

**Commentary on
Je Tsong-kha-pa's
Lam Rim Chen Mo
By Venerable Jih-Chang**
**English Commentary Book 10, ver 2.0
(Lamrim Vol 1, Chapter 17,18,19)**

Printed by BW Monastery, Singapore
For use by students of the monastery only

Purpose:

This book (version 2.0) contains the translation of Master Jih-Chang's commentary of the *Lamrim Volume 1, Chapter 17 "The Eight Types of Suffering", Chapter 18 "The Six Types of Suffering" & Chapter 19 "Further Meditation on Suffering"*. This book is for use by BW Monastery students only. It serves to facilitate students' understanding of the Lamrim as explained by Master Jih-Chang.

Student Feedback:

The translation of Master's commentary in this book is still a draft and will be improved. All students are welcome to provide your feedback to improve the translation. Kindly submit your feedback via the feedback form that is available in the BW Monastery web page, where this book can be downloaded from.

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Chapter 17

The Eight Types of Suffering

Chapter 17 Outline
THE EIGHT TYPES OF SUFFERING

2) Training the mind in the stages of the path shared with persons of medium capacity

a) The mental training

- i) Identifying the mind intent on liberation**
- ii) The method for developing the mind intent on liberation**

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(a) Reflection on the eight types of suffering

- (i) The suffering of birth**
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- (iii) The suffering of illness**
- (iv) The suffering of death**
- (v) The suffering of encountering what is unpleasant**
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- (vii) The suffering of not getting what you want**
- (viii) The suffering of the five appropriated aggregates**

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2) Training the mind in the stages of the path shared with persons of medium capacity [206]

[67A, 24.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p84L1)]

[p265, English LR Vol 1]

I bow with respect to the revered teachers who have great compassion.

In the beginning of every section, He will always take refuge and offer obeisance to the Bhagavan. He will always take refuge and offer obeisance to the Bhagavan. The reason for this was said in the very beginning.

[67A, 24.28 (手抄稿 第九冊 p84L3)]

[p265, English LR Vol 1]

Be mindful of death and reflect on how you will fall into a miserable realm after you die. Turn your mind away from this world and

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diligently seek a happy, future rebirth.

This is the reason for refuge as stated in the section of small capacity. It is because you gained this understanding in your mind. And of course this understanding was dependent upon an excellent teacher's exposition of the realities of the world and the result of your analysis and reflection according to the teachings. Therefore, by that time, you will seek for a refuge. This says,

[67A, 25.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p84L7)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

If you strive to reject sin and to cultivate virtue through the standard practice of going for refuge and through reflection upon virtuous and non virtuous karma and the certainty of their results, you will achieve a happy rebirth.

Through this cause, that is why you have taken refuge. Through this refuge, you at last understood the correct root of Buddhism. You will practice according to the teachings to cultivate virtue and to reject sins. Hence you will obtain a happy rebirth.

[67A, 25.31 (手抄稿 第九冊 p84L10)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

However, do not be satisfied with this alone:

But do not be satisfied with just this. Let me explain this. Let me explain this. Do we really get this now? I am sorry, it's difficult to say. For me, I know that I don't have this down yet. That is why I don't dare to be even just slightly careless. I used to have this problem that as soon as I understood a little, ah-ya, I would think that I know it really well. So I can't listen anymore to what others are telling me. I would always feel that I know a lot. But now I see that there are many students who are just like that now. Ah-ya, when one understands something, he thinks that he knows everything. And then he doesn't want to listen to anything else. This is so regretful and really too bad! This is the case for the mundane world and also the supramundane world.

[67A, 26.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p85L3)]

Perhaps you might have seen things. To have seen them is not a bad thing. It is indeed, indeed a good thing. Unfortunately, what have we seen? What we have only seen is the evil world of the five impurities, the world of the ordinary beings. What you have seen is just something that is relatively better in this world of the ordinary beings. If you feel that this should be your model, it would be nothing much even if you accomplish it! Isn't it so? It told us earlier that even if you become a noble being, an arhat, it is still not good enough. This is what we should understand. Therefore I wanted to

specifically bring this up here. If we feel that "I am really right!" You are wrong, you are wrong! It has told us earlier for those who truly accord, if you discover that you are wrong yourself, then you are wise. If you have that, you will be able to advance. On the contrary, if you feel that you really understand, then I am sorry. You are at most a person with great intelligence who can out argue everyone around you. You fall into one of the eight conditions that make it difficult for you to see a Buddha or hear his teaching. This is what we should absolutely pay attention to!

[67A, 27.25 (手抄稿 第九冊 p85L10)]

So now it has already reminded us before, this section tells us even more so: You should absolutely not think that you have enough! What does it mean by having enough? It means that you have developed the attitude that is shared with persons of small capacity. Therefore everyone should pay attention here. You should examine and examine yourself. Have you developed this attitude that is shared with persons of small capacity? What would it be like if you have developed the attitude that is shared with persons of small capacity? When you see in front of you as you go to the cafeteria, "Ah-ya, this thing is really horrible. But I have no other alternative but to eat it!" So for your every bite, the scriptures tell us, it is as if you are eating your own son's flesh in the wilderness. The more you eat the worse you feel. As soon as you eat enough

to be full, ah-ya, you would quickly put your bowl down. That's when it counts as developing the attitude! If as you are eating it, the more you eat the more eager you are, then I am sorry. You have not even developed the attitude that is shared with a person of small capacity. In this case, if you feel happy with things, then you would be absolutely wrong! Further,

[67A, 28.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p86L2)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

after you have developed the attitude that is shared with persons of small capacity, develop the attitude that is shared with persons of medium capacity—namely, disgust with all of cyclic existence. On this basis, you may aspire to become a person of great capacity by developing the spirit of supreme enlightenment.

Why can't you be satisfied with this? Oh! This is to say that you should use this as the foundation. On this foundation you go further to do that. The foundation is the same as the persons of small capacity. A person like this is called a person that shares the path of persons of small capacity. By taking it further, the one step further would be the medium capacity. This foundation is necessary as well for a person who shares the path with the persons of medium capacity. The content of medium capacity is "**disgust with all of cyclic existence.**" Not only do you seek for the future life, but even if you are to be

born as a deity, you wouldn't care for that. Based on this, **"you may aspire to become a person of great capacity by developing the spirit of supreme enlightenment."** That's what we are after.

[67A, 29.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p86L8)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Consequently, you must train in the attitude of a person of medium capacity.

Now that we have obtained the attitude of a person of small capacity, we now will move on further. Eh, after studying in the elementary school, now you are going to study in the middle school. Don't be saying, "Ah-ya, I am done with elementary school now. I know everything." But if you say, "Eh, now that I am done with elementary school, it's just right that after finishing this, I can go to middle school now." That would be right!

[67B, 00.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p87L1)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Why? Because even were you to reach the level of a deity or a human, you would be mistaken if you believed this to be pleasurable by nature, since you would still not have escaped the suffering of conditionality.⁴⁵²

Why? Even though you have obtained the excellences of the humans and deities, but you have not escaped the suffering of conditionality. You are still within the bounds of cyclic existence! If you think of this as happiness, then you are mistaken.

[67B, 00.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p87L4)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, in reality, you would have no happiness whatsoever—your life would still come to a bad end, for you would surely fall into a miserable realm again. A human or divine lifetime is like resting on a precipice just before falling into the abyss.

Therefore, even though we have obtained the attitude that is shared with persons of small capacity, but for what is true and ultimate, we have not gained any of that type of happiness. In the end, we will have all fall [into the miserable realms]. This is much like us resting on a precipice temporarily. But as soon as you move, you could immediately fall and break into pieces!

[67B, 01.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p88L1)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds:⁴⁵³

**After repeatedly coming to happy rebirths,
And experiencing much joy there,
You die and fall into the protracted
And unbearable suffering of the miserable realms.**

This is very apparent.

[67B, 01.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p88L3)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Candragomin's Letter to a Student: [207]

**You who whirl constantly in cyclic existence,
Yet who enter a happy realm mistaking mere calm for
happiness,
Will certainly wander helplessly
Through hundreds of like and unlike realms.**

What is the state of us ordinary people? We whirl constantly in cyclic existence. Yet we have just temporarily obtained a little bit, which is the good status of being a human or deity in this cyclic existence. But we can't see clearly of the reality and mistake it to be happiness out of foolishness. That is due to not having the correct understanding. Thus, one cannot gain control of the self [and wander helplessly]. Why? It is because you can't see clearly, because of ignorance. Since you are ignorance, of course you are helpless. Thus, you will

gradually whirl hundreds of times, constantly. This "**hundred**" does not mean one hundred times but that you are forever whirling in the six realms. "**Like and unlike realms**" means you either move up [to the happy realms] or down [to the miserable realms]. This is the meaning.

[67B, 02.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p88L10)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Consequently, you have to become as thoroughly disenchanted with the happy realms as you were with the miserable realms.

Therefore, what we should really do is to become disenchanted with the excellences [in the happy realms]. This is very important.

[67B, 02.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p88L12)]

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

As Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas* says:

High states frighten the wise

As much as hell.

Rare is the state of existence

That does not terrify them.

This commentary tells us that for those who are truly wise, they will see high states as hell. To be not afraid of this, there is absolutely no one like that in our community. Pay attention! Therefore, we should now know that as soon as you actually become a renunciate, that's our real goal. In this community, no need to mention what you have now, even if you are born in the heaven, born in the heaven, even if you are a king, a king of the heaven, you will have to see that as appalling as hell. That's the state of mind!

[\[67B, 03.08 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p89L4\)\]](#)

[p266, English LR Vol 1]

Also, the Verse Summary of the Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines says:456

Those whose minds are attached to cyclic existence will continue to wander there constantly.

What is our state now? To be attached to cyclic existence. What sort of condition would this mentality bring you? Forever wander in cyclic existence. This is what we should recognize and become truly disenchanted with. Therefore, for any good thing, you should understand, when one truly cultivates, if you cannot eliminate the love of the Dharma, you cannot advance. Therefore, among the five paths and the ten grounds, on the path of accumulation, the path of preparation and then above that, the path of preparation consists of [four

wholesome roots of] the warmth, the pinnacle, the forbearance, and the highest mundane Dharma. The highest mundane Dharma's last mindset is the path of seeing. When you get to the very top, you could "sink on the very top." This is to say that you can no longer move up. What is "to sink on the very top"? That is when one cultivates according to the teaching, one would feel happy. Ah, one would think that it's great. To have this one thought of clinging to delight, then one would fail to move up. Look at that! The people [at that point] are said to be close to seeing the path. But many of the greatly awakened past masters fell in this category. They had this one thought and could not move up. We are now tens of thousands of miles away from that. We cannot let go of so many things in our minds. This is what we should understand. It is not about accomplishing it [now] - I have reminded you this on all occasions that what we should truly understand now is the "correct view." What we should see is to see this. Then we can gradually strive to remedy it.

[\[67B, 04.38 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p90L1\)\]](#)

[English LR v.1 p.267](#)

The Letter to a Student:

**The more you conceive all beings as happy,
The more dense the darkness of your delusion becomes.**

Ah, it's just like this. Within these six realms of cyclic existence, if you "**conceive all beings as happy**," and you feel that it is happiness, I am sorry. Your delusion is very dense. Therefore, as we look at what's in front of us, it's really pitiful! We can't let this go and can't let that go. We can't shrug off this and can't shrug off that. We can't brush profit aside nor can we brush fame aside. Not only can't we disregard money, we can't ignore our bodies. I even frequently feel that...when we hear the clapping of the wooden boards in the morning, we can't even get up from our beds. Ah, it's truly, truly, I feel for this deeply...though I tell you this and exhort you, but I ask myself this, have I done it? I can only honestly tell you that I have not done it myself. But I would frequently remind myself, "There is the clapping of the wooden boards, quickly get up!" Sometimes I would feel faint for a while. But I would always remember what my master told me in the early years, "Pa! (The sound of the boards) You need to sit up right away!" Then I would sit up and put my feet down. Ah, it would be so cold! Okay, so need to put clothes on quickly. You should absolutely not say, " Ah, it is so cold, I need to get under the blankets again. It was the first clapping of the wooden boards anyway." Then you will be doomed.

[67B, 05.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p90L11)]

Make a note of this! That is, on all occasions, the correct view is the most important. I just wanted to mention this in passing. With regards to anything, do not think of it as happiness. What kind of happiness are these? These are all traps, traps! This is what we must and should understand. Once you have this kind of thought, this is what's most important now. Pay attention! The thought is foremost important.

[67B, 06.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p90L14)]

Therefore, now I would frequently tell you my own faults. There is a reason for that. That is so that you don't need to be afraid! You may feel that a teacher that you venerate seems to make mistakes himself. Not only does he make mistakes, he makes them all the time. But what's more important? It is that I know my mistakes and I correct them. It is because he corrects them, this is the reason you feel that you want to venerate him. If this is even the case here, let alone the Buddha! Therefore, as long as you...this is what you should actually learn. Hence, pay attention! What's more important is to not look at the others' faults and tell others the principles after you understand them. You must apply this principle and see where you are mistaken and strive to exhort yourself. "I must strive! I am sorry, even though I can't seem to get up [from the bed], but I must get up!" This is it. Therefore, it tells us, if you develop any thought of happiness regarding this, wrong! On the contrary,

[67B, 07.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p91L7)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

**The more you conceive all beings as suffering,
The more the darkness of your delusion lessens.**

For those happy things, if you can "**conceive all beings as suffering.**", that's when your delusions are gradually lessening. This is called wisdom. Now there are many people who have a great intellect. If you apply your intellect to this, then you will be right. Oh! That's how we should contemplate. Then you will examine yourself. When you are able to examine yourself, by then, when you are about to debate with others, you would think, "Eh, this is wrong, wrong! It is not that I have the principles, but what do I have? I have a strong affliction of the view." By then, you will swallow your words right away. That's when your wisdom is gradually increasing and your delusions are lessening. This is specifically referring to afflictions of the view. This is similar for the latent propensities, the afflictions of the emotions. It works the same way. You may ordinarily feel, " Ah, I can't stand how cold it is." For the scenario earlier, you would have shrunk back and got under the blankets. But, " Ah, this is wrong, wrong. This doesn't work! I would rather grit my teeth and bear the pain, and freeze a little longer. Then I will exhort myself to put on

my clothes. I must get up!" Just like that. This is what we should know normally.

[67B, 08.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p92L3)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

**The more you contemplate what is pleasant,
The more the flames of attachment spread.**

This next part tells us that for what is pleasant in front of us, the more you contemplate how great it is, then you will be doomed! This is attachment, and the attachment will increase. Attachment is something that is very horrendous. The more you are attached, the more it increases. I think we all have had this experience. The more you are attached, the greater the attachment becomes. Therefore, "to rely on the assembly and to depend on the assembly," is a benefit. Whether our reasoning is clear or not clear, whether our latent propensity is strong [or not], but when we are among the assembly, we would always feel embarrassed [to commit non-virtue]. Hence by relying on the assembly, we more or less will create less non-virtue. But if you are by yourself, then you are doomed. Your attachment will never be satisfied. So for whatever that we enjoy, don't look at them as pure and pleasant.

[67B, 09.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p92L10)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

**The more you contemplate what is unpleasant,
The more the flames of attachment abate.**

You should see how horrible these things are. They are great con artists. These great con artists will give you some small benefits [up front] but will end up sending you to hell. By then, after you contemplate this, you will develop fear for it. Of course, usually for us beginners to truly train, to remedy attachment, for instance, we would use meditation on impurity and so on. There are special antidotes for it. This can be explained later. For here now, we should understand this principle.

[67B, 09.57 (手抄稿 第九冊 p93L1)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

From beginningless time you have been conditioned to believe that the wonders of cyclic existence are sources of happiness, and you have habitually projected upon them a false image of beauty.

The above told us that from the beginningless time, due to our delusional and distorted views, we saw the wonders of cyclic existences as sources of happiness. We have habituated ourselves, accustomed ourselves to think of these delusions as

correct and proper. Therefore, we tend to view these things as good things. This is what we should recognize.

[67B, 10.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p93L5)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

But if, as a remedy, you train yourself to meditate on suffering and unpleasantness, you will put an end to these wrong ideas.

What is the best remedy for this? It is to meditate on suffering, to meditate on suffering, these things are actually suffering. And you also want to meditate on unpleasantness, meditate on unpleasantness (uncleanness). Actually, for this topic, what are you actually practicing? "Contemplate the suffering of feelings, contemplate the impurities of the body." These two things are the most difficult ones for us to overcome, the most difficult ones for us to overcome. But there are correct methods, correct methods [to counteract them]. When we come to the topic on afflictions later, I will bring it up then. When a thought arises in your mind, that's when you will understand, you are still being led by afflictions. And then when you are being manipulated by the afflictions, indeed none of us can do anything about it. This is extremely horrible. Therefore, you must understand it beforehand and then contemplate upon it. When a situation [adverse or favourable] appears, a mental manifestation that accords with the sublime teaching arises [in your mind stream], that's when

your powerful remedy has taken effect. That's when you will be delighted. "Ah, I have actually won a battle today!" That sort of happiness is true happiness.

[67B, 11.44 (手抄稿 第九冊 p93L14)]

With what you normally have for meals, your appetite is pretty good when you eat, but are you really happy? We might as well think about this calmly. We all have this problem - greediness. Ah, with the good stuff, you'll feel that the more the merrier prior to your meal. After you finish eating, ha, your stomach becomes distended. When you try to sleep, you'll feel like something's not right when you stand or when you lie down. Just like that. Did you really feel happy while eating? When you were eating, you didn't feel really happy. I think all of us have had that kind of feeling. But you just did that with great enthusiasm. After eating, you become sleepy. And then when the time comes, you do the same again. Where's the happiness? Ah, but strange enough, when the time comes, it just let you do that. This is the true nature [of greediness]. The principles on how to stop afflictions, slowly learn it well. If you are able to cultivate according to the teachings, the afflictions will be restrained. On the contrary,

[67B, 12.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p94L7)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

Candragomin says that if you neglect to meditate on these, ignorance and attachment will increase, and you will continue to fuel the process of cyclic existence. Hence, it is vitally important to meditate on the faults of cyclic existence.

If you do not practice accordingly by meditating on these remedies, then you will continue to increase your ignorance and attachment. There will be ignorance when you have attachment. And the end result for attachment is that when you cannot get what you want, hostility will ensue. These three things are concomitant and will revolve around each other. By creating karma as such, one will reincarnate in the cyclic existence. You won't be able to escape. Since you are afraid and feel disgusted by what was mentioned earlier, your only solution is right here. Therefore, now that you know, ah, if you truly want to escape, what must you do? It tells us that from knowing the inevitable relationship between cause and effect, we understand what we need to truly cultivate is by meditating on the faults of cyclic existence. After understanding this, we can then advance step by step towards liberation.

That means it is advancing to the next stage. The second stage is called the medium capacity.

Therefore, let us now take a look, what is the content on training in the medium capacity?

[67B, 14.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p95L1)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

The faults of cyclic existence are explained in three parts:

- 1. The mental training (Chapters 17-21)**
- 2. The measure of the determination to be free (Chapter 22)**
- 3. Dispelling misconceptions (Chapter 22)**

a) The mental training

This is explained in two parts:

- 1. Identifying the mind intent on liberation**
- 2. The method for developing the mind intent on liberation**

"**Training the mind in the stages of the path shared with persons of medium capacity**" is divided into four parts. The first one is "**the mental training.**" Well, what is the correct content to the actual training, what should we recognize in our minds, and how should we practice. The second one is "**The measure of the determination to be free**". The third one is "**Dispelling misconceptions.**" These are all similarly structured [as in the small capacity]. The fourth one is "**Ascertaining the nature of the path leading to liberation.**" Since you wish to seek for liberation, what we will finally understand, now it is going to tell us in part four. Do you want to train in the path leading to liberation? By the way, what is the nature of the path leading to liberation, what is the nature of the path leading to liberation? Now we will explain by following the

sequence, "**This is explained in two parts.**" This is regarding the mental training, "**Identifying the mind intent on liberation.**" What is the mind intent on liberation? Secondly, how do you develop such an intent on liberation, therefore it leads to "**The method for developing the mind intent on liberation.**"

[67B, 15.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p95L10)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

i) Identifying the mind intent on liberation [208]

Liberation means freedom from bondage, and what binds you to cyclic existence is karma and the afflictions.

Therefore, what is "**liberation**"? It's simple. It is to be freed from bondage. It's just that simple. So what is binding you? They are karma and the afflictions. It is karma and the afflictions that bind us to cyclic existence. It is that simple.

[67B, 15.32 (手抄稿 第九冊 p95L13)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

Under their power, the aggregates are reborn in a threefold manner: in terms of the three realms they are reborn in the desire realm, and so forth; in terms of kinds of beings, they are reborn as the five [deities, humans, animals, hungry ghosts and hell-beings] or six kinds of beings [the five plus

demi-gods]; and in terms of the type of birth, they are reborn in four ways—by birth from a womb, birth from eggs, birth from heat and moisture, and spontaneous birth. Since this is the nature of bondage,

This means, yes, what binds you are karma and the afflictions. Through the perpetual enhancement of these two things, you are nevertheless bound. Where are you bound to? The place you are bound to, if you use "realms," using that place as an example to distinguish, you are then bound to the three realms which are the desire realm, form realm and formless realm. And within the three realms, if you distinguish in terms of kinds of beings, there are six kinds or six types of beings. You can say six types or five types of beings. If you count the asuras as part of the heavenly realm, then there are five types of beings. Some would call the asuras as demi-gods. It doesn't matter. There is also another one, "**the type of birth.**" That is within the three realms, how you are reborn. These are divided into the four types, which are birth from a womb, birth from eggs, birth from heat and moisture, and spontaneous birth. That's it. There are no others.

[67B, 16.48 (手抄稿 第九冊 p96L8)]

Therefore, whether you distinguish it, by the three realms, the six kinds of beings, or the four types of births. In brief, it is karma and dependent arising from beginning to end. When

the preceding aggregates cease to exist, the following aggregates will arise. Thus this is "**rebirth impelled by karma and the afflictions.**" Within this construct, the five aggregates will continually, continually push forward to the next cycle and thus this is continuity of rebirth. These aggregates, the five aggregates are not something that is real. These five types of things, by the time the old deteriorates, a new one will be generated. This thing, which is newly born will continue to propel forward in a continuous process. The aggregates are the ones that are bound. Karma and the afflictions are the powers that bind the five aggregates. That's how it is. It is much like how the ropes tie you up. It's just that simple. The ropes are karma and the afflictions. And you, you are the aggregates, the five aggregates.

[67B, 17.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p96L14)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

freedom from rebirth impelled by karma and the afflictions is liberation,

That's how it is. You need to free yourself from this place [cyclic existence]. That's it!

[67B, 18.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p97L2)]

[p267, English LR Vol 1]

and the desire to obtain that freedom is the mind intent on liberation.

So if you now wish to say, "Ah, I do not want to be bound. I must think of some ways to escape this." This is it! This is what it is!

[67B, 18.14 (手抄稿 第九冊 p97L5)]

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Moment by moment the compositional activity of karma and the afflictions arises and is destroyed, but this destruction is not liberation. Though things that have been produced do not abide for a second moment, this destruction is not contingent upon conditions for liberation, such as the cultivation of a remedy [knowledge of selflessness]. If this were liberation, it would follow that everyone would be liberated without effort, and that is absurd.

We have said earlier, what has us bound are karma and afflictions, and the aggregates reborn are the bound objects that whirl in cyclic existence. So then with regards to the compositional activities of karma and afflictions, as the earlier ones are destroyed, the later ones will arise. Once arisen, they will be destroyed. After being destroyed, more will arise. They will continue to arise and become destroyed without end.

Therefore, after they have arisen, they will eventually be destroyed. **"Though things that have been produced do not abide for a second moment..."** Aggregates will forever arise and be destroyed, arise and be destroyed. **"This destruction is not contingent upon conditions for liberation, such as the cultivation of a remedy [knowledge of selflessness]."** If you do not cultivate, **"...this destruction is not contingent upon conditions for liberation, such as the cultivation of a remedy [knowledge of selflessness]. If this were liberation, it would follow that everyone would be liberated without effort, and that is absurd."** This is to say what is the actual substance of the produced aggregates? You cannot find it. How does it work? It is a continuous process of arising and destroying. In other words, it will continue to be reborn, continue to be reborn. In this case, you must cultivate a remedy to put an end to rebirth. Then that is the right way. Otherwise, if you do not cultivate a remedy, if you do not cultivate, I am sorry, it will arise and be destroyed continuously without interruption, to arise and be destroyed, to arise and be destroyed. Therefore,

[67B, 19.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p98L2)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

Consequently, if you fail to cultivate the remedy, you will be reborn in the future,

Therefore, if you have not cultivated this remedy, you will forever be reborn.

[67B, 20.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p98L4)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

since you only stop rebirth by cultivating the remedy.

You must cultivate that which will pin down the problem on how the aggregates are reborn in the cyclic existence. Then this thing will stop. After it stops, the bondage is gone. Therefore, here it is specifically telling us that we should have this mind intent on liberation. What kind of mind intent on liberation is this? It is that for the aggregates that are reborn, you must find a remedy that is accordant to the teaching. After you apply this remedy, you can then concretely realize liberation. After you understand this, therefore [you know], oh, to seek liberation, you must have a method to obtain liberation, a correct method. To put it simply, it is just that. As for the contents to this method, I think that I will save that for next time. We will stop here today.

[67B, 21.09 (手抄稿 第九冊 p98L11)]

Today, *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, page 153, scroll six, this is on the path that is shared with persons of medium capacity, medium capacity. So

then for the persons of medium capacity, from the foundation that has been laid out in the earlier sections, we understood further that though we can maintain a life in the human or deity realms, in the happy realms, we will ultimately fall into the miserable realms. Due to this reason, we know we will still fall into miserable realms, [that means] we will still suffer. This will not do. So the next step is to seek further for a resolution. Thus, from the earlier foundation, you will advance one step further which is then the medium capacity. So the stages here are divided into four parts, [the first one being] the mental training. What kind of attitude do we need to train formally as persons of medium capacity? In other words, what would be our mindset, what we should know and what would our minds be like. How would we develop such a state? He will tell us what specific method would make it work. After understanding that, there are misconceptions that need to be eliminated. After we understand what are correct and eliminate what are mistaken, at last, it will tell us what kind of path one should cultivate to reach this goal. This is divided into four parts, advancing level by level in order to reach our goal.

[67B, 23.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p99L6)]

So it has been said earlier that what kind of a mind intent on liberation is this? How would one develop this type of attitude? In general, all of us wish for this, no one is an exception to this, we all wish to be liberated from suffering, all

wish to be liberated from suffering. No one is an exception. But we cannot find a solution to this. The reason is because of our foolishness and ignorance, our foolishness and ignorance. It is because our foolishness and ignorance that we do not understand, therefore we do not know where to find it. Now we are very fortunate to know, ah, to find the solution, we must do so this way, and we have concluded [the refuge] to be the Three Jewels. From this place we realized further that to just accomplish what is said in the earlier sections is not enough, we must go further as stated in this section.

[67B, 24.15 (手抄稿 第九冊 p99L12)]

So now, although we want to take the next step to seek liberation, this intent on liberation, we do know we need to be liberated, how can we properly develop such accordant cognition within our minds? Although all of us feel, "Ah, we need to seek liberation!" Although you wish for liberation, but after you think it through, there is just no force to propel you forward, no force to propel you forward. Since there is no propelling force, so although you have thought it over, you are still bogged down by your usual latent propensities. Such latent propensities are the ignorance-accordant afflictions of the view and thought. By having those types of affliction of the view and thought, even though one may increase plenty of views after reading the Buddha's scriptures, may increase all sorts of knowledge. But, what should have been our guide and basis for

liberation, what could have been used to purify our views, after all this work, you would have increased much knowledge, but your pride have increased as well. In the end, the more you do this, the more your afflictions increase. Therefore, here we must tactfully find the remedy that will stop this correctly. So now he tells us this next,

[67B, 25.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p100L6)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

ii) The method for developing the mind intent on liberation

How do you develop a valid cognition that is true to the teaching?

[67B, 26.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p100L8)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

The desire to relieve the suffering of thirst is based on seeing that you do not want to be tormented by thirst.

So first, an analogy is given. For instance, if we are thirsty and feel miserable, the only thing in our mind is to look for water. Why? When you are really thirsty, you cannot bear the misery. Let us dwell deeper into this analogy. If you are sick, if you have some minor ailments, you will be too lazy to see a doctor even if we asked you to. However, if your sickness

causes great suffering, you cannot stop yourself from seeing a doctor even if we ask you not to. By the same principle, it must be something that you feel the torment of. It is the negative aspect, or to put it more strongly, the horrible and miserable conditions that compelled you to devote yourself entirely to finding a way out of misery, a way to be freed from this misery. Therefore,

[67B, 27.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p101L1)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

Likewise, the desire to attain liberation—which relieves the suffering of the aggregates appropriated by karma and the afflictions—is based upon seeing that the appropriated aggregates are flawed insofar as they have suffering as their nature.

Similarly, if we now wish to be liberated from the sufferings of the aggregates, to be relieved from this suffering, then we will also need to see how the appropriated aggregates - which are the five aggregates that comprise our body and mind - have suffering as their nature and the many problems and faults that come with this suffering. When you truly see them, that's when you will set your mind solely on escaping from them. If you cannot see these, then it will be absolutely impossible [for liberation]. Therefore, this is the root to the path. It is because you need to be liberated from this, you will

go find the path that will liberate you. When you search for it and finally find it, that's when you will strive to cultivate it. If you don't have this kind of force, you don't have a propelling force, then whatever that you say will just be empty words. This is the reason. We must have a grasp of this in whatever that we do! Even for what you do now, why do you maintain the vows? It is the same concept. You must have a grip on this principle. This is the most important. Otherwise, after you go about doing things, doing things, doing things...you will get it wrong.

[67B, 28.44 (手抄稿 第九冊 p101L10)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

Unless you develop a determination to reject cyclic existence through meditating on its faults, you will not seek relief from the suffering of the appropriated aggregates.

Therefore, the first thing is we must first understand cyclic existence where the suffering aggregates reside, the many faults of cyclic existence, and all kinds of unwanted problems. When you see the problems and the faults, you will from the depth of your heart feel disenchanted and wish to reject it. All you will want to do is to escape from this place. In order to escape it, you will think about how you can be relieved from these sufferings. That's when you will seek for a method to be freed.

This is necessary, this is necessary, this principle. So, it cites from the commentary,

[\[68A, 00.15 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p105L2\)\]](#)

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

The *Four Hundred Stanzas*:

**How can one who is not disenchanted
With this world appreciated peace?
Cyclic existence, like home,
Is difficult to leave behind.**

For anyone, with regards to this, if he does not develop disenchantment, how can he seek for peace, the method for disenchantment? It would be impossible. Contrary to that, because he does not understand the faults of cyclic existence, he sees the excellences of cyclic existence. So, he is attached and finds it difficult to let go. If he is attached and finds it difficult to let go, how will it be possible for him to come out of this place, how will it be possible for him to come out of this place? Therefore, there are many now, ah, they say they want to practice. Although they want to practice, oh, they would adopt the vows, perhaps become renunciates, and perhaps will learn diligently. But after learning for a lengthy period of time, they never grasp this - why do you come here to learn? They don't have a grasp of it. Therefore, in the very end, there is just

a pile of views and a great deal of knowledge. Many people are like that. As a result, they would continue to run in circles. That is such a loss, such a loss!

