

So It Was Said

Bhikkhu Sujato

SO IT WAS SAID

A delectable translation of the Itivuttaka



translated and introduced by

BHIKKHU SUJATO

Iti

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The Realized One, **compassionate for all living
creatures,
unstintingly offers teaching.
Sentient beings revere him,
first among gods and humans.**

THE HOLY OFFERING OF THE TEACHING
Brāhmaṇadhammayāgasutta
Itivuttaka 100

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Preface to the Itivuttaka

For the slightest of the early Buddhist books, I feel I should write a slight preface. There is beauty in simplicity and strength in humility. Spiritual teachings need not always tell us something new, nor need they dazzle us with complicated philosophy or intricate arguments. Sometimes the most powerful lesson is that which you have always known.

It is a discomfoting thought, but when I think of those who most effortlessly embody the Buddha's teachings, it is rarely those who have mastered the scriptures or who debate the meaning of abstruse points. It is in the simple offering, the quiet devotion, the humble wisdom, the unnoticed kindness that I see the flowering of grace.

To be all that we can be is to be less than we have become. If all that the suttas did was to fill us with information, they would be as useful as an ancient Wikipedia (which would be no bad thing). The real wisdom of the suttas, I have come to learn, lies in their delicate balance: saying what need be said and not saying what need not be said.

A full meal is best enjoyed on an empty stomach. And the suttas will fill our minds and hearts, but only if we respect their empty spaces.

So It Was Said: summary sayings

Bhikkhu Sujato, 2022

The Itivuttaka or “So it Was Said” is the fourth book of the Pali Khuddhaka Nikāya, the “Minor Collection”. It is a short book, with 112 discourses in mixed prose and verse. The teachings in the Itivuttaka are by and large straightforward, as is the style of both prose and verse.

The text is arranged in the Aṅguttara style of incremental numbering, which here goes from the Ones through Fours. Within each of these major sections, the texts are rather arbitrarily divided into chapters (*vagga*) of ten. The exceptions are the concluding chapters of the Ones, Twos, and Fours, which contain 7, 12, and 13 discourses respectively.

The Chinese Collection of Itivuttakas

As with most of the early texts in the Pali Canon, there exists a corresponding Chinese version: 本事經 (Taishō vol. 17, sutra 765), which was translated by Xuanzang in CE 650. This was studied by K. Watanabe in his *A Chinese Collection of Itivuttakas* (Journal of the Pali Text Society V, 1906–7, pp. 44–49).

The Chinese text contains framing statements that are similar to the Pali, except the final statement is omitted. This is, I think, a significant detail, to which I will return below.

While the first two sections are similar to the Pali, three-fifths of the third and all of the fourth sections are missing. That this is the result of an incomplete text, rather than a shorter recension, is supported by two details. The text lacks a concluding *uddāna*, the summary verse or “resumé” that is normally found at the end of every section. And the content of the Suttas, while remaining within the scope of the early Buddhist teachings, is somewhat developed compared to the Pali. It seems, then, that the Chinese text represents an incomplete text of a somewhat later version of an Itivuttaka.

It is not clear why a scholar as able as Xuanzang would leave the work incomplete. Perhaps he had only a partial manuscript to work with, or perhaps it was simply that other demands took his time. In the introduction to his translation of the Itivuttaka, Ven. Ṭhānissaro remarks that Xuanzang’s translation “dates from the last months of his life”. This is mistaken and apparently caused by a misreading of Watanabe’s article. Xuanzang did not die until fourteen years later, in 664.

The Formation of the Itivuttaka

Each Sutta is introduced with a distinct phrase saying the text was “said” (*vutta*) by the Buddha, and it appears that this tag is what gives the collection its name. The tag is more than just an introduction; it is a full template that frames each discourse.

- Start the prose— *This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.*
- End the prose— *The Buddha spoke this matter.*
- Start the verse— *On this it is said:*
- End the verse— *This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.*

This framework, more formalized and consistent than the standard forms, is adhered to rigorously throughout without variation.

Note that the tag lines assume that the verse comments on the prose (*tattha*). Note too that here, as in the Udāna, *attha* has the sense “matter, substance, content” rather than “meaning”.

The opening compound, *vuttañhetam* contains the particle *hi*, which most translators ignore, but which Masfield perhaps over-renders as “unquestionably”. This exact idiom is not used elsewhere in the early texts, but it is quite common in the Niddesa, where it seems to act as a logical connection. A doctrine is stated, and it is supported with additional quotations. Perhaps then we should translate, “For this was said by the Buddha . . .”.

Unusually, there is no mention of the setting or other background details. Additionally, there are few personal names in the text. Apart from the Buddha, who is referred to by many epithets, only the Buddha’s antagonists Devadatta (Iti 89) and Māra (Iti 58, Iti 68, Iti 82, Iti 83, Iti 93) are mentioned by name. As for places, only the Vulture’s Peak in Rāgaha is mentioned (Iti 24). All this adds up to an oddly abstracted and spare text, almost Abhidhammic in style. It suggests that the collection was compiled from reports of what the Buddha said rather than from first-hand recollections.

This is, in fact, the position of the commentary, which explains that the Itivuttaka, alone among the texts of the Pali canon, was not compiled primarily by the monks, but by the laywoman Khujjuttarā. In the Aṅguttara Nikāya, she was extolled by the Buddha as the foremost in learning among the laywomen and is frequently held up as an exemplary laywoman. While the Suttas do not say how she earned that title, the commentary tells of how, as hand-maid to Queen Sāmāvatī of Kosambi, she became the respected teacher of Dhamma for the ladies of the court. This story is only part of a much longer and very dramatic series of events known as the Kosambi Cycle.

It seems that the Queen entrusted her with procuring flowers for the court, but she would save some of the money each day. One day, she overheard the Buddha teaching the Dhamma to the

gardener Sumana and right away entered the stream. In celebration, she spent her saved money on flowers, prompting the queen to ask where they all came from. And when Khujjuttarā told her, the queen showered her with honors, bathed her in perfumed water, and became her student. Khujjuttarā continued to listen and memorize the Dhamma from the Buddha and would convey it to all the court ladies, who became stream-enterers in turn. These teachings were compiled into the Itivuttaka, which is why they do not have the usual prose opening formula.

It is difficult to reconcile this story with the Itivuttaka as it stands. The texts are clearly organized in a pattern of numbers from one to four, and it seems improbable that Khujjuttarā just happened to hear texts that would be amenable to such an arrangement. It could be that she did hear many more teachings, but selected certain texts and arranged them for the ladies of the court. However, there is no special emphasis on teachings suitable for court ladies, and several quite difficult texts that would be hard to make sense of without a broader context.

On the other hand, there seems no reason why the monks would invent such a story, which sidelines their role in the creation of this text, and ascribes it instead to the elevated slave of a doomed dynasty. As so often in such matters, we are left without definite conclusions. The absence of certainty does not, however, imply the presence of ignorance. In such matters, it is usually the case that there is something to the stories; they are rarely fabricated out of thin air. We should not reject knowledge simply because it is unconfirmed or hard to understand. The truth is surely more complicated than we know. Yet if we were to abandon our few clues because they are not as certain as we would like, we would be like someone who, lost in the darkness with only a candle to light the way, blows out the candle because it is not a torch.

A text called Itivuttaka is mentioned in the list of the nine *aṅgas* (sections) of the Dhamma that is found throughout the early texts. And as with so many of the *aṅgas*, it is not easy to determine the

extent to which the Itivuttaka as it exists today is the same text referred to as an *āṅga*.

Normally the *āṅgas* define a genre of text with an identifiable style. If, however, we accept the Theravadin account, the Itivuttaka is unusual in that there is no intrinsic relationship between the name of the *āṅga* and the style of text. The discourses are, leaving the unique framing aside, essentially no different from those found in the Aṅguttara. Perhaps, like most *āṅgas*, *itivuttaka* originally referred to a distinct genre of early Buddhist literature.

The name itself is perhaps misleadingly malleable. By that I mean that it compounds two very common words (*iti* “thus” and *vutta* “spoke”) and hence may be applied very generally. However, in idiomatic usage, the terms have a more specific and stronger sense: something that is quoted or passed down from the past. The name is reminiscent of the class of Vedic literature called *itihāsa*, “Thus It Was”, i.e. “stories of the past, legendary histories”, which is sometimes equated with the Mahābhārata and the Rāmāyana. Similarly, *itikirā* “So It Seems”, though sometimes translated as “hearsay”, is grouped with words referring to the transmission of texts, and must mean something like “testament”. We also find *itihitiha* “So and So It Was” used of knowledge that has been passed down from the past.

By analogy, *itivuttaka* would mean “sayings of the past”, which could refer to the legendary histories that are found in the Nikāyas, such as the Aggaññasutta (DN 27) and the Cakkavattisihanādasutta (DN 26), as well as legendary lore such as the 32 marks of the great man, or the occasional sayings reported to have been passed down from teachers of old (eg. MN 75:19.11). This theory finds support from the great Mahāyāna commentator Asaṅga, who in his Abhidharmasamuccaya says *itivuttaka* “narrates the former existences of the noble disciples”, while in the Śrāvakabhūmi of the Yogācārabhūmiśāstra, he says it refers to “whatever is connected with previous practice”.

Still further support may be adduced in that part of the framing tags of the *Itivuttaka*—specifically, those that connect the prose and verse—are found in one other text of the Pali canon in nearly identical form (lacking only a connecting *iti*: *tatthetaṃ vuccati* rather than *tatthetaṃ iti vuccati*). This is in DN 30 Mahāpurisala-kkhaṇasutta, an extended elaboration of the so-called “marks of the great man”, which are said in the Suttas to be traditional lore handed down among the brahmins. The verses especially are among the latest additions to the four Nikāyas, and in this case, it is clear that the tagline serves to add verses to a pre-existing prose text. The commentary says that some “elders of old” explain *tatthetaṃ vuccati* as indicating that the verses were added by Ānanda.

If this reasoning is cogent, then it seems that *itivuttaka* originally referred to the various legendary accounts that are currently scattered in the four Nikāyas. At some point—the First Council, perhaps—the material organized in the nine *aṅgas* was rearranged for the convenience of memorization into the Nikāyas. With the legendary texts absorbed in the Nikāyas, the name *itivuttaka* was floating unused and was adopted to frame this small selection of Aṅguttara style texts.

If this is true it may be easily reconciled with the traditional account. There is no reason why, if the collection as we have it is due to Khujjuttarā, it should not have been titled *Itivuttaka* at a later date. All this is, of course, speculative.

The Purpose of the *Itivuttaka*

Given its minor position within the Pali Canon, it is probably safe to assume that most modern readers will pick up the *Itivuttaka* when already familiar with the Suttas from the Nikāyas. It may be that this is the wrong approach.

The text begins with a series of teachings on the “one thing” that must be given up. To read a series of multiple “one things” is a bit odd. Are they all “one thing”? What is the relation between

them? Does any one of these imply all the rest? The text begins by speaking of realizing “non-return”, assuming the audience already knows what this is and wants to attain it.

Take the first discourse: the one thing to be given up is greed. As a reader, this discourse can be skimmed in a couple of minutes, and it provides no new information or perspective. But perhaps that is not its purpose. Perhaps the text was meant to be approached as a meditation structured for those who are familiar with the basics and are undertaking the process of internalizing the theory.

One could learn just this one discourse and take it as a theme for meditation. Focus only on greed, and how it drags the mind to unworthy places. The *idea* is simple, but to truly digest it can be long and complex work. By giving only the simplest of outlines, the text leaves the details to the individual, who is left to explore their relation to greed.

Such a process might take days, weeks, or months. But conservatively, one might take such a short discourse as the theme of contemplation for a day. The next day it is not greed, but hate. The details, differences, and relations between greed and hate are not spelled out; they are realized by the meditator, informed by their prior study and experience.

And so on through the different qualities. Then the round repeats with a slight variation. Then new topics are introduced, each one a self-contained reflection.

I can't prove that this is why the Itivuttaka is the way it is, but I do think this offers a promising way of approaching the text.

Relation Between Prose and Verse

Unlike the Udāna, where the verse is the culminating purpose of the narrative, here the verses serve to repeat and amplify the prose teachings, again in a style similar to certain portions of the Aṅguttara. In line with the systematic tendency of the Itivuttaka, this pattern occurs in all Suttas.

The framing text asserts that both prose and verse portions were spoken by the Buddha. However, it is careful to qualify this by saying “so I have heard”, indicating that the speaker was not present when the teachings were given, but rather is passing down an oral tradition. It is quite possible that this is correct, and that both prose and verse were spoken in this form by the Buddha. However, there are several indications that this is not always the case.

It is quite common for Buddhist texts to have verse and prose portions that are loosely coupled. Sometimes the same verse has a different prose background. Sometimes the connection between the two seems distant or arbitrary. Sometimes the texts attribute the different portions to different authors. So it would be no great surprise for the Itivuttaka to follow a similar pattern.

A fruitful approach is to look at the implicit speaker in the text, rather than the speaker assigned by the framework. Now, the framing portions must have been added by redactors at some point, possibly the First Council. They are in the third person, reporting what the Buddha said.

In the prose teaching portions, by contrast, the Buddha refers to himself in the first person (eg. Iti 14 *aham*; Iti 103 *na me te*). Appropriately, he addresses the mendicants in the second person (eg. Iti 22 *mā, bhikkhave, puññānaṃ bhāyittha*; Iti 38 *tumhepi abyāpajjhārāmā viharatha*; Iti 111 *sampannasīlā, bhikkhave, viharatha*). I’m setting aside here the vocative form of direct address found in every Sutta (*bhikkhave*), as this could be regarded as a mere convention.

In the verses, however, we typically find the third person used for both the Buddha and the mendicants, in a manner that is more similar to the framing portions.

For example, in Iti 26 the prose is in the first person “as I understand” *yathāham jānāmi*, while the verse reports the words of the Buddha, “as taught by the great hermit” (*yathāvuttaṃ mahesinā*). Not only is this in the third person, but the passive instrumental construction is identical to that used in the frame (*vutto bhagavatā*).

The Buddha is also referred to in the third person in a similar way in Iti 36 (*adesayi so bhagavā, yathā buddhena desitaṃ*).

In Iti 85 the mendicants are addressed in the second person in the prose (*viharatha*), but the third person is used in the verse (*vimuccati*).

In Iti 70, Iti 71, and Iti 81 the Buddha speaks of how good and bad kamma results in good or bad rebirths, insisting that this is something that he has seen for himself (*diṭṭhā mayā*), and has not learned from any other ascetic or brahmin. The verses again are in the third person.

Iti 92 has one of the Itivuttaka's rare moments of intimacy. The Buddha speaks of a poorly-behaved mendicant who might follow him around holding the corner of his robe, yet they remain "far from me, and I from them" (*ārakāva mayhaṃ, ahañca tassa*). This is unlike one who has well-practiced the Dhamma, to whom the Buddha is always close. The verses once more avoid the personal touch here. The same pattern holds for Iti 100, where the Buddha says to his students that "you are my children" (*me tumhe puttā*); and in Iti 107 where the mendicants are enjoined to be grateful for the things that the lay folk offer "to you", while in both cases the verses shift to the more distant third person.

