. Hence it follows that there is no such thing as a real existence, or "being" (Latin *esse*), but only as it were an endless process, a continuous change, a "becoming," consisting in a "producing," and in a "being produced"; in a "process of action," and in a "process of reaction," or "rebirth."

This process of perpetual "producing" and "being produced" may best be compared with an ocean wave. In the case of a wave, there is not the slightest quantity of water traveling over the surface of the sea. But the wave structure, that hastens over the surface of the water, creating the appearance of one and the same mass of water, is, in reality, nothing but the continuous rising and falling of continuous, but quite different, masses of water, produced by the transmission of force generated by the wind. Even so, the Buddha did not teach that Ego-entities hasten through the ocean of rebirth, but merely life-waves, which, according to their nature and activities (good, or evil), manifest themselves here as men, there as animals, and elsewhere as invisible beings.]

The Threefold Craving

There is the "Sensual Craving," the "Craving for Eternal-Annihilation." "Existence," the "Craving for Self-Annihilation."

[The "Craving for Eternal Existence," according to the *Visuddhi-Magga*, is intimately connected with the so-called "Eternity-Belief," *i.e.*, the belief in an absolute, eternal, Ego-entity persisting independently of our body.

The Craving for Self-Annihilation is the outcome of the so-called "Annihilation-Belief," the delusive materialistic notion of an Ego which is annihilated at death, and which does not stand in any causal relation with the time before birth or after death.]

But, where does this craving arise and take root? Wherever in the world there are delightful and pleasurable things, there this craving arises and takes root. Eye, ear,

nose, tongue, body, and mind, are delightful and pleasurable: there this craving arises and takes root.

Visual objects, sounds, smells, tastes, bodily impressions, and mind-objects, are delightful and pleasurable: there this craving arises and takes root.

Consciousness, sense impression, feeling born of sense impression, perception, will, craving, thinking, and reflecting, are delightful and pleasurable: there this craving arises and takes root. If, namely, when perceiving a visual object, a sound, odor, taste, bodily impression, or a mind object, the object is pleasant, one is attracted; and if unpleasant, one is repelled.

Thus, whatever kind of "Feeling" one experiences, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent—one approves of, and cherishes the feeling, and clings to it; and while doing so, lust springs up; but lust for feelings, means Clinging; and on Clinging, depends the "Process of Becoming"; on the Process of Becoming (*Karma*-process), depends (future) "Birth"; and dependent on Birth, are Decay and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Pain, Grief, and Despair. Thus arises this whole mass of suffering.

This is called the Noble Truth of the Origin of Suffering.

Heaping up of Present Suffering

Verily, due to sensuous craving, conditioned through sensuous craving, impelled by sensuous craving, entirely moved by sensuous craving, kings fight with kings, princes with princes, priests with priests, citizens with citizens; the mother quarrels with the son, the son with the mother, the father with the son, the son with the father; brother quarrels with brother, brother with sister, sister with brother, friend with friend. Thus, given to dissension, quarreling and fighting, they fall upon one another with fists, sticks, or weapons. And thereby they suffer death or deadly pain.



Crossing Over, detail from *The Land of the Veda*

And further, due to sensuous craving, conditioned through sensuous craving, impelled by sensuous craving, entirely moved by sensuous craving, people break into houses, rob, plunder, pillage whole houses, commit highway robbery, seduce the wives of others. Then, the rulers have such people caught, and inflict on them various forms of punishment. And thereby they incur death or deadly pain. Now, this is the misery of sensuous craving, the heaping up of suffering in this present life, due to sensuous craving, conditioned through sensuous craving, caused by sensuous craving, entirely dependent on sensuous craving.

Heaping Up of Future Suffering

And further, people take the evil way in deeds, the evil way in words, the evil way in thoughts; and by taking the evil way in deeds, words, and thoughts, at the dissolution of the body, after death, they fall into a downward state of existence, a state of suffering, into perdition, and the abyss of hell. But, this is the misery of sensuous craving, the heaping up of suffering in the future life, due to sensuous craving, conditioned through sensuous craving, caused by sensuous craving, entirely dependent on sensuous craving.

Not in the air, nor ocean-midst,
Nor hidden in the mountain clefts,
Nowhere is found a place on earth,
Where man is freed from evil deeds.

Inheritance of Deeds (*Karma*)

For, owners of their deeds (*karma*) are the beings, heirs of their deeds; their deeds are the womb from which they sprang; with their deeds they are bound up; their deeds are their refuge. Whatever deeds they do-good or evil-of such they will be the heirs.

And wherever the beings spring into existence, there their deeds will ripen; and wherever their deeds ripen, there they will earn the fruits of those deeds, be it in this life, or be it in the next life, or be it in any other future life.

There will come a time, when the mighty ocean will dry up, vanish, and be no more. There will come a time, when the mighty earth will be devoured by fire, perish, and be no more. But, yet there will be no end to the suffering of beings,

who, obstructed by ignorance, and ensnared by craving, are hurrying and hastening through this round of rebirths.

Third Truth: The Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering

What, now, is the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering? It is the complete fading away and extinction of this craving, its forsaking and giving up, the liberation and detachment from it.

But where may this craving vanish, where may it be extinguished? Wherever in the world there are delightful and pleasurable things, there this craving may vanish, there it may be extinguished.

From the reading...

"This, truly, is the Peace, this is the Highest, namely the end of all formations, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth, the fading away of craving: detachment, extinction—*Nirvana*."

Be it in the past, present, or future, whosoever of the monks or priests regards the delightful and pleasurable things in the world as "impermanent," "miserable," and "without an Ego," as a disease and cancer; it is he who overcomes the craving.

And released from Sensual Craving, released from the Craving for Existence, he does not return, does not enter again into existence.

Dependent Extinction of All Phenomena

For, through the total fading away and extinction of Craving, Clinging is extinguished; through the extinction of clinging, the Process of Becoming is extinguished; through the extinction of the (*karmic*) process of becoming, Rebirth is extinguished; and through the extinction of rebirth, Decay and Death, Sorrow, Lamentation, Suffering, Grief, and Despair, are extinguished. Thus comes about the extinction of this whole mass of suffering.

Hence, the annihilation, cessation, and overcoming of corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness, this is the extinction of suffering, the end of disease, the overcoming of old age and death.

[The undulatory motion, which we call wave—which in the spectator creates the illusion of a single mass of water moving over the surface of the lake—is produced and fed by the wind, and maintained by the stored-up energies. After the wind has ceased, and no fresh wind again whips up the water, the stored-up energies will gradually be consumed, and the whole undulatory motion come to an end. Similarly, if fire does not get new fuel, it will become extinct. just so, this Five-*Khandha*-process—which, in the ignorant worldling, creates the illusion of an Ego-entity—is produced and fed by the life-affirming craving, and maintained for some time by means of the stored-up life-energies. Now, after the fuel, i.e., the craving and clinging to life, has ceased, and no new craving impels again this Five-*Khandha*-process, life will continue as long as there are still life-energies stored up, but at their destruction at death, the Five-*Khandha*-process will reach final extinction.

Thus, *Nirvana* or "Extinction" (Sanskrit: to cease blowing, to become extinct), may be considered under two aspects:

1. "Extinction of Impurities," reached at the attainment of *Arahat*ship, or Holiness, which takes place during the life-time.
2. "Extinction of the Five-*Khandha*-process," which takes place at the death of the *Arahat*.]

Nirvana

This, truly, is the Peace, this is the Highest, namely the end of all formations, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth, the fading away of craving: detachment, extinction—*Nirvana*.

Enraptured with lust, enraged with anger, blinded by delusion, overwhelmed, with mind ensnared, man aims at his own ruin, at others' ruin, at the ruin of both parties, and he experiences mental pain and grief. But, if lust, anger, and delusion are given up, man aims neither at his own ruin, nor at others' ruin, nor at the ruin of both parties, and he experiences no mental pain and grief. Thus is *Nirvana* immediate, visible in this life, inviting, attractive, and comprehensible to the wise.

The extinction of greed, the extinction of anger, the extinction of delusion: this, indeed, is called *Nirvana*.

The *Arahat*, or Holy One

And for a disciple thus freed, in whose heart dwells peace, there is nothing to be added to what has been done, and naught more remains for him to do. Just as a

rock of one solid mass remains unshaken by the wind, even so, neither forms, nor sounds, nor odors, nor tastes, nor contacts of any kind, neither the desired, nor the undesired, can cause such an one to waver. Steadfast is his mind, gained is deliverance.

And he who has considered all the contrasts on this earth, and is no more disturbed by anything whatever in the world, the Peaceful One, freed from rage, from sorrow, and from longing, he has passed beyond birth and decay.

The Immutable

There is a realm, where there is neither the solid, nor the fluid, neither heat, nor motion, neither this world, nor any other world, neither sun, nor moon. This I call neither arising, nor passing away, neither standing still nor being born, nor dying. There is neither foothold, nor development, nor any basis. This is the end of suffering.

There is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed. If there were not this Unborn, this Unoriginated, this Uncreated, this Unformed, escape from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed, would not be possible.

But since there is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed, therefore is escape possible from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed.

Fourth Truth: The Noble Truth of the Path that Leads to the Extinction of Suffering—The Two Extremes and the Middle Path

To give oneself up to indulgence in sensual pleasure, the base, common, vulgar, unholy, unprofitable; and also to give oneself up to self-mortification, the painful, unholy, unprofitable: both these two extremes the Perfect One has avoided, and found out the Middle Path, which makes one both to see and to know, which leads to peace, to discernment, to enlightenment, to *Nirvana*.



Deer Park, Library of Congress

From the reading...

"There is an Unborn, Unoriginated, Uncreated, Unformed. If there were not this Unborn, this Unoriginated, this Uncreated, this Unformed, escape from the world of the born, the originated, the created, the formed, would not be possible."

Topics Worth Investigating

1. The Zen Master Bankei said:

Learn to abide in the Unborn for thirty days, and from there on, even if you don't want to—whether you like it or not—you'll just naturally *have* to abide in the Unborn... That way you'll be living buddhas here today, won't you?²

2. Peter Haskel. *Bankei Zen: Translations from the Record of Bankei* New York: Grove Press,

Explain Master Bankei's instruction in terms of the realm of the "Immutable."

2. Explain Buddha's doctrine of the "Middle Path" between the two extremes of pleasure and self-mortification. How does the Buddha's Middle Path compare with Confucius' Doctrine of the Mean?

While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of Equilibrium. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of Harmony. This Equilibrium is the great root from which grow all the human actions in the world, and this Harmony is the universal path which they all should pursue.

Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.³

3. Explain Buddha's conception of holiness. What forms the consciousness of the *Arhat*? Why does the holy person seem to have no hindrances?
4. In the *Apology*, Socrates states when he has been sentenced to death:

... we are quite mistaken in supposing death to be an evil...

Death is one of two things. Either it is annihilation, and the dead have no consciousness of anything, or, as we are told, it is really a change—a migration of the soul from this place to another. Now if there is no consciousness but only a dreamless sleep, death must be a marvelous gain.⁴

Contrast Socrates' notion of "annihilation" with Buddha's notion of extinction or *Nirvana*.

1984, 19.

3. Confucius. "Doctrine of the Mean." 500 BC. Translated by James Legge.

4. *Socrates' Defense (Apology)*. Translated by Hugh Tredennick. In *Plato: The Collected Dialogues*. Edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969, 25.

Chapter 4

“The Noble Eightfold Path” by Buddha



Brahmin Reading, Caleb Wright, India and Its Inhabitants

About the author...

Attending the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago was a life-changing event for Paul Carus (1852-1919). Not only did Swami Vivekananda (whose paper on Hinduism is in this text) present many talks at this congress, but also D. T. Suzuki (whose chapter on the ox-herding pictures is also here) translated a paper for the event. Carus and Suzuki later worked together on the translation of the *Tao te Ching* as well as several other works.

About the work...

In his *Buddha, The Word*,¹ Paul Carus compiles the fundamental teachings of the Buddha: the four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, and Buddha’s sermons and advice to his disciples. In this reading, Buddha explains how *nirvana* can result from the discipline of the Noble Eightfold Path. In his teachings, Buddha did not claim divine authority, instead he emphasizes that each person should trust his own experience.

From the reading...

“It is the Noble Eightfold Path, the way that leads to the extinction of suffering...”

Ideas of Interest from “The Noble Eightfold Path”

1. List and briefly describe the central characteristics of each of the steps of the Eightfold Path.
2. Explain the parable of the poisoned arrow. Do you think metaphysical questions are worth pursuing? What harm does Buddha think attends metaphysical questioning?
3. Why is the middle path described as “the perfect path”? Why do you think the middle path is given this name?
4. Explain the basis of self-illusion. Does the quest for happiness perpetuate self-illusion? Does Buddha believe the ego is annihilated at death?
5. Who is the *Sotapan*? Describe the fetters from which the *Sotapan* or “stream-enterer” has freed himself.
6. How does Buddha describe the *Arahat*?
7. What are the arguments Buddha advances to the conclusion that there is no ego?

1. Paul Carus. *Buddha, The Word*. 1915.

8. Explain the teaching of “dependent origination.” Is this teaching a metaphysical view of the world?
9. Describe the four-fold characteristics of wrong speech.
10. What are the five methods Buddha describes to avoid harmful thoughts?
11. What are the ten blessings which result from contemplation of the body?
12. What are the differences between thought or thinking and consciousness?
13. Which of the steps are reflective of morality? Why is meditation and not moral conduct the most important aspect of the Eightfold path?
14. What is the difference between mindfulness and non-attachment? What is the true goal of the holy life?

The Reading Selection from “The Eightfold Path”

The Eightfold Path

It is the Noble Eightfold Path, the way that leads to the extinction of suffering, namely:

1. Right Understanding, 2. Right Mindedness, which together are Wisdom.
3. Right Speech, 4. Right Action, 5. Right Living, which together are Morality.
6. Right Effort, 7. Right Attentiveness, 8. Right Concentration, which together are Concentration.

This is the Middle Path which the Perfect One has found out, which makes one both to see and to know, which leads to peace, to discernment, to enlightenment, to *Nirvana*.

Free from pain and torture is this path, free from groaning and suffering; it is the perfect path.

Truly, like this path there is no other path to the purity of insight. If you follow this path, you will put an end to suffering.

But each one has to struggle for himself, the Perfect Ones have only pointed out the way.

Give ear then, for the Immortal is found. I reveal, I set forth the Truth. As I reveal it to you, so act! And that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which, sons of good families rightly go forth from home to the homeless state: this you will, in no long time, in this very life, make known to yourself, realize, and make your own.

The Eightfold Path—First Step—Right Understanding

What, now, is Right Understanding? It is understanding the Four Truths. To understand suffering; to understand the origin of suffering; to understand the extinction of suffering; to understand the path that leads to the extinction of suffering: This is called Right Understanding.

Or, when the noble disciple understands what is karmically wholesome, and the root of wholesome *karma*; what is karmically unwholesome, and the root of unwholesome *karma*, then he has Right Understanding.

[“Karmically unwholesome” is every volitional act of body, speech, or mind which is rooted in greed, hatred, or delusion, and produces evil and painful results in this or any future form of existence]. . .

What, now, is “karmically wholesome?”

In Bodily Action it is to abstain from killing; to abstain from stealing; and to abstain from unlawful sexual intercourse.

In Verbal Action it is to abstain from lying; to abstain from tale-bearing; to abstain from harsh language; and to abstain from frivolous talk.

In Mental Action it is absence of covetousness; absence of ill-will; and right understanding.

And what is the root of wholesome *karma*? Absence of greed (unselfishness) is a root of wholesome *karma*; absence of anger (benevolence) is a root of wholesome *karma*; absence of delusion (wisdom) is a root of wholesome *karma*.

Or, when one understands that corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formation, and consciousness, are transient [subject to suffering, and without an Ego], also in that case one possesses Right Understanding.

Unprofitable Questions

Should anyone say that he does not wish to lead the holy life under the Blessed

One, unless the Blessed One first tells him, whether the world is eternal or temporal, finite or infinite; whether the life principle is identical with the body, or something different; whether the Perfect One continues after death, and so on such a man would die, ere the Perfect One could tell him all this.

It is as if a man were pierced by a poisoned arrow, and his friends, companions, or near relations, should send for a surgeon; but that man should say: "I will not have this arrow pulled out, until I know who the man is that has wounded me: whether he is a noble, a priest, a citizen, or a servant"; or: "what his name is, and to what family he belongs"; or: "whether he is tall, or short, or of medium height." Verily, such a man would die, ere he could adequately learn all this.

Therefore, the man who seeks his own welfare, should pull out this arrow—this arrow of lamentation, pain, and sorrow.

From the reading...

"If there really existed the Ego, there would be also something which belonged to the Ego."

For, whether the theory exists, or whether it does not exist, that the world is eternal, or temporal, or finite, or infinite—certainly, there is birth, there is decay, there is death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief, and despair, the extinction of which, attainable even in this present life, I make known unto you.

There is, for instance, an unlearned worldling, void of regard for holy men, ignorant of the teaching of holy men, untrained in the noble doctrine. And his heart is possessed and overcome by Self-Illusion, by Skepticism, by attachment to mere Rule and Ritual, by Sensual Lust, and by will; and how to free himself from these things, he does not really know.

[Self-Illusion may reveal itself as "Eternalism" or "Eternity-belief" *i.e.*, the belief that one's Ego is existing independently of the material body, and continuing even after the dissolution of the latter; or as "Annihilationism," or "Annihilation-belief" *i.e.*, the materialistic belief that this present life constitutes the Ego, and hence that it is annihilated at the death of the material body.]

Not knowing what is worthy of consideration, and what is unworthy of consideration, he considers the unworthy, and not the worthy.

And unwisely he considers thus: "Have I been in the past? Or, have I not been in the past? What have I been in the past? How have I been in the past? From what state into what state did I change in the past?—Shall I be in the future? Or, shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future?"

From what state into what state shall I change in the future?" And the present also fills him with doubt: "Am I? Or, am I not? What am I? How am I? This being, whence has it come? Whither will it go?" And with such unwise considerations, he falls into one or other of the six views, and it becomes his conviction and firm belief: "I have an Ego"; or: "I have no Ego"; or: "With the Ego I perceive the Ego"; or: "With that which is no Ego, I perceive the Ego"; or: "With the Ego I perceive that which is no Ego." Or, he falls into the following view: "This my Ego, which can think and feel, and which, now here, now there, experiences the fruit of good and evil deeds; this my Ego is permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, and will thus eternally remain the same."

If there really existed the Ego, there would be also something which belonged to the Ego. As, however, in truth and reality, neither the Ego, nor anything belonging to the Ego, can be found, is it not therefore really an utter fool's doctrine to say: "This is the world, this am I; after death, I shall be permanent, persisting, and eternal?"

These are called mere views, a thicket of views, a puppet show of views, a toil of views, a snare of views; and ensnared in the fetter of views, the ignorant worldling will not be freed from rebirth, from decay, and from death, from sorrow, pain, grief, and despair; he will not be freed, I say, from suffering.

The Sotapan, or "Stream-Enterer"

The learned and noble disciple, however, who has regard for holy men, knows the teaching of holy men, is well trained in the noble doctrine, he understands what is worthy of consideration, and what is unworthy. And knowing this, he considers the worthy, and not the unworthy. What suffering is, he wisely considers. What the origin of suffering is, he wisely considers; what the extinction of suffering is, he wisely considers; what the path is that leads to the extinction of suffering, he wisely considers.

And by thus considering, three fetters vanish, namely: Self-illusion, Skepticism, and Attachment to mere Rule and Ritual. But those disciples in whom these three fetters have vanished have "entered the Stream," have forever escaped the states of woe, and are assured of final enlightenment.

More than any earthly power,
More than all the joys of heaven,
More than rule o'er all the world,
Is the Entrance to the Stream.

Chapter 4. “The Noble Eightfold Path” by Buddha

And, verily, those who are filled with unshaken faith in me, all those have entered the stream.



Indonesian Temple Ruins, Library of Congress

There are ten “Fetters” by which beings are bound to the wheel of existence. They are: Self-Illusion, Skepticism, Attachment to mere Rule and Ritual, Sensual Lust, Ill-will, Craving for the World of pure Form, Craving for the Formless World, Conceit, Restlessness, Ignorance.

A *Sotapan*, or “Stream-Enterer” i.e. “one who has entered the stream leading to *Nirvana*,” is free from the first three fetters.

A *Sakadagamin*, or “Once-Returned”—namely to this sensuous sphere—has overcome the 4th and 5th fetters in their grosser form. An *Anagamin*, or “Non-Returner,” is wholly freed from the first five fetters, which bind to rebirth in the sensuous sphere; after death, whilst living in the sphere of pure form, he will reach the goal. An *Arahat*, or perfectly “Holy One,” is freed from all fetters.]

The Two Understandings

Therefore, I say, Right Understanding is of two kinds:

1. The view that alms and offerings are not useless; that there is fruit and result, both of good and bad actions; that there are such things as this life, and the next life; that father and mother as spontaneously born beings (in the heavenly worlds) are no mere words; that there are monks and priests who are spotless and perfect, who can explain this life and the next life, which they themselves have understood: this is called the “Mundane Right Understanding,” which yields worldly fruits, and brings good results.

2. But whatsoever there is of wisdom, of penetration, of right understanding, conjoined with the Path—the mind being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued;—this is called the “Ultramundane Right Understanding,” which is not of the world, but is ultramundane, and conjoined with the Path.

[Thus, there are two kinds of the Eightfold Path: the “mundane,” practiced by the “worldling”; and the “ultra-mundane,” practiced by the “Noble Ones.”]

Now, in understanding wrong understanding as wrong, and right understanding as right, one practices Right Understanding [1st step]; and in making efforts to overcome wrong understanding, and to arouse right understanding, one practices Right Effort [6th step]; and in overcoming wrong understanding with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in the possession of right understanding, one practices Right-Attentiveness [7th step]. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right understanding, namely: right understanding, right effort, and right attentiveness.

Complete Deliverance

Now, if any one should put the question, whether I admit any view at all, he should be answered thus:

The Perfect One is free from any theory, for the Perfect One has understood what corporeality is, and how it arises, and passes away. He has understood what feeling is, and how it arises, and passes away. He has understood what perception is, and how it arises, and passes away. He has understood what the mental formations are, and how they arise, and pass away. He has understood what consciousness is, and how it arises, and passes away. Therefore, I say, the Perfect One has won complete deliverance through the extinction, fading-away, disappearance, rejection, and getting rid of all opinions and conjectures, of all inclination to the vainglory of “I” and “mine.”

Whether Perfect Ones [Buddhas] appear in the world or whether Perfect Ones do not appear in the world, it still remains a firm condition, an immutable fact and

fixed law: that all formations are "impermanent" that all formations are "subject to suffering"; that everything is "without an Ego."

[The word *sankhara* (formations) comprises all things which have a beginning and an end, the so-called created, or "formed" things, *i.e.*, all possible physical and mental constituents of existence.] A corporeal phenomenon, a feeling, a perception, a mental formation, a consciousness, that is permanent and persistent, eternal and not subject to change: such a thing the wise men in this world do not recognize; and I also say, there is no such thing.

And it is impossible that a being possessed of Right Understanding should regard anything as the Ego.

Now, if someone should say that Feeling is his Ego, he should be answered thus: "There are three kinds of feeling: pleasurable, painful, and indifferent feeling. Which of these three feelings, now, do you consider your Ego?" At the moment namely of experiencing one of these feelings one does not experience the other two. These three kinds of feelings are impermanent, of dependent origin, are subject to decay and dissolution, to fading-away and extinction. Whosoever, in experiencing one of these feelings, thinks that this is his Ego, will, after the extinction of that feeling, admit that his Ego has become dissolved. And thus he will consider his Ego already in this present life as impermanent, mixed up with pleasure and pain, subject to rising and passing away.

If any one should say that Feeling is not his Ego, and that his Ego is inaccessible to feeling, he should be asked thus: "Now, where there is no feeling, is it there possible to say: 'This am I?'"

Or, someone might say: "Feeling, indeed, is not my Ego, but it also is untrue that my Ego is inaccessible to feeling; for it is my Ego that feels, for my Ego has the faculty of feeling." Such a one should be answered thus: "Suppose, feeling should become altogether totally extinguished; now, if there, after the extinction of feeling, no feeling whatever exists, it is then possible to say: 'This am I?'"

To say that the mind, or the mind-objects, or the mind-consciousness, constitute the Ego; such an assertion is unfounded. For an arising and a passing away is seen there; and seeing this, one should come to the conclusion that one's Ego arises and passes away.

It would be better for the unlearned worldling to regard this body, built up of the four elements, as his Ego, rather than the mind. For it is evident that this body may last for a year, for two years, for three years, four, five, or ten years, or even a hundred years and more; but that which is called thought, or mind, or consciousness, is continuously, during day and night, arising as one thing, and passing away as another thing.

Therefore, whatsoever there is of corporeality, of feeling, of perception, of mental formations, of consciousness, whether one's own or external, gross or subtle, lofty or low, far or near; there one should understand according to reality and true wisdom: "This does not belong to me; this am I not; this is not my Ego."

