

The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

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The Dhammapada: The Way of the Buddha, Vol 1

Chapter #1

Chapter title: We are what we think

21 June 1979 am in Buddha Hall

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND
AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH A PURE MIND
AND HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
LIVE WITH SUCH THOUGHTS AND YOU LIVE IN HATE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
ABANDON SUCH THOUGHTS, AND LIVE IN LOVE.

IN THIS WORLD
HATE NEVER YET DISPELLED HATE.
ONLY LOVE DISPELS HATE.
THIS IS THE LAW,
ANCIENT AND INEXHAUSTIBLE.

YOU TOO SHALL PASS AWAY.
KNOWING THIS, HOW CAN YOU QUARREL?

HOW EASILY THE WIND OVERTURNS A FRAIL TREE.

SEEK HAPPINESS IN THE SENSES,
INDULGE IN FOOD AND SLEEP,
AND YOU TOO WILL BE UPROOTED.

THE WIND CANNOT OVERTURN A MOUNTAIN.
TEMPTATION CANNOT TOUCH THE MAN
WHO IS AWAKE, STRONG AND HUMBLE,
WHO MASTERS HIMSELF AND MINDS THE LAW.

IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY,
IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT,
HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

WHOEVER IS MASTER OF HIS OWN NATURE,
BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE,
HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE.

My beloved bodhisattvas.... Yes, that's how I look at you. That's how you have to start looking at yourselves. Bodhisattva means a buddha in essence, a buddha in seed, a buddha asleep, but with all the potential to be awake. In that sense everybody is a bodhisattva, but not everybody can be called a bodhisattva -- only those who have started groping for the light, who have started longing for the dawn, in whose hearts the seed is no longer a seed but has become a sprout, has started growing.

You are bodhisattvas because of your longing to be conscious, to be alert, because of your quest for the truth. The truth is not far away, but there are very few fortunate ones in the world who long for it. It is not far away but it is arduous, it is hard to achieve. It is hard to achieve, not because of its nature, but because of our investment in lies.

We have invested for lives and lives in lies. Our investment is so much that the very idea of truth makes us frightened. We want to avoid it, we want to escape from the truth. Lies are beautiful escapes -- convenient, comfortable dreams. But dreams are dreams. They can enchant you for the moment, they can enslave you for the moment, but only for the moment. And each dream is followed by tremendous frustration, and each desire is followed by deep failure.

But we go on rushing into new lies; if old lies are known, we immediately invent new lies. Remember that only lies can be invented; truth cannot be invented. Truth already is! Truth has to be discovered, not invented. Lies cannot be discovered, they have to be invented.

Mind feels very good with lies because the mind becomes the inventor, the doer. And as the mind becomes the doer, ego is created. With truth, you have nothing to do...and because you have nothing to do, mind ceases, and with the mind the ego disappears, evaporates. That's the risk, the ultimate risk.

You have moved towards that risk. You have taken a few steps -- staggering, stumbling, groping, haltingly, with many doubts, but still you have taken a few steps; hence I call you bodhisattvas.

And THE DHAMMAPADA, the teaching of Gautama the Buddha, can only be taught to the bodhisattvas. It cannot be taught to the ordinary, mediocre humanity, because it cannot be understood by them.

These words of Buddha come from eternal silence. They can reach you only if you receive them in silence. These words of Buddha come from immense purity. Unless you become a vehicle, a receptacle, humble, egoless, alert, aware, you will not be able to understand them. Intellectually you will understand them -- they are very simple words, the simplest possible. But their very simplicity is a problem, because you are not simple. To understand simplicity you need simplicity of the heart, because only the simple heart can understand the simple truth. Only the pure can understand that which has come out of purity.

I have waited long...now the time is ripe, you are ready. The seeds can be sown. These tremendously important words can be uttered again. For twenty-five centuries, such a gathering has not existed at all. Yes, there have been a few enlightened masters with a few disciples -- half a dozen at the most -- and in small gatherings THE DHAMMAPADA has been taught. But those small gatherings cannot transform such a huge humanity. It is like throwing sugar in the ocean with spoons: it cannot make it sweet -- your sugar is simply wasted.

A great, unheard-of experiment has to be done, on such a large scale that at least the most substantial part of humanity is touched by it -- at least the soul of humanity, the center of humanity, can be awakened by it. On the periphery, the mediocre minds will go on sleeping -- let them sleep -- but at the center where intelligence exists a light can be kindled.

The time is ripe, the time has come for it. My whole work here consists in creating a buddhafiield, an energy field where these eternal truths can be uttered again. It is a rare opportunity. Only once in a while, after centuries, does such an opportunity exist. Don't miss it. Be very alert, mindful. Listen to these words not only with the head but with your heart, with every fiber of your being. Let your totality be stirred by them.