[68A, 01.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p106L2)]

Therefore, at this place, he first points out the root cause. In other words, once you have the root cause and you exert efforts on this to increase and perfect it, then it will work. Otherwise, after being busy for a while, what have you accomplished after all this busy work? You've planted defiled causes. The more you do, the further you are. The more you do, the further you are. This is a point that we should first recognise here. After you have this understanding and go deeper step by step, then everything becomes a way to help us be liberated from cyclic existence. But if you do not understand this one point before you enter, then all your views will not accord, all of them will not accord. Like that. So, then this kind of view will wind up to be what? Say you trained in accumulating merits. Then the three-lifetime dilemma will be that you will have great wealth. If you trained in knowledge, the three-lifetime dilemma will manifest itself as you having a great wealth of knowledge. That's how it is.

[68A, 02.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p106L9)]

Therefore, there are many who are well learned, many who are very wealthy and many who have great status, what is the reason that they cannot enter Buddhism? It is that there is one type of people who train in accumulating merits. Ah, they will also give, do things in the circle of Buddhism, and may even restore temples. But as for the root cause for doing these things, they have not grasped it. In the beginning, they were right in doing so. But they've lost the grasp of it. Therefore, they eventually gained great merits for the future. There is another kind who devoted themselves to compiling a lot of knowledge at the time, ah, the scriptures, the texts on the vows, the commentaries and they have delved into them deeply with contemplations, analysis and even gave instructions. But similarly, because they did not grasp the root cause in the past, so in this life, they are very intelligent. They may even study very well. There is another kind who has carried out the forms of the vows very appropriately. But even though this is the case, to truly purify the mind, the root of it, they could not grasp the goal of maintaining the vows. So, when they reincarnated again, their reputation, they would become high officials. They all come about like that.

[68A, 03.54 (手抄稿 第九冊 p107L2)]

Therefore, as of now, no matter what we learn in the future, you must grasp this root cause. After you grasp it, then no matter which way you train is correct. For instance, for us

who are reciting the Buddha's name in the Pure Land method, it is precisely because of this, that is why you will feel like you need to save your burning head. "Ah, I can't take care of anything else, I can only wholeheartedly rely on the Amitabha Buddha!" By then your recitation of the Buddha's name will be very stable. If you maintain the vows, you will know very clearly that the goal of ethical discipline is right here. You will naturally grasp this and you will make great efforts. It is the same as learning knowledge. Otherwise, we will develop disputes and say that I am right and you are wrong. So, then everyone will be busy for this and busy for that. In the Buddha's time, the classic examples are just like that. The Buddha would tell them things. Oh, as soon as they heard the teaching, they would devote all their attention on their own issues, to solve their own problems. So, after they solved it, after they solved it, they were liberated from their afflictions. That's when you can go do more.

[\[68A, 05.00 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p107L11\)\]](#)

But for us now, no, there are others who are more inferior, ah, they are busy to become liberated. They don't care about anything. As a result, if you have not obtained the method, though you close the door to practice, after training for a while, you are just whirling in afflictions. You just don't know. So, then the opposite of that is another type of people who want to understand first and they will compile knowledge.

After spending a lengthy period of time compiling knowledge, they don't know why they are compiling knowledge. Then they would compare different sects, different factions, different disciplines, and different methods. This is right and that is not right. There will be loads of knowledge and we have no idea how many disputes were caused. And they would go outside. This is what we must understand. Therefore now, this place specifically tells us, there, the method for liberation, where is the root of that! So, let us read on. It says,

[\[68A, 05.45 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p108L2\)\]](#)

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

Developing the mind intent on liberation has two parts:

The method to develop this, there are two parts. The first one,

[\[68A, 05.54 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p108L4\)\]](#)

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

- 1. Reflection on suffering and its origin (Chapters 17-20)**
- 2. Reflection from the viewpoint of the twelve dependent-arising (Chapter 21)**

Between these two, as long as you can understand one, grasp one, you will be able to solve the problem. If you want to

understand both of these and you become very clear as to the differences between the two, then the problem becomes extremely easy. Wherever you go, under any circumstance, you can relate this to whatever you come in contact with. You'll be able to relate it to whatever you come in contact with. All the obstacles that are present now will be cleared away. Now we can continue to look at the two parts of this. The first one is to go by the suffering and its origin. This is divided into two parts.

[68A, 06.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p108L9)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

a' Reflection on suffering and its origin

This is explained in two parts:

- 1. Reflection on the truth of suffering—the faults of cyclic existence (Chapters 17-19)**

The first thing that we need to understand, recognise, analyse and reflect on is what is the characteristic to cyclic existence? Suffering, it is suffering. Indeed, it is suffering. The second one,

[68A, 06.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p109L1)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

2. Reflection on the process of cyclic existence in terms of its origin (Chapter 20)

Why do we whirl in cyclic existence? Why? This is it. These are the two parts. So these are discussed individually.

[68A, 07.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p109L4)]

[p268, English LR Vol 1]

1' Reflection on the truth of suffering – the faults of cyclic existence

Reflection on the truth of suffering is explained in terms of:

English LR v.1 p.269

- 1. Showing the significance of the Buddha's asserting the truth of suffering as the first of the four truths**
- 2. The actual meditation on suffering**

This first explains that for the four truths, the suffering, the origin, the cessation and the path, why is the truth of suffering explained first. Then it will go on to the actual meditation on suffering. So now let us continue. Usually, the way we learn in general, we would say, "The scriptures tell us suffering, origin, cessation and path. So just tell us! Why does it say, oh, 'The truth of suffering is spoken first'? Ah, why, why is it explained in this order?" Like that. We would normally

say, "Ah! Tell me this quickly. Just tell us and we'll know. That's good enough!" It would seem that by just looking at the surface of the principle, we can't find a good reason why this needs to be explained. This is how we usually are. But in reality, there is a great reason for this, a great reason for this. Now let us continue to read the text.

[68A, 08.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p109L11)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

***a*" Showing the significance of the Buddha's asserting the truth of suffering as the first of the four truths**

***Qualm:* [209] The true origins are the causes and true sufferings are their effects.**

The true origins are the causes. Through creating the causes, assembling the causes, the causes will issue a particular effect. The causes to whirl in cyclic existence are the true origins. This issue the effect of whirling in cyclic existence, which is the suffering. Therefore, by this sequence of order, the origin should precede the suffering. Yet the Bhagavan explained the suffering first and then the origin. Therefore, what was the reason the Bhagavan reversed this order?

[68A, 08.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p110L2)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Why, then, did the Bhagavan reverse that order, if the origins precede sufferings, and say: "Monks, this is the noble truth of suffering; this is the noble truth of the origin"?

When the Bhagavan taught this, He first explained, "This is suffering that you should know. And this is origin!" So he chose the order of telling the suffering first and then the origin. He did the exact opposite. What was the reason for that? It says next,

[68A, 09.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p110L5)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

***Reply:* In this case, the Teacher reversed the sequence of cause and effect, not out of error, but because this reversal is vital for practice.**

It tells us first that as for the Buddha to reverse the sequence of cause and effect on this matter, He had special considerations. What was the reason? The key to practice is right here. Why are you learning? You must learn and practice. You'll have to practice as a result. The order is just as such. Therefore, there is no error in this, no error in this. On the contrary, you can say that it is absolutely correct that He explained it this way. The reason Bhagavan is the Bhagavan is shown right here. Regarding this point, this is a very important revelation for us. The reason we cannot practice is because we

lack the motivating force to practice. We know that practice is a good thing, but we just can't get motivated. So we have heard all sorts of stories in the past, the stories all go like this, "Ah-ya, he has gone there, but it still didn't work after becoming ordained. But as he went to hell and heaven to look, ah-ya! Then it didn't matter whether he was young or old, everyone desperately strived." Why? Ah! It is because they have seen how serious the situation is.

[68A, 10.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p111L1)]

Similarly, this is the same for us. Even though we don't have this type of merit to have the Buddha show us heaven and hell, but we have experienced things in the present. Oh, when we are sick, ah-yo, we would quickly look for a doctor when we are sick. Ah, when this happens, you wouldn't continue to do what you ordinarily had to do. You would instead worry and hurry [to find the doctor]. Even though it is a small suffering, you would desperately try to find a doctor. So now this place also points this out. It says that nah, nah, nah, this thing in itself is a great sickness, a great suffering! So after he points it out, if you can follow his method properly and delve deeper one step at a time, you will develop a kind of attitude. What is it? You will feel the menace of suffering is right here! You will not be able to tolerate it and be desperately seeking for liberation. This is why he explains that first in the order.

[68A, 11.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p111L8)]

From the example given earlier, we can also feel that if we are suffering from sickness physically, we will look for a doctor. Now, according to this method, mentally, if you can also feel the power of this suffering, you will not be able to sit or stand. Why would you be so ill-at-ease? It is because you are fully devoted to seeking liberation. If you can do this, how can you not be liberated? Hence this is an order to cultivation. This is accurate. It is accurate.

[68A, 12.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p111L12)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Why? If his disciples failed to develop a proper determination to liberate themselves from cyclic existence first, they would sever the very root of liberation. How then could he lead them to liberation?

It's just like that. For the disciples, these are the ones to be transformed by the Bhagavan. If they do not understand the nature of cyclic existence, are attached and are unable to let go, they absolutely do not wish for liberation, absolutely do not wish for liberation, then if you tell them to cultivate, what is there to cultivate? To cultivate is to cultivate for liberation. If I absolutely do not wish to be liberated, then wouldn't this make cultivation something ridiculous? That is because the

root has been severed. Everyone, do take this and contemplate it thoroughly. Don't be saying that, "I am cultivating there, I am going there to cultivate." You should first ask yourselves, "What is your goal for coming here? This must be very clear and apparent. This is one point that we must understand. For all of you who are sitting here, even for those who are not going to be renunciates, for you to have the opportunity to be exposed to Buddhism, it is because you all have roots of virtue from the past. From the principles of karma that we've explained earlier, we know that what occur simultaneously with the fruitional effect are the causally concordant effects and also the environmental effect. The environmental effect is the external objective environment. The fruitional effect is the effect of having this body and mind. The causally concordant effect is the mentality, the states of mind that arise. These have been accumulated from our past lives. Therefore, in this lifetime, when the internal cause encounters the external conditions, you will feel happy as you see an ordained life. So you will walk down this path.

[68A, 14.25 (手抄稿 第九冊 p112L10)]

But the root cause for one to walk down this path, after a whirl through rebirth, this cause has become muddled. In addition to that, when we are born in this world, our prior exposures are all defilements of the mundane world. And these defilements accord with our ignorant latent propensities

from our beginningless lives. Therefore, we have in the early parts of our lives continued to bring these forward. Hence our mental actions are immersed in a very strong mundane attachment. Hence at this time, we have not a single bit of yearning for liberation. Once you are exposed, although you have developed an interest to enter Buddhism, but do you possess the root cause? You do not. This is why the first thing to do must be to obtain understanding of the correct view. After confession, we have to eradicate these mundane and defiled mental actions and overcome them. By then, in one's mind, this sort of [new] understanding will develop. That is when one will think in his mind, "Ah, I need to seek for liberation!"

[68A, 15.47 (手抄稿 第九冊 p113L3)]

In my own experience and through the many fellow practitioners whom I have encountered, [it would seem that] one would desire this with his whole heart. They would very much look forward to becoming ordained and they would seek for an excellent teacher. Even though they were ordained and sought after an excellent teacher, however, there are few who have truly found this root cause. They would like to recite the Buddha's name and feel that it is good to recite the Buddha's name. Nevertheless, the motivational cause for doing so is never strong. Actually, rather than saying that it is not strong, we should say that they have never figured out this root cause.

This is the situation. Hence, with the virtuous karma from the past and adding to that the current defilements in this lifetime, you are muddled with some sort of propelling force. But it is something that you cannot properly determine. If you cannot determine this [in your mind], it would mean that you are not using this type of force as your primary fuel, you are not using this type of force as your primary fuel. So, what is your primary fuel? That is - nah, your defiled consciousness from the beginningless cyclic existence. Even though we are already here, I am sorry, whatever you see with your eyes, whatever you hear with your ears, they all belong to the mundane world. In your views, in your habits, all these are [that way]. Therefore, to say this, the root cause of truly seeking for liberation, I am sorry, this has not been established [in the mind]. Hence, this would be called, "**sever the very root of liberation.**"

[\[68A, 17.06 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p113L12\)\]](#)

"**How then could he lead them to liberation?**" So, when you want to lead them to liberation, how could you do that? You would try to teach them, "Do not be attached!" And they would feel, "This is just what I want. But you tell me not to do this and not do that!" Even though he is sitting here, he would really develop many afflictions as he hears you. When you teach him to do this, he would feel, "It would be best if I slept more, best if I did more of that...." With what you teach him,

he would not want to do this, would not want to do that. The more this goes on, the further he becomes. The more this goes on, the further he becomes! This is what we should correctly understand. Therefore, the Teacher has fully realized the external factor. The real problem is that we are bound by our own obstacles, bound by our own obstacles!

[68A, 17.49 (手抄稿 第九冊 p114L3)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, in the beginning, the darkness of ignorance enshrouded his students; they mistook the wonders of cyclic existence—which are in fact suffering—for happiness.

And the students are us. In this state, you are still enshrouded by the darkness of ignorance, unable to see the realities of things, unable to see the realities of things. In this cyclic existence, these things are obviously all sufferings, are all sufferings. However, though the attributes of these things are suffering, but the appearance of them, the false appearance of them as displayed in the cyclic existence has deceived the students. They mistook them for happiness, mistook them for happiness. Therefore, "**they mistook the wonders of cyclic existence—which are in fact suffering—for happiness.**" If you teach them to stop from doing something, they would in fact feel, "Um, this is exactly what I need. If you tell me to forgo this, how could it be possible?" Even though one may have

roots of virtue from the past, but when you let him come here, he still can't progress. This is the fundamental reason right here.

[68A, 19.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p114L10)]

Therefore, to truly train in Buddhism, the first point that you must understand is this. When you correctly understand this, no matter what teaching method you obtain, you will devote yourself fully to go in depth. There will be no more strife. Hence, during the Age of Correct Dharma, they have what is called, "firm liberation." When one hears a teaching, he will devote his entire attention to it. To even hear the words, "sweeping broom," he would sweep, sweep, sweep, and sweep. And then, his afflictions in his mind were swept clean. But now we hear so many teachings, one would still say, "This is not right and that is not right!" People would make distinctions of so many things. This is the time that we find no accordance [to the teaching]! Hence, in this situation, what is it called? Unfortunately, this would be classified as a worldly intelligence such that one could use it to out argue everyone else. This is what we should particularly understand right here. On the contrary, if you can truly purify yourself, this then becomes a tool that is extremely important to us, a tool that is extremely important to us. What is the distinction here? It is just this one little bit, did you mistaken [wonders of cyclic existence for happiness]? Have you been enshrouded by

ignorance? Hence, the first thing is to transform this incorrect understanding to the correct view.

[68A, 20.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p115L5)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

As the *Four Hundred Stanzas* says:

**Fool! If there is no end whatsoever
To this ocean of suffering,
Why are you,
Who are caught up in it, not afraid?**

This great ocean of suffering of cyclic existence, it has no end or a bottom. Those who are foolish in there, they are completely unafraid. How can they not be afraid? How foolish can one be! Therefore,

[68A, 21.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p115L8)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

By saying "In fact this [cyclic existence] is not happiness but suffering," the Buddha explained many forms of suffering,

Therefore, the Buddha must first tell him, "This is suffering, it is not happiness!" The Buddha told this to us. So then, at this time, what we should first understand is to

understand this one point. No matter what we are learning now, this is what is most imperative, most imperative! This is to say that although you might have been ordained, and everyone would say, "For the first five years, one must first rely on the master. One must know what to do, what to not do, what should be kept, what constitutes as a transgression." You need to know why the vows are stipulated and why should you maintain the vows. This is what you must know. The Buddha will certainly explain suffering, origin, cessation and path. It is because you have this order that is why you go and train in the path. When you train in the path, the first step is then to maintain the ethical disciplines. Therefore, the root to ethical disciplines is actually established through this. This is what we must know. If you cannot grasp this, may I ask then, what are you maintaining? Why did you come here? Isn't that something obvious?

[68A, 22.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p116L2)]

Therefore, in the thirty-seven conditions leading to Buddhahood, the first one is the fourfold stage of mindfulness, which talks about this very topic as well. "Be mindful of the body as impure and utterly filthy and be mindful of the sensation, or consciousness, as always resulting in suffering." This is number one. Normally, the most difficult thing for us to let go of is precisely this body. The most difficult thing to let go of is precisely all the things we are attached to right now.

Therefore, I want to tell you, this body is not as real as you imagine it to be! It is filthy. If it reeks like faeces, will you cherish it? As soon as you see it you will be disgusted! Then, for all sorts of happiness that you have, this tells you that they are sufferings! It is inevitable! There isn't anything unlike that. This is what we should understand.

[68A, 22.52 (手抄稿 第九冊 p116L7)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

and led his disciples to become disenchanted with cyclic existence and recognize it as suffering. As this is a necessary precondition, the Buddha spoke first about the truth of suffering.

Not only just one form, but multiple forms, many forms [of sufferings] are skilfully explained for one purpose - to bring about disenchantment. Therefore, He first explained the truth of suffering. Now when we truly cultivate, there is no other, we must also start from this. If you can accurately understand the truth of suffering, you will obtain everything that comes after. This is the root. If you do not have this, I am sorry, you will be taking a roundabout path with whatever that you train later. You will be taking a roundabout path!

[68A, 23.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p116L12)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Once you recognize suffering, you see yourself as submerged in an ocean of suffering, and realize that, if you want to be liberated from suffering, you must counteract it.

It is because you understand this suffering that you seek for liberation. Hence at this time, you will want to counteract this suffering.

[68A, 23.52 (手抄稿 第九冊 p117L1)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Moreover, you recognize that you cannot stop suffering unless you counteract its cause. By investigating the cause of suffering, you come to understand its true origin.

Consequently, the Buddha spoke next about the truth of the origin. [210]

Ah, here it comes! Ah, you wish to eliminate suffering, to eliminate suffering, but how does this suffering come about? When you understand that this suffering is indeed the effect, to truly clear away the effect, one must fix the problem in the causal stage. So now, what cause this effect of suffering? That is when you will go further to find the cause of suffering, which is the truth of the cause of suffering. Through understanding suffering, it will prompt us to seek liberation, to be liberated from suffering. Because you have yearned for it, you make an

aspiration, and start searching: where does suffering come from? By then, you will strive to look for it (the cause of suffering). So you will go look for it. When you have found the truth of the cause of suffering, you will make efforts to surmount the cause. That's when two of the noble truths, the truth of the cessation of suffering and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering, follow. It is because of this that you will naturally practice the three trainings in accordance with the teachings, namely ethical discipline, meditative concentration and wisdom.

[68A, 25.18 (手抄稿 第九冊 p117L10)]

Otherwise, as you speak of ethical discipline, you may sound very logical. Ah, no need to speak of the Chinese Four Part Vinaya, the Five Part Vinaya, and Sarvastivadavinaya. You may be an expert in everything, you may be a knowledgeable great scholar, perhaps you may have earned all sorts of Ph.D. degrees, but these are not applicable at all! You will be whirling in cyclic existence. If you don't do it right, you may even fall into miserable realms. This is what we should know, must know. Contrary to that, for all these things, not to mention knowing every one of them thoroughly, even if you are like Suddhipanthaka, even if you just know two words, you can solve your problems. Now there is an even more marvelous method. Suddhi-panthaka even became an Arhat. But now, you don't need anything, you don't need to become

an Arhat, you don't need anything you can think of except one phrase, Amitabha Buddha. Ah, you can also be freed from cyclic existence. This is what we must understand. This root, it is the first thing that you must get a grasp of! This is why he explained the truth of the cause of suffering afterwards.

[68A, 26.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p118L3)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

Next you develop an understanding of the truth of the origin, an understanding that contaminated karma produces the suffering of cyclic existence, that afflictions produce karma and that the conception of self is the root of the afflictions.

So then, step by step, you will get to the bottom of it through this: Ah, the suffering of cyclic existence is from contaminated karma, karma comes from affliction and that the root of afflictions is self-cherishing. That's when you will understand the true aspects of the truth of the cause of suffering.

[68A, 26.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p118L6)]

[p269, English LR Vol 1]

When you see that you can eliminate the conception of self, you will vow to realize

its cessation, which is also the cessation of suffering. Thus, the Buddha spoke next about the truth of cessation.

After you understand this, immediately after that you will see this: Oh! So this self-cherishing is not intrinsic, but that it is illusory and delusive. This is something you will be able to purify and destroy. Therefore, at that time you will think: Ah, so the root of suffering is here! That's when you will absolutely try to think of some way to eliminate it. Therefore, you will **"vow and aspire."** Not only will you aspire. What is "vow"? That is an aspiration that you must realize. It is not an attitude that is fleeting nor superficial: " Ah, I wish for that too!" Though you think about it, you may think about it a great deal, but you may still be sitting there. Therefore, for this vow indicated here, it is not that way (only thinking about it). It is "I must accomplish it!" You will stand up and devote all of your energy to it. Of course, this points to the state of our mind. Therefore, cultivation is not languid, as if you lack energy. No! When you cultivate, you must gear up everything you got. That's how it is. That's what the mentality is. Since you have this kind of attitude, so upon doing anything, it is certain to be that way. Just look at the great past masters. That's how they were. Just like that. Therefore, at this time, He will explain the truth of the cessation of suffering after the truth of the cause of suffering.

[68A, 28.14 (手抄稿 第九冊 p119L2)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Qualm: If teaching the truth of suffering promotes the desire for liberation, should not the Buddha have taught the truth of cessation immediately after teaching the truth of suffering?

Accordingly, then after explaining the truth of the cause of suffering, you would seek liberation. So, the truth of the cessation of suffering should be explained, but why is the truth of the cause of suffering expounded?

[68A, 28.29 (手抄稿 第九冊 p119L5)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Reply: There is no mistake.

He said: There is no mistake to this. Why is that?

[68A, 28.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p119L7)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Why? At this point, after you recognize the truth of suffering, you have a desire for liberation, and think, "If only I could attain a cessation that relieves this suffering!" But if you have not identified the cause of suffering, and have not seen that

you can eliminate that cause, you do not yet regard liberation as something attainable and thus do not think, "I will realize a cessation."

That's right. At that time, even though you have a desire for liberation and you wish to end all suffering - so cessation means to annihilate all sufferings - but you don't know the cause of this suffering. So you don't know if this cause can be impeded definitely. In other words, you cannot be certain that you can eliminate it (the cause). Thus at this time, you are not sure if you can actually do that. You are not sure if you can attain the state where you are able to annihilate all suffering. Hence, cessation is not explained first at this time.

[68B, 00.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p121L1)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

In this way, when you do think, "I shall realize a cessation that is liberation," you become interested in the truth of the path, wondering about the path that leads to this cessation. For this reason, the Buddha spoke about the truth of the path last.

Now by following the stages, it said to first understand suffering. From suffering we find the cause of suffering. We find that the cause of suffering is right here and it is something that can be stopped. That's when you will think, "Ah! I will

devote myself entirely to stopping it." But to stop it, what will you have to do? There is a definite method which is called the "**path.**" It is through this process that you find the path. So when we talk about the path, when one trains on the path, that's when we talk about the three trainings: ethical discipline, meditative concentration and wisdom. It is not the wide variety of ways of the mundane world. It is not the topics covered in the elementary schools, the middle schools, or the colleges. It is not the polytechnic knowledge, the knowledge of the medicines or the agriculture. It is not related to the scholars, the farmers, the artisans or the merchants. These are entirely not applicable. So this is the necessary order here.

[68B, 00.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p121L8)]

Therefore, if you follow this order, you will naturally accord with it in your mind and will go in depth step by step. You will benefit from whatever you learn. Otherwise, with whatever you learn, you will continue to whirl in afflictions. And these are all defilements. Even though you may have cultivated a little virtue, it is unavoidable for it to be tainted by defilements. And therefore you always...this is the condition that we are in now. Since you have cultivated a little according to the teaching, this is why you have produced somewhat of a virtuous effect of being accordant with the teaching. But this thing is defiled. This virtue continues, ah, continues to be accompanied by lots of afflictions and sufferings. And the end result is for you to forever whirl in

cyclic existence. The fundamental reason is right here. Therefore here, this is the first thing that we need to get a grasp of.

[68B, 01.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p122L6)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

In the same way, the Sublime Continuum says:

Recognize that you are ill: eliminate the cause of the illness;

Attain health, rely on a remedy.

Likewise, you should recognize, eliminate, attain and rely upon

Suffering, its cause, its cessation, and the path, respectively.

So here now is an analogy. It is much like when one is ill, one will feel the suffering of this illness. So you will want to know the cause for this illness. You will want to know on how to eliminate the cause for this illness. To seek elimination of this illness, that's when you will seek for medicine. That's when you will rely on a remedy. Similarly, this is why for this suffering, due to this suffering we find the cause - the truth of origin. Then from this cause, we can see that it is something that can be eliminated - the truth of cessation. And then, how do you eliminate it becomes the truth of the path. This is what we should really do, "**Recognize that you are ill.**" Then you should eliminate [the cause of the illness] and attain [health] by relying upon [a remedy]. This is it. This is the origin of suffering which you should eliminate. And this is the cessation

which you should attain. What should you do if you want to attain cessation? You will need to rely on this path!

[68B, 03.09 (手抄稿 第九冊 p122L14)]

Therefore, the Bhagavan turned the dharma wheel three times and there are twelve applications within the three turns to each of the four truths. That's what it is. The first one: This is suffering and you should know! Why are you suffering? There are reasons for that. You should eliminate the causes. After eliminating them, you will attain the cessation [nirvana]. This is what you truly need. In order to attain the truth of cessation, what will you need to do? You will have to rely on this path. That's it. This is why the Bhagavan explained it in this order. All the fundamental contents of the great and small vehicles are right here! This is it. There is nothing else, nothing other than this! There is no Buddhism apart from the four noble truths. It is just that the explanations of the four noble truths vary in different aspects. If you are moved by your own interest, then that would be the small vehicle. If you take this principle and understand it a little more in depth, a little more thoroughly, then that would make you a pratyekabuddha. If you extend this to all sentient beings, then you would become a Buddha or Bodhisvatta. That's how it goes!

[68B, 04.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p123L6)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

This being the case, the four truths are taught repeatedly throughout the Mahayana and the Hinayana. Since the Sugata has included in the four truths the vital points concerning the process of cyclic existence and its cessation, this teaching is crucial for achieving freedom.

Thus, the four truths are taught in both the Mahayana and the Hinayana repeatedly -this "**repeatedly**" means that it is taught throughout. The entire teachings in the scriptures of Mahayana and Hinayana are all about this. Therefore, the Buddha's vital points concerning the process of cyclic existence and its cessation are right here. All the scriptures use these vital points as the basis to give a even more in depth and detailed explanation. There are many scriptures that explain all the four truths. There are many others which emphasised on one particular aspect with even more in depth and detailed explanations. But without any exception, all the scriptures are the same in that way.

[68B, 05.00 (手抄稿 第九冊 p123L11)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Since this synoptic outline of practice is important, it must be taught to students in just this order.

(Please note that Sanskrit word "uddāna" is used for the word "outline." This is why Shifu is explaining the word's original meaning.)

Hence, to truly cultivate the path of liberation, this is the most imperative. This is truly the most important. It is also an outline of practice [uddāna]. This uddāna means the vital points, the vital aspect of the doctrine. Normally we can translate uddāna as a "verse." A summary verse, a verse that would summarize what was explained earlier. In other words, the vital points of the entire practice are just this! The vital points of the entire practice are just this. Normally, other than using uddāna as a verse, the four truths are also called the four Uddāna methods. Which are the four methods? They are the suffering, the origin, the cessation and the path. Even for the three seals of the Dharma, these are also called the three...oh, no, it is not the suffering, origin, cessation and path. They are "all things are impermanent," and "all things lack inherent existence" ...it's the four seals of the Dharma [the seal of the four truths]. These four seals of the Dharma. In other words, these are the vital points, for the Buddhism. Hence these are the vital points for the entire practice. Therefore, use this order as a guidance. You can also say the entire Buddhism is exactly this. This is also the beauty of this treatise. So the next one, allow me to explain this further. This paragraph is to exhort us.

[68B, 06.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p124L7)]

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Why? Unless you reflect on the truth of suffering to the point of actually becoming revolted by cyclic existence, your desire to attain liberation will be mere words, and whatever you do will lead to origins of further suffering.

Therefore, if you do not have the correct understanding on the truth of suffering, or even if you have recognized it but you have not reflected properly to generate a valid cognition, then our minds will still be preoccupied by this life. Our mental actions will continue to manifest all the defilements of the mundane world. That's called the desire for cyclic existence, not revolted by cyclic existence. At this time, to say that you seek for liberation are just empty words, mere words. Let's not talk about the lay practitioners but for the renunciates, you are wasting even more efforts here! You are wasting even more efforts here! Therefore it says here, for "**whatever you do**," no matter what you do, you will still be practicing the truth of origin. What is the truth of origin? It is transmigration through birth and death. This is what it says for the Hinayana. No, not just from the perspective of the Hinayana, but this is from the standpoint of what is fundamental. If we go a level deeper with a more complete explanation, another phrase would be, If you forget your resolve upon Bodhi, your cultivation of even wholesome practices becomes the karma of

demons." This is the one. What is your fundamental goal for your cultivation? The spirit of enlightenment. What is the mentality that is required here? It is the desire for liberation. As soon as you forget it, then whatever you do will fall within the boundaries of the truth of origin. What is the truth of origin? What does the demon do? He specializes in trapping you in the cyclic existence. So now over here, no matter what training we are in, this is what we must understand.

[68B, 08.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p125L4)]

Recently for most of the students here, I am very happy and impressed by you. Why? Everyone has been very diligent. But you have to take note! To be diligent does not mean that you are after some knowledge. Nor is it a pursuance of just the words and you would [only go as far as to] say, "Ah, now I understand it!" You must use the principles which you have understood to find its corresponding meaning within your mind. In other words, what is this principle referring to? That's when it will initiate in us a fear and disenchantment for the cyclic existence right before us. Through this we are propelled to pursue [the teachings] with great effort. Or else, you will definitely [limit yourself and] ponder over the text, ponder over the text. This is one type. Another type would be even though you are here [to attend class], ah! You would feel that your life currently is pretty good. There isn't a need to get yourself busy, . You just have to wake up a little early and do

the morning ritual. When it is time for your meal, ah, others will deliver all the food to you. Ah, and you are particular on the flavour of the food. Seriously! After eating, you will take a good nap and refuse to do anything. When it's time for discussion, oh, you would offer your reasonings with lots of opinions. Your mind is always not associated [with the teachings]! Your mind is always not associated [with the teachings]. The reason is right here. This is a point that we must understand!

[\[68B, 10.00 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p125L13\)\]](#)

Therefore, let us remind ourselves again with this sentence. "**Unless you reflect on the truth of suffering,**" if you have not truly reflected, you won't feel "**revolted by cyclic existence.**" Not only will you need to know, you have to reflect on it after knowing. This is a situation whereby you have eradicated the defiled actions associated with this mundane world. That is when your mind acts according to the teachings. Then you will certainly feel revolted by what we have at present. When you seek for liberation wholeheartedly, that's the right time. Everything that you do from then on will be for the purpose of liberation. Otherwise, in your heart, no matter what you do or what you think about, they are all consider as the truth of origin.

