

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #7

Chapter title: By watching....

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THE FOOL IS CARELESS.
BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.
IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE.
HE MEDITATES.
AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS RESOLVE
HE DISCOVERS TRUE HAPPINESS.

HE OVERCOMES DESIRE --
AND FROM THE TOWER OF WISDOM
HE LOOKS DOWN WITH DISPASSION
UPON THE SORROWING CROWD.
FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP
HE LOOKS DOWN ON THOSE
WHO LIVE CLOSE TO THE GROUND.

MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS,
AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM,
SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE
HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD.

BY WATCHING
INDRA BECAME KING OF THE GODS.
HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO WATCH,
HOW FOOLISH TO SLEEP.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS
BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND
WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS HIS OWN CONFUSION
CANNOT FALL.
HE HAS FOUND THE WAY TO PEACE.

Life is three-dimensional, and man is free to choose. The freedom that man has is both a curse and a blessing. He can choose to rise, he can choose to fall. He can choose the way of darkness or he can choose the way of light.

No other being has the freedom to choose. Their lives are predetermined. Because they are predetermined they cannot go astray -- that's the beauty of it. But because it is predetermined they are mechanical -- that's what is ugly about it.

Man is not yet a being in the true sense. He is only a becoming, he is on the way. He is searching, seeking, groping; he is not yet crystallized. That's why he does not know who he is -- because he is not yet; how can he know who he is? Before knowing, being has to happen. And the being is possible only if you choose rightly, consciously, with full awareness.

Jean-Paul Sartre is right when he says that man is a project, that man creates himself by his own effort, that man is born only as an opportunity, as a possibility, not as an actuality. He has to become actual -- and there is every possibility that he may miss the target. Millions of people miss the target; it is very rarely that a person has found his being. When a person finds his being, he is a buddha.

But the basic requirement is: choose your life with awareness. You have to choose anyway -- whether you choose with awareness or not makes no difference, choice has to be made. You are not free in the sense that if you don't want to choose you will be allowed not to. You are not free not to choose -- even not choosing will be a choosing.

The millions who miss, they miss because they don't choose. They simply wait; they go on hoping that something is going to happen. Nothing ever happens that way. You have to create the context, the space, for something valuable to happen to you, for something essential to happen to you.

There are two schools of philosophers in the world. One believes that man is born as an essence: the essentialist school. It says that man is already born ready-made. This is the idea of all the fatalists. The other school is that of those who call themselves existentialists. They believe that man is born not as an essence but only as an existence.

And what is the difference? The essence is predetermined; you bring it with your life, you bring it as a blueprint. You have only to unfold it; you are already made. There is no choice for you to make yourself, to create yourself. That is a very uncreative standpoint; that reduces man to a machine.

The other school believes that man is born only as an existence. The essence has to be created; it is not already there. You have to create yourself, you have to find ways and means to become, to be. You have to become a womb to your own being, you have to give birth to yourself. The physical birth is not the true birth; you will have to be born again.

Jesus says to Nicodemus, "Unless you are born again, you will not enter into the kingdom of my God." What does he mean? Is Nicodemus to die first physically? No. Jesus means something totally different: he has to die as an ego, he has to die as a personality. He has to die as a past. He has to die as mind. Only when you die as mind are you born as a being.

In the East we have called the buddhas the twice-born -- dwij. Other people are only once-born; a buddha is twice-born. The first gift of life is through the parents; the second gift you have to give to yourself.

You can choose between these three dimensions. If you choose one dimension you will attain a certain integrity, but because it is one-dimensional it will not be total and it will not be whole. The first dimension is the dimension of science, of the objective world, of objects, things, the other. The second dimension is of aesthetics: the world of music, poetry, painting, sculpture, the world of imagination. And the third dimension is that of religion -- subjective, inner.

Science and religion are polar opposites: science is extrovert, religion is introvert. And between the two is the world of aesthetics. It is the bridge; it is both and neither. The world of aesthetics, the world of the artist, is in a way objective -- only in a way. He paints, and then a painting is born as an object. It is also subjective, because before he can paint he has to create the painting in his inwardness, in his subjectivity. Before a poet can sing his song, he sings it in his innermost recesses of being. It is sung there first, only then does it move into the outer world.

It is scientific in the sense that art creates objects, and it is religious in the sense that whatsoever art creates is first envisioned in one's own inner being. It is the bridge between science and religion. Religion is absolute inwardness. It is moving into your innermost core, it is subjectivity.

These are the three dimensions.

If you become a scientist and lose contact with aesthetics and religion, you will be a one-dimensional man. You will be only one third; you will not be whole. You may attain to a certain integrity that you will see in a man like Albert Einstein -- a certain individuality, a beauty, a truth, but only partial.