And after these ten days of silence, it is exactly the right moment to bring Buddha back, to make him alive again amongst you, to let him move amongst you, to let the winds of Buddha pass through you. Yes, he can be called back again, because nobody ever disappears. Buddha is no longer an embodied person; certainly he does not exist as an individual anywhere -- but his essence, his soul, is part of the cosmic soul now.

If many many people -- with deep longing, with immense longing, with prayerful hearts -- desire it, passionately desire it, then the soul that has disappeared into the cosmic soul can again become manifest in millions of ways.

No true master ever dies, he cannot die. Death does not appear for the masters, does not exist for them. Hence they are masters. They have known the eternity of life. They have seen that the body disappears but that the body is not all: the body is only the periphery, the body is only the garments. The body is the house, the abode, but the

guest never disappears. The guest only moves from one abode to another. One day, ultimately, the guest starts living under the sky, with no shelter...but the guest continues. Only bodies, houses, come and go, are born and then die. But there is an inner continuum, an inner continuity -- that is eternal, timeless, deathless.

Whenever you can love a master -- a master like Jesus, Buddha, Zarathustra, Lao Tzu -- if your passion is total, immediately you are bridged.

My talking on Buddha is not just a commentary: it is creating a bridge. Buddha is one of the most important masters who has ever existed on the earth -- incomparable, unique.

And if you can have a taste of his being, you will be infinitely benefited, blessed.

I am immensely glad, because after these ten days of silence I can say to you that many of you are now ready to commune with me in silence. That is the ultimate in communication. Words are inadequate; words say, but only partially. Silence communes totally.

And to use words is a dangerous game too, because the meaning will remain with me, only the word will reach you; and you will give it your own meaning, your own color. It will not contain the same truth that it was meant to contain. It will contain something else, something far poorer. It will contain your meaning, not my meaning. You can distort language -- in fact it is almost impossible to avoid distortion -- but you cannot distort silence. Either you understand or you don't understand.

And for these ten days there were only two categories of people here: those who understood and those who did not. But there was not a single person who misunderstood. You cannot misunderstand silence -- that's the beauty of silence. The demarcation is absolute: either you understand or, simply, you don't understand -- there is nothing to misunderstand.

With words the case is just the opposite: it is very difficult to understand, it is very difficult to understand that you don't understand; these two are almost impossibilities. And the third is the only possibility: misunderstanding.

These ten days have been of strange beauty, and of a mysterious majesty too. I no longer really belong to this shore. My ship has been waiting for me for a long time -- I should have gone. It is a miracle that I am still in the body. The whole credit goes to you: to your love, to your prayers, to your longing. You would like me to linger a little while longer on this shore, hence the impossible has become possible.

These ten days, I was not feeling together with my body. I was feeling very uprooted, dislocated. It is strange to be in the body when you don't feel that you are in the body. And it is also strange to go on living in a place which no longer belongs to you -- my home is on the other shore. And the call comes persistently. But because you need me, it is the compassion of the universe -- you can call it God's compassion -- that is allowing me to be in the body a little more.

It was strange, it was beautiful, it was mysterious, it was majestic, it was magical. And many of you have felt it. Many of you have felt it in different ways. A few have felt it as a very frightening phenomenon, as if death is knocking on the door. A few have felt it as a great confusion. A few have felt shocked, utterly shocked. But everybody has been touched in some way or other.

Only the newcomers were a little at a loss -- they could not comprehend what was going on. But I feel thankful to them too. Although they could not understand what was going on, they waited -- they were waiting for me to speak, they were waiting for me to say something, they were hoping. Many were afraid that I might not speak ever again...that was also a possibility. I was not certain myself.

Words are becoming more and more difficult for me. They are becoming more and more of an effort. I have to say something so I go on saying something to you. But I would like you to get ready as soon as possible so that we can simply sit in silence...listening to the birds and their songs...or listening just to your own heartbeat...just being here, doing nothing....

Get ready as soon as possible, because I may stop speaking any day. And let the news be spread to all the nooks and corners of the world: those who want to understand me only through the words, they should come soon, because I may stop speaking any day. Unpredictably, any day, it may happen -- it may happen even in the middle of a sentence. Then I am not going to complete the sentence! Then it will hang forever and forever...incomplete.

But this time you have pulled me back.