[\[68B, 10.58 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p126L3\)\]](#)

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Unless you reflect on the origin of suffering until you have a good understanding of the root of cyclic existence, which is karma and the afflictions, you will be like an archer who does not see the target you will miss the essential points of the path. You will mistake what is not a path to freedom from cyclic existence for the path and exhaust yourself without result.

Further, this says that now that you understand the attributes of suffering, you will therefore wish to be liberated from suffering. Where is this root to suffering? It would be these two things, afflictions and karma which are ignorance and actions. These are the root to cyclic existence. Suppose you do not even know the root to cyclic existence, or perhaps you may know but you are not skilled at it. This does not mean that you know it imprecisely. You may understand it while it is explained, but it becomes completely blurred afterwards. This is useless. Or perhaps you can explain it to others, but after you explain what the principles are referring to, where is it referring to? It is still just on the text book. "I have attained a Ph.D. for my thesis!" However, what are the subjective aspects that it is pointing to within the mind? These are two irrelevant phenomena. Then it would be futile.

[68B, 12.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p126L11)]

What is this like? It is much like shooting an arrow without seeing the target. May I ask...when you shoot arrow without seeing the target, others would call this random shooting. What is "random shooting?" You have no goal. So what are you shooting? It is just like that. Now we wish to train on the path, but what are you training? This is very clear. You prostrate to the Buddha, why do you prostrate to the Buddha? You recite the scriptures, why do you recite the scriptures? You do the morning and night time rituals, you explore the knowledge, you write essays, you learn the ethical disciplines, learn the meditative concentrations, why do you do them? There are many now who would say, "Ah, I need to learn meditative concentration." Why should you learn meditative concentration? In truth, he does not know either! He may just feel that learning meditative concentration is pretty good. Ah! After you train in meditative concentration, your health will be good and after you learn that...these are all entirely non-accordant, entirely non-accordant! And then you learn ethical discipline, "Ah, look at how they maintain the ethical discipline!" Yes, these produce the effect of drawing us to it. And they accord with our roots of virtue from our past lives. But why do they do these things? These are all just the act of shooting arrows, but without purpose!

[68B, 13.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p127L6)]

Therefore, at this time, one misses the essential points of the path. In other words, the path has already been severed. By then what are you busy with? **"You will mistake what is not a path to freedom from cyclic existence for the path and exhaust yourself without result."** By then the path you train will not be right either. You will be mistaken on your training. After busying yourself a great deal, you may think that you are training on the path.

However, because to have a purpose for your training is much like shooting an arrow, you must shoot the target, the bullseye. If you have not seen the target, after shooting for a while, you will not have any result! The goal for training on the path is to be freed from the root of cyclic existence. You do not even know what the root to cyclic existence is and you go on training for a great deal of time. Therefore, there are many people now, ah, they would prostrate to the Buddha every day. They are busy prostrating to the Buddha. There are many who would recite the Buddha's name every day. There are many people who would read the scriptures every day. They will write their thesis, remember this and remember that. Why do you do these? It would be best if you ask yourself of this. This section has given us the best guidance! You will **"exhaust yourself without result."** This is what it is telling us.

[\[68B, 14.27 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p127L14\)\]](#)

[p270, English LR Vol 1]

Finally, if you fail to understand the need to eliminate suffering and its origin, you will also fail to recognize the liberation that provides relief from suffering and its origin; hence your interest in liberation will be a mere conceit.

Therefore, if from the very beginning, you do not have a good grasp of these two things "**the need to eliminate suffering and its origin**," then I am sorry, nothing else will work for you. "**...you will also fail to recognize the liberation that provides relief from suffering and its origin!**" You must go from these two things which are suffering and origin, and you get to the bottom of them to find the exact liberation from suffering and origin. Then this would be the path to liberation. Hence prior to understanding that, our so called cultivation, it is at most an "**increasing conceit**." An increasing conceit...it is already bad enough to be conceited, but this is (even worse, as it is) increasingly one. This is why it seems easy to learn Buddhism now: Ah, we look down on this person, and look down on that person. We cannot seem to see, cannot seem to see anyone that is worthy for us to learn from. But once we truly understand, to even hear the word "Amitabha " would be enough. You will clasp tightly onto it and feel that there is not enough time for you to apply yourself fully. You will not have time to mind others' business. "Amitabha," he provided me with these words so that I can recite the Buddha's name. I am extremely grateful!" Whatever that he does right or wrong, why would you be worried about that? This is such a simple reasoning! Of course if you take this a step further, you will be

liberated from more afflictions and gain more merits. Naturally, you will find that you cannot thank others enough. Why would you have any thoughts of judging others?

[68B, 16.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p128L11)]

Hence right here it first tells us, "Oh, so the Buddha had to have (overcome) this crucial point here!" This is why this section explains the truth of suffering first. At this point we can understand this now. Hence everyone should not just rush in and say, "Ah, you have to cultivate!" You must become clear of why this order is established in this way. After you understand this, you follow it. That is when you will understand very clearly, and every step is absolutely correct. This will propel you upward. If you found your method of cultivation due to this force, you would devote yourself entirely to this. No matter what you do then, it is not something that will count as the truth of origin. Whatever karma you create then will be uncontaminated. Since all the karma that you create will be uncontaminated, how can you not escape cyclic existence?

After we understand the stages, it tells us this next, "**the actual meditation on suffering.**" That is when we actually meditate on the truth of suffering.

[68B, 17.31 (手抄稿 第九冊 p129L4)]

English LR v.1 p.271

b” The actual meditation on suffering

The actual meditation on suffering is explained in two parts:

1. Reflection on the universal suffering of cyclic existence (Chapters 17-19)
2. Reflection on specific sufferings (Chapter 19)

The universal suffering is explained. Then secondly, the specific sufferings are explained.

[68B, 17.52 (手抄稿 第九冊 p129L6)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

1" Reflection on the universal suffering of cyclic existence

This is divided into three:

1. Reflection on the eight types of suffering
2. Reflection on the six types of suffering (Chapter 18)
3. Meditation on the three types of suffering (Chapter 19)

(a) Reflection on the eight types of suffering

The universal suffering is first explained. In the universal suffering, we frequently would hear of "the torment of the

eight sufferings." And there are also others below. Let us now take a look at them one by one.

[68B, 18.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p129L9)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

Meditate in accordance with what is said in Nagarjuna's *Friendly Letter*:⁴⁶¹

**Your Highness,⁴⁶² be disenchanted with cyclic existence,
Which is the origin of many sufferings—
Being deprived of what you want, death, illness, old age,
and so on.**

So for you Bodhisattvas! This is what you should understand, what you should be disenchanted with! For matters on cyclic existence, you should recognize them and develop disenchantment. You should know that there is no happiness at all within it. With what you want, you cannot obtain. You get the exact opposite, which is what? Death, sickness, and old age, all sorts of sufferings come from it. This is what we should recognize. This is how we should meditate.

[68B, 19.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p130L3)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

Here, cultivating a sense of disenchantment with cyclic existence means reflecting on it as the origin of many

sufferings. The eight types of suffering include the four that Nagarjuna states explicitly—being deprived of what one wants, and so forth—as well as the four that are indicated by the words" and so on. "⁴⁶³ The Bhagavan taught these eight in many discourses when he identified the truth of suffering.

It told us suffering earlier, this essentially explained what? Being "**deprived of what one wants,**" meaning you will lack what you want. You will have nothing good. Nothing good means whatever that is bad!" "**And so forth,**" this so forth includes the next part, birth, old age, sickness and death. So now it is divided into eight categories. These eight categories are what the Bhagavan has explained incessantly, explained incessantly in many of the scriptures. Why did he incessantly and incessantly explain these to us? He is urging us through many different perspectives and there has to be a point where it touches your heart. Then you can strive to go from that point and make effort. You will then be on your way, on your way. Now it is the same for us here. So, don't just roughly glance at it. Ah, you are not very eager to read it. You must make efforts to read it. Wherever you feel accordance, that's where you should desperately grasp onto it and strive. That's when you will have the opportunity, will have the opportunity. Otherwise, you will only be circling about outside. What a waste. You will end up wasting your human life of leisure and opportunity!

[68B, 20.32 (手抄稿 第九冊 p130L12)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

During every session in which you meditate on the teachings shared with persons of medium capacity, take up as well the shared teachings that I explained in the section on the practices appropriate to persons of small capacity.

So now here we are training on the teachings for the persons of medium capacity. The medium capacity here and the small capacity earlier are arranged in dependent stages to facilitate advancement. Therefore, for the teachings shared with persons of small capacity that is said earlier, we should take them up to practice. Once this is stabilized, then you can move up. Hence,

[68B, 21.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p131L2)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

As for the teachings that are not shared with persons of small capacity, if your mind is strong, sustain them in meditation in exactly the way that I have written them here;

Well, so what is not shared? This refers to the teachings of the medium capacity. The teachings of the medium capacity are not shared with persons of small capacity. There are many

people whose goal is to become a person of great capacity, so then this teaching [of medium capacity] is shared with them. There are many people whose goal is to become a person of small capacity, so then this teaching [of medium capacity] is not shared with them. Therefore, suppose one has trained well in the previous foundation and he is now going a step further to train further, at this time, if the mind is strong then one can sustain what is to be explained next in meditation. In other words, what does this explain to us? If you don't have enough strength, you do not need to get going with this now. You should first build your foundation well. Hence,

[68B, 21.51 (手抄稿 第九冊 p131L8)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

if it is weak, then leave out the scriptural citations,

If you do not have enough strength, you should for the mean time not get going on this, should not delve deep into what's to come next.

[68B, 22.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p131L10)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

and only meditate on the meaning of the points I have outlined.

This is to say that we should train in what we accord with, what is appropriate. We should always make sure that every step is steady and sure. We should delve deep in this matter. This is what's most important! By following these stages, we will advance step by step. Hence, I have said this earlier: confession has been effective for some people and that reading has been effective for some people. This has been true for quite a few students lately. There used to be a fellow practitioner before who frequently like to tell you what his principles are [all the time]. But recently, he realized this. So, he frequently says, "ah, I have been wrong. I feel really happy [to know this]!" I truly praise that. I am truly grateful for that! This is because of what? From our discussions together, he made a shift and obtained this good quality. And I have profited from this association. I felt so happy for him the entire day. Ah, I feel truly happy!

[68B, 23.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p132L4)]

This teaching, this is why I particularly wish to explain this here, "You must understand this. What do you must understand?" There are two things. What are the two things? What is the goal here, and what are your latent propensities? We are controlled by our latent propensities from our past lives, controlled by our latent propensities from our past lives. Therefore, we have naturally come back to Buddhism. However, I have said this just earlier, although you have

arrived here, but what is your purpose for coming here? You may not necessarily have that straight right away. This is in fact absolutely true. There are very few people who have great roots and will accord very quickly. For instance, the Sixth Patriarch. Oh, he just heard others say one phrase from *The Diamond Sutra*. He got it, and that was it. But there are after all very few people like that. For most of us, yes, you will feel happy seeing the monastery. You are delighted by it. This is already pretty difficult to come by. But to become ordained, that is even more difficult to achieve. However, we are nevertheless amidst our latent propensities.

[68B, 24.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p132L11)]

Therefore, the first thing to do at present, what you must do is that if you are unclear of things, you absolutely should not say, "Ah, there is this great teaching that I must seek for. That particular one is great!" No. The main thing is to find what the root is and have a firm grasp of it - the root cause. Then the further step is [to achieve] the completing cause. The root cause [first] and then the completing cause. This is much like you earning money. You must first know whether you will make money or lose money by doing this business. If it is profitable, then you can talk about how to do the business. But if you haven't understood it clearly, then for a business that is obviously unprofitable, you could very well still strive to continue to do it. But the more you do it, the more money you

will lose! This is what we should understand. So, actually it told us earlier that if our minds are weak in wisdom, then we should meditate on the meaning of the points that He has outlined. What is the attribute of wisdom? The attribute of wisdom is to remedy afflictions. You must understand this thing before you can talk about applying the remedies. After you apply the remedies for afflictions, you can then be freed from cyclic existence. This is the attribute to cultivation that we've come into Buddhism for. Otherwise, for you to have given up all that there is in the world and come here, wouldn't you be ludicrous [to have done that]? Why are you busy for these things? This is what we should understand. So, let us continue.

[\[68B, 25.50 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p133L6\)\]](#)

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

Though these are analytical meditations, you should nonetheless arrest excitement and so forth⁴⁶⁴ with regard to your mental object, not taking up any object—virtuous, nonvirtuous, or ethically neutral—other than that which you are meditating upon.

After we understand this point, so let us immediately follow up on this. Speaking of this, yes, what will you need when you do this? "**Analytical meditation.**" Why does it not say study (hearing)? It is because of what has been told to us

earlier. What was it? This is the correct content to which the excellent teacher has given us to allow us to learn and study. Here what we should begin to do is to reflect on the correct principles that we have listened to in a way that accords with the teaching! Hence, it says to **"Though these are analytical meditations."** However, **"with regard to your mental object,"** this is really important! This is to say that when we come to class we need to listen, when we do morning and nightly rituals, we should think as we read the texts. And then, other than this, **"arrest excitement and so forth⁴⁶⁴ with regard to your mental object, not taking up any object—virtuous, non virtuous, or ethically neutral— other than that which you are meditating upon."** Other than these times, at all times, no matter virtuous, non-virtuous, or ethically neutral, you should not be distracted. You would say, "Eh, with what's virtuous, one should not be distracted. But how can you be not distracted with what's non virtuous and ethically neutral? Not only shouldn't you be distracted by what is virtuous, you should even more be undistracted by what is non virtuous! It is because you are not excited, so you know, "Ah, this is non virtuous." Once you know what is non virtuous, you will apply the remedy for it. When what is non virtuous arises, and you are excited then you will have wasted what you have cultivated for a long time. You will end up exhausting it (your previous cultivation). Do you understand this principle?

[68B, 27.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p134L3)]

So, when you actually practice, you do not relax for even a single moment. You must be able to control yourself. That's when you will diligently practice. If that happens, even if you go out for a walk, chat a few words, you won't stray. Otherwise, ah, even if you practice study there for a while, you will feel no interest. Then you will want to go out to take a break. And when you see a people sitting under the shade, "Ah, here comes my opportunity!" So, you will sit down. Ah! So happy. When you read, it's rare for you to read for more than ten or twenty minutes. But when you sit there [and chat], you can sit for three hours and feel it's still not enough. What's the reason? It is exactly this. Therefore, at this place, don't overlook this as if there is no profound principle here. Actually, our problems and vital points [to practice] are all here! This is what we need to understand! This is what we need to understand. Hence,

[68B, 28.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p134L10)]

Therefore, at any time, our mind, in our conscious mind, we certainly have a mind that is capable of being cognizant of objects, of what you want to focus on. So, for the objects which we focus on, if we act not accordant to the teaching, we should eliminate it. "**Excitement**," "**Excitement and so forth**" would include whatever else that is not accordant.

"Excitement" would be those that accord with distractions and attachments.

[68B, 29.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p134L14)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

Without letting your mind fall under the influence of sleep, lethargy, or laxity,

When your mind goes up, that would be excitement. Then when your mind goes down, that is lethargy and laxity. These are all causes for cyclic existence.

[68B, 29.26 (手抄稿 第九冊 p135L2)]

[p271, English LR Vol 1]

meditate continually in a state of consciousness that is very clear

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and pure.

At all times, you should make sure our minds have these two things, "clear and pure." Pure means what is clean. This would mean you are certainly accordant to virtue and pure

teachings. And this virtue and pure teachings are very clear [for you].

[69A, 00.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p139L1)]

Sometimes, you may have a slight laxity, it is already not correct. You must be very clear and pure. This is the goal. And then, gradually, gradually, we follow the goal that is recognized to slowly, slowly practice it and think of ways to go deeper step by step.

[69A, 00.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p139L3)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

For, as *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says, there will be little result from any virtuous practice if the mind is distracted:⁴⁶⁵

**The One Who Knows Reality⁴⁶⁶ has said that
Prayers, austerities, and such –
Even if practised for a long time –
Are pointless if done with a distracted mind. [212]**

Nah! It cites from the commentary to tell us. Though you may practice for a long time, to recite, to do ascetics, and all sorts of things, but if your mind is distracted, there will not be much benefit. So, what will you have to do? You will have to

follow what is said earlier, to allow your consciousness to be in a state that is clear and pure. Like that. **"There will be little result from any virtuous practice if the mind is distracted."** He will achieve very little, very little result.

[69A, 01.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p139L8)]

Speaking of this, we can also reflect back at the same time. This was why it said earlier that though our cultivation requires a human body, but even after obtaining the human body, you need to have a fully qualified human body. So, the external body must be like this, and this happens only in the people realm. But once you become a person, you will need to be fully qualified. It is not enough to be just lay practitioner, not just adopting the five vows, the eight vows, or even the novice monk's vows, but that you will have to adopt the vows of a renunciate. Then on top of that, you can adopt the Bodhisattva vows and so on. Then after that, what is the state of mind? You will need to accord in body and mind as well, be pure and clear. That is the time when you can truly accord with the vows that the Buddha has given us. The Buddha's vows, in all, there are these three phrases, using "purify your mind" as the central core. After that, since your mind is as such, it will manifest itself in the body and speech, hence, "Stop all non-virtues and engage in all virtues!" Then, you can enter meditative concentration and wisdom. This is a principle that cannot be shaken.

[69A, 02.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p140L7)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

Also, the Sutra of Cultivating Faith in the Mahayana (Mahayana-prasada-prabhavana-sutra) says: 467

O child of a good family, from this enumeration you should know that faith in the Mahayana of the bodhisattvas, and all that emerges out of the Mahayana, comes from properly contemplating the meaning and the teaching with a mind that is not distracted.

The commentary was cited earlier. The sutra also tells us this. With the principles stated above, through all sorts of ways, all aspects, “**enumeration,**” means it has been said in a variety of ways. To train, in Mahayana, “**faith in the Mahayana,**” is a beginner’s level faith. Beginning with understanding, you will develop faith. Then you can go deeper to increase faith and practice according to the teachings. All the development of good qualities in Mahayana, from the very beginning until full development, all will come from this. What is it? “**A mind that is not distracted.**” What do you do with a mind that is not distracted? This is the mind that is “**properly contemplating the meaning and the teaching.**” Yes, as it was said earlier, at all times and places, whether our mind is being virtuous, non-virtuous, or ethically neutral, we should not let it become distracted, but to make it focus on this (the teaching).

[69A, 03.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p140L14)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

Here, a “mind that is not distracted” means a mind that does not wander to objects that are other than the virtuous object of meditation; “the meaning and the teaching” refers to the meaning and the words;

This is it. With this principle, as soon as we examine our mind, we will easily understand it. Now that many have come here, and we feel that it is great. However, we are quite afflicted in our minds! That is when you need to be clear on something! There is no other thing to do when one learns Buddhism -- the real core of Buddhism is to remedy afflictions, to remedy afflictions. If you cannot remedy afflictions, then no matter where you are, even if you are next to the Buddha, it would be futile! Even if you are next to Buddha, it would be futile. This is what we absolutely need to recognize. With all that we learn, there is only one goal. What is it? To clear away afflictions, because that is the root of it all! Therefore, you should not be distracted and you need to contemplate the meaning and the teaching. What is the specific characteristic of the teaching? It is pointing to this. This is what we should understand.

[69A, 04.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p141L8)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

and "properly contemplating" means analyzing and reflecting with discernment. This shows that any achievement of a virtuous quality requires both undistracted focus and analytical discernment.

And then? You follow this **"properly contemplating,"** you reflect according to the teachings without making any mistake. So then what is this reflection? It is to analyze and reflect with discernment. That is in our minds, we need to observe and analyze. There cannot be muddle-headedness! This discernment here is the wisdom that one would use to observe, to reflect and to analyze. Here it points out the achievement of any virtuous quality will come by this way, will all come by this way. One must be able to use an undistracted mind to "properly contemplate" and delve in depth.

[69A, 05.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p141L13)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, the Buddha says that any achievement of a virtuous quality in the three vehicles requires a state of mind that is both (1) an actual meditative serenity, or a similitude of it, which rests one-pointedly on its virtuous object of meditation without wandering from it; and (2) an actual insight, or a similitude of it: which carefully analyzes a

virtuous object of meditation and distinguishes both the real nature and the diversity of phenomena:

For all the virtuous qualities of the three vehicles, they primarily require these two things. One is meditative serenity, **“which rests one-pointedly on its virtuous object of meditation without wandering from it.”** You abide on this. **“Or a similitude of it,”** what is a similitude? Prior to you attaining the actual meditative serenity, you are in a state that is similar to it, a state that is in the same direction. Much like how we are now, we always put our minds on accumulating all sorts of merits and making efforts for preparation. Therefore, what is ethical discipline? It is the foundation to meditative concentration. This is the real goal for us to learn the ethical discipline, the real goal to us learning the ethical discipline. This is what we must understand.

[69A, 06.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p142L6)]

Now, I often see many who are truly...you can say that they are pitiful. When they speak of the vows, they would say that this is said in this way here and in that way there. As a result of obtaining the vows, they caused troubles everywhere. They do not know the real characteristic of ethical discipline. They have got this completely wrong. Therefore, Buddha has taught very clearly that in all of the 18 factions, they were spoken for people of varying dispositions. When a piece of

gold, such as a gold bowl breaks apart, each piece remains a piece of true gold! What is most important is for you to make use it. Yet now, you have got it wrong. This is what we need to understand. Thus, here is the purpose. So then “a similitude of it” is such that you need to accumulate the merits for meditative serenity. These are all that we do now. Yet what is the purpose for obtaining meditative serenity? The purpose is for attaining wisdom. Therefore, the next step is one that “carefully analyzes a virtuous object of meditation and distinguishes both the real nature and the diversity of phenomena.” To distinguish both the real nature and the diversity of phenomena, this will be explained briefly here. But the true meaning of it will be explained in detail in the section of insight.

[69A, 07.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p142L14)]

“The real nature,” in other words, this is the truth of the phenomena, to put it simply. In other words, we would say that is the reality of all phenomena. Or we can call it the nature of phenomena, or emptiness. This is it. “The diversity of phenomena,” this describes all the manifestations as phenomena. These would be the five aggregates, the six sources, the 18 realms. In other words, if you draw a circle around the phenomena, this is it. Or you can say that it is the boundary of phenomena. To go a step further, you can say that this is the manifestation of emptiness in subjective

aspects, in the character of phenomena, in dependent arising, or in the conventional truth. For all that is involved, if you sum them up, then they are no more than the five aggregates, or perhaps the 18 realms...etc. All of these belong to the category of insight which is analysis. Thus what we do now is of similitude. As we advance step by step, this is the central focus for us, it is our goal. Upon anything that we do, when we learn the teachings, we need to always remember this. If you can remember this, then with whatever that you do, slowly and slowly, you will come closer, closer and elevate. This point is particularly important.

[\[69A, 09.09 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p143L8\)\]](#)

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

Similarly, the Sutra Unravelling the Intended Meaning (Samdhinirmocana-sutra) says:

Maitreya, you should know that all the virtuous qualities, mundane or supramundane, of the *sravakas*, the bodhisattvas or the *tathagatas* result from meditative serenity and insight.

In the sutra, no matter Sravakas, Bodhisattvas, or Buddhas, no matter the virtuous qualities of the mundane or the supramundane world, these are the results of these two things. These are the result of these two things.

[69A, 09.37 (手抄稿 第九冊 p143L12)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

Construe "meditative serenity" and "insight" here as including both actual serenity and insight and states of mind that are similar to them. For it is not certain that all of the good qualities of the three vehicles develop as a result of *actual* serenity and insight.

If there is not actual serenity and insight, or states of mind that are similar to them, then it is not certain the good qualities of the three vehicles will develop. Actually, all of the good qualities of the three vehicles are the results of serenity and insight. Therefore, in other words, this is to illustrate from the opposite angle. In brief, one sentence sums it up. No matter which of the three vehicles, the foremost important purpose lies here. Before we formally begin the training of eight sufferings, this is first brought up again. This now says that since we're going to practice now, then with the stages, how do you go from the lower level to upper levels? Therefore, at the point of meditation, this is brought up again. The earlier section has told us this how does one train during an actual session. Then after the session, how do you make the dedication. After the dedication and before the next session, what should you do in between the sessions? Then four preconditions are explained. Then many erroneous concepts were brought forward. Each step has been explained

very clearly. Then when we formally train, he reminds us whenever it's necessary, reminds us whenever it's necessary.

[69A, 10.52 (手抄稿 第九冊 p144L7)]

There is an important point here. The reason we cannot lift ourselves up is because we overlooked this point, we overlooked this point. Therefore, this section reminds us again and again. Why does the Buddha need to remind us again and again? Buddha is one who is omniscient and sees exactly that our problems all stem from this. Normally when we read books, we always wish to find the key to the problems. Eh, you often do not want to do preparations beforehand. Much like when we construct a house, "I wish to build a house that's 100 stories tall." So you build the 100th story and do not want to do any of the foundations. This is much like what we've been talking about here. The Buddha tells us this in all sorts of places. He says that you must be able to train in the lower levels before you have the ability to advance.

[69A, 11.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p144L13)]

There is a type of person now who is ambitious and always aspires for the higher teachings. Then there is another type of person who is exactly the opposite, "I can't do this, I can't do it!" They seem to be paralyzed and are unable to climb out of their position. Some say, "I just need to recite the Buddha's

name.” It’s not bad to recite the Buddha’s name. If you can truly recite Buddha’s name, then it’s very good! As a result, due to his frail mind, he can only say that “I just need to recite Buddha’s name.” In his actual practice, did he recite Buddha’s name? He didn’t do it! He falls into laxity and lethargy. His whole life is spent in vain.

Therefore, excess is just as bad as deficiency! Most of us now have this type of problem. This is the general phenomena of the practitioners. But if you speak of the subtle aspect of this, that’s how our mental states are as well. When our minds are strong and forceful, we would all of a sudden go overboard and then all of a sudden crash. Then we can’t lift our spirits up again. That’s how we are.

[69A, 12.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p145L5)]

Therefore, at this point, note this here. This is not asking us to change ourselves right away. Thus it tells us in the later section that for anything that we do, that’s how it is. In the beginning, there will be lots of ups and downs. Then once you come to understand it more, slowly, slowly, slowly and slowly, you will be able to discipline yourself to have the specific subjective aspect. Only you will be able to feel this. Slowly, you get on the right track. Then you continue with the way you’ve been practicing. Even when you progress, you still cannot become anxious! This is what we call a real improvement. A real improvement must be done this way.

This is what we should understand, what we should understand. Then once you got to this point, you will at all times observe what you've done wrong and exhort yourself. If you have been too strict with disciplining yourself, then you observe the good points of yourself. You will then feel fortunate and have given yourself more space. You will become happy. So you will be adjusting constantly as such, and gradually taking one step at a time, one step at a time.

[69A, 13.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p145L13)]

At this point, I thought I will just mention something from before. To reflect and analyze is of course extremely important, but a real discussion between fellow practitioners is also very crucial. Everyone! Don't be spending your time on just casual conversations! There are a few fellow practitioners here who would often come to talk to me, I am so delighted, so delighted by this! However, there is often this one small issue, and I might as well bring this forward now.

[69A, 13.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p146L2)]

A fellow practitioner said that sometimes he felt really uptight from being diligent in practice. He was an excellent practitioner and so he was very diligent. His mind was much stressed. He felt the imminence of death and was afraid he might lose his life.... These were all good signs. However, he

became more and more stressed, more and more uptight until the point when he could no longer fall asleep or study. What should he do? So he looked for a way to relax. He finally thought of a way to relax at times, a way to de-stress. This is a practitioner who is a householder and householders would at times listen to some light music. This seems not bad.

That's right! After he learned to relax, he came again. He said, "I am truly not attached to music. But at that time (listening to music), it helps to relax my mind." So to him, this seemed really good.

[69A, 15.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p146L11)]

In principle, I do very much praise him. But this shows the very importance, the very significance of having a discussion. That was when I gave him an example, but I did not go further on the topic. [I said,] "Yes, that's very good. But let me give you an example." He said, "Okay." "Have you watched TV?" "I have." "When you are watching an important program, when you are really enjoying watching or listening to it, there may be a commercial break. You will feel very annoyed with this commercial. Why is this here? You wish for it to quickly, quickly pass. Yes, the companies who advertise the commercials know this as well. But they will still insert the commercials in between. Do you know why they do this? This is the intriguing part. Although you are completely absorbed, and it is because you are completely absorbed (by the programs you are watching), you resent the commercials. Yet

after this is done, though this does not manifest in your mind stream during the time you are watching the program, but one day when you need to use something related to what has been advertised, you will remember the advertisement which you have detested and find that the advertised product is precisely what you need now. The commercial has now fully realized its purpose. “Yes! “

[69A, 16.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p147L5)]

[I continued to say this,] “So you can think about this now, it’s true that when you are uptight, you can adjust your mind using that method. True, you don’t feel anything (negative) now in your mind. But your adjustment has been done with the seeds of the mundane world’s decadent music. The seeds have been planted in your mind. If you are a noble being who has attained the fruit of enlightenment, you need not worry! Buddhas do not care about this. But you are an ordinary being wherein you still have immeasurable tainted seeds and there are immeasurable tainted external causes and conditions. In another setting, when you are not mindful and since your mind constantly dwell in the defiled conditions of the mundane world, it will rise again due to the seeds. Because of the seeds and you have internalised the seeds, when an appropriate external condition appears, you will pursue it.” He thought about it for a while and said, “This is true!” “Much like when you found the commercial to be annoying at the moment, but

sorry, this commercial would fully realize its purpose later. Right?” “Yes!”

[69A, 17.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p147L12)]

That’s why sometimes we think that we are right. But sorry, there could be some problems with this! This is what we should truly observe, analyze and discuss! We shouldn’t be saying in general, “I understand, I am right this time!” Sorry, there is a great problem here. Buddhism is not that simple. Well then, does the Buddha have a way? The Buddha does, he has many skilful methods to help you. But here, I won’t go into them in detail. I just thought I would give an example. As a result, this fellow student was so happy! What I told you earlier, you can immediately experience it. As long as one tries to go in depth as much as he can, then at any moment he can have a breakthrough, it could come at any time. So after he repented this morning, in a word, he cried for a long time and was happy for a long time as well. I then reported this to the senior monk. The senior monk was so happy! “His virtuous roots sprouted!” This is absolutely true. Those who truly have some cultivation experience must have gone through these stages as such.

[69A, 17.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p148L4)]

This is why I particularly wish to remind you that you need not be afraid. It may be that at present, you can't seem to find an entry after much effort. But don't be busy doing all sorts of things. As long as you have planted the cause, if you've done correctly in the causal period, then you just have to continue in your endeavours. You need not ask whether you've made progress. If you've done the right thing in the causal period, you are in the process of entry. It's that simple! When the time is right, at a certain time, fruition will naturally take effect. This is the experience of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And he told us so. So at present, it would seem that we are just observing informally; as we gather, you observe, I observe; we're pretty similar. We truly are more or less the same. However, he practised in accordance with the Dharma in the causal period, and the effect was immediate. Therefore, with the complete stages (of the path) as such, as long as you are willing to practise accordingly, it is immediately effective. Once we have this motivation, this understanding, then when we formally train, we will realise this is where it is! How do you then practice?