Rarely in the analysis of ancient texts do we find that a pattern admits of no exceptions. It is true, admittedly, that the prose text sometimes has the Buddha referring to himself in the third person as the "Realized One" (eg. Iti 38, Iti 39, Iti 84). But this is a common feature of prose Suttas. The Buddha speaks in this way when evoking the profound nature of his state of transcendent realization (Iti 112).

In Iti 47 the verses are in a direct second person. This, however, turns out to be the exception that proves the rule, for the subject here is wakefulness. The text is designed to jolt awake the sleepy, so the direct address of the second person is called for. Amid the almost brutalist plainness of the Itivuttaka, this qualifies as a flourish of literary style.

A further exception is in Iti 99, where both the prose and verse employ the first person. The verses are not unique to this Sutta, however, for they are found in a similar context in AN 3.58 and AN 3.59. There, the Buddha is responding to a brahmin who challenges him on the true meaning of a “brahmin who is master of the three knowledges”. The brahmin defines this in terms of knowing the Vedic literary tradition, while the Buddha redefines it, as always, in terms of the gradual training and the realization of the three higher knowledges. The text of the Itivuttaka reads like the Aṅguttara texts with the narrative removed and has probably been adapted from there. This is an interesting case because it agrees very nicely with the traditional origin story of the Itivuttaka. A text with a narrative context has been repeated in a slightly adapted and stripped-down form, taking a step towards an almost Abhidhammic plainness.

Finally, in two further Suttas we find the first person *brūmi* “I say” used in verse (Iti 38:7.5, Iti 46:3.4). These lines are unique to the Itivuttaka, so they constitute a genuine exception to the rule.

In sum, there is a strong tendency for the prose sections to be presented as the Buddha speaking directly to the monks, while the verses read as a third-hand rephrasing of the same teachings, sometimes summarizing or expanding. The few occasions where this pattern does not hold are mostly explained by the specific context. This pattern suggests that, on the whole, the prose portions are relatively direct reports of the Buddha’s words, while the verses were added by redactors.

I noted above that the Chinese version, though otherwise appearing somewhat more developed than the Pali, lacks the final tag phrase of the frame (*ayampi attho vutto bhagavatā*). It is in this line that the Pali text asserts that the verses were spoken by the Buddha. The tag phrase that starts the verses says simply “on this it is said” (*tatthetam iti vuccati*), which might easily refer to an addition made by redactors. Recall that a nearly-identical tag is used in DN 30 where it indicates a later addition.

This provides, I think, concrete support for the conclusion that the verses are for the most part a later addition to the prose. Originally they were simply presented as such, but at some point, the redactors claimed that, like the prose, the verses were “also” (*pi*) spoken by the Buddha. As we have seen, they were not entirely wrong, for some of the verses do present as the direct words of the Buddha. And in many other cases, there is no real evidence either way.

A case like this is not so much an attempt to misrepresent the material as it is an outcome of a process of systematization. Material from diverse sources is flattened and simplified, and certain nuances get lost along the way. The Theravada tradition is usually very scrupulous about such details, and less inclined to adapt older texts to later needs. Yet this case proves the exception, as the northern—possibly Sarvāstivādin—text retains a clue to an earlier form.

Similes

Moore, in the introduction to his 1908 translation, counts a round fifty similes in the Itivuttaka, and the following is based on his analysis. Nature provides most of the similes, starting with water in its many forms.

Water is a decidedly ambiguous element in the Itivuttaka. It often figures in powerfully negative ways. The realm of desire and suffering is called a flood (*ogha*, Iti 107), an ocean (*samudda*, Iti 69), a river (*nadī*) or a stream, (*sota*, Iti 109), or even a treacherous whirlpool (*āvaṭṭa*, Iti 109:7.1). A perfected one crosses (*tarati*, occurring about a dozen times) beyond all these, going to the far side (*pāra*, Iti 69:2.4).

On the other hand, the bursting of a rain cloud is like one whose generosity covers all quarters (Iti 75), while one who understands the Dhamma is like a still lake unruffled by the winds (Iti 92).

Metaphors based upon light are almost as numerous as the aqueous metaphors, but unlike the water's ambiguity, they are invariably positive, contrasting with the darkness of ignorance. The awakened mendicants are the "torch-bearers" for those still in darkness (Iti 104:2.9). Of the heavenly bodies, we find the sun (Iti 59:3.4, Iti 88:11.4), the moon (Iti 27:9.3, Iti 74:7.5), and the morning-star, (*osadhitaraka*, Iti 27:5.1) as images of wisdom and freedom.

Fire, like water, is often negative. The impressive and relatively modern technology of smelting iron, based on the capacity to focus and amplify heat beyond anything experienced in nature, provides a suitable metaphor for the fate awaiting evildoers in hell (Iti 48:5.1, Iti 91:5.1).

The highest goal of Nibbāna, of course, is the quenching or extinguishment of a flame, the fundamental image of all Buddhism. One who has attained such is far from those who are still burning (Iti 92:4.4).

Ambiguously, Devadatta before his fall had glory that shone forth like the crest of a flame (Iti 89:4.3).

Despite its rather austere style, at times the Itivuttaka builds images in a way that accumulates beauty. A gentle series of similes describes one who can let go of greed, like the water that rolls off a lotus leaf; hate, like a palm-leaf falling from its stem; and delusion, like the rising sun banishing the dark (Iti 88).

Few animals are mentioned in the Itivuttaka, but of those that are we find a man who wraps stinky fish (*maccha*, Iti 76:7.1); and the Buddha compared to a lion (*siha*, Iti 112:10.2).

One who enters the water is at risk of being devoured by the saltwater crocodile (*gaha*, Iti 69:2.2, Iti 109:2.3). Science tells us that seven species of crocodile flourished in ancient India, sadly reduced to three in the present day. Pali offers us at least five words for these: *sumsumārā*, *susukā*, *nakka*, *gaha* (*gāha*, *gahaka*), and *kumbhīlā*. It is not clear which words apply to which species, or even if they correlate to different species at all. Only the *gaha* appears in the Itivuttaka, and it notably is a denizen of both oceans

and large lakes, so I think it must be a saltwater crocodile. Since the *kumbhīlā* and *susukā* do not appear to inhabit the ocean, I call them “marsh crocodiles” and “gharials” respectively, while *sumsumārā* is generically a “crocodile”.

There is, I believe, an implicit metaphor in the term *siṅgī*, “fraud”, that is applied to a bad monk in Iti 108. This is a word for either “horn” or “gold”. I believe the latter is meant here, for there are hints that the kind of gold meant is adulterated, perhaps a form of rose gold admixed with copper to form jewelry. The robes accepted by the Buddha shortly before his Parinibbāna are this color, where they are meant to contrast palely with the true gold of the Buddha’s skin. I think *siṅgī* became an idiomatic term for “false gold” and hence a bad monk.

A few miscellaneous similes are worthy of note. The poisoned arrow that contaminates its quiver (Iti 76) is like a bad person who infects those around them. The striking image occurs of the conduit to rebirth (*netti*, Iti 43:4.1), psychologically explained as craving, but metaphorically evocative of a line or a link that leads from one life to the next. Finally, the piling up of a person’s bones in their countless rebirths would reach higher than the great mountain of Vulture Peak (Iti 24).

A Few Remarks on the Discourses

The Ones

The first chapter begins with a series of teachings on the “one thing”. This follows the pattern of the Aṅguttara, although the specifics are different. Rather than opening with the overcoming of sensual desire, here we begin with what must be given up to guarantee non-return. This is the third of the four stages of awakening commonly taught in the Buddhist texts:

- Stream-entry (*sotāpatti*)
- Once-return (*sakadāgāmitā*)

- Non-return (*anāgāmitā*)
- Perfection (*arahattā*)

The qualities spoken of, however, don't always sit easily with this ideal. A non-returner has given up greed (Iti 1) and hate (Iti 2), but they have not given up delusion (Iti 3) or conceit (Iti 6). Perhaps the text has been overly systematized since these details are repeated in the next section where they fit better. But this is the kind of detail that the Pali texts are normally very careful with.

The next series graduates from non-return to speak of ending suffering through complete understanding, which implies arahantship. This pattern crosses over the boundary of the second chapter, which suggests that the texts were grouped before being somewhat arbitrarily organized in groups of ten. Likewise, the pair on the "corrupted mind" (Iti 20) and "pure mind" (Iti 21) also cross the chapter boundary. Again, we find a similar phenomenon in the *Aṅguttara*, where for example the discourses on the radiant or corrupted mind (1.49–52) cross the boundary of the fifth and sixth chapters.

These details are not very important in themselves, but they do indicate the struggles of the redactors to formalize the organization of texts. If we are alert to these issues, we guard against reading undue significance into mere editorial choices.

The benefits of the meditation on love are extolled in (Iti 22), which details some of the Buddha's past life practices, and (Iti 27), which is adorned by a series of glorious metaphors. This relatively extended and exalted text forms a suitable conclusion to the first part of the book. This pattern repeats throughout the *Itivuttaka*, as the final discourse of each of the numbers deals with deep matters in a solemn tone.

The Twos

Continuing a similar approach, the second chapter speaks of sets of "two things" that lead to happiness or suffering, or else practices that lead to one of two good results.

In a break from the practical ethics of most of the Itivuttaka, Iti 43 speaks of Nibbāna as the “unborn”, in a passage shared with Ud 8.3. Here an extra set of verses is added, adding to the impression that the Itivuttaka is compiled from earlier texts, sometimes with additions.

In Iti 44 we find one of the few distinct doctrinal contributions of the Itivuttaka. It introduces the distinction between “the element of extinguishment with something left over” (*saupādisesā ca nibbānadhātu*) and “the element of extinguishment with nothing left over” (*anupādisesā ca nibbānadhātu*). The first refers to an arahant who has abandoned all defilements, yet who continues to live and experience pleasure and pain. The second refers to an arahant for whom “everything that’s felt, being no longer relished, will become cool right here”. This presumably refers to the time of death, an inference that is confirmed in the verses. The idea of the “element of extinguishment with nothing left over” is found elsewhere in the Suttas in the same sense, but here it is more clearly defined. And while the contrast with what “has something left over” is found elsewhere in the Suttas, nowhere is this said to be an “element of extinguishment”. A fine distinction to be sure, but it indicates that the Itivuttaka is not solely a remix of teachings from elsewhere in the canon. This distinction went on to become a fundamental aspect of the Theravadin teachings on Nibbāna.

The Threes

Rather than contrasting pairs, the Threes begins with the enumeration of various sets of three principles, such as greed, hate, and delusion, or the three feelings.

While most of the teachings are familiar from elsewhere in the Suttas, we find a few unique presentations. For example, in Iti 74 a child is said to better, equal, or fail their birth, while the famous simile of the generous giver who is like a rainstorm over all quarters is found in Iti 75. One who wisely wishes for even the worldly aims of wealth, praise, and heaven should guard their morality Iti 76.

At Iti 77 we find a rather blunt assessment of the fragility of the body, consciousness, and all attachments. And while it is commonly said that a heavenly rebirth is a reward for good deeds, the aspiration to heaven is put to question by the fact that even the gods celebrate a mendicant going forth (Iti 82), and the end of their all-too-temporary lives is foreshadowed by five signs (Iti 83).

Among the straightforward, didactic texts of the Itivuttaka, we find an occasional passage of a more subtle philosophical nature. Such is Iti 63 on the three “periods” of the past, future, and present. According to Buddhist philosophy, the use of language embeds notions of time in the very pathways of thought. Thus those who are still trapped in the “communicable” (*akkheyya*) do not find the peace that is beyond time and reckoning (*saṅkhyam nopeti*).

The Fours

The discourses of the Fours are often held to be later than the other numbers; I don’t know that I am completely persuaded by this, but certainly, the section is notable for its brevity. While the exact forms of the discourses are sometimes unique to the Itivuttaka, there is nothing in the teachings that would not be familiar to a student of the four Nikāyas.

A Brief Textual History

A Latin-script edition of the Itivuttaka was published in 1889 by the Pali Text Society. It was edited by the handsomely-bearded Ernst Windisch, who was a professor of Sanskrit and comparative linguistics at the University of Leipzig. He made use of three manuscripts in Sinhalese script and four in Burmese, as well as a copy of the commentary. He notes that the Sinhalese manuscripts appear to have been influenced by Burmese script, an indication that they were copied from Burmese sources. His primary source was a Burmese manuscript held in the India Office Library, which he describes as “beautifully written”, and which almost always held the more

correct reading. Windisch gave each Sutta a number in simple sequence, a numbering system that is still used by SuttaCentral. His discussion of the manuscripts is exemplary and well worth a read to see the process by which modern editions are created. The edition is extensively footnoted, and is praised by Ireland and by Moore, who calls it “admirable”. Masfield, however, draws attention to the “poor quality of many readings” in this edition, for which he supplies emendations.

The first English translation was published by Columbia University Press in 1908 by Justin Hartley Moore under the title *Sayings of Buddha*. Moore undertook the translation for his Ph.D. program at Columbia University, a task he described as “a dive into unfathomed waters”. Moore’s introductory essay remains one of the more complete surveys of the text. And in addition, he published *Metrical Analysis of the Pāli Iti-vuttaka, a Collection of Discourses of Buddha* (Journal of the American Oriental Society, vol. 28 1907), which was an early contribution to the difficult and still understudied field of Pali meter. On the question of authorship, Moore suggests that the verses may be older, while the prose portions “bear all the ear-marks of a short commentary on the succeeding verses”. I find his argumentation here curiously unpersuasive; he presents a couple of examples in support, but I fail to see how they relate to his argument. As I mentioned above, I think it is more likely that to the extent that the prose and verse have separate origins, the verses were added to the prose.

F.L. Woodward was the next to translate the text into English, under the title *As It Was Said*. It was published by the Pali Text Society in 1935 together with his translation of the Udāna with the collective title, *Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, Part II*. Woodward endorses Moore’s view that the prose is a commentary on the verses. His translation is unfortunately marred by the then-fashionable tendency to render religious text with deliberate archaisms. Time has not been kind to these stylings.

As is usual with English translations from the Pali, there is a marked leap from the first or second-generation translations and those completed after the work of Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoḷi in the 1950s. All later translators aspired to his consistency, clarity, and straightforwardness of diction. The first modern translation of the Itivuttaka was that of John Ireland, originally published through the Buddhist Publications Society in 1991, and subsequently reprinted together with his equally readable translation of the Udāna. It contains a brief introduction and notes.

Peter Masefield published a highly literal translation in 2000 with the Pali Text Society. This was a companion to his translation of the commentary and is intended to present the text as understood by the commentator. It was completed while the translator was at the University of Sydney, which makes my translation the second to be done in Sydney. And since Woodward made his while in Tasmania, mine is the third translation of the Itivuttaka to be completed in Australia.

