

Brahmajala Sutta

The Supreme Net

What the Teaching Is Not

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THUS HAVE I HEARD.¹ Once the Lord was traveling along the main road between Rajagaha and Nalanda² with a large company of some five hundred monks. And the wanderer, Suppiya³ was also traveling on that road with his pupil the youth, Brahmadata. And Suppiya was finding fault in all sorts of ways with the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, whereas his pupil, Brahmadata was speaking in various ways in their praise. And so these two, teacher and pupil, directly opposing each other's arguments, followed close behind the Lord and his order of monks.

Then the Lord stopped for one night with his monks at the royal park of Ambalatthika. And Suppiya too stopped there for the night with his pupil Brahmadata. And Suppiya went on abusing the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, while his pupil Brahmadata defended them. And thus disputing, they followed close behind the Buddha and his order of monks.

Now in the early morning a number of monks, having got up, gathered together and sat in the Round Pavilion, and this was the trend of their talk: "It is wonderful, friends, it is marvelous how the Blessed Lord, the Arahant, the fully Enlightened Buddha knows, sees and clearly distinguishes the different inclinations of beings! For here is the wanderer Suppiya finding fault in all sorts of ways with the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha, while his pupil Brahmadata in various ways defends them. And, still disputing, they follow closely behind the Blessed Lord and his order of monks."

Then the Lord, being aware of what those monks were saying, went to the Round Pavilion and sat down on the prepared seat. Then he said: "Monks, what was the subject of your conversation just now? What talk have I interrupted?" And they told him.

"Monks, if anyone should speak in disparagement of me, of the Dhamma or of the Sangha, you should not be angry, resentful or upset on that account. If you were to be angry or displeased at such disparagement, that would only be a hindrance to you. For if others disparage me, the Dhamma or the Sangha, and you are angry or displeased, can you recognize whether what they say is right or not?" 'No, Lord.' "If others disparage me, the Dhamma or the Sangha, then you must explain what is incorrect as being incorrect", saying: "That is incorrect, that is false, that is not our way, ⁴ that is not found among us.'

"But, monks, if others should speak in praise of me, of the Dhamma or of the Sangha, you should not on that account be pleased, happy or elated. If you were to be pleased, happy or elated at such praise, that would only be a hindrance to you." If others praise me, the Dhamma or the Sangha, you should acknowledge the

truth of what is true, saying: 'That is correct, that is right, that is our way, that is found among us'.

"It is, monks, for elementary, inferior matters of moral practice⁵ that the worldling⁶ would praise the Tathagata.⁷ And what are these elementary, inferior matters for which the worldling would praise him?"

Short Section On Morality⁸

"Abandoning the taking of life, the ascetic Gotama dwells refraining from taking life, without stick or sword, scrupulous, compassionate, trembling for the welfare of all living beings." Thus the worldling would praise the Tathagata.⁹

"Abandoning the taking of what is not given, the ascetic Gotama dwells refraining from taking what is not given, living purely, accepting what is given, awaiting what is given, without stealing. Abandoning unchastely, the ascetic Gotama lives far from it, aloof from the village-practice of sex." ¹⁰

"Abandoning false speech, the ascetic Gotama dwells refraining from false speech, a truth-speaker, one to be relied on, trustworthy, dependable, not a deceiver of the world. Abandoning malicious speech, he does not repeat there what he has heard here to the detriment of these, or repeat here what he has heard there to the detriment of those. Thus he is a reconciler of those at variance and an encourager of those at one, rejoicing in peace, loving it, delighting in it, one who speaks up for peace. Abandoning harsh speech, he refrains from it. He speaks whatever is blameless, pleasing to the ear, agreeable, reaching the heart, urbane, pleasing and attractive to the multitude. Abandoning idle chatter, he speaks at the right time, what is correct and to the point,¹¹ of Dhamma and discipline. He is a speaker whose words are to be treasured, seasonable, reasoned, well-defined and connected with the goal." ¹² Thus the worldling would praise the Tathagata.

"The ascetic Gotama is a refrainer from damaging seeds and crops. He eats once a day and not at night, refraining from eating at improper times.¹³ He avoids watching dancing, singing, music and shows. He abstains from using garlands, perfumes, cosmetics, ornaments and adornments. He avoids using high or wide beds. He avoids accepting gold and silver.¹⁴ He avoids accepting raw grain or raw flesh, he does not accept women and young girls, male or female slaves, sheep and goats, cocks and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares, fields and plots,¹⁵ he refrains from running errands, from buying and selling, from cheating with false weights and measures, from bribery and corruption, deception, and insincerity, from wounding, killing, imprisoning, highway robbery, and taking food by force." Thus the worldling would praise the Tathagata.

Middle Section On Morality

"Whereas, gentlemen, some ascetics and Brahmins, feeding on the food of the faithful, are addicted to the destruction of such seeds as are propagated from roots, from stems, from joints, from cuttings, from seeds, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such destruction." Thus the worldling would praise the Tathagata.