[\[69A, 18.51 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p148L11\)\]](#)

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

(i) The suffering of birth

Contemplate the suffering of birth. We are normally aware of the eight types of sufferings: birth, old age, illness, death, parting with what we love, not getting what we want, encountering what we hate, and meeting all the ills of the five skandhas. These are the eight things. Each is separated to be explored.

[69A, 19.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p148L14)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

There are five points to contemplate:

There are five points.

[69A, 19.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p149L2)]

[p272, English LR Vol 1]

**1) Birth is suffering because it is associated with pain: [213]
birth is accompanied by many intense feelings of pain for the following four types of living beings: those born as hell-beings,**

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hungry ghosts who invariably suffer, beings born from a womb, and beings born from an egg.

First, regarding the pain of “birth”, the birth, all pain accompanies birth. When birth emerges, pain immediately follows. No need to even mention the hell realm because once one falls in, the pain is unbearable! Hungry ghosts. Aside from these, the rest are born from wombs, from eggs. There are four types. Once there’s birth and the body forms, immeasurable severe suffering follows, immense hardship follows. Once there’s “birth”, pain follows suit. Second,

[69A, 20.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p149L8)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

2) Birth is suffering because it is associated with dysfunctional tendencies:

What are dysfunctional tendencies? Dysfunctional tendencies are the synonym of afflictions.

[69A, 20.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p149L10)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

all of the compositional factors of the three realms, because they are associated with dysfunctional tendencies that are in harmony with the class of the afflictions, are ill-suited [to the service of virtue] and uncontrollable.

As soon as birth occurs, afflictions arise. **“All of the compositional factors of the three realms”** - not only the hell realm (needless to mention), nor the non-virtuous realms, but even the deity realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, all are submerged in the suffering of conditionality. Such “conditionality” is itself “affliction”. **“Ill-suited to the service of virtue”** - what does “ill-suited to the service of virtue” mean? You are powerless. You don’t want to be trapped in the suffering of cyclic existence, but you can’t. It is out of your control. This is the second one.

[69A, 21.00 (手抄稿 第九冊 p150L2)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

Moreover, once you possess the compositional factors of a living being within the three realms, you too are bound to dysfunctional tendencies that are in harmony with the class of afflictions. In short, because the compositional factors are associated with seeds that generate, sustain, and increase the afflictions, they are ill-suited to the service of virtue; furthermore, you cannot control them as you would wish.

These are the characteristics of dysfunctional tendencies that are in harmony with the class of afflictions. Because all the sentient beings of the three realms are bound to conditionality. Since they are bound to conditionality, afflictions arise. In summary, the sequence goes like this: from birth to uphold,

and then to augment. What follows birth? Ah, there it comes, the manifestation of an affliction. The seed of afflictions exerts its effects and distracts you from focusing on the virtuous. You just can't avoid its influence. You just can't. **“Furthermore, you cannot control them as you would wish”** – What you desire, sorry, it cannot be fulfilled. You want happiness, but it just wouldn't allow you to have it, even for a small pleasure. You just had a fill of good food, but shortly after your stomach became bloated and you feel uncomfortable. You might even have to use the bathroom. Despite that eating brings you plenty of satisfaction, it requires much hassle such as washing, shopping, and preparation. Let alone other things. Therefore, birth is full of flaws.

[69A, 22.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p150L12)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

3) Birth is suffering because it is the origin of suffering: you take birth in the three realms and on that basis suffer old age, illness, and death.

Third, birth is the origin of suffering. All sufferings are derived from birth, thus **“it is the origin of suffering”**. First, all suffering follows birth, then come afflictions, afflictions. And now? All pain is derived from birth. As soon as birth is given in the three realms, immense suffering will follow it,

[69A, 23.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p151L2)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

4) Birth is suffering because it is the origin of the afflictions: when you are born in cyclic existence, the three mental poisons arise for objects of attachment, hostility, and ignorance, and as a result, body and mind are disturbed and in pain, and you cannot be happy. The afflictions torment your body and mind in numerous ways.

Well, these are afflictions. As far as these things go, one is the fruit of suffering while the other, the cause of suffering. The cause includes the karmic cause and the ...And the karmic cause which consists of afflictions and karma, etc. What it refers here is the afflictions from the cause of suffering, and birth is “**the origin of the afflictions**”. Once birth is brought forth, afflictions will increase. Afflictions are a mental occurrence. The above mentioned are physical aspects, such as sickness, aging, and death. Over here, it refers to the mental aspect. As one is born, he will crave for the desirable, resent the undesirable, and be ignorant about other situations. “**The three mental poisons arise.**” Because these three mental poisons torment both the body and the mind, they cause **disturbance, pain and** unhappiness. This is point number four. This is point number four. Last point,

[69A, 24.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p151L10)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

5) Birth is suffering because it is an unwanted separation:

So, what is the last point on the suffering of birth? The term, **“unwanted”**, which truly describes the reality of us having no control. You have no control over yourself. Whatever you desire, it won't listen to you. And in the end, separation occurs. Nobody wants to be separated. In other words, nobody wants to die, but you will die in the end. This is **unwanted separation**. This is the natural state of phenomenon, the characteristic of birth. It is suffering.

[\[69A, 24.43 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p152L1\)\]](#)

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

all births end in death, which is undesirable, and causes you to experience only suffering.

Just like this.

[\[69A, 24.51 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p152L3\)\]](#)

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, at birth you are bound to pain and endowed with dysfunctional tendencies. Birth leads to illness, aging, and so forth, as well as to the afflictions and death.

There are five points in total.

[69A, 25.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p152L5)]

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

Consider how these give rise to suffering as well.

So firstly, from the perspective of birth, it is divided into five points, it is divided into five points. The more you can contemplate in many ways, the greater the merits are, the greater the merits are. We are now all in a state of distorted perception. From the very beginning, we were told that we perceive many things as pure. What is purity? (Purity refers to those that are good , seem happy and peaceful. Our afflictions since the beginningless time lie right there, and the only way is to eliminate them. So to those pleasant things right now, please be aware! You must also think of their scary and undesirable sides. If you don't practice on this, it will be useless. Talking about precepts, the key to precepts lies right here. So why do we become helpless when adversity arises, despite that we constantly talk about precepts? It's because you haven't seriously contemplated on it. Therefore, as some people talk about precepts, talk about this, talk about that, but when they are faced with obstacles, their reactions are totally unrelated to precepts. In my heart, I really feel sorry for them, but all I can say is "What a pity! How ignorant!" Nevertheless,

he still considered himself smart. It makes me feel that nothing is more ignorant than this! I think to myself that he is my teacher. Amitabha Buddha! I must never make such mistake. So, he just reminds me of this over here.

[\[69A, 26.41 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p153L3\)\]](#)

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

In particular, the suffering you undergo in the womb is

Those refers to what happens after birth. And over here, it specially points out to us: With regards to birth, we need to understand one thing in particular before birth occurs. Why is this mentioned over here? It's because only after we are born, we get to feel. We can't feel it before birth. In fact, this is reality, so it's being mentioned for us to think about. Once we think of this, ah, we will be terrified and be instigated. Next,

[\[69A, 27.18 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p153L8\)\]](#)

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

as described in Candragomin's *Letter to a Student*:⁴⁷⁰ [214]

After you have entered the womb, which is like hell,

You are hemmed in by foul-smelling filth

And trapped in pitch-dark gloom.

Your body cramped, you must undergo enormous sufferings.

This is what the Commentary tells us: Ah! This place is stinky, filthy, suppressing, dark, and cramped. It's like living in hell, having to endure enormous sufferings. Therefore, the Sutra tells us that while we are in the womb, we feel like being pressed under a mountain when our mother is full. Ah! When she is hungry, you feel like being suspended in the air because the pressing weight is suddenly lifted. When she eats something hot, the heat is so unbearable. When it is something cold, you are tormented by the freezing pain. It is this bad! It's absolutely true, just that we don't know it at all. So if we diligently contemplate on this, we will realize that birth and death are entirely worthless.

[69A, 28.24 (手抄稿 第九冊 p154L2)]

So at this point we shall never waste human's most valuable gift. What is it? It is our ability to contemplate. Unfortunately, we do not put our ability of contemplation to best use. For example, we wonder in meaningless thoughts. It is such a waste! So sometimes when we talk about certain things, some people are particularly opinionated. I often feel like telling him, "You have a good brain, but do not use it on such nonsense matters! Instead, this is what you should seriously think about. If one can diligently contemplate on what is worth thinking, it

will be beneficial to both self and others. All the benefits lie in here, lie in here. So we have to hold on to this. Thus I put a reminder on the blackboard, “I must remember firmly, ‘What is my purpose of coming here? What is the goal?’” Once we have good grasp of this concept, you will be able to initiate the practice easily. Next, the Sutra:

[\[69A, 29.12 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p154L9\)\]](#)

[\[69B, 00.02 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p155L1\)\]](#)

[p273, English LR Vol 1]

The *Descent into the Womb Sidra* explains the meaning of these words:⁴⁷¹

Filthy with quantities of urine, brain-like substances, thick saliva, and marrow, the fetus dwells above the intestines and below the stomach, in a space which is filled with many kinds of filth and is

[English LR v.1 p.274](#)

home to a myriad of bacteria, with two very foul-smelling openings and hollows and apertures in the bone. Its front faces the vertebrae and its back, the stomach wall. It is nourished every month by its mother's uterine blood. The bits of food its mother has eaten are ground by her two rows of teeth and swallowed. As it is

swallowed, the food is moistened from below by saliva and the oozing of mouth sores, while it is polluted from above by thick saliva. The remains of that vomit-like food enter from above through the umbilical cord's opening and generate growth. Through the thickening, quivering, elongated, and globular stages, the embryo is completely transformed into a fetus with arms and legs. The placenta encloses its arms, legs, and cheeks. Reeking like an old rag used for mucus, the stench is unbearable. Enshrouded in pitch darkness, it moves up and down. The bitter, sour, pungent, salty, spicy, and astringent tastes of food affect it like hot coals. Like an intestinal worm, it feeds on filthy fluids; it finds itself in a swamp that oozes rotting filth. Its life-force is unstable. The heat of its mother's body torments, heats, and overheats it all in three degrees: slightly, moderately, and greatly. It experiences distressing, intense, violent, and unbearable agony. Whenever its mother moves a little, moderately, or greatly, it also moves in the same way, constrained by five bonds.⁴⁷² [215] It experiences agony that is distressing, intense, violent, unbearable, and almost inconceivable, as though it had been thrust into a pit of burning cinders.

The text above is found in the Sutra. It will not be explained in detail here. This is what we should learn if we are to take practice seriously. When you want to truly engage yourself in practice, you should first try to understand its

meaning. After that, you contemplate on it. But if you cannot understand, very simple, very simple! Well, actually it is not so simple nowadays. It was simpler when we were young. Nowadays, bathroom utensil is meant to ensure sanitation and is supposed to be..... Well, I once met a teacher, who told me, “People today are really deluded and their misconceptions continue to grow. In our old days, practice could be done anywhere, anytime. Now everything is decorated so beautifully, including the mortuary. After a person dies, his body is so heavily decorated and painted, like... When you walk into the mortuary, you cannot sense any atmosphere of a funeral, except your feeling of a lost family member.” The more I think about it, the more I agree to it. In my childhood, it was impossible that we find such sanitation facility. Nothing like that! Nothing but a hole (outhouse). You have to run far before you reach the hole, the flies scattered, and that unbearable stench, ah! Then in the hole you found larvae... This is exactly what it is like when we are in our mother’s womb. Really, it is just like this!

[69B, 02.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p156L9)]

Ah, so you have to use this method. In fact, it is even more dreadful than this. The larva in the hole only needs to endure stench. It is not pressed or burned. On the contrary, it is not only smelly and filthy in the womb, but also pressing and cold, freezing and scorching. All the tormenting conditions are

present. However, not all are like this. Many births enjoy a happy stay in their mothers' wombs, if they have a good karma. But we would better not assume that we have a good karma. That is, if you do not diligently practice the teaching of suffering, someday you will still need to go through this after you descend from the deity realm. This is yet the best case scenario. You might fall into hells, instead. So the main point here is that you have to contemplate on the most miserable circumstances. After that, you will be propelled to get out of it by all means. This is the purpose. And this is the focus that we need to grasp. Followings are the explanations. I will just read the explanations once.

[\[69B, 03.35 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p157L2\)\]](#)

[p274, English LR Vol 1]

Similarly, it is said that the fetus is harmed in the womb when the mother eats too much or too little; eats food that is too oily, pungent, cold, hot, salty, sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, or astringent; indulges her sexual desires; runs too much or too fast; jumps or swims; or sits or squats in front of the fire. It is also said that the fetus is confined by the stomach and held firm by the intestines

Ah! Pressing from above and pricking from under. It is like you are sitting on what is described by the term that we frequently use, “as though sitting on the blanket of spikes”.

Just like that! What the term describes is only that I sit on the spikes. But in addition to this, there is a huge mountain sitting on top of me. Sigh! There is indeed nothing right or good at all.

[\[69B, 04.19 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p157L7\)\]](#)

[p274, English LR Vol 1]

as though it were bound by five bonds or impaled on a stake.

There is even further suffering when the infant emerges from the womb and is born into the outside. Candragomin's *Letter to a Student* says:⁴⁷³

Being in the womb is like this. The process of birth is similar. What is it like to emerge from the womb?

[\[69B, 04.34 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p157L9\)\]](#)

[p274, English LR Vol 1]

It is crushed slowly, like sesame seeds in an oil press,

And then somehow it is born.

Nonetheless, those who do not lose their lives immediately

Must settle for pain.

The body that dwelt and grew in that filth

Is smeared with the womb's slime and has an unbearable foul smell.

Memory is lost upon being inflicted with such torment,

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Which is like having an inflamed boil burst or being on the verge of vomiting.

What is the emerging process like? Like pressing oil! Have you seen it before? Have you seen oil pressing? We are not talking about the contemporary method of extracting oil with chemicals. We saw how oil was pressed in the old days. Ah, the process was... First they poured oil (seed) into the pot and heated it until it was very hot. Then they pressed the seeds flat and roasted them. Then they put the seeds in a basket and pressed them with a big hammer. That pressing force was immense! Nowadays I see how people wrought steel. How people wrought steel in the old way was that they raised a huge hammer. Pa! When the hammer fell, the steel snapped. The oil pressing workers worked in the same fashion. Their arms are this thick. They pounded with the hammer. When we are born, it is like this. With regard to the hammer, we would cry like crazy if the hammer is gently laid on our toes, let alone hit by the hammer! And now the process of birth is as tormenting as this! There are many places where we are reminded of this!

[69B, 06.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p158L7)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

The *Descent into the Womb Sutra* explains the meaning of these words:⁴⁷⁴

The aforementioned is the explanation. Now let us read on.

[69B, 06.09 (手抄稿 第九冊 p158L9)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, when all its major and minor limbs have developed, the fetus stirs in a frightful, pitchdark place of urine that oozes rot, has an unbearable stench, is contaminated by excrement and urine, and continually dripping with foul-smelling filth, blood, and putrid fluids. Energy arising from the maturation of previous karma makes its feet turn up and its head turn down toward the opening. With both arms drawn in, it is slightly, moderately, and utterly smashed between two machines of bone. [216] The distressing, intense, violent, and unbearable agonies cause all the limbs of the body-painful as fresh wounds-to turn blue. All of the body's organs become hot. Since the uterine slime is now much reduced, the surface of the body dries out, and so the lips, throat, and heart become parched. Confined and full of insufferable dread, it emerges-however difficult this may be-when drawn out

by the influence of causes and conditions, by energies arising from the maturation of previous karma. Once outside, the air burns like caustic liquid on a wound; the mere touch of a hand or a cloth feels like the cut of a sword. It experiences distressing, intense, violent, and unbearable agony.

Ah! When one is born, being in the womb is so painful and the moment of birth is so unbearable! So the sutra explains that when we are born...our skin used to be exceptionally tender, exceptionally tender in our mother's womb. As soon as we are born and become exposed to the outside (world), upon contact, the pain, it is excruciating pain, excruciating pain! This is not so easy for us to...actually, honestly speaking, we can still easily... There are times when your skin is burned or for some reason you may have been injured. The outer layer of the skin is peeled off, leaving the flesh exposed. Ah! No need to mention letting it come into contact with anything, even a breeze could bring excruciating pain. Right? Just a little bit of water, say a little bit of salt water, or whatever [that is dripped on the wound], you would absolutely not be able to withstand the pain. When we are born, that's exactly how it feels. That is why the newborns cry out loud the moment they are born. This is the reason. Wow! One is in extreme pain. For his mind, he has this great fear. For his body, he has this great pain. Nah, nah, nah! This is what we cannot we cannot feel now. So if the Buddha didn't tell us. We won't even know. It is exactly like that.

[69B, 08.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p159L12)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

It is said that when taken up onto someone's lap and the like, or touched with hot or cold objects, the newborn baby experiences distressing, intense, violent, and unbearable agony, like a flayed cow being eaten by vermin or a leper whose lesions are struck with a whip.

And then, when the grown-ups see the baby, they would happily embrace him. When they hold the baby and touch any part of his body, every touch is nonetheless...that is why as soon as the babies are born, they cry! That's it. That's the reason. The baby is in pain! Everything is unbearable. Nothing is good.

[69B, 09.18 (手抄稿 第九冊 p160L3)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

Among the eight types of sufferings, regard this first type, along with the eighth type [the suffering of the five appropriated aggregates], as the most crucial and meditate upon both of them.

Actually these two things are most agonizing: the sufferings of birth and death. Yet, we simply can't relate to

these two things. So if it hadn't been told by the Buddha, we truly would not have known! We truly would not have known!

[69B, 09.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p160L6)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, as explained before, you should repeatedly investigate them with discerning wisdom and meditate on them.

So we must use the discerning wisdom as told to us earlier. This is birth, and then there is old age - birth and old age. Though I briefly read over it, the reason I only just read over it is because the main focus now is for us to become cognizant of this view. So when you actually meditate...now what we should do first is to recognize the vital points to the steps of the path. This is what's important. In our day-to-day life, when you become lazy or whatever that causes you to become unmotivated, that's when you can make a conscious effort to read over this part. Of course you shouldn't wait until you've lost motivation before you read it. You need to look at it beforehand. So then after you have studied it and in the case that you think you are about to become lazy, you can then [come back and] read it. Ah-yo! Then you'll be reminded: as soon as you become lazy, I am sorry, you'll stop right there.

[69B, 10.22 (手抄稿 第九冊 p160L13)]

Once you understand this mundane world, you'll realize that there's no other option. Oftentimes people would say, "Ah-ya, it doesn't work. I need to back out." If backing out would lead to happiness, I would be the first one to back out. I would definitely not want to inflict myself with such pain. It is because I now see clearly and plainly that there's no other path to take. Though you do suffer some now, but your monumental efforts will give you the opportunity to be freed from suffering. If you can't even put up with such minor pain and decide to back out, boundless miseries await you. If you can't even put up with such minor pain and decide to back out, will you be able to bear the boundless miseries? This is the concept of utmost importance. Why do we want to back out? It is because we are muddleheaded! Therefore, all these things are actually helping us. So even though I am not explaining it here, but it holds the greatest importance, the greatest importance for your cultivation! Now let's continue on. Anyhow, for each section, we should know the effect that it brings. So whenever we have this type of sickness, we should immediately come for this remedy. This remedy is the exact antidote. Now that we know birth, then it is about old age.

[69B, 11.28 (手抄稿 第九冊 p161L9)]

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

(ii) The suffering of old age

There are five points to contemplate:

The first point,

[\[69B, 11.31 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p161L11\)\]](#)

[p275, English LR Vol 1]

1) *A handsome body deteriorates: your back bends down like a bow; your head is white like the dra-wa (spra-ba) grass flower; wrinkles cover your forehead like the lines of a cutting board. In ways such as these, youth breaks down and you become unattractive.*

The first thing about old age, after you become old...when you normally stand up, you can stand very upright. But once you become old, you can't keep your back straight. You will look like a bow. Ah! I am deeply aware of this for myself. I know I need to sit up straight [in a session], but after a little while, ah, I can't help to have a sore and aching back. Just like that. So then I have to exit the pose. But actually, actually, you have not reached old age yet. But many of us here have become frail even though they haven't reached old age. That is really pitiful! You must quickly strive! In particular for the mind, for some people, that is even more critical, even more critical! Then **“your head is white like the dra-wa grass flower.”** At that time the hair is completely white, like that.

“Wrinkles cover your forehead like the lines of a cutting board.” What does a cutting board look like? Usually our skin is very tender and smooth, whereas the cutting board is full of lines left by the cutting knives. When we are old, our face is just like that. Women should pay particular attention to this. Don’t say, “Ah-ya, it is miserable to cultivate!” When you’re reminded of this here, cultivation becomes the only path. It is the only path. There is no other way out. **“Wrinkles cover your forehead,”** and **“you become unattractive,”** these do not necessarily apply to women only. Whoever enjoys this type of thing, this point is particularly valuable to you. Second,

[\[69B, 13.05 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p162L9\)\]](#)

[English LR v.1 p.276](#)

2) ***Physical strength and vigor deteriorate:*** for example, when you sit down, you drop like a sack of dirt cut from a rope; when you rise up, it is like uprooting a tree; when you speak, you are incoherent; and when you walk, you stumble.

[217]

3) ***The senses deteriorate:*** your eyes cannot see forms clearly, and so forth; and the power of memory and the other faculties wanes due to extreme forgetfulness, and so on.

The second thing is that physical strength and vigor deteriorate. When you sit down, you drop like a sack of dirt cut from a rope. What does a sack of dirt cut from a rope mean? The sack is normally tied up by a rope. And then, when you let it loose, "pu-tong!" It drops. When one gets old, that's how it is. When one is going to sit on the stool, then "ka-da!" He drops at once. Ah! When you stand, you can't stand too long. When we are sitting, it seems fine. But when we want to stand up, we just can't. Ah! It's extremely difficult to stand up. You can't really relate to it now. But when you are sick, that's how it is. Ah! When you stand, the legs just lack strength! When you speak, you are slow and incoherent. When you walk, you are slow and stumble.

[69B, 13.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p163L2)]

Then, "**the senses deteriorate.**" This particularly refers to the body. Physical strength and vigor diminish. The internal senses deteriorate. "**The eyes**" "**can't see clearly**". "**The power of memory wanes due to extreme forgetfulness.**" Your mindfulness weakens. Just like that. When you reach that point, you develop both near- and far-sightedness. You can't see either far or near. Ah! Really! Just like that, just like that. Then, you forget many things as quickly as you turn around your body. However hard you try, you just can't recall anything. Right now everyone has this mentality – "Ah! I can hold off patiently and wait until later to practice." This is what

you will be like when you are old, can you still practice? When you are young, you waste your strength and vigor on things that are meaningless and unnecessary. This is somewhat understandable for the lay people because they don't know. But for a renunciate to keep himself busy with these irrelevant matters, it would be a great shame! If you keep yourself busy with these irrelevant matters, then once you are old, there is only the dreadful end. This is the situation!

[69B, 14.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p163L9)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

4) ***Enjoyment of sense objects fades: you have difficulty digesting food and drink, and cannot enjoy desirable objects.***

It (the prior section) refers to the internal aspects. What about the external objects?

The enjoyments, what you used to be pleased by, sorry, you now have difficulties digesting them. You can no longer enjoy them. Ah! You really want it badly, yet you just can't have it. Then,

[69B, 15.21 (手抄稿 第九冊 p163L12)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

5) ***The deterioration of life is painful: as your life nears exhaustion, you head rapidly toward death.***

Think about these points again and again.

For these five points, you want to constantly and thoroughly reflect on them! It references the sutra to explain this to us.

[69B, 15.37 (手抄稿 第九冊 p164L1)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

As the *Extensive Sport Sutra* says:⁴⁷⁵

As aging progresses and we pass a certain point,

This "**old age**," this phenomenon, the characteristic of "old age" is that it forces each one of us to gradually age. It gradually, gradually chips away your youth and vigor.

[69B, 15.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p164L4)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

We are like a tree struck by lightning,

Just like a tree that was just standing upright and then completely shattered by lightning.

[69B, 16.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p164L6)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

**Withered by old age like a terrible, decrepit house.
O Sage, speak quickly about an escape from old age.**

That's what old age is! Therefore, the Bhagavan tells us the characteristics of old age. Thus, once you understand, quickly take advantage of the time that you can do something about it and quickly escape, escape this suffering!

[69B, 16.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p164L9)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

**Age enfeebles the masses of men and women
As a windstorm strips vines from a grove of sal trees
Age steals our vigor, skill, and strength –
It is as though we are stuck in mud.**

No matter men or women, age enfeebles them. What is enfeebling like? Like the windstorm blowing through a grove of sal trees. Sal trees are brittle. When a strong storm runs through, the brittle branches are immediately broken. By then our persevering and strong attitude will be completely gone. What would it be like then? As if stuck in mud, it's difficult for you to either proceed or fallback!

[69B, 17.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p165L1)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

Age makes attractive bodies unattractive.

Age steals our glory and our strength.

Age steals our happiness and subjects us to insults.

Age takes our vigor; age begets deaths.

It's that serious.

[69B, 17.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p165L3)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

Jen-ga-wa said: "The pain of death is horrible but brief; how horrible is aging!"

Though death is terrible, but at least it's brief! If you truly look at this, aging is the worst. What the former teacher says next is absolutely true.

[69B, 17.32 (手抄稿 第九冊 p165L6)]

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

Ga-ma-pa said: "It is well that aging happens little by little. If it happened all at once, it would be intolerable."

It's a good thing that old age comes gradually. In general, after a person turns 40, it will gradually manifest, will manifest. When you get to 70, 80 years old, within these few decades, if the characteristics of aging were to happen all at once, no one would be able to forbear this, no one could forbear this. This is absolutely true. Normally if we all of a sudden got sick, it could be something very small, but you are all of a suddenly down because of your sickness. Ah! You would feel so miserable. Often when we get sick, we virtually want to stop living. Why? We cannot bear it anymore! Therefore, if aging happens all at once, then no one can take this.

[69B, 18.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p165L13)]

If we don't think about this then it's fine. There are times that I already feel it. Sometimes, it truly feels like this! It is absolutely true, no matter what aspect. For everything mentioned earlier, I don't care so much that my hair turned white. I don't care that my face wrinkles like a cutting board. But truly when I sit down, if you ask me to do so slowly, I will sit and "kata!" I would have sat down as such. When I stand up it's like uprooting a tree. After I stand for a while, I feel really tired. Then as I talk to you about something that's so obvious and clear...eh? It's on the tip of my tongue but I just can't remember this person's name. I would try to recall it for

a long time but I can't remember it. And it is someone who I see often, someone I see often. The memory is reduced to such level! You cannot imagine how serious this is.

[69B, 19.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p166L7)]

Therefore, if it came all at once, truly, no one can stand this. Yet we seem to be fairly content now and think we can take things slowly. How can you take it slowly? You can only do this when you are young and able. That's why I see some of you young fellow practitioners who try to hide in the back thinking that it won't get to your turn. Being lazy is the greatest loss! On the other hand, I see some young practitioners here whom I truly praise, I am really happy for them. I am too old now and can't do much. I can only earn what? Merits from rejoice.

[69B, 19.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p166L12)]

That's why as soon as I woke up in the morning, when I saw the fellow practitioner who lives across from me, his light is always.... When I get up in the morning, my greatest joy is to see that light. Ah, I so praise that! Even though I am old, but this person is training during his youth! And I have earned the merit of praising someone training in his youth. On the other hand, with this other person, I had already woken up and

washed up for some time, but he would still be dragging and drudging along. The bell had rung, the drum had sounded, but he was still there washing his face. I used to think how come this person is like this. But now I have learned. Ah! It is just too bad for this person! I do not wish to be like that. He has done much to exhort me! Eh, that is great! That is excellent! I hope that you do what I did as well. So, you do not need to be surprised at others' actions, or be afflicted over them. In brief, on the one hand this enhances your learning. On the other hand, you want to cherish yourself! In many instances, you want to take the aforementioned principles and contemplate often. If you contemplate more, then you will be able to begin to strive. Now let us look at the sufferings.

[\[69B, 20.52 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p167L7\)\]](#)

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

(iii) The suffering of illness

Here there are also five points [to contemplate]:

This suffering is divided into five parts. Let me read through them. I think these sufferings are things that everyone can readily relate to. So, I will just read through it and let you relate to it yourself. Number one.

[\[69B, 21.05 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p167L9\)\]](#)

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

- 1) ***Illness changes the nature of the body: the flesh wastes away, the skin dries out, and so forth.***

So, number two.

[\[69B, 21.14 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p167L11\)\]](#)

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

- 2) ***Pain and anguish increase and are seldom absent: the elements of the body-water, earth, air, and fire-are not in equilibrium and fluctuate chaotically, causing physical torment, which in turn produces mental anguish. You spend night and day in this state.***

This is number two.

[\[69B, 21.25 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p167L13\)\]](#)

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

- 3) ***There is no desire for attractive things:***

In general, you would wish for good sight, delicious food, fun activities, but by then, nothing will work.

[\[69B, 21.32 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p168L2\)\]](#)

[p276, English LR Vol 1]

as you are told that desirable things harm those who are sick, you cannot indulge

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in them freely; [218] and you do not have the range of movements and postures that you would wish.

4) *You must have recourse, however unwillingly, to unpleasant objects:* the sick are forced to take unpalatable medicine, food, drink, and the like; and have to rely on harsh therapies that involve such things as being burned with fire or being penetrated with instruments.

The section before describes how with the attractive objects, sorry, you can't indulge in them. Here with the unpleasant objects, you will have to have them.

[69B, 22.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p168L6)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

5) *You lose your vital energy:* it is painful to realize that your illness is terminal.

This is the same.

[69B, 22.22 (手抄稿 第九冊 p168L8)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

Reflect with care upon these points. As the *Extensive Sport Sutra* says:

**Hundreds of illnesses and the pain of rampant disease
Afflict us, just as humans oppress wild animals.**

Much like those people, the hunters who hunt for deer, this disease, this is how we are harmed by this disease.

[69B, 22.37 (手抄稿 第九冊 p168L10)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

**Regard the beings overwhelmed by old age and disease
And quickly speak about escape from suffering.**

Quickly! We must go to the Buddha who explains to us this suffering. We must quickly think of ways to escape this!

[69B, 22.49 (手抄稿 第九冊 p168L12)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

In deep winter, wind and great blizzards

**Take the vigor from the grasses, shrubs, trees, and herbs.
In the same way, disease takes the vigor out of living
beings;
It breaks down their faculties, physical appearance, and
strength.**

This is the same.

[69B, 23.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p169L2)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

**It will drain a great fortune in wealth and grain to the last.
Disease constantly humiliates living beings;
It harms them and is contemptuous of beauty.
It torments them, like the sun beating down from the sky.**

I do not need to explain these words but you can go through them carefully yourself. Anyhow, this is something that you can have feelings for. It is very easy. You can relate to this, you can relate. Even if you cannot develop feelings for them, [but because] you have faith in the Buddha and so you can [still] strive to reflect and analyze. For now, the most critical thing to do is for us to maintain this idea within us.