Bhikkhu Ṭhānissaro published a translation in 2001 under the title *This Was Said by the Buddha*, revised with a new introduction in 2013. In 2018 Anagarika Mahendra (AKA Sāmaṇera Mahinda) published a “contemporary” translation with both Pali and English under the title *Book of This Was Said* through Dhamma Publishers. And a simple English version is made available by Ven. Gnanananda Thero on his Sutta Friends website.

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THE BOOK OF THE ONES

Chapter One

Iti 1

Greed

Lobhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, give up one thing and I guarantee you non-return. What one thing? Greed is the one thing. Give it up, and I guarantee you non-return.”
- 2.6 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “When overcome by greed
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that greed,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.¹

1. We find the same tag in Ud 1.10, except with *udāno* in place of *attho*. This confirms that *attha* here refers to the “substance” or “main matter” of the text, in other words, the portion that was spoken by the Buddha, which is usually the prose teaching, rather than connecting phrases or summary verses.

Iti 2

Hate

Dosasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, give up one thing and I guarantee you non-return. 2.1
What one thing? Hate is the one thing. Give it up, and I guarantee
you non-return.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“When overcome by hate 3.1
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that hate,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 3

Delusion

Mohasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, give up one thing and I guarantee you non-return. 2.1
What one thing? Delusion is the one thing. Give it up, and I
guarantee you non-return.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“When overcome by delusion 3.1
beings go to a bad place.

Having rightly understood that delusion,
the discerning give it up.
Once they've given it up,
they never return to this world."

- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 4

Anger

Kodhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

- 2.1 "Mendicants, give up one thing and I guarantee you non-return. What one thing? Anger is the one thing. Give it up, and I guarantee you non-return."

- 2.6 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

- 3.1 "When overcome by anger
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that anger,
the discerning give it up.
Once they've given it up,
they never return to this world."

- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 5

Disdain

Makkhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“Mendicants, give up one thing. and I guarantee you non-return. 2.1
What one thing? Disdain is the one thing. Give it up, and I guarantee you non-return.” The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

“When overcome by disdain 3.1
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that disdain,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 6

Conceit

Mānasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, give up one thing and I guarantee you non-return. 2.1
What one thing? Conceit is the one thing. Give it up, and I guarantee you non-return.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“Drunk on conceit, 3.1
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that conceit,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 7

Complete Understanding of All

Sabbapariññāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding the all, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understanding the all, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.”
- 2.3 That is what the Buddha said. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Those who know the all as all,
are not attracted to anything.
They completely understand all,
and have risen above all suffering.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 8

Complete Understanding of Conceit

Mānapariññāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding conceit, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understanding conceit, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

“These folk are caught up in conceit, 3.1
 tied by conceit, delighting in existence.
 Not completely understanding conceit,
 they return in future lives.

Those who have given up conceit, 4.1
 freed in the ending of conceit,
 vanquishers of the tie of conceit,
 have risen above all suffering.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
 what I heard.

Iti 9

Complete Understanding of Greed

Lobhapariññāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
 heard.

“Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely under- 2.1
 standing greed, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t
 end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understand-
 ing greed, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end
 suffering.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“When overcome by greed 3.1
 beings go to a bad place.
 Having rightly understood that greed,
 the discerning give it up.
 Once they’ve given it up,
 they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
 what I heard.

Iti 10

Complete Understanding of Hate

Dosaparīññāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding hate, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understanding hate, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “When overcome by hate
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that hate,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Chapter Two

Iti 1 1

Complete Understanding of Delusion

Mohapariññāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely under- 2.1
standing delusion, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you
can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely under-
standing delusion, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can
end suffering.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“When overcome by delusion 3.1
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that delusion,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 12

Complete Understanding of Anger

Kodhapariññāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding anger, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understanding anger, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “When overcome by anger
beings go to a bad place.
Having rightly understood that anger,
the discerning give it up.
Once they’ve given it up,
they never return to this world.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 13

Complete Understanding of Disdain

Makkhapariññāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding disdain, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering. By directly knowing and completely understanding disdain, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“When overcome by disdain 3.1
 beings go to a bad place.
 Having rightly understood that disdain,
 the discerning give it up.
 Once they’ve given it up,
 they never return to this world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
 what I heard.

Iti 14

The Shroud of Ignorance

Avijjānīvaraṇasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
 heard.

“Mendicants, I do not see a single shroud, shrouded by which 2.1
 people wander and transmigrate for a long time like the shroud of
 ignorance. Shrouded by ignorance, people wander and transmi-
 grate for a long time.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“There is no other thing 3.1
 that shrouds people like ignorance.
 Veiled by delusion,
 they transmigrate day and night.

Those who have given up delusion, 4.1
 shattering the mass of darkness,
 wander no more,
 the root is not found in them.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
 what I heard.

Iti 15

The Fetter of Craving

Tañhāsaṁyojanasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, I do not see a single fetter, fettered by which people wander and transmigrate for a long time like the fetter of craving. Fettered by craving, people wander and transmigrate for a long time.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Craving is a person’s partner
as they transmigrate on this long journey.
They go from this state to another,
but don’t escape transmigration.
- 4.1 Knowing this danger,
that craving is the cause of suffering—
rid of craving, free of grasping,
a mendicant would wander mindful.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 16

A Trainee (1st)

Paṭhamasekhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Taking into account interior factors, mendicants, I do not see a single one that is so very helpful as proper attention for a trainee mendicant who hasn’t achieved their heart’s desire, but lives aspir-

ing to the supreme sanctuary. A mendicant paying proper attention gives up the unskillful and develops the skillful.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“There is nothing so helpful 3.1
for a trainee mendicant
aspiring for the ultimate goal
as proper attention.
Striving properly, a mendicant
attains the end of suffering.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 17

A Trainee (2nd)

Dutiyasekhasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Taking into account exterior factors, mendicants, I do not see 2.1
a single one that is so very helpful as good friendship for a trainee
mendicant who hasn’t achieved their heart’s desire, but lives aspir-
ing to the supreme sanctuary. A mendicant who has good friends
gives up the unskillful and develops the skillful.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“A mendicant with good friends 3.1
is reverential and respectful
when their friends are speaking,
aware and mindful.
Gradually they would attain
the ending of all fetters.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 18

Schism in the Saṅgha

Saṅghabhedasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “One thing, mendicants, arises in the world for the hurt and unhappiness of the people, for the harm, hurt, and suffering of gods and humans. What one thing? Schism in the Saṅgha. When the Saṅgha is split, they argue, insult, block, and reject each other. This doesn’t inspire confidence in those without it, and it causes some with confidence to change their minds.”
- 2.6 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “A schismatic remains for the eon
in a place of loss, in hell.
Taking a stand against the teaching,
favoring factions, they destroy their sanctuary.
After causing schism in a harmonious Saṅgha,
they burn in hell for an eon.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 19

Harmony in the Saṅgha

Saṅghasāmaggīsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “One thing, mendicants, arises in the world for the welfare and happiness of the people, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. What one thing? Harmony in the Saṅgha. When the Saṅgha is in harmony, they don’t argue, insult, block, or

reject each other. This inspires confidence in those without it, and increases confidence in those who have it.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“A Saṅgha in harmony is happy, 3.1
as is support for those in harmony.
Taking a stand on the teaching,
favoring harmony, they ruin no sanctuary.
After creating harmony in the Saṅgha,
they rejoice in heaven for an eon.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 20

A Corrupted Mind

Paduṭṭhacittasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, when I’ve comprehended the mind of a person 2.1
whose mind is corrupted, I understand: ‘If this person were to die
right now, they would be cast down to hell.’ Why is that? Because
their mind is corrupted. Corruption of mind is the reason why
some sentient beings, when their body breaks up, after death, are
reborn in a place of loss, a bad place, the underworld, hell.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“Knowing a person’s 3.1
corrupted mind,
the Buddha explained this matter
in the mendicants’ presence.

If that person 4.1
were to die at this time,

they'd be reborn in hell,
for their mind is corrupted.

- 5.1 Such a person is cast down as surely
 as if they'd been carried off and put there.
 For corruption of mind is the reason
 sentient beings go to a bad place.”

- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
 what I heard.

Chapter Three

Iti 2 1

A Pure Mind

Pasannacittasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, when I’ve comprehended the mind of a person 2.1
whose mind is pure, I understand: ‘If this person were to die right
now, they would be raised up to heaven.’ Why is that? Because
their mind is pure. Purity of mind is the reason why some sentient
beings, when their body breaks up, after death, are reborn in a good
place, a heavenly realm.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“Knowing a person’s 3.1
pure mind,
the Buddha explained this matter
in the mendicants’ presence.

If that person 4.1
were to die at this time,
they’d be reborn in heaven,
for their mind is pure.

Such a person is raised up as surely 5.1
as if they’d been carried and put there.

For purity of mind is the reason
sentient beings go to a good place.”

- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 22

The Benefits of Love

Mettasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, don’t fear good deeds. For ‘good deeds’ is a term for happiness, for what is likable, desirable, and agreeable. I recall undergoing for a long time the likable, desirable, and agreeable results of good deeds performed over a long time. As a result, for seven eons of the cosmos contracting and expanding I didn’t return to this world again. As the eon contracted I went to the realm of streaming radiance. As it expanded I was reborn in an empty mansion of Brahmā.
- 3.1 There I was Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the undefeated, the champion, the universal seer, the wielder of power. I was Sakka, lord of gods, thirty-six times. Many hundreds of times I was a king, a wheel-turning monarch, a just and principled king. My dominion extended to all four sides, I achieved stability in the country, and I possessed the seven treasures. Not to mention regional kingship!
- 4.1 Then I thought, ‘Of what deed of mine is this the fruit and result, that I am now so mighty and powerful?’ Then I thought, ‘It is the fruit and result of three kinds of deeds: giving, self-control, and restraint.’”
- 4.6 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 5.1 “One should practice only good deeds,
whose happy outcome stretches ahead.

Giving and moral conduct,
developing a mind of love:

having developed these 6.1
three things yielding happiness,
that astute one is reborn
in a happy, pleasing world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 7.1
what I heard.

Iti 23

Both Kinds of Benefit

Ubhayatthasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“This one thing, mendicants, when developed and cultivated, 2.1
secures benefits for both the present life and lives to come. What
one thing? Diligence in skillful qualities. This is the one thing
that, when developed and cultivated, secures benefits for both the
present life and lives to come.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

“The astute praise diligence 3.1
in making merit.

Being diligent, an astute person
secures both benefits:

the benefit in this life, 4.1
and in lives to come.

A wise one, comprehending the meaning,
is said to be astute.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 24

A Heap of Bones

Aṭṭhipuñjasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, one person roaming and transmigrating for an eon would amass a heap of bones the size of this Mount Vepulla, if they were gathered together and not lost.”
- 2.2 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “If the bones of a single person
for a single eon were gathered up,
they’d make a pile the size of a mountain:
so said the great hermit.
- 4.1 And this is declared to be
as huge as Mount Vepulla,
higher than the Vulture’s Peak
near the Mountainfold of the Magadhans.
- 5.1 But then, with right understanding,
a person sees the noble truths—
suffering, suffering’s origin,
suffering’s transcendence,
and the noble eightfold path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.
- 6.1 After roaming on seven times at most,
that person
makes an end of suffering,
with the ending of all fetters.”
- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 25

Lying

Musāvādasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, for an individual who transgresses in one thing, 2.1
there is no bad deed they would not do, I say. What one thing? It
is this: telling a deliberate lie.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.4

“When a person, spurning the hereafter, 3.1
transgresses in just one thing—
lying—
there is no evil they would not do.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 26

Giving

Dānasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, if sentient beings only knew, as I do, the fruit of 2.1
giving and sharing, they would not eat without first giving, and
the stain of stinginess would not occupy their minds. They would
not eat without sharing even their last mouthful, their last morsel,
so long as there was someone to receive it. It is because sentient
beings do not know, as I do, the fruit of giving and sharing, that
they eat without first giving, and the stain of stinginess occupies
their minds.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.4

- 3.1 “If sentient beings only knew
how great is the fruit
of giving and sharing
as taught by the great hermit!
- 4.1 Rid of the stain of stinginess,
with clear and confident heart,
they would duly give to the noble ones,
where a gift is very fruitful.
- 5.1 Having given food in abundance
to those worthy of a religious donation,
after passing from the human realm,
the givers go to heaven.
- 6.1 And when they have arrived there in heaven,
they enjoy all the pleasures they desire.
The generous enjoy the
fruit of giving and sharing.”
- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 27

The Meditation on Love

Mettābhāvanāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, of all the grounds for making worldly merit, none
are worth a sixteenth part of the heart’s release by love. Surpassing
them, the heart’s release by love shines and glows and radiates.
- 3.1 It’s like how the radiance of all the stars is not worth a sixteenth
part of the moon’s radiance. Surpassing them, the moon’s radiance
shines and glows and radiates. In the same way, of all the grounds

for making worldly merit, none are worth a sixteenth part of the heart's release by love. Surpassing them, the heart's release by love shines and glows and radiates.

It's like the time after the rainy season when the sky is clear and cloudless. And when the sun rises, it dispels all the darkness from the sky as it shines and glows and radiates. In the same way, of all the grounds for making worldly merit, none are worth a sixteenth part of the heart's release by love. Surpassing them, the heart's release by love shines and glows and radiates. 4.1

It's like how after the rainy season the sky is clear and cloudless. At the crack of dawn, the Morning Star shines and glows and radiates. In the same way, of all the grounds for making worldly merit, none are worth a sixteenth part of the heart's release by love. Surpassing them, the heart's release by love shines and glows and radiates." 5.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 5.3

"A mindful one who develops
limitless love
weakens the fetters,
seeing the ending of attachments. 6.1

Loving just one creature with a hateless heart
makes you a good person.
Compassionate for all creatures,
a noble one creates abundant merit. 7.1

The royal potentates conquered this land
and traveled around sponsoring sacrifices—
horse sacrifice, human sacrifice,
the sacrifices of the 'casting of the yoke-pin',
the 'royal soma drinking', and the 'unbarred'. 8.1

These are not worth a sixteenth part
of the mind developed with love,
as starlight cannot rival the moon. 9.1

- 10.1 Don't kill or cause others to kill,
 don't conquer or encourage others to conquer,
 with love for all living creatures—
 you'll have no enmity for anyone.”
- 11.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
 what I heard.

THE BOOK OF THE TWOS

Chapter One

Iti 28

Living in Suffering

Dukkhavihārasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, when a mendicant has two qualities they live unhappily in the present life—with distress, anguish, and fever—and when the body breaks up, after death, they can expect a bad rebirth. What two? Not guarding the sense doors and eating too much. When a mendicant has these two qualities they live unhappily in the present life—with distress, anguish, and fever—and when the body breaks up, after death, they can expect a bad rebirth.”
- 2.7 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Eye, ear, nose,
tongue, body, and likewise mind:
a mendicant who leaves these
sense doors unguarded—
- 4.1 immoderate in eating,
sense faculties unrestrained—
reaps suffering
both physical and mental.
- 5.1 Burning in body,

burning in mind,
by day or by night
such a person lives in suffering.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Iti 29

Living in Happiness

Sukhavihārasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, when a mendicant has two qualities they live hap- 2.1
pily in the present life—without distress, anguish, and fever—
and when the body breaks up, after death, they can expect a good
rebirth. What two? Guarding the sense doors and moderation in
eating. When a mendicant has these two qualities they live hap-
pily in the present life—without distress, anguish, and fever—
and when the body breaks up, after death, they can expect a good
rebirth.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

“Eye, ear, nose, 3.1
tongue, body, and likewise mind:
a mendicant who makes these
sense doors well guarded—

eating in moderation, 4.1
restrained in the sense faculties—
reaps happiness
both physical and mental.