[To show the Egolessness, utter emptiness of existence, *Visuddhi-Magga* XVI quotes the following verse:

Mere suffering exists, no sufferer is found;
The deed is, but no doer of the deed is there;
Nirvana is, but not the man that enters it;
The Path is, but no traveler on it is seen.]

Past, Present, and Future

If, now, any one should ask: "Have you been in the past, and is it untrue that you have not been? Will you be in the future, and is it untrue that you will not be? Are you, and is it untrue that you are not?"—you may say that you have been in the past, and it is untrue that you have not been; that you will be in the future, and it is untrue that you will not be; that you are, and it is untrue that you are not.

In the past only the past existence was real, but unreal the future and present existence. In the future only the future existence will be real, but unreal the past and present existence. Now only the present existence is real, but unreal the past and future existence.

Verily, he who perceives the Dependent Origination, perceives the truth and he who perceives the truth, perceives the dependent origination. For, just as from the cow comes milk, from milk curds, from curds butter, from butter ghee, from ghee the scum of ghee; and when it is milk, it is not counted as curds, or butter, or ghee, or scum of ghee, but only as milk; and when it is curds, it is only counted as curds—just so was my past existence at that time real, but unreal the future and present existence; and my future existence will be at one time real, but unreal the past and present existence; and my present existence is now real, but unreal the past and future existence. All these are merely popular designations and expressions, mere conventional terms of speaking, mere popular notions. The Perfect One, indeed, makes use of these, without, however, clinging to them.

Thus, he who does not understand corporeality, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness according to reality [*i.e.*, as void of a personality, or Ego], and not their arising, their extinction, and the way to their extinction, he is liable

to believe, either that the Perfect One continues after death, or that he does not continue after death, and so forth.

Verily, if one holds the view that the vital principle [Ego] is identical with this body, in that case a holy life is not possible; or, if one holds the view that the vital principle is something quite different from the body, in that case also a holy life is not possible. Both these two Extremes the Perfect One has avoided, and shown the Middle Doctrine, saying:

Dependent Origination

On Delusion depend the *Karma*-Formations. On the *karma*-formations depends Consciousness [starting with rebirth-consciousness in the womb of the mother].—On consciousness depends the Mental and Physical Existence.—On the mental and physical existence depend the Six Sense-Organs.—On the six sense-organs depends the Sensory Impression.—On the sensory impression depends Feeling.—On feeling depends; Craving.—On craving depends Clinging. On clinging depends the Process of Becoming.—On the process of becoming [here: *karma* process] depends Rebirth.—On rebirth depend Decay and Death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. Thus arises this whole mass of suffering. This is called the noble truth of the origin of suffering.



Buddhist Temple, Cambodia, from 1905 French Postcard

In whom, however, Delusion has disappeared and wisdom arisen, such a disciple heaps up neither meritorious, nor demeritorious, nor imperturbable *Karma*-formations.

Thus, through the entire fading away and extinction of this Delusion, the *Karma*-Formations are extinguished. Through the extinction of the *Karma*-formations, Consciousness [rebirth] is extinguished. Through the extinction of consciousness, the Mental and Physical Existence is extinguished. Through the extinction of the mental and physical existence, the six Sense—Organs are extinguished. Through the extinction of the six sense-organs, the Sensory Impression is extinguished. Through the extinction of the sensory impression, Feeling is extinguished. Through the extinction of feeling, Craving is extinguished. Through the extinction of craving, Clinging is extinguished. Through the extinction of clinging, the Process of Becoming is extinguished. Through the extinction of the process of becoming, Rebirth is extinguished. Through the extinction of rebirth, Decay and Death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are extinguished. Thus takes place the extinction of this whole mass of suffering. This is called the Noble Truth of the Extinction of Suffering.

***Karma*: Rebirth—Producing and Barren**

Verily, because beings, obstructed by Delusion, and ensnared by Craving, now here now there seek ever fresh delight, therefore such action comes to ever fresh Rebirth.

And the action that is done out of greed, anger and delusion, that springs from them, has its source and origin there: this action ripens wherever one is reborn; and wherever this action ripens, there one experiences the fruits of this action, be it in this life, or the next life, or in some future life.

However, through the fading away of delusion through the arising of wisdom, through the extinction of craving, no future rebirth takes place again.

For the actions, which are not done out of greed, anger and delusion, which have not sprung from them, which have not their source and origin there—such actions are, through the absence of greed, anger and delusion, abandoned, rooted out, like a palm-tree torn out of the soil, destroyed, and not liable to spring up again.

In this respect one may rightly say of me: that I teach annihilation, that I propound my doctrine for the purpose of annihilation, and that I herein train my disciples; for, certainly, I do teach annihilation—the annihilation, namely, of greed, anger and delusion, as well as of the manifold evil and unwholesome things.

[“Dependent Origination” is the teaching of the strict conformity to law of everything that happens, whether in the realm of the physical, or the psychical. It shows

how the totality of phenomena, physical and mental, the entire phenomenal world that depends wholly upon the six senses, together with all its suffering—and this is the vital point of the teaching is not the mere play of blind chance, but has an existence that is dependent upon conditions; and that, precisely with the removal of these conditions, those things that have arisen in dependence upon them—thus also all suffering—must perforce disappear and cease to be.]

Second Step: Right Mindedness

What, now, is Right Mindedness? It is thoughts free from lust; thoughts free from ill-will; thoughts free from cruelty. This is called right mindedness.

Now, Right Mindedness, let me tell you, is of two kinds: 1. Thoughts free from lust, from ill-will, and from cruelty:—this is called the "Mundane Right Mindedness," which yields worldly fruits and brings good results.

2. But, whatsoever there is of thinking, considering, reasoning, thought, ratiocination, application—the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued—: these "Verbal Operations" of the mind are called the "Ultramundane Right Mindedness" which is not of the world, but is ultra mundane, and conjoined with the paths.

Now, in understanding wrong-mindedness as wrong, and right-mindedness as right, one practices Right Understanding [1st step]; and in making efforts to overcome evil-mindedness, and to arouse right-mindedness, one practices Right Effort [6th step]; and in overcoming evil-mindedness with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right-mindedness, one practices Right Attentiveness [7th step]. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right-mindedness, namely: right understanding, right effort, and right attentiveness.

Third Step: Right Speech

What, now, is Right Speech? It is abstaining from lying; abstaining from tale-bearing; abstaining from harsh language; abstaining from vain talk.

There, someone avoids lying, and abstains from it. He speaks the truth, is devoted to the truth, reliable, worthy of confidence, is not a deceiver of men. Being at a meeting, or amongst people, or in the midst of his relatives, or in a society, or in the king's court, and called upon and asked as witness, to tell what he knows, he answers, if he knows nothing: "I know nothing"; and if he knows, he answers: "I

know”; if he has seen nothing, he answers: “I have seen nothing,” and if he has seen, he answers: “I have seen.” Thus, he never knowingly speaks a lie, neither for the sake of his own advantage, nor for the sake of another person’s advantage, nor for the sake of any advantage whatsoever.

He avoids tale-bearing, and abstains from it. What he has heard here, he does not repeat there, so as to cause dissension there; and what he heard there, he does not repeat here, so as to cause dissension here. Thus he unites those that are divided; and those that are united, he encourages. Concord gladdens him, he delights and rejoices in concord, and it is concord that he spreads by his words.

He avoids harsh language, and abstains from it. He speaks such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, going to the heart, courteous and dear, and agreeable to many.

[In *Majjhima-Nikaya*, No. 21, the Buddha says: “Even, O monks, should robbers and murderers saw through your limbs and joints, whoso gave way to anger thereat, would not be following my advice. For thus ought you to train yourselves:”

““Undisturbed shall our mind remain, no evil words shall escape our lips; friendly and full of sympathy shall we remain, with heart full of love, and free from any hidden malice; and that person shall we penetrate with loving thoughts, wide, deep, boundless, freed from anger and hatred.””]

He avoids vain talk, and abstains from it. He speaks at the right time, in accordance with facts, speaks what is useful, speaks about the law and the discipline; his speech is like a treasure, at the right moment accompanied by arguments, moderate and full of sense. This is called right speech. Now, right speech, let me tell you, is of two kinds: 1. Abstaining from lying, from tale-bearing, from harsh language, and from vain talk; this is called the “Mundane Right Speech,” which yields worldly fruits and brings good results.

2. But the abhorrence of the practice of this four-fold wrong speech, the abstaining, withholding, refraining therefrom—the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued—: this is called the “Ultramundane Right Speech”, which is not of the world, but is ultramundane, and conjoined with the paths.

Now, in understanding wrong speech as wrong, and right speech as right, one practices Right Understanding [1st step]; and in making efforts to overcome evil speech and to arouse right speech, one practices Right Effort [6th step]; and in overcoming wrong speech with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right speech, one practices Right Attentiveness [7th step]. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right attentiveness.

Fourth Step: Right Action

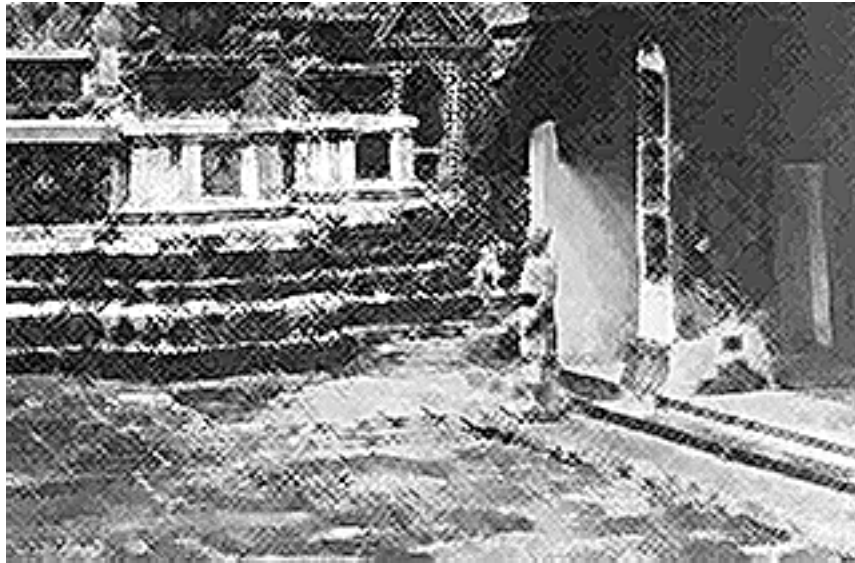
What, now, is Right Action? It is abstaining from killing; abstaining from stealing; abstaining from unlawful sexual intercourse.

There, someone avoids the killing of living beings, and abstains from it. Without stick or sword, conscientious, full of sympathy, he is anxious for the welfare of all living beings.

He avoids stealing, and abstains from it; what another person possesses of goods and chattels in the village or in the wood, that he does not take away with thievish intent.

He avoids unlawful sexual intercourse, and abstains from it. He has no intercourse with such persons as are still under the protection of father, mother, brother, sister or relatives, nor with married women, nor female convicts, nor, lastly, with betrothed girls.

This is called Right Action.



Temple Wat Prakeu

Now, Right Action, let me tell you, is of two kinds: 1. Abstaining from killing, from stealing, and from unlawful sexual intercourse—this is called the “Mundane Right Action,” which yields worldly fruits and brings good results. But the abhorrence of the practice of this three-fold wrong action, the abstaining, withholding, refraining therefrom—the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined

with the path, the holy path being pursued—: this is called the “Ultramundane Right Action,” which is not of the world, but is ultramundane, and conjoined with the paths.

Now, in understanding wrong action as wrong, and right action as right, one practices Right Understanding [1st step]; and in making efforts to overcome wrong action, and to arouse right action, one practices Right Effort [6th step]; and in overcoming wrong action with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right action, one practices Right Attentiveness [7th step]. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right action, namely: right understanding, right effort, and right attentiveness.

Fifth Step: Right Living

What, now, is Right Living? When the noble disciple, avoiding a wrong way of living, gets his livelihood by a right way of living, this is called Right Living.

Now, right living, let me tell you, is of two kinds: 1. When the noble disciple, avoiding wrong living, gets his livelihood by a right way of living—this is called the “Mundane Right Living,” which yields worldly fruits and brings good results.

2. But the abhorrence of wrong living, the abstaining, withholding, refraining therefrom—the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued—: this is called the “Ultramundane Right Living,” which is not of the world, but is ultramundane, and conjoined with the paths.

Now, in understanding wrong living as wrong, and right living as right, one practices Right Understanding [1st step]; and in making efforts to overcome wrong living, to arouse right living, one practices Right Effort [6th step]; and in overcoming wrong living with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right living, one practices Right Attentiveness [7th step]. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right living, namely: right understanding, right effort, and right attentiveness.

Sixth Step: Right Effort

What, now, is Right Effort? There are Four Great Efforts: the effort to avoid, the effort to overcome, the effort to develop, and the effort to maintain.

What, now, is the effort to avoid? There, the disciple incites his mind to avoid the arising of evil, demeritorious things that have not yet arisen; and he strives, puts

forth his energy, strains his mind and struggles.

Thus, when he perceives a form with the eye, a sound with the ear, an odor with the nose, a taste with the tongue, a contact with the body, or an object with the mind, he neither adheres to the whole, nor to its parts. And he strives to ward off that through which evil and demeritorious things, greed and sorrow, would arise, if he remained with unguarded senses; and he watches over his senses, restrains his senses.

Possessed of this noble "Control over the Senses," he experiences inwardly a feeling of joy, into which no evil thing can enter. This is called the effort to avoid.

What, now, is the effort to Overcome? There, the disciple incites his mind to overcome the evil, demeritorious things that have already arisen; and he strives, puts forth his energy, strains his mind and struggles.

He does not retain any thought of sensual lust, ill-will, or grief, or any other evil and demeritorious states that may have arisen; he abandons them, dispels them, destroys them, causes them to disappear.

Five Methods of Expelling Evil Thoughts

If, whilst regarding a certain object, there arise in the disciple, on account of it, evil and demeritorious thoughts connected with greed, anger and delusion, then the disciple should, by means of this object, gain another and wholesome object. Or, he should reflect on the misery of these thoughts: "Unwholesome, truly, are these thoughts! Blameable are these thoughts! Of painful result are these thoughts!" Or, he should pay no attention to these thoughts. Or, he should consider the compound nature of these thoughts. Or, with teeth clenched and tongue pressed against the gums, he should, with his mind, restrain, suppress and root out these thoughts; and in doing so, these evil and demeritorious thoughts of greed, anger and delusion will dissolve and disappear; and the mind will inwardly become settled and calm, composed and concentrated.

This is called the effort to overcome.

From the reading...

"One may enjoy the different 'Magical Powers.'"

What, now, is the effort to Develop? There the disciple incites his will to arouse meritorious conditions that have not yet arisen; and he strives, puts forth his energy, strains his mind and struggles.

Thus he develops the "Elements of Enlightenment," bent on solitude, on detachment, on extinction, and ending in deliverance, namely: Attentiveness, Investigation of the Law, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration, and Equanimity. This is called the effort to develop.

What, now, is the effort to Maintain? There, the disciple incites his will to maintain the meritorious conditions that have already arisen, and not to let them disappear, but to bring them to growth, to maturity and to the full perfection of development; and he strives, puts forth his energy, strains his mind and struggles.

Thus, for example, he keeps firmly in his mind a favorable object of concentration that has arisen, as the mental image of a skeleton, of a corpse infested by worms, of a corpse blue-black in color, of a festering corpse, of a corpse riddled with holes, of a corpse swollen up.

This is called the effort to maintain.

Truly, the disciple who is possessed of faith and has penetrated the Teaching of the Master, he is filled with the thought: "May rather skin, sinews and bones wither away, may the flesh and blood of my body dry up: I shall not give up my efforts so long as I have not attained whatever is attainable by manly perseverance, energy and endeavor!"

This is called right effort.

The effort of Avoiding, Overcoming,
Of Developing and Maintaining:
These four great efforts have been shown
By him, the scion of the sun.
And he who firmly clings to them,
May put an end to all the pain.

Seventh Step: Right Attentiveness

What, now, is Right Attentiveness? The only way that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering upon the right path and the realization of *Nirvana*, is the "Four Fundamentals of Attentiveness." And which are these four? In them, the disciple dwells in contemplation of the Body, in contemplation of Feeling, in contemplation

of the Mind, in contemplation of the Mind-objects, ardent, clearly conscious and attentive, after putting away worldly greed and grief.

Contemplation of the Body

But, how does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the body? There, the disciple retires to the forest, to the foot of a tree, or to a solitary place, sits himself down, with legs crossed, body erect, and with attentiveness fixed before him.

With attentive mind he breathes in, with attentive mind he breathes out. When making a long inhalation, he knows: “I make a long inhalation”; when making a long exhalation, he knows: “I make a long exhalation.” when making a short inhalation, he knows: “I make a short inhalation”; when making a short exhalation, he knows: “I make a short exhalation.” Clearly perceiving the entire [breath]-body, “I will breathe in”: thus he trains himself; clearly perceiving the entire [breath]-body, “I will breathe out”: thus he trains himself. Calming this bodily function, “I will breathe in”: thus he trains himself; calming this bodily function, “I will breathe out”: thus he trains himself.

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the body, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how the body arises; beholds how it passes away; beholds the arising and passing away of the body. “A body is there—”

“A body is there, but no living being, no individual, no woman, no man, no self, and nothing that belongs to a self; neither a person, nor anything belonging to a person”—

this clear consciousness is present in him, because of his knowledge and mindfulness, and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the body.

And further, whilst going, standing, sitting, or lying down, the disciple understands the expressions: “I go”; “I stand”; “I sit”; “I lie down”; he understands any position of the body.

[The disciple understands that it is not a being, a real Ego, that goes, stands, etc., but that it is by a mere figure of speech that one says: “I go,” “I stand,” and so forth.]

And further, the disciple is clearly conscious in his going and coming; clearly conscious in looking forward and backward; clearly conscious in bending and stretching; clearly conscious in eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting; clearly conscious

in discharging excrement and urine; clearly conscious in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep and awakening; clearly conscious in speaking and in keeping silent.

From the reading...

“... it is by a mere figure of speech that one says: ‘I go,’ ‘I stand,’ ...”

“In all the disciple is doing, he is clearly conscious: of his intention, of his advantage, of his duty, of the reality.”

And further, the disciple contemplates this body from the sole of the foot upward, and from the top of the hair downward, with a skin stretched over it, and filled with manifold impurities: “This body consists of hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, diaphragm, spleen, lungs, intestines, bowels, stomach, and excrement; of bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, lymph, tears, semen, spittle, nasal mucus, oil of the joints, and urine.”

Just as if there were a sack, with openings at both ends, filled with all kinds of grain—with paddy, beans, sesamum and husked rice—and a man not blind opened it and examined its contents, thus: “That is paddy, these are beans, this is sesamum, this is husked rice”: just so does the disciple investigate this body.

And further, the disciple contemplates this body with regard to the elements: “This body consists of the solid element, the liquid element, the heating element and the vibrating element.” Just as a skilled butcher or butcher’s apprentice, who has slaughtered a cow and divided it into separate portions, should sit down at the junction of four highroads: just so does the disciple contemplate this body with regard to the elements.

And further, just as if the disciple should see a corpse thrown into the burial-ground, one, two, or three days dead, swollen-up, blue-black in color, full of corruption he draws the conclusion as to his own body: “This my body also has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it.” And further, just as if the disciple should see a corpse thrown into the burial-ground, eaten by crows, hawks or vultures, by dogs or jackals, or gnawed by all kinds of worms—he draws the conclusion as to his own body: “This my body also has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it.”

And further, just as if the disciple should see a corpse thrown into the burial-ground, a framework of bones, flesh hanging from it, bespattered with blood, held together by the sinews; a framework of bones, stripped of flesh, bespattered with blood, held together by the sinews; a framework of bones, without flesh and blood, but still held together by the sinews; bones, disconnected and scattered in all direc-

tions, here a bone of the hand, there a bone of the foot, there a shin bone, there a thigh bone, there the pelvis, there the spine, there the skull—he draws the conclusion as to his own body: "This my body also has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it."

And further, just as if the disciple should see bones lying in the burial ground, bleached and resembling shells; bones heaped together, after the lapse of years; bones weathered and crumbled to dust;—he draws the conclusion as to his own body: "This my body also has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it."

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the body, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how the body arises; beholds how it passes away; beholds the arising and passing of the body. "A body is there" this clear consciousness is present in him, because of his knowledge and mindfulness; and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the body.

The Ten Blessings

Once the contemplation of the body is practiced, developed, often repeated, has become one's habit, one's foundation, is firmly established, strengthened and well perfected, one may expect ten blessings:

Over Delight and Discontent one has mastery; one does not allow himself to be overcome by discontent; one subdues it, as soon as it arises. One conquers Fear and Anxiety; one does not allow himself to be overcome by fear and anxiety; one subdues them, as soon as they arise. One endures cold and heat, hunger and thirst, wind and sun, attacks by gadflies, mosquitoes and reptiles; patiently one endures wicked and malicious speech, as well as bodily pains, that befall one, though they be piercing, sharp, bitter, unpleasant, disagreeable and dangerous to life. The four "Trances," the mind bestowing happiness even here: these one may enjoy at will, without difficulty, without effort.

One may enjoy the different "Magical Powers." With the "Heavenly Ear," the purified, the super-human, one may hear both kinds of sounds, the heavenly and the earthly, the distant and the near. With the mind one may obtain "Insight into the Hearts of Other Beings" of other persons. One may obtain "Remembrance of many Previous Births." With the "Heavenly Eye," the purified, the super-human, one may see beings vanish and reappear, the base and the noble, the beautiful and the ugly, the happy and the unfortunate; one may perceive how beings are reborn according to their deeds.

One may, through the "Cessation of Passions," come to know for oneself, even in this life, the stainless deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom.

Contemplation of the Feelings

But how does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the feelings?

In experiencing feelings, the disciple knows: "I have an indifferent agreeable feeling," or "I have a disagreeable feeling," or "I have an indifferent feeling," or "I have a worldly agreeable feeling," or "I have an unworldly agreeable feeling" or "I have a worldly disagreeable feeling," or "I have an unworldly disagreeable feeling," or "I have a worldly indifferent feeling," or have an unworldly indifferent feeling.

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the feelings, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how the feelings arise; beholds how they pass away; beholds the arising and passing away of the feelings. "Feelings are there": this clear consciousness is present in him, because of his knowledge and mindfulness; and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the feelings.

From the reading...

"... and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world."

[The disciple understands that the expression "I feel" has no validity except as an expression of common speech; he understands that, in the absolute sense, there are only feelings, and that there is no Ego, no person, no experience of the feelings.]

Contemplation of the Mind

But how does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the mind? The disciple knows the greedy mind as greedy, and the not greedy mind as not greedy; knows the angry mind as angry, and the not angry mind as not angry; knows the deluded mind as deluded, and the undeluded mind as undeluded. He knows the cramped mind as cramped, and the scattered mind as scattered; knows the developed mind as developed, and the undeveloped mind as undeveloped; knows the surpassable mind as surpassable, and the unsurpassable mind as unsurpassable; knows the concentrated mind as concentrated, and the unconcentrated mind as unconcentrated; knows the freed mind as freed, and the unfreed mind as unfreed.

["Mind" is here used as a collective for the moments of consciousness. Being identical with consciousness, it should not be translated by "thought." "Thought" and "thinking" correspond rather to the so-called "verbal operations of the mind"; they

are not, like consciousness, of primary, but of secondary nature, and are entirely absent in all sensuous consciousness, as well as in the second, third and fourth Trances. (See eighth step).]

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the mind, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how consciousness arises; beholds how it passes away; beholds the arising and passing away of consciousness. "Mind is there"; this clear consciousness is present in him, because of his knowledge and mindfulness; and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the mind.

Contemplation of Phenomena (Mind-objects)

But how does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the phenomena? First, the disciple dwells in contemplation of the phenomena, of the "Five Hindrances."

He knows when there is "Lust" in him: "In me is lust"; knows when there is "Anger" in him: "In me is anger"; knows when there is "Torpor and Drowsiness" in him: "In me is torpor and drowsiness"; knows when there is "Restlessness and Mental Worry" in him: "In me is restlessness and mental worry"; knows when there are "Doubts" in him: "In me are doubts." He knows when these hindrances are not in him: "In me these hindrances are not." He knows how they come to arise; knows how, once arisen, they are overcome; knows how, once overcome, they do not rise again in the future.

[For example, Lust arises through unwise thinking on the agreeable and delightful. It may be suppressed by the following six methods: fixing the mind upon an idea that arouses disgust; contemplation of the loathsomeness of the body; controlling one's six senses; moderation in eating; friendship with wise and good men; right instruction. Lust is forever extinguished upon entrance into Anagamiship; Restlessness is extinguished by reaching Arahathship; Mental Worry, by reaching Sotapanship.]