You can choose to be an artist: you can be a Picasso, a Van Gogh, a Beethoven, a Rabindranath, but then too...you will be a little better because aesthetics is the world of in-between, the world of twilight. You will have something of religion in you. Each poet has something of religion in him -- he may be aware of it, he may not be aware of it, but no poet can be without some flavor of religion. It is impossible. Even the most atheistic artist is bound to have some kind of religiousness. Without it he will not be a genius. Without it he will remain only a technician, a craftsman, but not an artist.

Even a man like Jean-Paul Sartre -- who is determinedly an atheist, who will never concede that he is religious -- even he is in some way religious. He has created great novels, and those novels and the characters of those novels have great interiority. That interiority has been lived by this man, otherwise he could not write about it. That interiority is experienced.

And the man that moves into aesthetics is bound to have some scientific qualities around him too. He will be more logical than the religious person, more object-oriented than the religious person -- less object-oriented than the scientist of course, less logical than the scientist, but more logical than the religious person. He will be in a more balanced state.

It is better to move in the world of art because somehow it has something of all the three dimensions -- but only something, still it is not total.

The religious man is again one-dimensional, just as the scientist is. Albert Einstein is one-dimensional, so is Gautama the Buddha. And because the East has become one-dimensionally religious it has suffered much. And now the West is suffering much, and the cause is one-dimensionality. The West is bankrupt as far as the inner world is concerned and the East is bankrupt as far as the outer world is concerned.

The East is not accidentally poor and starving. It has chosen to be that way. It has denied science; it has even denied the world of objective reality. It says the world is illusory. If the world is illusory, how can you create a science? The very first requirement is missing. You cannot create a science out of maya, illusion. How can you create a science out of something which is not, which does not even exist? If you deny the world, you have denied the dimension of science altogether.

That is the reason why the East is poor and starving. And unless the Eastern genius understands this, we can go on importing science from the West but it will not get roots into our beings. If our approach remains the same as it has been for five thousand years, science will only be something foreign. That's how it is.

In India you can find a scientist, world famous in his field of work, and still living a very unscientific life. He may be consulting the palmist and the astrologer. He may be going to take a bath in the Ganges, so his sins of many many lives are washed away. He may still be believing in a thousand and one things which are simply superstitious -- and still he is a scientist! Science remains something peripheral; his soul still remains rooted in the ancient past of the East, which is unscientific.

The East has suffered much because of one-dimensionality. And now the West is suffering again for the same reason: one-dimensionality. The West has chosen to be scientific at the cost of being religious. Now God is denied, the soul is denied. Man is reduced first to an animal and now to a machine. Man loses all glory, all grandeur. Man loses all hope, all future. The moment man loses his interiority he loses depth, he becomes superficial. The Western man is rich as far as things are concerned, but is very poor as far as soul is concerned -- inwardly poor, outwardly rich.

This is the state of affairs right now.

And between these two a few artists exist who have something of both the dimensions. But even the artist is not satisfied, because he is something of both but he is neither a scientist nor a religious person -- just having a few glimpses of both the worlds. He remains in a kind of limbo; he never settles, he remains a vagabond. He moves like a shuttle between these two worlds. He does not contribute much: because he is not a scientist he cannot contribute scientifically and he is not religious so he cannot contribute religiously. At the most his art remains decorative; at the most it can make life a little more beautiful, a little more comfortable, convenient. But that is not much.

I propose the fourth way. The true man will be all three simultaneously: he will be a scientist, an artist, and religious. And I call the fourth man the spiritual man. That's where I differ from Albert Einstein and Gautam Buddha and Picasso -- from them all. You must remember my differences.

Buddha is one-dimensional -- tremendously beautiful! As far as his own inner world is concerned he is the greatest master, the master of the inner, unsurpassable, but he remains one-dimensional. He attains to immense peace, silence, bliss, but does not contribute to the world in any objective way.

Albert Einstein contributes to the world in a very objective way, but cannot contribute anything of the inner -- hence his contribution becomes a curse. He suffered his whole life because he was the man who proposed that atom bombs should be made. He had written a letter to the American president: "Now it is time -- unless atom bombs are made the war can go on for years and years and will be very destructive. Just making the atom bombs, the very threat of it, will stop the war."

But once the power -- any kind of power -- reaches into the hands of the politicians, you cannot control them, you cannot prevent them from using it. The politician is the most stupid kind of person -- monkeyish, power-mad.

Once the atom bomb was in the hands of the American politicians it had to be dropped somewhere. Hiroshima, Nagasaki, were bound to happen. And when they happened it was a wound, a great wound, for Albert Einstein. He repented his whole life.

In the last moments, when somebody asked him, "Would you like to become a scientist again if God gives you an opportunity to be born in the world again?"