Not burning in body, 5.1
not burning in mind,

by day or by night
such a person lives in happiness.”

- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 30

Mortifying

Tapanīyasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “These two things, mendicants, are mortifying. What two? It’s when someone hasn’t done good and skillful things that keep them safe, but has done bad, violent, and depraved things. Thinking, ‘I haven’t done good things’, they’re mortified. Thinking, ‘I have done bad things’, they’re mortified. These are the two things that are mortifying.”
- 2.6 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Having done bad things
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
and whatever else is corrupt;
- 4.1 not having done good deeds,
and having done many bad,
when their body breaks up, that witless person
is reborn in hell.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 3 1

Not Mortifying

Atapanīyasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“These two things, mendicants, are not mortifying. What two? 2.1
It’s when someone has done good and skillful things that keep them
safe, but has not done bad, violent, and depraved things. Thinking,
‘I have done good things’, they’re not mortified. Thinking, ‘I haven’t
done bad things’, they’re not mortified. These are the two things
that are not mortifying.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.6

“Having given up bad conduct 3.1
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
and whatever else is corrupt;

not having done bad deeds, 4.1
and having done many good,
when their body breaks up, that wise person
is reborn in heaven.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 3 2

Ethics (1st)

Paṭhamasīlasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

- 2.1 “Mendicants, a person with two qualities is cast down to hell. What two? Bad conduct and bad view. A person who has these two qualities is cast down to hell.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “If a person possesses
these two qualities—
bad conduct
and bad views—
when their body breaks up, that witless person
is reborn in hell.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 33

Ethics (2nd)

Dutiyasīlasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, a person with two qualities is raised up to heaven. What two? Excellent conduct and excellent view. A person who has these two qualities is is raised up to heaven.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “If a person possesses
these two qualities—
excellent conduct
and excellent views—
when their body breaks up, that wise person
is reborn in heaven.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 34

Keen

Ātāpīsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, without being keen and prudent a mendicant can’t 2.1
achieve awakening, extinguishment, and the supreme sanctuary.
But if a mendicant is keen and prudent they can achieve awakening,
extinguishment, and the supreme sanctuary.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“Neither keen nor prudent, 3.1
lazy, lacking energy,
full of dullness and drowsiness,
unconscientious, lacking regard for others,
such a mendicant is incapable
of touching the highest awakening.

One who is mindful, alert, meditative, 4.1
keen, prudent, and diligent,
having cut the fetter of birth and old age,
would experience supreme awakening in this very
life.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 35

Deceit and Flattery

Paṭhamajāṇanakuhanasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

- 2.1 “Mendicants, this spiritual life is not lived for the sake of deceiving people or flattering them, nor for the benefit of possessions, honor, or popularity, nor thinking, ‘So let people know about me!’ This spiritual life is lived for the sake of restraint and giving up.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “The Buddha taught the spiritual life
not because of tradition,
but for the sake of restraint and giving up,
and because it culminates in extinguishment.
- 4.1 This is the path followed by the great souls,
the great hermits.
Those who practice it
as it was taught by the Buddha
doing the teacher’s bidding,
make an end of suffering.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 36

Deceit and Flattery

DutiyaJananakuhanasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, this spiritual life is not lived for the sake of deceiving people or flattering them, nor for the benefit of possessions, honor, or popularity, nor thinking, ‘So let people know about me!’ This spiritual life is lived for the sake of direct knowledge and complete understanding.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “The Buddha taught the spiritual life

not because of tradition,
but for the sake of insight and understanding,
and because it culminates in extinguishment.

This is the path followed by the great souls, 4.1
the great hermits.
Those who practice it
as it was taught by the Buddha
doing the teacher's bidding,
make an end of suffering."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 37

Happiness

Somanassasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

"Mendicants, when a mendicant has two qualities they're full 2.1
of joy and happiness in the present life, and they have laid the
groundwork for ending the defilements. What two? Being inspired
at inspiring places, and making a suitable effort when inspired.
When a mendicant has these two qualities they're full of joy and
happiness in the present life, and they have laid the groundwork
for ending the defilements."

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

"At inspiring places 3.1
an astute person should be inspired;
a keen and alert mendicant
should examine with wisdom.

A mendicant living like this, with keen energy, 4.1

peaceful and stable,
devoted to serenity of heart,
attains the ending of suffering.”

- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Chapter Two

Iti 38

Thoughts

Vitakkasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Two thoughts, mendicants, often occur to the Realized One, 2.1
the perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha: the thought of
sanctuary, and that of seclusion. The Realized One loves kindness
and delights in it, so this thought often occurs to him: ‘Through
this behavior, I shall not hurt any creature firm or frail.’

The Realized One loves seclusion and delights in it, so this 3.1
thought often occurs to him: ‘What is unskillful has been given
up.’

So, mendicants, you too should love kindness and delight in it, 4.1
then this thought will often occur to you: ‘Through this behavior,
I shall not hurt any creature firm or frail.’

You too should love seclusion and delight in it, then this thought 5.1
will often occur to you: ‘What is unskillful? What is not given up?
What should I give up?’”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 5.4

“Two thoughts occur to him, 6.1
the Realized One, the bearer of the unbearable:
first mentioned was thought of sanctuary,

then the second made clear was seclusion.

- 7.1 Dispeller of darkness,
 the great hermit has crossed over:
 the attained, the master, the undefiled.
 In the midst of it all,
 he is freed in the ending of craving;
 that sage bears his final body.
 He has disposed of Māra, I declare,
 and gone beyond old age.

- 8.1 Standing high on a rocky mountain,
 you can see the people all around.
 In just the same way, the all-seer, wise one,
 having ascended the Temple of Truth,
 rid of sorrow, looks upon the people
 swamped with sorrow,
 oppressed by rebirth and old age.”

- 9.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
 what I heard.

Iti 39

Teaching

Desanāsutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
 heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, the Realized One, the perfected one, the fully
 awakened Buddha has two approaches to teaching Dhamma. What
 two? ‘See evil as evil’—this is the first approach to teaching
 Dhamma. ‘Having seen evil as evil, be disillusioned, dispassion-
 ate, and freed from it’—this is the second approach to teaching
 Dhamma. The Realized One, the perfected one, the fully awakened
 Buddha has these two approaches to teaching Dhamma.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.8

“See the two approaches for 3.1
explaining the Dhamma
used by the Realized One, the Buddha,
compassionate for all beings:

see that that is evil, 4.1
and be dispassionate towards it.
Then, with a mind free of desire,
you will make an end of suffering.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 40

Knowledge

Vijjāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, ignorance precedes the attainment of unskillful 2.1
qualities, with lack of conscience and prudence following along.
Knowledge precedes the attainment of skillful qualities, with con-
science and prudence following along.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.3

“Bad destinies of whatever kind, 3.1
in this world or the next,
are all rooted in ignorance,
compounded of greed and desire.

Since one of corrupt wishes is 4.1
unconscientious, lacking regard for others,
they make much bad karma,

which sends them to a place of loss.

- 5.1 Therefore, dispelling desire
and greed and ignorance,
a mendicant arousing knowledge
would cast off all bad destinies.”

- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 41

Bereft of Wisdom

Paññāparihīnasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Those sentient beings are truly bereft, mendicants, who are
bereft of noble wisdom. They live unhappily in the present life—
with distress, anguish, and fever—and when the body breaks up,
after death, they can expect a bad rebirth. Those sentient beings
are not bereft who are not bereft of noble wisdom. In the present
life they’re happy—free of anguish, distress, and fever—and when
the body breaks up, after death, they can expect a good rebirth.”
- 2.7 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “See the world with its gods,
bereft of wisdom,
habituated to name and form,
imagining this is truth.
- 4.1 Wisdom is best in the world,
as it leads to penetration,
through which one rightly understands
the ending of rebirth and continued existence.
- 5.1 Gods and humans envy them,

the Buddhas, ever mindful,
of laughing wisdom,
bearing their final body.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Iti 42

Bright Things

Sukkadhammasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“These two bright things, mendicants, protect the world. What 2.1
two? Conscience and prudence. If these two bright things did
not protect the world, there would be no recognition of the status
of mother, aunts, or wives and partners of teachers and respected
people. The world would become promiscuous, like goats and
sheep, chickens and pigs, and dogs and jackals. But because the
two bright things protect the world, there is recognition of the
status of mother, aunts, and wives and partners of teachers and
respected people.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

“Those in whom conscience and shame 3.1
are never found at all,
have lost their bright roots,
and fare on in birth and death.

Those in whom conscience and shame 4.1
are always rightly established,
thrive in the spiritual life;
being at peace, they will not be reborn again.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 43

Unborn

Ajātasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “There is, mendicants, an unborn, unproduced, unmade, and unconditioned. If there were no unborn, unproduced, unmade, and unconditioned, then you would find no escape here from the born, produced, made, and conditioned. But since there is an unborn, unproduced, unmade, and unconditioned, an escape is found from the born, produced, made, and conditioned.”
- 2.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “What’s born, produced, and arisen,
made, conditioned, not lasting,
wrapped in old age and death,
frail, a nest of disease,
- 4.1 generated by food and the conduit to rebirth:
that’s not fit to delight in.
The escape from that is peaceful,
beyond the scope of logic, everlasting,
- 5.1 unborn and unarisen,
the sorrowless, stainless state,
the cessation of all painful things,
the stilling of conditions, bliss.”
- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 44

Elements of Extinguishment

Nibbānadhātusutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“There are, mendicants, these two elements of extinguishment. 2.1
What two? The element of extinguishment with something left
over, and the element of extinguishment with nothing left over.

And what is the element of extinguishment with something left 3.1
over? It’s when a mendicant is a perfected one, with defilements
ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had
to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their own true goal,
utterly ended the fetters of rebirth, and is rightly freed through en-
lightenment. Their five sense faculties still remain. So long as their
senses have not gone they continue to experience the agreeable
and disagreeable, to feel pleasure and pain. The ending of greed,
hate, and delusion in them is called the element of extinguishment
with something left over.

And what is the element of extinguishment with nothing left 4.1
over? It’s when a mendicant is a perfected one, with defilements
ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had
to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their own true goal,
utterly ended the fetters of rebirth, and is rightly freed through
enlightenment. For them, everything that’s felt, being no longer
relished, will become cool right here. This is called the element of
extinguishment with nothing left over. These are the two elements
of extinguishment.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 4.6

“These two elements of extinguishment 5.1
have been made clear
by the seer, the unattached, the poised.
One element pertains to the present life—

what is left over
 when the conduit to rebirth has ended.
 What has nothing left over
 pertains to what follows this life,
 where all states of existence cease.

- 6.1 Those who have fully understood
 the unconditioned state—
 their minds freed, the conduit to rebirth ended—
 attained to the heart of the Dhamma,
 they delight in ending,
 the poised ones have given up all states of existence.”

Iti 45

Retreat

Paṭisallānasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Enjoy retreat, mendicants, love retreat. Be committed to inner serenity of the heart, don’t neglect absorption, be endowed with discernment, and frequent empty huts. A mendicant who enjoys retreat can expect one of two results: enlightenment in the present life, or if there’s something left over, non-return.”
- 2.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “With minds at peace, alert,
 mindful and meditative,
 they rightly discern the Dhamma,
 unconcerned for sensual pleasures.
- 4.1 Delighting in diligence, peaceful,
 seeing fear in negligence,
 such a one can’t decline,
 and has drawn near to quenching.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 46

The Benefits of Training

Sikkhānisaṃsasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, live with training as benefit, with wisdom as over- 2.1
seer, with freedom as core, and with mindfulness as ruler. A men-
dicant who lives in this way can expect one of two results: en-
lightenment in the present life, or if there’s something left over,
non-return.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.4

“The training fulfilled, not liable to decline, 3.1
overseen by wisdom, seer of rebirth’s end;
that sage bears their final body;
they have disposed of Māra, I declare,
and gone beyond old age.

Therefore be always enjoying absorption, 4.1
immersed in samādhi,
energetic, seers of rebirth’s end.
Having overcome Māra and his armies, mendicants,
go beyond birth and death.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 47

Wake Up

Jāgariyasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Meditate wakeful, mendicants, mindful and aware, joyful and clear, and at times discern the skillful qualities in that state. A mendicant who meditates in this way can expect one of two results: enlightenment in the present life, or if there’s something left over, non-return.”
- 2.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Listen up, wakeful ones!
And those asleep, wake up!
Wakefulness is better than sleep,
the wakeful have nothing to fear.
- 4.1 Those who are wakeful, mindful and aware,
immersed in samādhi, joyful and clear,
rightly investigating the Dhamma in good time,
at one, would banish the darkness.
- 5.1 That’s why you should apply yourself to wakefulness.
A keen and alert mendicant, possessing absorption,
having cut the fetter of birth and old age,
would experience supreme awakening in this very
life.”
- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 48

Bound for Loss

Āpāyikasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, two kinds of people are bound for a place of loss, 2.1
bound for hell, if they don’t give up this fault. What two? Some-
one who is unchaste, but claims to be celibate; and someone who
makes a groundless accusation of unchastity against a person whose
celibacy is pure. These are the two kinds of people bound for a
place of loss, bound for hell, if they don’t give up this fault.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“A liar goes to hell, 3.1
as does one who denies what they did.
Both are equal in the hereafter,
those men of base deeds.

Many who wrap their necks in ocher robes 4.1
are unrestrained and wicked.
Being wicked, they are reborn in hell
due to their bad deeds.