And further: the disciple dwells in contemplation of the phenomena, of the five Groups of Existence. He knows what Corporeality is, how it arises, how it passes away; knows what Feeling is, how it arises, how it away; knows what Perception is, how it arises, how it passes away; knows what the Mental Formations are, how they arise, how they pass away; knows what Consciousness is, how it arises, how it passes away.

And further: the disciple dwells in contemplation of the phenomena of the six Subjective-Objective Sense-Bases. He knows eye and visual objects, ear and sounds, nose and odors, tongue and tastes, body and touches, mind and mind objects; and the fetter that arises in dependence on them, he also knows. He knows how the

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fetter comes to arise, knows how the fetter is overcome, and how the abandoned fetter does not rise again in future.

And further: the disciple dwells in contemplation of the phenomena of the seven Elements of Enlightenment. The disciple knows when there is Attentiveness in him; when there is Investigation of the Law in him; when there is Energy in him; when there is Enthusiasm in him; when there is Tranquility in him; when there is Concentration in him; when there is Equanimity in him. He knows when it is not in him, knows how it comes to arise, and how it is fully developed.

And further: the disciple dwells in contemplation of the phenomena of the Four Noble Truths. He knows according to reality, what Suffering is; knows according to reality, what the Origin of Suffering is; knows according to reality, what the Extinction of Suffering is; knows according to reality, what the Path is that leads to the Extinction of Suffering.

Thus he dwells in contemplation of the phenomena, either with regard to his own person, or to other persons, or to both. He beholds how the phenomena arise; beholds how they pass away; beholds the arising and passing away of the phenomena. Phenomena are there; this consciousness is present in him because of his knowledge and mindfulness; and he lives independent, unattached to anything in the world. Thus does the disciple dwell in contemplation of the phenomena.



Rice Boat, Library of Congress

The only way that leads to the attainment of purity, to the overcoming of sorrow

and lamentation, to the end of pain and grief, to the entering upon the right path, and the realization of *Nirvana*, is these four fundamentals of attentiveness.

***Nirvana* Through Watching Over Breathing**

“Watching over In-and Out-breathing” practiced and developed, brings the four Fundamentals of Attentiveness to perfection; the four fundamentals of attentiveness, practiced and developed bring the seven Elements of Enlightenment to perfection; the seven elements of enlightenment, practiced and developed, bring Wisdom and Deliverance to perfection.

But how does Watching over In-and Out-breathing, practiced and developed, bring the four Fundamentals of Attentiveness to perfection?

I. Whenever the disciple is conscious in making a long inhalation or exhalation, or in making a short inhalation or exhalation, or is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst feeling the whole [breath]-body, or whilst calming down this bodily function—at such a time the disciple is dwelling in “contemplation of the body,” of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. For, inhalation and exhalation I call one amongst the corporeal phenomena.

II. Whenever the disciple is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst feeling rapture, or joy, or the mental functions, or whilst calming down the mental functions—at such a time he is dwelling in “contemplation of the feelings,” full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. For, the full awareness of in—and outbreathing I call one amongst the feelings.

III. Whenever the disciple is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst feeling the mind, or whilst gladdening the mind or whilst concentrating the mind, or whilst setting the mind free—at such a time he is dwelling in “contemplation of the mind,” full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief. For, without attentiveness and clear consciousness, I say, there is no Watching over in-and Out-breathing.

IV. Whenever the disciple is training himself to inhale or exhale whilst contemplating impermanence, or the fading away of passion, or extinction, or detachment at such a time he is dwelling in “contemplation of the phenomena,” full of energy, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief.

Watching over In-and Out-breathing, thus practiced and developed, brings the four Fundamentals of Attentiveness to perfection. But how do the four Fundamentals of Attentiveness, practiced and developed, bring the seven Elements of Enlightenment to full perfection?

Whenever the disciple is dwelling in contemplation of body, feeling, mind and phenomena, strenuous, clearly conscious, attentive, after subduing worldly greed and grief—at such a time his attentiveness is undisturbed; and whenever his attentiveness is present and undisturbed, at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Attentiveness”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.

And whenever, whilst dwelling with attentive mind, he wisely investigates, examines and thinks over the Law—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Investigation of the Law”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.

And whenever, whilst wisely investigating, examining and thinking over the law, his energy is firm and unshaken—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Energy”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.

And whenever in him, whilst firm in energy, arises supersensuous rapture—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Rapture”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.

From the reading...

“... just as if the disciple should see a corpse thrown into the burial-ground, one, two, or three days dead, swollen-up... he draws the conclusion as to his own body: ‘This my body also has this nature, has this destiny, and cannot escape it...’”

And whenever, whilst enraptured in mind, his spiritual frame and his mind become tranquil—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Tranquility”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection.

And whenever, whilst being tranquilized in his spiritual frame and happy, his mind becomes concentrated—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Concentration”; and thus this element of enlightenment reaches fullest perfection. And whenever he thoroughly looks with indifference on his mind thus concentrated—at such a time he has gained and is developing the Element of Enlightenment “Equanimity.”

The four fundamentals of attentiveness, thus practiced and developed, bring the seven elements of enlightenment to full perfection.

But how do the seven elements of enlightenment, practiced and developed, bring Wisdom and Deliverance to full perfection? There, the disciple is developing the elements of enlightenment: Attentiveness, Investigation of the Law, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration and Equanimity, bent on detachment, on absence of desire, on extinction and renunciation.

Thus practiced and developed, do the seven elements of enlightenment bring wisdom and deliverance to full perfection.

Just as the elephant hunter drives a huge stake into the ground and chains the wild elephant to it by the neck, in order to drive out of him his wonted forest ways and wishes, his forest unruliness, obstinacy and violence, and to accustom him to the environment of the village, and to teach him such good behavior as is required amongst men: in like manner also has the noble disciple to fix his mind firmly to these four fundamentals of attentiveness, so that he may drive out of himself his wonted worldly ways and wishes, his wonted worldly unruliness, obstinacy and violence, and win to the True, and realize *Nirvana*.

Eighth Step: Right Concentration

What, now, is Right Concentration? Fixing the mind to a single object (“One-pointedness of mind”): this is concentration.

The four Fundamentals of Attentiveness (seventh step): these are the objects of concentration.

The four Great Efforts (sixth step): these are the requisites for concentration.

The practicing, developing and cultivating of these things: this is the “Development” of concentration.

[Right Concentration has two degrees of development: 1. “Neighborhood-Concentration,” which approaches the first trance, without however attaining it; 2. “Attainment Concentration,” which is the concentration present in the four trances. The attainment of the trances, however, is not a requisite for the realization of the Four Ultramundane Paths of Holiness; and neither Neighborhood-Concentration nor Attainment-Concentration, as such, in any way possesses the power of conferring entry into the Four Ultramundane Paths; hence, in them is really no power to free oneself permanently from evil things. The realization of the Four Ultramundane Paths is possible only at the moment of insight into the impermanency, miserable nature, and impersonality of phenomenal process of existence. This insight is attainable only during Neighborhood-Concentration, not during Attainment-Concentration.

He who has realized one or other of the Four Ultramundane Paths without ever having attained the Trances, is called a “Dry-visioned One,” or one whose passions are “dried up by Insight.” He, however, who after cultivating the Trances has reached one of the Ultramundane Paths, is called “one who has taken tranquility as his vehicle.”]

The Four Trances

Detached from sensual objects, detached from unwholesome things, the disciple enters into the first trance, which is accompanied by “Verbal Thought,” and “Rumination,” is born of “Detachment,” and filled with “Rapture,” and “Happiness.”

This first trance is free from five things, and five things are present. When the disciple enters the first trance, there have vanished [the 5 Hindrances]: Lust, Ill-will, Torpor and Dullness, Restlessness and Mental Worry, Doubts; and there are present: Verbal Thought, Rumination, Rapture, Happiness, and Concentration. And further: after the subsiding of verbal thought and rumination, and by the gaining of inward tranquility and oneness of mind, he enters into a state free from verbal thought and rumination, the second trance, which is born of Concentration, and filled with Rapture and Happiness.

And further: after the fading away of rapture, he dwells in equanimity, attentive, clearly conscious; and he experiences in his person that feeling, of which the Noble Ones say: “Happy lives the man of equanimity and attentive mind”—thus he enters the third trance. And further: after the giving up of pleasure and pain, and through the disappearance of previous joy and grief, he enters into a state beyond pleasure and pain, into the fourth trance, which is purified by equanimity and attentiveness.

[The four Trances may be obtained by means of Watching over In-and Out-breathing, as well as through the fourth sublime meditation, the “Meditation of Equanimity,” and others.

From the reading...

“That unshakable deliverance of the heart: that, verily, is the object of the Holy Life, that is its essence, that is its goal.”

The three other Sublime Meditations of “Loving Kindness,” “Compassion”, and “Sympathetic Joy” may lead to the attainment of the first three Trances. The “Cemetery Meditations,” as well as the meditation “On Loathsomeness,” will produce only the First Trance. The “Analysis of the Body” and the Contemplation on

the Buddha, the Law, the Holy Brotherhood, Morality, etc., will only produce Neighborhood-Concentration.]

Develop your concentration: for he who has concentration understands things according to their reality. And what are these things? The arising and passing away of corporeality, of feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness.

Thus, these five Groups of Existence must be wisely penetrated; Delusion and Craving must be wisely abandoned; Tranquility and Insight must be wisely developed.

This is the Middle Path which the Perfect One has discovered, which makes one both to see and to know, and which leads to peace, to discernment, to enlightenment, to *Nirvana*. And following upon this path, you will put an end to suffering.

Development of the Eightfold Path—Confidence and Right-Mindedness (2nd Step)

Suppose a householder, or his son, or someone reborn in any family, hears the law; and after hearing the law he is filled with confidence in the Perfect One. And filled with this confidence, he thinks: "Full of hindrances is household life, a refuse heap; but pilgrim life is like the open air. Not easy is it, when one lives at home, to fulfill in all points the rules of the holy life. How, if now I were to cut off hair and beard, put on the yellow robe and go forth from home to the homeless life?" And in a short time, having given up his more or less extensive possessions, having forsaken a smaller or larger circle of relations, he cuts off hair and beard, puts on the yellow robe, and goes forth from home to the homeless life.

Morality (3rd, 4th, 5th Step)

Having thus left the world, he fulfills the rules of the monks. He avoids the killing of living beings and abstains from it. Without stick or sword, conscientious, full of sympathy, he is anxious for the welfare of all living beings.—He avoids stealing, and abstains from taking what is not given to him. Only what is given to him he takes, waiting till it is given; and he lives with a heart honest and pure.—He avoids unchastity, living chaste, resigned, and keeping aloof from sexual intercourse, the vulgar way.—He avoids lying and abstains from it. He speaks the truth, is devoted to the truth, reliable, worthy of confidence, is not a deceiver of men.—He avoids tale-bearing and abstains from it. What he has heard here, he does not repeat there, so as to cause dissension there; and what he has heard there, he does not repeat here, so as to cause dissension here. Thus he unites those that are divided, and those that are united he encourages; concord gladdens him, he delights and rejoices in

concord, and it is concord that he spreads by his words.—He avoids harsh language and abstains from it. He speaks such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, going to the heart, courteous and dear, and agreeable to many.—He avoids vain talk and abstains from it. He speaks at the right time, in accordance with facts, speaks what is useful, speaks about the law and the disciple; his speech is like a treasure, at the right moment accompanied by arguments, moderate, and full of sense.

He keeps aloof from dance, song, music and the visiting of shows; rejects flowers, perfumes, ointments, as well as every kind of adornment and embellishment. High and gorgeous beds he does not use. Gold and silver he does not accept. Raw corn and meat he does not accept. Women and girls he does not accept. He owns no male and female slaves, owns no goats, sheep, fowls, pigs, elephants, cows or horses, no land and goods. He does not go on errands and do the duties of a messenger. He keeps aloof from buying and selling things. He has nothing to do with false measures, metals and weights. He avoids the crooked ways of bribery, deception and fraud. He keeps aloof from stabbing, beating, chaining, attacking, plundering and oppressing.

He contents himself with the robe that protects his body, and with the alms with which he keeps himself alive. Wherever he goes, he is provided with these two things; just as a winged bird, in flying, carries his wings along with him. By fulfilling this noble Domain of Morality he feels in his heart an irreproachable happiness.

Control of the Senses (6th Step)

Now, in perceiving a form with the eye—a sound with the ear—an odor with the nose—a taste with the tongue—a touch with the body—an object with his mind, he sticks neither to the whole, nor to its details. And he tries to ward off that which, by being unguarded in his senses, might give rise to evil and unwholesome states, to greed and sorrow; he watches over his senses, keep his senses under control. By practicing this noble “Control of the Senses” he feels in his heart an unblemished happiness.

Attentiveness and Clear Consciousness (7th Step)

Clearly conscious is he in his going and coming; clearly conscious in looking forward and backward; clearly conscious in bending and stretching his body; clearly conscious in eating, drinking, chewing and tasting; clearly conscious in discharging excrement and urine; clearly conscious in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep and awakening; clearly conscious in speaking and keeping silent.

Now, being equipped with this lofty Morality, equipped with this noble “Control of the Senses,” and filled with this noble “Attentiveness and Clear Consciousness,” he chooses a secluded dwelling in the forest, at the foot of a tree, on a mountain, in a cleft, in a rock cave, on a burial ground, on a woody table-land, in the open air, or on a heap of straw. Having returned from his alms-round, after the meal, he sits himself down with legs crossed, body erect, with attentiveness fixed before him.

Absence of the Five Hindrances

He has cast away Lust; he dwells with a heart free from lust; from lust he cleanses his heart.

He has cast away Ill-will; he dwells with a heart free from ill-will; cherishing love and compassion toward all living beings, he cleanses his heart from ill-will.

He has cast away Torpor and Dullness; he dwells free from torpor and dullness; loving the light, with watchful mind, with clear consciousness, he cleanses his mind from torpor and dullness.

He has cast away Restlessness and Mental Worry; dwelling with mind undisturbed, with heart full of peace, he cleanses his mind from restlessness and mental worry.

He has cast away Doubt; dwelling free from doubt, full of confidence in the good, he cleanses his heart from doubt.

The Trances (8th Step)

He has put aside these five Hindrances and come to know the paralyzing corruptions of the mind. And far from sensual impressions, far from unwholesome things, he enters into the Four Trances.

Insight (1st Step)

But whatsoever there is of feeling, perception, mental formation, or consciousness—all these phenomena he regards as “impermanent,” “subject to pain,” as infirm, as an ulcer, a thorn, a misery, a burden, an enemy, a disturbance, as empty and “void of an Ego”; and turning away from these things, he directs his mind towards the abiding, thus: “This, verily, is the Peace, this is the Highest, namely the end of all formations, the forsaking of every substratum of rebirth, the fading away of craving; detachment, extinction: *Nirvana*.” And in this state he reaches the “Cessation of Passions.”

Nirvana

And his heart becomes free from sensual passion, free from the passion for existence, free from the passion of ignorance. "Freed am I!": this knowledge arises in the liberated one; and he knows: "Exhausted is rebirth, fulfilled the Holy Life; what was to be done, has been done; naught remains more for this world to do."

Forever am I liberated,
This is the last time that I'm born,
No new existence waits for me.

This, verily, is the highest, holiest wisdom: to know that all suffering has passed away.

This, verily, is the highest, holiest peace: appeasement of greed, hatred and delusion.

The Silent Thinker

"I am" is a vain thought; "I am not" a vain thought; "I shall be" is a vain thought; "I shall not be" is a vain thought. Vain thoughts are a sickness, an ulcer, a thorn. But after overcoming all vain thoughts, one is called "silent thinker." And the thinker, the Silent One, does no more arise, no more pass away, no more tremble, no more desire. For there is nothing in him that he should arise again. And as he arises no more, how should he grow old again? And as he grows no more old, how should he die again? And as he dies no more, how should he tremble? And as he trembles no more, how should he have desire?

The True Goal

Hence, the purpose of the Holy Life does not consist in acquiring alms, honor, or fame, nor in gaining morality, concentration, or the eye of knowledge.

And those, who formerly, in the past, were Holy and Enlightened Ones, those Blessed Ones also have pointed out to their disciples this self-same goal, as has been pointed out by me to my disciples. And those, who afterwards, in the future, will be Holy and Enlightened Ones, those Blessed Ones also will point out to their disciples this self-same goal, as has been pointed out by me to my disciples. However, Disciples, it may be that (after my passing away) you might think: "Gone is the doctrine of our Master. We have no Master more." But you should not think;

Chapter 4. “The Noble Eightfold Path” by Buddha

for the Law and the Discipline, which I have taught you, Will, after my death, be your master.

The Law be your light,
The Law be your refuge!
Do not look for any other refuge!

Disciples, the doctrines, which I advised you to penetrate, you should well preserve, well guard, so that this Holy Life may take its course and continue for ages, for the weal and welfare of the many, as a consolation to the world, for the happiness, weal and welfare of heavenly beings and men.



Buddhist Room, Library of Congress

From the reading...

“That unshakable deliverance of the heart: that, verily, is the object of the Holy Life. . .”

Topics Worth Investigating

1. Explain whether you think that the notion of “karmically wholesome” as used in this reading is meant primarily in a moral (*i.e.*, having to do with right and wrong) or in a psychological sense (*i.e.*, having to do with behavioral consequences).
2. Could it be argued that suffering ought *not* be extinguished? Doesn’t suffering actually serve a helpful service in life? For example, Franz Kafka writes, “Suffering is the positive element in this world, indeed it is the only link between this world and the positive.”² Or Miguel de Unamuno writes, “There is no true love save in suffering, and in this world we have to choose either love, which is suffering, or happiness. . . . Man is the more man—that is, the more divine—the greater his capacity for suffering, or rather, for anguish.”³
3. Discuss whether or not you think Buddha would agree with Krishnamurti’s distinction between “introspection” and “awareness”:

Introspection is self-improvement and therefore introspection is self-centeredness. Awareness is not self-improvement. On the contrary, it is the ending of the self, of the “I,” with all its peculiar idiosyncrasies, memories, demands, and pursuits. In introspection there is identification and condemnation. In awareness there is no condemnation or identification; therefore, there is no self-improvement. There is a vast difference between the two.⁴

4. Explain how the achievement of non-attachment in Buddhism is unlike Søren Kierkegaard’s ethico-religious stage embodying the “teleological suspension of the ethical” or Friedrich Nietzsche’s master morality of “standing beyond good and evil.”
5. After studying this chapter, do you think the following criticism of Buddhism by Immanuel Kant is well founded?

We men know very little *a priori*, and have our senses to thank for nearly all our knowledge. Through experience we know only appearances. . . but not the *modum noumenon*. . . not things as they are in themselves. . . God knows all things as they are in themselves *a priori* and immediately through an intuitive understanding. . . If we were to flatter ourselves so much as to claim that we know the *modum*

2. Franz Kafka. *Dearest Father: Stories and Other Writings*. Trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins. New York: Schocken Books, 1954.

3. Miguel de Unamuno. *The Tragic Sense of Life*. Trans. J. E. C. Fitch. New York: Macmillan, 1921.

4. Jiddu Krishnamurti. “On Awareness,” in *First and Last Freedom*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975.

Chapter 4. “The Noble Eightfold Path” by Buddha

noumenon, then we would have to be in community with God so as to participate immediately in the divine ideas. To expect this in the present life is the business of mystics and theosophists. Thus arises the mystical self-annihilation of China, Tibet, and India, in which one is under the delusion that he will finally be dissolved in the Godhead.⁵

6. Explain and amplify the meaning of Pirsig’s assertion:

The Buddha, the Godhead, resides quite as comfortably in the circuits of a digital computer or the gears of a cycle transmission as he does at the top of a mountain or in the petals of a flower.⁶

7. Buddha states the Noble Eightfold Path is “the way that leads to the extinction of suffering.” Is it clearly the case that suffering ought to be extinguished? For example, Kafka writes:

Suffering is the positive element in this world, indeed it is the only link between this world and the positive.⁷

Is Kafka referring to the same kind of suffering as is the Buddha?

5. Immanuel Kant. *Lectures on Philosophical Theology*. Trans. Allen W. Wood and Gertrude M. Clark. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978. 86.

6. Robert M. Pirsig. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. New York: William Morrow, 1974.

7. Franz Kafka. *Dearest Father: Stories and Other Writings*. Trans. Ernst Kaiser and Eithne Wilkins. New York: Schocken Books, 1954.

Chapter 5

The Dhammapada (abridged)



Bronze Buddha, The American Cyclopædia

About the author...

After Buddha's death, purportedly under the guidance of Kasyapa, Buddha's disciples gathered to record orally the thoughts of their teacher in order that the insights of his spiritual truth would not be lost or changed. The resulting collection of sayings, the *Dhammapada*, was passed on from generation to generation; several versions of these verses survive as recorded in different languages. The *Dhammapada* is generally considered among the most popular and best-loved Buddhist scriptures. Max Müller says, "I cannot see any reason why we should not treat the verses of the Dhammapada, if not as the utterances of Buddha, at least as what were believed by the members of the council under Asoks, 242 B.C., to have been the utterances of the founder of their religion."¹

1. Quoted in James Freeman Clarke. *Ten Great Religions* New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1871-3. xiii.

About the work...

In the *The Dhammapada: A Collection of Verses (abridged)*,² the Buddha's philosophy is presented in over 400 verses. The scripture notes that people seek pleasure for themselves but experience suffering as a direct result of seeking their self-interest. Buddha believes that suffering ceases when the self is extinguished. The experiences of each person are consequences of past thoughts and actions; consequently, enlightenment or awakening as an escape from the seemingly endless cycles of life is as precious as it is rare.

From the reading...

"All that we are is the result of what we have thought. . ."

Ideas of Interest from *The Dhammapada*

1. Explain why Buddha believes hatred will cease when the world knows we will come to an end. What is the meaning of the phrase, "we will come to an end"?
2. What is the importance of mindfulness or earnestness? Why is thoughtlessness to be feared?
3. In what ways do wise persons fashion themselves? How does a wise person differ from a foolish person?
4. Name and characterize the five "lower fetters." Which are to be cut off? Do you see any relation between the five bonds³ and the five lower fetters?
5. Describe the *Arhat*. What are the five "higher fetters" which an *Arhat* abandons?
6. Why do you think the *Bhikshu* seeks separation from this world rather than seeking to do good works and deeds within this world?
7. According to the *The Dhammapada*, how is suffering to be overcome?

2. *The Dhammapada: A Collection of Verses*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1881. Translated from the Pauli by F. Max Müller. *Sacred Books of the East*. Edited by F. Max Müller. Translated by Various Oriental Scholars. Volume X, Part I.

3. The five bonds are greed, hatred, delusion, false views, and conceit. *Ed.*

8. Explain the metaphor of the tabernacle. Do you think the law mentioned throughout the *The Dhammapada* is natural law or moral law or some combination of the two?
9. Which of the following courses of action should be preeminent for you: seeking to help others with their duties or seeking to do your own duties? Explain why this is the case.
10. What do you think this verse from the *The Dhammapada* means: "... [T]here is no happiness higher than rest"?
11. Why, according to the *The Dhammapada*, should no one love anything? What does Buddha say about desire?
12. What do you think is meant by the phrase, "There is no path through the air... "?
13. Contrast the *Brahmana* (*Arhat*) with the *Bhikshu* (Mendicant).

The Reading Selection from *The Dhammapada*

Chapter I: The Twin Verses

1. All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought, pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage.
2. All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him.
3. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,"—in those who harbour such thoughts hatred will never cease.
4. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me,"—in those who do not harbour such thoughts hatred will cease.
5. For hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love, this is an old rule.
6. The world does not know that we must all come to an end here;—but those who know it, their quarrels cease at once.

Chapter 5. *The Dhammapada (abridged)*

7. He who lives looking for pleasures only, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle, and weak, *Mara* (the tempter) will certainly overthrow him, as the wind throws down a weak tree.
8. He who lives without looking for pleasures, his senses well controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong, him *Mara* will certainly not overthrow, any more than the wind throws down a rocky mountain...
13. As rain breaks through an ill-thatched house, passion will break through an unreflecting mind.
14. As rain does not break through a well-thatched house, passion will not break through a well-reflecting mind...
17. The evil-doer suffers in this world, and he suffers in the next; he suffers in both. He suffers when he thinks of the evil he has done; he suffers more when going on the evil path.
18. The virtuous man is happy in this world, and he is happy in the next; he is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done; he is still more happy when going on the good path...

Chapter II: On Earnestness

21. Earnestness is the path of immortality (*Nirvana*), thoughtlessness the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already...
23. These wise people, meditative, steady, always possessed of strong powers, attain to *Nirvana*, the highest happiness...
27. Follow not after vanity, nor after the enjoyment of love and lust! He who is earnest and meditative, obtains ample joy.
28. When the learned man drives away vanity by earnestness, he, the wise, climbing the terraced heights of wisdom, looks down upon the fools, serene he looks upon the toiling crowd, as one that stands on a mountain looks down upon them that stand upon the plain...



China, Kiangsu Province, Soochow, Library of Congress

31. A *Bhikshu* (mendicant) who delights in earnestness, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, moves about like fire, burning all his fetters, small or large.