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins, feeding on the food of the faithful, remain addicted to the enjoyment of stored-up goods such as food, drink, clothing, carriages, beds, perfumes, meat, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such enjoyment.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins ... remain addicted to attending such shows as dancing, singing, music, displays, recitations, hand-music, cymbals and drums, fairyshows,¹⁶ acrobatic and conjuring tricks,¹⁷ combats of elephants, buffaloes, bulls, goats, rams, cocks and quail, fighting with staves, boxing, wrestling, sham-fights, parades, manoeuvres and military reviews, the ascetic Gotama refrains from attending such displays.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to such games and idle pursuits as eight- or ten-row chess,¹⁸ chess in the air,¹⁹ hopscotch, spillikins, dicing, hitting sticks, 'hand-pictures', ball-games, blowing through toy pipes, playing with toy ploughs, turning somersaults, playing with toy windmills, measures, carriages, and bows, guessing letters,²⁰ guessing thoughts,²¹ mimicking deformities, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such idle pursuits.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to high and wide beds and long chairs, couches adorned with animal figures,²² fleecy or variegated coverlets, coverlets with hair on both sides or one side, silk coverlets, embroidered with gems or without, elephant-, horse- or chariot-rugs, choice spreads of antelope-hide, couches with awnings, or with red cushions at both ends, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such high and wide beds.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to such forms of self-adornment and embellishment as rubbing the body with perfumes, massaging, bathing in scented water, shampooing, using mirrors, ointments, garlands, scents, unguents, cosmetics, bracelets, headbands, fancy sticks, bottles, swords, sunshades, decorated sandals, turbans, gems, yak-tail fans, long-fringed white robes, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such self-adornment.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to such unedifying conversation²³ as about kings, robbing ministers, armies, dangers, wars, food, drink, clothes, beds, garlands, perfumes, relatives, carriages, villages, towns and cities, countries, women, heroes, street- and well-gossip, talk of the departed, desultory chat, speculations about land and sea,²⁴ talk about being and non-being,²⁵ the ascetic Gotama refrains from such conversation.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to disputation such as:

‘You don't understand this doctrine and discipline - I do!’

“How could you understand this doctrine and discipline?”

‘Your way is all wrong - mine is right!’

“I am consistent - you aren't!”

‘You said last what you should have said first, and you said first what you should have said last!’

“What you took so long to think up has been refuted!”

'Your argument has been overthrown, you're defeated!'

"Go on, save your doctrine - get out of that if you can!"

The ascetic Gotama refrains from such disputation."

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to such things as running errands and messages, such as for kings, ministers, nobles, Brahmins, householders and young men who say: 'Go here - go there! Take this there bring that from there!' the ascetic Gotama refrains from such errand-running."

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins remain addicted to deception, patter, hinting, belittling, and are always on the make for further gains, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such deception." Thus the worldling would praise the Tathagata.

Large Section On Morality

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins, feeding on the food of the faithful, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as palmistry,²⁶ divining by signs, portents, dreams, body-marks, mouse-gnawings, fire-oblations, oblations from a ladle of husks, rice-powder, rice-grains, ghee or oil, from the mouth or of blood, reading the finger-tips, house- and garden-lore, skill in charms, ghost-lore, earth-house lore,²⁷ snake-lore, poison-lore, rat-lore, bird-lore, crow-lore, foretelling a person's life-span, charms against arrows, knowledge of animals' cries, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood."

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins make their living by such base arts as judging the marks of gems, sticks, clothes, swords, spears, arrows, weapons, women, men, boys, girls, male and female slaves, elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, cocks, quail, iguanas, bamboo-rats,²⁸ tortoises, deer, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts."

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins make their living by such base arts as predicting: 'The chiefs will march out²⁹ - the chiefs will march back', 'Our chiefs will advance and the other chiefs will retreat', 'Our chiefs will win and the other chiefs will lose', 'The other chiefs will win and ours will lose', 'Thus there will be victory for one side and defeat for the other', the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts."

"Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins make their living by such base arts as predicting an eclipse of the moon, the sun, a star; that the sun and moon will go on their proper course - will go astray; that a star will go on its proper course - will go astray; that there will be a shower of meteors, a blaze in the sky, an earthquake, thunder; a rising, setting, darkening, brightening of the moon, the sun, the stars; and 'such will be the outcome of these things', the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood."

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins make their living by such base arts as predicting good or bad rainfall; a good or bad harvest; security, danger; disease, health; or accounting, computing, calculating, poetic composition, philosophising, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins make their living by such base arts as arranging the giving and taking in marriage, engagements and divorces; [declaring the time for] saving and spending, bringing good or bad luck, procuring abortions,³⁰ using spells to bind the tongue, binding the jaw, making the hands jerk, causing deafness, getting answers with a mirror, a girl-medium, a Deva; worshipping the sun or Great Brahma, breathing fire, invoking the Goddess of luck, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.”

“Whereas some ascetics and Brahmins, feeding on the food of the faithful, make their living by such base arts, such wrong means of livelihood as appeasing the Devas and redeeming vows to them, making earth-house spells, causing virility or impotence, preparing and consecrating building sites, giving ritual rinsings and bathings, making sacrifices, giving emetics, purges, expectorants and phlegmagogues, giving ear-, eye-, nose-medicine, ointments and counter-ointments, eye-surgery, surgery, pediatry, using balms to counter the side-effects of previous remedies, the ascetic Gotama refrains from such base arts and wrong means of livelihood.” ³¹ It is, monks, for such elementary, inferior matters of moral practice that the worldling would praise the Tathagata.

“There are, monks, other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak. And what are these matters?”

The Sixty-Two Kinds Of Wrong Views

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, having fixed views about the past, and who put forward various speculative theories about the past, in eighteen different ways. On what basis, on what grounds do they do so?”

“There are some ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists, who proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways. On what grounds?”

Wrong view 1 “Here, monks, a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attained to such a state of mental concentration that he thereby recalls past existences - one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten births, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand births, several hundred, several thousand, several hundred thousand births. ‘There my name was so-and-so, my clan was so-and-so, my caste was so-and-so, my food was such-and-such, I experienced such-and-such pleasant and painful conditions, I

lived for so long. Having passed away from there, I arose there. There my name was so-and-so ... And having passed away from there, I arose here.' Thus he remembers various past lives, their conditions and details. And he says: 'The self and the world are eternal, barren³² like a mountain-peak, set firmly as a post. These beings rush round, circulate, pass away and re-arise, but this remains eternally. Why so? I have by means of effort, exertion, attained to such a state of mental concentration that I have thereby recalled various past existences. That is how I know the self and the world are eternal ...' That is the first way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world."