Lastly, among birth, old age, sickness, and death, here is "death":

[69B, 23.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p169L7)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

(iv) The suffering of death

Again, there are five points to contemplate:

- 1) You are separated from objects that are fine and attractive.**
- 2) You are separated from close relatives who are fine and attractive.**
- 3) You are separated from companions who are fine and attractive.**
- 4) You are deprived of a body that is fine and attractive.**
- 5) As you die, you experience terrible pain and anguish.**

Reflect on these repeatedly, until you become disenchanted.

Suppose within our mind, we do not understand the aforementioned reality, we do not develop disenchantment due to a lack of understanding, and perhaps go as far as being attached. In this case, you will need to continually reflect. We need not busy ourselves with anything else. We should truly busy ourselves with this. You need to pay attention to this! We are here to learn knowledge, but do not regard them as mere knowledge. The goal is right here. If you can focus on this, then this will become your great learning. Otherwise, no matter how much you know, it will be futile!

[69B, 24.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p169L13)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

How do the first four of these constitute suffering? You suffer upon seeing that you are losing these four excellent things.

These refer to wealth and companions.

[69B, 24.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p170L2)]

[p277, English LR Vol 1]

The *Extensive Sport Sutra*:⁴⁷⁷

**You die and pass on to another life, and in so doing
You are forever separated from people who are
beautiful and beloved. [219]**

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**Like a leaf from a tree, or the current of a river,
You will never return and meet them again.**

**Death makes the powerful weak.
Death takes you away, as a river carries away a log
People go alone, unaccompanied, with no
companion –
Powerless because their karma has its effects.**

This is your issued karmic effect. You have no way out of this.

[69B, 25.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p170L6)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

**Death seizes myriad living beings,
As sea-monsters seize swarms of creatures,
As an eagle seizes a snake, or a lion an elephant,
As fire takes hold of grass, trees, and swarming
creatures.**

When death comes, this is the condition. No matter what state you are in, as soon as death comes, alright, that is all there is, all there is. These are the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness and death. These four things, I have gone through these today.

[69B, 25.43 (手抄稿 第九冊 p170L9)]

Please open up to *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, page 161. (English text, page 278). Every suffering here is divided into five parts. Every suffering is divided into five parts. If you reflect and analyse frequently, then you will develop a strong feeling that life is nothing more than suffering. There are four more other ones next. Now

here we can in many instances relate to the following three sufferings. The last one is actually the root to everything, the most important one. Let us now discuss them one by one. Let us read the text.

[69B, 26.52 (手抄稿 第九冊 p171L1)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

**(v) The suffering of encountering what is unpleasant
Here there are also five points to contemplate:**

This is divided into five parts as well.

[69B, 27.00 (手抄稿 第九冊 p171L3)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

- 1) **Merely encountering your enemies, for example, causes pain and anguish.**
- 2) **You dwell in fear of being punished by them.**
- 3) **You fear they will speak maliciously, without kind words.**
- 4) **You dread death.**
- 5) **You worry that you will go to a miserable realm after death for having acted in ways contrary to the teaching.**

Reflect on these.

The pleasant things [for you] in the mundane world are just not so easy to encounter. But for the unpleasant things, it is just so difficult to avert. Enemies, those you have hostility toward, those you resent, you just end up running into them. Let us think about what is present before us. At all times, there isn't anything that goes as we wish. So, this is divided into five parts. When you encounter your enemies, you will have pain and anger. Your mind will be disturbed. Then the enemies will harm each other and injure each other's body. This pain can be divided into the physical and mental aspects, or it can include both the physical and mental aspects.

[69B, 28.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p171L10)]

You are also afraid, this is in general, you are afraid that they will harm you. This is number two. Due to this, at the same time, "**you fear they will speak maliciously.**" The enemies, everyone is like this, you say that I am wrong and I say that you are wrong. So then there will be all sorts of slandering. Then it is "**without kind words.**" (Translator note: this part in the Chinese text it says that "we will be subject to no praises. So, Shifu goes on to explain this.) We wish for praises from others. In this case, not only will one not obtain that, but will actually be harmed. And then you will fear death. Not only will your reputation in the present suffer, but that there will be actual physical harm, perhaps even to the extent

of losing your life. Since you have acted "**contrary to the teaching,**" you will fear going to the miserable realms after death. These are the five parts. Those you find unpleasant, you will have to encounter them. On the other hand, those you find pleasant, you will have to be separated from them!

[\[69B, 29.28 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p172L2\)\]](#)

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

(vi) The suffering of separation from what is pleasant
Again, there are five points to contemplate. When you are separated from a very dear relative, for example:

1) **In your mind, sorrow arises.**

The first one is sorrow. Your mind really feel....

[\[69B, 29.28 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p172L2\)\]](#)

[\[69B, 29.41 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p172L4\)\]](#)

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

2) **In your speech, you lament.**

In your mind, you will feel the sorrow. When you speak, you really don't know what to say!

[69B, 29.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p172L6)]

[70A, 00.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p177L1)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

- 3) **You bring harm to your own body.**
- 4) **You are saddened, recalling and missing the good qualities of what you have lost.**

Because when you think of the person you love has all kinds of good qualities, you feel difficult to be apart! You just can't let go.

[70A, 00.15 (手抄稿 第九冊 p177L3)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

- 5) **Recourse is no longer available for what you have lost.**

Reflect on these.

So I will lack all kinds of resources as well. This has been divided into five parts. These are all easy to understand.

[70A, 00.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p177L5)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

(vii) The suffering of not getting what you want

Again, there are five points, similar to separation from what is pleasant.

Number seven, for what you wish to get, you can't get it. This is just like separation from what is pleasant. Separation from what is pleasant describes those that you love. This says,

[70A, 00.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p178L1)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

Seeking but not getting what you want means,

The things that you are busy with,

[70A, 00.42 (手抄稿 第九冊 p178L3)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

for example, farming a field but reaping no harvest,

As a farmer, you worked for a long time but have no good harvest.

[70A, 00.51 (手抄稿 第九冊 p178L6)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

or engaging in business but receiving no profits.

As a businessman, you may not obtain benefit.

[70A, 00.54 (手抄稿 第九冊 p178L7)]

[p278, English LR Vol 1]

The pain of disappointment comes from working hard to get something that you long for, and then not getting it.

The texts are all easy to understand. So we should take the meaning of what has been said and on all occasions relate to them in our daily lives. For instance, this is even the case for us who have become ordained or have started to learn the teachings. Ah! we had imagined what it would be like and came with great enthusiasm. But when we arrive, we are greatly disappointed! What is that? That is not getting what you want. What is another side of not getting what you want? What you encountered is far below what you had expected. Even if you feel that the situation might be pretty good, but it may not necessarily work to your advantage. You may feel that, oh-yo, there are many who have real achievements and so on, but there is just no way for you to follow them. It is everything of this sort. Whether it is the mundane world or the supramundane world, these situations occur all the time. Lastly,

[70A, 02.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p179L1)]

English LR v.1 p.279

(viii) The suffering of the five appropriated aggregates
The Buddha said, "In brief, the five appropriated aggregates are suffering."⁴⁷⁸ Reflection on the meaning of this teaching again takes in five points.

In general, we would say "the flaming of five appropriated aggregates." The flaming of the five appropriated aggregates, so how are they flaming? Here, let me say a few words. Actually, when we truly contemplate these eight types of sufferings, the most important thing to be concluded from them is the last suffering, the five appropriated aggregates. This is the focal point in training in the medium capacity. The focal point is right here. Now let us study this well.

[70A, 02.37 (手抄稿 第九冊 p179L6)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

It is the nature of the five aggregates appropriated by karma and the afflictions to be:

- (1) vessels for future suffering;**
- (2) vessels for suffering based on what presently exists;**

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- (3) vessels for the suffering of pain;**
- (4) vessels for the suffering of change; and**
- (5) vessels for the suffering of conditionality.**

Reflect on these again and again.

What are the five appropriated aggregates? It is what we called the five aggregates. "Form" would be our physical body. It is the physical body, composed by different characteristics of form. Then there are "feeling, discrimination, compositional factors, and consciousness." These are the mind aggregates. "Consciousness," the last one is the consciousness. The type of activities and the functions of consciousness are feeling, discrimination, and compositional factors. So in summary, these five major categories are combined to produce a continuum of body and mind. This continuum of body and mind will incessantly whirl inside the five realms. This is therefore called pudgala (all beings subject to transmigration). One will incessantly whirl in cyclic existence. These things - the five aggregates, the five appropriated aggregates, are what we would usually call "human being." When we relate this "human being" to the self, it would be called "I." That is where all the problems come from. This is the basis of all problems. Now let's take a look at what this thing is? This is everything, everything that we desire, we are nonetheless preoccupied by this, nonetheless preoccupied by this. Now let us take a look at what this is.

[70A, 04.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p180L2)]

This says that these things (the five appropriated aggregates) are "[vessels] **for future suffering.**" The future which has yet to come, so this is to say that you will eventually get it in the future. When you do get it the vessels for future suffering which are the basis of all sufferings for the future. "Vessels" are containers. For example, this tea cup here contains water. So now the five appropriated aggregates contain sufferings. Once these aggregates are formed in the future, what happens? There, it will contain merely some sufferings and nothing else. This thing works just like that. "**Vessels for suffering based on what presently exists,**" once it exists, all sufferings will come from the existing aggregates. So this thing is so flawed. It brings nothing but suffering. Then, the aggregates themselves are "**vessels for the suffering of pain.**" Pain itself is of course suffering. This sort of suffering, where is it? You can physically and mentally feel it. How about happiness? Sorry, happiness is {the [vessels for the suffering of] change}. This happiness is the suffering of change, when it changes, you cannot stand the pain. In addition, there is the "**vessels for the suffering of conditionality.**" Though you normally feel neither pain nor happiness, I am sorry to say that things cannot be stopped. Whatever is phenomenal is impermanent. It will always push forward. And what is the result from this? You will still revolve around suffering. You should reflect on this repeatedly.

[70A, 05.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p180L12)]

What we should really recognize with regards to the truth of suffering, this is where we should place particular emphasis on. This is the root [of all]. There are a variety of causes. But when we discuss issues in general, this is something you need to pay special attention to! That is we must have certainty of what the root is. Usually we learn a lot of things and what you have seen may make sense to you. But we tend to dwell on the insignificant issues. So after studying for a long time, we couldn't get hold of what the root is. We would take the longer path and may even stray further and further away. This is what we should know. Similarly, the most important thing in learning Buddhism is that you must first understand what is the fundamental root . When we talk about sufferings in general, there are various kinds. In summary, we just wanted to find out: Yes, this is suffering! So if you want to get rid of the suffering, what is the fundamental basis of doing that? You must recognize that first.

[70A, 06.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p181L3)]

Similarly, as we are learning Buddhism, the teachings available now are numerous. Not to mention the countless teachings but for those mentioned in Tripitaka [the three baskets], ah, the first step on ethical discipline itself has

already so much information. Ah! And we have one set over here and one set over there, the Mahasamghika, the Sthaviravada, and the Sarvastivada. You absolutely do not know where to start! No matter which aspect you are working on, you must find the most important fundamental root, to proceed from there. Once you have a grasp of the fundamental root, then you can slowly work your way down to its derivatives. Only then will we have a chance and only by doing so will we solve the problem. Otherwise, the problem can never be resolved. Now, let us read on from here.

[\[70A, 07.22 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p181L9\)\]](#)

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

Here, with regard to the first point,

This is the first one.

[\[70A, 07.24 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p181L11\)\]](#)

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

you induce suffering in future lives by taking up these appropriated aggregates. As for the second, the appropriated aggregates form the basis for states,

This is for the future. Once we have taken up the appropriated aggregates, by taking up the appropriated

aggregates, just because... for example, once we have taken up these five aggregates, we will create all sorts of karma. All the future sufferings are induced by the karma we create now. This will induce the future effect, induce the future effect. Then similarly for the present moment, all sufferings are based on what presently exists. So, not only are there sufferings now, it also induce suffering in future lives. When you induce suffering in future lives by taking up the appropriated aggregates, this will again induce more [sufferings] in the future. This will continue to increase forever. What are our sufferings now?

[\[70A, 08.15 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p182L4\)\]](#)

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

such as illness and old age, that are grounded in the already existing aggregates.

Those mentioned previously such as birth, old age, illness, death, and then separation from what is pleasant, encountering what is unpleasant, and not getting what you want, all of these [sufferings] come from this. So the root of these [sufferings] is right here.

[\[70A, 08.28 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p182L7\)\]](#)

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

The third and the fourth both come about because the appropriated aggregates are linked with dysfunctional tendencies toward these two types of suffering.

So the third and the fourth are the suffering of pain and the suffering of change respectively. How do these two come about? This is because the five appropriated aggregates that are vessels for the future suffering as well as for suffering based on what presently exists, these two are linked with "**dysfunctional tendencies.**" This means the body and mind we attained were results of our afflictions and defilements. The content of what we attained from the results of afflictions and defilements consists nothing but fruitional, causally concordant and environmental effects which revolve around each other repeatedly. We repeatedly pass through birth and death as we revolve around these "seeds and manifestations." (The editor's note: This refers to the seeds and its manifestations in the present actions.) Hence this is called "**dysfunctional tendencies.**" We will incessantly continue in this process. It is this repeated process that induces future lives, which are nothing more than the suffering of pain and the suffering of change. So what about the last one, the suffering of conditionality?

[70A, 09.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p182L13)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

As regards the fifth, the very existence of the appropriated aggregates constitutes the nature of the suffering of conditionality,

From the very beginning, we are in this conditionality [of compositional activities]. Actually, from the beginning, [we would say that] it is the time we begin to relate to this. But has it been this way before [we developed an understanding]? Yes, it's just that we can't feel it. But in reality, the aggregates of compositional activity, from the beginningless time, it has never stopped its activities. This is the heart of the problem.

[70A, 10.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p183L4)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

because all of the compositional factors which depend on previous karma and afflictions are the suffering of conditionality.

What are the compositional factors that we have? They are our ignorance from the past. The ignorance caused us to create all kinds of defiled karma to achieve this. Thus we are compelled to follow the subjective aspects of the afflictions and karma. Everything is determined by afflictions and karma. There is nothing you can do about it, nothing you can do about it. Hence inevitably, you will continue the process of birth and

death along with the causal compositional factors. This is the suffering of conditionality. Thus regarding this,

[70A, 10.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p183L9)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

This will be explained in detail in the section on the three sufferings.⁴⁷⁹

The suffering of pain, the suffering of change, and the suffering of conditionality, these will be explained to us in detail later. Why does he want to explain more in detail? It is because this is the root, the most important root. When you understand the attributes of the appropriated aggregates, that's the time you would develop great disenchantment. Otherwise, what do we busy ourselves with all day long? We would be busy with this thing. But in reality, this is our ultimate enemy in cyclic existence, our ultimate enemy in cyclic existence! Hence the Buddha repeatedly tells us that there is nothing good about this thing, there is nothing good about this thing! What is the only benefit? We take advantage of this thing to practice Dharma. Because of this, in order to practice, you have to eat and live somewhere. But what do you do for the food? You would go out for alms. You would get just enough to fill your stomach. As for accommodation, ah, you can live anywhere. Even a night under the tree would do. But what we have now is far beyond that. It is because we

don't recognize this, so we devote particular care to this all day long. We devote particular care to this all day long. Since we devote much care to this, all the afflictions arise from that, all the afflictions arise from that!

[70A, 12.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p184L5)]

But actually, we can also feel this. What do the lay practitioners busy with? After all, this is one of the two main issues, one of the two main issues. One is for the maintenance of life and the other is for the continuation of life. To maintain your life means that you eat to live. That's it. And then when we become ordained, we are supposed to be liberated from this thing. Actually because we have not recognize the root of the problem, so we are still busy with this thing all day long. This mouth, truly; when you speak of it, no matter how reasonable you sound, as soon as you get there, all sorts of problems arise, all sorts of problems arise. There are also all kinds of excuses. What is the reason for this? This is because we do not understand the fundamental concept.

[70A, 13.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p184L11)]

Even though the earlier part had mentioned so much about sufferings, it's true, but he cannot recognize the root of cause. Now over here, after finding the root cause, by the time, you can solve the fundamental problem. When the

fundamental problem is resolved...since all the sufferings as mentioned earlier are produced from taking up the five appropriated aggregates, when the problem of the five appropriated aggregates is resolved and completely eliminated, the [sufferings] mentioned earlier will be gone. But what is the reason for mentioning those problems earlier? Why? It is to exhort you to feel a great dissatisfaction with what you are now. So then you will strive to find a solution to solve this problem. You will look for a solution. Then you will get to the bottom of it to find its root cause. Then you will eliminate it.

[70A, 13.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p185L2)]

Why do we emphasize this concept again and again? Why did the Buddha tell us about this first? Wherever we are right now, why must we know about this? You say you want to cultivate. Yes, so where do you cultivate from? If you cannot understand this, yet you spend so much time cultivating, isn't that a waste of your efforts? That is because you have only understood very little of it, but you say you want to practice, you want to practice. There are many people who are just like that. Ah, it's best that I go practice, and why are you worried about this! But as for why you should practice, what should you practice? He doesn't know! Since you don't know, how are you going to practice? Another type of person would say, "I need to understand the principles." But after practicing for

some time, they drift further and further away. They become more confused as they try to figure it out the text. Hence over here, I must emphasize this again, I must emphasize this. You must get hold of these issues and concentrate our limited efforts right here! Then once you are able to solve the main problem, great! The rest of the problems will naturally be resolved.

[70A, 15.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p185L10)]

It goes on to say now that we understand this, so the problem stems from ~~this~~ here. On the contrary, if you do not understand the problem, what would happen?

[70A, 15.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p185L12)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

If you do not cultivate a genuine sense of disenchantment with cyclic existence—the nature of which is the appropriated aggregates—you will have no chance to develop a genuine mind intent on liberation,

Regarding this problem, in other words, if you absolutely do not comprehend the nature of the five appropriated aggregates. Since its nature is suffering, yet you do not recognize it as suffering, and as a result, we instinctively feel that this is me, and feel really happy about it! We want

nutrition, we want to be fat, we want to be plump, and we demand comfort. Under this circumstance, all sorts of problem will ensue. Of course then, how can one develop a genuine sense of disenchantment [with cyclic existence]? Now that we have understood the texts presented earlier, what is liberation? It is to be freed from the bondage. What binds you? Afflictions and karma. What do afflictions and karma bind? They bind the five appropriated aggregates together. Hence you must develop a great disgust for the five appropriated aggregates and a mind intent on liberation. That is when you will go further to look for the cause and reasons why we are bound. The root to the entire cultivation of the teaching begins from here.

[70A, 16.38 (手抄稿 第九冊 p186L6)]

Since you do not understand this now, you therefore cannot develop a genuine sense of disenchantment. Since you cannot develop a genuine sense of disenchantment, how can you develop the mind intent on liberation? Since you wish for liberation, this is when you will seek for all sorts of methods in order to be liberated and be trained on that path. That is when you will have [the idea], "Ah, it is necessary to maintain the vows!" With this foundation, it would be all fine whether you recite the Buddha's name, practice Zen, or learn the teachings. But if you have not figured out the problem, you have no grasp of it, then (it would be pointless for you) to be

reciting the Buddha's name, maintaining the vows, practicing Zen, engaging in a sitting meditation. You could be meditating, but what are you (really) doing? What are you (really) doing? You may have researched a great deal, but what are you (really) doing? Are we not shooting arrows without a target? Therefore, it said earlier that if you have not figured this problem out, it would be like shooting arrows [at random], much like us going out to a shooting range without knowing where the target is. We would be pointing the gun to the sky and be shooting randomly. If we randomly shoot at the sky, we would at most waste bullets. But if we shoot randomly (i.e. preaching without true understanding) now we would kill a lot of people. And you will have to pay for the lost lives! This is what we have been doing.

[70A, 17.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p186L14)]

So as for this point, no one should rush off to start cultivating. You should be busy with - Why do I cultivate! Once you understand this firmly, then you can look for the method of cultivation. That is when you will feel, "Ah! This method suits me. It befits my disposition." Then you will devote your entire attention to it. And your problem is naturally solved! Oh, once you learned that the only thing you can do is to recite the Buddha's name. You will hold tightly onto the Buddha's epithet upon hearing this. It would not matter even if the sky has fallen, it does not matter at all. If you have developed the

great spirit, [you will think,] "Once I get there, I will come back and help others." The problem is solved. If you are maintaining the vows, all you have to do is to have a grasp of a single thing. Oh, the ethical discipline tells you that if you are able to produce this kind of purity, it will bring about rebirth in the human and deity realms, or even bring about liberation. You will then devote all your attention to this. This is why people would say "One who is zealous for knowledge rather than the discipline." What is the purpose for that? It is right here. If you can have a grasp of this, even if you are zealous for knowledge rather than discipline, you can still be liberated. Otherwise, sorry, there will certainly be problems because ethical discipline is the root!

[70A, 18.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p187L7)]

Why do we say one who is zealous for knowledge rather than the discipline can be liberated as well? It is (because) by this time he will feel, "Oh, so this is the root of it!" He will then certainly devote all his energy to resolve this fundamental problem. So he will apply that fundamental idea. Although you need to maintain all three aspects of the ethical discipline, you cannot err at physical or the verbal actions at all. But at this time he will discover that as long as he is able to hold on to the mental aspect, he can deal with the other aspects gradually at a later time. This is how it is. Hence if one is reciting the Buddha's name, and have nothing other than this one

Buddha's name in mind, he will definitely be liberated! Then for those who are practicing Zen, one will be contemplating this all day long, "Who is the person reciting the Buddha's name?" "Who is the person dragging this corpse?" He is determined to find it. Ah, when he finally finds the answer, he is then in accordance with emptiness. Of course then the problem is solved. Therefore, this right here is what the ancients meant when they said "zealous for knowledge"! Now when we say [we want to be] "zealous for knowledge rather than the discipline", we are lax with discipline, and yet not zealous for knowledge. Where else would we end up but the miserable realms! On the other hand, if we are zealous on maintaining ethical discipline, but why should we be zealous for that? The purpose is still this - telling you that this is the root to cyclic existence so you should refrain (from certain actions)! You must stop it right here! Ah! Therefore, you tremble with fear and place meticulous care on this. This is because you understand that, "It is impossible for us, ordinary beings, to understand reality of things!"

[70A, 20.14 (手抄稿 第九冊 p188L2)]

Therefore one day a fellow practitioner came to talk to me. He is a brilliant person. Ah, he has practiced ethical discipline before. He told me then, "Truly for us to be doing this, we will have to be Arhats." I very much praised that. It is absolutely correct. Why? When we get to that point, we are

not turned by the manifestations [of afflictions] in our minds. That is when you can objectively see the problem. His statement is correct. But can we accomplish that now? Leave this topic aside for now, what is the actual question here? Even though we cannot accomplish that right now, what should we be doing now in the causal period? There! We should be busy at this. If you can grasp this, in this case, you do not need to be afraid even though you are not able to completely grasp the crux of the problem! If you are able to grasp the root, and continue to plough through that, you will certainly resolve your problem! And what is the real goal to maintaining ethical discipline? It is this. Otherwise, you will focus on the ethical discipline conducts, the ethical discipline forms, ah, this, and that if you cannot figure this out. The more you practice, the further away you will be. This is what we must understand.

[70A, 21.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p188L11)]

Therefore it is telling us this: If you do not genuinely understand the nature of the appropriated aggregates in the cyclic existence, there is no chance for you to develop this mind intent on liberation. Now what is the goal of becoming ordained and of cultivating? It has told us earlier that we are not doing this to just become an Arhat. If you wish to become an Arhat, you can achieve that by adopting the eight precepts. Why do you bother doing this? You can do that by being a

novice monk, such as the Kunti novice monk and so on. Why do you bother adopting the 250 vows that are so difficult to practice? To gain just a little benefit? This is what we must understand! Therefore, this is its root!

[70A, 22.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p189L1)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

and there will be no way for you to develop great compassion for living beings wandering through cyclic existence.

For ourselves, we will develop disenchantment. And then it is with this understanding we know how horrendous it is. All problems come from this. As we place ourselves in others' shoes we develop the great compassion. Therefore great compassion must come from your having deeply felt how horrendous this thing is. Then from this you begin to sympathize with others. Now if you are attached and find it difficult to let go (of your possessions), to say that you sympathize them, what do you sympathize them for? Is that not completely ludicrous? Is that not completely ludicrous? Hence it is very clear here, without disenchantment, one will absolutely not have great compassion. To say that you have great compassion would be a mere deceit. But with regards to this, there is one point that we need to take note of! We are clear of the reasoning. But when we practice, we must first understand the reasoning and then gradually progress. If you

ask me, "Have you developed disenchantment?" As we are ordinary beings, I do know what disenchantment is. And sometimes by coincidence, I feel a little bit of it. Normally I encourage myself this - it is precisely because I do not have it that I need to develop it! Since I have not even developed disenchantment yet, I will remind myself at all times that I need to develop great compassion, the great spirit of enlightenment, because my goal is to become a buddha. This is absolutely correct, absolutely unmistakable. You must understand this reasoning and encourage yourself to advance step by step. This is the correct way.

[70A, 23.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p189L12)]

Hence for the principle that was said earlier, from the very beginning, you must reach a complete understanding, not complete - [actually] you need to understand it accurately. Then you can progress step by step. You will not stray and waste efforts. This is foremost important, foremost important. Whenever we begin to stray and get it wrong, ah, we know that it is wrong and we pull ourselves back. Whenever we get it wrong, we pull ourselves back. Then, teachers and friends become your best mutual support to this fundamental problem. Therefore nowadays people would say, "Ah, I am a Mahayana Bodhisattva, this determination to be free (from cyclic existence) is practiced (only) by Hinayana practitioners." I do not know where they learned this type of Buddhism? At least

for me, I do not understand [what they are saying]. I have read from the Nagajuna Bodhisattva, who was hailed as the "common origin of all eight sects." Or the most brilliant one, the Asanga Bodhisattva, or from any of the complete lineages, it is very clear that great compassion must arise from this. Yes, by the time one develops great compassion, one will primarily seem to have become selfless and be helping others. So on external appearance, indeed, there is some difference between him and those who focus entirely on solving their own problems. But if you probe deeper, they are of the same nature. What is its nature? There! These pudgala (i.e. all beings subject to transmigration) are suffering in the cyclic existence. So he wants to liberate them from the cyclic existence. He is deeply aware that the nature of the appropriate aggregates is suffering. This point is absolutely shared [by both Mahayana and Hinayana practitioners]. There is absolutely no exception! Without this point, there can be no Buddhism! Hence this is a point that we must understand.

[70A, 25.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p190L10)]

So now the number one concept comes from this section. I am very happy (learning this). Viewing that I am not able to accomplish it, I often feel sad. But I am utterly joyful as I do understand the teaching. Ah, I feel that in a degenerated time like this, everyone propagates his own teachings and no one knows which one is the best. Yet the most complete and

fundamental teaching is right here. Ah, I feel utterly fortunate! We would not have encountered this if we did not have some type of virtuous roots in our past lives. Why? Simple, it is due to karma and dependent arising. If you have not accumulated this virtuous root, you will absolutely not have encountered this. As I think of this, I feel so happy. As I think of this, I feel so happy! Then I push myself to strive without delay. Since it has told us earlier that there are things which we cannot accomplish, but now I understand the way to accomplish it, I will have the power to move forward! One pulls you and the other one pushes you. Of course you will progress.

[70A, 26.38 (手抄稿 第九冊 p191L2)]

So when you accidentally stray from the right path while being happy because you feel the pull, you should quickly think, "Ah, I still have so many faults!" So the happiness from being pulled to somewhere else is now remedied by this mentality of misery. This has now changed the pull into a push. And as a result of the continuous pushing, and when the pushing becomes too hard, you would change your thought then and it becomes a pull. Ah, then you are happy again! Under this circumstance, whether you are happy or in misery, you are always propelled forward. This is what we should understand here. This is what we should understand.

[70A, 27.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p191L7)]

And then in terms of method, we should also study this seriously. Even though, yes! We will all walk the path to renounce the world, regardless it is for the sake of the self or others. But if the method is incorrect, but we think that we are right, then as a result we end up straying. Much like what was said earlier, ah, even though one talks about cultivation, he does not know the principles himself. But for those who do talk about principles, they cannot grasp the vital points either. These are some examples of that.

[70A, 27.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p191L11)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

Hence this reflection is extremely important, regardless of which vehicle—Mahayana or Hinayana—you enter.

Hence whether you are in the Mahayana or in the Hinayana, this concept, this understanding is the most, most crucial. This is the core of the problem. By the time we are here we all know that, "This is why there seems to be a lot of things to be learned, but we need to learn this treatise as the first one." Everyone now understands this. Nah, it is because of this. If you can grasp this root, that's when you will know, "Ah! What do I need to learn now? I need to learn ethical discipline." What is the purpose to maintaining ethical discipline? Ethical discipline and other methods of learning are practiced for no other purpose

than this. So if you can grasp this concept, you will achieve whatever that you learn!

[70A, 28.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p192L3)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

Even when you have developed a sense of disenchantment with cyclic existence, follow flawless scriptures and authoritative commentaries and seek an exact understanding of them.

Eh, [now] you know this. So then this moves on to tell us what are the stages of the learning? It says that for such an important and true life root to the sacred path, how do you develop this root? Hmm, you must follow "**flawless [scriptures]**." He did not use the word "correct" but instead the word "flawless." That is marvelous! Sometimes we could be correct. It is right. But sorry, you might be right, he might be right, and this other person could be right as well. Among all these that are "right," one could be addressing the twigs and ends, the other one might be addressing the root. So you will have to go about in a big circle [to figure it out]. The opposite of that would be flawless, meaning it is absolutely unmistaken. It is all correct and positive. Hence to use the reverse side to bring out the subject versus using the front side to present the subject, the difference between these two is something I wish to explain. When presenting the subject in

the front side, sometimes there can be loopholes. However, if we use the reverse side to bring out the subject, in other words, he will be able to completely close the errors [or the loopholes].

[70B, 00.09 (手抄稿 第九冊 p193L1)]

For instance, just like what I said yesterday where a fellow practitioner told me his experience. He said that when he practices a lot, ah-ya, he would get to a point of being very uptight. And since he is a lay practitioner, so of course, there are times when he can listen to some sort of light music. Hmm, there are some merits to that. There are positive effects. But it is not "**flawless**." I have explained this yesterday. Did you understand it? It's similar to the case that I told you, about how when one is watching TV, the idea of how commercials are inserted in between the programs. Therefore, to be really strict on this, which is the case for those who abide by the principles of characteristics of phenomenon, and this is the reason why it is that great. At the same time, this section here also explains to us that even though it is more difficult to study this treatise, do not be afraid of the difficulty. It is precisely because you have slightly more difficulties now that you will be able to learn the entirety of it without leaving any loopholes. So that by the time you train, there will be no loopholes. It will be 100% safe.

[70B, 01.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p193L8)]

Now if you attempt to save yourself a little effort in the beginning, let me give you an example [of what this would do]. Let's say you are going to build a ship. So in the earlier stages of building a ship, you decided to save yourself some effort. But as a result, there were many loopholes. You thought that you had finished construction and you sailed out to the sea. It starts to leak here and leak there. By that time, it is too late. There is only one option for you - death. Hence now for us here, the real reason that it explains how this is flawless is because there are absolutely no loopholes. What are the attributes to the "**flawless scriptures**"? They will specifically pinpoint the problems and solve them. Hence they are flawless scriptures. Even though there are many books now, there are a variety of books, but among these books, we must be choosy. We must choose according to the principles. That would be correct. Hence the quality (the attributes) cannot be wrong. And then there are the "**authoritative commentaries**." For that which accords with the subject, it is explained clearly. For these principles, "**seek an exact understanding of them**." The stages here will include: you should first understand it, and after you understand it,

[70B, 02.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p194L7)]

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

Then, use prolonged and discerning analytical meditation to bring about a powerful transformation of your mind.