32. A *Bhikshu* (mendicant) who delights in reflection, who looks with fear on thoughtlessness, cannot fall away (from his perfect state)—he is close upon *Nirvana*.

Chapter III: Thought

33. As a fletcher makes straight his arrow, a wise man makes straight his trembling and unsteady thought, which is difficult to guard, difficult to hold back.

34. As a fish taken from his watery home and thrown on dry ground, our thought trembles all over in order to escape the dominion of *Mara* (the tempter).

35. It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to hold in and flighty, rushing wherever it listeth; a tamed mind brings happiness...

From the reading...

“Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.”

39. If a man's thoughts are not dissipated, if his mind is not perplexed, if he has ceased to think of good or evil, then there is no fear for him while he is watchful.
40. Knowing that this body is (fragile) like a jar, and making this thought firm like a fortress, one should attack *Mara* (the tempter) with the weapon of knowledge, one should watch him when conquered, and should never rest.
41. Before long, alas! this body will lie on the earth, despised, without understanding, like a useless log.
42. Whatever a hater may do to a hater, or an enemy to an enemy, a wrongly-directed mind will do us greater mischief.
43. Not a mother, not a father will do so much, nor any other relative; a well-directed mind will do us greater service.

Chapter IV: Flowers

44. Who shall overcome this earth, and the world of *Yama* (the lord of the departed), and the world of the gods? Who shall find out the plainly shown path of virtue, as a clever man finds out the (right) flower?
45. The disciple will overcome the earth, and the world of *Yama*, and the world of the gods. The disciple will find out the plainly shown path of virtue, as a clever man finds out the (right) flower.
46. He who knows that this body is like froth, and has learnt that it is as unsubstantial as a mirage, will break the flower-pointed arrow of *Mara*, and never see the king of death.
47. Death carries off a man who is gathering flowers and whose mind is distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.
48. Death subdues a man who is gathering flowers, and whose mind is distracted, before he is satiated in his pleasures.
49. As the bee collects nectar and departs without injuring the flower, or its colour or scent, so let a sage dwell in his village...
- 58, 59. As on a heap of rubbish cast upon the highway the lily will grow full of sweet perfume and delight, thus the disciple of the truly enlightened Buddha shines forth by his knowledge among those who are like rubbish, among the people that walk in darkness.



China-Burma Highway, (detail) Library of Congress

Chapter V: The Fool

60. Long is the night to him who is awake; long is a mile to him who is tired; long is life to the foolish who do not know the true law.

61. If a traveller does not meet with one who is his better, or his equal, let him firmly keep to his solitary journey; there is no companionship with a fool.

62. “These sons belong to me, and this wealth belongs to me,” with such thoughts a fool is tormented. He himself does not belong to himself; how much less sons and wealth? . . .

66. Fools of little understanding have themselves for their greatest enemies, for they do evil deeds which must bear bitter fruits. . . .

71. An evil deed, like newly-drawn milk, does not turn (suddenly); smouldering, like fire covered by ashes, it follows the fool. . . .

74. “May both the layman and he who has left the world think that this is done by me; may they be subject to me in everything which is to be done or is not to be done,” thus is the mind of the fool, and his desire and pride increase.

75. “One is the road that leads to wealth, another the road that leads to *Nirvana*;” if the *Bhikshu*, the disciple of Buddha, has learnt this, he will not yearn for honour, he will strive after separation from the world.

Chapter VI: The Wise Man (*Pandita*)

76. If you see an intelligent man who tells you where true treasures are to be found, who shows what is to be avoided, and administers reproofs, follow that wise man; it will be better, not worse, for those who follow him. . . .

78. Do not have evil-doers for friends, do not have low people for friends: have virtuous people for friends, have for friends the best of men. . . .

80. Well-makers lead the water (wherever they like); fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; wise people fashion themselves.

81. As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, wise people falter not amidst blame and praise.

82. Wise people, after they have listened to the laws, become serene, like a deep, smooth, and still lake.

83. Good people walk on whatever befall, the good do not prattle, longing for pleasure; whether touched by happiness or sorrow wise people never appear elated or depressed.

84. If, whether for his own sake, or for the sake of others, a man wishes neither for a son, nor for wealth, nor for lordship, and if he does not wish for his own success by unfair means, then he is good, wise, and virtuous.

85. Few are there among men who arrive at the other shore (become *Arhats*); the other people here run up and down the shore. . . .

89. Those whose mind is well grounded in the (seven) elements of knowledge, who without clinging to anything, rejoice in freedom from attachment, whose appetites have been conquered, and who are full of light, are free (even) in this world.

Chapter VII: The Venerable (*Arhat*)

90. There is no suffering for him who has finished his journey, and abandoned grief, who has freed himself on all sides, and thrown off all fetters.

91. They depart with their thoughts well-collected, they are not happy in their abode; like swans who have left their lake, they leave their house and home.

92. Men who have no riches, who live on recognised food, who have perceived void and unconditioned freedom (*Nirvana*), their path is difficult to understand, like that of birds in the air.

93. He whose appetites are stilled, who is not absorbed in enjoyment, who has perceived void and unconditioned freedom (*Nirvana*), his path is difficult to understand, like that of birds in the air.
94. The gods even envy him whose senses, like horses well broken in by the driver, have been subdued, who is free from pride, and free from appetites.
95. Such a one who does his duty is tolerant like the earth, like Indra's bolt; he is like a lake without mud; no new births are in store for him.
96. His thought is quiet, quiet are his word and deed, when he has obtained freedom by true knowledge, when he has thus become a quiet man.
97. The man who is free from credulity, but knows the uncreated, who has cut all ties, removed all temptations, renounced all desires, he is the greatest of men. . .

Chapter VIII: The Thousands

100. Even though a speech be a thousand (of words), but made up of senseless words, one word of sense is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.
101. Even though a *Gatha* (poem) be a thousand (of words), but made up of senseless words, one word of a *Gatha* is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.
102. Though a man recite a hundred *Gathas* made up of senseless words, one word of the law is better, which if a man hears, he becomes quiet.
103. If one man conquer in battle a thousand times thousand men, and if another conquer himself, he is the greatest of conquerors. . .
109. He who always greets and constantly reveres the aged, four things will increase to him, *viz.* life, beauty, happiness, power. . .
111. And he who lives a hundred years, ignorant and unrestrained, a life of one day is better if a man is wise and reflecting.
112. And he who lives a hundred years, idle and weak, a life of one day is better if a man has attained firm strength.
113. And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing beginning and end, a life of one day is better if a man sees beginning and end.
114. And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing the immortal place, a life of one day is better if a man sees the immortal place.
115. And he who lives a hundred years, not seeing the highest law, a life of one day is better if a man sees the highest law.



Chinese Built Suspension Bridge, Szechwan Province, China, (detail) Library of Congress

Chapter IX: Evil

116. If a man would hasten towards the good, he should keep his thought away from evil; if a man does what is good slothfully, his mind delights in evil.

117. If a man commits a sin, let him not do it again; let him not delight in sin: pain is the outcome of evil.

118. If a man does what is good, let him do it again; let him delight in it: happiness is the outcome of good.

119. Even an evil-doer sees happiness as long as his evil deed has not ripened; but when his evil deed has ripened, then does the evil-doer see evil.

120. Even a good man sees evil days, as long as his good deed has not ripened; but when his good deed has ripened, then does the good man see happy days.

121. Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little.

122. Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, It will not come nigh unto me. Even by the falling of water-drops a water-pot is filled; the wise man becomes full of good, even if he gather it little by little...

124. He who has no wound on his hand, may touch poison with his hand; poison does not affect one who has no wound; nor is there evil for one who does not commit evil.

From the reading...

“Well-makers lead the water (wherever they like); fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; good people fashion themselves.”

125. If a man offend a harmless, pure, and innocent person, the evil falls back upon that fool, like light dust thrown up against the wind.

126. Some people are born again; evil-doers go to hell; righteous people go to heaven; those who are free from all worldly desires attain *Nirvana*...

Chapter X: Punishment

129. All men tremble at punishment, all men fear death; remember that you are like unto them, and do not kill, nor cause slaughter.

130. All men tremble at punishment, all men love life; remember that thou art like unto them, and do not kill, nor cause slaughter.

131. He who seeking his own happiness punishes or kills beings who also long for happiness, will not find happiness after death.

132. He who seeking his own happiness does not punish or kill beings who also long for happiness, will find happiness after death.

133. Do not speak harshly to anybody; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful, blows for blows will touch thee.

134. If, like a shattered metal plate (gong), thou utter not, then thou hast reached *Nirvana*; contention is not known to thee.

135. As a cowherd with his staff drives his cows into the stable, so do Age and Death drive the life of men.

136. A fool does not know when he commits his evil deeds: but the wicked man burns by his own deeds, as if burnt by fire...

145. Well-makers lead the water (wherever they like); fletchers bend the arrow; carpenters bend a log of wood; good people fashion themselves.

Chapter XI: Old Age

146. How is there laughter, how is there joy, as this world is always burning? Why do you not seek a light, ye who are surrounded by darkness?

147. Look at this dressed-up lump, covered with wounds, joined together, sickly, full of many thoughts, which has no strength, no hold!

148. This body is wasted, full of sickness, and frail; this heap of corruption breaks to pieces, life indeed ends in death. . .

151. The brilliant chariots of kings are destroyed, the body also approaches destruction, but the virtue of good people never approaches destruction,—thus do the good say to the good.

152. A man who has learnt little, grows old like an ox; his flesh grows, but his knowledge does not grow.

153, 154. Looking for the maker of this tabernacle, I shall have to run through a course of many births, so long as I do not find (him); and painful is birth again and again. But now, maker of the tabernacle, thou hast been seen; thou shalt not make up this tabernacle again. All thy rafters are broken, thy ridge-pole is sundered; the mind, approaching the Eternal (*visankhara, Nirvana*), has attained to the extinction of all desires.

155. Men who have not observed proper discipline, and have not gained treasure in their youth, perish like old herons in a lake without fish.

156. Men who have not observed proper discipline, and have not gained treasure in their youth, lie, like broken bows, sighing after the past.

Chapter XII: Self

157. If a man hold himself dear, let him watch himself carefully; during one at least out of the three watches⁴ a wise man should be watchful.

158. Let each man direct himself first to what is proper, then let him teach others; thus a wise man will not suffer.

159. If a man make himself as he teaches others to be, then, being himself well subdued, he may subdue (others); one's own self is indeed difficult to subdue.

160. Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well subdued, a man finds a lord such as few can find.

4. *I.e.*, the “three watches” are when we are young, middle-aged, and old, *Ed.*

161. The evil done by oneself, self-begotten, self-bred, crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks a precious stone.

162. He whose wickedness is very great brings himself down to that state where his enemy wishes him to be, as a creeper does with the tree which it surrounds.

163. Bad deeds, and deeds hurtful to ourselves, are easy to do; what is beneficial and good, that is very difficult to do...

165. By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one suffers; by oneself evil is left undone, by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another.

From the reading...

“Come, look at this glittering world, like unto a royal chariot; the foolish are immersed in it, but the wise do not touch it.”

166. Let no one forget his own duty for the sake of another's, however great; let a man, after he has discerned his own duty, be always attentive to his duty...

Chapter XIII: The World

168. Rouse thyself! do not be idle! Follow the law of virtue! The virtuous rests in bliss in this world and in the next...

170. Look upon the world as a bubble, look upon it as a mirage: the king of death does not see him who thus looks down upon the world.

171. Come, look at this glittering world, like unto a royal chariot; the foolish are immersed in it, but the wise do not touch it.

172. He who formerly was reckless and afterwards became sober, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds.

173. He whose evil deeds are covered by good deeds, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds.

174. This world is dark, few only can see here; a few only go to heaven, like birds escaped from the net...

178. Better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, better than lordship over all worlds, is the reward of the first step in holiness.

Chapter XIV: The Buddha (The Awakened)

179. He whose conquest is not conquered again, into whose conquest no one in this world enters, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?



Bronze Statue of Amida Nyorai, Library of Congress, Denjiro Hasegawa, photographer

180. He whom no desire with its snares and poisons can lead astray, by what track can you lead him, the Awakened, the Omniscient, the trackless?

181. Even the gods envy those who are awakened and not forgetful, who are given to meditation, who are wise, and who delight in the repose of retirement (from the world).

182. Difficult (to obtain) is the conception of men, difficult is the life of mortals, difficult is the hearing of the True Law, difficult is the birth of the Awakened (the attainment of Buddhahood).

183. Not to commit any sin, to do good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of (all) the Awakened...

185. Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in eating, to sleep and sit alone, and to dwell on the highest thoughts,—this is the teaching of the Awakened.

186. There is no satisfying lusts, even by a shower of gold pieces; he who knows that lusts have a short taste and cause pain, he is wise;

187. Even in heavenly pleasures he finds no satisfaction, the disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of all desires.

188. Men, driven by fear, go to many a refuge, to mountains and forests, to groves and sacred trees.

189. But that is not a safe refuge, that is not the best refuge; a man is not delivered from all pains after having gone to that refuge.

190. He who takes refuge with Buddha, the Law, and the Church; he who, with clear understanding, sees the four holy truths:—

191. *Viz.* pain, the origin of pain, the destruction of pain, and the eightfold holy way that leads to the quieting of pain;—

192. That is the safe refuge, that is the best refuge; having gone to that refuge, a man is delivered from all pain.

193. A supernatural person (a Buddha) is not easily found, he is not born everywhere. Wherever such a sage is born, that race prospers. . . .

Chapter XV: Happiness

197. Let us live happily then, not hating those who hate us! among men who hate us let us dwell free from hatred!

198. Let us live happily then, free from ailments among the ailing! among men who are ailing let us dwell free from ailments!

199. Let us live happily then, free from greed among the greedy! among men who are greedy let us dwell free from greed!

200. Let us live happily then, though we call nothing our own! We shall be like the bright gods, feeding on happiness!

201. Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, he, the contented, is happy.

202. There is no fire like passion; there is no losing throw like hatred; there is no pain like this body; there is no happiness higher than rest.

From the reading. . .

“Let, therefore, no man love anything; loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing and hate nothing, have no fetters.”

Chapter 5. The Dhammapada (abridged)

203. Hunger is the worst of diseases, the body the greatest of pains; if one knows this truly, that is *Nirvana*, the highest happiness.

204. Health is the greatest of gifts, contentedness the best riches; trust is the best of relationships, *Nirvana* the highest happiness.

205. He who has tasted the sweetness of solitude and tranquility, is free from fear and free from sin, while he tastes the sweetness of drinking in the law.

206. The sight of the elect (Arya) is good, to live with them is always happiness; if a man does not see fools, he will be truly happy.

207. He who walks in the company of fools suffers a long way; company with fools, as with an enemy, is always painful; company with the wise is pleasure, like meeting with kinsfolk.

208. Therefore, one ought to follow the wise, the intelligent, the learned, the much enduring, the dutiful, the elect; one ought to follow a good and wise man, as the moon follows the path of the stars.

Chapter XVI: Pleasure

209. He who gives himself to vanity, and does not give himself to meditation, forgetting the real aim (of life) and grasping at pleasure, will in time envy him who has exerted himself in meditation.

210. Let no man ever look for what is pleasant, or what is unpleasant. Not to see what is pleasant is pain, and it is pain to see what is unpleasant.

211. Let, therefore, no man love anything; loss of the beloved is evil. Those who love nothing and hate nothing, have no fetters.

212. From pleasure comes grief, from pleasure comes fear; he who is free from pleasure knows neither grief nor fear.

213. From affection comes grief, from affection comes fear; he who is free from affection knows neither grief nor fear.

214. From lust comes grief, from lust comes fear; he who is free from lust knows neither grief nor fear.

215. From love comes grief, from love comes fear; he who is free from love knows neither grief nor fear.

216. From greed comes grief, from greed comes fear; he who is free from greed knows neither grief nor fear.

217. He who possesses virtue and intelligence, who is just, speaks the truth, and does what is his own business, him the world will hold dear.

218. He in whom a desire for the Ineffable (*Nirvana*) has sprung up, who is satisfied in his mind, and whose thoughts are not bewildered by love, he is called *urdhvamsrotas* (carried upwards by the stream).

219. Kinsmen, friends, and lovers salute a man who has been long away, and returns safe from afar.

220. In like manner his good works receive him who has done good, and has gone from this world to the other;—as kinsmen receive a friend on his return.

Chapter XVII: Anger

221. Let a man leave anger, let him forsake pride, let him overcome all bondage! No sufferings befall the man who is not attached to name and form, and who calls nothing his own.

222. He who holds back rising anger like a rolling chariot, him I call a real driver; other people are but holding the reins.

From the reading...

“Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with thy hand! ”

223. Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good; let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth!

224. Speak the truth, do not yield to anger; give, if thou art asked for little; by these three steps thou wilt go near the gods.

225. The sages who injure nobody, and who always control their body, they will go to the unchangeable place (*Nirvana*), where, if they have gone, they will suffer no more.

226. Those who are ever watchful, who study day and night, and who strive after *Nirvana*, their passions will come to an end.

227. This is an old saying, O Atula, this is not only of to-day: “They blame him who sits silent, they blame him who speaks much, they also blame him who says little; there is no one on earth who is not blamed.”

228. There never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed, or a man who is always praised...

234. The wise who control their body, who control their tongue, the wise who control their mind, are indeed well controlled...



Hong Kong Dock Workers, (detail) Library of Congress

Chapter XVIII: Impurity

... 237. Thy life has come to an end, thou art come near to death (*Yama*), there is no resting-place for thee on the road, and thou hast no provision for thy journey.

238. Make thyself an island, work hard, be wise! When thy impurities are blown away, and thou art free from guilt, thou wilt not enter again into birth and decay.

From the reading...

“There is no path through the air, a man is not a *Samana* by outward acts.”

239. Let a wise man blow off the impurities of his self, as a smith blows off the impurities of silver one by one, little by little, and from time to time.

240. As the impurity which springs from the iron, when it springs from it, destroys it; thus do a transgressor's own works lead him to the evil path.

241. The taint of prayers is non-repetition; the taint of houses, non-repair; the taint of the body is sloth; the taint of a watchman, thoughtlessness...

243. But there is a taint worse than all taints,—ignorance is the greatest taint. O mendicants! throw off that taint, and become taintless!

244. Life is easy to live for a man who is without shame, a crow hero, a mischief-maker, an insulting, bold, and wretched fellow.

245. But life is hard to live for a modest man, who always looks for what is pure, who is disinterested, quiet, spotless, and intelligent...

249. The world gives according to their faith or according to their pleasure: if a man frets about the food and the drink given to others, he will find no rest either by day or by night.

251. There is no fire like passion, there is no shark like hatred, there is no snare like folly, there is no torrent like greed.

252. The fault of others is easily perceived, but that of oneself is difficult to perceive; a man winnows his neighbour's faults like chaff, but his own fault he hides, as a cheat hides the bad die from the gambler.

253. If a man looks after the faults of others, and is always inclined to be offended, his own passions will grow, and he is far from the destruction of passions.

254. There is no path through the air, a man is not a *Samana* by outward acts. The world delights in vanity, the Tathagatas (the Buddhas) are free from vanity.

255. There is no path through the air, a man is not a *Samana* by outward acts. No creatures are eternal; but the awakened (Buddha) are never shaken.

Chapter XIX: The Just

256, 257. A man is not just if he carries a matter by violence; no, he who distinguishes both right and wrong, who is learned and leads others, not by violence, but by law and equity, and who is guarded by the law and intelligent, he is called just...

261. He in whom there is truth, virtue, love, restraint, moderation, he who is free from impurity and is wise, he is called an elder.

262. An envious greedy, dishonest man does not become respectable by means of much talking only, or by the beauty of his complexion.

263. He in whom all this is destroyed, and taken out with the very root, he, when freed from hatred and wise, is called respectable.

264. Not by tonsure does an undisciplined man who speaks falsehood become a *Samana*; can a man be a *Samana* who is still held captive by desire and greediness?

265. He who always quiets the evil, whether small or large, he is called a *Samana* (a quiet man), because he has quieted all evil. . .

270. A man is not an elect (*Ariya*) because he injures living creatures; because he has pity on all living creatures, therefore is a man called *Ariya*.

271, 272. Not only by discipline and vows, not only by much learning, not by entering into a trance, not by sleeping alone, do I earn the happiness of release which no worldling can know. *Bhikshu*, be not confident as long as thou hast not attained the extinction of desires.

Chapter XX: The Way

273. The best of ways is the eightfold; the best of truths the four words; the best of virtues passionlessness; the best of men he who has eyes to see.

274. This is the way, there is no other that leads to the purifying of intelligence. Go on this way! Everything else is the deceit of *Mara* (the tempter).

275. If you go on this way, you will make an end of pain! The way was preached by me, when I had understood the removal of the thorns (in the flesh).

276. You yourself must make an effort. The *Tathagatas* (Buddhas) are only preachers. The thoughtful who enter the way are freed from the bondage of *Mara*.

277. "All created things perish," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way to purity.

278. "All created things are grief and pain," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

279. "All forms are unreal," he who knows and sees this becomes passive in pain; this is the way that leads to purity.

280. He who does not rouse himself when it is time to rise, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and thought are weak, that lazy and idle man will never find the way to knowledge.

281. Watching his speech, well restrained in mind, let a man never commit any wrong with his body! Let a man but keep these three roads of action clear, and he will achieve the way which is taught by the wise.

282. Through zeal knowledge is gotten, through lack of zeal knowledge is lost; let a man who knows this double path of gain and loss thus place himself that knowledge may grow.

283. Cut down the whole forest (of lust), not a tree only! Danger comes out of the forest (of lust). When you have cut down both the forest (of lust) and its undergrowth, then, *Bhikshus*, you will be rid of the forest and free!

284. So long as the love of man towards women, even the smallest, is not destroyed, so long is his mind in bondage, as the calf that drinks milk is to its mother.

285. Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus, with thy hand! Cherish the road of peace. *Nirvana* has been shown by *Sugata* (Buddha).

286. "Here I shall dwell in the rain, here in winter and summer," thus the fool meditates, and does not think of his death.

287. Death comes and carries off that man, praised for his children and flocks, his mind distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

288. Sons are no help, nor a father, nor relations; there is no help from kinsfolk for one whom death has seized.

289. A wise and good man who knows the meaning of this, should quickly clear the way that leads to *Nirvana*.

Chapter XXI: Miscellaneous

290. If by leaving a small pleasure one sees a great pleasure, let a wise man leave the small pleasure, and look to the great.

291. He who, by causing pain to others, wishes to obtain pleasure for himself, he, entangled in the bonds of hatred, will never be free from hatred.

292. What ought to be done is neglected, what ought not to be done is done; the desires of unruly, thoughtless people are always increasing.

293. But they whose whole watchfulness is always directed to their body, who do not follow what ought not to be done, and who steadfastly do what ought to be done, the desires of such watchful and wise people will come to an end.

294. A true *Brahmana* goes scatheless, though he have killed father and mother, and two valiant kings, though he has destroyed a kingdom with all its subjects...

296. The disciples of Gotama (Buddha) are always well awake, and their thoughts day and night are always set on Buddha... 297. —on the law... 298. —on the

Chapter 5. The Dhammapada (abridged)

church... 299. —on the body... 300. —in compassion... [and] 301. —in meditation...

304. Good people shine from afar, like the snowy mountains; bad people are not seen, like arrows shot by night.

305. He alone who, without ceasing, practises the duty of sitting alone and sleeping alone, he, subduing himself, will rejoice in the destruction of all desires alone, as if living in a forest.



Views of Thailand—[Reclining Buddha], Library of Congress

Chapter XXII: The Downward Course

306. He who says what is not, goes to hell; he also who, having done a thing, says I have not done it. After death both are equal, they are men with evil deeds in the next world.

307. Many men whose shoulders are covered with the yellow gown are ill-conditioned and unrestrained; such evil-doers by their evil deeds go to hell.

308. Better it would be to swallow a heated iron ball, like flaring fire, than that a bad unrestrained fellow should live on the charity of the land...

313. If anything is to be done, let a man do it, let him attack it vigorously! A careless pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

314. An evil deed is better left undone, for a man repents of it afterwards; a good deed is better done, for having done it, one does not repent. . .

318. They who forbid when there is nothing to be forbidden, and forbid not when there is something to be forbidden, such men, embracing false doctrines, enter the evil path.

319. They who know what is forbidden as forbidden, and what is not forbidden as not forbidden, such men, embracing the true doctrine, enter the good path.

Chapter XXIII: The Elephant

320. Silently shall I endure abuse as the elephant in battle endures the arrow sent from the bow: for the world is ill-natured.

321. They lead a tamed elephant to battle, the king mounts a tamed elephant; the tamed is the best among men, he who silently endures abuse.

322. Mules are good, if tamed, and noble *Sindhu* horses, and elephants with large tusks; but he who tames himself is better still. . .

325. If a man becomes fat and a great eater, if he is sleepy and rolls himself about, that fool, like a hog fed on wash, is born again and again.