It’d be better for the immoral and unrestrained 5.1
to eat an iron ball,
scorching, like a burning flame,
than to eat the nation’s alms.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Iti 49

Misconceptions

Diṭṭhigatasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Overcome by two misconceptions, mendicants, some gods and humans get stuck, some overreach, while those with vision see.
- 3.1 And how do some get stuck? Because of love, delight, and enjoyment of existence, when the Dhamma is being taught for the cessation of existence, the minds of some gods and humans are not eager, confident, settled, and decided. That is how some get stuck.
- 4.1 And how do some overreach? Some, becoming horrified, repelled, and disgusted with existence, delight in ending existence: ‘When this self is annihilated and destroyed when the body breaks up, and doesn’t exist after death: that is peaceful, that is sublime, that is reality.’ That is how some overreach.
- 5.1 And how do those with vision see? It’s when a mendicant sees what has come to be as having come to be. Seeing this, they are practicing for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding what has come to be. That is how those with vision see.”
- 5.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 6.1 “Those who see what has come to be
as having come to be,
transcending what has come to be,
are freed in accord with the truth,
with the ending of craving for continued existence.
- 7.1 They completely understand what has come to be,
rid of craving for rebirth in this or that state,
with the disappearance of what has come to be,
a mendicant does not come back to future lives.”
- 8.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

THE BOOK OF THE THREES

Chapter One

Iti 50

Roots

Mūlasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three unskillful roots. What three? Greed, hate, and delusion. These are the three unskillful roots.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “When greed, hate, and delusion,
have arisen inside oneself,
they harm a person of wicked heart,
as a reed is destroyed by its own fruit.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 51

Elements

Dhātusutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three elements. What three? The elements of form, formlessness, and cessation. These are the three elements.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Comprehending the element of form,
not stuck in the formless,
those who are released in cessation,
they are conquerors of death. 3.1

Having directly experienced the deathless element,
free of attachments; 4.1
having realised relinquishment
of attachments, the undefiled
fully awakened Buddha teaches
the sorrowless, stainless state.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 52

Feelings (1st)

Paṭhamavedanāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these three feelings. What three? Pleasant, painful, and neutral feeling. These are the three feelings.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Stilled, aware, 3.1
a mindful disciple of the Buddha
understands feelings,
the cause of feelings,

where they cease, 4.1

and the path that leads to their ending.
 With the ending of feelings, a mendicant
 is hungerless, extinguished.”

- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 53

Feelings (2nd)

Dutiya vedanā sutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three feelings. What three? Pleasant, painful, and neutral feeling. Pleasant feeling should be seen as suffering. Painful feeling should be seen as a dart. Neutral feeling should be seen as impermanent. When a mendicant has seen these three feelings in this way, they’re called a noble mendicant who sees rightly, has cut off craving, untied the fetters, and by rightly comprehending conceit has made an end of suffering.”
- 2.9 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “A mendicant who sees pleasure as pain,
 and suffering as a dart,
 and that peaceful, neutral feeling
 as impermanent
- 4.1 sees rightly.
 And when freed in regards to that,
 that peaceful sage, with perfect insight,
 has truly escaped their bonds.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 54

Searches (1st)

Paṭhamaesanāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three searches. What three? The 2.1
search for sensual pleasures, the search for continued existence,
and the search for a spiritual path. These are the three searches.

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Stilled, aware, 3.1
a mindful disciple of the Buddha
understands searches,
the cause of searches,

where they cease, 4.1
and the path that leads to their ending.
With the ending of searches, a mendicant
is hungerless, extinguished.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 55

Searches (2nd)

Dutiyaesanāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three searches. What three? The 2.1
search for sensual pleasures, the search for continued existence,
and the search for a spiritual path. These are the three searches.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

- 3.1 “The search for sensual pleasures, for a good rebirth,
and the search for a spiritual path;
the holding tight to the notion ‘this is the truth’,
and the mass of grounds for views—
- 4.1 for one detached from all lusts,
freed by the ending of craving,
that searching has been relinquished,
and those viewpoints eradicated.
With the ending of searches, a mendicant
is free of hope and indecision.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 56

Defilements (1st)

Paṭhamaāśavasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three defilements. What three?
The defilements of sensuality, desire to be reborn, and ignorance.
These are the three defilements.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Stilled, aware,
a mindful disciple of the Buddha
understands defilements,
the cause of defilements,
- 4.1 where they cease,
and the path that leads to their ending.
With the ending of defilements, a mendicant
is hungerless, extinguished.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 57

Defilements (2nd)

Dutiyaāśavasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these three defilements. What three? 2.1
The defilements of sensuality, desire to be reborn, and ignorance.
These are the three defilements.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“One who has ended the defilement of sensuality, 3.1
whose ignorance has faded away,
and whose desire to be reborn is finished—
liberated, free of attachments,
they bear their final body,
having vanquished Māra and his mount.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 4.1

Iti 58

Craving

Taṇhāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these three cravings. What three? Craving for sensual pleasures, craving to continue existence, and craving to end existence. These are the three cravings.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

- 3.1 “Bound by craving, minds full of desire
for rebirth in this or that state,
yoked by Māra’s yoke, these people
find no sanctuary from the yoke.
Sentient beings continue to transmigrate,
with ongoing birth and death.
- 4.1 Those who have given up craving,
rid of craving for rebirth in this or that state,
they in this world have truly crossed over,
having reached the ending of defilements.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 59

Māra’s Sway

Māradheyyasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, a mendicant with these three qualities has slipped
free of Māra’s sway and shines like the sun. What three? It’s when
they have the entire spectrum of the master’s ethics, immersion,
and wisdom. A mendicant with these three qualities has slipped
free of Māra’s sway and shines like the sun.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Whoever has well developed
ethics, immersion, and wisdom
has slipped free of Māra’s sway
and shines like the sun.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Chapter Two

Iti 60

Grounds for Making Merit

Puññakiriyavatthusutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three grounds for making merit. 2.1
What three? Giving, ethical conduct, and meditation are all
grounds for making merit. These are the three grounds for making
merit.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“One should practice only good deeds, 3.1
whose happy outcome stretches ahead.
Giving and moral conduct,
developing a mind of love:

having developed these 4.1
three things yielding happiness,
that astute one is reborn
in a happy, pleasing world.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 61

The Eye

Cakkhusutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three eyes. What three? the eye of the flesh, the eye of clairvoyance, and the eye of wisdom. These are the three eyes.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “The eye of flesh, the clairvoyant eye,
the supreme eye of wisdom:
these three eyes
were taught by the supreme person.
- 4.1 The arising of the eye of flesh
is the path to the clairvoyant eye.
When knowledge arises—
the supreme eye of wisdom—
one who gains that eye
is released from all suffering.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 62

Faculties

Indriyasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three faculties. What three? The faculty of understanding that one’s enlightenment is imminent. The

faculty of enlightenment. The faculty of one who is enlightened.
These are the three faculties.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“As a trainee trains, 3.1
following the straight road,
first they know about ending;
enlightenment follows in the same lifetime.

Then the knowledge comes 4.1
to such a one, freed through enlightenment,
with the end of the fetters of rebirth:
‘My freedom is unshakable.’

Accomplished in the faculties, 5.1
peaceful, in love with the state of peace,
they bear their final body,
having vanquished Māra and his mount.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Iti 63

Periods

Addhāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three periods. What three? Past, 2.1
future, and present. These are the three periods.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Sentient beings who perceive the communicable, 3.1
become established in the communicable.
Not understanding the communicable,

they fall under the yoke of Death.

4.1 But having fully understood the communicable,
they don't identify as a communicator,
as they've touched liberation with their mind,
the supreme state of peace.

5.1 Accomplished in the communicable,
peaceful, in love with the state of peace;
making use after reflection, firm in principle,
a knowledge master cannot be reckoned."

6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 64

Bad Conduct

Duccaritasutta

1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.

2.1 "Mendicants, there are these three kinds of bad conduct. What
three? Bad conduct by way of body, speech, and mind. These are
the three kinds of bad conduct."

2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

3.1 "Having done bad things
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
and whatever else is corrupt;

4.1 not having done good deeds,
and having done many bad,
when their body breaks up, that witless person
is reborn in hell."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 65

Good Conduct

Sucaritasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these kinds of good conduct. What three? Good conduct by way of body, speech, and mind. These are the three kinds of good conduct.” The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.1

“Having given up bad conduct 3.1
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
and whatever else is corrupt;

not having done bad deeds, 4.1
and having done many good,
when their body breaks up, that wise person
is reborn in heaven.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 66

Purity

Soceyyasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three kinds of purity. What three? Purity of body, speech, and mind. These are the three kinds of purity.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Purity of body, purity of speech,
and undefiled purity of heart.
A pure person, blessed with purity,
has given up everything, they say.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 67

Sagacity

Moneyyasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three kinds of sagacity. What three? Sagacity of body, speech, and mind. These are the three kinds of sagacity.” The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “A sage in body, a sage in speech,
a sage undefiled in mind;
a sage, blessed with sagacity,
has washed off all bad things, they say.”
- 4.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 68

Greed (1st)

Paṭhamarāgasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Whoever has not given up greed, hate, and delusion is said to 2.1
be trapped. They’re caught in Māra’s snare, and the Wicked One
can do with them what he wants. Whoever has given up greed,
hate, and delusion is said to be free. They’re caught in Māra’s snare,
and the Wicked One can do with them what he wants.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Those in whom greed, hate, and ignorance 3.1
have faded away,
belong with those who are evolved;
holy, realized, awakened,
beyond enmity and fear,
they’ve given up everything, they say.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 69

Greed (2nd)

Dutiyarāgasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Whoever has not given up greed, hate, and delusion is said to 2.1
have not crossed over the ocean with its waves and whirlpools, its
saltwater crocodiles and monsters. Whoever has given up greed,
hate, and delusion is said to have crossed over the ocean with

its waves and whirlpools, its saltwater crocodiles and monsters.
Crossed over and gone beyond, that brahmin stands on the shore.”

2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

3.1 “Those in whom greed, hate, and ignorance
have faded away,
have crossed the ocean so hard to cross,
with its saltwater crocodiles and monsters,
its waves and dangers.

4.1 They’ve escaped their chains, given up death,
and have no attachments.
They’ve given up suffering,
so there are no more future lives.
They’ve come to an end, and cannot be measured;
and they’ve confounded the King of Death, I say.”

5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Chapter Three

Iti 70

Having Wrong View

Micchādiṭṭhikasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, I’ve seen beings who engaged in misconduct by 2.1
body, speech, and mind, who abused the noble ones, who had
wrong views and acted accordingly. At the breaking up of the body,
after death, they were reborn in a lower realm, a bad destination, a
world of misery, hell.

Now, I don’t say this because I’ve heard it from some other 3.1
ascetic or brahmin. I only say it because I’ve known, seen, and
realized it for myself.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 4.3

“When the mind has been misdirected, 5.1
and words wrongly spoken,
and wrong bodily deeds have been done,
a person here

unlearned, doer of bad deeds, 6.1
though their life may be short,
when their body breaks up, that witless person
is reborn in hell.”

- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 71

Having Right View

Sammādiṭṭhikasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, I’ve seen beings who engaged in good conduct of body, speech, and mind, who did not abuse the noble ones, who held right view and acted accordingly. At the breaking up of the body, after death, they were reborn in a good destination, a heavenly realm.
- 3.1 Now, I don’t say this because I’ve heard it from some other ascetic or brahmin. I only say it because I’ve known, seen, and realized it for myself.”
- 4.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 5.1 “When the mind has been directed right,
and words rightly spoken,
and right bodily deeds have been done,
a person here
- 6.1 learned, doer of good deeds,
though their life may be short,
when their body breaks up, that wise person
is reborn in heaven.”
- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 72

Elements of Escape

Nissaraṇīyasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three elements of escape. What 2.1
three? Renunciation is the escape from sensual pleasures. Form-
lessness is the escape from form. Cessation is the escape from what-
ever is created, conditioned, and dependently originated. These
are the three elements of escape.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Knowing the escape from sensuality, 3.1
and form’s transcendence,
one always keen touches
the stilling of all activities.

That mendicant sees rightly, 4.1
and when freed in regards to that,
that peaceful sage, with perfect insight,
has truly escaped their bonds.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 73

More Peaceful

Santatarasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, formless states are more peaceful than states of 2.1
form; cessation is more peaceful than formless states.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.2

- 3.1 “There are beings in the realm of luminous form,
and others stuck in the formless.
Not understanding cessation,
they return in future lives.
- 4.1 But the people who completely understand form,
not stuck in the formless,
released in cessation—
they are conquerors of death.
- 5.1 Having directly experienced the deathless element,
free of attachments;
having realised relinquishment
of attachments, the undefiled
fully awakened Buddha teaches
the sorrowless, stainless state.”
- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 74

A Child

Puttasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “These three kinds of children are found in the world. What
three? One who betters their birth, one who equals their birth,
one who fails their birth.
- 3.1 And how does a child better their birth? It’s when a child’s par-
ents have not gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the
Saṅgha. They kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual miscon-
duct, lie, and use alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They’re
immoral, of bad character. But their child has gone for refuge to
the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha. They don’t kill living

creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, or take alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They're ethical, of good character. That's how a child betters their birth.

And how does a child equal their birth? It's when a child's parents have gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha. They don't kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, or take alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They're ethical, of good character. And their child has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha. They don't kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, or take alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They're ethical, of good character. That's how a child equals their birth. 4.1

And how does a child fail their birth? It's when a child's parents have gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha. They don't kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, or take alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They're ethical, of good character. But their child has not gone for refuge to the Buddha, the teaching, and the Saṅgha. They kill living creatures, steal, commit sexual misconduct, lie, and use alcoholic drinks that cause negligence. They're immoral, of bad character. That's how a child fails their birth. These are the three kinds of children found in the world." 5.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 5.10

"The astute wish for a child 6.1
who betters or equals their birth;
not one who fails their birth,
disgracing their family.

These are the children in the world 7.1
who become lay devotees;
faithful, accomplished in ethics,
bountiful, rid of stinginess.
Like the moon freed from a cloud,
they shine in the assemblies."

- 8.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 75

A Rainless Cloud

Avuṭṭhikasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, these three people are found in the world. What three? One like a rainless cloud, one who rains locally, one who rains all over.
- 3.1 And how is a person like a rainless cloud? It’s when some person doesn’t give to anyone at all—whether ascetics and brahmins, paupers, vagrants, nomads, or beggars—such things as food, drink, clothing, vehicles; garlands, perfumes, and makeup; and bed, house, and lighting. That’s how a person is like a rainless cloud.
- 4.1 And how does a person rain locally? It’s when some person gives to some but not to others—whether ascetics and brahmins, paupers, vagrants, nomads, or beggars—such things as food, drink, clothing, vehicles; garlands, perfumes, and makeup; and bed, house, and lighting. That’s how a person rains locally.
- 5.1 And how does a person rain all over? It’s when some person gives to everyone—whether ascetics and brahmins, paupers, vagrants, nomads, or beggars—such things as food, drink, clothing, vehicles; garlands, perfumes, and makeup; and bed, house, and lighting. That’s how a person rains all over. These are the three people found in the world.”
- 5.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 6.1 “They don’t share the food and drink
they have acquired
with ascetics or brahmins,
with paupers, vagrants, or travelers.

They're like a rainless cloud,
they say, the meanest of men.

They don't give to some, 7.1
to some they provide.
They rain locally,
so say the wise.

Compassionate for all beings, 8.1
that person distributes
abundant food upon request,
saying, "Give! Give!"

The rain cloud rains forth, 9.1
having thundered and roared,
drenching the earth with water,
soaking the uplands and valleys.

Even so, such a person, 10.1
having accumulated wealth
by legitimate means,
through their own hard work,
rightly satisfies with food and drink
those fallen to destitution."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 11.1
what I heard.