Wrong view 2 "And what is the second way? Here, monks, a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort, exertion ... attained to such a state of mental concentration that he thereby recalls one period of contraction and expansion,³³ two such periods, three, four, five, ten periods of contraction and expansion ... 'There my name was so-and-so. . .' That is the second way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world."

Wrong view 3 "And what is the third way? Here, monks, a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort attained to such a state of mental concentration that he recalls ten, twenty, thirty, forty periods of contraction and expansion. 'There my name was so-and-so ...' That is the third way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world."

Wrong view 4 "And what is the fourth way? Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin is a logician,³⁴ a reasoner. Hammering it out by reason, following his own line of thought, he argues: 'The self and the world are eternal, barren like a mountain-peak, set firmly as a post. These beings rush round, circulate, pass away and re-arise, but this remains for ever.' That is the fourth way in which some ascetics and Brahmins proclaim the eternity of the self and the world."

"These are the four ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins are Eternalists, and proclaim the eternity of the self and the world on four grounds. And whatever ascetics or Brahmins are Eternalists and proclaim the eternity of the self and the world, they do so on one or other of these four grounds. There is no other way."

"This, monks, the Tathagata understands : These viewpoints thus grasped and adhered to will lead to such-and-such destinations in another world. This the Tathagata knows, and more, but he is not attached to that knowledge. And being thus unattached he has experienced for himself perfect peace, and having truly understood the arising and passing away of feelings, their attraction and peril and the deliverance from them, the Tathagata is liberated without remainder."

"There are, monks, other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak. And what are these matters?"

End Of First Recitation-Section

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists, who proclaim the partial eternity and the partial non-eternity of the self and the world in four ways. On what grounds?”

“There comes a time, monks, sooner or later after a long period, when this world contracts. At a time of contraction, beings are mostly reborn in the Abhassara Brahma³⁵ world. And there they dwell, mind-made,³⁶ feeding on delight,³⁷ self-luminous, moving through the air, glorious - and they stay like that for a very long time.”

Wrong view 5 “But the time comes, sooner or later after a long period, when this world begins to expand. In this expanding world an empty palace of Brahma³⁸ appears. And then one being, from exhaustion of his life-span or of his merits,³⁹ falls from the Abhassara world and arises in the empty Brahma-palace. And there he dwells, mind-made, feeding on delight, self-luminous, moving through the air, glorious - and he stays like that for a very long time.”

“Then in this being who has been alone for so long there arises unrest, discontent and worry, and he thinks: ‘Oh, if only some other beings would come here!’ And other beings, from exhaustion of their life-span or of their merits, fall from the Abhassara world and arise in the Brahma palace as companions for this being. And there they dwell, mind-made, ... and they stay like that for a very long time.”

“And then, monks, that being who first arose there thinks: “I am Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, the All-Powerful, the Lord, the Maker and Creator, Ruler, Appointer and Orderer, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. These beings were created by me. How so? Because I first had this thought: ‘Oh, if only some other beings would come here!’ That was my wish, and then these beings came into this existence!” But those beings who arose subsequently think: “This, friends, is Brahma, Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, the All-Powerful, the Lord, the Maker and Creator, Ruler, Appointer and Orderer, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. How so? We have seen that he was here first, and that we arose after him.”

“And this being that arose first is longer-lived, more beautiful and more powerful than they are. And it may happen that some being falls from that realm and arises in this world. Having arisen in this world, he goes forth from the household life into homelessness. Having gone forth, he by means of effort, exertion, application, earnestness and right attention attains to such a degree of mental concentration that he thereby recalls his last existence, but recalls none before that. And he thinks: ‘That Brahma, ... he made us, and he is permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, the same for ever and ever. But we who were created by that Brahma, we are impermanent, unstable, short-lived, fated to fall away, and we have come to this world.’ This is the first case where-by some ascetics and Brahmins are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists.”

Wrong view 6 “And what is the second way? There are, monks, certain Devas called Corrupted by Pleasure.⁴⁰ They spend an excessive amount of time addicted to merriment, play and enjoyment, so that their mindfulness is dissipated, and by the dissipation of mindfulness those beings fall from that state.”

“And it can happen that a being, having fallen from that state, arises in this world. Having arisen in this world, he goes forth from the household life into homelessness. Having gone forth, he by means of effort, exertion, recalls his last existence, but recalls none before that.”

“He thinks: ‘Those reverend Devas who are not corrupted by pleasure do not spend an excessive amount of time addicted to merriment, play and enjoyment. Thus their mindfulness is not dissipated, and so they do not fall from that state. They are permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, the same for ever and ever. But we, who are corrupted by pleasure, spent an excessive amount of time addicted to merriment, play and enjoyment. Thus we, by the dissipation of mindfulness, have fallen from that state, we are impermanent, unstable, short-lived, fated to fall away, and we have come to this world.’ This is the second case.”

Wrong view 7 “And what is the third way? There are, monks, certain Devas called Corrupted in Mind.⁴¹ They spend an excessive amount of time regarding each other with envy. By this means their minds are corrupted. On account of their corrupted minds they become weary in body and mind. And they fall from that place.”

“And it can happen that a being, having fallen from that state, arises in this world. He ... recalls his last existence, but recalls none before that.”

“He thinks: ‘Those reverend Devas who are not corrupted in mind do not spend an excessive amount of time regarding each other with envy ... They do not become corrupted in mind, or weary in body and mind, and so they do not fall from that state. They are permanent, stable, eternal ... But we, who are corrupted in mind, ... are impermanent, unstable, short-lived, fated to fall away, and we have come to this world.’ This is the third case.”

Wrong view 8 “And what is the fourth way? Here, a certain ascetic or Brahmin is a logician, a reasoner. Hammering it out by reason, following his own line of thought, he argues: ‘Whatever is called eye or ear or nose or tongue or body, that is impermanent, unstable, non-eternal, liable to change. But what is called thought,⁴² or mind or consciousness, that is a self that is permanent, stable, eternal, not subject to change, the same for ever and ever!’ This is the fourth case.”