He said, "No, certainly no, absolutely no! I would like rather to be a plumber than to be a physicist, a scientist. Enough is enough! I have not been a blessing to the world, I have been a curse."

He enriched the outer world certainly, but without inner growth, the outer growth creates a lopsidedness. You possess many things, but you don't possess yourself. You have all that can make you happy but you are not happy, because happiness cannot be derived from your possessions. Happiness is an inner welling-up; it is an awakening of your own energies. It is an awakening of your soul.

Buddha contributed tremendously to the subjective dimension. He is a master par excellence. Whatsoever he says is absolutely true, but it is one-dimensional -- never forget it.

My effort here is to create the fourth way: a man who joins all these three dimensions of life into himself, who becomes a trinity, a trimurti, who has all these three faces of God to him. Who has as much of a logical mind as is needed by science and who is also as poetic as is needed by aesthetics, and who is also as meditative and watchful as is proposed by the buddhas.

The fourth man is the hope of the world. The fourth way is the only possibility if man is to survive. If man is still to exist on this earth, we have to find a great synthesis between these three dimensions. And if all these three dimensions are meeting, merging, melting into one, of course that synthesis is the fourth.

I am speaking on Buddha, on Mahavira, on Jesus, on Patanjali, on Lao Tzu, and many more. But always remember that all these people are one-dimensional. I want to enrich your life through their teachings, but I don't end with them. I would like you to go a little deeper into other dimensions too.

Hence the new commune is going to be a meeting place of East and West, of the subjective and the objective. In the new commune we are going to have scientists, artists, poets, painters, singers, musicians, meditators, yogis, mystics -- all kinds of people pouring their energies into one great river. And that's how I would like the whole world to be.

Buddha is to be incorporated in it, that's why I am speaking on him. And, of course, the third dimension, the religious, is one of the most important, the most important dimension. Without it everything is soulless.

Today's sutras:

THE FOOL IS CARELESS.
BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.
IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

Buddha calls a man foolish, not because he is ignorant, not because he is not knowledgeable. According to Buddha, a man is a fool if he is unconscious, if he behaves unconsciously, if he lives in sleep, if he is a somnambulist. If he goes on behaving without any mindfulness, then he is a fool. The word has a special meaning, remember: unconsciousness, unawareness, unmindfulness -- that's Buddha's definition of the fool.

He moves in life like driftwood, at the mercy of the winds. He does not know who he is, he does not know from where he comes, he does not know to where he is going. He is accidental; he simply lives by accident. He has no conscious, deliberate search for being, for truth, for reality. He follows the crowd; he remains a part of the mob psychology. He is not an individual. He has no authentic intelligence of his own; he simply follows others. The parents have said something, the teachers, the priests, the politicians, and he goes on following all kinds of advice. He has no idea why he is here, for what, and what he is doing, and why. He never raises such questions.

These questions are very uncomfortable to him. They create anxiety in him; he avoids these questions. He simply believes in the answers that are handed over to him; he never doubts those answers. Not that he has attained to trust -- no, he has no trust either -- but he simply represses his doubt because doubt creates discomfort.

He remains a Hindu, a Mohammedan, a Christian. He never inquires and he never risks anything for his inquiry. He never goes into exploration. He is not an adventurer, his life is not an adventure. He is stuck, he is dormant, stagnant. You cannot separate him from his crowd; he is like a sheep. Buddha calls him the fool.

The fool can be very knowledgeable -- in fact almost always he is. He can be a pundit, a scholar, a great professor -- that's how he hides his foolishness. By gathering knowledge on the circumference he hides the ignorance that exists at the center.

There are two types of people: one, very knowledgeable people -- knowledgeable, but they know nothing. They have a kind of ignorant knowledge. And there is the other category: the people who are not knowledgeable -- but they know. They have a kind of knowing ignorance.

When Buddha uses the word 'fool', he is not talking about the second category -- because Buddha himself is not very knowledgeable, neither is Jesus, nor is Mohammed. They are innocent people, simple people, but their simplicity is such, their innocence is such, their childlike quality is such, that they have been able to penetrate into the innermost core of their beings. They have been able to know their truth; they have been able to reach the very core of their existence. They know, but they are not knowledgeable. Their knowing is not through scriptures. Their knowing has happened through watchfulness. Remember the source: real knowing comes through meditation, awareness, consciousness, mindfulness, watchfulness, witnessing. And unreal knowledge comes through scriptures. You can learn the unreal knowledge very easily and you can brag about it, but you will remain a fool -- a learned fool, but a fool all the same.