Iti 76

Wishing for Happiness

Sukhapatthanāsutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

"Mendicants, an astute person who wishes for three kinds of 2.1
happiness should take care of their ethics. What three? "May I be

be praised!” “May I become rich!” “When my body breaks up, after death, may I be reborn in a good place, a heavenly realm!” An astute person who wishes for these three kinds of happiness should protect their precepts.”

2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

3.1 Wishing for three kinds of happiness—
praise, prosperity,
and to delight in heaven after passing away—
the wise would take care of their ethics.

4.1 Though you do no wrong,
if you associate with one who does,
you’re suspected of wrong,
and your disrepute grows.

5.1 Whatever kind of friend you make,
with whom you associate,
that’s how you become,
for so it is when you share your life.

6.1 The one who associates and the one associated with,
the one contacted and the one who contacts another,
are like an arrow smeared with poison
that contaminates the quiver.
A wise one, fearing contamination,
would never have wicked friends.

7.1 A man who wraps
putrid fish in blades of grass
makes the grass stink—
so it is when associating with fools.

8.1 But one who wraps
sandalwood incense in leaves
makes the leaves fragrant—

so it is when associating with the wise.

So, knowing they'll end up 9.1
like the wrapping, the astute
would shun the wicked,
and befriend the good.
The wicked lead you to hell,
the good help you to a good place."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 10.1
what I heard.

Iti 77

Fragile

Bhidurasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

"This body is fragile, mendicants, consciousness is liable to fade 2.1
away, and all attachments are impermanent, suffering, and perish-
able."

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.2

"Knowing that the body is fragile, 3.1
that consciousness fades away,
and seeing the danger in attachments,
they go beyond birth and death.
Having attained ultimate peace,
evolved, they bide their time."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 78

Converging Elements

Dhātusosaṁsandanasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, sentient beings come together and converge because of an element: Those who have bad convictions come together and converge with those who have bad convictions. Those who have good convictions come together and converge with those who have good convictions.
- 3.1 In the past ...
- 4.1 In the future ...
- 5.1 At present, too, sentient beings come together and converge because of an element. Those who have bad convictions come together and converge with those who have bad convictions. Those who have good convictions come together and converge with those who have good convictions.”
- 5.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 6.1 “Socializing promotes entanglements;
they’re cut off by being aloof.
If you’re lost in the middle of a great sea,
and you clamber up on a little log, you’ll sink.
- 7.1 So too, a person who lives well
sinks by relying on a lazy person.
Hence you should avoid such
a lazy person who lacks energy.
- 8.1 Dwell with the noble ones
who are secluded and determined
constantly energetic,
the astute who practice absorption.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 9.1
what I heard.

Iti 79

Decline

Parihānasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“These three things lead to the decline of a mendicant trainee. 2.1
What three? It’s when a mendicant relishes work, talk, and sleep.
These three things lead to the decline of a mendicant trainee.

These three things don’t lead to the decline of a mendicant 3.1
trainee. What three? It’s when a mendicant doesn’t relish work,
talk, and sleep. These three things don’t lead to the decline of a
mendicant trainee.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 3.7

“Restless, they relish 4.1
work, talk, and sleep.

Such a mendicant is incapable
of touching the highest awakening.

That’s why one ought have few duties, 5.1
being wakeful and stable.

Such a mendicant is capable
of touching the highest awakening.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Chapter Four

Iti 80

Thoughts

Vitakkasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are these three unskillful thoughts. What three? The thought of being looked up to; of getting material possessions, honor, and popularity; and of fondness for others. These are the three unskillful thoughts.”
- 2.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “One concerned with being looked up to,
with possessions, honor, and respect,
with sharing joys with friends,
is far from the ending of fetters.
- 4.1 But one who gives up children and herds,
marriage and acquisitions—
such a mendicant is capable
of touching the highest awakening.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 81

Esteem

Sakkārasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“I’ve seen, mendicants, sentient beings whose minds are over- 2.1
come and overwhelmed by honor. When their body breaks up,
after death, they’re reborn in a place of loss, a bad place, the under-
world, hell.

I’ve seen sentient beings whose minds are overcome and over- 3.1
whelmed by not being honored. When their body breaks up, after
death, they’re reborn in a place of loss, a bad place, the underworld,
hell.

I’ve seen sentient beings whose minds are overcome and over- 4.1
whelmed by both honor and by not being honored. When their
body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in a place of loss, a bad
place, the underworld, hell.

Now, I don’t say this because I’ve heard it from some other 5.1
ascetic or brahmin. I only say it because I’ve known, seen, and
realized it for myself.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 8.2

“Whether they’re honored 9.1
or not honored, or both,
their immersion doesn’t waver
as they live diligently.

They persistently practice absorption 10.1
with subtle view and discernment.
Rejoicing in the ending of grasping,
they’re said to be a good person.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 11.1
what I heard.

Iti 82

The Cry of the Gods

Devasaddasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, these three cries are uttered among the gods on occasion. What three? When a noble disciple shaves off their hair and beard, dresses in ocher robes, and goes forth from the lay life to homelessness, the gods cry out: ‘This noble disciple intends to join battle with Māra!’ This is the first occasion a cry is uttered among the gods.
- 3.1 Furthermore, when a noble disciple meditates pursuing the development of the seven qualities that lead to awakening, the gods cry out: ‘This noble disciple is joining battle with Māra!’ This is the second occasion a cry is uttered among the gods.
- 4.1 Furthermore, when a noble disciple realizes the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom in this very life, and they live having realized it with their own insight due to the ending of defilements, the gods cry out: ‘This noble disciple has won victory in battle, establishing himself as foremost in battle!’ This is the third occasion a cry is uttered among the gods. These are the three cries that are uttered among the gods on occasion.”
- 4.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 5.1 “Seeing the winner of the battle—
a disciple of the Buddha,
a great one, rid of naivety—
even the deities revere them:
- 6.1 ‘Homage to you, O thoroughbred!
You won a battle hard to win!
Having defeated the army of death,
your liberation is unobstructed.’

And so the deities revere the one, 7.1
 who has achieved their heart's desire.
 For they see nothing in them by means of which
 they might fall under the sway of Death.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 8.1
 what I heard.

Iti 83

Five Warning Signs

Pañcapubbanimittasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
 heard.

“Mendicants, when a god is due to pass away from the realm of 2.1
 the gods, five warning signs appear. Their flower-garlands wither;
 their clothes become soiled; they sweat from the armpits; their
 physical appearance deteriorates; and they no longer delight in
 their heavenly throne.² When the other gods know that that god is
 due to pass away, they wish them well in three ways: ‘Sir, may you
 go from here to a good place!

When you have gone to a good place, may you be blessed with 3.1
 good fortune!

When you have been blessed with good fortune, may you be- 4.1
 come well grounded!’

When he said this, one of the mendicants said to the Buddha, 5.1
 “Sir, what do the gods reckon to be going to a good place?

What do they reckon to be blessed with good fortune? 6.1

What do they reckon to become well grounded?” 7.1

“It is human existence, mendicant, that the gods reckon to be 8.1
 going to a good place.

2. *Kāye dubbañṇiyam okkamati* doesn't refer to the dimming of a divine radiance. It describes a declining physical appearance (AN 5.50:9.4).

- 9.1 When a human being gains faith in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One, that is what the gods reckon to be blessed with good fortune.
- 10.1 When that faith in the Realized One is settled, rooted, and planted deep; when it's strong and can't be shifted by any ascetic or brahmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world, that is what the gods reckon to become well grounded."
- 11.1 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 12.1 "When, with the fading of life,
a god passes from the realm of the gods,
the gods utter three cries
of well-wishing:
- 13.1 'Sir, go from here to a good place,
in the company of humans.
As a human being, gain supreme faith
in the true teaching.
- 14.1 May that faith of yours be settled,
with roots planted deep,
unfaltering all life long
in the true teaching so well proclaimed.
- 15.1 Having given up bad conduct
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
and whatever else is corrupt;
- 16.1 and having done much good,
by way of body,
speech, and mind,
limitless, free of attachments;
- 17.1 then, having made much worldly merit
by giving gifts,

establish other colleagues
in the true teaching, the spiritual life.’

It is due to such compassion 18.1
that when the gods know a god
is due to pass away, they wish them well:
‘Come back, god, again and again!’

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 19.1
what I heard.

Iti 84

For the Welfare of the People

Bahujanahitasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Three people, mendicants, arise in the world for the welfare 2.1
and happiness of the people, out of compassion for the world, for
the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. What
three? It’s when a Realized One arises in the world, perfected, a
fully awakened Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and conduct,
holy, knower of the world, supreme guide for those who wish to
train, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed. He teaches
Dhamma that’s good in the beginning, good in the middle, and
good in the end, meaningful and well-phrased. And he reveals
a spiritual practice that’s entirely full and pure. This is the first
person who arises in the world for the welfare and happiness of the
people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare,
and happiness of gods and humans.

Furthermore, it’s when a mendicant is a perfected one, with 3.1
defilements ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done
what had to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their own
true goal, utterly ended the fetters of rebirth, and is rightly freed
through enlightenment. They teach Dhamma that’s good in the

beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, meaningful and well-phrased. And they reveal a spiritual practice that's entirely full and pure. This is the second person who arises in the world for the welfare and happiness of the people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans.

- 4.1 Furthermore, it's when a disciple of that Teacher is a trainee, a learned practitioner with precepts and observances intact. They teach Dhamma that's good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, meaningful and well-phrased. And they reveal a spiritual practice that's entirely full and pure. This is the third person who arises in the world for the welfare and happiness of the people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. These are the three people who arise in the world for the welfare and happiness of the people, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans."

- 4.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

- 5.1 "The Teacher is the first, the great hermit,
following whom is the disciple of developed self,
and then a trainee, a practitioner,
learned, with precepts and observances intact.

- 6.1 These three are first among gods and humans,
beacons proclaiming the teaching!
They fling open the door to the deathless,
freeing many from bondage.

- 7.1 Following the path so well taught
by the unsurpassed caravan leader,
those who are diligent in the Holy One's teaching
make an end of suffering in this very life."

- 8.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 85

Observing Ugliness

Asubhānupassīutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, meditate observing the ugliness of the body. Let 2.1
mindfulness of breathing be well-established internally in front
of you Meditate observing the impermanence of all conditions.
As you meditate observing the ugliness of the body, you will give
up desire for the body. When mindfulness of breathing is well-
established internally in front of you, there will be no distressing
external thoughts or wishes. When you meditate observing the im-
permanence of all conditions, ignorance is given up and knowledge
arises.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

“Observing the ugliness of the body, 3.1
mindful of the breath,
one always keen sees
the stilling of all activities.

That mendicant sees rightly, 4.1
and when freed in regards to that,
that peaceful sage, with perfect insight,
has truly escaped their bonds.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 5.1
what I heard.

Iti 86

Practicing In Line With the Teaching

Dhammānūdhammaṭṭipannasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Regarding a mendicant practicing in line with the teaching, it is in line with the teaching to declare that this is what it means to practice in line with the teaching. When speaking, they speak in line with the teaching, not against it. When thinking, they think in line with the teaching, not against it. And rejecting both, they meditate staying equanimous, mindful and aware.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Delighting in the teaching, enjoying the teaching,
contemplating the teaching,
a mendicant who recollects the teaching
doesn’t decline in the true teaching.
- 4.1 Whether walking or standing,
sitting or lying down,
with mind collected inside,
they attain only peace.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 87

Destroyers of Sight

Andhakaraṇasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, these three unskillful thoughts are destroyers of sight, vision, and knowledge. They block wisdom, they’re on the

side of anguish, and they don't lead to extinguishment. What three? Thoughts of sensuality, malice, and cruelty. These are the three unskillful thoughts that are destroyers of sight, vision, and knowledge. They block wisdom, they're on the side of anguish, and they don't lead to extinguishment.

These three skillful thoughts are creators of sight, vision, and knowledge. They grow wisdom, they're on the side of solace, and they lead to extinguishment. What three? Thoughts of renunciation, good will, and harmlessness. These are the three skillful thoughts that are creators of sight, vision, and knowledge. They grow wisdom, they're on the side of solace, and they lead to extinguishment.” 3.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 3.7

“Think the three skillful thoughts, 4.1
and get rid of the unskillful.
Quelling such thoughts and considerations,
like rain on the dust,
with a heart calmed of thought,
you'll touch the state of peace right here.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 88

Inner Stains

Antarāmalasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these three inner stains, inner foes, inner enemies, inner killers, and inner adversaries. What three? Greed, hate, and delusion. These three are inner stains, inner foes, inner enemies, inner killers, and inner adversaries.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

- 3.1 “Greed creates harm;
greed upsets the mind.
That person doesn’t recognize
the danger that arises within.
- 4.1 A greedy person doesn’t know the good.
A greedy person doesn’t see the truth.
When a person is beset by greed,
only blind darkness is left.
- 5.1 Those who have given up greed,
don’t get greedy even when provoked.
Greed falls off them
like a drop from a lotus-leaf.
- 6.1 Hate creates harm;
hate upsets the mind.
That person doesn’t recognize
the danger that arises within.
- 7.1 A hateful person doesn’t know the good.
A hateful person doesn’t see the truth.
When a person is beset by hate,
only blind darkness is left.
- 8.1 Those who have given up hate,
don’t get angry even when provoked.
Hate falls off them
like a palm-leaf from its stem.
- 9.1 Delusion creates harm;
delusion upsets the mind.
That person doesn’t recognize
the danger that arises within.
- 10.1 A deluded person doesn’t know the good.

A deluded person doesn't see the truth.
When a person is beset by delusion,
only blind darkness is left.

Those who have given up delusion, 11.1
don't get deluded even when provoked.
They banish all delusion,
as the rising sun the dark."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 12.1
what I heard.

Iti 89

About Devadatta

Devadattasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

"Mendicants, overcome and overwhelmed by three things that 2.1
oppose the true teaching, Devadatta is going to a place of loss,
to hell, there to remain for an eon, irredeemable. What three?
Corrupt wishes ... Bad friendship ... When there is still more
to be done, stopping half-way after achieving some insignificant
distinction. Overcome and overwhelmed by these three things
that oppose the true teaching, Devadatta is going to a place of loss,
to hell, there to remain for an eon, irredeemable."

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.7

"Surely, none of wicked desire 3.1
are reborn into this world.
And by this too you should know
the place where those of corrupt wishes go.

He once was considered astute, 4.1
deemed to be evolved,

his glory stood forth like a flame,
the renowned Devadatta.³

- 5.1 Seduced by heedlessness,
he attacked the Realized One.
He has fallen to Avīci hell,
four-doored and terrifying.
- 6.1 When someone betrays the innocent,
who have done no wrong,
their bad deeds impact the one
with corrupt heart, lacking regard for others.
- 7.1 One might think to pollute
the ocean with a pot of poison,
but it wouldn't work,
for the sea is terribly large.
- 8.1 So too when someone attacks
with words the Realized One—
consummate, of peaceful mind—
the words don't take.
- 9.1 The astute would befriend one like this,
and follow them around.
A mendicant who walks the path
attains the ending of suffering.”
- 10.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

3. Commentary gives *me sutam* as variant here. But this construction is found in a number places with *vissuta*. See MN 86:18.40, Thag 16.8:15.2.