“These are the four ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists ... Whatever ascetics and Brahmins ... proclaim the partial eternity and the partial non-eternity of the self and the world, they do so on one or other of these four grounds. There is no other way.”

Verse 15 "This, monks, the Tathagata understands : These viewpoints thus grasped and adhered to will lead to such-and-such destinations in another world. This the Tathagata knows, and more, but he is not attached to that knowledge. And being thus unattached he has experienced for himself perfect peace, and having truly understood the arising and passing away of feelings, their attraction and peril and the deliverance from them, the Tathagata is liberated without remainder. Verse 15

These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak."

"There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are Finitists and Infinitists,⁴³ and who proclaim the finitude and infinitude of the world on four grounds. What are they?"

Wrong view 9 "Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin has by means of effort ... attained to such a state of concentration that he dwells perceiving the world as finite. He thinks: 'This world is finite and bounded by a circle. How so? Because I have ... attained to such a state of concentration that I dwell perceiving the world as finite. Therefore I know that this world is finite and bounded by a circle.' This is the first case."

Wrong view 10 "And what is the second way? Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin has attained to such a state of concentration that he dwells perceiving the world as infinite. He thinks: 'This world is infinite and unbounded. Those ascetics and Brahmins who say it is finite and bounded are wrong. How so? Because I have attained to such a state of concentration that I dwell perceiving the world as infinite. Therefore I know that this world is infinite and unbounded.' This is the second case."

Wrong view 11 "And what is the third way? Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin has attained to such a state of consciousness that he dwells perceiving the world as finite up-and-down, and infinite across. He thinks: 'The world is finite and infinite. Those ascetics and Brahmins who say it is finite are wrong, and those who say it is infinite are wrong. How so? Because I have attained to such a state of concentration that I dwell perceiving the world as finite up-and-down, and infinite across. Therefore I know that the world is both finite and infinite.' This is the third case."

Wrong view 12 "And what is the fourth case? Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin is a logician, a reasoner. Hammering it out by reason, he argues: 'This world is neither finite nor infinite. Those who say it is finite are wrong, and so are those who say it is infinite, and those who say it is finite and infinite. This world is neither finite nor infinite.' This is the fourth case." ⁴⁴

“These are the four ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins are Finitists and Infinitists, and proclaim the finitude and infinitude of the world on four grounds. There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands : These viewpoints thus grasped and adhered to will lead to such-and-such destinations in another world ... (as verse 15)

These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are Eel-Wrigglers.⁴⁵ When asked about this or that matter, they resort to evasive statements, and they wriggle like eels on four grounds. What are they?”

Wrong view 13 “In this case there is an ascetic or Brahmin who does not in truth know whether a thing is good or bad. He thinks : ‘I do not in truth know whether this is good or whether it is bad. Not knowing which is right, I might declare : “That is good”, or “That is bad”, and that might be a lie, and that would distress me. And if I were distressed, that would be a hindrance to me.’ ⁴⁶ Thus fearing to lie, abhorring to lie,⁴⁷ he does not declare a thing to be good or bad, but when asked about this or that matter, he resorts to evasive statements and wriggles like an eel : ‘I don't say this, I don't say that. I don't say it is otherwise. I don't say it is not. I don't not say it is not.’ This is the first case.”

Wrong view 14 “What is the second way? Here an ascetic or Brahmin does not in truth know whether a thing is good or bad. He thinks : “I might declare : ‘That is good’, or ‘That is bad’, and I might feel desire or lust or hatred or aversion. If I felt desire, lust, hatred or aversion, that would be attachment on my part. If I felt attachment, that would distress me, and if I were distressed, that would be a hindrance to me.” Thus, fearing attachment, abhorring attachment, he resorts to evasive statements ... This is the second case.”

Wrong view 15 “What is the third way? Here an ascetic or Brahmin does not in truth know whether a thing is good or bad. He thinks : “I might declare : ‘That is good’, or ‘That is bad’, but there are ascetics and Brahmins who are wise, skilful, practised debaters, like archers who can split hairs, who go around destroying others' views with their wisdom, and they might cross-examine me, demanding my reasons and arguing. And I might not be able to reply. Not being able to reply would distress me, and if I were distressed, that would be a hindrance to me.’ Thus, fearing debate, abhorring debate, he resorts to evasive statements. This is the third case.”

Wrong view 16 “What is the fourth way? Here, an ascetic or Brahmin is dull and stupid. Because of his dullness and stupidity, when he is questioned he resorts to evasive statements and wriggles like an eel : “If you ask me whether there is

another world - if I thought so, I would say there is another world. But I don't say so. And I don't say otherwise. And I don't say it is not, and I don't not say it is not." 'Is there no other world? ...' "Is there both another world and no other world? ...'" 'Is there neither another world nor no other world? ...'48 "Are there spontaneously-born beings? ..." 'Are there not...?' "Both ...?" 'Neither ...?' "Does the Tathagata exist after death? Does he not exist after death? Does he both exist and not exist after death? Does he neither exist nor not exist after death? ..." 'If I thought so, I would say so ... I don't say it is not.' This is the fourth case."

"These are the four ways in which those ascetics and Brahmins who are Eel-Wrigglers resort to evasive statements ... There is no other way."

"This, monks, the Tathagata understands : These viewpoints thus grasped and adhered to will lead to such-and-such destinations in another world (as verse 15)

These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see ... which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak."

"There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are Chance-Originationists, and who proclaim the chance origin of the self and the world on two grounds. What are they?"