This is the vital point to how we should truly train in general! So why is it that after we understand, we can't seem to do it? Actually, in general, we haven't really understood it. This is [the] number one [reason]. Now that we understand this here, [we know that,] "Ah! The key is right here." We do now truly understand it. But even though we truly understand it, but because the latent propensity from beginningless time still remains, you will still carry out [mental] actions that manifest from the beginningless latent propensity. What is our beginningless latent propensity? They are defiled. Since our actions manifest from defiled latent propensities, whatever you have done still fall within the defiled karma of cyclic existence. This will still produce miserable effects. So how could you be liberated! Hence at this place, this further tells us, "You must analyze for a prolonged period of time and train. You are training to change your mind. And you must transform your mind." If we are able to accomplish this, then it will work. If we can't, then we should quickly confess intensely.

[70B, 03.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p195L1)]

Therefore we now can immediately recall this. Yes! In the earlier sections, what did it tell us to practice in the actual session? It said we should arrange the images of the Buddha

first and then wholeheartedly go for refuge. The intention of refuge is included. In the case that you do not have adequate collections and have not cleared away obscurations, then you won't be able to go for refuge even if you try. He told us earlier of a special attribute for going for refuge. It is that we need to absorb ourselves in the practices of going for refuge. There were these few sentences. Now we understand what is called "**absorb yourself.**" This is asking, "Why do you go for refuge?" Ah, the reason is you understand what happened to you previously were sufferings. Hence you [now] wish to seek happiness. What this happiness will depend on is this. So at that time, you will wholeheartedly go for refuge and rely on Him. What mental actions will manifest in your mind at this point? Whatever that happened before is devoid of any merit, the only thing to do now is to go for refuge! May I ask then, this type of manifestation of the mind conforms to afflictions or to the sublime teaching? It conforms to the sublime teaching! It is entirely unmistakable!

[70B, 04.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p195L8)]

Therefore at this time, suppose you are a practitioner who recites the Buddha's name, "Amitabha Buddha, Amitabha Buddha, Amitabha Buddha..." Even after you become tired, though your lips do not want to move anymore, but your mind will continue to recite Amitabha Buddha. Even when you fall asleep, you will still be reciting Amitabha Buddha. If you are a

person practicing Zen, you will be looking for the answer all day long. If you are one who focuses on maintaining ethical disciplines, you will naturally purify your mind. Ah, whatever that is said in the different sects and factions, this person would say this, and that person would say that - I can't worry about them. I can't worry about them. Everyone has different dispositions. I know that what I have here specifically pinpoints my problems. I will follow this method to purify my mind. Why would there be any queries [of other sects' methods]? No more! As a result, sorry, hey, because we do not have adequate collections and have not cleared away our obscurations, we either whirl in the afflictions of the emotions or whirl in the afflictions of the view. Those who whirl in the afflictions of the view are very intelligent. They have a good sense of the concepts and the language. For those who whirl in the afflictions of the emotions, they have very strong habits. You may ask him to not throw a tantrum, and he knows it's not good to have a temper. But when things happen, he will throw a fit. He cannot stand the way this person is and cannot stand the way that person is. Attachment is not good. And when you explain that to him, it would be all fine. But as soon as he sees something, ah-ya, the index finger* begins to move. What is the reason for that? That's just what it is.

(*please note that this came from a Chinese story how before this one person is about to eat something delicious, his index finger would first move.)

[70B, 06.00 (手抄稿 第九冊 p196L3)]

So then what do you do? You will have to confess. So the first thing to do when you confess is to "**eradicate** [your current manifestations]." Ah! Now we see it in our mind, so this is the situation. What should we do? We should analyze, reflect and practice for a prolonged period of time and then "**bring about a powerful transformation of your mind.**" How does this transformation take place? Previously, you pursued afflictions in your mind all day long. Now you are entirely changed. Ah, so that's what it is! You have very clearly and plainly transformed this mental state. This is the first one. After the transformation...because what occupied you before were the afflictions and what are the subjective aspects of afflictions? It's very simple! Once you are transformed, you will immediately...normally, you always cannot let go of what you are attached to. But when this happens, ah-ya, you will feel, "Ah! Coolness pervades throughout the mind." With what you normally cannot stand to look at, you are now able to let go of your hostility. Ah, you will only feel this incomparable joy. You might be normally whirling in views, but you will discover that you have actually been stuck in a dense forest of views to no avail. You will then let it go.

[70B, 07.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p196L11)]

Hence you won't have to wait until the effect period, but that you will have already experienced the joy from the teaching in the causal period. This is the true joy from the teaching. It is not the case where, "Ah-ya, he sounds so pleasant." If you care for it being pleasant then you should go and listen to a professional storyteller or a cross talk. Honestly speaking, the cross talkers will perform a lot better than us, how can I compare to them! This is a concept that you must know, must know. Hence the joy of teaching would indicate one becoming attuned to the teaching. The attribute of the teaching is to purify the afflictions. By then you will know very clearly in the causal period, you have clearly and plainly subdued and disciplined [the afflictions]. Once you have this cause, what is the effect that will be issued? It will be a pure effect. A pure effect is one that will not put you in the cyclic existence. This is the difference between the two. Therefore,

[\[70B, 08.02 \(手抄稿 第九冊 p197L2\)\]](#)

[p279, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, I have followed the well-founded presentation of the noble Asanga in explaining the Bhagavan's purpose in teaching the eight types of suffering as a way to understand the truth of suffering, the faults of cyclic existence.

Therefore, Buddha's purpose was for us to understand the nature of the truth of suffering...there, this is exactly how it

is...and therefore he explained these few things to us. The really important intended meaning, the content is as such. Here is this noble being. What the Buddha said is more profound. Now that Asanga has skilfully explained it. There! Herein is the principle. Ah! Now we understand.

[70B, 08.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p197L6)]

English LR v.1 p.280

Bo-do-wa said:

This former teacher also tells us,

[70B, 08.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p197L8)]

[p280, English LR Vol 1]

As soon as we are born as anyone of the six types of beings, we are faced with the sufferings of sickness, death, and so forth. When the cause of sickness is present, we are sick; when the cause of death is present, we die. This is neither inappropriate nor accidental; it is the character or nature of cyclic existence. While we are in cyclic existence there is no escaping it. If we are disgusted by it, then we must eliminate the process of birth. [221] To do this, we must eliminate its cause.

It tells us this past master said that among the six realms, whether categorized by the three realms, the four types of births or the six kinds of beings, no matter where you are, all of these things you face are all sorts of sufferings! And all these sufferings of the body and mind, sickness, death and so on, do not occur accidentally without any reason. No! The case is always like this. Because you are in an afflictive state, you continue to exist in cyclic existence. The nature of this is **"the nature of cyclic existence."** The character of it is **"the character of cyclic existence."** As long as you are inside this cyclic existence, you have no way to escape these [sufferings]. With regards to this point, it is something we should understand. After we understand it, we should develop disenchantment. When you become truly disenchanted and want to put an end to this (existing in cyclic existence), what do you need to do? That is when you would try to understand it (cyclic existence) further. You would wonder why and how does it (cyclic existence) come about? Oh! There is a reason. Since this is the reason that produces such corresponding result, that's the time you would want to eliminate the cause. Hence, you would study the truth of suffering and the truth of the cause of suffering. Suppose you do not have this viewpoint, indeed, although we would say, "Ah, these three mental poisons!" But these are not poison to you. Instead, (to you), these three are the most precious things! When you see something that's nice, ah, you are only afraid there isn't enough of it. Like this. But if you are asked to carry out some minor duties as cultivation, you would feel so miserable. You

would secretly find some time to be lazy. Not to mention secretly, well we don't need to say it that way. In brief, if you have not found the problem, you will always be going around in circles on the external.

[70B, 11.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p198L9)]

[p280, English LR Vol 1]

Reflect in this way on the arising of the sufferings explained above-the sufferings of birth, old age, illness, death, and so forth.

Therefore, we must follow the above instruction. This is the fundamental reason for explaining the eight types of suffering. Hence, we have now understood the main points. As for the five aggregates (five skandhas), he has covered the main points. The most unique features of the five aggregates are the three types of sufferings: suffering of pain, suffering of change, and suffering of conditionality. At the very end of this section, there will be more explanations. It is divided into eight categories. The second part is to reflect on the six types of suffering, and to reflect on the six types of suffering. So then, from this perspective, let us now take a look as well.

Chapter 18

The Six Types of Suffering

Chapter 18 Outline
THE SIX TYPES OF SUFFERING

(b) Reflection on the six types of suffering

- (i) The fault of uncertainty**
- (ii) The fault of insatiability**
- (iii) The fault of casting off bodies repeatedly**
- (iv) The fault of repeated rebirth**
- (v) The fault of repeatedly descending from high to low**
- (vi) The fault of having no companions**

[English LR v.1 p281](#)

[70B, 11.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p198L14)]

(b) Reflection on the six types of suffering

[Mahamati's] Clear Words: Explanation of the "Friendly Letter" says that there are seven types of suffering, but since the last merely restates each of the faults, you should contemplate six types here.

The source of [the explanations on] the six sufferings, in other words, the treatise has in many places clarified the lineage from which a particular explanation comes from. I have explained this point numerous times earlier. I feel that when the ancients write or compile writings, a single word makes a difference. For any word that may be a mistake, even though it is obviously wrong, he will not just go ahead and change it. He will certainly search for the reason why it (the wording) is that way. And then there will be an explanation for it. It might have possibly been because of something. But if he can't find anything, he won't change it (the wording) at all. But for us now, we at any given chance will just change it (the wording) at will. Not only do we change the word, we will use our own ideas to interpret it. We are truly, in this cyclic existence, 100% ordinary beings. If our concepts are correct, there is absolutely no need to learn from Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And that would mean instead of us learning from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, we would be teaching them. This is something that everyone should understand!

[70B, 12.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p199L7)]

Even though this seems unremarkable here, but these references indicate how when a real noble being writes or compiles writings, he has to have a perfect lineage source. And by having this lineage source does not necessarily mean that he will go by it just because he heard it. He will have to personally

experience it for himself. This is the case for the author of the root text of our treatise (Lamrim) Master Atisha. It is also true for Master Tsong Kha Pa who composed this treatise using Master Atisha's work as the blueprint. They possessed all three ideal qualifications! They all possessed the three ideal qualifications. In other words, for whatever cognition they stated, these are 100% accurate. Therefore for this one particular point, he provides this explanation. This is the meaning here. **"But since the last"** is something that is specific, so we will not explain it here. This is the time that we contemplate in general now. So here, we will explain the six general ones.

[70B, 13.54 (手抄稿 第九冊 p199L3)]

[p281, English LR Vol 1]

(i) The fault of uncertainty

This is number one. It says that there is uncertainty. Let us take a look at the meaning of uncertainty?

[70B, 14.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p200L1)]

[p281, English LR Vol 1]

As you pass through cyclic existence, close relatives such as your father and mother become enemies in other lifetimes, while enemies become close relatives. Similarly, your father becomes your son and your son your father; and your mother becomes your wife and your wife your mother. Since there is nothing but a succession of such transformations, there is nothing that you can count on.

Hmm, this is it, there is no certainty. Those who are your close relatives could become your enemies in the next lifetime. Those who are your enemies could become your close relatives. It says that "**your father becomes your son.**" This is a reverse in the roles. But this reverse still maintains a close relationship. Many of your enemies become your relatives. So, do we get ourselves preoccupied with, ah, you are on good terms with me and I am on bad terms with you. These are all utterly meaningless, utterly meaningless. After a few short decades have passed, who knows who is going to be who? At this time, we shouldn't be preoccupied with these things. We should not be busy about such things. If we understand this, then we know there is nothing that we can count on. Therefore we should understand first that for the close relationships that we have in this mundane world, these are not something that we can count on! Hence for these, "**there is nothing that you can count on.**" What does the Friendly Letter say?

[70B, 15.14 (手抄稿 第九冊 p200L10)]

[p281, English LR Vol 1]

The Friendly Letter:

**For those in cyclic existence there are no certainties
Because fathers become sons, mothers become wives,
Enemies become friends,
And the converse happens as well.**

Not only do we go in circles in cyclic existence, but this happens even now. It is absolutely true. Ah, the good friends that you have from before could become your enemies. Previously, perhaps these two people did not get along, but later on, they could be really close! This happens everywhere. So the scripture says,

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[70B, 15.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p201L1)]

Even in this life, enemies become friends and vice versa. The Tantra Requested by Subahu says:

**Within a short space of time, an enemy
can become a friend
And a friend can become an enemy.
Likewise, either one may become indifferent,**

**While those who were indifferent may
become enemies
Or intimate friends.
Knowing this, the wise never form
attachments. They give up the
thought of delighting in friends
And are content to focus on virtue.**

It is just like this. Actually, it is constantly changing! It is truly constantly changing back and forth. For those who have true wisdom, they will never form attachments. Ordinarily, what we find most difficult to let go is this. But after you understand this, what is there to be attached to? You should stop, stop! Once you stop this attachment, what would you do? You will be content to focus on virtue. This is the most fundamental. But in fact, one can go a step further to transcend and transform it into a Mahayana state of mind. If you so cherish and love them, real love is unlike the defilement that we have in the mundane world. This is useless. You must go a step further to help others to solve their problems and that is when you transform it into a Mahayana state of mind. Hence, the attitude of a Mahayana practitioner is to purify the defiled part of love and to transcend the good part of it into compassion!

[70B, 16.58 (手抄稿 第九冊 p201L11)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

By meditating on this, you should check the arising of the attachment and hostility that come from discriminating between friends and enemies. Be aware that among the phenomena of cyclic existence, absolutely nothing can be trusted. Become disenchanted.

This point is the first one. When we view cyclic existence, ah! "**Absolutely nothing**," this means there isn't anything that we can count on, nothing can be counted on.

Second one,

[70B, 17.26 (手抄稿 第九冊 p201L14)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

(ii) The fault of insatiability

And then in the cyclic existence, the greatest characteristic of that is attachment. When you are attached and cannot get what you want or when things turn out the opposite of what you want, you will become hostile. This type of situation is called "insatiability. For anything that you do, you are just insatiable. Not only are you insatiable, the more you do it, the more severe it (the craving) becomes. The more you do it, the

more severe it (the craving) becomes! This thing is truly horrendous, truly horrendous! I believe that all of us have this experience. There are many who have fewer attachments and may not be able to feel this. For those who have great attachments, no matter what, ah! Under any circumstance, the horridness of this thing is that it is like a rolling snowball. It will get bigger as it rolls downhill. As soon as you see what you want, ah, at that point, you see nothing else. But no matter what you do, you are insatiable. The fault is as such.

[70B, 18.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p202L7)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

The Friendly Letter:

**Each of us has drunk more milk
Than would fill the four oceans; yet
Those in cyclic existence who act as
ordinary beings
Are intent on drinking still more than that.**

For anyone of us, just by the quantity of milk that any one of us drank, it amounts to more than the four oceans. We have no idea how much that is. To foresee the future, as long as you are in cyclic existence, what you will drink will far surpass this.

[70B, 18.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p202L10)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

Think about it: each living being has drunk so much mother's milk in the past, and yet - without training on a path to liberation-will drink that much again in the future. This is just an example. When you reflect on how you have no lack of experience with the wonders and sufferings of cyclic existence, you should become disenchanted.

This tells us that for any of us, we have no idea how much milk we've drunk. If we do not seek liberation, what we will drink in the future will far surpass that which is described here. Other than that, as long as we're in cyclic existence, it doesn't matter what [bad thing there is], there are no sufferings and bad things that you won't have to experience. And for all the things (wonders) that you experience, without any exception, there will forever be this characteristic. You will never have enough, never stop wanting to have. But as a result, the actual state of it, what is the ramification for not being able to stop? Ah! For any little happiness, it is actually false, and it will bring you incomparable suffering, bring you incomparable suffering. So as you think of this, you must become disenchanted, become disenchanted!

[70B, 19.51 (手抄稿 第九冊 p203L4)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

You indulge in pleasures in pursuit of satisfaction, yet, with worldly pleasures, you are never satisfied no matter how much you enjoy them. Hence, time after time your craving grows, and on that account you wander for ages through cyclic existence.

Suppose then if you indulge in pleasure and this can satisfy you, then it would be great if you can truly be satisfied! But in the three worlds, no matter which one (of the three worlds) no matter how much you get, you will never be satisfied. Not only are you unsatisfied, but that the craving grows even more, it grows even more!

[70B, 20.18 (手抄稿 第九冊 p203L8)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

For an immeasurably long period of time you will experience intolerable suffering,

It is exactly because of this, this is why you will have immeasurable suffering for the boundless eons to come. Now we are attached to a small bite of food. In the future, liquid copper and hot iron [will be waiting for us]. When that time comes, it will be horrendous, really horrendous! Ah, so as we

think of that, it is indeed not worthwhile, indeed not worthwhile!

[70B, 20.47 (手抄稿 第九冊 p203L11)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

which those pleasures will not ameliorate in the least.

The sufferings will be boundless for the very little pleasures that you receive.

[70B, 20.54 (手抄稿 第九冊 p204L1)]

[p282, English LR Vol 1]

The Friendly Letter:

**Just as a leper tormented by maggots
Turns to fire for relief
But finds no peace, so should you
understand
Attachment to sensual pleasures.**

Also in the Compendium of the Perfections it is said:

**You get what you want,
Use it up, then acquire more,**

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And still you are not satisfied,
What could be sicker than this?

It is like leprosy. Ah! Leprosy is terrifying. I don't know if you have gone to see it before? In Xīn Zhuāng, there is a Lè Shēng Leprosy Hospital. I went there once. I heard them describe this. At the time, I didn't have much feeling about it. Sometimes, when you have an itch on your body, you would try to scratch it. Ah, the more you scratch it, the itchier it gets. But if you compare it to leprosy, one truly cannot bear the pain of leprosy. To what degree is this sort of suffering? He would rather use fire to burn his skin. I am sorry to say that he would burn his skin till he burned his flesh. Although he would feel the extreme pain on the external, he would still feel the itch within. Ah! Like this thing, it is how severe our attachment is. It is that severe. But to compare this thing to the fierce fires of hell, we have no idea how much worse they (fires of hell) are.

[70B, 21.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p204L9)]

Hence what we normally have in our minds, these subjective aspects of attachment and hostility, these are what will issue rebirth in hell to become hungry ghosts. Therefore, this is how you suffer for numerous eons. At present, whenever that time

comes, when it comes, our intense attachment will arise. You will never be satiated. This is the type of mentality. In the future, why would someone become a hungry ghost? It is because of that. You can never be satisfied. Yet for those who are attached/greedy, they act this way: ah, they take care of themselves with all the good things and they cannot care for others. Therefore, they cannot accumulate any merit. This is why they can never feel satisfied and yet, they have created the karma. That is why when he wants to eat, I am sorry! He cannot find food. This is it. That is why if at present you understand the cause and effect relationship, you will clearly understand the state in which the effect takes place. Hence we should now spend more time to reflect and analyze. The only method is to stop it, to transform it.

[70B, 22.42 (手抄稿 第九冊 p205L2)]

[p283, English LR Vol 1]

And Candragomin's *Letter to a Student* says:⁴⁸⁶

What being has not come into the world hundreds of times?

What pleasure has not already been experienced countless times?

What luxury, such as splendid white yak-tail fans, have they not owned?

Yet, even when they possess something, their attachment continues to grow.

There is no suffering they have not experienced many times.

The things they desire do not satisfy them.

There is no living being that has not slept in their bellies.

So why do they not rid themselves of attachment to cyclic existence?

So the above tells us also, this "**hundreds of times**," this does not just mean a hundred but that it actually means "**numerous hundreds**." That is for any of the [six] realms, any of the realms, we have gone through it innumerable times. We have experienced every sort of pleasure, every good thing. But after we possessed it, I am sorry, were our attachments satisfied? I am sorry, we were not, but the craving actually increased. Ah, and so the sufferings are as such, as such! It is precisely because you got what you were attached to that you will have to experience the suffering. It is because we are not satiated that we will have to experience the suffering. And when we are in the cyclic existence, "**There is no living being that has not slept in their bellies**." What does this mean? That is living beings are all mother and child to each other. There are countless beings in the world. But because we have lived and died countless times, hence we've all been a mother and child to others. There isn't one living being, you absolutely cannot find one living being who is an exception to this. All of the living beings have been a mother and a child to all other living beings.

It occurred that many times! As a result, I am sorry, we are still not satisfied. This would also mean that we won't be able to leave.

[70B, 24.18 (手抄稿 第九冊 p205L12)]

[p283, English LR Vol 1]

Think about this.

We should think and analyze in this way!

[70B, 24.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p206L1)]

[p283, English LR Vol 1]

Furthermore, you will become very disenchanted [with cyclic existence] if you reflect on what the *Alleviating Sorrow (Sokavinodana)* says.⁴⁸⁷

If we follow along the *Alleviating Sorrow* to reflect, it will be very easy, very easy for you [to develop disenchantment]. Honestly, someone read the sutra and told me this before, "Ah-ya, Dharma Master! After I heard this, I am afraid to keep listening or to keep reading." I said, "Why?" "Ah-ya, when I look at that, I am very frightened. Just like that. But I still can't do what's right." If you get into situations like that, what would you say? I used to think like that as well. But later, no! Later,

no! Even if you can't do it and back down, will there be happiness by backing down? If there is happiness by backing down, then no one would be willing to do this in the first place. I would be the first one to say I absolutely don't want to be doing this. Oh-yo, what's the point of engaging in such a painstaking task! It is because if you back down, there is only one option for you - a dead end. You will forever have to endure the boundless sufferings. However, if you do this now and continue, eh, even though you can't accomplish it at present, but if you clench your teeth down and pace yourself, you will accomplish it. After you accomplish it, all the problems are solved. Even though at present you may feel this, "Ah, I can't accomplish this, I can't accomplish that." But for that point of not being to accomplish, there is no actual suffering. You are just a little fearful in your mind. Isn't it right? If you can't even withstand a little fear in your mind, how will you be able to withstand this enormous suffering in the future! So as you think of this, you will definitely charge forward.

[70B, 25.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p206L12)]

Therefore, speaking of this, what is most crucial? The correct view. Once you are able to look at the issue and assess it accurately, all the problems are solved. If you thoroughly contemplate this, ah, you will realize it! And you will at this time only intend on striving to progress from the depths of your heart. Hence this point is telling us, this is why we should follow

according to the scriptures. If you can do that, you will certainly develop disenchantment. You will certainly develop disenchantment. Now let us continue.

[70B, 26.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p207L2)]

[p283, English LR Vol 1]

**Again and again in hells
You drank boiling liquid copper-
So much that even the water in the ocean
Does not compare. [223]**

**The filth you have eaten
As a dog and as a pig
Would make a pile far
more vast**

**Than Meru, the king of
mountains.**

**On account of losing loved ones and friends
You have shed so many tears
In the realms of cyclic existence
That the ocean could not contain them.**

**The heads that have been severed
From fighting one another,
If piled up, would
Reach beyond Brahma's heaven.**

**You have been a worm
And, having been ravenous, you
ate so much sludge That if it were
poured into the great ocean It
would fill it completely.**

Look at that, the sutra tells us, "Ah! The boiling liquid copper that we've drunk in hells exceeds the amount of water in the ocean." Ah-ya! When I think of this, when I think of this, there really is no way for me to generate any attachment at all. As I think of this, there really is no way for me to generate any attachment at all. Not to mention drinking as much boiling liquid copper as the amount of water in the ocean, not to mention the hot iron, just try this for yourself. Heat the iron, and not necessarily to the point of making it red hot! But heat the iron in the fire for five minutes. It will still be black and you can't see any difference. Then you can try touching it. You might want to just touch it. I had this classmate, someone in my class. Once we went to visit an aluminum factory in Kaohsiung together. They took out the aluminum ingots, after forming them from the crude materials, and placed them on the ledge. They were already in the shape of ingots. You can't tell they were any different from the ones that were completely done [and cooled]. Hey! This fellow thought it was fun and went over to touch it. Just like that. He touched it. Someone said to him, "Eh, you can't touch this!" He let go of his hand immediately. At first, he didn't feel anything wrong. But once he opened his hand, he

realized that his hand was severely burnt, severely burned. It was that terrible! It was like that!

[70B, 28.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p208L1)]

Therefore, at this point we should not merely...if you truly just want to listen and establish a connection for the future, then that's fine. Ah, it's fun anyway. It is indeed fun. If you feel that it is fun and you are willing to take a look, it will still benefit you! However, if you truly wish to be able to relate to this kind of feeling, it would be best for you to try it yourself. But don't swallow it. You will not tolerate swallowing it. Oh, but you can try it with your hand. Boil the water until it reaches 100 degrees and stick your finger in it. Don't use this finger, use that finger. Why? It is because you need this finger to do things. Or you can use the finger on your left hand. So after while, in case you revert again, you can try putting the finger down to burn it. If burning doesn't work, then cut it and sprinkle some salt on it. If you like soy sauce, whatever you like to eat, with what you like to eat, try putting that on the wound. After doing these things a few times, I think it will probably provide some help to us. With a little suffering now, you will be able to avoid tremendous suffering in the future! Hence, if we have set our minds to rectify ourselves, then naturally... Perhaps this method is awfully dumb, yet, it's most effective.

[71A, 01.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p214L1)]

[p283, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, the Array of Stalks Sutra states:⁴⁸⁸

He keeps using the sutras to substantiate. He is nonetheless using a variety of methods [to help us]. It is just that the more we are exposed, there has to be something that will eventually affect our hearts. When that happens, do not let it go lightly! When it affects you, you must think of some ways to enhance this feeling that you have for it. A mental force is therefore developed through this, developed through this. This is why you should regularly read these as much as you can. When you all of a sudden develop some feelings for it, you should pause at where you are. It is true! Then, you should slowly increase and stabilize this type of cognition, increase and stabilize it. Hence, after you strive at it several times, in the future, it will be easy for you to slowly, slowly, produce efficacy for this type of remedy. So, what does *The Array of Stalks Sutra* say?

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[71A, 02.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p214L8)]

**Remember the infinite bodies which, in the past,
You wasted senselessly on account of desire;**

**Now in this life truly seek enlightenment;
Take up disciplined conduct and thereby destroy desire.
Remember the infinite bodies
which, in the past, You wasted
senselessly on account of desire.
As many times as there are grains of sand in the Ganges
You failed to please the buddhas and ignored their
teachings such as this.**

In the sutra, it focused only on the suffering aspect earlier. This part will also explain it to us from the positive side. You should think about this, we had for this senseless desire wasted our lives countless times before! Now in order to be freed from this pointless suffering, we wholeheartedly strive to practice according to the teachings, and rely on ethical discipline, meditative concentration and wisdom. We should take advantage of the opportunity to strive and destroy this desire! Here, this is what we should indeed strive at. Hence once we have come here [to the monastery], this is what we should exactly strive at. This point is most important. If we have come here to exchange pleasantries and cannot let go of that, then absolutely, you should take off your robe and go home. You should first confess and wait until you have gained strength before you come back. Pleasantries are what the lay people do. Renunciates should do this, they would say, "I have come to this place. This is what I am here for!" So this is it. Therefore, there is this fellow practitioner here whom I praise very much. He felt that, "I cannot seem to maintain the vows well. I will

[formally] give it up." When it is necessary, you may even want to give up being a novice monk and be an upāsaka at the temple to serve others. When it is really necessary, you will want to just go home and suffer many privations before you come back again. That is truly called having aims and ambition! For everything [that we do], this is a point that we need to know!

[71A, 04.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p215L6)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Even if you gained the vast wonders of cyclic existence, they would be illusory.

No matter what wonders of cyclic existence that you have gained, what are they really? "**Illusory**," this is the word. They deceived you. For some small wonder, it deceived you. Consequently, you will have to endure limitless suffering. This limitless suffering is actually pointless. Why does it say "**limitless and pointless suffering**"? Our cultivation is not something that is happy to do. Cultivation is a miserable thing! But cultivation - behind this small suffering, there is a great meaning! But this suffering now is limitless and pointless. This is what we should discern very clearly! This is what we should absolutely discern clearly.

[71A, 04.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p215L11)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Bear in mind the countless bodies you have wasted in the past, experiencing limitless and pointless suffering.

We did not know this before and have wasted [the bodies] for nothing. This is something that we should thoroughly reflect on!

[71A, 04.57 (手抄稿 第九冊 p215L13)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Consider that it will continue this way unless you make an effort to put an end to it. Develop a sense of disenchantment.

If we do not strive from now on, it will continue this way. This is what we should reflect according to the teaching. Do not waste our difficult opportunity to obtain our body of leisure and opportunity for nothing. It is not permitted to be wasting it away for nothing, not to mention, using it to pay improper attention and sending ourselves to the miserable realms! Therefore, on this point, you must develop a sense of disenchantment! What did the former teacher say?

[71A, 05.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p216L4)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Jen-nga-wa said:

Honorable teachers, how many bodies have you taken from beginningless time? Now, since you never practiced Mahayana teachings, you must apply yourselves assiduously.

He said that from beginningless times, we have taken up various types of bodies, but we have not practiced the sublime teaching, in particular, "**Mahayana teachings.**" We have never done it as conscientiously as we have today. Therefore, as we actually got to do so today, we should quickly strive! Remember what the former teacher said before? When others saw how diligent he was in his practice, they said, "So and so, you are so diligent. You should rest for a while." He said, "Yes, logically speaking, I should rest for a while. But as soon as I think of the suffering of cyclic existence and my human life of leisure and opportunity, I just cannot stop." This is a typical story of former teachers. If we truly speak of cultivation, we should use this as our role model. Hence, a teacher also said this, I emulate...how did he say it? "I emulate with my whole heart. I keep the stories of the excellent persons in my mind. I emulate them with my whole heart. I must imitate them, imitate them!" We absolutely should let go of attachments and

throw them into the ocean. Do not be saying things as these, "But it is difficult to let this person go and difficult to let that thing go." Like that. You cannot do this and cannot do that. This is why these are the things you absolutely should give up!

[71A, 07.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p216L14)]

I just thought of something. Not so long ago, when I first arrived here, I saw that we had lots of preserved mustard greens. They are really pretty good. So, I said, "We have so much of it, let us give some away!" Someone replied, "But this is very delicious!" "Oh, alright, but we cannot finish it, might as well give it away." But thereafter, everyone just let it sit there. Lately, I heard it has got bugs. Look at that. It was out of the lay practitioners' good intention that they gave it to us. On occasions like this... If I was handling it, when something is delicious, I would quickly give what is delicious away. I have read many stories of the former teachers. These things will only increase attachments, will only increase attachments. As long as I eat enough to make myself full, that is great. That is why when other people make lots of delicious foods, I would frown a little when when I see that. I am afraid because I know that my attachments are still strong! Therefore, this is where we should look at the former teachers. Look at what the former teachers have done. This is the goal that we have come for.

[71A, 07.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p217L8)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Sang-pu-wa (gSang-phu-ba) said:

In this cyclic existence there are many turns of fortune for better and for worse; do not stake your hopes on them.