326. This mind of mine went formerly wandering about as it liked, as it listed, as it pleased; but I shall now hold it in thoroughly, as the rider who holds the hook holds in the furious elephant.

327. Be not thoughtless, watch your thoughts! Draw yourself out of the evil way, like an elephant sunk in mud.

328. If a man find a prudent companion who walks with him, is wise, and lives soberly, he may walk with him, overcoming all dangers, happy, but considerate.

329. If a man find no prudent companion who walks with him, is wise, and lives soberly, let him walk alone, like a king who has left his conquered country behind,—like an elephant in the forest.

330. It is better to live alone, there is no companionship with a fool; let a man walk alone, let him commit no sin, with few wishes, like an elephant in the forest.

331. If an occasion arises, friends are pleasant; enjoyment is pleasant, whatever be the cause; a good work is pleasant in the hour of death; the giving up of all grief is pleasant.

Chapter 5. The Dhammapada (abridged)

332. Pleasant in the world is the state of a mother, pleasant the state of a father, pleasant the state of a *Samana*, pleasant the state of a *Brahmana*.

333. Pleasant is virtue lasting to old age, pleasant is a faith firmly rooted; pleasant is attainment of intelligence, pleasant is avoiding of sins.

Chapter XXIV: Thirst

334. The thirst of a thoughtless man grows like a creeper; he runs from life to life, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest.

335. Whomsoever this fierce thirst overcomes, full of poison, in this world, his sufferings increase like the abounding Birana grass.

336. He who overcomes this fierce thirst, difficult to be conquered in this world, sufferings fall off from him, like water-drops from a lotus leaf...

341. A creature's pleasures are extravagant and luxurious; sunk in lust and looking for pleasure, men undergo (again and again) birth and decay.

342. Men, driven on by thirst, run about like a snared hare; held in fetters and bonds, they undergo pain for a long time, again and again.

343. Men, driven on by thirst, run about like a snared hare; let therefore the mendicant drive out thirst, by striving after passionlessness for himself...



Hong Kong Sampans, (detail) Library of Congress

345. Wise people do not call that a strong fetter which is made of iron, wood, or hemp; far stronger is the care for precious stones and rings, for sons and a wife...

348. Give up what is before, give up what is behind, give up what is in the middle, when thou goest to the other shore of existence; if thy mind is altogether free, thou wilt not again enter into birth and decay.

349. If a man is tossed about by doubts, full of strong passions, and yearning only for what is delightful, his thirst will grow more and more, and he will indeed make his fetters strong.

350. If a man delights in quieting doubts, and, always reflecting, dwells on what is not delightful (the impurity of the body, &c.), he certainly will remove, nay, he will cut the fetter of *Mara*...

352. He who is without thirst and without affection, who understands the words and their interpretation, who knows the order of letters (those which are before and which are after), he has received his last body, he is called the great sage, the great man...

356. The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by passion: therefore a gift bestowed on the passionless brings great reward.

357. The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by hatred: therefore a gift bestowed on those who do not hate brings great reward.

From the reading...

“When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made.”

358. The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by vanity: therefore a gift bestowed on those who are free from vanity brings great reward.

359. The fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by lust: therefore a gift bestowed on those who are free from lust brings great reward...

Chapter XXV: The *Bhikshu* (Mendicant)

361. In the body restraint is good, good is restraint in speech, in thought restraint is good, good is restraint in all things. A *Bhikshu*, restrained in all things, is freed from all pain...

365. Let him not despise what he has received, nor ever envy others: a mendicant who envies others does not obtain peace of mind.

Chapter 5. The Dhammapada (abridged)

366. A *Bhikshu* who, though he receives little, does not despise what he has received, even the gods will praise him, if his life is pure, and if he is not slothful.

367. He who never identifies himself with name and form, and does not grieve over what is no more, he indeed is called a *Bhikshu*.

368. The *Bhikshu* who acts with kindness, who is calm in the doctrine of Buddha, will reach the quiet place (*Nirvana*), cessation of natural desires, and happiness.

369. O *Bhikshu*, empty this boat! if emptied, it will go quickly; having cut off passion and hatred thou wilt go to *Nirvana*.

370. Cut off the five (senses), leave the five, rise above the five. A *Bhikshu*, who has escaped from the five fetters, he is called *Oghatinna*, "saved from the flood." . . .

372. Without knowledge there is no meditation, without meditation there is no knowledge: he who has knowledge and meditation is near unto *Nirvana*.

373. A *Bhikshu* who has entered his empty house, and whose mind is tranquil, feels a more than human delight when he sees the law clearly.

374. As soon as he has considered the origin and destruction of the elements (*khandha*)⁵ of the body, he finds happiness and joy which belong to those who know the immortal (*Nirvana*).

375. And this is the beginning here for a wise *Bhikshu*: watchfulness over the senses, contentedness, restraint under the law; keep noble friends whose life is pure, and who are not slothful.

376. Let him live in charity, let him be perfect in his duties; then in the fulness of delight he will make an end of suffering. . . .

380. For self is the lord of self, self is the refuge of self; therefore curb thyself as the merchant curbs a good horse.

381. The *Bhikshu*, full of delight, who is calm in the doctrine of Buddha will reach the quiet place (*Nirvana*), cessation of natural desires, and happiness.

382. He who, even as a young *Bhikshu*, applies himself to the doctrine of Buddha, brightens up this world, like the moon when free from clouds.

5. *I.e.*, the five kinds of things which make up living things: material forms, feelings, perceptions, mental forms, and consciousness. *Ed.*



Hong Kong Rickshaw, (detail) Library of Congress

Chapter XXVI: The *Brahmana* (*Arhat*)

383. Stop the stream valiantly, drive away the desires, O *Brahmana*! When you have understood the destruction of all that was made, you will understand that which was not made.

384. If the *Brahmana* has reached the other shore in both laws (in restraint and contemplation), all bonds vanish from him who has obtained knowledge.

385. He for whom there is neither this nor that shore, nor both, him, the fearless and unshackled, I call indeed a *Brahmana*.

386. He who is thoughtful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest end, him I call indeed a *Brahmana*.

387. The sun is bright by day, the moon shines by night, the warrior is bright in his armour, the *Brahmana* is bright in his meditation; but Buddha, the Awakened, is bright with splendour day and night.

388. Because a man is rid of evil, therefore he is called *Brahmana*; because he walks quietly, therefore he is called *Samana*; because he has sent away his own impurities, therefore he is called *Pravragita* (*Pabbagita*, a pilgrim)...

391. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who does not offend by body, word, or thought, and is controlled on these three points...

395. The man who wears dirty raiments, who is emaciated and covered with veins, who lives alone in the forest, and meditates, him I call indeed a *Brahmana*...

397. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who has cut all fetters, who never trembles, is independent and unshackled.
398. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who has cut the strap and the thong, the chain with all that pertains to it, who has burst the bar, and is awakened. . . .
400. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who is free from anger, dutiful, virtuous, without appetite, who is subdued, and has received his last body.
401. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who does not cling to pleasures, like water on a lotus leaf, like a mustard seed on the point of a needle.
402. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who, even here, knows the end of his suffering, has put down his burden, and is unshackled.
403. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* whose knowledge is deep, who possesses wisdom, who knows the right way and the wrong, and has attained the highest end.
404. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who keeps aloof both from laymen and from mendicants, who frequents no houses, and has but few desires.
405. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who finds no fault with other beings, whether feeble or strong, and does not kill nor cause slaughter.
406. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who is tolerant with the intolerant, mild with fault-finders, and free from passion among the passionate.
407. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* from whom anger and hatred, pride and envy have dropt like a mustard seed from the point of a needle.
408. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who utters true speech, instructive and free from harshness, so that he offend no one.
409. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who takes nothing in the world that is not given him, be it long or short, small or large, good or bad.
410. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who fosters no desires for this world or for the next, has no inclinations, and is unshackled.
411. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who has no interests, and when he has understood (the truth), does not say How, how? and who has reached the depth of the Immortal.
412. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who in this world is above good and evil, above the bondage of both, free from grief from sin, and from impurity.
413. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who is bright like the moon, pure, serene, undisturbed, and in whom all gaiety is extinct.

414. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who has traversed this miry road, the impassable world and its vanity, who has gone through, and reached the other shore, is thoughtful, guileless, free from doubts, free from attachment, and content.
415. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who in this world, leaving all desires, travels about without a home, and in whom all concupiscence is extinct.
416. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who, leaving all longings, travels about without a home, and in whom all covetousness is extinct.
417. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who, after leaving all bondage to men, has risen above all bondage to the gods, and is free from all and every bondage.
418. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who has left what gives pleasure and what gives pain, who is cold, and free from all germs (of renewed life), the hero who has conquered all the worlds.
419. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who knows the destruction and the return of beings everywhere, who is free from bondage, welfaring (Sugata), and awakened (Buddha).
420. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* whose path the gods do not know, nor spirits (Gandharvas), nor men, whose passions are extinct, and who is an *Arhat* (venerable).
421. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who calls nothing his own, whether it be before, behind, or between, who is poor, and free from the love of the world.
422. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana*, the manly, the noble, the hero, the great sage, the conqueror, the impassible, the accomplished, the awakened.
423. Him I call indeed a *Brahmana* who knows his former abodes, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of births, is perfect in knowledge, a sage, and whose perfections are all perfect.

From the reading...

“Give up what is before, give up what is behind, give up what is in the middle, when thou goest to the other shore of existence; if thy mind is altogether free, thou wilt not again enter into birth and decay.”



Entrance to Buddhist Temple, from photograph by F. Boileau

Topics Worth Investigating

1. A verse of the *Dhammapada* states “The evil-doer suffers in this world, and he suffers in the next; he suffers in both. He suffers when he thinks of the evil he has done; he suffers more when going on the evil path.” Yet, it seems evident that some evil-doers do not suffer at all—in fact, some evil-doers seem genuinely happy and fulfilled. In what ways do such persons suffer? How is it that the good person sees “evil days,” and the bad person sees “happiness.” Also, doesn’t it seem odd that if there is no self, there is something that suffers?
2. With regard to pleasure, the *Dhammapada* states “Even in heavenly pleasures he finds no satisfaction, the disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of all desires.” How do you think the Buddha would respond to the following analysis by Rilke?

Physical pleasure is a sensual experience no different from pure seeing or the pure sensation with which a fine fruit fills the tongue; it is a great unending experience, which is given us, a knowing of the world, the fullness and the glory of all knowing. And not our acceptance of it is bad; the bad thing is that most people misuse and squander this experience and apply it as a stimulant at the tired spots

of their lives and as distraction instead of a rallying toward exalted moments.⁶

In light of your response consider verse 290 of the *The Dhammapada*: “If by leaving a small pleasure one sees a great pleasure, let a wise man leave the small pleasure, and look to the great.”

3. Does the desire for enlightenment obviate the possibility of enlightenment? The *The Dhammapada* says, “Even in heavenly pleasures he finds no satisfaction, the disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of all desires.” Explain this apparent paradox.
4. Contrast the role of the various forms of “love” in Chapter 12 (“Govinda”) of Hermann Hesse’s *Siddhartha* with the forms discussed in the *The Dhammapada*.
5. What are the similarities between the chapter “The Elephant” in the *The Dhammapada* and “The Ten Oxherding Pictures” by Kaku-an as discussed by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki?

6. Rainer Maria Rilke. “Letter, July 16, 1903” in *Letters to a Young Poet*. Mineola, N.Y.:Dover, 2002.

Chapter 6

“The Doctrine of the Mean” by Confucius



Confucius, Thoemmes

About the author...

Confucius (551-479 B.C.) sought to impose an integrated socio-ethical order in an attempt to secure the peace among warring states in China. Several talented and influential disciples adopted Confucius' philosophy during his time, but apparently Confucius, himself, never obtained the opportunity to apply his cultural changes from high office. Confucius thought the foundation of social order is to be based on the *jen* or “human-heartedness” of the *chün tzu* or “superior man.” The path to *jen*, the highest virtue, is reached through the practice of *li*, the principles of social order. The ruler is an ideal man or superior man, a *chün tzu*, who governs by *jen*. Confucius' ideas gained influence through successive generations of his students and were finally adopted during the Han dynasty six centuries later.

About the work...

In the “The Doctrine of the Mean,”¹ one of the writings attributed to Confucius, many of the central doctrines of Confucianism are elaborated. The characteristic of *jen* is articulated in terms of a cluster of related moral terms including the Five Relationships, the principle of reciprocity (the Golden Rule), and various forms of virtue. The heart of Confucianism is explained here as the adoption of the policies of inculcating virtue in people by the example of tradition and the *jen* of the superior person.

From the reading...

“There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute.”

Ideas of Interest from “The Doctrine of the Mean”

1. List some of the essential characteristics of the *chün tzu* or superior man. Does Confucius allow that women become superior persons? Explain your answer.
2. Interpret the Confucius’ description of the cultivation of energy according to the Mean.
3. What is the principle of reciprocity?
4. Speculate as to the reasons filial piety (*hsiao*) is necessary in a stable and ordered society.
5. What are the duties of universal obligation? How are they related to the three universally binding virtues?
6. Relate the description of benevolence *jen* with the development of character and filial piety.
7. According to Confucius, how is virtue obtained by the ideal person?

1. Confucius. “Doctrine of the Mean.” 500 BC. Translated by James Legge.

The Reading Selection from “The Doctrine of the Mean”

[Instruction for the Path of Duty]

What Heaven has conferred is called The Nature; an accordance with this nature is called The Path of duty; the regulation of this path is called Instruction.

The path may not be left for an instant. If it could be left, it would not be the path. On this account, the superior man does not wait till he sees things, to be cautious, nor till he hears things, to be apprehensive.

There is nothing more visible than what is secret, and nothing more manifest than what is minute. Therefore the superior man is watchful over himself, when he is alone.

While there are no stirrings of pleasure, anger, sorrow, or joy, the mind may be said to be in the state of Equilibrium. When those feelings have been stirred, and they act in their due degree, there ensues what may be called the state of Harmony. This Equilibrium is the great root from which grow all the human actions in the world, and this Harmony is the universal path which they all should pursue.

Let the states of equilibrium and harmony exist in perfection, and a happy order will prevail throughout heaven and earth, and all things will be nourished and flourish.

[The Course of the Mean]

Chung-ni said, “The superior man embodies the course of the Mean; the mean man acts contrary to the course of the Mean.

“The superior man’s embodying the course of the Mean is because he is a superior man, and so always maintains the Mean. The mean man’s acting contrary to the course of the Mean is because he is a mean man, and has no caution.”

The Master said, “Perfect is the virtue which is according to the Mean! Rare have they long been among the people, who could practice it!”

The Master said, “I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not walked in:—the knowing go beyond it, and the stupid do not come up to it. I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not understood:—The men of talents and virtue go beyond it, and the worthless do not come up to it.

"There is no body but eats and drinks. But they are few who can distinguish flavors."

The Master said, "Alas! How is the path of the Mean untrodden!" The Master said, "There was Shun:—He indeed was greatly wise! Shun loved to question others, and to study their words, though they might be shallow. He concealed what was bad in them and displayed what was good. He took hold of their two extremes, determined the Mean, and employed it in his government of the people. It was by this that he was Shun!"

The Master said "Men all say, 'We are wise'; but being driven forward and taken in a net, a trap, or a pitfall, they know not how to escape. Men all say, 'We are wise'; but happening to choose the course of the Mean, they are not able to keep it for a round month."

The Master said "This was the manner of Hui:—he made choice of the Mean, and whenever he got hold of what was good, he clasped it firmly, as if wearing it on his breast, and did not lose it."

The Master said, "The kingdom, its states, and its families, may be perfectly ruled; dignities and emoluments may be declined; naked weapons may be trampled under the feet; but the course of the Mean cannot be attained to."

Tsze-lu asked about energy.

The Master said, "Do you mean the energy of the South, the energy of the North, or the energy which you should cultivate yourself?"

"To show forbearance and gentleness in teaching others; and not to revenge unreasonable conduct:—this is the energy of southern regions, and the good man makes it his study.

"To lie under arms; and meet death without regret:—this is the energy of northern regions, and the forceful make it their study.

"Therefore, the superior man cultivates a friendly harmony, without being weak.—How firm is he in his energy! He stands erect in the middle, without inclining to either side.—How firm is he in his energy! When good principles prevail in the government of his country, he does not change from what he was in retirement. How firm is he in his energy! When bad principles prevail in the country, he maintains his course to death without changing.—How firm is he in his energy!"

The Master said, "To live in obscurity, and yet practice wonders, in order to be mentioned with honor in future ages:—this is what I do not do.

"The good man tries to proceed according to the right path, but when he has gone halfway, he abandons it:—I am not able so to stop.

“The superior man accords with the course of the Mean. Though he may be all unknown, unregarded by the world, he feels no regret.—It is only the sage who is able for this.”

The way which the superior man pursues, reaches wide and far, and yet is secret.

From the reading...

“I know how it is that the path of the Mean is not understood:—The men of talents and virtue go beyond it, and the worthless do not come up to it.”

Common men and women, however ignorant, may intermeddle with the knowledge of it; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage does not know. Common men and women, however much below the ordinary standard of character, can carry it into practice; yet in its utmost reaches, there is that which even the sage is not able to carry into practice. Great as heaven and earth are, men still find some things in them with which to be dissatisfied. Thus it is that, were the superior man to speak of his way in all its greatness, nothing in the world would be found able to embrace it, and were he to speak of it in its minuteness, nothing in the world would be found able to split it.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*,² “The hawk flies up to heaven; the fishes leap in the deep.” This expresses how this way is seen above and below.

The way of the superior man may be found, in its simple elements, in the intercourse of common men and women; but in its utmost reaches, it shines brightly through Heaven and earth.

The Master said “The path is not far from man. When men try to pursue a course, which is far from the common indications of consciousness, this course cannot be considered The Path.

“In the *Book of Poetry*, it is said, ‘In hewing an ax handle, in hewing an ax handle, the pattern is not far off. We grasp one ax handle to hew the other; and yet, if we look askance from the one to the other, we may consider them as apart.’ Therefore, the superior man governs men, according to their nature, with what is proper to them, and as soon as they change what is wrong, he stops.

“When one cultivates to the utmost the principles of his nature, and exercises them on the principle of reciprocity, he is not far from the path. What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others.

2. *The Book of Poetry* is an anthology of about three hundred poems written by unknown authors between 1100 and 600 BC; the compilation was later entitled *Shijing*. Ed.

[Chün Tzu—The Superior Man]

“In the way of the superior man there are four things, to not one of which have I as yet attained.—To serve my father, as I would require my son to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my prince as I would require my minister to serve me: to this I have not attained; to serve my elder brother as I would require my younger brother to serve me: to this I have not attained; to set the example in behaving to a friend, as I would require him to behave to me: to this I have not attained. Earnest in practicing the ordinary virtues, and careful in speaking about them, if, in his practice, he has anything defective, the superior man dares not but exert himself; and if, in his words, he has any excess, he dares not allow himself such license. Thus his words have respect to his actions, and his actions have respect to his words; is it not just an entire sincerity which marks the superior man?”

The superior man does what is proper to the station in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this.



Chinese Gentleman’s Garden, J. D. Cooper

In a position of wealth and honor, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honor. In a poor and low position, he does what is proper to a poor and low position. Situated among barbarous tribes, he does what is proper to a situation among barbarous tribes. In a position of sorrow and difficulty, he does what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty. The superior man can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself.

In a high situation, he does not treat with contempt his inferiors. In a low situation, he does not court the favor of his superiors. He rectifies himself, and seeks for nothing from others, so that he has no dissatisfactions. He does not murmur against Heaven, nor grumble against men.

Thus it is that the superior man is quiet and calm, waiting for the appointments of Heaven, while the mean man walks in dangerous paths, looking for lucky occurrences.

The Master said, “In archery we have something like the way of the superior man. When the archer misses the center of the target, he turns round and seeks for the cause of his failure in himself.”

The way of the superior man may be compared to what takes place in traveling, when to go to a distance we must first traverse the space that is near, and in ascending a height, when we must begin from the lower ground.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, “Happy union with wife and children is like the music of lutes and harps. When there is concord among brethren, the harmony is delightful and enduring. Thus may you regulate your family, and enjoy the pleasure of your wife and children.”

The Master said, “In such a state of things, parents have entire complacency!”

The Master said, “How abundantly do spiritual beings display the powers that belong to them!

“We look for them, but do not see them; we listen to, but do not hear them; yet they enter into all things, and there is nothing without them.

“They cause all the people in the kingdom to fast and purify themselves, and array themselves in their richest dresses, in order to attend at their sacrifices. Then, like overflowing water, they seem to be over the heads, and on the right and left of their worshippers.

“It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, ‘The approaches of the spirits, you cannot surmise; and can you treat them with indifference?’

“Such is the manifestness of what is minute! Such is the impossibility of repressing the outgoings of sincerity!”

[Hsiao—Filial Piety]

The Master said, “How greatly filial was Shun! His virtue was that of a sage; his dignity was the throne; his riches were all within the four seas. He offered his

Chapter 6. “The Doctrine of the Mean” by Confucius

sacrifices in his ancestral temple, and his descendants preserved the sacrifices to himself.

“Therefore having such great virtue, it could not but be that he should obtain the throne, that he should obtain those riches, that he should obtain his fame, that he should attain to his long life.



A Pavilion in Pun-Ting-Qua’s Garden, J. D. Cooper

“Thus it is that Heaven, in the production of things, is sure to be bountiful to them, according to their qualities. Hence the tree that is flourishing, it nourishes, while that which is ready to fall, it overthrows.

“In the *Book of Poetry*, it is said, ‘The admirable amiable prince displayed conspicuously his excelling virtue, adjusting his people, and adjusting his officers. Therefore, he received from Heaven his emoluments of dignity. It protected him, assisted him, decreed him the throne; sending from Heaven these favors, as it were repeatedly.’

“We may say therefore that he who is greatly virtuous will be sure to receive the appointment of Heaven.”

The Master said, “It is only King Wan of whom it can be said that he had no cause for grief! His father was King Chi, and his son was King Wu. His father laid the foundations of his dignity, and his son transmitted it.

“King Wu continued the enterprise of King T’ai, King Chi, and King Wan. He

once buckled on his armor, and got possession of the kingdom. He did not lose the distinguished personal reputation which he had throughout the kingdom. His dignity was the royal throne. His riches were the possession of all within the four seas. He offered his sacrifices in his ancestral temple, and his descendants maintained the sacrifices to himself.

"It was in his old age that King Wu received the appointment to the throne, and the duke of Chau completed the virtuous course of Wan and Wu. He carried up the title of king to T'ai and Chi, and sacrificed to all the former dukes above them with the royal ceremonies. And this rule he extended to the princes of the kingdom, the great officers, the scholars, and the common people. If the father were a great officer and the son a scholar, then the burial was that due to a great officer, and the sacrifice that due to a scholar. If the father were a scholar and the son a great officer, then the burial was that due to a scholar, and the sacrifice that due to a great officer. The one year's mourning was made to extend only to the great officers, but the three years' mourning extended to the Son of Heaven. In the mourning for a father or mother, he allowed no difference between the noble and the mean.

The Master said, "How far-extending was the filial piety of King Wu and the duke of Chau!

"Now filial piety is seen in the skillful carrying out of the wishes of our forefathers, and the skillful carrying forward of their undertakings.

"In spring and autumn, they repaired and beautified the temple halls of their fathers, set forth their ancestral vessels, displayed their various robes, and presented the offerings of the several seasons.

"By means of the ceremonies of the ancestral temple, they distinguished the royal kindred according to their order of descent. By ordering the parties present according to their rank, they distinguished the more noble and the less. By the arrangement of the services, they made a distinction of talents and worth. In the ceremony of general pledging, the inferiors presented the cup to their superiors, and thus something was given the lowest to do. At the concluding feast, places were given according to the hair, and thus was made the distinction of years.

"They occupied the places of their forefathers, practiced their ceremonies, and performed their music. They revered those whom they honored, and loved those whom they regarded with affection. Thus they served the dead as they would have served them alive; they served the departed as they would have served them had they been continued among them.

"By the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth they served God, and by the ceremonies of the ancestral temple they sacrificed to their ancestors. He who understands the ceremonies of the sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, and the meaning of the several sacrifices to ancestors, would find the government of a kingdom as

easy as to look into his palm!”

From the reading...

“Now filial piety is seen in the skillful carrying out of the wishes of our forefathers, and the skillful carrying forward of their undertakings.”

[Te—Power by which Men are Ruled; Moral Example]

The Duke Ai asked about government.

The Master said, “The government of Wan and Wu is displayed in the records,—the tablets of wood and bamboo. Let there be the men and the government will flourish; but without the men, their government decays and ceases.

“With the right men the growth of government is rapid, just as vegetation is rapid in the earth; and, moreover, their government might be called an easily-growing rush.

“Therefore the administration of government lies in getting proper men. Such men are to be got by means of the ruler’s own character. That character is to be cultivated by his treading in the ways of duty. And the treading those ways of duty is to be cultivated by the cherishing of benevolence.

“Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives. Righteousness is the accordance of actions with what is right, and the great exercise of it is in honoring the worthy. The decreasing measures of the love due to relatives, and the steps in the honor due to the worthy, are produced by the principle of propriety.

“When those in inferior situations do not possess the confidence of their superiors, they cannot retain the government of the people.

“Hence the sovereign may not neglect the cultivation of his own character. Wishing to cultivate his character, he may not neglect to serve his parents. In order to serve his parents, he may not neglect to acquire knowledge of men. In order to know men, he may not dispense with a knowledge of Heaven.

[The Five Relationships]

“The duties of universal obligation are five and the virtues wherewith they are practiced are three. The duties are those between sovereign and minister, between father and son, between husband and wife, between elder brother and younger, and those belonging to the intercourse of friends. Those five are the duties of universal obligation. Knowledge, magnanimity, and energy, these three, are the virtues universally binding. And the means by which they carry the duties into practice is singleness.

From the reading . . .

“The superior man can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself.”

“Some are born with the knowledge of those duties; some know them by study; and some acquire the knowledge after a painful feeling of their ignorance. But the knowledge being possessed, it comes to the same thing. Some practice them with a natural ease; some from a desire for their advantages; and some by strenuous effort. But the achievement being made, it comes to the same thing.”

The Master said, “To be fond of learning is to be near to knowledge. To practice with vigor is to be near to magnanimity. To possess the feeling of shame is to be near to energy.

“He who knows these three things knows how to cultivate his own character. Knowing how to cultivate his own character, he knows how to govern other men. Knowing how to govern other men, he knows how to govern the kingdom with all its states and families.

[Rules of Government]

“All who have the government of the kingdom with its states and families have nine standard rules to follow;—*viz.*, the cultivation of their own characters; the honoring of men of virtue and talents; affection towards their relatives; respect towards the great ministers; kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers; dealing with the mass of the people as children; encouraging the resort of all classes of artisans; indulgent treatment of men from a distance; and the kindly cherishing of the princes of the states.



One of the Inner Gates of Peking, J. D. Cooper

“By the ruler’s cultivation of his own character, the duties of universal obligation are set forth. By honoring men of virtue and talents, he is preserved from errors of judgment. By showing affection to his relatives, there is no grumbling nor resentment among his uncles and brethren. By respecting the great ministers, he is kept from errors in the practice of government. By kind and considerate treatment of the whole body of officers, they are led to make the most grateful return for his courtesies. By dealing with the mass of the people as his children, they are led to exhort one another to what is good. By encouraging the resort of an classes of artisans, his resources for expenditure are rendered ample. By indulgent treatment of men from a distance, they are brought to resort to him from all quarters. And by kindly cherishing the princes of the states, the whole kingdom is brought to revere him.

“Self-adjustment and purification, with careful regulation of his dress, and the not making a movement contrary to the rules of propriety this is the way for a ruler to cultivate his person. Discarding slanderers, and keeping himself from the seductions of beauty; making light of riches, and giving honor to virtue—this is the way for him to encourage men of worth and talents. Giving them places of honor and large emolument. and sharing with them in their likes and dislikes—this is the way for him to encourage his relatives to love him. Giving them numerous officers to discharge their orders and commissions:—this is the way for him to encourage the great ministers. According to them a generous confidence, and making their emoluments large:—this is the way to encourage the body of officers. Employing them only at the proper times, and making the imposts light:—this is the way to en-

courage the people. By daily examinations and monthly trials, and by making their rations in accordance with their labors:—this is the way to encourage the classes of artisans. To escort them on their departure and meet them on their coming; to commend the good among them, and show compassion to the incompetent:—this is the way to treat indulgently men from a distance. To restore families whose line of succession has been broken, and to revive states that have been extinguished; to reduce to order states that are in confusion, and support those which are in peril; to have fixed times for their own reception at court, and the reception of their envoys; to send them away after liberal treatment, and welcome their coming with small contributions:—this is the way to cherish the princes of the states.

“All who have the government of the kingdom with its states and families have the above nine standard rules. And the means by which they are carried into practice is singleness.

[Rules for Success and Sincerity]

“In all things success depends on previous preparation, and without such previous preparation there is sure to be failure. If what is to be spoken be previously determined, there will be no stumbling. If affairs be previously determined, there will be no difficulty with them. If one’s actions have been previously determined, there will be no sorrow in connection with them. If principles of conduct have been previously determined, the practice of them will be inexhaustible. “When those in inferior situations do not obtain the confidence of the sovereign, they cannot succeed in governing the people. There is a way to obtain the confidence of the sovereign;—if one is not trusted by his friends, he will not get the confidence of his sovereign. There is a way to being trusted by one’s friends;—if one is not obedient to his parents, he will not be true to friends. There is a way to being obedient to one’s parents;—if one, on turning his thoughts in upon himself, finds a want of sincerity, he will not be obedient to his parents. There is a way to the attainment of sincerity in one’s self;—if a man do not understand what is good, he will not attain sincerity in himself.

“Sincerity is the way of Heaven. The attainment of sincerity is the way of men. He who possesses sincerity is he who, without an effort, hits what is right, and apprehends, without the exercise of thought;—he is the sage who naturally and easily embodies the right way. He who attains to sincerity is he who chooses what is good, and firmly holds it fast.

“To this attainment there are requisite the extensive study of what is good, accurate inquiry about it, careful reflection on it, the clear discrimination of it, and the earnest practice of it.

Chapter 6. “The Doctrine of the Mean” by Confucius

“The superior man, while there is anything he has not studied, or while in what he has studied there is anything he cannot understand, Will not intermit his labor. While there is anything he has not inquired about, or anything in what he has inquired about which he does not know, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not reflected on, or anything in what he has reflected on which he does not apprehend, he will not intermit his labor. While there is anything which he has not discriminated or his discrimination is not clear, he will not intermit his labor. If there be anything which he has not practiced, or his practice fails in earnestness, he will not intermit his labor. If another man succeed by one effort, he will use a hundred efforts. If another man succeed by ten efforts, he will use a thousand.

“Let a man proceed in this way, and, though dull, he will surely become intelligent; though weak, he will surely become strong.”

When we have intelligence resulting from sincerity, this condition is to be ascribed to nature; when we have sincerity resulting from intelligence, this condition is to be ascribed to instruction. But given the sincerity, and there shall be the intelligence; given the intelligence, and there shall be the sincerity.



Temple of the Five Hundred Gods, J. D. Cooper

It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can give its full development to his nature. Able to give its full development to his own nature, he can do the same to the nature of other men. Able to give its full development to the nature of other men, he can give their full devel-

opment to the natures of animals and things. Able to give their full development to the natures of creatures and things, he can assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth. Able to assist the transforming and nourishing powers of Heaven and Earth, he may with Heaven and Earth form a ternion.

Next to the above is he who cultivates to the utmost the shoots of goodness in him. From those he can attain to the possession of sincerity. This sincerity becomes apparent. From being apparent, it becomes manifest. From being manifest, it becomes brilliant. Brilliant, it affects others. Affecting others, they are changed by it. Changed by it, they are transformed. It is only he who is possessed of the most complete sincerity that can exist under heaven, who can transform.

It is characteristic of the most entire sincerity to be able to foreknow. When a nation or family is about to flourish, there are sure to be happy omens; and when it is about to perish, there are sure to be unlucky omens. Such events are seen in the milfoil and tortoise, and affect the movements of the four limbs. When calamity or happiness is about to come, the good shall certainly be foreknown by him, and the evil also. Therefore the individual possessed of the most complete sincerity is like a spirit.

Sincerity is that whereby self-completion is effected, and its way is that by which man must direct himself.

Sincerity is the end and beginning of things; without sincerity there would be nothing. On this account, the superior man regards the attainment of sincerity as the most excellent thing.

The possessor of sincerity does not merely accomplish the self-completion of himself. With this quality he completes other men and things also. The completing himself shows his perfect virtue. The completing other men and things shows his knowledge. But these are virtues belonging to the nature, and this is the way by which a union is effected of the external and internal. Therefore, whenever he—the entirely sincere man—employs them,—that is, these virtues, their action will be right.

Hence to entire sincerity there belongs ceaselessness.

Not ceasing, it continues long. Continuing long, it evidences itself.

Evidencing itself, it reaches far. Reaching far, it becomes large and substantial. Large and substantial, it becomes high and brilliant.

Large and substantial;—this is how it contains all things. High and brilliant;—this is how it overspreads all things. Reaching far and continuing long;—this is how it perfects all things.

So large and substantial, the individual possessing it is the co-equal of Earth. So high and brilliant, it makes him the co-equal of Heaven. So far-reaching and long-

continuing, it makes him infinite.

Such being its nature, without any display, it becomes manifested; without any movement, it produces changes; and without any effort, it accomplishes its ends.

The way of Heaven and Earth may be completely declared in one sentence.—They are without any doubleness, and so they produce things in a manner that is unfathomable.

The way of Heaven and Earth is large and substantial, high and brilliant, far-reaching and long-enduring.

The Heaven now before us is only this bright shining spot; but when viewed in its inexhaustible extent, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations of the zodiac, are suspended in it, and all things are overspread by it. The earth before us is but a handful of soil; but when regarded in its breadth and thickness, it sustains mountains like the Hwa and the Yo, without feeling their weight, and contains the rivers and seas, without their leaking away. The mountain now before us appears only a stone; but when contemplated in all the vastness of its size, we see how the grass and trees are produced on it, and birds and beasts dwell on it, and precious things which men treasure up are found on it. The water now before us appears but a ladleful; yet extending our view to its unfathomable depths, the largest tortoises, iguanas, iguanodons, dragons, fishes, and turtles, are produced in it, articles of value and sources of wealth abound in it.

[Virtue]

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "The ordinances of Heaven, how profound are they and unceasing!" The meaning is, that it is thus that Heaven is Heaven. And again, "How illustrious was it, the singleness of the virtue of King Wan!" indicating that it was thus that King Wan was what he was. Singleness likewise is unceasing.

How great is the path proper to the Sage!

Like overflowing water, it sends forth and nourishes all things, and rises up to the height of heaven.

All-complete is its greatness! It embraces the three hundred rules of ceremony, and the three thousand rules of demeanor.

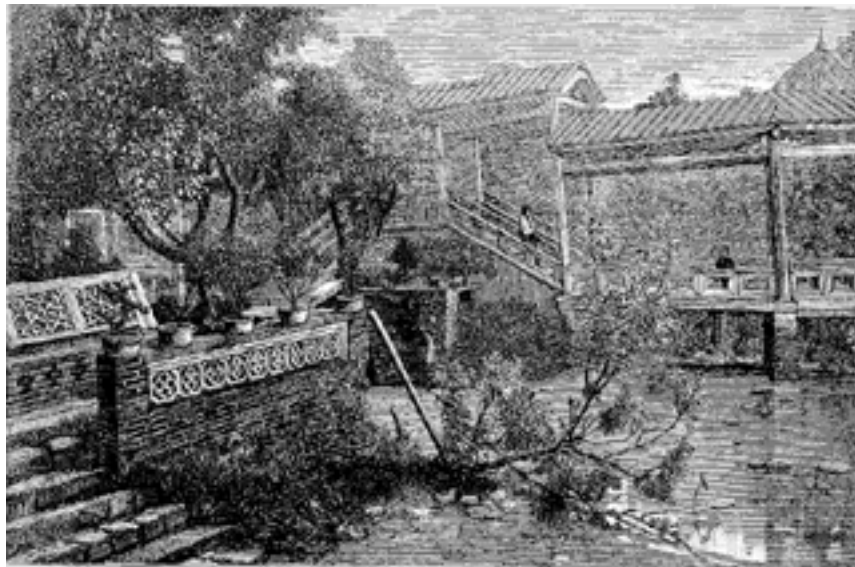
It waits for the proper man, and then it is trodden.

Hence it is said, "Only by perfect virtue can the perfect path, in all its courses, be made a fact."

Chapter 6. “The Doctrine of the Mean” by Confucius

Therefore, the superior man honors his virtuous nature, and maintains constant inquiry and study, seeking to carry it out to its breadth and greatness, so as to omit none of the more exquisite and minute points which it embraces, and to raise it to its greatest height and brilliancy, so as to pursue the course of the Mean. He cherishes his old knowledge, and is continually acquiring new. He exerts an honest, generous earnestness, in the esteem and practice of all propriety.

Thus, when occupying a high situation he is not proud, and in a low situation he is not insubordinate. When the kingdom is well governed, he is sure by his words to rise; and when it is ill governed, he is sure by his silence to command forbearance to himself. Is not this what we find in the *Book of Poetry*,—“Intelligent is he and prudent, and so preserves his person”?



The Willow-Pattern Bridge, J. D. Cooper

The Master said, Let a man who is ignorant be fond of using his own judgment; let a man without rank be fond of assuming a directing power to himself; let a man who is living in the present age go back to the ways of antiquity;—on the persons of all who act thus calamities will be sure to come.

To no one but the Son of Heaven does it belong to order ceremonies, to fix the measures, and to determine the written characters.

Now over the kingdom, carriages have all wheels, of the same size; all writing is with the same characters; and for conduct there are the same rules.

One may occupy the throne, but if he have not the proper virtue, he may not dare

to make ceremonies or music. One may have the virtue, but if he do not occupy the throne, he may not presume to make ceremonies or music.

[Institutions and Ceremony of the Ruler]

The Master said, “I may describe the ceremonies of the Hsia dynasty, but Chi cannot sufficiently attest my words. I have learned the ceremonies of the Yin dynasty, and in Sung they still continue. I have learned the ceremonies of Chau, which are now used, and I follow Chau.”

He who attains to the sovereignty of the kingdom, having those three important things, shall be able to effect that there shall be few errors under his government.

However excellent may have been the regulations of those of former times, they cannot be attested. Not being attested, they cannot command credence, and not being credited, the people would not follow them. However excellent might be the regulations made by one in an inferior situation, he is not in a position to be honored. Unhonored, he cannot command credence, and not being credited, the people would not follow his rules.

Therefore the institutions of the Ruler are rooted in his own character and conduct, and sufficient attestation of them is given by the masses of the people. He examines them by comparison with those of the three kings, and finds them without mistake. He sets them up before Heaven and Earth, and finds nothing in them contrary to their mode of operation. He presents himself with them before spiritual beings, and no doubts about them arise. He is prepared to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, and has no misgivings.

His presenting himself with his institutions before spiritual beings, without any doubts arising about them, shows that he knows Heaven. His being prepared, without any misgivings, to wait for the rise of a sage a hundred ages after, shows that he knows men.

Such being the case, the movements of such a ruler, illustrating his institutions, constitute an example to the world for ages. His acts are for ages a law to the kingdom. His words are for ages a lesson to the kingdom. Those who are far from him look longingly for him; and those who are near him are never wearied with him.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*,—“Not disliked there, not tired of here, from day to day and night tonight, will they perpetuate their praise.” Never has there been a ruler, who did not realize this description, that obtained an early renown throughout the kingdom.

Chung-ni handed down the doctrines of Yao and Shun, as if they had been his ancestors, and elegantly displayed the regulations of Wan and Wul taking them as his model. Above, he harmonized with the times of Heaven, and below, he was conformed to the water and land.

He may be compared to Heaven and Earth in their supporting and containing, their overshadowing and curtaining, all things. He may be compared to the four seasons in their alternating progress, and to the sun and moon in their successive shining.

All things are nourished together without their injuring one another. The courses of the seasons, and of the sun and moon, are pursued without any collision among them. The smaller energies are like river currents; the greater energies are seen in mighty transformations. It is this which makes heaven and earth so great.

It is only he, possessed of all sagely qualities that can exist under heaven, who shows himself quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, fitted to exercise rule; magnanimous, generous, benign, and mild, fitted to exercise forbearance; impulsive, energetic, firm, and enduring, fitted to maintain a firm hold; self-adjusted, grave, never swerving from the Mean, and correct, fitted to command reverence; accomplished, distinctive, concentrative, and searching, fitted to exercise discrimination.

All-embracing is he and vast, deep and active as a fountain, sending forth in their due season his virtues.

All-embracing and vast, he is like Heaven. Deep and active as a fountain, he is like the abyss. He is seen, and the people all reverence him; he speaks, and the people all believe him; he acts, and the people all are pleased with him.

Therefore his fame overspreads the Middle Kingdom, and extends to all barbarous tribes. Wherever ships and carriages reach; wherever the strength of man penetrates; wherever the heavens overshadow and the earth sustains; wherever the sun and moon shine; wherever frosts and dews fall:—all who have blood and breath unfeignedly honor and love him. Hence it is said,—“He is the equal of Heaven.”

[Chün Tzu and Perfect Virtue]

It is only the individual possessed of the most entire sincerity that can exist under Heaven, who can adjust the great invariable relations of mankind, establish the great fundamental virtues of humanity, and know the transforming and nurturing operations of Heaven and Earth;—shall this individual have any being or anything beyond himself on which he depends?

Call him man in his ideal, how earnest is he! Call him an abyss, how deep is he!
Call him Heaven, how vast is he!

Who can know him, but he who is indeed quick in apprehension, clear in discernment, of far-reaching intelligence, and all-embracing knowledge, possessing all Heavenly virtue?

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "Over her embroidered robe she puts a plain single garment," intimating a dislike to the display of the elegance of the former. Just so, it is the way of the superior man to prefer the concealment of his virtue, while it daily becomes more illustrious, and it is the way of the mean man to seek notoriety, while he daily goes more and more to ruin. It is characteristic of the superior man, appearing insipid, yet never to produce satiety; while showing a simple negligence, yet to have his accomplishments recognized; while seemingly plain, yet to be discriminating. He knows how what is distant lies in what is near. He knows where the wind proceeds from. He knows how what is minute becomes manifested. Such a one, we may be sure, will enter into virtue.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "Although the fish sink and lie at the bottom, it is still quite clearly seen." Therefore the superior man examines his heart, that there may be nothing wrong there, and that he may have no cause for dissatisfaction with himself. That wherein the superior man cannot be equaled is simply this,—his work which other men cannot see.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "Looked at in your apartment, be there free from shame as being exposed to the light of Heaven." Therefore, the superior man, even when he is not moving, has a feeling of reverence, and while he speaks not, he has the feeling of truthfulness.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "In silence is the offering presented, and the spirit approached to; there is not the slightest contention." Therefore the superior man does not use rewards, and the people are stimulated to virtue. He does not show anger, and the people are awed more than by hatchets and battle-axes.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "What needs no display is virtue. All the princes imitate it." Therefore, the superior man being sincere and reverential, the whole world is conducted to a state of happy tranquility.

It is said in the *Book of Poetry*, "I regard with pleasure your brilliant virtue, making no great display of itself in sounds and appearances." The Master said, "Among the appliances to transform the people, sound and appearances are but trivial influences. It is said in another ode, 'His Virtue is light as a hair.' Still, a hair will admit of comparison as to its size. 'The doings of the supreme Heaven have neither sound nor smell.' That is perfect virtue."

From the reading...

“Benevolence is the characteristic element of humanity, and the great exercise of it is in loving relatives.”



Great Gateway, Temple of Confucius, J. D. Cooper

Topics Worth Investigating

1. Examine carefully how Confucius’ Doctrine of the Mean differs from Aristotle’s Doctrine of the Mean as discussed in Book II 6-7 of the *Nicomachean Ethics*.³

In everything that is continuous and divisible it is possible to take more, less, or an equal amount, and that either in terms of the thing itself or relatively to us; and the equal is an intermediate between excess and defect. By the intermediate in the

3. Aristotle. *Ethica Nicomachea*. Book II Chapter 6 Lines 25-35. Translated by Richard McKeon.

Chapter 6. “The Doctrine of the Mean” by Confucius

object I mean that which is equidistant from each of the extremes, which is one and the same for all men; by the intermediate relatively to us that which is neither too much nor too little—and this is not one, nor the same for all. For instance, if ten is many and two is few, six is the intermediate, taken in terms of the object; for it exceeds and is exceeded by an equal amount; this is the intermediate according to arithmetical proportion. But the intermediate relatively to us is not to be taken so; if ten pounds are too much for a particular person to eat and two too little, it does not follow that the trainer will order six pounds; for this also is perhaps too much for the person who is to take it, or too little—too little for Milo,⁴ too much for the beginner in athletic exercises.

2. Analyze how Confucius’ statement of the principle of reciprocity (“What you do not like when done to yourself, do not do to others”) differs from the Golden Rule expressed in *Matthew* 7:12 and in *Luke* 6:31. In your answer, you might wish to consult the logical relation of contraposition in a logic textbook in order to compare the various formulations.
3. Confucius writes, “The superior man does what is proper to the station in which he is; he does not desire to go beyond this.” Does this statement imply that the superior man follows the philosophy of ethical relativism? Cannot his actions be objectively determined?
4. Explain “the outgoings of sincerity” according to this citation from the *Book of Poetry*, “The approaches of the spirits, you cannot surmise; and can you treat them with indifference?”

4. A famous wrestler

Chapter 7

Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu



Lao Tzu, 18th Century French Print

About the author...

Lao Tzu (6th. cent. B.C.), according to Chinese legend, was an imperial court keeper of the archives. As an old man, discouraged with honesty of those around him, he left to go to the mountains of Tibet but was accosted at Kwan Yin (Hank Pass) by the guard Yin Hsi at the western border of China. The guard demanded that Lao Tzu present his teachings before he could pass. Puportedly, at that time, Lao Tzu composed the eighty-one verses of the *Tao Te Ching*.

About the work...

The name *Tao Te Ching*¹ can be translated as “classic of the way and power of excellence.” The *Tao Te Ching* expresses the harmony and simplicity of natural action; in point of fact, the scripture expresses the doctrine of *not* striving purposely—a kind of non-action or *wu-wei*. The goal of life is for each person to be one with *Tao*, the underlying source of the unity of nature.

Although some parts of the *Tao Te Ching* might have been written in the 6th century, probably most of the scriptural-text dates from around the 3rd century B.C.

From the reading...

“The *Tao* in its regular course does nothing (for the sake of doing it), and so there is nothing which it does not do.”

Ideas of Interest from *The Tao Te Ching*

1. What are the two aspects of the Mystery described in Chapter 1?
2. Explain the doctrine of *wu-wei* or non-action.
3. What is meant by the assertion that “The highest excellence is like (that of) water.” Provide examples with your explanation.
4. What is meant by leaving a vessel unfilled? Why should “a vessel” be left unfilled? How is it that emptiness is useful?
5. What are some of the moral qualities of the sage?
6. Describe of what the happiness of attaining to the *Tao* consists.
7. Explain what it means to “hide the light of [your] procedure” or to leave no traces. Is this notion a kind of ecological behavior?
8. If the *Tao* does nothing for the sake of doing it, then how is it that there is noting it does not do.?

1. Lao Tzu. *The Tao Te Ching*. Trans. James Legge. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1891.

9. Discuss whether the movement of *Tao* is by contraries or by contradictories. Try to ascertain why this would be so.
10. What are the relations between *Tao* and individual contentment or societal peace?
11. Discuss the possibility of “doing nothing” on purpose? How does this trick of language give insight into “the Way” for excellence? Moreover, how is it in such a life, “the tiger [finds no] place in which to fix its paws”?
12. How are gentleness, economy, and modesty in accord with *Tao*?

The Reading Selection from *The Tao Te Ching*

Part I. *The Tao Te Ching*.

Ch. 1

1. The *Tao* that can be trodden is not the enduring and unchanging *Tao*. The name that can be named is not the enduring and unchanging name.
2. (Conceived of as) having no name, it is the Originator of heaven and earth; (conceived of as) having a name, it is the Mother of all things.
3. Always without desire we must be found,
If its deep mystery we would sound;
But if desire always within us be,
Its outer fringe is all that we shall see.
4. Under these two aspects, it is really the same; but as development takes place, it receives the different names. Together we call them the Mystery. Where the Mystery is the deepest is the gate of all that is subtle and wonderful.

Ch. 2

1. All in the world know the beauty of the beautiful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what ugliness is; they all know the skill of the skilful, and in doing this they have (the idea of) what the want of skill is.
2. So it is that existence and non-existence give birth the one to (the idea of) the other; that difficulty and ease produce the one (the idea of) the other; that length

and shortness fashion out the one the figure of the other; that (the ideas of) height and lowness arise from the contrast of the one with the other; that the musical notes and tones become harmonious through the relation of one with another; and that being before and behind give the idea of one following another.

3. Therefore the sage manages affairs without doing anything, and conveys his instructions without the use of speech.

From the reading...

“The highest excellence is like (that of) water.”

4. All things spring up, and there is not one which declines to show itself; they grow, and there is no claim made for their ownership; they go through their processes, and there is no expectation (of a reward for the results). The work is accomplished, and there is no resting in it (as an achievement).

The work is done, but how no one can see;
'Tis this that makes the power not cease to be.

Ch. 7

1. Heaven is long-enduring and earth continues long. The reason why heaven and earth are able to endure and continue thus long is because they do not live of, or for, themselves. This is how they are able to continue and endure.