These sayings of Buddha are called THE DHAMMAPADA. This name has to be understood. Dhamma means many things. It means the ultimate law, logos. By "ultimate law" is meant that which keeps the whole universe together. Invisible it is, intangible it is -- but it is certainly; otherwise the universe would fall apart. Such a vast, infinite universe, running so smoothly, so harmoniously, is enough proof that there must be an undercurrent that connects everything, that joins everything, that bridges everything -- that we are not islands, that the smallest grass leaf is joined to the greatest star. Destroy a small grass leaf and you have destroyed something of immense value to the existence itself.

In existence there is no hierarchy, there is nothing small and nothing great. The greatest star and the smallest grass leaf, both exist as equals; hence the other meaning of the word 'dhamma'. The other meaning is justice, the equality, the nonhierarchic existence. Existence is absolutely communist; it knows no classes, it is all one. Hence the other meaning of the word 'dhamma' -- justice.

And the third meaning is righteousness, virtue. Existence is very virtuous. Even if you find something which you cannot call virtue, it must be because of your misunderstanding; otherwise the existence is absolutely virtuous. Whatsoever happens here, always happens rightly. The wrong never happens. It may appear wrong to you because you have a certain idea of what right is, but when you look without any prejudice, nothing is wrong, all is right. Birth is right, death is right. Beauty is right and ugliness is right.

But our minds are small, our comprehension is limited; we cannot see the whole, we always see only a small part. We are like a person who is hiding behind his door and looking through the keyhole into the street. He always sees things...yes, somebody is moving, a car suddenly passes by. One moment it was not there, one moment it is there, and another moment it is gone forever. That's how we are looking at existence. We say

something is in the future, then it comes into the present, and then it has gone into the past.

In fact, time is a human invention. It is always now! Existence knows no past, no future -- it knows only the present.

But we are sitting behind a keyhole and looking. A person is not there, then suddenly he appears; and then as suddenly as he appears he disappears too. Now you have to create time. Before the person appeared he was in the future; he was there, but for you he was in the future. Then he appeared; now he is in the present -- he is the same! And you cannot see him anymore through your small keyhole -- he has become past. Nothing is past, nothing is future -- all is always present. But our ways of seeing are very limited.

Hence we go on asking why there is misery in the world, why there is this and that...why? If we can look at the whole, all these whys disappear. And to look at the whole, you will have to come out of your room, you will have to open the door...you will have to drop this keyhole vision.

This is what mind is: a keyhole, and a very small keyhole it is. Compared to the vast universe, what are our eyes, ears, hands? What can we grasp? Nothing of much importance. And those tiny fragments of truth, we become too much attached to them.

If you see the whole, everything is as it should be -- that is the meaning of "everything is right." Wrong exists not. Only God exists; the Devil is man's creation.

The third meaning of 'dhamma' can be God -- but Buddha never uses the word 'God' because it has become wrongly associated with the idea of a person, and the law is a presence, not a person. Hence Buddha never uses the word 'God', but whenever he wants to convey something of God he uses the word 'dhamma'. His mind is that of a very profound scientist. Because of this, many have thought him to be an atheist -- he is not. He is the greatest theist the world has ever known or will ever know -- but he never talks about God. He never uses the word, that's all, but by 'dhamma' he means exactly the same. "That which is" is the meaning of the word 'God', and that's exactly the meaning of 'dhamma'. 'Dhamma' also means discipline -- different dimensions of the word. One who wants to know the truth will have to discipline himself in many ways. Don't forget the meaning of the word 'discipline' -- it simply means the capacity to learn, the availability to learn, the receptivity to learn. Hence the word 'disciple'. 'Disciple' means one who is ready to drop his old prejudices, to put his mind aside, and look into the matter without any prejudice, without any a priori conception.

And 'dhamma' also means the ultimate truth. When mind disappears, when the ego disappears, then what remains? Something certainly remains, but it cannot be called 'something' -- hence Buddha calls it 'nothing'. But let me remind you, otherwise you will misunderstand him: whenever he uses the word 'nothing' he means no-thing. Divide the word in two; don't use it as one word -- bring a hyphen between 'no' and 'thing', then you know exactly the meaning of 'nothing'.

The ultimate law is not a thing. It is not an object that you can observe. It is your interiority, it is subjectivity.

Buddha would have agreed totally with the Danish thinker, Soren Kierkegaard. He says: Truth is subjectivity. That is the difference between fact and truth. A fact is an objective thing. Science goes on searching for more and more facts, and science will never arrive at truth -- it cannot by the very definition of the word. Truth is the interiority of the scientist, but he never looks at it. He goes on observing other things. He never becomes aware of his own being.

That is the last meaning of 'dhamma': your interiority, your subjectivity, your truth.

One thing very significant -- allow it to sink deep into your heart: truth is never a theory, a hypothesis; it is always an experience. Hence my truth cannot be your truth. My truth is inescapably my truth; it will remain my truth, it cannot be yours. We cannot share it. Truth is unsharable, untransferable, incommunicable, inexpressible.