If you really want to know you will have to drop all your knowledge, you will have to unlearn it. You will have to become ignorant again, like a small child, with wondering eyes, with alertness. You will be able to know not only your own being but also the being that exists in the world...the being that exists in the trees and the birds and the animals and the rocks and the stars. If you are able to know yourself, you will be able to know all that is.

God is another name for all that is.

THE FOOL IS CARELESS. By "carelessness" Buddha means he behaves unconsciously. He does not know what he is doing. He simply goes on doing things because he cannot remain unoccupied; he wants constant occupation. He cannot remain alone; he wants constant company. He cannot remain unengaged even for a single moment, because whenever he is unengaged, unoccupied, alone, he starts facing himself -- and he is very afraid of that.

He does not want to go into the abyss of his own being. All that he knows is meaningless there. All that he knows, he cannot carry it there. All his knowledge, all his efficiency, all his scriptures, all his theories, are utterly futile in the inner world. He clings to the outer because there he is somebody. In the inner world he is a nobody.

Just watch people! In fact it is the greatest entertainment: stand by the side of the road and just watch people. What are they doing? Why are they doing it? And then watch yourself -- what are you doing? and why?

A man picks up a young woman in a hotel lobby and goes to her apartment with her. They both undress, but then she says, "First chase me! I want to be inflamed, excited!"

He chases her for two hours, but cannot catch her and leaves in disgust.

The next night he sees her pick up another victim in the same lobby and he sneaks up on the fire-escape to watch the new sucker's discomfiture through the window. As he watches the bare legs flashing by under the partly-drawn window shade, he says to himself out loud, "Ah, brother, get a load of that!"

"You said it!" breathes a man's voice in his ear, "but you should have seen the sonofabitch that was here last night!"

Just watch people -- what are they doing? Chasing shadows, chasing things which they don't need, trying to make great effort to attain something which once attained they will not know what to do with. That's how people are running after money, after political power. Once you have it you don't know what to do with it.

A woman was saying to another woman, "Are you not worried about your husband? He continuously goes on chasing women, any woman -- and you know it!"

And the other woman laughed. She said, "There is nothing to worry about: his chasing women is like dogs chasing cars."

The other woman said, "I don't understand. What do you mean, dogs chasing cars?"

She said, "Yes, dogs chasing cars -- once they have caught one they don't know what to do with the car, and that's how my husband is. He will chase a woman, he will catch hold of her. Then he does not know what to do with her. I know him! That's why I am not worried."

This is the situation. Somebody wants to be very famous, and he will waste his whole life in becoming famous and then he will not know what to do with it. In fact, once you become very famous you want to become unfamous again, because it is such a weight. You cannot relax. You cannot go anywhere without being watched by the crowds. You have no privacy anymore, you cannot live any personal life. Everybody is looking, watching, investigating your life. You cannot laugh, you cannot talk with ease...everything becomes difficult.

Just a few days ago Jimmy Carter said that if Kennedy stands against him in the presidential election he will "whip his ass." Now he is being condemned all over the world for using that word. You cannot even use an innocent word. Now he must be feeling very repentant for what he has done. He has committed a crime.

You don't have a private life when you are famous -- when you are a president of a country, a Nobel Prize winner, you are a public thing. You are always on show, in the show-window; you always have to keep dressed up. You cannot make a simple gesture in freedom.

People have money...and then they don't know what to do with it.

The accidental man is foolish. The wise man moves deliberately, takes each step consciously. His life is a constant inquiry for truth. He does not go astray. He remains alert in every one of his acts -- not because of others. He remains alert because it is only by being alert that he will become integrated, that he will become crystallized.

THE FOOL IS CARELESS. The wise man cares -- he cares about himself, he cares about his life, and he cares about others too. He cares about everything, because he values his life. He knows that it is very precious, that it is a God-given opportunity to grow, that it has not to be lost in a kind of drunkenness.

A reformed prostitute has joined the Salvation Army and is giving testimony on a street corner. "I used to lie in the arms of men," she confesses, "white men, black men, Chinamen. But now I lie in the arms of Jesus."

"That's right, sister," cries a drunk in the back row, "fuck 'em all!"

Just watch people and watch yourself, and you will be surprised how unconscious, how drunk we are. How careless! We don't listen to what is said, we don't see what we see. Our eyes are clouded, our minds confused, our beings have no clarity. We are not perceptive, we are not sensitive.

We go on uttering things which we don't mean, and then we suffer for them. We go on saying things which we never wanted to say. We go on doing things -- even while we are doing them we know that we don't want to do these things, still we go on doing them. Some unconscious force goes on driving us. Sometimes we even decide not to do a certain thing, not to say a certain thing -- still we do it, even against our own decisions. We don't have any resolution, we don't have any resolve, we don't have any will.

She knew that these were to be her last few hours on this earth, so she called her husband to her side and in a halting voice told him her last request.