Chapter Five

Iti 90

The Best Kinds of Confidence

Aggappasādasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, these three kinds of confidence are the best. What 2.1
three? Mendicants, the Realized One, the perfected one, the fully
awakened Buddha, is said to be the best of all sentient beings—be
they footless, with two feet, four feet, or many feet; with form or
formless; with perception or without perception or with neither
perception nor non-perception. Those who have confidence in
the Buddha have confidence in the best. Having confidence in the
best, the result is the best.

Fading away is said to be the best of all things whether con- 3.1
ditioned or unconditioned. That is, the quelling of vanity, the
removing of thirst, the abolishing of clinging, the breaking of the
round, the ending of craving, fading away, cessation, extinguish-
ment. Those who have confidence in the teaching of fading away
have confidence in the best. Having confidence in the best, the
result is the best.

The Saṅgha of the Realized One’s disciples is said to be the best 4.1
of all communities and groups. It consists of the four pairs, the
eight individuals. This is the Saṅgha of the Buddha’s disciples that
is worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods, worthy of hospitality,

worthy of a religious donation, worthy of greeting with joined palms, and is the supreme field of merit for the world. Those who have confidence in the Saṅgha have confidence in the best. Having confidence in the best, the result is the best. These are the three best kinds of confidence.”

4.5 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

5.1 “For those who, knowing the best teaching,
base their confidence on the best—
confident in the best Awakened One,
supremely worthy of a religious donation;

6.1 confident in the best teaching,
the bliss of fading and stilling;
confident in the best Saṅgha,
the supreme field of merit—

7.1 giving gifts to the best,
the best of merit grows:
the best lifespan, beauty,
fame, reputation, happiness, and strength.

8.1 An intelligent person gives to the best,
settled on the best teaching.
When they become a god or human,
they rejoice at reaching the best.”

9.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 91

Lifestyle

Jīvikasutta

1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“Mendicants, this relying on alms is an extreme lifestyle. The world curses you: ‘You beggar, walking bowl in hand!’ Yet earnest gentlemen take it up for a good reason. Not because they’ve been forced to by kings or bandits, or because they’re in debt or threatened, or to earn a living. Rather, because they think: ‘I’m swamped by rebirth, old age, and death; by sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. I’m swamped by suffering, mired in suffering. Hopefully I can find an end to this entire mass of suffering.’ That’s how this gentleman has gone forth. Yet they covet sensual pleasures; they’re infatuated, full of ill will and malicious intent. They are unmindful, lacking situational awareness and immersion, with straying mind and undisciplined faculties. Suppose there was a firebrand for lighting a funeral pyre, burning at both ends, and smeared with dung in the middle. It couldn’t be used as timber either in the village or the wilderness. I say that person is just like this. They’ve missed out on the pleasures of the lay life, and haven’t fulfilled the goal of the ascetic life.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.11

“They’ve left behind the pleasures of the lay life,
and miss out on the goal of the ascetic life.
Ruining it, they throw it away,
and perish like a funeral firebrand. 3.1

Many who wrap their necks in ocher robes
are unrestrained and wicked. 4.1
Being wicked, they are reborn in hell
due to their bad deeds.

It’d be better for the immoral and unrestrained
to eat an iron ball,
scorching, like a burning flame,
than to eat the nation’s alms.” 5.1

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 6.1

Iti 92

The Corner of the Cloak

Saṅghāṭikaṇṇasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, suppose a mendicant were to hold the corner of my cloak and follow behind me step by step. Yet they covet sensual pleasures; they’re infatuated, full of ill will and malicious intent. They are unmindful, lacking situational awareness and immersion, with straying mind and undisciplined faculties. Then they are far from me, and I from them. Why is that? Because that mendicant does not see the teaching. Not seeing the teaching, they do not see me.
- 3.1 Suppose a mendicant were to live a hundred leagues away. Yet they do not covet sensual pleasures; they’re not infatuated, or full of ill will and malicious intent. They have established mindfulness, situational awareness and immersion, with unified mind and restrained faculties. Then they are close to me, and I to them. Why is that? Because that mendicant sees the teaching. Seeing the teaching, they see me.”
- 3.7 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 4.1 “One full of desire and distress
may follow close behind,
yet see how distant they are—
the stirred from the still,
the burning from the quenched,
the greedy from the greedless.
- 5.1 An astute person who has understood
and directly known the teaching,
grows calm,
like a lake unstirred by the wind.

See how close they are— 6.1
 the still to the still,
 the quenched to the quenched,
 the greedless to the greedless.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 7.1
 what I heard.

Iti 93

Fire

Aggisutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
 heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three fires. What three? The fires 2.1
 of greed, hate, and delusion. These are the three fires.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“The fire of greed burns a mortal, 3.1
 lustful, infatuated by sensual pleasures;
 while, fallen in the fire of hate,
 a person kills living creatures;

and, bewildered by the fire of delusion, 4.1
 they miss the teaching of the noble ones.
 Not recognizing these three fires,
 people are caught up in identity.

They fill the ranks of hell, 5.1
 of birth as an animal,
 or of demons and ghosts,
 not freed from Māra’s bonds.

But as to those committed day and night 6.1
 to the teaching of the Buddha:

- they quench the fire of greed,
always perceiving ugliness;
- 7.1 while those supreme persons
quench the fire of hate with love;
and the fire of delusion with the wisdom
that leads to penetration.
- 8.1 Having quenched these fires, alert,
tireless all day and night,
they become completely quenched,
completely transcending suffering.
- 9.1 Seers of the noble truths, knowledge masters,
the astute, understanding rightly,
directly know the ending of rebirth,
they come not back to future lives.”
- 10.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 94

Examination

Upaparikkhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, a mendicant should examine in any such a way
that their consciousness is neither scattered and diffused externally
nor stuck internally, and they are not anxious because of grasping.
When this is the case and they are no longer anxious, there is for
them no coming to be of the origin of suffering—of rebirth, old
age, and death in the future.”
- 2.3 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “For one who has given up seven chains,

a mendicant who has cut the cord,
transmigration through births is finished,
now there'll be no more future lives.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 4.1
what I heard.

Iti 95

Provided With Pleasure

Kāmūpapattisutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, there are these three ways of being provided with 2.1
sensual pleasures.⁴ What three? Some sensual pleasures are simply
present; some are for those who love to create; and some are for
those who control the creations of others. These are the three ways
of being provided with sensual pleasures.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Sensual pleasures that are simply present, 3.1
Gods Who Control the Creations of Others,
Gods Who Love to Create,
and others who indulge in sensual pleasures—
They go from this state to another,
but don't escape transmigration.

Knowing this danger 4.1
in sensual indulgence, an astute person
would reject all sensual pleasures,
both human and divine.

4. The prose phrasing in this sutta is obscure, so I have drawn out the meaning somewhat. According to the commentary, the first category refers to humans and certain devas.

- 5.1 Having cut the stream so hard to pass,
that's tied to pleasant seeming things,
they become completely quenched,
completely transcending suffering.
- 6.1 Seers of the noble truths, knowledge masters,
the astute, understanding rightly,
directly know the ending of rebirth,
they come not back to future lives."
- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 96

Attached to Sensual Pleasures

Kāmayogasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 "Mendicants, one attached to both sensual pleasures and re-
birth is a returner, who comes back to this state of existence. One
detached from sensual pleasures but still attached to rebirth is a
non-returner, who comes not back to this state of existence. One
detached from both sensual pleasures and rebirth is a perfected
one, who has ended defilements."
- 2.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 "Attached to both sensual pleasures
and the desire to be reborn in a future life;
sentient beings continue to transmigrate,
with ongoing birth and death.
- 4.1 Those who've given up sensual pleasures
without attaining the end of defilements,
and are still attached to being reborn,

are said to be non-returners.

Those who have cut off doubt, 5.1
and ended conceit and future lives,
they're the ones in this world
who've truly crossed over,
having reached the ending of defilements.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 6.1
what I heard.

Iti 97

Good Morals

Kalyāṇasīlasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, in this teaching and training a mendicant of good 2.1
morals, good practice, and good wisdom is called consummate,
accomplished, a supreme person.⁵

And how does a mendicant have good morals? It's when a men- 3.1
dicant is ethical, restrained in the monastic code, conducting them-
selves well and seeking alms in suitable places. Seeing danger in
the slightest fault, they keep the rules they've undertaken. That's
how a mendicant has good morals. Such is one of good morality.

And how does one have good practice? It's when a mendicant 4.1
meditates pursuing the development of the seven qualities that lead
to awakening. That's how a mendicant has good practice. Such is
one of good morality and good practice.

And how does one have good wisdom? It's when a mendicant 5.1
realizes the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom in
this very life. And they live having realized it with their own insight

5. Normally *kalyāṇadhamma* means “good character”, but here it refers to the development of meditation.

due to the ending of defilements. That's how a mendicant has good wisdom;

6.1 Such is one of good morals, good practice, and good wisdom, who in this teaching and training is called consummate, accomplished, a supreme person.

6.2 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

7.1 “Who does nothing wrong
by body, speech or mind,
is said to be one good morals,
a conscientious mendicant.

8.1 Who has well developed the seven
factors that lead to awakening
is said to be one good practice,
a humble mendicant.

9.1 Who understands for themselves
the end of suffering in this life
is said to be one good wisdom,
an undefiled mendicant.

10.1 One accomplished in these three things,
untroubled, with doubts cut off,
unattached to anything in the world,
has given up everything, they say.”

11.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 98

Giving

Dānasutta

1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“There are, mendicants, these two gifts. A gift of material things 2.1
and a gift of the teaching. The better of these two gifts is the gift of
the teaching.

There are these two kinds of sharing. Sharing material things 3.1
and sharing the teaching. The better of these two kinds of sharing
is sharing the teaching.

There are these two kinds of support. Support in material things 4.1
and support in the teaching. The better of these two kinds of sup-
port is support in the teaching.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 4.4

“It is said to be the supreme, ultimate gift, 5.1
and the sharing praised by the Buddha;
what wise and sensible person,
confident in the best of fields,
would not sow a such timely gift?

For those who are diligent 6.1
in the dispensation of the Holy One,
both those who speak and those who listen,
confident in the dispensation of the Holy One,
such a gift purifies the highest goal.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 7.1
what I heard.

Iti 99

The Three Knowledges

Tevijjasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, I describe a brahmin who is master of the three 2.1
Vedic knowledges in terms of the teaching, not by mere oral recita-
tion.

3.1 How so? It's when a mendicant recollects many kinds of past lives. That is: one, two, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand rebirths; many eons of the world contracting, many eons of the world expanding, many eons of the world contracting and expanding. They remember: 'There, I was named this, my clan was that, I looked like this, and that was my food. This was how I felt pleasure and pain, and that was how my life ended. When I passed away from that place I was reborn somewhere else. There, too, I was named this, my clan was that, I looked like this, and that was my food. This was how I felt pleasure and pain, and that was how my life ended. When I passed away from that place I was reborn here.' And so they recollect their many kinds of past lives, with features and details. This was the first knowledge they achieved. Ignorance was destroyed and knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed and light arose, as happens for a meditator who is diligent, keen, and resolute.

4.1 Furthermore, with clairvoyance that is purified and superhuman, a mendicant sees sentient beings passing away and being reborn—inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, in a good place or a bad place. They understand how sentient beings are reborn according to their deeds: 'These dear beings did bad things by way of body, speech, and mind. They spoke ill of the noble ones; they had wrong view; and they chose to act out of that wrong view. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a place of loss, a bad place, the underworld, hell. These dear beings, however, did good things by way of body, speech, and mind. They never spoke ill of the noble ones; they had right view; and they chose to act out of that right view. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in a good place, a heavenly realm.' And so, with clairvoyance that is purified and superhuman, they see sentient beings passing away and being reborn—inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, in a good place or a bad place. They understand how sentient beings are reborn according to their deeds. This was the second knowledge they achieved. Ignorance was destroyed

and knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed and light arose, as happens for a meditator who is diligent, keen, and resolute.

Furthermore, a mendicant realizes the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom in this very life, and they live having realized it with their own insight due to the ending of defilements. This was the third knowledge which they achieved. Ignorance was destroyed and knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed and light arose, as happens for a meditator who is diligent, keen, and resolute. That's how I describe a brahmin who is master of the three Vedic knowledges in terms of the teaching, not by mere oral recitation.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 5.4

“They know their past lives, 6.1
seeing heaven and places of loss,
and have attained the end of rebirth;
that sage has perfect insight.

Because of these three knowledges 7.1
a brahmin is a master of the three knowledges.
That's who I call a three-knowledge master,
and not some mere reciter.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 8.1

THE BOOK OF THE FOURS

The Chapter on the Holy Offering of the Teaching

Iti 100

The Holy Offering of the Teaching

Brāhmaṇadhammayāgasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“I, Mendicants, am a brahmin, committed to charity, always 2.1
open-handed, bearing my final body, a healer, a surgeon. You are
my rightful children, born of my mouth, born of the teaching,
created by the teaching, heirs in the teaching, not in material things.

There are these two gifts. A gift of material things and a gift of 3.1
the teaching. The better of these two gifts is the gift of the teaching.

There are these two kinds of sharing. Sharing material things 4.1
and sharing the teaching. The better of these two kinds of sharing
is sharing the teaching.

There are these two kinds of support. Support in material things 5.1
and support in the teaching. The better of these two kinds of sup-
port is support in the teaching.

There are these two offerings. An offering of material things and 6.1
an offering of the teaching. The better of these two offerings is an
offering of the teaching.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 6.4

- 7.1 “The Realized One,
 compassionate for all living creatures,
 unstintingly offers teaching.
 Sentient beings revere him,
 first among gods and humans,
 who has gone beyond rebirth.”
- 8.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 101

Easy to Find

Sulabhasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, these four trifles are easy to find and are blameless. What four? Rag-robres ... A lump of almsfood ... Lodgings at the root of a tree ... Fermented urine as medicine ... These four trifles are easy to find and are blameless. When a mendicant is content with trifles that are easy to find, they have one of the factors of the ascetic life, I say.”
- 2.9 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “When one is content with what’s blameless,
 trifling, and easy to find,
 they don’t get upset
 about lodgings, robes,
 food, and drink,
 and they’re not obstructed anywhere.
- 4.1 These qualities are said to be
 integral to the ascetic life.
 They’re mastered by a mendicant,
 content and diligent.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 102

The Ending of Defilements

Āsavakkhayasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, I say that the ending of defilements is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know or see. For one who knows and sees what? The ending of defilements is for one who knows and sees suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path. The ending of the defilements is for one who knows and sees this.” 2.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“As a trainee trains,
following the straight road,
first they know about ending;
enlightenment follows in the same lifetime. 3.1

Then to one freed through enlightenment
the knowledge of ending arises,
the supreme knowledge of freedom,
with the ending of the fetters. 4.1

This is not for the lazy,
the fools don’t understand,
extinguishment is realized
with release from all ties.” 5.1

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 6.1

Iti 103

Ascetics and Brahmins

Samaṇabrāhmaṇasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand about suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path. I don’t deem them as true ascetics and brahmins. Those venerables don’t realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and don’t live having realized it with their own insight.
- 3.1 There are ascetics and brahmins who truly understand about suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path.
- 4.1 “There are those who don’t understand suffering
and suffering’s cause,
and where all suffering
cease with nothing left over;
And they don’t know the path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.
- 5.1 They lack the heart’s release,
as well as the release by wisdom.
Unable to make an end,
they continue to be reborn and grow old.
- 6.1 But there are those who understand suffering
and suffering’s cause,
and where all suffering
cease with nothing left over;
And they understand the path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.
- 7.1 They’re endowed with the heart’s release,
as well as the release by wisdom.