I can explain to you how I have attained it, but I cannot say what it is. The "how" is explainable, but not the "why." The discipline can be shown, but not the goal. Each one has to come to it in his own way. Each one has to come to it in his own inner being. In absolute aloneness it is revealed.

And the second word is PADA. 'Pada' also has many meanings. One, the most fundamental meaning, is path. Religion has two dimensions: the dimension of "what" and the dimension of "how." The "what" cannot be talked about; it is impossible. But the "how" can be talked about, the "how" is sharable. That is the meaning of 'path'. I can indicate the path to you; I can show you how I have traveled, how I reached the sunlit peaks. I can tell you about the whole geography of it, the whole topography of it. I can give you a contour map, but I cannot say how it feels to be on the sunlit peak.

It is like you can ask Edmund Hillary or Tensing how they reached the highest peak of the Himalayas, Gaurishankar. They can give you the whole map of how they reached. But if you ask them what they felt when they reached, they can only shrug their shoulders. That freedom that they must have known is unspeakable; the beauty, the benediction, the vast sky, the height, and the colorful clouds, and the sun and the unpolluted air, and the virgin snow on which nobody had ever traveled before...all that is impossible to convey. One has to reach those sunlit peaks to know it. 'Pada' means path, 'pada' also means step, foot, foundation. All these meanings are significant. You have to move from where you are. You have to become a great process, a growth. People have become stagnant pools; they have to become rivers, because only rivers reach the ocean. And it also means foundation, because it is the fundamental truth of life. Without dhamma, without relating in some way to the ultimate truth, your life has no foundation, no meaning, no significance, it cannot have any glory. It will be an exercise in utter futility. If you are not bridged with the total you cannot have any significance of your own. You will remain a driftwood -- at the mercy of the winds, not knowing where you are going and not knowing who you are. The search for truth, the passionate search for truth, creates the bridge, gives you a foundation. These sutras that are compiled as THE DHAMMAPADA are to be understood not intellectually but existentially. Become like sponges: let it soak, let it sink into you. Don't be sitting there judging; otherwise you will miss the Buddha. Don't sit there constantly chattering in

your mind about whether it is right or wrong -- you will miss the point. Don't be bothered whether it is right or wrong.

The first, the most primary thing, is to understand what it is -- what Buddha is saying, what Buddha is trying to say. There is no need to judge right now. The first, basic need is to understand exactly what he means. And the beauty of it is that if you understand exactly what it means, you will be convinced of its truth, you will know its truth. Truth has its own ways of convincing people; it needs no other proofs.

Truth never argues: it is a song, not a syllogism.

The sutras:

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.

ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.

WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.

It has been said to you again and again that the Eastern mystics believe that the world is illusory. It is true: they not only believe that the world is untrue, illusory, maya -- they know that it is maya, it is an illusion, a dream. But when they use the word sansara -- the world -- they don't mean the objective world that science investigates; no, not at all. They don't mean the world of the trees and the mountains and the rivers; no, not at all. They mean the world that you create, spin and weave inside your mind, the wheel of the mind that goes on moving and spinning. Sansara has nothing to do with the outside world.

There are three things to be remembered. One is the outside world, the objective world. Buddha will never say anything about it because that is not his concern; he is not an Albert Einstein. Then there is a second world: the world of the mind, the world that the psychoanalysts, the psychiatrists, the psychologists investigate. Buddha will have a few things to say about it, not many, just a few -- in fact, one: that it is illusory, that it has no truth, either objective or subjective, that it is in between.

The first world is the objective world, which science investigates. The second world is the world of the mind, which the psychologist investigates. And the third world is your subjectivity, your interiority, your inner self.

Buddha's indication is towards the interiormost core of your being. But you are too much involved with the mind. Unless he helps you to become untrapped from the mind, you will never know the third, the real world: your inner substance. Hence he starts with the statement: WE ARE WHAT WE THINK. That's what everybody is: his mind. ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.

Just imagine for a single moment that all thoughts have ceased...then who are you? If all thoughts cease for a single moment, then who are you? No answer will be coming. You cannot say, "I am a Catholic," "I am a Protestant," "I am a Hindu," "I am a Mohammedan" -- you cannot say that. All thoughts have ceased. So the Koran has disappeared, the Bible, the Gita...all words have ceased! You cannot even utter your

name. All language has disappeared so you cannot say to which country you belong, to which race. When thoughts cease, who are you? An utter emptiness, nothingness, nothingness.