Wrong view 17 "There are, monks, certain Devas called Unconscious.⁴⁹ As soon as a perception arises in them, those Devas fall from that realm. And it may happen that a being falls from that realm and arises in this world. He ... recalls his last existence, but none before that. He thinks : 'The self and the world have arisen by chance. How so? Before this I did not exist. Now from not-being I have been brought to being.' This is the first case,"

Wrong view 18 "What is the second case? Here, an ascetic or Brahmin is a logician, a reasoner. He hammers out his own opinion and declares : 'The self and the world have arisen by chance.' This is the second case."

"These are the two ways in which those ascetics and Brahmins who are Chance-Originists proclaim the chance origin of the self and the world. There is no other way."

"This, monks, the Tathagata understands ... These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, ... which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak."

"And these, monks, are the eighteen ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins are speculators about the past ... There is no other way."

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ...”

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the future, having fixed views about the future, and who put forward various speculative theories about the future in forty-four different ways. On what basis, on what grounds do they do so?”

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who proclaim a doctrine of Conscious Post-Mortem Survival, and do so in sixteen different ways. On what basis?”

Wrong view 19 - 34 “They declare that the self after death is healthy and conscious and

(1) material,⁵⁰ (2) immaterial,⁵¹ (3) both material and immaterial, (4) neither material nor immaterial, (5) finite, (6) infinite, (7) both, (8) neither, (9) of uniform perception, (10) of varied perception, (11) of limited perception, (12) of unlimited perception, (13) wholly happy, (14) wholly miserable, (15) both, (16) neither.”

“These are the sixteen ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins proclaim a doctrine of conscious post-mortem survival. There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ... These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, ... which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

End Of Second Recitation-Section

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who proclaim a doctrine of Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival, and they do so in eight ways. On what basis?”

Wrong view 35 - 42 “They declare that the self after death is healthy and unconscious and (1) material, (2) immaterial, (3) both, (4) neither, (5) finite, (6) infinite, (7) both, (8) neither.” 52

“These are the eight ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins proclaim a doctrine of Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival. There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ... These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

“There are some ascetics and Brahmins who declare a doctrine of Neither-Conscious- nor-Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival, and they do so in eight ways. On what basis?”

Wrong view 43 - 50 "They declare that the self after death is healthy and neither conscious nor unconscious and (1) material, (2) immaterial, (3) both, (4) neither, (5) finite, (6) infinite, (7) both, (8) neither ." 53

"These are the eight ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins proclaim a doctrine of Neither-Conscious-Nor-Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival. There is no other way."

"This, monks, the Tathagata understands ... These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see ... which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak."

"There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are Annihilationists, who proclaim the annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings, and they do so in seven ways. On what basis?"

Wrong view 51 "Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin declares and holds the view: 'Since this self is material, composed of the four great elements,⁵⁴ the product of mother and father,⁵⁵ at the breaking up of the body is annihilated and perishes, and does not exist after death. This is the way in which this self is annihilated.' That is how some proclaim the annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings."

Wrong view 52 Another says to him : 'Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that self is not wholly annihilated. For there is another self, divine,⁵⁶ material, belonging to the sense-sphere,⁵⁷ fed on real food.⁵⁸ You don't know it or see it, but I do. It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body perishes ..." 59

Wrong view 53 Another says to him : "Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that self is not wholly annihilated. For there is another self, divine, material, mind made,⁶⁰ complete with all its parts, not defective in any sense organ ... It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body perishes. ..."

Wrong view 54 Another says to him : "Sir, there is such a self as you say ... There is another self which, by passing entirely beyond bodily sensations, by the disappearance of all sense of resistance and by non-attraction to the perception of diversity, seeing that space is infinite, has realised the Sphere of Infinite Space.⁶¹ It is this self that at the breaking up of the body perishes . . ."

Wrong view 55 Another says to him : "There is another self which, by passing entirely beyond the Sphere of Infinite Space, seeing that consciousness is infinite, has realised the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness. It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body perishes ..."

Wrong view 56 Another says to him : "There is another self which, by passing entirely beyond the Sphere of Infinite Consciousness, seeing that there is no thing,

has realised the Sphere of No-Thingness. It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body perishes ...”

Wrong view 57 Another says to him : “Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that self is not wholly annihilated. For there is another self which, by passing entirely beyond the Sphere of No-Thingness and seeing : This is peaceful, this is sublime, has realised the Sphere of Neither Perception-Nor-Non-Perception. You don't know it or see it, but I do. It is this self that at the breaking-up of the body is annihilated and perishes, and does not exist after death. This is the way in which the self is completely annihilated.” That is how some proclaim the annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings.

“These are the seven ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins proclaim a doctrine of annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings ... There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ... These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

“There are, monks, some ascetics and Brahmins who are proclaimers of Nibbana Here and Now, and who proclaim Nibbana here and now for an existent being in five ways. On what grounds?”

Wrong view 58 “Here a certain ascetic or Brahmin declares and holds the view : In as far as this self, being furnished and endowed with the fivefold sense-pleasures, indulges in them, then that is when the self realises the highest Nibbana here and now.⁶² So some proclaim it.”

Wrong view 59 Another says to him : “Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that is not where the self realises the highest Nibbana here and now. Why so? Because, Sir, sense-desires are impermanent, painful and subject to change, and from their change and transformation there arise sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and distress. But when this self, detached from sense-desires, detached from unwholesome states, enters and abides in the first jhana⁶³ which is accompanied by thinking and pondering,⁶⁴ and the delight,⁶⁵ and happiness⁶⁶ born of detachment, that is when the self realises the highest Nibbana here and now.”

Wrong view 60 Another says to him : “Sir, there is such a self as you say. But that is not when the self attains Nibbana. How so? Because on account of thinking and pondering, that state is considered gross. But when the self by the subsiding of thinking and pondering enters and abides in the second jhana, with inner tranquility and oneness of mind, which is free from thinking and pondering and is born of concentration,⁶⁷ and accompanied by delight and joy, that is when the self realizes the highest Nibbana here and now.”