"I know," she said, "that you and mother have never gotten along. But would you as a special favor to me, ride to the cemetery in the same car with her?"

"Alright," replied the unhappy husband. "But it will spoil my whole day."

This is not really a joke -- this happens every day. You say things which you should have known are not right to say. But you know only later on, when the harm is done. Unconscious utterings.

Now, this man may have been crying and saying to his wife, "Without you it will be impossible to live. I will always remain empty without you, a part of my soul will die with you..." and things like that. But now, in this moment, he has forgotten all.

THE FOOL IS CARELESS. BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE. The fool remains a slave -- a slave of the instincts, a slave of unconscious desires, a slave of whims, a slave of the society in which he is born, a slave of the fashions -- a slave of anything that happens around him. He simply picks it up. If the neighbor is buying a new car, he has to buy a new car too. He does not need it. If the neighbor has purchased a house in the hills, he has to purchase one. It may be difficult and hard to manage for the money. He may have to borrow, it may take years for him to pay, but he has to purchase it. His ego is hurt. People are living imitatively, very carelessly.

Among the Eskimos there is a tradition, a very beautiful tradition, that each year, the first day of the year, every family looks in the house for what is unnecessary and what is necessary -- they sort things out. And only what is absolutely necessary is saved; all that is unnecessary is given as gifts to people.

And you will be surprised to know that the Eskimo's home is the cleanest home in the world, has a purity about it -- no garbage, nothing accumulates. Spacious -- small but spacious; only that much which is necessary, absolutely necessary....

Just think of all the things that you go on accumulating: are they really necessary? do you really need them? Or is it just because people are accumulating that you also become accumulative?

The watchful man becomes the master of his life. He lives it according to his light, not according to others' lives. He lives it according to his own needs. And remember, your needs are not many. If you are wise, watchful, you will have a very very contented life, and very simple, and with small things.

But if you are imitative, then your life will become very complex, unnecessarily complex. And I am not giving you particular directions about what you should have and what you should not have. I am simply saying go on watching...whatsoever is necessary for you, have it; and whatsoever is not necessary for you, forget about it. This is the way of a sannyasin.

I am not for renouncing things, but I am certainly for renouncing unnecessary garbage. And it is not only that you collect unnecessary things -- you desire unnecessary things, and you never meditate whether those things are really necessary. Are they going to help in any way? Are they going to make you more happy, more blissful?

Before you start desiring a thing, think it over thrice...and you will be surprised. Out of a hundred of your desires, ninety-nine are absolutely useless. They simply keep you occupied; that is their only function. They keep you away from yourself; that is their only utility. They don't allow you time, space to be with yourself. They are dangerous. It is because of these unnecessary things that you will waste your life, and you will die a bankrupt.

...THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING.

I have heard:

The husband and wife are being driven crazy by the continued presence of the wife's brother, who came to spend the weekend but is still there six months later. They decide that the wife will cook a chicken and the husband will pretend it is overdone. They will put the matter to the brother-in-law. If he says the chicken is good, the husband will throw him out; if he says the chicken is bad the wife will throw him out. It can't fail!

The scene is set up as planned, with much pretended shouting and recrimination, while the brother-in-law silently stows away his food. Suddenly the husband and wife stop shouting and turn to him.

"Harry," says the husband, "what do you think?"

"Me?" says Harry, biting into the chicken leg. "I think I am staying another three months."

Must have been a very watchful man. Must have been very careful, alert. He is not caught in the trap. The trap was certainly very subtle. Unless he was very alert, it was bound to trap him. He does not give any opinion. He simply states a fact, that "I am going to stay three more months."

Live watchfully and you will not be trapped. Live unconsciously and on each step you are trapped; your life becomes more and more imprisoned. And nobody is responsible except you.

BUT THE MASTER GUARDS HIS WATCHING. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE. Whatsoever he does, he does with total awareness. Whatsoever you do, you do almost mechanically. You will have to de-automatize yourself. That's what meditation is all about: the process of de-automatization.

You have become automatic. You go on driving the car, smoking the cigarette, talking to the friend, and thinking a thousand and one thoughts inside. Most accidents happen because of this. More men are dying every year in car, train, airplane and similar accidents than die in war. Adolf Hitler may not have killed as many people as are being killed every year by the mechanical behavior of man around the earth.

But what can you do? That's your whole way of life, that's how you live. You eat -- you simply go on stuffing, you don't pay any attention to what you are eating. You make love to your wife or your husband -- you don't even see the face of the woman. You have become very insensitive; you just go on moving through empty gestures, with no significance. They can't have any significance unless you are fully alert.