It is because of this that Buddha has used a strange word; nobody has ever done such a thing before, or since. The mystics have always used the word 'self' for the interiormost core of your being -- Buddha uses the word 'no-self'. And I perfectly agree with him; he is far more accurate, closer to truth. To use the word 'self' -- even if you use the word 'Self' with a capital 'S', does not make much difference. It continues to give you the sense of the ego, and with a capital 'S' it may give you an even bigger ego.

Buddha does not use the words atma, 'self', atta. He uses just the opposite word: 'no-self', anatma, anatta. He says when mind ceases, there is no self left -- you have become universal, you have overflowed the boundaries of the ego, you are a pure space, uncontaminated by anything. You are just a mirror reflecting nothing.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK. ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS. WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.

If you really want to know who, in reality, you are, you will have to learn how to cease as a mind, how to stop thinking. That's what meditation is all about. Meditation means going out of the mind, dropping the mind and moving in the space called no-mind. And in no-mind you will know the ultimate truth, dhamma.

And moving from mind to no-mind is the step, pada. And this is the whole secret of THE DHAMMAPADA.

SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND
AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

Whenever Buddha uses the phrase 'impure mind' you can misunderstand it. By 'impure mind' he means mind, because all mind is impure. Mind as such is impure, and no-mind is pure. Purity means no-mind; impurity means mind.

SPEAK OR ACT WITH AN IMPURE MIND -- speak or act with mind -- AND TROUBLE WILL FOLLOW YOU.... Misery is a by-product, the shadow of the mind, the shadow of the illusory mind. Misery is a nightmare. You suffer only because you are asleep. And there is no way of escaping it while you are asleep. Unless you become awakened the nightmare will persist. It may change forms, it can have millions of forms, but it will persist.

Misery is the shadow of the mind: mind means sleep, mind means unconsciousness, mind means unawareness. Mind means not knowing who you are and still pretending that you know. Mind means not knowing where you are going and still pretending that you know the goal, that you know what life is meant for -- not knowing anything about life and still believing that you know.

This mind will bring misery as certainly AS THE WHEEL FOLLOWS THE OX THAT DRAWS THE CART.

WE ARE WHAT WE THINK.
ALL THAT WE ARE ARISES WITH OUR THOUGHTS.
WITH OUR THOUGHTS WE MAKE THE WORLD.
SPEAK OR ACT WITH A PURE MIND
AND HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU
AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

Again, remember: when Buddha says "pure mind" he means no-mind. It is very difficult to translate a man like Buddha. It is almost an impossible job, because a man like Buddha uses language in his own way; he creates his own language. He cannot use the ordinary language with ordinary meanings, because he has something extraordinary to convey.

Ordinary words are absolutely meaningless in reference to the experience of a Buddha. But you should understand the problem. The problem is, he cannot use an absolutely new language; nobody will understand. It will look like gibberish.

That's how the word 'gibberish' came into existence. It comes from a Sufi; his name was Jabbar. He invented a new language. Nobody was able to make head or tail of it. How can you understand an absolutely new language? He looked like a madman, uttering nonsense, utter nonsense. That's how it happens! If you listen to a Chinese and you don't understand Chinese, it is utter nonsense.

Somebody was asking a man who had gone to China, "How do they find such strange names for people? -- Ching, Chung, Chang...."

The man said, "They have a way: they collect all the spoons in the house and they throw them upwards, and when those spoons fall down...ching! chung! chang! or whatsoever sound they make, that's how they name a child."

But the same is the case: if a Chinese hears English he thinks, "What nonsense!"

If that is the case with languages which millions of people use, what will be the case with a Buddha if he invents an original language? Only he will understand it and nobody else. Jabbar did that -- must have been a very courageous man. People thought that he was mad.

The English word 'gibberish' comes from Jabbar. Nobody knows what he was saying. Nobody has even tried to collect it...how to collect it? There was no alphabet. And what he was saying was making no sense at all, so we don't know what treasures we have missed.

The problem for Buddha is that either he has to use your language as you use it -- then he cannot convey his experience at all -- or he has to invent a new language nobody will understand. So all great masters have to be very much in the middle. They will use your language, but they will give your words their color, their flavor. The bottles will be yours, the wine will be theirs. And thinking that because the bottles are yours the wine is also yours, you will carry them for centuries. And there is a possibility that, thinking

that it is your wine because the bottle is yours, sometimes you may drink out of it, you may become drunk.

That's why it is very difficult to translate. Buddha used a language that was understood by the people who surrounded him, but he gave twists and turns to words in such a subtle way that even people who knew the language were not alerted, were not shocked. They thought they were hearing their own language.