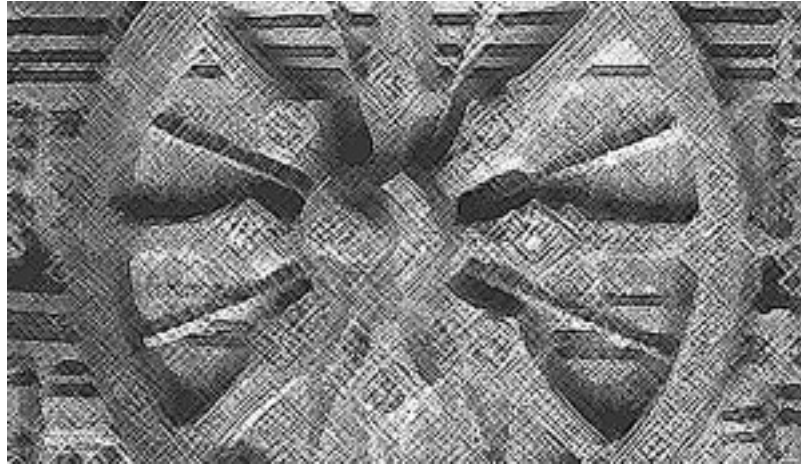
2. Therefore the sage puts his own person last, and yet it is found in the foremost place; he treats his person as if it were foreign to him, and yet that person is preserved. Is it not because he has no personal and private ends, that therefore such ends are realised?

Ch. 8

1. The highest excellence is like (that of) water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things, and in its occupying, without striving (to the contrary), the low place which all men dislike. Hence (its way) is near to (that of) the *Tao*.

2. The excellence of a residence is in (the suitability of) the place; that of the mind is in abysmal stillness; that of associations is in their being with the virtuous; that of government is in its securing good order; that of (the conduct of) affairs is in its ability; and that of (the initiation of) any movement is in its timeliness.

3. And when (one with the highest excellence) does not wrangle (about his low position), no one finds fault with him.



The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends.

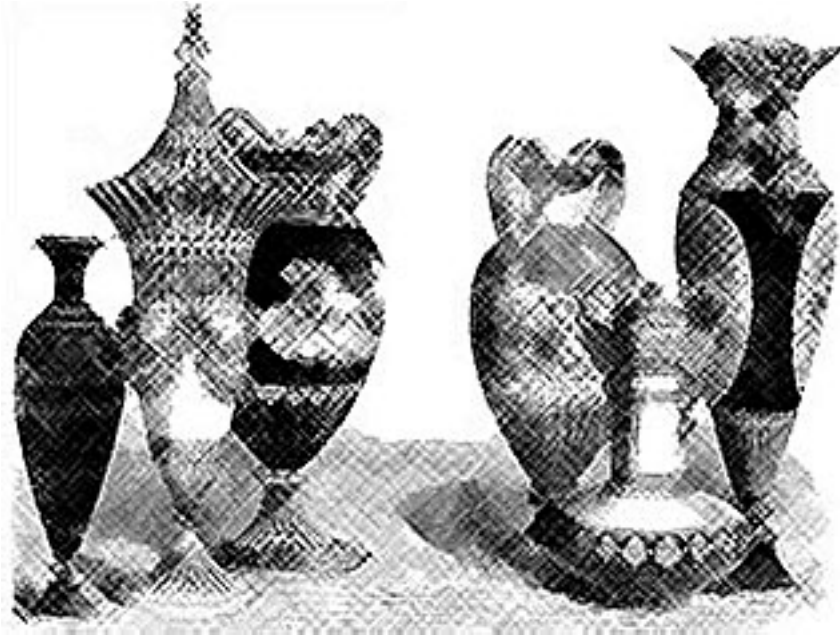
Ch. 9

1. It is better to leave a vessel unfilled, than to attempt to carry it when it is full. If you keep feeling a point that has been sharpened, the point cannot long preserve its sharpness.

2. When gold and jade fill the hall, their possessor cannot keep them safe. When wealth and honours lead to arrogancy, this brings its evil on itself. When the work is done, and one's name is becoming distinguished, to withdraw into obscurity is the way of Heaven.

Ch. 11

1. The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends. Clay is fashioned into vessels; but it is on their empty hollowness, that their use depends. The door and windows are cut out (from the walls) to form an apartment; but it is on the empty space (within), that its use depends. Therefore, what has a (positive) existence serves for profitable adaptation, and what has not that for (actual) usefulness.



Vases, James D. McCabe

Ch. 14

1. We look at it, and we do not see it, and we name it “the Equable.” We listen to it, and we do not hear it, and we name it “the Inaudible.” We try to grasp it, and do not get hold of it, and we name it “the Subtle.” With these three qualities, it cannot be made the subject of description; and hence we blend them together and obtain The One.

2. Its upper part is not bright, and its lower part is not obscure. Ceaseless in its action, it yet cannot be named, and then it again returns and becomes nothing. This is called the Form of the Formless, and the Semblance of the Invisible; this is called the Fleeting and Indeterminable.

From the reading...

“The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends.”

Chapter 7. Selections from *The Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu

3. We meet it and do not see its Front; we follow it, and do not see its Back. When we can lay hold of the *Tao* of old to direct the things of the present day, and are able to know it as it was of old in the beginning, this is called (unwinding) the clue of *Tao*.

Ch. 20

1. When we renounce learning we have no troubles.
The (ready) “yes,” and (flattering) “yea;”—
Small is the difference they display.
But mark their issues, good and ill;—
What space the gulf between shall fill?

What all men fear is indeed to be feared; but how wide and without end is the range of questions (asking to be discussed)!

2. The multitude of men look satisfied and pleased; as if enjoying a full banquet, as if mounted on a tower in spring. I alone seem listless and still, my desires having as yet given no indication of their presence. I am like an infant which has not yet smiled. I look dejected and forlorn, as if I had no home to go to. The multitude of men all have enough and to spare. I alone seem to have lost everything. My mind is that of a stupid man; I am in a state of chaos.

Ordinary men look bright and intelligent, while I alone seem to be benighted. They look full of discrimination, while I alone am dull and confused. I seem to be carried about as on the sea, drifting as if I had nowhere to rest. All men have their spheres of action, while I alone seem dull and incapable, like a rude borderer. (Thus) I alone am different from other men, but I value the nursing-mother (the *Tao*).

Ch. 22

1. The partial becomes complete; the crooked, straight; the empty, full; the worn out, new. He whose (desires) are few gets them; he whose (desires) are many goes astray.

2. Therefore the sage holds in his embrace the one thing (of humility), and manifests it to all the world. He is free from self-display, and therefore he shines; from self-assertion, and therefore he is distinguished; from self-boasting, and therefore his merit is acknowledged; from self-complacency, and therefore he acquires superiority. It is because he is thus free from striving that therefore no one in the world is able to strive with him.

3. That saying of the ancients that “the partial becomes complete” was not vainly spoken:—all real completion is comprehended under it.

Ch. 23

1. Abstaining from speech marks him who is obeying the spontaneity of his nature. A violent wind does not last for a whole morning; a sudden rain does not last for the whole day. To whom is it that these (two) things are owing? To Heaven and Earth. If Heaven and Earth cannot make such (spasmodic) actions last long, how much less can man!

2. Therefore when one is making the *Tao* his business, those who are also pursuing it, agree with him in it, and those who are making the manifestation of its course their object agree with him in that; while even those who are failing in both these things agree with him where they fail.

3. Hence, those with whom he agrees as to the *Tao* have the happiness of attaining to it; those with whom he agrees as to its manifestation have the happiness of attaining to it; and those with whom he agrees in their failure have also the happiness of attaining (to the *Tao*). (But) when there is not faith sufficient (on his part), a want of faith (in him) ensues (on the part of the others).

Ch. 24

He who stands on his tiptoes does not stand firm; he who stretches his legs does not walk (easily). (So), he who displays himself does not shine; he who asserts his own views is not distinguished; he who vaunts himself does not find his merit acknowledged; he who is self-conceited has no superiority allowed to him. Such conditions, viewed from the standpoint of the *Tao*, are like remnants of food, or a tumour on the body, which all dislike. Hence those who pursue (the course) of the *Tao* do not adopt and allow them.

From the reading...

“It is because he is thus free from striving that therefore no one in the world is able to strive with him.”

Ch. 25

1. There was something undefined and complete, coming into existence before Heaven and Earth. How still it was and formless, standing alone, and undergoing no change, reaching everywhere and in no danger (of being exhausted)! It may be regarded as the Mother of all things.

2. I do not know its name, and I give it the designation of the *Tao* (the Way or Course). Making an effort (further) to give it a name I call it The Great.

Chapter 7. Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

3. Great, it passes on (in constant flow). Passing on, it becomes remote. Having become remote, it returns. Therefore the *Tao* is great; Heaven is great; Earth is great; and the (sage) king is also great. In the universe there are four that are great, and the (sage) king is one of them.

4. Man takes his law from the Earth; the Earth takes its law from Heaven; Heaven takes its law from the *Tao*. The law of the *Tao* is its being what it is.

Ch. 27

1. The skilful traveller leaves no traces of his wheels or footsteps; the skilful speaker says nothing that can be found fault with or blamed; the skilful reckoner uses no tallies; the skilful closer needs no bolts or bars, while to open what he has shut will be impossible; the skilful binder uses no strings or knots, while to unloose what he has bound will be impossible. In the same way the sage is always skilful at saving men, and so he does not cast away any man; he is always skilful at saving things, and so he does not cast away anything. This is called "Hiding the light of his procedure."

2. Therefore the man of skill is a master (to be looked up to) by him who has not the skill; and he who has not the skill is the helper of (the reputation of) him who has the skill. If the one did not honour his master, and the other did not rejoice in his helper, an (observer), though intelligent, might greatly err about them. This is called "The utmost degree of mystery."

Ch. 29

1. If any one should wish to get the kingdom for himself, and to effect this by what he does, I see that he will not succeed. The kingdom is a spirit-like thing, and cannot be got by active doing. He who would so win it destroys it; he who would hold it in his grasp loses it.

2. The course and nature of things is such that
What was in front is now behind;
What warmed anon we freezing find.
Strength is of weakness oft the spoil;
The store in ruins mocks our toil.

Hence the sage puts away excessive effort, extravagance, and easy indulgence.

Ch. 32

1. The *Tao*, considered as unchanging, has no name.

2. Though in its primordial simplicity it may be small, the whole world dares not deal with (one embodying) it as a minister. If a feudal prince or the king could guard and hold it, all would spontaneously submit themselves to him.

From the reading...

“The skilful traveller leaves no traces of his wheels or footsteps.”

3. Heaven and Earth (under its guidance) unite together and send down the sweet dew, which, without the directions of men, reaches equally everywhere as of its own accord.

4. As soon as it proceeds to action, it has a name. When it once has that name, (men) can know to rest in it. When they know to rest in it, they can be free from all risk of failure and error.

5. The relation of the *Tao* to all the world is like that of the great rivers and seas to the streams from the valleys.

Ch. 37

1. The *Tao* in its regular course does nothing (for the sake of doing it), and so there is nothing which it does not do.

2. If princes and kings were able to maintain it, all things would of themselves be transformed by them.

3. If this transformation became to me an object of desire, I would express the desire by the nameless simplicity.

Simplicity without a name
Is free from all external aim.
With no desire, at rest and still,
All things go right as of their will.

Part II. *The Tao Ching.*

Ch. 38

1. (Those who) possessed in highest degree the attributes (of the *Tao*) did not (seek) to show them, and therefore they possessed them (in fullest measure). (Those who)

Chapter 7. Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

possessed in a lower degree those attributes (sought how) not to lose them, and therefore they did not possess them (in fullest measure).

2. (Those who) possessed in the highest degree those attributes did nothing (with a purpose), and had no need to do anything. (Those who) possessed them in a lower degree were (always) doing, and had need to be so doing.

3. (Those who) possessed the highest benevolence were (always seeking) to carry it out, and had no need to be doing so. (Those who) possessed the highest righteousness were (always seeking) to carry it out, and had need to be so doing.

4. (Those who) possessed the highest (sense of) propriety were (always seeking) to show it, and when men did not respond to it, they bared the arm and marched up to them.

5. Thus it was that when the *Tao* was lost, its attributes appeared; when its attributes were lost, benevolence appeared; when benevolence was lost, righteousness appeared; and when righteousness was lost, the proprieties appeared.

6. Now propriety is the attenuated form of leal-heartedness and good faith, and is also the commencement of disorder; swift apprehension is (only) a flower of the *Tao*, and is the beginning of stupidity.

7. Thus it is that the Great man abides by what is solid, and eschews what is flimsy; dwells with the fruit and not with the flower. It is thus that he puts away the one and makes choice of the other.

Ch. 40

1. The movement of the *Tao*
By contraries proceeds;
And weakness marks the course
Of *Tao*'s mighty deeds.

2. All things under heaven sprang from It as existing (and named); that existence sprang from It as non-existent (and not named).

Ch. 43

1. The softest thing in the world dashes against and overcomes the hardest; that which has no (substantial) existence enters where there is no crevice. I know hereby what advantage belongs to doing nothing (with a purpose).

From the reading...

“There is no guilt greater than to sanction ambition; no calamity greater than to be discontented with one’s lot; no fault greater than the wish to be getting.”

2. There are few in the world who attain to the teaching without words, and the advantage arising from non-action.

Ch. 46

1. When the *Tao* prevails in the world, they send back their swift horses to (draw) the dung-carts. When the *Tao* is disregarded in the world, the war-horses breed in the border lands.

2. There is no guilt greater than to sanction ambition; no calamity greater than to be discontented with one’s lot; no fault greater than the wish to be getting. Therefore the sufficiency of contentment is an enduring and unchanging sufficiency.

Ch. 47

1. Without going outside his door, one understands (all that takes place) under the sky; without looking out from his window, one sees the *Tao* of Heaven. The farther that one goes out (from himself), the less he knows.

2. Therefore the sages got their knowledge without travelling; gave their (right) names to things without seeing them; and accomplished their ends without any purpose of doing so.

Ch. 48

1. He who devotes himself to learning (seeks) from day to day to increase (his knowledge); he who devotes himself to the *Tao* (seeks) from day to day to diminish (his doing).



Street Scene, Chefang China, Library of Congress

2. He diminishes it and again diminishes it, till he arrives at doing nothing (on purpose). Having arrived at this point of non-action, there is nothing which he does not do.

3. He who gets as his own all under heaven does so by giving himself no trouble (with that end). If one take trouble (with that end), he is not equal to getting as his own all under heaven.

Ch. 49

1. The sage has no invariable mind of his own; he makes the mind of the people his mind.

2. To those who are good (to me), I am good; and to those who are not good (to me), I am also good;—and thus (all) get to be good. To those who are sincere (with me), I am sincere; and to those who are not sincere (with me), I am also sincere;—and thus (all) get to be sincere.

3. The sage has in the world an appearance of indecision, and keeps his mind in a state of indifference to all. The people all keep their eyes and ears directed to him, and he deals with them all as his children.

Ch. 50

1. Men come forth and live; they enter (again) and die.

2. Of every ten three are ministers of life (to themselves); and three are ministers of death.

3. There are also three in every ten whose aim is to live, but whose movements tend to the land (or place) of death. And for what reason? Because of their excessive endeavours to perpetuate life.

4. But I have heard that he who is skilful in managing the life entrusted to him for a time travels on the land without having to shun rhinoceros or tiger, and enters a host without having to avoid buff coat or sharp weapon. The rhinoceros finds no place in him into which to thrust its horn, nor the tiger a place in which to fix its claws, nor the weapon a place to admit its point. And for what reason? Because there is in him no place of death.

Ch. 51

1. All things are produced by the *Tao*, and nourished by its outflowing operation. They receive their forms according to the nature of each, and are completed according to the circumstances of their condition. Therefore all things without exception honour the *Tao*, and exalt its outflowing operation.

2. This honouring of the *Tao* and exalting of its operation is not the result of any ordination, but always a spontaneous tribute.

3. Thus it is that the *Tao* produces (all things), nourishes them, brings them to their full growth, nurses them, completes them, matures them, maintains them, and overspreads them.

4. It produces them and makes no claim to the possession of them; it carries them through their processes and does not vaunt its ability in doing so; it brings them to maturity and exercises no control over them;—this is called its mysterious operation.

Ch. 56

1. He who knows (the *Tao*) does not (care to) speak (about it); he who is (ever ready to) speak about it does not know it.

2. He (who knows it) will keep his mouth shut and close the portals (of his nostrils). He will blunt his sharp points and unravel the complications of things; he will temper his brightness, and bring himself into agreement with the obscurity (of others). This is called “the Mysterious Agreement.”

From the reading...

“(The master of it) anticipates things that are difficult while they are easy, and does things that would become great while they are small.”

Chapter 7. Selections from *The Tao Te Ching* by Lao Tzu

3. (Such an one) cannot be treated familiarly or distantly; he is beyond all consideration of profit or injury; of nobility or meanness:—he is the noblest man under heaven.

Ch. 63

1. (It is the way of the *Tao*) to act without (thinking of) acting; to conduct affairs without (feeling the) trouble of them; to taste without discerning any flavour; to consider what is small as great, and a few as many; and to recompense injury with kindness.

2. (The master of it) anticipates things that are difficult while they are easy, and does things that would become great while they are small. All difficult things in the world are sure to arise from a previous state in which they were easy, and all great things from one in which they were small. Therefore the sage, while he never does what is great, is able on that account to accomplish the greatest things.

3. He who lightly promises is sure to keep but little faith; he who is continually thinking things easy is sure to find them difficult. Therefore the sage sees difficulty even in what seems easy, and so never has any difficulties.

Ch. 64

1. That which is at rest is easily kept hold of; before a thing has given indications of its presence, it is easy to take measures against it; that which is brittle is easily broken; that which is very small is easily dispersed. Action should be taken before a thing has made its appearance; order should be secured before disorder has begun.

2. The tree which fills the arms grew from the tiniest sprout; the tower of nine storeys rose from a (small) heap of earth; the journey of a thousand *li* commenced with a single step.

3. He who acts (with an ulterior purpose) does harm; he who takes hold of a thing (in the same way) loses his hold. The sage does not act (so), and therefore does no harm; he does not lay hold (so), and therefore does not lose his hold. (But) people in their conduct of affairs are constantly ruining them when they are on the eve of success. If they were careful at the end, as (they should be) at the beginning, they would not so ruin them.

4. Therefore the sage desires what (other men) do not desire, and does not prize things difficult to get; he learns what (other men) do not learn, and turns back to what the multitude of men have passed by. Thus he helps the natural development of all things, and does not dare to act (with an ulterior purpose of his own).

Ch. 66

Chapter 7. Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

1. That whereby the rivers and seas are able to receive the homage and tribute of all the valley streams, is their skill in being lower than they;—it is thus that they are the kings of them all. So it is that the sage (ruler), wishing to be above men, puts himself by his words below them, and, wishing to be before them, places his person behind them.

2. In this way though he has his place above them, men do not feel his weight, nor though he has his place before them, do they feel it an injury to them.

3. Therefore all in the world delight to exalt him and do not weary of him. Because he does not strive, no one finds it possible to strive with him.

Ch. 38

1. All the world says that, while my *Tao* is great, it yet appears to be inferior (to other systems of teaching). Now it is just its greatness that makes it seem to be inferior. If it were like any other (system), for long would its smallness have been known!



Lotus, Library of Congress

2. But I have three precious things which I prize and hold fast. The first is gentleness; the second is economy; and the third is shrinking from taking precedence of others.

3. With that gentleness I can be bold; with that economy I can be liberal; shrinking from taking precedence of others, I can become a vessel of the highest honour.

Chapter 7. Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

Now-a-days they give up gentleness and are all for being bold; economy, and are all for being liberal; the hindmost place, and seek only to be foremost;—(of all which the end is) death.

4. Gentleness is sure to be victorious even in battle, and firmly to maintain its ground. Heaven will save its possessor, by his (very) gentleness protecting him.

Ch. 68

He who in (*Tao's*) wars has skill
Assumes no martial port;
He who fights with most good will
To rage makes no resort.
He who vanquishes yet still
Keeps from his foes apart;
He whose hests men most fulfil
Yet humbly plies his art...
Thus we say, "He ne'er contends,
And therein is his might."
Thus we say, "Men's wills he bends,
That they with him unite."
Thus we say, "Like Heaven's his ends,
No sage of old more bright."

Ch. 71

1. To know and yet (think) we do not know is the highest (attainment); not to know (and yet think) we do know is a disease.

2. It is simply by being pained at (the thought of) having this disease that we are preserved from it. The sage has not the disease. He knows the pain that would be inseparable from it, and therefore he does not have it.

Ch. 72

1. When the people do not fear what they ought to fear, that which is their great dread will come on them.

2. Let them not thoughtlessly indulge themselves in their ordinary life; let them not act as if weary of what that life depends on.

3. It is by avoiding such indulgence that such weariness does not arise.

4. Therefore the sage knows (these things) of himself, but does not parade (his knowledge); loves, but does not (appear to set a) value on, himself. And thus he puts the latter alternative away and makes choice of the former.

Ch. 77

1. May not the Way (or *Tao*) of Heaven be compared to the (method of) bending a bow? The (part of the bow) which was high is brought low, and what was low is raised up. (So Heaven) diminishes where there is superabundance, and supplements where there is deficiency.
2. It is the Way of Heaven to diminish superabundance, and to supplement deficiency. It is not so with the way of man. He takes away from those who have not enough to add to his own superabundance.
3. Who can take his own superabundance and therewith serve all under heaven? Only he who is in possession of the *Tao*!

From the reading...

“(The master of it) anticipates things that are difficult while they are easy, and does things that would become great while they are small.”

4. Therefore the (ruling) sage acts without claiming the results as his; he achieves his merit and does not rest (arrogantly) in it:—he does not wish to display his superiority.

Ch. 38

There is nothing in the world more soft and weak than water, and yet for attacking things that are firm and strong there is nothing that can take precedence of it;—for there is nothing (so effectual) for which it can be changed.

2. Every one in the world knows that the soft overcomes the hard, and the weak the strong, but no one is able to carry it out in practice.
3. Therefore a sage has said,
“He who accepts his state’s reproach,
Is hailed therefore its altars’ lord;
To him who bears men’s direful woes
They all the name of King accord.”

4. Words that are strictly true seem to be paradoxical.

Ch. 79

Chapter 7. Selections from The Tao Te Ching by Lao Tzu

1. When a reconciliation is effected (between two parties) after a great animosity, there is sure to be a grudge remaining (in the mind of the one who was wrong). And how can this be beneficial (to the other)?
2. Therefore (to guard against this), the sage keeps the left-hand portion of the record of the engagement, and does not insist on the (speedy) fulfilment of it by the other party. (So), he who has the attributes (of the *Tao*) regards (only) the conditions of the engagement, while he who has not those attributes regards only the conditions favourable to himself.
3. In the Way of Heaven, there is no partiality of love; it is always on the side of the good man.

Ch. 81

1. Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere. Those who are skilled (in the *Tao*) do not dispute (about it); the disputatious are not skilled in it. Those who know (the *Tao*) are not extensively learned; the extensively learned do not know it.
2. The sage does not accumulate (for himself). The more that he expends for others, the more does he possess of his own; the more that he gives to others, the more does he have himself.
3. With all the sharpness of the Way of Heaven, it injures not; with all the doing in the way of the sage he does not strive.

From the reading . . .

“(The master of it) anticipates things that are difficult while they are easy, and does things that would become great while they are small.”



There is nothing in the world more soft and weak than water, and yet for attacking things that are firm and strong there is nothing that can take precedence of it. . . ,
Library of Congress

Topics Worth Investigating

1. Compare and contrast the Western doctrine of polar opposites with the Eastern doctrine of *yin—yang*. Are these doctrines metaphysical or logical or both?
2. Clarify the doctrine of *wu-wei* or non-action. The *The Tao Te Ching* emphasizes “there is no expectation (of a reward for the results). The work is accomplished and there is no resting in it (as an achievement).” Contrast this idea with that of the *Bhagavad Gita*, to do “all work as an offering to God abandoning attachment to the results.”
3. The *The Tao Te Ching* states “The law of the *Tao* is its being what it is.” In what ways is this remark profound and not an empty tautology? Is the *Tao* considered in this manner analogous to the Western notion of the laws of nature?
4. Contrast the political advice for the strategy of winning in the *The Tao Te Ching* with Miyamoto Musashi’s *The Book of Five Rings* and Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*.

Chapter 8

“The Ten Oxherding Pictures” by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki



Ox, (detail) Library of Congress

About the author...

Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki (1870-1966) is an influential scholar of Japanese Buddhist thought and one of the first persons to introduce Buddhism to the West. He is perhaps best known for his description of Zen history and practice in *Zen Buddhism*. The existentialist Martin Heidegger, the psychologists Carl Jung and Erich Fromm, and the musician John Cage, all acknowledge D. T. Suzuki's influence on their work and thought.

About the work...