Able to make an end,
they don't continue to be reborn and grow old."

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 8.1
what I heard.

Iti 104

Accomplished in Ethics

Sīlasampannasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

"Mendicants, take a mendicant who is accomplished in ethics, 2.1
immersion, wisdom, freedom, and the knowledge and vision of
freedom. They advise and instruct. They educate, encourage, fire
up, and inspire, and can rightly explain the true teaching. Even
the sight of those mendicants is very helpful, I say.⁶ Even to hear
them, approach them, pay homage to them, recollect them, or
go forth after them is very helpful, I say. For one who frequents
and associates with such mendicants, their incomplete spectrum
of ethics is completed. Their incomplete spectrum of immersion
... wisdom ... freedom ... knowledge and vision of freedom is
completed. Such mendicants are called 'teachers', 'leaders of the
caravan', 'vice-discarders', 'dispellers of darkness', 'bringers of light',
'luminaries', 'lamps', 'candlebearers', 'beacons', 'noble ones', and
'seers'.

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.10

"This is a reason for joy 3.1
for those who understand:
that is, those who are evolved,
the noble ones living righteously.

6. For *alaṃsamakkhātāro*, compare DN 29:11.2.

- 4.1 They illuminate the true teaching,
beacons beaming light,
the wise ones bringing light,
seers with vices discarded.
- 5.1 Having heard their instruction,
the astute, understanding rightly,
directly know the ending of rebirth,
they come not back to future lives.”
- 6.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 105

The Arising of Craving

Tanĥuppādasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, there are four things that give rise to craving in a
mendicant. What four? For the sake of robes, almsfood, lodgings,
or rebirth in this or that state. These are the four things that give
rise to craving in a mendicant.”
- 2.8 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 “Craving is a person’s partner
as they transmigrate on this long journey.
They go from this state to another,
but don’t escape transmigration.
- 4.1 Knowing this danger,
that craving is the cause of suffering—
rid of craving, free of grasping,
a mendicant would wander mindful.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard. 5.1

Iti 106

With Brahmā

Sabrahmakasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard. 1.1

“Mendicants, a family where the children honor their parents in their home is said to live with Brahmā. A family where the children honor their parents in their home is said to live with the old deities. A family where the children honor their parents in their home is said to live with the first teachers. A family where the children honor their parents in their home is said to live with those worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods. 2.1

‘Brahmā’ is a term for your parents. ‘Old deities’ is a term for your parents. ‘First teachers’ is a term for your parents. ‘Worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods’ is a term for your parents. Why is that? Parents are very helpful to their children, they raise them, nurture them, and show them the world.” 3.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 3.7

“Parents are said to be ‘Brahmā’
and ‘first teachers’. 4.1

They’re worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods
from their children,
for they love their offspring.

Therefore an astute person 5.1
would revere them and honor them
with food and drink,
clothes and bedding,
anointing and bathing,
and by washing their feet.

- 6.1 Because they look after
their parents like this,
they're praised in this life by the astute,
and they depart to rejoice in heaven."

- 7.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 107

Very Helpful

Bahukārasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 "Mendicants, brahmins and householders are very helpful to you, as they provide you with robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and supplies for the sick. And you are very helpful to brahmins and householders, as you teach them the Dhamma that's good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, meaningful and well-phrased. And you reveal a spiritual practice that's entirely full and pure. That is how this spiritual path is lived in mutual dependence in order to cross over the flood and make a complete end of suffering."
- 2.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:
- 3.1 "The home-dweller and the homeless,
depending on each other,
find success in the true teaching,
the supreme sanctuary.
- 4.1 The homeless receive requisites
from the home-dwellers:
robes and lodgings
to shelter from harsh conditions.

Relying on the Holy One, 5.1
home-loving layfolk
place faith in the perfected ones,
meditators of noble wisdom.

Having practiced the teaching here, 6.1
the path that goes to a good place,
they delight in the heavenly realm,
enjoying all the pleasures they desire.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 7.1
what I heard.

Iti 108

Deceivers

Kuhasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, those mendicants who are deceivers and flatterers, 2.1
pompous and fake, insolent and scattered: those mendicants are no
followers of mine. They’ve left this teaching and training, and they
don’t achieve growth, improvement, or maturity in this teaching
and training. But those mendicants who are genuine, not flatterers,
wise, amenable, and serene: those mendicants are followers of
mine. They haven’t left this teaching and training, and they do
achieve growth, improvement, or maturity in this teaching and
training.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 2.5

“Those who are deceivers and flatterers, 3.1
pompous and fake,
insolent and scattered:
these don’t grow in the teaching
that was taught by the perfected Buddha.

- 4.1 But those who are genuine, not flatterers, wise,
amenable, and serene:
these do grow in the teaching
that was taught by the perfected Buddha.”
- 5.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

Iti 109

A River

Nadīsotasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I
heard.
- 2.1 “Suppose a person was being carried along by a river current
that seemed nice and pleasant. If a person with good eyesight saw
them, they’d say: ‘Mister, even though the river current carrying
you along seems nice and pleasant, downstream there is a lake with
waves and whirlpools, saltwater crocodiles and monsters. When
you reach there it will result in death or deadly pain.’ Then, when
they heard what was said, they’d paddle against the stream using
their hands and feet.
- 3.1 I’ve made up this simile to make a point. And this is the point.
‘Stream’ is a term for craving.
- 4.1 ‘Seeming nice and pleasant’ is a term for the six interior sense
fields.
- 5.1 ‘A downstream lake’ is a term for the five lower fetters.
- 6.1 ‘Danger of waves’ is a term for anger and distress.
- 7.1 ‘Whirlpool’ is a term for the five kinds of sensual stimulation.
- 8.1 ‘Saltwater crocodiles and monsters’ is a term for females.
- 9.1 ‘Against the stream’ is a term for renunciation.
- 10.1 ‘Paddling with hands and feet’ is a term for being energetic.
- 11.1 ‘A person with good eyesight’ is a term for the Realized One, the
perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 11.2

“In pain they’d give up sensual pleasures,
aspiring to the future sanctuary. 12.1

With deep understanding and heart well-freed,
they’d experience universal liberation.⁷

That knowledge master

who has completed the spiritual journey,

and gone to the end of the world,

is called ‘one who has gone beyond.’”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is 13.1
what I heard.

Iti 110

Walking

Carasutta

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I 1.1
heard.

“Mendicants, suppose a mendicant has a sensual, malicious, or 2.1
cruel thought while walking. They tolerate it and don’t give it up,
get rid of it, eliminate it, and obliterate it. Such a mendicant is said
to be ‘not keen or prudent, always lazy, and lacking energy’ when
walking.

Suppose a mendicant has a sensual, malicious, or cruel thought 3.1
while standing ... sitting ... or when lying down while awake.
They tolerate it and don’t give it up, get rid of it, eliminate it, and
obliterate it. Such a mendicant is said to be ‘not keen or prudent,
always lazy, and lacking energy’ when lying down while awake.

Suppose a mendicant has a sensual, malicious, or cruel thought 6.1
while walking. They don’t tolerate them, but give them up, get rid

7. Here, as commonly, the duplicated *tattha tattha* is not used in a limiting sense such as the English “here and there”, but in a distributive sense, “in each and every place”.

of them, eliminate them, and obliterate them. Such a mendicant is said to be ‘keen and prudent, always energetic and determined’ when walking.

- 7.1 Suppose a mendicant has a sensual, malicious, or cruel thought while standing ... sitting ... or when lying down while awake. They don’t tolerate it, but give it up, get rid of it, eliminate it, and obliterate it. Such a mendicant is said to be ‘keen and prudent, always energetic and determined’ when lying down while awake.”

9.4 The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

10.1 “Whether walking or standing,
sitting or lying down,
one who thinks a bad thought
to do with the lay life

11.1 is practicing the wrong way,
lost among things that delude;
such a mendicant is incapable
of touching the highest awakening.

12.1 But one who, whether standing or walking,
sitting or lying down,
has calmed their thoughts,
loving peace of mind;
such a mendicant is capable
of touching the highest awakening.”

13.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 111

Accomplishment in Ethics

Sampannasīlasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“Mendicants, live by the ethical precepts and the monastic code. 2.1
Live restrained in the code of conduct, conducting yourselves well
and seeking alms in suitable places. Seeing danger in the slightest
fault, keep the rules you’ve undertaken.

When you’ve done this, what more is there to do? 3.1

Suppose a mendicant has got rid of desire and ill will while 4.1
walking, and has given up dullness and drowsiness, restlessness
and remorse, and doubt. Their energy is roused up and unflagging,
their mindfulness is established and lucid, their body is tranquil
and undisturbed, and their mind is immersed in samādhi. Such a
mendicant is said to be ‘keen and prudent, always energetic and
determined’ when walking.

Suppose a mendicant has got rid of desire and ill will while 5.1
standing ...⁸

sitting ... 6.1

or when lying down while awake. Such a mendicant is said to be 7.1
‘keen and prudent, always energetic and determined’ when lying
down while awake.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 7.3

“Carefully walking, carefully standing, 8.1
carefully sitting, carefully lying;
a mendicant carefully bends their limbs,
and carefully extends them.

Above, below, all round, 9.1
as far as the earth extends;
they scrutinize the rise and fall
of phenomena such as the aggregates.

Meditating diligently like this, 10.1
peaceful and stable,
training in what leads to serenity of heart,

8. The *pe* in Mahāsaṅgīti here and in similar phrases below appears to be an error, as there is no abbreviation at this point.

always staying mindful;
they call such a mendicant
‘always determined.’”

- 11.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.

Iti 112

The World

Lokasutta

- 1.1 This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.
- 2.1 “Mendicants, the world has been understood by the Realized One; and he is detached from the world. The origin of the world has been understood by the Realized One; and he has given up the origin of the world. The cessation of the world has been understood by the Realized One; and he has realized the cessation of the world. The practice that leads to the cessation of the world has been understood by the Realized One; and he has developed the practice that leads to the cessation of the world.
- 3.1 In this world—with its gods, Māras, and Brahmās, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans—whatever is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind, all that has been understood by the Realized One. That’s why he’s called the ‘Realized One.’
- 4.1 From the night when the Realized One understands the supreme perfect awakening until the night he becomes fully extinguished—in the element of extinguishment with nothing left over—everything he speaks, says, and expresses is real, not otherwise. That’s why he’s called the ‘Realized One.’
- 5.1 The Realized One does as he says, and says as he does. Since this is so, that’s why he’s called the ‘Realized One.’

In this world—with its gods, Māras and Brahmās, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, gods and humans—the Realized One is the undefeated, the champion, the universal seer, the wielder of power. That’s why he’s called the ‘Realized One.’” 6.1

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said: 6.3

“Directly knowing the whole world as it is, 7.1
and everything in it,
he is detached from the whole world,
disengaged from the whole world.

That wise one is the champion 8.1
who is released from all ties.
He has reached ultimate peace:
extinguishment, fearing nothing from any quarter.

He is the Buddha, with defilements ended, 9.1
untroubled, with doubts cut off.
He has attained the end of all deeds,
freed with the ending of attachments.

That Blessed One is the Buddha, 10.1
he is the supreme lion,
in all the world with its gods,
he turns the holy wheel.

And so those gods and humans, 11.1
who have gone to the Buddha for refuge,
come together and revere him,
even the deities revere him:

‘Tamed, he is the best of tamers, 12.1
peaceful, he is the hermit among the peaceful,
liberated, he is the foremost of liberators,
crossed over, he is the most excellent of guides across.’

And so they revere him, 13.1

great of heart and rid of naivety.
In the world with its gods,
he has no counterpart.”

- 14.1 This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is
what I heard.

THE SO IT WAS SAID IS FINISHED.

Colophon

The Translator

Bhikkhu Sujato was born as Anthony Aidan Best on 4/11/1966 in Perth, Western Australia. He grew up in the pleasant suburbs of Mt Lawley and Attadale alongside his sister Nicola, who was the good child. His mother, Margaret Lorraine Huntsman née Pinder, said “he’ll either be a priest or a poet”, while his father, Anthony Thomas Best, advised him to “never do anything for money”. He attended Aquinas College, a Catholic school, where he decided to become an atheist. At the University of WA he studied philosophy, aiming to learn what he wanted to do with his life. Finding that what he wanted to do was play guitar, he dropped out. His main band was named Martha’s Vineyard, which achieved modest success in the indie circuit.

A seemingly random encounter with a roadside joey took him to Thailand, where he entered his first meditation retreat at Wat Ram Poeng, Chiang Mai in 1992. Feeling the call to the Buddha’s path, he took full ordination in Wat Pa Nanachat in 1994, where his teachers were Ajahn Pasanno and Ajahn Jayasaro. In 1997 he returned to Perth to study with Ajahn Brahm at Bodhinyana Monastery.

He spent several years practicing in seclusion in Malaysia and Thailand before establishing Santi Forest Monastery in Bundanoon, NSW, in 2003. There he was instrumental in supporting the establishment of the Theravada bhikkhuni order in Australia

and advocating for women's rights. He continues to teach in Australia and globally, with a special concern for the moral implications of climate change and other forms of environmental destruction. He has published a series of books of original and groundbreaking research on early Buddhism.

In 2005 he founded SuttaCentral together with Rod Bucknell and John Kelly. In 2015, seeing the need for a complete, accurate, plain English translation of the Pali texts, he undertook the task, spending nearly three years in isolation on the isle of Qi Mei off the coast of the nation of Taiwan. He completed the four main Nikāyas in 2018, and the early books of the Khuddaka Nikāya were complete by 2021. All this work is dedicated to the public domain and is entirely free of copyright encumbrance.

In 2019 he returned to Sydney where he established Lokanta Vihara (The Monastery at the End of the World).

Creation Process

Translated from the Pali. Primary source was the Mahāsaṅgīti edition, with reference to several English translations, especially those of John Ireland.

The Translation

This translation aims to make a clear, readable, and accurate rendering of the Itivuttaka, preserving consistency with Sujato's renderings of the main nikāyas.

About SuttaCentral

SuttaCentral publishes early Buddhist texts. Since 2005 we have provided root texts in Pali, Chinese, Sanskrit, Tibetan, and other languages, parallels between these texts, and translations in many

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