Buddha uses the words "pure mind" for no-mind, because if you say "no-mind," immediately it becomes impossible to understand. But if you say "pure mind," then some communication is possible. Slowly slowly, he will convince you that pure mind means no-mind. But that will take time; very slowly you have to be caught and trapped into a totally new experience. But remember always: pure mind means no-mind, impure means mind.

By putting these adjectives, impure and pure, he is compromising with you so that you don't become alerted too early and escape. You have to be allured, seduced. All great masters are seductive -- that is their art. They seduce you in such a way that slowly slowly, you are ready to drink anything, whatsoever they give. First they supply you with ordinary water, then slowly slowly, wine has to be mixed in it. Then water has to be withdrawn...and one day you are completely drunk. But it has to be a very slow process.

As you go deeper into the sutras you will understand. Impure mind means mind, pure mind means no-mind. And happiness will follow you if you have a pure mind or no mind.... HAPPINESS WILL FOLLOW YOU AS YOUR SHADOW, UNSHAKABLE.

Misery is a by-product, so is bliss. Misery is a by-product of being asleep, bliss is a by-product of being awake. Hence you cannot seek and search for bliss directly, and those who seek and search for bliss directly are bound to fail, doomed to fail. Bliss can be attained only by those who don't seek bliss directly; on the contrary, they seek awareness. And when awareness comes, bliss comes of its own accord, just like your shadow, unshakable.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
LIVE WITH SUCH THOUGHTS AND YOU LIVE IN HATE.

"LOOK HOW HE ABUSED ME AND BEAT ME,
HOW HE THREW ME DOWN AND ROBBED ME."
ABANDON SUCH THOUGHTS, AND LIVE IN LOVE.

Something of profound importance: hate exists with the past and the future -- love needs no past, no future. Love exists in the present. Hate has a reference in the past: somebody abused you yesterday and you are carrying it like a wound, a hangover. Or you are afraid that somebody is going to abuse you tomorrow -- a fear, a shadow of the fear. And you are already getting ready, you are getting prepared to encounter it.

Hate exists in the past and the future. You cannot hate in the present -- try, and you will be utterly impotent. Try it today: sit silently and hate somebody in the present, with no reference to the past or the future...you cannot do it. It cannot be done; in the very nature of things it is impossible. Hate can exist only if you remember the past: this man did something to you yesterday -- then hate is possible. Or this man is going to do something tomorrow -- then too hate is possible. But if you don't have any reference to the past or the future -- this man has not done anything to you and he is not going to do anything to you, this man is just sitting there -- how can you hate? But you can love.

Love needs no reference -- that's the beauty of love and the freedom of love. Hate is a bondage. Hate is imprisonment -- imposed by you upon yourself. And hate creates hate, hate provokes hate. If you hate somebody you are creating hate in that person's heart for yourself. And the whole world exists in hate, in destructiveness, in violence, in jealousy, in competitiveness. People are at each other's throats either in reality, actuality, in action, or at least in their minds, in their thoughts, everybody is murdering, killing. That's why we have created a hell out of this beautiful earth -- which could have become a paradise.

Love, and the earth becomes a paradise again. And the immense beauty of love is that it has no reference. Love comes from you for no reason at all. It is your outpouring bliss, it is your sharing of your heart. It is the sharing of the song of your being. And sharing is so joyful -- hence one shares! Sharing for sharing's sake, for no other motive.

But what love you have known in the past is not the love Buddha is talking about or I am talking about. Your love is nothing but the other side of hate. Hence your love has reference: somebody has been beautiful to you yesterday, so nice he was that you feel great love for him. This is not love; this is the other side of hate -- the reference proves it. Or somebody is going to be nice to you tomorrow: the way he smiled at you, the way he talked to you, the way he invited you to his house tomorrow -- he is going to be loving to you. And great love arises.

This is not the love buddhas talk about. This is hate disguised as love -- that's why your love can turn into hate any moment. Scratch a person just a little bit, and the love disappears and hate arises. It is not even skin-deep. Even so-called great lovers are continuously fighting, continuously at each other's throats -- nagging, destructive. And people think this is love....

You can ask Astha and Abhiyana -- they are in such a love that Astha is having a black eye almost every day. Great fight! But when great fight goes on, people think something is happening. When nothing is happening -- no fight, no quarrel -- people feel empty. "It is better to be fighting than to be empty" -- that's the idea of millions of people in the world. At least the fight keeps you engaged, at least the fight keeps you involved, and the fight makes you important. Life seems to have some meaning -- ugly meaning, but at least some meaning.

Your love is not really love: it is its very opposite. It is hate disguised as love, camouflaged as love, parading as love. True love has no reference. It thinks not of the yesterdays, it thinks not of the tomorrows. True love is a spontaneous welling up of joy

in you...and the sharing of it...and the showering of it...for no other reason, for no other motive, than just the joy of sharing it.