In this cyclic existence, we all have to...what is called "**many turns of fortune for better and for worse**"? You will want to repeatedly and often reflect on this. If you can repeatedly and often reflect on this, your mind will not be the way it is now - feeling so happy! You will be anxious. What will you do then? He told us earlier to reflect on this [until] "**...your head pounding, or like a man struggling in the desert.**"

(Translator note: This is from the last section of the chapter on miserable realms. The English text's translation is a little different from the Chinese one.) You will be anxious! That is when in your mind, you will feel as if something is on fire. You will become very fearful, wishing only to be freed. That is the idea.

[71A, 08.38 (手抄稿 第九冊 p217L14)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Reflect until you give rise to this kind of thinking; after you have developed it, you must continually sustain it in meditation.

This says that before you give rise to this in your mind, you must strive. Even if you have developed it, you must continually sustain it. After every earlier section, he would always tell us these few things. After every section, he would always tell us these few things. Honestly, this is all that we do in cultivation. There is no other thing to do than this. That is why we should not aim too high and be overly ambitious. We would say, "There is this profound teaching and there is that great teacher!" The Buddha has already explained this very clearly. This is how it is, you must practise beginning from the fundamentals. Then it will work. In particular, someone recently said this also, "A great lama will be arriving to give initiation." So he was figuring out ways to go and receive the initiation. I remember it now. They said that the great lama is from the Karma Kagyupa School - Tai Situ Rinpoche. Tai Situ Rinpoche from the Kagyupa School is indeed very magnificent, very brilliant. After His Holiness the Gyalwa Karmapa passed, as in common appearances, Tai Situ Rinpoche became one, to certify the next Karmapa. Hence, you can say that he is the second in command. Of course, within the Karma Kagyu lineage, there are four eminent lamas who hold the second highest post. And this Rinpoche would be one of the four who hold the second highest post. This is in fact true.

(Translator note: Four eminent Lamas of the Karma Kagyu School: the 14th Shamar Rinpoche, the 12th Tai Situ Rinpoche, the 3rd Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche and the 12th Goshir Gyaltsab Rinpoche.)

[71A, 09.57 (手抄稿 第九冊 p218L10)]

But we might as well say, for the Karma Kagyu lineage, who was one of the genuine lineage masters? Master Marpa, and then there was also the Honorable Milarepa. And then there was Lama Gampopa, who developed and expanded the lineage. Among the teachers, the Honorable Milarepa was a legendary figure. He left us a few celebrated lines. What did he say? "Cultivate the lower teachings and you will reach the higher teachings. Cultivate gradually and you will reach your destination sooner. When one practices, two people will achieve." When you cultivate, you should go at it gradually. Consequently, you will get there sooner. If you practice the lower teachings, you will be able to advance to the higher levels. You do not have to worry about helping everybody else first. You need to first get yourself ready. This is absolutely true, absolutely. His real achievements are right here. His real achievements are right here.

[71A, 10.51 (手抄稿 第九冊 p219L1)]

For those of you who have read his biography, you will know. If you have not read the biography, I will tell you some of it now. When he was training in asceticism, it was unbelievable! [There was an instance when] others gave him some food when he was a lay practitioner. Tibet is not like how we are over here - they have to eat meat. So these people gave him some zanba (roasted qingke barley flour), some cheese and some dried meat. Worms grew in the dried meat after some time. So he removed the worms. But he thought afterwards, "That is not right! They need to eat just like I. How can I rob them of their food? Alright, alright, alright! I will just go hungry. I will let the worms eat." So he made this pledge, he said, "If I do not attain enlightenment, I will absolutely not be influenced by the eight winds. I will absolutely not do things to just stay alive. If I did, I would rather the Dharma Protectors kill me in this instance, I will cultivate in my next life after reincarnation!" And he did not care even he had nothing to eat and went hungry for a few days. And then he thought, "Yes, I have made a pledge to cultivate. But if I die of hunger, I would not be able to cultivate! Therefore, it will not go against my pledge [to find food to eat]. So fine, fine, fine, I will go and ask for food!" As a result, he went outside. As he went outside, ah, he saw the green nettles.

(Translator note: eight winds or influences which fan the passions, i.e. gain, loss; defamation, eulogy; praise, ridicule; sorrow, joy.)

[71A, 12.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p219L11)]

You do not know what nettles are. I had only seen it when I visited India recently. Ah, those things have green shoots growing all over, and full of thorns. The thorns are poisonous but not so when you digest it! Unknowingly, I touched it. Ah, my hand was itchy for two whole days. Ah, it was so itchy that I just did not know what to do! Such a thing! But he actually collected the fresh shoots. I do not know how he managed it. But they told me, "There, there! This is what Milarepa ate." It did not really impress upon me when I first heard it. But after I was stung by it, I contemplated about this. Ah! I cried over this a few times as I thought how inferior I am when compare to the ancient master! I would still complain about this and that when others cook all these food for me. Ah, and I demand soy sauce, sesame oil and all sorts of stuff. But for him, he just ate nettles. Did a hunter not go look for him? He asked the Honorable Milarepa for food, "I have been hunting and could not find anything to eat. Can you share some of your food first? I will give you some when I find some food." What did the Honorable Milarepa say? "Ah, I am just eating nettles." "Oh, fine, fine, just give me some salt!" "Salt! It would be great if I had salt. I have just been eating only the nettles." And then, the hunter asked for some more foods. So the Honorable Milarepa replied, "This is all that I eat." As a result of eating nettles for a prolonged period of time, it got to the point where he grew green hairs all over his body.

[71A, 13.28 (手抄稿 第九冊 p220L8)]

Did his sister not go look for him? While looking for him, his sister passed by an area with a great lama who was proud and had many students. So his sister asked him, "Ah, brother, I have suffered for years looking for you, now I finally found you. What are you doing here?" "Cultivating!" "Why do you cultivate this way! I saw a great lama who is cultivating [as well]. He is supported by so many people and eats so well. He is also cultivating. Why do you not cultivate in that way?" What did the honorable Milarepa say? "The path that a lion walks on is not one that a rabbit like me dares walk on!" He was such a magnificent person yet he saw himself as a rabbit. This was the real brilliance of the Honorable Milarepa! Therefore, everyone in the Tibetan lineages, no matter which school or lineage, venerated him. He had such high attainments in his life because he relied on this - he knew that he had poor qualifications. Actually, did he really have poor qualifications? If we compare ourselves to him, none of us comes close, not even one hundredth, or even one thousandth of him, yet he viewed himself "I am a rabbit." Ah, we view ourselves so highly. We think, "Ah! This is not right, that is not right. We would look down on everyone. We do not want to do this and that." This is the reason that we do not achieve.

(Translator note: "To do so would be like a rabbit bounding along in a guise of a lion, it would fall into an abyss and surely die!" This is taken from the book *The Life of Milarepa*, By Tsangnyon Heruka)

[71A, 14.38 (手抄稿 第九冊 p221L4)]

Hence at this point, we should understand: In this case, what we should really reflect and analyze is not the profound teaching but the fundamental. Therefore, "Cultivate the lower teachings and you will reach the higher teachings." If you can build a sound foundation, actually as we have learned up to this point, it remains very clear that if you can develop the mindfulness of death, what other temporal things can you not let go? As soon as you understand what is suffering, would you still seek after these things? What is death and suffering? They are topics for the path that is shared with the small capacity. "Amitabha Buddha!" Therefore, absolutely, when you train in the lower teachings, there are not any higher teachings that cannot be reached! And you should not make haste to get going on this and that. "Cultivate gradually and you will reach your destination sooner." This is why we Chinese would say, "Haste makes waste." Your foundation must be steady and stable!

Continuing on, this is the third one.

[71A, 15.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p221L11)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

(iii) The fault of casting off bodies repeatedly

The Friendly Letter:

Each of us has left a pile of bones

That would dwarf Mount Meru. [224]

For each living being, if the bones discarded upon taking up new bodies did not disappear, they would tower over even Mount Meru.

And our fault of casting off bodies. We would cast off bodies and take up new ones. The bodies that we have casted off, the bones, not to mention the bones, even our ashes would tower over Mount Meru. Ah! We have no idea how many bodies we have taken up. That is, if we think about this truly, we have done this too many times. But what is the result! We remain still in the same place, still in the same place, and this will continue (to happen). Therefore, it said earlier that our minds are really like diamonds, nothing can affect it. Even after the Buddha has explained the severity of this, we are actually not at all affected. Ah! We should act the opposite. It would be best for us to be like this, as it will be told later: we should be as soft as tofu, soft like cotton. Then we will be more or less correct. Then we become immediately affected for any small thing. This is why the sutra has explained to us that the reaction of a real fine horse when it sees the shadow of a leash - a real fine horse

start running when it sees the shadow of a leash. That is how we should be. Any small little thing should instantly trigger us to strive. [If that is the case,] then there will be hope for our life. Next,

[71A, 17.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p222L7)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

(iv) The fault of repeated rebirth

The Friendly Letter:⁴⁹⁰

If you looked for the limit of mothers by counting with earthen pellets. The size of juniper berries, the earth would not suffice.

This means you had gone through rebirth repeatedly and you had casted off your bodies while whirling in this cyclic existence. And what happened after you casted off your bodies? You were reborn again, meaning whirling in this cyclic existence. So say we take all the clay from earth and form them into pellets, each pellet being the size of a juniper berry, and we would use it to count the mothers, our mothers. We will not be able to find the limit of our mothers.

[71A, 17.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p222L11)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

Earlier scholars took this to mean that each pellet represents a living being who has been your mother, but this is incorrect.

When we look at this in general, we would think: Since we kept going through rebirth, therefore, in every rebirth we had a mother. So if you try to find [how many] mothers [there were], there is no limit. But Lama [Tsong Kha Pa] said: no! This is not what it means. Next,

[71A, 18.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p223L1)]

[p284, English LR Vol 1]

The *Clear Words: Explanation of the "Friendly Letter"*⁴⁹¹ cites a sutra which indicates

[English LR v.1 p285](#)

that

He said this next. It is from the *Friend Letter*, either from the *Letter to a Student* or from the *Friendly Letter*. The explanation cites from the scriptures.

[71A, 18.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p223L4)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

it refers to the line of matrilineal predecessors, from one's own mother to her mother, and so forth:

For example, O monks, if someone took from this vast earth pellets the size of juniper berries and set them aside, saying, "This is my mother, and this is my mother's mother," then, monks, the clay of this vast earth would be exhausted, yet the line of matrilineal predecessors would not.

It is because in the scriptures, the explanation uses the text from the scriptures. Whenever a Bodhisattva composes, he would never make a statement without ground. There will certainly be references and it will be based on scriptures. And then his explanation will be governed by the meaning in the scriptures. So he referenced the scriptures and said: What is said earlier is not the correct meaning. So what does the scripture really say? It is referring to this, "**O monks**" - This is telling the Bhikshu, the Buddha told him that for instance, if someone used the clay of the earth to make pellets, like the size of juniper berries, then count them, "This is my mother, this is my mother's mother, my mother's mother's mother. My mother's mother's mother's...like that. And then, go on like this to count the next pellets. You would count the next pellet as you go through each matrilineal predecessor. The pellets formed by the clay of the earth will be quickly exhausted. So then if you want to find the original matrilineal predecessor, you cannot. What does this mean? This would mean we are not looking for the mothers that we have had in every life, but

where did the mother of my mother in this life come from? And this mother was born from another mother who was born from yet another mother...

[71A, 19.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p223L14)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

Again, the reading of those former scholars is wrong because Nagarjuna's text says "the limit of mothers."

We would be thinking: Hmm? Why does he say this? What is the reason? It would seem in our feeling, the former explanation would make a deeper impact on us - no! He will explain the reasons for this next.

[71A, 19.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p224L3)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

You should understand how this causes you to be disenchanted as follows. The *Four Hundred Stanzas* says:⁴⁹²

He references the sutras and commentaries in every instance. Before we go on to explain this, I want to first say something. We normally go by our own imagination. It tells us here not to go by our imagination! What is our imagination? In

one word - ignorant. Not only are we ignorant but very clinging. We would even think that we are right! This is where all of our problems lie. Therefore, the scriptures will tell us this on many occasions that if we recognize this point, then there will be hope for us, there will be hope. Hence at any point, do not say that this is the right interpretation, why do you bother to be so verbose! What type of attitude is this? Affliction, it is your latent propensity. Look at the scriptures and see why it says this. Every time that it says something, there must be a special meaning behind it. What does the commentary say?

[71A, 20.38 (手抄稿 第九冊 p224L11)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

**You cannot see the initial cause
Of even a single effect;
Seeing how vast the causes of even
one effect are, Who would not be
frightened?**

It says that for any single effect, meaning any one of our lifetimes, this says that for us now - "I" exist. So then for this single effect, you want to find its causes, to find its causes, the "initial cause," what is the initial cause? You can't find it. You can't find it for any single effect! Ah! Hence there are limitless causes and conditions! You have to think about it, since

everything depends on causes and conditions, in order to produce the right effect, you will have to begin from the causes. But for a very simple issue, you can't even find the initial cause. You can then imagine how complex this issue is. If it is that complicated, how horrible it is. Then you have found a more frightening reason. Do you understand? So let's just say, ah, we're just doing something really minor. It doesn't matter if you did it due to attachment or hostility. You might think that you are just taking a bite of the food. But for that mouthful of food, you can't find its initial cause. If you have to repay back for that mouthful of food in the future, you will not be able to repay it even if you want to. That's what it means. And then no matter what you do, the root cause is right here. It is because you cannot find the initial cause, and unable to repay it back fully, therefore, you will forever go through rebirth in this place, you forever have to resolve these problems. The real problem is right here. So anything that we do, we must instantly urge ourselves to be alert. Do you understand this?

[71A, 22.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p225L9)]

I will say this one more time, "**of even a single effect**," this means for any single effect, if you want to find the very initial cause for this, you can't find it, you can't find it! At this time, how can you not be frightened, how can you not be frightened! Therefore, for any issue right before us, this is why we should

not say, ah, let's be casual about things. Especially for the renunciates, we get the food offered by others, so you eat as much as you can, you play, you use, you feel happy...ah, you can't do that! If you take these things and seek liberation for yourself, that's because you have been liberated, you can have these things in order for others to accumulate merits in the merit field. But if you are not liberated now, then others would have wasted their efforts in vain. You will have to repay them! Since this initial cause, if you can't find the source, to repay others, how are you able to repay fully! How are you able to repay others completely!

[71A, 23.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p226L1)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

Candrakirti's commentary on this says:⁴⁹³

It is right to cultivate a constant sense of disenchantment, and a corresponding mode of conduct, in the face of this vast wilderness—cyclic existence—where movement is difficult on account of the dense forest of ignorance whose reaches cannot be measured.

Well, that's exactly how it is. Ah! Therefore, the defilements in the cyclic existence are just so, are just so complicated, this is really difficult!

[71A, 23.29 (手抄稿 第九冊 p226L4)]

Therefore with this principle, this is what you need to cultivate thoroughly!

[71A, 23.37 (手抄稿 第九冊 p226L6)]

This is what we should do. Therefore, the karma that we usually mention, such as the karmic fruits - [it is] the simplest basic karma cause being explained. However, if you want to figure out how the basic cause evolves as it progresses, only the Buddha can do it. Only the Buddha can do it. Therefore, we must take the first step and quickly strive, we must quickly strive! This is the principle.

Furthermore,

[71A, 24.04 (手抄稿 第九冊 p226L10)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

(v) The fault of repeatedly descending from high to low

Number five, after you ascended, you will have to fall again. This is unbearable. After you descended, you will feel that you are going to ascend. I am sorry, after you ascended, you will have to fall again.

[71A, 24.15 (手抄稿 第九冊 p227L1)]

[p285, English LR Vol 1]

The Friendly Letter:⁴⁹⁴

**Having become Indra, worthy of the world's
honor, you will still fall**

**Once again to the earth because of the force of
past karma.**

**Even having become a universal monarch,
You will once again become a slave for other beings in
cyclic existence.**

**Though you have long experienced the pleasures
Of caressing the breasts and waists of divine women,
You will once again encounter the
unbearable sensations [225]**

**Of the grinding, cutting, and flesh-tearing
hell-devices.**

**Having dwelled long on the peak of Mount Meru,
Enjoying the pleasant touch of soft ground on your feet,**

**Imagine undergoing the unbearable pain
Of walking once again over hot coals and rotting corpses
in hell.**

**Having frolicked in beautiful groves
And enjoyed the embraces of divine women,**

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**You will arrive once again in the forests of
hell, where the leaves**

**Are swords that slice off ears, nose, hands,
and legs.**

**Though you have entered the Gently Flowing River
With beautiful goddesses and golden lotuses,
You will plunge once more in hell into
scalding water—**

**The unbearable waters of the
Impassable River.**

**Having gained the great pleasures of a deity
In the realm of desire, or the detached happiness of
Brahma,⁴⁹⁵**

**You will once again become fuel for the fires
Of the Unrelenting Hell, suffering pain without respite.**

**Having been a deity of the sun or the moon,
Illuminating all the world with the
light of your body,**

**You will return once more to dense,
black darkness,
Where you cannot see even your own outstretched hand.**

This is descending from high to low. When he talks about descending from high to low, that means you will ascend first. Afterwards, you will descend again. Just like that. "**Having become Indra, worthy of the world's honor,**" in other words, you have done all kinds of generosity and in return received all sorts of great offerings in this mundane world, such as becoming a king and so on. I am sorry, after you created [nonvirtuous] karma, you will fall again, you will fall again. That is one of the stories we told the day before, it is about a king who actually had done good deeds! But he became drunk and had someone killed. He consequently fell into the miserable realms. So at this point in time, as we take a look at this, this is really terrible! Hence nothing is desirable in this world. Once you fall into the miserable realms, I am sorry! "**Even having become a universal monarch,**" this is even better. But you will descend once again to become a slave in cyclic existence. A universal monarch holds the highest position in the mundane world. A slave has the lowest position. Not to mention a universal monarch, let's say if you are originally a boss and suddenly you become an entry level worker. We wouldn't be able to take it. Let alone falling from the status of a universal monarch! At this very moment you may be the president, and next, a prisoner, ah! And then you ascend to the heavens,

afterwards, you fall into hell. In all these places, the following describes all the things you will have to experience.

[71A, 26.44 (手抄稿 第九冊 p228L3)]

Usually, for something like this, it doesn't seem that easy for us to relate. But if you seriously think about it, it's still very easy for us to relate. How do you reflect on this? For instance, if you have had something that is really good, for example, it is an item you fervently wanted, it is an item you fervently wanted. All of a sudden, you lost this item, you lost it. Generally, for a relationship between a man and a woman. Ah, both are in love with each other so much, and unexpectedly, one of the parties has a new sweetheart. And then when both of you met each other, she treats you with disdain. Ah, the misery in your heart, compare to what was just mentioned, the difference is unbelievably great - you had just lost something you love, you are not suffering in the miseries of hell! But not for his case, he originally enjoyed such pleasures in the heavens, and next, he fall into the hell. Ah! The way of descending from high to low places is what we should understand. In this mundane world! You are doing some businesses, you have been doing very well. But all of a sudden, you become a prisoner, and owed a debt. You used to be so well-to-do and other people approach you for favors. But suddenly, you have to hide from your debtors and are afraid to be seen by others. But if you compare these to

what was mentioned earlier, they are far much better circumstances! Hence, this is the fault of repeatedly descending from high to low. The following says,

[71A, 28.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p228L13)]

[p286, English LR Vol 1]

The three devices for grinding, cutting, and tearing flesh are those of the Crushing, Black Line, and Extremely Hot Hells, respectively.

This refers to the earlier section, those few things that he mentioned earlier. What does this refer to? He was originally in the heaven, but then, he fall into the Crushing Hell, the Black Hell and the Extremely Hot Hell, these three hells.

[71A, 28.44 (手抄稿 第九冊 p229L2)]

[p286, English LR Vol 1]

To be attended by divine women means to be served by goddesses. The "pleasures of deities in the desire realm" refers to the deities in the desire realm from the Heaven of the Thirty-three and above. Here, the light of the sun and the moon is described in terms that are familiar to ordinary

people, without distinguishing between the support—the palace of the deity—and what is supported—the deity; if you do distinguish them, then the light is the light of the palaces of the sun and moon.

Considering all the ways that you can fall from high to low places—as illustrated by these examples—you should be disenchanted with cyclic existence, because all of its wonders will collapse in the end.

This section explains what was said earlier. Then we do not need to go into details over here. In brief, no matter how wonderful things are, in the end, you will fall into miserable realms. No matter what condition you are in, as long as you are in cyclic existence, all wonders in the cyclic existence will end with this phrase - you will fall into the miserable realms. This final phrase - you will fall into the miserable realms. So as you think about this, oh no, "you should be **disenchanted with cyclic existence.**" Ah! That is why Venerable Sundarananda (the Buddha's younger brother) did not want to work hard initially. But after what he saw in the hells, he began to strive. Oh, as soon as he saw the heavens he began to practice diligently. But after what he saw in the hells, he realized: oh no, after one experiences the heavens, one will have to return [to the hells]. So he desperately strived without even thinking about [going to] heaven.

[71B, 00.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p231L1)]

Unfortunately for us, since we have not accumulated such merits in our past lives, so we cannot have such attainment of having a great noble being to guide us in this way. But what's fortunate for us is that we have more or less accumulated a small portion of merits in order for us to listen to this complete teachings. We should quickly strive according to the teachings, so we will have the opportunity to escape, we will have the opportunity to escape [cyclic existence]. As we think of this, we should strive even harder now, strive even harder. That's the right thing to do! Otherwise, if we lose this opportunity, we will be doomed. We will not even have the chance to hear this teaching anymore. There is only one thing left to do, by then we will be drinking molten copper and be deep-fried in a pot of boiling oil. That's most horrendous!

[71B, 00.51 (手抄稿 第九冊 p231L6)]

[p286, English LR Vol 1]

As the Bases of Discipline states:⁴⁹⁶

**The end of accumulated things
is depletion.**

**The end of things that are high
is a fall. [226] The end of
meetings is separation.**

The end of life is death.

The sutra tells us, for "**accumulated things**," no matter how much wealth you have, it will be "**depleted**" in the end. No matter how high your status is - you will fall. No matter how much you love each other - you will be separated. "**The end of life is death.**" As you think of this, all these things become meaningless. Why do I bother myself with them? The only thing that you should busy yourself with - quickly escape from the cyclic existence! That is why "even if your head is on fire you can put it aside for a moment." Nowadays people are busy with stocks speculations, oh, saving up money into the bank. They don't know what they are doing and the dreams they are having are unrealistic! Therefore, I read up about one ancient master, after he finished eating for the day, he would give the rest away. Why? "I don't even know if I have another tomorrow. If you keep the food which were donated by the kind benefactors, what are you keeping them for!" So as a result, he gave away the food every day, gave away the food every day. His student was miserable over this. Now, even if the student was feeling miserable, he also had his attainments finally. This is how the ancient people really practice. Ah! We have accumulated enough for a month and still want to accumulate for a year. After we accumulated enough for a year, we still go on to accumulate enough for a hundred years. After we accumulated enough for a hundred years, we still want to accumulate enough for a thousand years. How much can we actually eat? No one can live to a hundred years old. But we are

planning as if we have 10,000 years. We don't know what we are busy with! After we busy for so long, we just end up becoming a pile of ashes. And we go to the hell to suffer. This is really not worthwhile!

Furthermore, this is the last of the six sufferings.

[71B, 02.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p232L10)]

[p286, English LR Vol 1]

(vi) The fault of having no companions

The Friendly Letter:⁴⁹⁷

In this way, you will come to grief.

**Therefore take light from the lamp of the
three types of merit; Otherwise, you will
go alone into endless darkness**

**That neither sun nor moon can
penetrate.**

English LR v.1 p287

"You will come to grief" means "Know that you must die as I have indicated before, and take the light of merit." "The three types of merit" refers either to physical, verbal, and mental virtue, or to the three foundations from which merit arises—generosity and so on.

"Endless darkness" refers to the darkness of ignorance.

Now that we are here, let me explain this first. Suppose we can understand the faults as described above, ah, there is nothing worthy to be attached to, nothing worthy to be attached to! What should you do at this time? Do not become attached and you should instead cultivate. What do you cultivate? You cultivate **"the three types of merits."** The three types of merits are explained as the **"physical, verbal, and mental virtue."** That is, you should strive to do this physically, verbally, and mentally. What is this? That is the **"lamp of the three types of merit."** That's what you need. A lamp will illuminate. We are normally in the darkness of ignorance. That's how it is. So, this is what we should go after. We should not stay in this cyclic existence. Like that. If you do not strive in this way, then I'm sorry, where will you go then? **"...endless darkness that neither sun nor moon can penetrate."** This place has no sun or moon. This is the miserable realms. By then, **"you will go alone!"** Whatever you are busy for now, there is nothing you can take with you, and no one will go with you. You are busy for this body. After all that nutrition, you are sent to a place like that. It is so not worthwhile! As for **"having no companions,"** what is that? Next, the commentary tells us,

[71B, 04.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p233L9)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

In regard to having no companions, *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:⁴⁹⁸

**This body comes forth whole, yet
The bones and flesh that
accompany it**

**Will break apart and
disperse. As this is so, Why
mention others, such as
loved ones?**

You are born alone.

Also you die alone.

As others cannot share your suffering,

Of what use is the hindrance of loved ones?

This body, when it is born, "**This body comes forth whole.**" This is how the body is born. And then you would always feel, "Ah, this should be 'me' after all! I'm sorry, when it breaks apart, I'm sorry, it will just break apart, just break apart. All the friends and families and so on that you have now, no one can go with you, not a single person. You cannot take them with you. This is the situation. Therefore, there are no companions. When you are born, you are born by yourself. When you die, you die by yourself. They cannot go instead of us. So why should we hinder each other? That is why we should help each other here. That's what is real. We should take advantage of

this rare opportunity to help each other. This is what we really need. There will be great benefits if we help each other and it will be meaningless to hinder each other. What is truly reliable - to rely on the teaching, to rely on the Sangha community. Then it's right. Other than those, there is nothing else. "**Having no companion,**" firmly remember this!

[71B, 05.40 (手抄稿 第九冊 p234L4)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, these six faults comprise three types:

Taking the earlier "**these six faults,**" these six things can be summarized into three big categories. The first one,

[71B, 05.49 (手抄稿 第九冊 p234L6)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

1) In cyclic existence, there is no secure basis that you can count on.

The first one, in all of cyclic existence, there is nothing you can count on. There's also nothing that can give you assurance. Therefore, from this standpoint, some people would say, "Ah, I need to cultivate. So, I need to first save some money in the

bank and then buy some stocks." This is completely wrong! "I need to first build a house. After it is built, I can seclude myself to do meditation." Don't do this, don't! If I need to cultivate, I need to quickly find the teaching that can help me cultivate and then put it into practice. That's what is correct. The Buddha has also clearly told us that these things cannot at all give you assurance. They cannot be counted on. Therefore, the first thing is that when we cultivate, we must recognize this: we should not busy ourselves for these things. If you have developed the great spirit, then to do these things for the sake of others will be great! That is magnificent! But what is your purpose for doing that? It is because you still saw the horrendous nature of cyclic existence and you wish to help others, to engender in others [this concept]. Your purpose is still this. This is the point that you need to absolutely pay attention, absolutely pay attention to! In brief, this is where the root is. Hence,

There is nothing in the cyclic existence [that you can count on]. Like that.

[71B, 07.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p235L2)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

2) However much you may indulge in its pleasures, they will not bring satisfaction in the end.

And then, the second one is that though you want to find happiness, but no matter what, you just can't be satisfied. Not only are you unsatisfied, the more you do it, the worse it gets. The more you do it, the worse it gets. You may go after some puny advantages now, but you will have to drink liquid copper and hot iron balls later. Ah, you will have to bear sufferings, sufferings, and sufferings. And then when you finally escape from there, eh, sorry, the causally concordant cause and effect are still waiting there for you. You will do the same thing again! So then after this rare opportunity of taking a human life, within these few short decades, your causally concordant effects are still just that strong. That is why I told you this earlier: If you do not work on breaking this, you will never have hope. Why does this thing particular arise for us at present? It's simple! It is the causally concordant effect. This explains that our latent propensity from our past lives is still there. If you do this [bad karma] now, you will fall. At that time, if you have strong attachment, you will become a hungry ghost. If your karma is a little worse, it's not the case where you will be able to eat anything, you will. But what would you end up eating? Liquid copper and hot iron balls. Ah! It is that horrible. After you have exhausted that bad karma, you will become an animal to continue to repay. You will repay. After you have paid it off, you will become a human again. Once you're in the human realm, I'm sorry, your taste buds will be acting up again, acting up again. Ah! It is that horrible. It can never be satisfied.

[71B, 08.31 (手抄稿 第九冊 p235L13)]

Therefore, after you understand this point, you should know: oh, to truly cultivate - everyone should pay attention to this - [it is to change] the causally concordant behavioral effect. Hence, in our confession rites, it says, "I have committed the ten nonvirtuous actions and the five actions of immediate retribution since beginningless time. These actions are caused by the afflictions from which the mind is bound by." Do you remember this sentence? What should you do with "all these nonvirtuous karma?" "I confess for all these." Ah! So, my mind has been bound by afflictions since beginningless time. How am I bound? I am bound by the causally concordant consciousness. Whenever a sensory object arises, if you do not cultivate the remedy, do not follow the correct method to reflect and analyze, eh, your customary temperament will arise. As soon as you see the sensory object, this [temperament] will come up. What happens at this point? It is about your affliction, you will certainly pursue it, certainly pursue it. So, when you are cultivating, what are you cultivating? It is exactly this. Therefore, the real purpose to confession is something that you must understand. Otherwise, you'll be saying, "I confess. Ah, I am regretful. I have weighty karmic obscuration!" After you go on at length, what is your karmic obscuration? You don't know it yourself. You don't know it at all. So, what are you

confessing? For this concept, we are now clear. That is excellent! Finally, the third one is,

[71B, 09.41 (手抄稿 第九冊 p236L8)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

3) You have been caught in cyclic existence from beginningless time.

Just like what is said earlier, the first one is that there is no assurance, that you cannot count on it. And then, after you obtain something good, you are never be satisfied. And you will end up with great suffering. The situation is that you are forever whirling inside, completely oblivious. Ah! It is that serious.

[71B, 10.00 (手抄稿 第九冊 p236L11)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

The first of these has four parts:

The first one is that there is no secure basis that you can count on. There are four [subcategories to that].

[71B, 10.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p236L13)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

1) There is no security in obtaining a body, for you discard bodies repeatedly.

2) There is no security in agents of help or harm, for they are not certain.

This body is indeed, indeed, indeed...do you have any security in this? You would feel that you want to make your body better, and you would prepare some nutritious foods. Eh, it just so happens that after you eat it, something goes wrong. Ah! You might feel that something is good and you go out to do that to find some happiness. But when you go out, you get into an accident. Even if you just comfortably sit in your house, "bang"! Your house collapse. When nothing seems to be wrong, you can't see anything wrong going on, but I am sorry, a small infectious disease could cause you to die. That's how it is for you! There is no security in obtaining a body. And then, there is "**no security in agents of help or harm.**" Ah, I feel that I've made some money and I put it in a bank. But the bank can close down. Eh, when others know that you have some money, when the robbers know that you have money, they can kidnap you. There are all these problems. Ah, you busy yourself with the stocks, alas! suddenly, the stocks crash, and you lose your investments. Ah, it is entirely meaningless! Therefore, there is no security in the agents.