In his *Manual of Zen Buddhism*,¹ D. T. Suzuki has compiled gathas and prayers, dharanis, and sutras from Zen Masters used in monastery life. The “Ten Oxherding Pictures” is drawn from Chapter IV of that anthology which is entitled “From the Chinese Masters.” The ox-herding pictures represent the stages of progress or levels of realization in zen practice. The ordinary, everyday self doing everyday activities can reveal the “true self” through enlightenment. The ox-herder does not retreat from the world.

From the reading...

“He now knows that... the objective world is a reflection of the Self.”

Ideas of Interest from “The Ten Oxherding Pictures”

1. What does the ox symbolize in the various series of ox-herding pictures? Why was this animal chosen for this metaphor?
2. In Kaku-an’s account, what is meant by “seeing” or “finding” the traces?
3. Why does the ox require herding? How in life does one “herd the ox”?
4. What is the relation between “gain and loss” and “the taming of the ox”?
5. What is the signification of the “marketplace”?
6. Once enlightenment is attained, do we remain aloof from the everydayness of the world?
7. What does Kaku-an mean by returning to the Origin or the Source?

1. Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki. *Manual of Zen Buddhism*. 1934.

The Reading Selection from "The Ten Oxherding Pictures"

Preliminary

The author of these "Ten Oxherding Pictures" is said to be a Zen master of the Sung Dynasty known as Kaku-an Shi-en (Kuo-an Shih-yuan) belonging to the Rinzai school. He is also the author of the poems and introductory words attached to the pictures. He was not however the first who attempted to illustrate by means of pictures stages of Zen discipline, for in his general preface to the pictures he refers to another Zen master called Seikyo (Ching-chu), probably a contemporary of his, who made use of the ox to explain his Zen teaching. But in Seikyo's case the gradual development of the Zen life was indicated by a progressive whitening of the animal, ending in the disappearance of the whole being. There were in this only five pictures, instead of ten as by Kaku-an. Kaku-an thought this was somewhat misleading because of an empty circle being made the goal of Zen discipline. Some might take mere emptiness as all important and final. Hence his improvement resulting in the "Ten Oxherding Pictures" as we have them now.

According to a commentator of Kaku-an's Pictures, there is another series of the Oxherding Pictures by a Zen master called jitoku Ki (Tzu-te Hui), who apparently knew of the existence of the Five Pictures by Seikyo, for jitoku's are six in number. The last one, No. 6, goes beyond the stage of absolute emptiness where Seikyo's end: the poem reads:

Even beyond the ultimate limits there extends a passageway,
Whereby he comes back among the six realms of existence;
Every worldly affair is a Buddhist work,
And wherever he goes he finds his home air;
Like a gem he stands out even in the mud,
Like pure gold he shines even in the furnace;
Along the endless road [of birth and death] he walks sufficient unto himself,
In whatever associations he is found he moves leisurely unattached.

Jitoku's ox grows whiter as Seikyo's, and in this particular respect both differ from Kaku-an's conception. In the latter there is no whitening process. In Japan Kaku-an's Ten Pictures gained a wide circulation, and at present all the oxherding books reproduce them. The earliest one belongs I think to the fifteenth century. In China however a different edition seems to have been in vogue, one belonging to the

Seikyo and Jitoku series of pictures. The author is not known. The edition containing the preface by Chu-hung, 1585, has ten pictures, each of which is preceded by Pu-ming's poem. As to who this Pu-ming was, Chu-hung himself professes ignorance. In these pictures the ox's colouring changes together with the oxherd's management of him. The quaint original Chinese prints are reproduced below, and also Pu-ming's verses translated into English.

Thus as far as I can identify there are four varieties of the Oxherding Pictures: (1) by Kaku-an, (2) by Seikyo, (3) by Jitoku, and (4) by an unknown author.

Kaku-an's "Pictures" here reproduced are by Shubun, a Zen priest of the fifteenth century. The original pictures are preserved at Shokokuji, Kyoto. He was one of the greatest painters in black and white in the Ashikaga period.

The Ten Oxherding Pictures, I. by Kaku-an

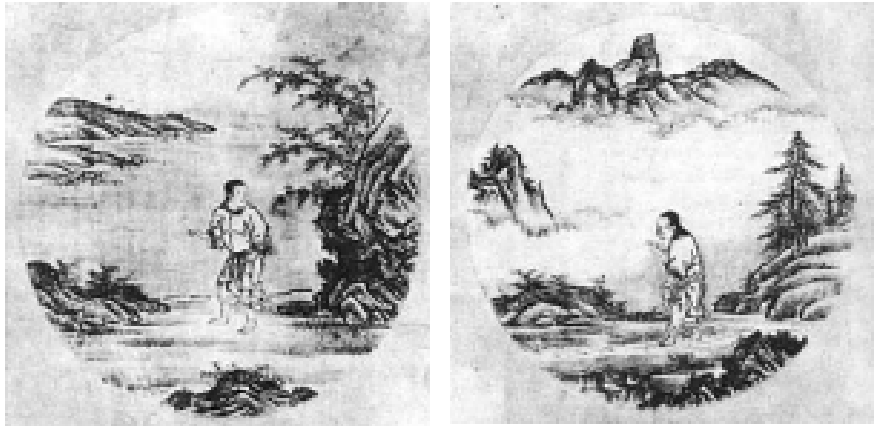
I. Searching for the Ox

The beast has never gone astray, and what is the use of searching for him? The reason why the oxherd is not on intimate terms with him is because the oxherd himself has violated his own inmost nature. The beast is lost, for the oxherd has himself been led out of the way through his deluding senses. His home is receding farther away from him, and byways and crossways are ever confused. Desire for gain and fear of loss burn like fire; ideas of right and wrong shoot up like a phalanx.

Alone in the wilderness, lost in the jungle, the boy is searching, searching!
The swelling waters, the far-away mountains, and the unending path;
Exhausted and in despair, he knows not where to go,
He only hears the evening cicadas singing in the maple-woods.

From the reading...

Things oppress us not because of an objective world, but because of a self-deceiving mind.



1. Searching for the Ox. 2. Seeing the Traces., D. T. Suzuki

II. Seeing the Traces

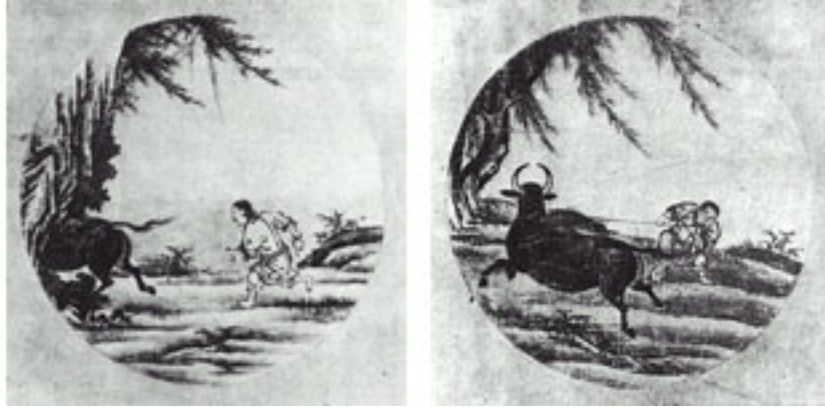
By the aid of the sutras and by inquiring into the doctrines, he has come to understand something, he has found the traces. He now knows that vessels, however varied, are all of gold, and that the objective world is a reflection of the Self. Yet, he is unable to distinguish what is good from what is not, his mind is still confused as to truth and falsehood. As he has not yet entered the gate, he is provisionally said to have noticed the traces.

By the stream and under the trees, scattered are the traces of the lost;
The sweet-scented grasses are growing thick--did he find the way?
However remote over the hills and far away the beast may wander,
His nose reaches the heavens and none can conceal it.

III. Seeing the Ox

The boy finds the way by the sound he hears; he sees thereby into the origin of things, and all his senses are in harmonious order. In all his activities, it is manifestly present. It is like the salt in water and the glue in colour. [It is there though not distinguishable as an individual entity.] When the eye is properly directed, he will find that it is no other than himself.

On a yonder branch perches a nightingale cheerfully singing;
The sun is warm, and a soothing breeze blows, on the bank the willows are green;
The ox is there all by himself, nowhere is he to hide himself;
The splendid head decorated with stately horns what painter can reproduce him?



3. *Seeing the Ox.* 4. *Catching the Ox.*, D. T. Suzuki

IV. Catching the Ox

Long lost in the wilderness, the boy has at last found the ox and his hands are on him. But, owing to the overwhelming pressure of the outside world, the ox is hard to keep under control. He constantly longs for the old sweet-scented field. The wild nature is still unruly, and altogether refuses to be broken. If the oxherd wishes to see the ox completely in harmony with himself, he has surely to use the whip freely.

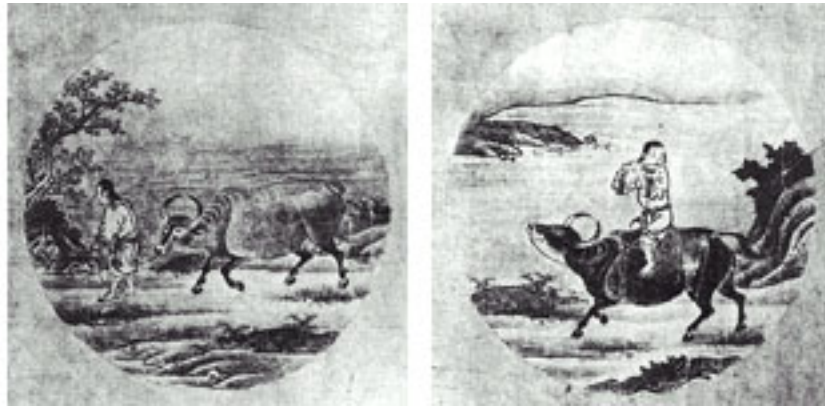
With the energy of his whole being, the boy has at last taken hold of the ox:
But how wild his will, how ungovernable his power!
At times he struts up a plateau,
When lo! he is lost again in a misty unpenetrable mountain-pass.

V. Herding the Ox

When a thought moves, another follows, and then another-an endless train of thoughts is thus awakened. Through enlightenment all this turns into truth; but

falsehood asserts itself when confusion prevails. Things oppress us not because of an objective world, but because of a self-deceiving mind. Do not let the nose-string loose, hold it tight, and allow no vacillation.

The boy is not to separate himself with his whip and tether,
Lest the animal should wander away into a world of defilements;
When the ox is properly tended to, he will grow pure and docile;
Without a chain, nothing binding, he will by himself follow the oxherd.



5. Herding the Ox. 6. Coming Home on the Ox's Back., D. T. Suzuki

VI. Coming Home on the Ox's Back

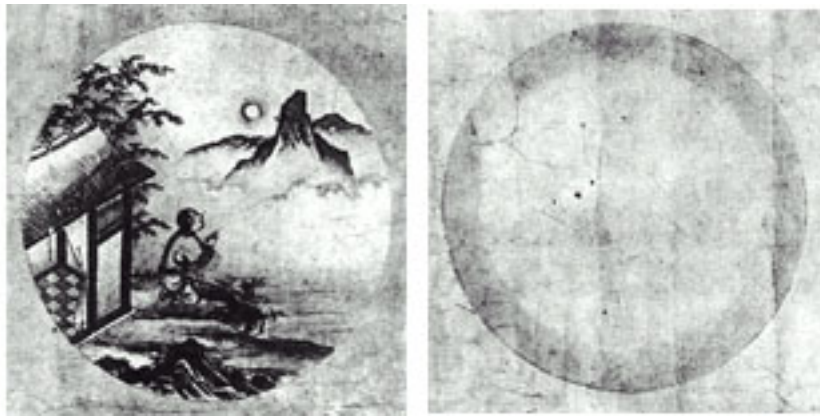
The struggle is over; the man is no more concerned with gain and loss. He hums a rustic tune of the woodman, he sings simple songs of the village-boy. Saddling himself on the ox's back, his eyes are fixed on things not of the earth, earthy. Even if he is called, he will not turn his head; however enticed he will no more be kept back.

Riding on the animal, he leisurely wends his way home:
Enveloped in the evening mist, how tunefully the flute vanishes away!
Singing a ditty, beating time, his heart is filled with a joy indescribable!
That he is now one of those who know, need it be told?

VII. The Ox Forgotten, Leaving the Man Alone

The dharmas are one and the ox is symbolic. When you know that what you need is not the snare or set-net but the hare or fish, it is like gold separated from the dross, it is like the moon rising out of the clouds. The one ray of light serene and penetrating shines even before days of creation.

Riding on the animal, he is at last back in his home,
Where lo! the ox is no more; the man alone sits serenely.
Though the red sun is high up in the sky, he is still quietly dreaming,
Under a straw-thatched roof are his whip and rope idly lying.



7. *The Ox Forgotten, Leaving the Man Alone.* 8. *The Ox and the Man Gone out of Sight.*, D. T. Suzuki

VIII. The Ox and the Man Gone out of Sight

All confusion is set aside, and serenity alone prevails; even the idea of holiness does not obtain. He does not linger about where the Buddha is, and as to where there is no Buddha he speedily passes by. When there exists no form of dualism, even a thousand-eyed one fails to detect a loop-hole. A holiness before which birds offer flowers is but a farce.²

2. It will be interesting to note what a mystic philosopher has to say about this: "A man shall become truly poor and as free from his creature will as he was when he was born. And I say to you, by the eternal truth, that as long as ye desire to fulfil the will of God, and have any desire after eternity and God; so long are ye not truly poor. He alone hath true spiritual poverty who wills nothing, knows nothing, desires nothing."—(From Eckhart as quoted by Inge in *Light, Life,*

All is empty—the whip, the rope, the man, and the ox:
Who can ever survey the vastness of heaven?
Over the furnace burning ablaze, not a flake of snow can fall:
When this state of things obtains, manifest is the spirit of the ancient master.

IX. Returning to the Origin, Back to the Source

From the very beginning, pure and immaculate, the man has never been affected by defilement. He watches the growth of things, while himself abiding in the immovable serenity of nonassertion. He does not identify himself with the maya-like transformations [that are going on about him], nor has he any use of himself [which is artificiality]. The waters are blue, the mountains are green; sitting alone, he observes things undergoing changes.

To return to the Origin, to be back at the Source—already a false step this!
Far better it is to stay at home, blind and deaf, and without much ado;
Sitting in the hut, he takes no cognisance of things outside,
Behold the streams flowing-whither nobody knows; and the flowers vividly red—for whom are they?



9. *Returning to the Origin, Back to the Source*. 10. *Entering the City with Bliss-bestowing Hands*, D. T. Suzuki

and Love.~]

X. Entering the City with Bliss-bestowing Hands

His thatched cottage gate is closed, and even the wisest know him not. No glimpses of his inner life are to be caught; for he goes on his own way without following the steps of the ancient sages. Carrying a gourd³ he goes out into the market, leaning against a staff⁴ he comes home. He is found in company with wine-bibbers and butchers, he and they are all converted into Buddhas.

Bare-chested and bare-footed, he comes out into the market-place;
Daubed with mud and ashes, how broadly he smiles!
There is no need for the miraculous power of the gods,
For he touches, and lo! the dead trees are in full bloom.

From the reading...

“He is found in company with wine-bibbers and butchers, he and they are all converted into Buddhas.”

The Ten Oxherding Pictures, II.

1. Undisciplined

With his horns fiercely projected in the air the beast snorts,
Madly running over the mountain paths, farther and farther he goes astray!
A dark cloud is spread across the entrance of the valley,
And who knows how much of the fine fresh herb is trampled under his wild hoofs!

3. Symbol of emptiness (*sunyata*).

4. No extra property he has, for he knows that the desire to possess is the curse of human life.



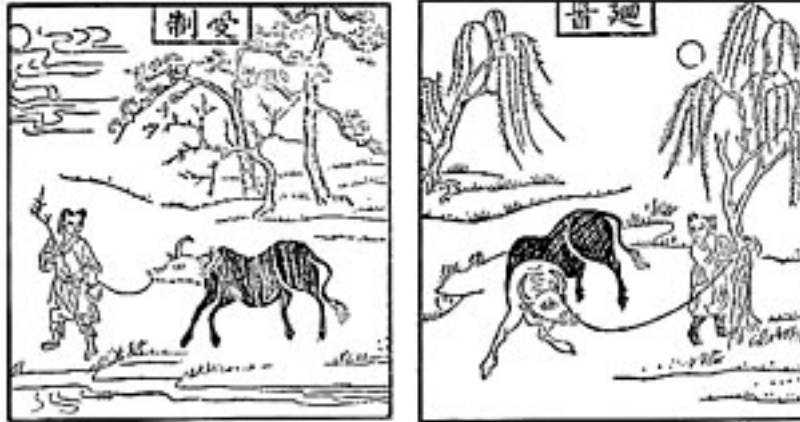
1. Undisciplined. 2. Discipline Begun, D. T. Suzuki

2. Discipline Begun

I am in possession of a straw rope, and I pass it through his nose,
For once he makes a frantic attempt to run away, but he is severely whipped and whipped;
The beast resists the training with all the power there is in a nature wild and ungoverned,
But the rustic oxherd never relaxes his pulling tether and ever-ready whip.

3. In Harness

Gradually getting into harness the beast is now content to be led by the nose,
Crossing the stream, walking along the mountain path, he follows every step of the leader;
The leader holds the rope tightly in his hand never letting it go,
All day long he is on the alert almost unconscious of what fatigue is.



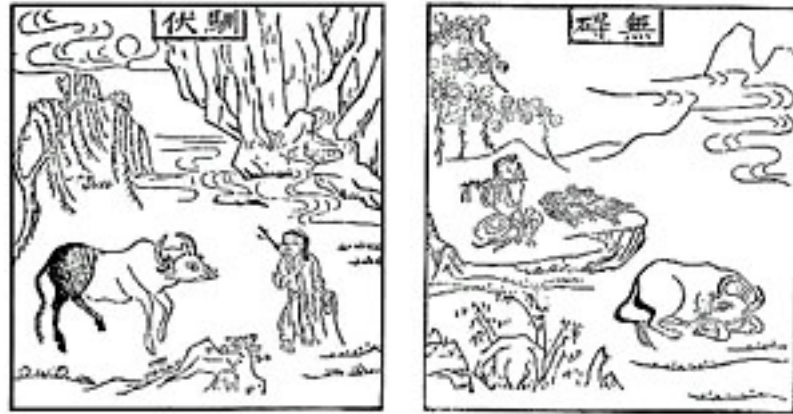
3. *In Harness.* 4. *Faced Round.*, D. T. Suzuki

4. Faced Round

After long days of training the result begins to tell and the beast is faced round,
A nature so wild and ungoverned is finally broken, he has become gentler;
But the tender has not yet given him his full confidence,
He still keeps his straw rope with which the ox is now tied to a tree.

5. Tamed

Under the green willow tree and by the ancient mountain stream,
The ox is set at liberty to pursue his own pleasures;
At the eventide when a grey mist descends on the pasture,
The boy wends his homeward way with the animal quietly following.



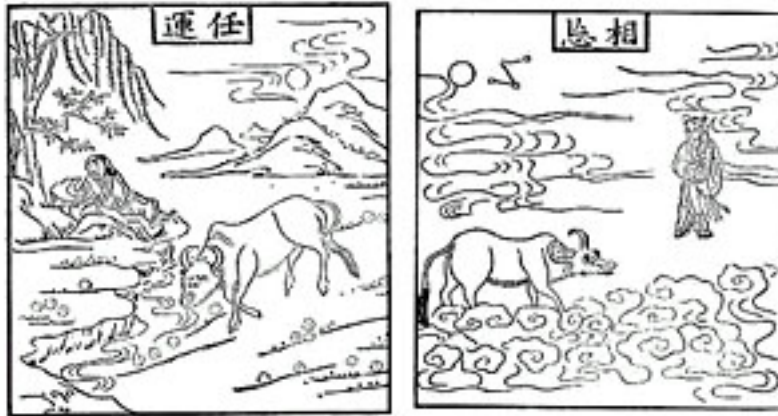
5. Tamed. 6. Unimpeded., D. T. Suzuki

6. Unimpeded

On the verdant field the beast contentedly lies idling his time away,
No whip is needed now, nor any kind of restraint;
The boy too sits leisurely under the pine tree,
Playing a tune of peace, overflowing with joy.

7. Laissez Faire

The spring stream in the evening sun flows languidly along the willow-lined bank,
In the hazy atmosphere the meadow grass is seen growing thick;
When hungry he grazes, when thirsty he quaffs, as time sweetly slides,
While the boy on the rock dozes for hours not noticing anything that goes on about him.



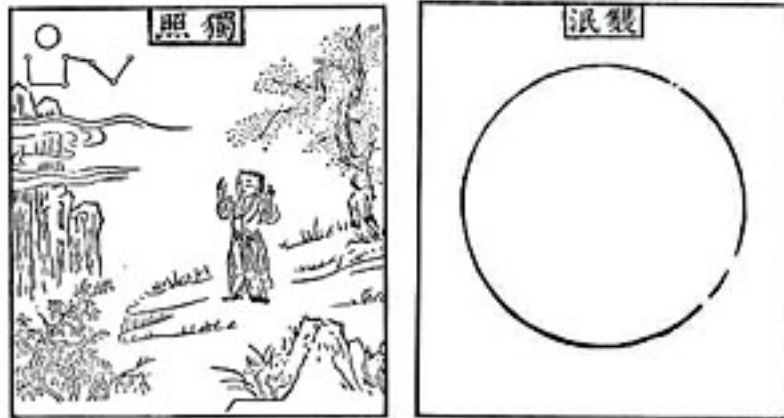
7. *Laissez Faire*. 8. *All Forgotten*, D. T. Suzuki

8. All Forgotten

The beast all in white now is surrounded by the white clouds,
The man is perfectly at his ease and care-free, so is his companion;
The white clouds penetrated by the moon-light cast their white shadows below,
The white clouds and the bright moon-light-each following its course of movement.

9. The Solitary Moon

Nowhere is the beast, and the oxherd is master of his time,
He is a solitary cloud wafting lightly along the mountain peaks;
Clapping his hands he sings joyfully in the moon-light,
But remember a last wall is still left barring his homeward walk.



9. *The Solitary Moon*. 10. *Both Vanished.*, D. T. Suzuki

10. Both Vanished

Both the man and the animal have disappeared, no traces are left,
The bright moon-light is empty and shadowless with all the ten-thousand objects in it;
If anyone should ask the meaning of this,
Behold the lilies of the field and its fresh sweet-scented verdure.

From the reading...

"If anyone should ask the meaning of this, Behold the lilies of the field and its fresh sweet-scented verdure."

Topics Worth Investigating

1. Compare the two sets of the ox-herding pictures. What are the essential differ-

ences of interpretation? Is the commentary to the first series a reliable guide to what you understand to be an effective way to progress in zen practice?

2. Do you think that the ox-herding pictures are more representative of the Hinayana or Mahayana Buddhist traditions?
3. Explain the characteristics of the progress toward enlightenment, step by step, as implied by the second series ox-herding pictures.
4. If our Buddha-nature is already perfect, why is enlightenment sought?

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Colophon

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Commands Used in Preparation. This book was prepared with

```
openjade 1.3.2
TeX 3.14159
```

The PDF version was generated from `reader.xml` to `reader.pdf` by the following series of command line arguments using Mandrake Linux 9.2:

First, the index was prepared with...

```
# collateindex.pl -N -o index.xml

# openjade -t sgml \
  -d /usr/share/sgml/docbook/dsssl-stylesheets/\
html/docbook.dsl -V html-index \
  /usr/share/sgml/docbook/dsssl-stylesheets/dtds/\
decls/xml.dcl \
  reader.xml

# collateindex.pl -o index.xml HTML.index
```

The `xml.dcl` file is used as a preamble to the actual `xml` document. Perhaps, in future, jade will have a `"-t xml"` option that would map to `"-t sgml"` internally and add the `xml.dcl` declaration implicitly.

Second, the document was processed to `reader.pdf` (where `eastern.dsl` is a local stylesheet) with a multi-step process...

```
# openjade -V tex-backend -t tex -d eastern.dsl \
  /usr/share/sgml/docbook/dsssl-stylesheets/\
dtds/decls/xml.dcl \
  reader.xml
```

```
# pdftex "&pdfjadetex" reader.tex
```

```
# pdftex "&pdfjadetex" reader.tex
```

```
# pdftex "&pdfjadetex" reader.tex
```

Processing to `reader.html` had the command line argument...

```
# openjade \
  -d /usr/share/sgml/docbook/dsssl-stylesheets/html/\
docbook.dsl \
  /usr/share/sgml/docbook/dsssl-stylesheets/dtds/\
decls/xml.dcl \
  -t sgml reader.xml
```

Stylesheets, formatting, and help are available with the *docbook-apps mailing list* (<http://www.oasis-open.org/docbook/maillinglist/>) and Norman Walsh's *DocBook: The Definitive Guide* published by O'Reilly. DocBook XML is available at *OASIS—XML* (<http://www.oasis-open.org/docbook/xml/>). Norman Walsh's text is a bit outdated, so check the more recent version on the Web at *DocBook: The Definitive Guide* (<http://docbook.org/tdg/en/html/docbook.html>).

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