The birds singing in the morning, this cuckoo calling from the distance...for no reason. The heart is just so full of joy that a song bursts forth. When I am talking about love I am talking about such love. Remember it. And if you can move into the dimension of this love, you will be in paradise -- immediately. And you will start creating a paradise on the earth.

Love creates love just as hate creates hate.

IN THIS WORLD

HATE NEVER YET DISPELLED HATE.

ONLY LOVE DISPELS HATE.

THIS IS THE LAW,

ANCIENT AND INEXHAUSTIBLE.

Aes dhammo sanantano -- this the law, eternal, ancient and inexhaustible.

What is the law? That hate never dispels hate -- darkness cannot dispel darkness -- that only love dispels hate. Only light can dispel darkness: love is light, the light of your being, and hate is the darkness of your being. If you are dark inside, you go on throwing hate all around you. If you are light within, luminous, then you go on radiating light around you.

A sanniyasin has to be a radiant love, a radiant light.

AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.... Buddha repeats this again and again -- this is the eternal law. What is the eternal law? Only love dispels hate, only light dispels darkness. Why? -- because darkness in itself is only a negative state; it has no positive existence of its own. It does not exist really -- how can you dispel it? You cannot do anything directly to darkness. If you want to do anything to darkness you will have to do something with light. Bring light in and darkness is gone, take light out and darkness comes in. But you cannot bring darkness in or out directly -- you cannot do anything with darkness. Remember, you cannot do anything with hate either.

And that's the difference between moral teachers and religious mystics: moral teachers go on propounding the false law. They go on propounding, "Fight with darkness -- fight with hate, fight with anger, fight with sex, fight with this, fight with that!" Their whole approach is, "Fight the negative," while the real, true master teaches you the positive law: aes dhammo sanantano -- the eternal law, "Do not fight with darkness." And hate is darkness, and sex is darkness, and jealousy is darkness, and greed is darkness and anger is darkness.

Bring the light in....

How is the light brought in? Become silent, thoughtless, conscious, alert, aware, awake - - this is how light is brought in. And the moment you are alert, aware, hate will not be found. Try to hate somebody with awareness....

These are experiments to be done, not just words to be understood -- experiments to be done. That's why I say don't try to understand only intellectually: become existential experimenters.

Try to hate somebody consciously and you will find it impossible. Either consciousness disappears, then you can hate; or if you are conscious, hate disappears. They can't exist together. There is no coexistence possible: light and darkness cannot exist together -- because darkness is nothing but the absence of light.

The true masters teach you how to attain to God; they never say renounce the world. Renunciation is negative. They don't tell you to escape from the world, they teach you to escape into God. They teach you to attain to truth, not to fight with lies. And lies are millions. If you go on fighting it will take millions of lives, and still nothing will be attained. And truth is one; hence truth can be attained instantly, this very moment it is possible.

YOU TOO SHALL PASS AWAY.
KNOWING THIS, HOW CAN YOU QUARREL?

Life is so short, so momentary, and you are wasting it in quarreling? Use the whole energy for meditation -- it is the same energy. You can fight with it or you can become a light through it.

HOW EASILY THE WIND OVERTURNS A FRAIL TREE.
SEEK HAPPINESS IN THE SENSES,
INDULGE IN FOOD AND SLEEP,
AND YOU TOO WILL BE UPROOTED.

Buddha says: Remember, if you depend on the senses you will remain very fragile -- because senses cannot give you strength. They cannot give you strength because they cannot give you a constant foundation. They are constantly in flux; everything is changing. Where can you have a shelter? Where can you make a foundation?

One moment this woman looks beautiful and another moment another woman. If you just decide by the senses, you will be a constant turmoil -- you cannot decide because senses go on changing their opinions. One moment something seems so incredible, and another moment it is just ugly, unbearable. And we depend on these senses.

Buddha says: Don't depend on senses -- depend on awareness. Awareness is something hidden behind the senses. It is not the eye that sees. If you go to the eye specialist he will say it is the eye that sees, but that is not true. The eye is only a mechanism -- through which somebody else sees. The eye is only a window; the window cannot see. When you stand at the window, you can look outside. Somebody passing in the street may think, "The window is seeing me." The eye is only a window, an aperture. Who is behind the eye?

The ear does not hear -- who is behind the ear who hears? Who is the one who feels? Go on searching for that and you will find some foundation; otherwise, your life will be just a dry leaf in the wind.