It is the light of awareness that makes things precious, extraordinary. Then small things are no longer small. When a man with alertness, sensitivity, love, touches an ordinary pebble on the seashore, that pebble becomes a kohinoor. And if you touch a kohinoor in your unconscious state, it is just an ordinary pebble -- not even that. Your life will have as much depth and as much meaning as you have awareness.

Now people are asking all over the world, "What is the meaning of life?" Of course the meaning is lost, because you have lost the way to find the meaning -- and the way is awareness. IT IS HIS MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE.

What does Buddha mean by "desire"? Desire means your whole mind. Desire means not to be herenow. Desire means moving somewhere in the future which is not yet. Desire means a thousand and one ways of escaping from the present. Desire is equivalent to mind. In Buddha's terminology, desire is mind.

And desire is time too. When I say desire is time too, I don't mean the clock time, I mean the psychological time. How do you create future in your mind? -- by desiring. You want to do something tomorrow, you have created the tomorrow; otherwise the tomorrow is nowhere yet, it has not come. But you want to do something tomorrow, and because you want to do something tomorrow you have created a psychological tomorrow.

And people are creating years ahead, lives ahead. They are even thinking about what to do after life, after death. They are even preparing for that! And these people are thought to be religious; they are not religious at all. Desire takes you away from the now-here, and now-here is the only reality.

Hence Buddha says: HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE. He never moves into the future, he lives in the present. To live in the future is to live a false life, a pseudo life.

A fashionable actress refuses a young man who begs for her favors, on the grounds that he is Jewish, and laughs at his offer of one hundred thousand francs. She tells him that to show him how little she cares for his money he can make love to her for as long as it takes the hundred thousand francs to burn.

He comes back the next day with the money, lays ten bills out in a line with the ends just overlapping, lights the first one and leaps into bed with her. As the last bill burns away, she pushes him off her.

"Well, I have had you," he says triumphantly.

"Yes," she smiles, "and your hundred thousand francs are burnt to ashes."

"What does it matter?" he says, lighting a cigarette. "They were counterfeit."

The man who lives in the future, lives a counterfeit life. He does not really live, he only pretends to live. He hopes to live, he desires to live, but he never lives. And the tomorrow never comes, it is always today. And whatsoever comes is always now and here, and he does not know how to live now-here; he knows only how to escape from now-here. The way to escape is called "desire," tanha -- that is Buddha's word for what is an escape from the present, from the real into the unreal.

The man who desires is an escapist.

Now, this is very strange, that meditators are thought to be escapists. That is utter nonsense. Only the meditator is not an escapist -- everybody else is. Meditation means getting out of desire, getting out of thoughts, getting out of mind. Meditation means relaxing in the moment, in the present. Meditation is the only thing in the world which is not escapist, although it is thought to be the most escapist thing. People who condemn meditation always condemn it with the argument that it is escape, escaping from life. They are simply talking nonsense; they don't understand what they are saying.

Meditation is not escaping from life: it is escaping into life. Mind is escaping from life, desire is escaping from life.

HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE....

HE MEDITATES.

He brings himself again and again to the present. Again and again the mind starts functioning and he brings it back to the present. Slowly slowly, it starts happening: the window opens and for the first time you see the sky as it is. And for the first time you feel the wind and the rain and the sun, in their immediacy, because you become meditative. You start touching life. Then life is no longer a word but a tangible reality; then love is no longer a word but an overflowing energy. Then blessing is no longer just a desire, a hope -- you feel it, you have it, you are it.

HE MEDITATES.... Buddha is not for prayer, he is for meditation, because prayer is again somehow a kind of desiring. When you pray, you desire. Prayer is always for the future; prayer means you are asking for something. You may not be asking for money, you may be asking for God himself, but it is the same. Ask, and you have moved away. Meditation is a state of nonasking, nonquestioning, nonthinking. Prayer is still part of thinking -- a beautiful thinking, but thinking is thinking; a beautiful prison, but a prison is still a prison.

And the mind who prays is greedy, and the mind who prays goes through no transformation. It remains the same mind. And the prayer is born out of the same mind; it cannot have a very different quality. How can you pray for something which is different from you? -- it will be your prayer. It will reflect your mind, it will come out of your mind, it will sprout out of your mind. How can it take you beyond the mind? Prayer cannot take you beyond the mind. Only meditation can take you beyond the mind.

Meditation is a state of no-mind. Prayer is a state of religious mind, but mind is there. And when it has the beautiful garment of religiousness around it, it becomes even more dangerous.

A little boy on a picnic strays away from his family, and suddenly realizes that he is lost and night is falling. Becoming frightened after wandering aimlessly for some time, and shouting for his parents but receiving no answer, he kneels down and prays with uplifted hands. "Dear Lord," he says, "please help me to find my daddy and mommy, and I won't hit my little sister anymore, honest I won't!"