Wrong view 61 Another says to him : “Sir, there is such a self as you say. But that is not when the self attains Nibbana. How so? Because on account of the presence of delight there is mental exhilaration, and that state is considered gross. But when the self, with the waning of delight, dwells in equanimity,⁶⁸ mindful and clearly aware,⁶⁹ experiencing in his own body that joy of which the Noble Ones say: “Happy dwells one who has equanimity and mindfulness, and so enters and abides in the third jhana, that is when the self realises the highest Nibbana here and now.”

Wrong view 62 Another says to him : “Sir, there is such a self as you say. I don't deny it. But that is not where the self experiences the highest Nibbana here and now. Why so? Because the mind contains the idea of joy, and that state is considered gross. But when, with the abandonment of pleasure and pain, with the disappearance of previous joy and grief, one enters and abides in a state beyond pleasure and pain in the fourth jhana, which is purified by equanimity and mindfulness, that is where the self realises the highest Nibbana here and now.” That is how some proclaim the highest Nibbana here and now for an existent being.

“These are the five ways in which these ascetics and Brahmins proclaim a doctrine of Nibbana here and now. There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ...”

“These are the forty-four ways in which those ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the future, having fixed ideas about the future, put forward various speculative views about the future. There is no other way.”

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands ...”

“These are the sixty-two ways in which those ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, the future, or both, put forward views about these. There is no other way. “

“This, monks, the Tathagata understands : These view-points thus grasped and adhered to will lead to such-and-such destination in another world. This the Tathagata knows, and more, but he is not attached to that knowledge. And being thus unattached he has experienced for himself perfect peace, and having truly understood the arising and passing away of feelings, their attraction and peril and the deliverance from them, the Tathagata is liberated without remainder.”

“These, monks, are those other matters, profound, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond mere thought, subtle, to be experienced by the wise, which the Tathagata, having realised them by his own super-knowledge, proclaims, and about which those who would truthfully praise the Tathagata would rightly speak.”

Conclusion

Wrong view 1 - 4 "Thus, monks, when those ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways, that is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see, the worry and vacillation of those immersed in craving."

Wrong view 5 - 8 "When those who are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists proclaim the partial eternity and the partial non-eternity of the self and the world in four ways, that is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see . . ."

Wrong view 9 - 12 "When those who are Finitists and Infinitists proclaim the finitude and infinitude of the world on four grounds, that is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see ..."

Wrong view 13 - 16 "When those who are Eel-Wrigglers resort to evasive statements, and wriggle like eels on four grounds, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 17 - 18 "When those who are Chance Originationists proclaim the chance origin of the self and the world on two grounds, this is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 1 - 18 "When those who are speculators about the past, having fixed views about the past, put forward various speculative theories about the past in eighteen different ways, this is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see, the worry and vacillation of those immersed in craving."

Wrong view 19 - 34 "When those who proclaim a doctrine of Conscious Post-Mortem Survival do so in sixteen different ways, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 35 - 42 "When those who proclaim a doctrine of Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival do so in eight different ways, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 43 - 50 "When those who proclaim a doctrine of Neither-Conscious-nor-Unconscious Post-Mortem survival do so in eight ways, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 51 - 57 "When those who are Annihilationists proclaim the annihilation, destruction and non-existence of beings in seven ways, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 58 - 62 "When those who are proclaimers of Nibbana Here and Now proclaim Nibbana here and now for an existent being on five grounds, that is merely the feeling ..."

Wrong view 19 - 62 "When those who are speculators about the future in forty-four different ways ..."

Wrong view 1 - 62 "When those ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, the future, or both, having fixed views, put forward views in sixty-two different ways, that is merely the feeling of those who do not know and see, the worry and vacillation of those immersed in craving."

"When those ascetics and Brahmins who are Eternalists proclaim the eternity of the self and the world in four ways, that is conditioned by contact." 70

"When those who are partly Eternalists and partly Non-Eternalists ..."

"When those who are Finitists and Infinitists ..."

"When those who are Eel-Wrigglers ..."

"When those who are Chance-Originationists ..."

"When those who are speculators about the past in eighteen ways ..."

"When those who proclaim a doctrine of Conscious Post-Mortem Survival ..."

"When those who proclaim a doctrine of Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival ..."

"When those who proclaim a doctrine of Neither-Conscious-Nor-Unconscious Post-Mortem Survival ..."

"When those who are Annihilationists ..."

"When those who are proclaimers of Nibbana Here and Now ..."

"When those who are speculators about the future ..."

"When those ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past, the future, or both, having fixed views, put forward views in sixty-two different ways, that is conditioned by contact."

"That all of these (Eternalists and the rest) should experience that feeling without contact is impossible."

"With regard to all of these ..., they experience these feelings by repeated contact through the six sense-bases;⁷¹ feeling conditions craving; craving conditions clinging; clinging conditions becoming; becoming conditions birth; birth conditions ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, sadness and distress. When, monks, a monk understands as they really are the arising and passing away of the six bases of contact, their attraction and peril, and the deliverance from them, he knows that which goes beyond all these views." 72

"Whatever ascetics and Brahmins who are speculators about the past or the future or both, having fixed views on the matter and put forth speculative views about it, these are all trapped in the net with its sixty-two divisions, and wherever they emerge and try to get out, they are caught and held in this net. Just as a skilled fisherman or his apprentice might cover a small piece of water with a fine-meshed net, thinking : 'Whatever larger creatures there may be in this water, they are all trapped in the net, caught, and held in the net', so it is with all these : they are trapped and caught in this net."

“Monks, the body of the Tathagata stands with the link that bound it to becoming cut.⁷³ As long as the body subsists, Devas and humans will see him. But at the breaking-up of the body and the exhaustion of the life-span, Devas and humans will see him no more. Monks, just as when the stalk of a bunch of mangoes has been cut, all the mangoes on it go with it, just so the Tathagata's link with becoming has been cut. As long as the body subsists, Devas and humans will see him. But at the breaking-up of the body and the exhaustion of the life-span, Devas and humans will see him no more.”