THE WIND CANNOT OVERTURN A MOUNTAIN.
TEMPTATION CANNOT TOUCH THE MAN
WHO IS AWAKE, STRONG AND HUMBLE,
WHO MASTERS HIMSELF AND MINDS THE LAW.

Meditation will make you awake, strong and humble. Meditation will make you awake because it will give you the first experience of yourself. You are not the body, you are not the mind -- you are the pure witnessing consciousness. And when this witnessing consciousness is touched, a great awakening happens -- as if a snake was sitting coiled up and suddenly it uncoils, as if somebody was asleep and has been shaken and awakened. Suddenly a great awakening inside: for the first time you feel you are. For the first time you feel the truth of your being.

And certainly it makes you strong; you are no longer fragile, not like a frail tree that any wind can overturn. Now you become a mountain! Now you have a foundation, now you are rooted -- no wind can overturn a mountain. You become awake, you become strong, and still you become humble. This strength does not bring any ego in you. You become humble because you become aware that the same witnessing soul exists in everybody, even in animals, birds, plants, rocks.

These are only different ways of sleeping! Somebody sleeps on the right side, and somebody sleeps on the left side, and somebody sleeps on the back...these are only different ways of sleeping. A rock has its own way of sleep, a tree a different way of sleep, a bird still a different way -- but only differences in the ways and methods of sleeping; otherwise deep down at the core of every being is the same witnessing, the same God. That makes you humble. Even before a rock you know you are nobody special, because the whole existence is made of the same stuff called consciousness. And if you are awake, strong, and humble, this gives you a mastery over yourself.

IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY,
IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT,
HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

Buddha chose for his sanniyasins the yellow robe, just as I have chosen the orange. That is the difference between my approach and the Buddha's approach. Yellow represents death -- the yellow leaf. Yellow represents the setting sun, the evening.

Buddha emphasized death too much -- that's a way. If you emphasize death too much, it helps: people become more and more aware of life in contrast to death. And when you emphasize death again and again and again, you help people to awaken. They have to be awake because death is coming. Whenever a new sanniyasin would be initiated by Buddha, he would tell him, "Go to the cemetery -- and just be there and go on watching

funeral pyres, dead bodies being carried, burned...go on watching. And go on remembering this is going to happen to you too. Three months' meditation on death, then come back." That was the beginning of sannyas.

There are only two possible ways. One is, emphasize death; the other is, emphasize life. Because these are the only two things in existence -- life and death. Buddha chose death as a symbol; hence the yellow robe.

The orange represents life; it is the color of blood. It represents the morning sun, the early dawn, the eastern sky becoming red. My emphasis is on life. But the purpose is the same. I want you to be so passionately in love with life that your very passion for life makes you aware, your very intensity to live it makes you awake.

And death is in the future, and life is now, so if you think of death you will be thinking of the future. If you think of death it will be an inference: you will see somebody else dying, you will never see yourself dying. You can imagine, you can infer, you can think, but this will be a thinking.

Life need not be thought, it can be lived. It can help you to be mindless more than death can. Hence my choice is far better than Buddha's choice, because life is right now; you need not go to a cemetery. All that you need is to be alert and life is everywhere...in the flowers, in the birds, in the people around you, the children laughing...and in you!...and right now! You need not think about it, you need not infer it. You can just close your eyes and feel it -- you can feel the tickle of it, you can feel the beat of it.

But both methods can be used: death can be used for you to become a meditator, or life can be used -- my choice is life. And I emphasize and repeat that my choice is far better than Buddha's. Buddha's choice of death as a symbol helped this whole country to become dead, dull, insipid. My choice of life as the symbol can revive this country -- not only this country but the whole world -- because it is not only the Buddha who has chosen death as a symbol, Christianity has also chosen death as a symbol -- the cross. So the two greatest religions of the world, Christianity and Buddhism, are death-oriented. And because of these two religions.... And their impact has been the greatest: Christianity has transformed the whole West, and Buddhism has transformed the whole East.

Jesus and Buddha have been the two greatest teachers, but the choice of death as a symbol has been dangerous, has been a calamity. I choose life. I would like this whole earth to be full of life, more and more life, pulsating life. But what Buddha says about his yellow robe I would also say about my orange robe. He says: IF A MAN'S THOUGHTS ARE MUDDY, IF HE IS RECKLESS AND FULL OF DECEIT, HOW CAN HE WEAR THE YELLOW ROBE?

WHOEVER IS MASTER OF HIS OWN NATURE,
BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE,
HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE ORANGE ROBE.

What he says about the yellow robe, I say about the orange robe: WHOEVER IS...BRIGHT, CLEAR AND TRUE, HE MAY INDEED WEAR THE ORANGE ROBE.
AES DHAMMO SANANTANO.