As he kneels praying, a bird flies over and drops a load of shit into his outstretched palm. The little boy examines it and turns his eyes back to heaven.

"Oh please, Lord," he begs, "don't hand me that shit. I really and truly am lost!"

Your prayer is your prayer; it is part of you, an extension of you. It cannot help you to surpass yourself. Meditation is the only way to surpass oneself, the only way to transcend oneself.

And what is meditation? It does not mean meditating upon something; the English word is misleading. In English there is no word adequate enough to translate Buddha's word *sammasati*. It has been translated as meditation, as right mindfulness, as awareness, as consciousness, alertness, watchfulness, witnessing -- but there is not really a single word which has the quality of *sammasati*.

Sammasati means: consciousness is, but without any content. There is no thought, no desire, nothing is stirred in you. You are not contemplating about God or about great things...nature and its beauty, the Bible, the Koran, the Vedas, and their immensely significant statements. You are not contemplating! You are not concentrating on any special object either. You are not chanting a mantra, because those are all things of the mind, those are all contents of the mind. You are not doing anything! The mind is utterly empty, and you are simply there in that emptiness. A kind of presence, a pure

presence, with nowhere to go -- utterly relaxed into oneself, at rest, at home. That is the meaning of Buddha's meditation.

And nobody else has ever reached such a beautiful expression about meditation as Buddha. Many people have attained, but nobody has been so expressive, so capable of conveying the message, as the Buddha. HE NEVER GIVES IN TO DESIRE. HE MEDITATES.

AND IN THE STRENGTH OF HIS RESOLVE
HE DISCOVERS TRUE HAPPINESS.

Bliss is true happiness. What you call happiness is just misery in disguise. What you call happiness is nothing but entertainment, pleasure. It is momentary -- it cannot be true. Truth has to have one quality, and the quality is of eternity. If something is true it is eternal; if it is untrue it is momentary.

True happiness is found only when the mind completely ceases functioning. It does not come from the outside. It wells up within your own being, it starts overflowing you. You become luminous. You become a fountain of bliss.

HE OVERCOMES DESIRE --
AND FROM THE TOWER OF WISDOM
HE LOOKS DOWN WITH DISPASSION
UPON THE SORROWING CROWD.
FROM THE MOUNTAINTOP
HE LOOKS DOWN ON THOSE
WHO LIVE CLOSE TO THE GROUND.

As someone becomes a buddha -- desire overcome, mind overcome, time overcome, the ego transcended -- he is no longer part of this earth. He still lives on the earth, but his soul soars so high that from the sunlit tops of his being he can see the sorrowing crowd in the dark valleys of life, stumbling, drunken, fighting, ambitious, greedy, angry, violent...a sheer wastage of great opportunities. Great compassion arises in his being. His whole passion passes through dispassion and becomes compassion.

Passion means using the other as a means -- and that is the fundamental of immorality. To use somebody as a means is the most immoral act in the world, because each person is an end unto himself. To use him as a means is to exploit. And that's what we call love: the husband using the wife, the wife using the husband; the children using their parents, and the parents later on using their children -- that's what we call love!

It is not love. It is a strategy of the mind; it is poison coated with sugar. This love is really disgusting. That's why you see the whole world in such disgust. This love is sickening. It has sickened the whole soul of humanity because it is not love at all. It is passion, lust, using the other as a means.

As you start meditating you move to the second stage, dispassion -- love disappears. You come into a neutral phase; just as you change gears in the car, and each time you

change gear, the gear first has to move through neutral, so passion moves through a neutral phase -- it becomes dispassion. Love disappears. For the time being, in the interval, the man who is moving towards buddhahood becomes utterly cold, dispassionate.

And then the third stage is reached. When he has attained buddhahood, he has found bliss and the inexhaustible fountains of bliss -- *aes dhammo sanantano* -- when he has found the principle of eternity, when he has found the inexhaustible treasure of life, he starts overflowing. Love comes back -- in fact, love comes for the first time. It is compassion. Now he showers his compassion on each and everybody; whosoever comes to him, he shares his bliss with him, he shares his way, he shares his insight.

MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS,
AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM,
SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE
HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD.

And when you have become established in meditation and compassion you no longer fall a victim of sleep and dream. You remain awake -- even while asleep. And then your life becomes a straight arrow, moves with tremendous speed, with the speed of light, towards the goal. You become, for the first time, being.

SWIFT AS THE RACE HORSE HE OUTSTRIPS THE FIELD. MINDFUL AMONG THE MINDLESS, AWAKE WHILE OTHERS DREAM. That is the difference between Buddha and others. Others are only dreaming, not really living; hoping to live some day, preparing to live, but not living. And that day never comes -- before that day comes death.