At these words the Venerable Ananda said to the Lord : “It is marvelous, Lord, it is wonderful. What is the name of this exposition of Dhamma?”

“Ananda, you may remember this exposition of Dhamma as the Net of Advantage, the Net of Dhamma, the Supreme Net, the Net of Views, or as the Incomparable Victory in Battle.”

Thus the Lord spoke, and the monks rejoiced and were delighted at his words. And as this exposition was being proclaimed, the ten-thousand world-system shook.

Footnotes:

[1] There is a separate translation of this Digha Nikáya by Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The All-Embracing Net of Views : The Brahmajala Sutta and its Commentaries* (BPS 1978). This is most valuable for its introduction as well as the translated commentarial material.

[2] Nalanda, afterwards the seat of a famous Buddhist University, was about 12 km north of Rajagaha (modern Rajgir), the Magadhan capital.

[3] A follower of Sanjaya Belatthaputta. Shariputra and Moggallana, the Buddha's most famous disciples, were originally followers of Sanjaya, and it was their defection, besides the loss of his gains, that angered Suppiya (DA).

[4] Lit. "That is not in us."

[5] DA points out that "morality is inferior in comparison with higher qualities, for morality does not reach the excellence of concentration, nor concentration the excellence of wisdom."

[6] Puthujjana : an "ordinary person" who, not having broken through the first three fetters (personality-view, doubt, attachment to rites and rituals), has not yet "entered the stream" and so started on the higher (supra-mundane) path.

[7] The Buddha's usual way of referring to himself.

[8] These three sections on morality occur verbatim in all of the first 13 Digha Nikáya and may once have formed a separate "tract" (RD).

[9] This "refrain" is repeated throughout.

[10] Brahmachariya is the supreme or holy life, i.e. celibacy. DA points out that it involves refraining from other forms of erotic behavior besides intercourse.

[11] Atthavadi : attha may also mean "that which is profitable" (see next note).

[12] Atthasamhitam : here the meaning of attha as "the profitable" is clear.

[13] "At improper times" means between mid-day and the following dawn.

[14] The first four precepts are undertaken by novices (samaneras). The elaboration of the different forms of wrong speech here (and elsewhere) reflects the importance of controlling the tongue. Curiously, there is no mention of abstaining from intoxicants, but instead a reference to "damaging seeds and crops". The next five items correspond to the novices' precepts 6-10.

[15] The Buddha did, however, accept land from Anathapindika and others for the Sangha.

[16] Sobha-nagarakam : "of the city Sobha" (this was the city of the gandhabbas or heavenly musicians). RD thinks of a ballet with fairy scenes. BB renders it "art exhibitions" - which surely gives the wrong impression for modern readers!

[17] Candalam vamsam dhohanam : rather obscure. The performers were presumably low-caste. DA thinks of an iron ball (used for juggling?).

[18] Chess, with a board of 64 or 100 squares, originated in India. Though previously not unknown, it was popularized in Europe by the Crusaders.

[19] Mental chess, played without a board.

[20] Written in the air, or on one's back. Writing was known, but was not used by the Buddha or other teachers of the day.

[21] A guessing game, not telepathy.

[22] Pallanka : (whence, ultimately, our "palanquin"), also means "sitting cross-legged". Pallaka is also the couch on which one sits cross-legged.

[23] Tiracchana-katha : lit. "animal-talk". As animals walk parallel to the earth, so this kind of talk does not lead upward (DA).

[24] Lokakkhayikam : philosophical speculations of a materialist kind (DA).

[25] Iti-bhavabhava-katha : also rendered "profit and loss", but the philosophical sense (as in the Homer and Nanamoli translations of MN 76) is preferable.

[26] Angam : including soles as well as palms.

[27] Knowing charms to be used by one dwelling in an earthen house.

[28] Kannika-lakkhanam : from kanna "ear". DA thinks it means either ear-rings or house-gables, both of which are incongruous here. Follow the Thai translation which, probably following an old tradition, has tun 'bamboo-rat' (see McFariand, Thai-English Dictionary, p. 371). Franke says "an animal that is always mentioned with the hare", and considers that it must mean an animal with long ears.

[29] Rannam (gen. pl.) : i.e. the joint leaders of a republican state.

[30] Viruddha-gabbha-karanam : Or perhaps "reviving the fetus".

[31] It is the practice of medicine for gain that is here condemned.

[32] i.e., producing nothing new.

[33] Samvattam-vivattam : "The PED definitions should be reversed" (BB).

[34] Takki. BB renders this "rationalist", which is somewhat misleading.

[35] This is part of the world of Form (rupaloka) which escapes destruction.

[36] Manomaya : mentally created, not sexually generated. They are Devas. In another sense, all Dhammas are said to be mind-made.

[37] Not requiring material food, but nourished by the jhana factor piti "delight".

[38] Brahma is allotted a relatively humble position, and his creator-role explained away, in Buddhism.

[39] The life-span of beings is fixed in some realms, and variable in others. Merit (Punna) is karmically wholesome action, leading to a favorable rebirth.

[40] Khiddapadosika : these Devas and the next group are mentioned only here and in Digha Nikáya 20, 24. They illustrate the consequences of desire and aversion even in the (relatively) "higher" worlds. Moral progress is virtually impossible outside the human state, so that they are actually fortunate to fall back to that state. Mindfulness (sati) is all-important. DA says the bodies of these Devas are so delicate that if by forgetfulness they miss a single meal they will pass away from that place. Even if they eat immediately afterwards, it is too late!