A buddha is awake. Even while he is asleep he does not dream. When desires disappear, dreams disappear too. Dreams are desires translated into the language of sleep. A buddha sleeps with absolute alertness. The light goes on burning within him. The body needs rest, hence the body sleeps, but he needs no rest -- the energy is inexhaustible. There, at the center of his being, a small light goes on burning. The whole circumference is fast asleep, but that light is alert, awake.

We are asleep even while we are awake: he is awake even while he is asleep.

BY WATCHING
INDRA BECAME KING OF THE GODS.
HOW WONDERFUL IT IS TO WATCH,
HOW FOOLISH TO SLEEP.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS
BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND
WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

'Bhikkhu' is Buddha's word for sannyasin. 'Sannyasin' is my word for the bhikkhu. I have not chosen Buddha's word -- for a certain reason. Bhikkhu literally means beggar. Buddha renounced his kingdom and became a beggar. Of course, even while he is a beggar, he walks like an emperor; of course, he is far more graceful than he ever was before, and far richer than he ever was before. But because he renounced the kingdom, people started calling him a bhikkhu, a beggar. And, slowly slowly, the name was adopted by his followers too.

I don't want you to be beggars, I want you to be masters. Hence I have chosen the word 'sannyasin'. A sannyasin means one who knows how to live rightly. It is not renunciation; on the contrary, it is rejoicing, it is celebration.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND AND FEARS THE WAYWARDNESS OF HIS THOUGHTS BURNS THROUGH EVERY BOND WITH THE FIRE OF HIS VIGILANCE.

Yes, meditation is fire -- it burns your thoughts, your desires, your memories; it burns the past and the future. It burns your mind and the ego. It takes away all that you think that you are. It is a death and a rebirth, a crucifixion and a resurrection. You are born anew. You lose your own identity totally, and you attain to a new vision of life.

That vision of life is what is meant by god, dhamma, tao, logos. You can choose your name for it because it has no name of its own. In fact it is not expressible at all; it can only be indicated, hinted at.

THE BHIKKHU WHO GUARDS HIS MIND
AND FEARS HIS OWN CONFUSION
CANNOT FALL.
HE HAS FOUND THE WAY TO PEACE.

Mind is confusion. Thoughts and thoughts -- thousands of thoughts clamoring, clashing, fighting with each other, fighting for your attention. Thousands of thoughts pulling you into thousands of directions. It is a miracle how you go on keeping yourself together. Somehow you manage this togetherness -- it is only somehow, it is only a facade. Deep behind it there is a clamoring crowd, a civil war, a continuous civil war. Thoughts fighting with each other, thoughts wanting you to fulfill them. It is a great confusion, what you call your mind.

But if you are aware that the mind is confusion, and you don't get identified with the mind, you will never fall. You will become fallproof! The mind will become impotent. And because you will be watching continuously, your energies will slowly be withdrawn, away from the mind; it will not be nourished any more.

And once the mind dies, you are born as a no-mind. That birth is enlightenment. That birth brings you for the first time to the land of peace, the lotus paradise. It brings you to the world of bliss, benediction. Otherwise you remain in hell. Right now you are in hell. But if you resolve, if you decide, if you choose consciousness, right now you can take a jump, a leap from hell into heaven.

It is up to you: you can choose hell, you can choose heaven. Hell is cheap. Heaven needs great effort, perseverance, resolve. Hell means you can remain unconscious, you can remain as you are. Heaven means you have to rise above yourself, you have to transcend. You have to move from the valley towards the peaks.

And those peaks are yours, but you have to pay for them. Climbing to those peaks is arduous effort. Be watchful, be meditative, and one day you will find yourself on the sunlit peaks. That is liberation, moksha. That is nirvana -- cessation of the ego and the birth of God.

You are entitled to be gods. If you are not, only you are responsible and nobody else. Listen to the Buddha. Don't only listen to the Buddha -- act, be committed to the life of consciousness, get involved.

But let me remind you again: this is only one dimension of life -- immensely rich, but still one dimension. You will have to do something more. I am giving you a more arduous task than Buddha did. Buddha gave you one dimension; I want you to have all three dimensions, and a synthesis.

A new man is needed on the earth. The old is rotten and finished, it has no future, it can't survive. It has come to the very end of its tether. It is on the deathbed. Unless a new man is born -- East and West meeting, all three dimensions together -- humanity is doomed.

This experiment that I am doing here is just to create the first specimen of the new man. You are participating in a great experiment of tremendous import. Feel blessed. Feel fortunate. You may not be aware of what you are participating in, but you may create history! It all depends on how committed, how involved you become with me and with my experiment.

This is the greatest synthesis possible, that has ever been tried....

Enough for today.