[41] Manopadosika. DA says these dwell on the plane of the Four Great Kings (i.e. only just above the human realm). Interestingly, if only one of the Devas gets angry while the other remains calm, this prevents the first from passing away, which would seem to illustrate the sentiment of Dh. 5, 6. These Devas are not essentially different from those mentioned in verses 1-2, though on a lower level.

[42] Citta : more or less synonymous with mano "mind", but often used much like "heart" in English ("to know in one's heart", etc.).

[43] Antanantika : or "Extensionists" (RD).

[44] DA associates these various views with the higher jhanas, obtained with the aid of the kasinas (colored discs, etc. DA says : " (1) Without having extended the counterpart sign to the boundaries of the world-sphere, he abides perceiving the world as finite. (2) But he who has extended the kasina-image to the boundaries of the world-sphere perceives the world to be infinite. (3) Not extending the sign in the upward and downward directions, but extending it across, he perceives the world as finite in the upward and downward directions, and infinite across. (4) The rationalist doctrine should be understood by the method stated." [This is unexplained, though the Sub-Commentary attempts an explanation: "If the self were finite, its rebirth in distant places could not be recollected. And if it were infinite, one living in this world would be able to experience the happiness of the heavenly worlds and the suffering of the hells, etc. If one holds it to be both finite and infinite, one would incur the errors of both the previous positions. Therefore the self cannot be declared to be either finite or infinite"] (Translated by BB, pp. 172, 171).

[45] Amara-vikheppika can be interpreted as either "eel-wriggling" (RD) or "endless equivocation" (BB) : amara (lit. "deathless") is the name of a slippery fish, perhaps an eel, which escapes capture by wriggling (DA). A deliberate pun may well be intended.

[46] Either for the higher training or for a heavenly rebirth (DA).

[47] Due to moral shame and moral dread (hiri-ottappa) (DA), i.e. shame at doing what is wrong, and dread of it. These two qualities are called "guardians of the world" (cf. Nyanaponika Thera, Abhidhamma Studies, 2nd. ed., Colombo 1965, p. 80). Thus it is

recognized that the first three classes of "eel-wrigglers" have a moral conscience. Their equivocation stems from lack of understanding, not of scruple.

[48] The four "alternatives" of Indian logic: a thing (a) is, (b) is not, (c) both is and is not, (d) neither is nor is not.

[49] Having attained a high absorption, and fearing the perils of conscious existence, they have wished for, and gained, an unconscious state. With the first stirring of perception, however, they fall away from that realm (DA).

[50] The view of the Ajivikas (DA).

[51] This is the view of the Jains. DA says the other views mentioned are based on various meditational experiences.

[52] The Sub-Commentary (see BB, p. 190) is helpful here : (1) is based on experience of the unconscious realm, (2) takes perception to be the self, (3) takes the material, or material and immaterial Dhammas + perception to be the self, (4) is based on reasoning. (5-8) are to be understood as at note 44 above.

[53] (1) is based on a subtle perception incapable of performing this function at death and rebirth-linking. RD points out that this and other passages disprove the idea that consciousness (vinnana) transmigrates. For holding this belief Sati was severely rebuked by the Buddha. A new re-linking consciousness (patisandhi) arises at conception, dependent on the old. The rest at in note 52 above.

[54] "Earth" (pathavi) or extension, "water" (apo) or cohesion, "fire" (tejo) or temperature, "air" (vayo) or motion: the traditional names for the four qualities present, in varying proportions, in all matter.

[55] In the Buddhist view, there is additionally required the presence of the gandhabba or "being-to-be-born", i.e. the arising of a new "continuity of consciousness" dependent on that of some being just deceased.

[56] Dibba (Skt. divya) : derived from the same stem as Deva: cf. Latin divus.

[57] Kamavacara : belonging to the sensuous sphere (kamalo-ka), the lowest of the three worlds.

[58] Kabalinkarahara generally means "material food." Here it denotes the kind of nutriment on which the lower Devas subsist.

[59] DA says this one takes the divine form (dibb'-atthabhava), i.e. the form of the Devas of the sensuous sphere, for the self. The assumption is that this survives the break-up of the physical body for a period of time (of unspecified duration), "annihilation" occurring at its cessation, and similarly with the remaining "selves". As BB points out, "Only the first form of Annihilationism is materialistic; six admit that the doctrine can take on a spiritual garb."

[60] "Produced by the jhana-mind" (DA).

[61] The next four correspond to the 4th-7th "liberations" or the four higher, "formless" jhanas.

[62] This is not, of course, the real Nibbána of Buddhism. DA says it means the subsiding of suffering (dukkhavupasama) in this very individual form (subsiding being something far short of cessation). The New Sub-Commentary (quoted by BB, p.197) adds : "It is not the supreme fruit and not the unconditioned element (asankhata-dhatu equals Nibbána), for these are beyond the domain of these theorists."

[63] The various jhanas are mistaken for Nibbána.

[64] Vitakka-vicara: otherwise rendered "initial and sustained thought", and the like.

[65] Piti : a difficult word to translate. Renderings vary from "interest" through "zest" to "rapture". It is classified not as a feeling (vedana) but as part of the group of mental formations (sankhárá), i.e. as a mental reaction. BDic says : "It may be described psychologically as "joyful interest" - for which the simplest term would seem to be "delight".

[66] Sukha : pleasant feeling, physical or mental (though for the latter the word somanassa exists). The difference between this and piti may seem subtle but is important.

[67] Samadhi here has its basic meaning of "concentration".

[68] Upekkhaka.

[69] Sampajana : not "self-possessed" as so many translators have repeated after RD.

[70] Phassa is the "contact" between sense-base and its object, e.g. eye and visible object. Such contact is the basis of feeling (vedana).

[71] Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body as base of the tactile sense, and mind (which is always the sixth sense in Buddhism).

[72] This is the first, partial, exposition of dependent origination (paticca-samuppada) in the Canon.

[73] All that formerly bound him to the cycle of rebirth