[71B, 11.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p237L9)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

3) There is no security in attaining a wonderful condition, for what is high becomes low.

Ah! You might have done many wonderful things, "alas!"
All of a sudden, you would fall from your status.

[71B, 11.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p237L11)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

4) There is no security in companions, for at death you go without companions.

This is just that.

[71B, 11.21 (手抄稿 第九冊 p237L13)]

[p287, English LR Vol 1]

The third of these four refers to being reborn again and again; there is no limit to the stream of rebirths. Reflect on suffering under this threefold arrangement as well.

These are the principles. The third one as indicated is **"caught in cyclic existence from beginningless time."** You are continuously caught inside. So, these are the few principles. These are the six sufferings as indicated earlier. We would frequently hear the eight sufferings, but not much about the six sufferings. Therefore here, this offers another type of suffering that we can contemplate on. Actually, it doesn't matter that much whether you contemplate on the eight sufferings or the six sufferings. What's really important is how you can find what you connect with in these few categories - eh, you would all of sudden feel deeply about one of them. So, you take this feeling which is your understanding at the moment, you continue to reflect and analyze. You would then be able to take this cognition and develop great strength. This will in turn change your previous mistaken concepts. This is the first task to do in cultivation. When you are able to change and transform, by then, you will wholeheartedly engage in what you are supposed to be doing. If you recite the Buddha's name, we wouldn't be able to ask you to stop reciting the Buddha's name. Even if we seal your mouth, you would still be reciting in your mind. You wouldn't even be scared of becoming sick, it's just right that you can go to the Pure Land [soon]. This [type of cultivation] is that excellent! Hence when you cultivate the lower teachings, you will reach the higher teachings! So then next,

Chapter 19

Further Meditations on Suffering

Chapter 19 Outline

FURTHER MEDITATIONS ON SUFFERING

(c) Meditation on the three types of suffering

- i) The suffering of change
- ii) The suffering of pain
- iii) The suffering of conditionality

2" Reflection on specific sufferings

- a) The suffering of human beings
- b) The suffering of the demigods
- c) Reflection on the suffering of the deities
 - (i) The deities of the desire realm
 - (a') The sufferings of dying and falling
 - (1') The suffering of dying
 - (2') The suffering of falling to lower realms
 - (b') The suffering of anxiety
 - (c') The sufferings of being cut, gashed, killed, and banished
 - (ii) The deities of the form and formless realms

[English LR v.1 p289](#)

[71B, 12.47 (手抄稿 第九冊 p238L10)]

(c) Meditation on the three types of suffering⁴⁹⁹

(i) The suffering of change [227]

Pleasant feelings experienced by beings in cyclic existence are like the pleasure felt when cool water is applied to an inflamed boil or carbuncle: as the temporary feeling fades, the pain reasserts itself. This is called *the suffering of change*

What are the "**three types of suffering**"? They are the suffering of pain, the suffering of change and the suffering of conditionality. Each is a type of suffering. The first one is the suffering of change. For this suffering of change, he gives an analogy. It is much like "**an inflamed boil or carbuncle.**" The inflamed boil, ah, it feels like it's burning so much, and you feel terrible! So you would pour some water on it. Ah, it would cool for a moment and it would seem like happiness. The pleasures that we feel in this cyclic existence is exactly this, exactly this. Actually, this in itself is not happiness. When it fades, there'll be all sorts of suffering. Therefore to pour some cold water on an inflamed boil or carbuncle may bring some pleasure, but when the carbuncle breaks, ah, there is enormous pain! Hence these two are the suffering of change. The pleasure that it brings is not worthwhile at all.

[71B, 14.05 (手抄稿 第九冊 p239L4)]

What is truly frightening is not the suffering! Do we need the Buddha to tell us about suffering? What we really need to understand is happiness. For what is obviously suffering, we do not see it that way. Not only do we not see, we are deceived by them and have to endure all kinds of great miseries. That is why this is something that has to be explained by the Buddha. And from now on I will no longer be fooled! So now I will be in a hurry to take all those things that are contrary to the teaching, the things that I used to accumulate, and throw them all away. After I throw them away, I will make offerings to the Three Jewels and dedicate. While I still have this body of leisure, I can use this unreliable body to bring about lasting significance - the wealth of the teaching. This is the concept that we need to understand. This is the case for our body too. Do not become attached to these small sufferings of change, this pleasant feeling. We should quickly strive to confess now, to conscientiously practice in order to obtain the lasting, diamond like body that will never deteriorate.

[71B, 15.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p239L10)]

[p289, English LR Vol 1]

and includes not only the feeling itself, but also the main mind and other mental processes that

[English LR v.1 p290](#)

are similar to it, ⁵⁰⁰ as well as the contaminated objects which, when perceived, give rise to that feeling.

Usually when we talk about this pleasant feeling, it would seem like a type of feeling. You should note that this does not refer to only the feeling, but that this includes all of the associated main mind and other mental processes that are similar to it. For instance, when you get something that makes you happy, all the thoughts that are associated with this in your mind will count towards that [i.e the suffering of change]. All situations that involve afflictions are suffering of change, are suffering of change. This is a point that we need to understand. In other words, this would include all the sensory objects produced by this pleasant feeling. These are all what we should know, all what we should know. Therefore it is because we want to enjoy some pleasure that we accumulate the wealth, all the friends and all the activities. All of these things are linked together beginning with this. After you understand this point, all those things that are linked will be severed. The root of it comes from this, comes from this.

Next,

[71B, 16.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p240L4)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

(ii) The suffering of pain

When a painfully inflamed boil makes contact with an irritant such as salt water, it is agonizing. This is how you recognize the feeling of pain. Painful feelings like this constitute the suffering of pain, because as soon as they arise the body and the mind are tormented,

It's like that. So further, it talks about "**the suffering of pain.**" What is the suffering of pain? It is still talking about the inflamed boil - this boil is like the body having a big sore, a big sore. It is really terrible. Ah, this sore itself is already extremely painful! And then when it "**makes contact,**" it was already painful, but now that you touch it, ah! It is just that painful. And then when it breaks, it is even more painful. That's how the feeling of pain is. As soon as you feel pain, you can't handle it. Ah, your body and your mind are experiencing this pain.

[71B, 16.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p240L10)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

as in the case of kidney pain. Also, as explained above, the suffering of pain is not just the feeling.

So then, similarly, it would be like the case of kidney pain, like a stomachache. Or in general, we.... Have you ever experienced the pain from kidney stones? I have seen someone go through that before. One of my teachers had kidney stones. Later on, ah, I heard that the pain was... There was this friend of mine, a friend of mine, ah! I saw how he had gone through it. He would not be in pain normally. But when it began to hurt, truly, a person who seemed just fine would suddenly begin to feel this pain, would suddenly begin to feel this pain. He was my friend in the Great Enlightenment Lotus Society in Los Angeles. One day he started to have pain, he was so miserable for one hour. He was sweating so much on his forehead. We couldn't do anything about it. His wife, his daughter, his relatives and friends were all there. So we said, "We need to quickly take him to the hospital." They said, "It is useless. We have taken him to the hospital a few times in Taiwan. He has already seen the doctors. But nothing can be done." So he just kept rolling round on the ground and sweating. We could not do anything about it!

[71B, 18.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p241L6)]

Therefore we now say we're not afraid, we are not afraid. I feel that this is really because we are foolish and we have not seen anything like that. Once you see it, there won't be anyone unafraid. I have been doing foot massage the last couple of

days. That really can't count as anything at all, but when I got to the painful spot, it was really unbearable! We should not think that we are unafraid. This is why I keep suggesting that you should not say you are not scared. It would be best if you tried this for yourself. You will then really know whether you are afraid or not. The Buddha sees the most clearly, this is why you sentient beings are foolish! If you have seen real suffering as I have, without an exception, you would be like the reed plant. What is that like? Just like a rope, as soon as you let go, it will fall to the ground. If you have really seen the sufferings, without an exception, anyone would fall to the ground and would not be able to get up. It is that severe, those types of sufferings! Therefore he said, "**As in a case of kidney stones,**" this is indeed the most painful thing I have seen.

[71B, 18.58 (手抄稿 第九冊 p241L14)]

I have seen this quite a few times. Ah! The pain [that people have to endure], there was this time that I was in the hospital. There was this once when I was sent to the emergency room. Later, another person also came in and was placed next to me. It was a woman and she was howling with such agony! The doctor was next to her, but could not do a thing. Eh, before he could find the root of the problem, he could do nothing. Ah! Therefore for this world...I read the sutras later, it said if you compare this kind of pain to the

suffering of hell, if all you have to endure in hell is this type of pain, it would be far better than being in heaven. These are all absolutely true. Therefore we shouldn't say that we are unafraid. We should reflect more. While our brains are still functioning well, this is what we should busy ourselves with!

[71B, 19.46 (手抄稿 第九冊 p242L5)]

Similarly, this is not limited to the feeling, but also the main mind and other mental processes that are concordant with it and so on. We should also understand, also understand them. Why? When you think of these things, ah! You will develop a great sense of disenchantment, and desperately strive. In regards to the feeling of pleasure, as soon as you think of pain, you will no longer be deceived by it. When you are no longer deceived by the pleasurable things, are no longer fooled, this is the first. The second one, as you think of this pain, it is a great push for you to advance. At that time, the only option is to cultivate. Eh, there is one more. There are times when it is neither pleasurable nor painful. What do you do then? There is another method. It says,

[71B, 20.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p242L10)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

(iii) The suffering of conditionality

Contaminated neutral feelings are like an inflamed boil which is in contact with neither soothing nor irritating substances. Because these feelings coexist with dysfunctional tendencies, they constitute the *suffering of conditionality*,

Similarly, just like an inflamed boil, even though you have not encountered those two things before, I am sorry, it is still contaminated. It is contaminated! It will continue to go forward. Even though you will not encounter them just now, later on, these two things will all happen to you at the same time. That is why it is called "**The suffering of conditionality.**" Therefore to summarize, whether you are feeling the pain or the pleasure right now, or you feel neither the pain nor pleasure, this is the very end result. It is just like that!

[71B, 21.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p243L1)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

which, as explained above, does not refer to the feelings alone.

This is the same, the main mind and other mental processes that are similar to it are all included!

[71B, 21.20 (手抄稿 第九冊 p243L3)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

Insofar as the suffering of conditionality is affected by previous karma, as well as the afflictions,

Why? It is because this thing comes entirely from our past lives, comes from our afflictions and karma from the past and present. And these two things will revolve around each other to generate more and to propel forward. As these [two] things continuously generate and propel forward, these things will always be there. Therefore without you training for an effective remedy and stop it right now, it will forever be like this. Speaking of this, we can immediately get a feel of what our causally concordant effect is like. When a sensory object arises, we indeed cannot do anything about it [i.e. our own reactions]. Once you recognize that there is nothing you can do, that would count as being pretty good. It is because you already know that there is nothing you can do. That means you have already recognized it. What's most pitiful is that we don't recognize it. We always feel, "Ah, we think we make great sense!"

[71B, 22.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p243L10)]

Why is it that when we hear the teachings from the sutra, we feel nothing? That is because we absolutely do not understand that we're actually in a state of ignorance. That is why after we listen to it, we are very blurred. This is a phenomenon that we must understand. As soon as you understand what you've heard, whatever you encounter, you will naturally be struck with fright - ah, this is how my mind is. I do not accord with the teaching! What is not being in accordance with the teaching? That is when you are amidst afflictions. Therefore, at all times, and all places, we are amidst afflictions. The thought before came with afflictions. The thought after will follow afflictions. Therefore, even though we listen to the teachings of the sutra, after you listen to it, you would feel, "Eh, this is really good." But after you listen, it will just be gone. If even listening to the teachings ends up as such, for other matters, do you have any control? Therefore when karma ripens, you can do nothing about it, nothing about it. This is what we need to understand. The characteristic of the suffering is right here, you are doomed to no escape from this state of being unless you cultivate the remedy. Hence this is called suffering.

[71B, 23.25 (手抄稿 第九冊 p244L5)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

and coexists with seeds that will produce future suffering and affliction, it coexists with persistent dysfunctional tendencies.

Not only is this as such now, but that it coexists with the **"seeds that will produce future suffering and afflictions."** **"Seed"** is something that will continuously grow, it will keep following you. Hence it is called **"persistent."** To be persistent, it means at anytime, anywhere, anyplace, as long as you are in the three realms, it is there without any exceptions. It is the same when you are awake or when you are sleeping. It is the same if you are muddled or intelligent. Ah, I can study very well. I am sorry, that is useless! So I just decide not to bother about it. It doesn't help to not bother about it either! Even when you are sleeping, it doesn't matter when you are sleeping either. Under any circumstance, this thing will keep following you. And as long as it follows you, there! All these other things will follow.

[71B, 24.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p244L12)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

Thus, attachment increases when a pleasant feeling arises,

For whatever that is pleasant, it will increase your attachment.

[71B, 24.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p245L1)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

and hostility increases when pain arises.

For whatever that is painful, it will increase your hostility. Ah, you just don't want it!

[71B, 24.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p245L3)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

Ignorance increases when you misapprehend the body-which is part of a dysfunctional situation that is neither pleasant nor painful-as permanent, when it is in fact impermanent.

When you don't feel pleasant or painful, you might feel that nothing is the matter. So you think, "Ah! I can live pretty comfortably." **"...You misapprehend the body-which is part of a dysfunctional situation that is neither pleasant nor painful-as permanent, when it is in fact impermanent."** Not only do you misapprehend what is impermanent to be permanent, wrong views will follow suit and thus "ignorance increases". When you do not comprehend, or when you do comprehend but you do not remedy it, you will forever be increasing your

three mental poisons. Just like that. Therefore, we should be able to understand the real principles. Once you actually understand the principles, , it is still not enough. You will still have to reflect on the remedy!

[71B, 25.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p245L9)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

Attachment gives rise to suffering such as future rebirth in the five realms [the realms of the hell-beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, and deities]; hostility brings about suffering such as sorrow in this life, as well as the future suffering of miserable realms;

Attachment, it is because you have attachment which is the main reason for giving rise to rebirth. The main reason is attachment, which then brings these sufferings. Hostility, not only will this make you suffer in the future, but you will suffer in the present because of it. You suffer in this life, and you will certainly suffer in the miserable realms in the future.

[71B, 25.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p245L12)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

while ignorance acts in such a way as to maintain in existence the sufferings produced by the other two [attachment and hostility].

Ignorance, it is because of ignorance, the aforementioned attachment and hostility will always follow it. Ah! From this we should,

[71B, 25.56 (手抄稿 第九冊 p246L1)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, attachment ceases when you see pleasant feelings as suffering.

This is the root. When pleasures arise, you should quickly say, "Ah! You are a great con-artist. I must not be deceived, I have to quickly stop!"

[71B, 26.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p246L4)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

In the case of painful feelings, hostility ceases when you consider that since these aggregates [of body and mind] are a

collection of causes for suffering, painful feelings arise from them just as physical affliction does.

So then in the case of painful feelings, we should know: Ah! The aggregates themselves are a collection of causes for suffering. Why is it specifically stated here? The real principal motivating force is the truth of suffering. Therefore, from the truth of suffering, we should consider this: our bodies from the start, this whole thing, are a collection of causes for suffering. This is why we would often say, "The flaming five aggregates, the flaming five aggregates." After talking about this for so long, after discussing the principles at length, you have not even grasped the fundamentals. The root to the flaming five aggregates, if you recognize this right here, that as long as you have these things, as long as your thoughts exist, as long as your body exists, I am sorry, you are forever in cyclic existence. You will forever be in misery. Therefore, you will develop what [sort of thoughts in your mind]? You will say, "Even if my head is on fire, I can wait just a moment. But I must quickly destroy the blazing flames of impermanence at once." When you reach this understanding, you would be able to let go of anything. Ah! You can ignore all other things and instead quickly pursue this to solve the problem!

[71B, 27.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p246L13)]

The Arhats who are in the Buddha's time, not one of them acted otherwise! And for all the great practitioners, look at the great practitioners of Zen. Ah! They would feel the uncertainty of time of death. They were "anxious about life and death." They had to find the root to it all. So how can anyone of them ever let go of practice! That is why I deeply feel that this is the root to our cultivation! Once you have this, this is where you begin to uphold the ethical disciplines. This is where you begin to recite the Buddha's name. This is where you begin to practice Zen. The teachings also tell you to recognize this thing. There is not one... Once you establish this, that's when you can go further to talk about learning Vajrayana. Therefore, for now, there is no need to talk about anything else other than whether you have recognized this yet? If you have not, then you should stop here. No need to practice anything else. After you get this right, you will naturally progress to the rest. Hence,

[71B, 28.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p247L5)]

You should not be hostile.

[71B, 28.16 (手抄稿 第九冊 p247L7)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

In the case of neutral feelings, ignorance ceases when you see that they are impermanent, exhaustible, and perishable in nature. In this way, you prevent the three feelings from giving rise to the three mental poisons.

When any situation appears, you should not give rise to the three mental poisons.

[71B, 28.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p247L9)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

I have explained these points in accordance with Compendium of Determinations and the Levels of Yogic Deeds.

He has explained this to us, he has explained this to us! With this point, let me stop here for a moment. This section has a deeper meaning.

[71B, 28.42 (手抄稿 第九冊 p247L12)]

Please turn to page 167 in The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment. (English text, page 290). We have finished explaining the three sufferings yesterday. Suffering f is classified into eight sufferings, six sufferings and three sufferings. The substance of the sufferings is the same.

They are after all, sufferings. However, he explained (sufferings) from different perspectives. Actually, different perspectives mean different types. There are different types of sufferings an individual has to deal with in daily life. There are different types of sufferings a being in the three realms has to face. Using these various types [of sufferings] helps us relate. Whatever that we can relate to, we should then conduct more in depth analysis to thoroughly understand the true ways of the entire three realms. After we understand the true ways, we can then discover the root of suffering. This is his foremost intention.

[72A, 00.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p253L1)]

Once you find the root, you will be able to uproot it. Otherwise, there are many who are learning Buddhism now, they all act like this: they would feel that Buddhism is good and it is something we should practice. But why is it good? Hmm? Don't know. How to practise? Don't know that either. Therefore, there is much ambiguity. In such a state, you would continue to devote yourself on the end twigs [the incidentals as oppose to the fundamentals]. Though you will eventually in a roundabout way get to the final destination, you have no idea the infinite eons of time that you would have wasted. This is what happens if you take the long route. You will endure so much suffering during this time. Therefore, since from the

beginning, we have step-by-step analysed and explored various aspects, we have finally found it! So what is the reason? It is right here.

Now let us look at the text, the first sentence.

[72A, 01.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p253L7)]

[p290, English LR Vol 1]

In the same way that someone bearing a heavy burden cannot be happy so long as the burden must be borne, you too will suffer

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so long as you carry the burden of the appropriated aggregates.

What is the real root to the suffering of truth? It is the five aggregates. In other words, it is precisely our body and mind. To put it simply, it is the "self" that we normally speak of. For anyone, it is the main substance of the individual. Much like bearing a few hundred kilograms of heavy burden, as long as one carries this burden on the body and has not been able to put it down, I am sorry, the suffering will persist. You will never be able to resolve this to obtain happiness. Hence, **"you too**

will suffer so long as you carry the burden of the appropriated aggregates." We should bear this sentence in mind.

[72A, 02.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p254L4)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Though you have occasional moments when painful feeling is absent,

(Translator note: this part of the Chinese text is different. It is more like this, "As long as you persist to conceive this, you will suffer.")

As long as you have not applied the remedy to ultimately alleviated the problem, that's when you "persist to conceive this." "Persist to conceive" is a beginningless latent propensity in our minds. Without us being aware, we keep at it. Hence, it is called conceiving the true sign of the self of persons and conceiving the true sign of the self of phenomena. This is what we would say normally. But what is conceiving the sign of the self? You don't know. What is conceiving the sign of phenomena? You don't know. In such a state, just knowing these two terms is not sufficient to help us alleviate the real problem. But we are under the threat of suffering right now. Hence, based on these two terms, you must go and find the meaning behind these two terms. Once you found the meaning

behind these two terms, that's when you can get rid of that. Hence, "persist to conceive this" would mean: Ah! The actual meaning presented by these two terms is such that as long as one persists to conceive these things, one will certainly suffer. So then why is that?

[72A, 03.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p254L12)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

because the aggregates are firmly embedded in the dysfunctional tendencies of suffering and the afflictions,

Within the aggregates, there is the root of suffering, which is the "**dysfunctional tendencies of suffering and the afflictions.**" These are right inside the aggregates, right inside them. Hence, this is called "**the suffering of conditionality.**" Even though it has not manifested, but that at all times, it will ceaselessly propel forward. Since it will ceaselessly propel forward, it will not abide at the present moment where there seems to be no suffering. But it is not the case where there really is no suffering but that that there aren't great sufferings [now]. However as it keeps propelling forward, as it meets up with the right conditions, ah! This suffering nature will immediately be exposed. And these conditions are what we have accumulated from endless eons ago. We have no idea how many conditions there are. This is what we need to

understand. Therefore, to truly speak of the various types of sufferings, what we should finally come to recognize is to recognize that: Oh! This is where things originate from. This is the miserable heavy burden of cyclic existence. Therefore, this is where we should apply remedy. Hence, regarding this point, if you do not recognize it, then there is no root to any of the Buddhism [that you learn]. There is no basis to establish it.

[72A, 04.57 (手抄稿 第九冊 p255L6)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

the suffering of conditionality is still present, and therefore myriad sufferings are just on the verge of arising in countless ways.

As long as the aggregates exist, because the aggregates exist, the dysfunctional tendencies will ride on them. In this case, even though no suffering has arisen just now, but they are "**just on the verge of arising.**" It will not stop and therefore in countless ways, it will meet all sorts of conditions, internally or externally. Then sufferings will arise.

[72A, 05.28 (手抄稿 第九冊 p255L10)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Therefore, since the suffering of conditionality pervades all suffering and is the root of the other two types of suffering, meditate on it often in order to become disenchanted with it.

This is what we should finally conclude and understand. This suffering pervades everything. In reality, in regards to how we feel about this, we just can't seem to relate to it. We would ordinarily speak of suffering frequently. But we never paid attention to the real suffering spoken by the Buddha in the truth of suffering in such that we need to find the root of it. But it happens to be right here and it is something that we can't ordinarily relate to. Therefore, if you cannot relate to this, the Buddhism that you learn is only limited to the vehicle of the human and deity. And another phrase to describe the vehicle of the human and deity would be "the three-lifetime dilemma." Are you willing to engage in things that will result in the three-lifetime dilemma? This is a point that we should especially understand and pay particularly attention to! In particular now, there are too many people who are learning Buddhism who would say that Buddhism is good. But what is so good about Buddhism? Ah, you will say that it tells you about birth, sickness, death...yes. If we need others to tell you about these things, we are indeed too unintelligent! Not to mention that when animals encounter suffering, they know to avoid it too. We are humans, are we only to understand these as well? This is the root of it. We must pay attention to this!

[72A, 06.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p256L7)]

So now, we understand it. But it is not something that will work just after you understand it. This was said again and again earlier: as you understand it, though it is like that in theory, but as for how you feel about it, it is something very difficult for you to relate to. Therefore, you have to reflect, reflect more often, train and train more often until you develop an accordant valid cognition in your mind. That is when you will develop a sense of great disenchantment. Then, it is right! Hence, the first root to training in Buddhism - disenchantment. This will certainly arise from right here! Once you develop the disenchantment, even if you are born in the heavens, but because you deeply understand the nature of suffering, that you have not attained liberation, this is why the wise will say the happy realms are just like hell. Those who are truly wise, who can properly understand the realities of the world, know that the reality is the truth of suffering. This type of people will view the heavenly pleasures like being in hell. The reason for that is right here. This is the nature of the aggregates, as long as the aggregates exist, the problem is unsolved. I will say this one last time. The key to the issue is to not just understand it, but to really feel it. There is a lot to learn for that. If you are unable to truly feel it, but only able to understand it, then this will only result in the

three-lifetime dilemma. You will become those really intelligent people in the mundane world.

[72A, 08.35 (手抄稿 第九冊 p257L2)]

Therefore, recently, we have gradually and slowly begun to explain confession and so on. So students have produced different feelings in response. Those who have developed feelings for it, what actually happened? These are the people who were able to put it to practice accordingly, put it to practice accordingly. This is why, the sutra has told us this time and again, though you may understand a lot, but if you let yourself become lazy, you will not accord. It is useless. On the contrary, even though you might only know a little, but if you put it to practice, you will immediately gain benefit. But here we should not misconstrue it as this: if this is the case, we do not need to know a lot. No! If you can understand a little, you will immediately gain benefits. So the more you know, the more benefits there will be. This is telling us to put the teachings that we understand to practice, accord with it, and experience its real benefits. So now, we have a general understanding. It will then particularly explain that with regards to the suffering of change - the pleasant feeling is the most difficult one to breakthrough. If you can breakthrough it, the rest of the problem will be easier in comparison.

Look at the text:

[72A, 09.59 (手抄稿 第九冊 p257L10)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Moreover, your current pleasant feelings—which cause attachment to grow—mostly arise only upon the relief of suffering; pleasure does not exist naturally, independently of the removal of suffering.

This says that many of your current pleasant feelings, these occur from the lack of understanding, a misconceived and a flawed view. These pleasant feelings produce a great fault - they cause attachment to grow. And attachment is the primary cause for bringing on cyclic existence. Yet actually, is this pleasant feeling real? No! These are actually "**the relief of suffering**" - hence these are actually sufferings, but the sufferings are gradually, gradually reducing. When they are gradually reducing, you then "misconceive" - meaning this is a mistaken feeling. You feel that it is pleasant. But its nature is not inherently pleasant. It lacks the nature that is inherently pleasant. Its nature is just not that. Hence, "**pleasure does not exist naturally, independently of the removal of suffering.**" This is because when the suffering is gradually reducing, this feeling will arise as the suffering is being removed. Hence, this [pleasantness] is not its real nature. The real nature of it is

absolutely not pleasant. The nature of this is absolutely suffering. It will immediately give us an actual event to explain this: for instance, you could keep walking, keep walking for a long time, going through great distance...and then it says this next as suffering.

[72A, 11.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p258L6)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

For example, if you suffer because of too much walking, a pleasant state of mind arises when you sit down.

Say you have walked for a long time and if you are told to temporarily stop and sit for a while, you will feel so comfortable and so happy at that moment! What is that? That is because -

[72A, 12.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p258L9)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Then, as the earlier intense suffering fades, pleasure appears to arise gradually. Yet sitting is not naturally pleasant,

The fact is there is a great suffering at present, but as you stop for a moment, the great suffering will gradually reduce, gradually diminish. Hence, you misconstrue this alleviation to be pleasant. But this thing itself, the nature of it is not

pleasant. Its nature is not pleasant. Thus, he immediately poses this question- if sitting down is pleasant, then the more you sit, the happier you should become. This is because it is supposed to be pleasant. Much like earning money, even having a dollar earned is good. But the more you earn the better it is. Hence, this should feel the same way! By the same token, if sitting down is pleasant, then the longer you sit, the happier you should become! Hence it says this next,

[72A, 13.12 (手抄稿 第九冊 p259L1)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

because if you sit too long, suffering arises again, just as before.

As a result, if we ask you to sit there for a long time, not only is it not pleasant, you will feel great suffering. Hence, if you were asked to keep sitting, as you sit for a long time, you will want to stand up and walk around for a while. Why? You are miserable. Suffering, that is how it is when you sit [for too long]. For sleeping, if you were to sleep [for a long time], the same thing happens. If we ask you to eat [a lot, it would be same]. There are no exceptions. Hence, he says this next,

[72A, 13.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p259L5)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Suppose that sitting and other postures were causes of pleasure by their very nature. Just as suffering increases in proportion to your involvement with causes of suffering, so should pleasure increase the longer you walk, sit, lie down, drink or eat, or stand in the sun or shade.

Suppose that the nature or the natural characteristic of these things are pleasant, much like how sufferings are, then what would happen? It should be that the longer you sit, the happier you will get. The sufferings in this world are naturally miserable. The longer you suffer, the more unbearable the suffering and the more it increases. Why? This is because the nature of it is suffering. But this pleasant feeling that we talked about earlier does not work that way. In the beginning, when you first change [from your previous state], you feel happy. But after a little while, this pleasant feeling will gradually subside. As you continue even more, the pleasant feeling is gone. It is transformed to the feeling of suffering. If it continues, then you will feel extremely miserable! What does this explain? This explains that the nature of it is not real happiness, but suffering! Hence, we should understand this properly. If you understand it, then there should be no problem. If you do not understand it, you should go back and think over this carefully. This concept is very important!

[72A, 14.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p259L14)]

It is the same principle. After you walk for too long, you want to sit. After you sit for too long, you want to do something else. This is the same when you "**walk, sit, lie down, drink or eat, or stand.**" There are no exceptions. After you walk for a long time, you want to sit. After you sit for a while, it is not right again. You need to nap. After you nap for a while, you need to stand. Even if we ask you to keep lying on the bed, you cannot. Why? It is the same idea. It is just a feeling that arises in dependence of the gradual reduction of the great suffering. The suffering has just been reduced a little, but the nature of it is still suffering. Hence, this is just a matter of our flawed delusion. That is why it is called ignorance!

[72A, 15.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p260L5)]

Other than those, "**in the sun or shade,**" when you are thirsty, you will drink. When you are hungry, you will eat. When you are cold, you need the sun. When the sun is beating down, you need shade. Everything is just like that. When you are cold, you need to bask in the sun. When the sun gets too strong, you cannot tolerate it either. If basking in the sun produces happiness, then the more you bask the happier you should get! But that is not the case. There are no exceptions to this. Even for food, you should try eating! When you get to the

end, you feel so miserable from eating. In the end, not only do you have digestive problems, but that you have lost your appetite. There is not anything that is an exception to this! Hence, what are all of these things? They are just a "**relief of suffering.**" This point is very important, very important! It is very important, very important! Hence, in this situation,

[72A, 16.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p260L12)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

However, it is clear that if you do any of these for too long, suffering is all that results. [229]

As long as you do anything for too long, the end result is always suffering, always suffering.

[72A, 16.44 (手抄稿 第九冊 p260L14)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

For, as the *Descent into the Womb Sidra* says in the same vein:⁵⁰¹

After he explains the principles, he immediately tells us that this is what the scripture says. It says,

[72A, 16.53 (手抄稿 第九冊 p261L2)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Nanda, the physical activities of walking, sitting, standing, or lying down must each be understood as suffering.

For everything, each one of them, there is no exception. They are all sufferings. Therefore,

[72A, 17.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p261L4)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

If meditators analyze the nature of these physical activities, they will see that if they spend the day walking and do not rest, sit down, or lie down, they will experience walking exclusively as suffering and will experience intense, sharp, unbearable and unpleasant feelings.

For everything, they are actually intense, sharp, and unbearable sufferings!

[72A, 17.26 (手抄稿 第九冊 p261L6)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

The notion that walking is pleasant will not arise.

You absolutely should not misconceive this to be pleasant. That is the case for walking. **"After discussing the other three physical activities in the same way,"** not only is this the case for walking, sitting, standing or lying down, but that it is true for all other activities. It mentioned earlier of these things, drinking, eating, or standing in the sun or shade. There are no exceptions to this in the mundane world! It continues to say,

[72A, 17.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p261L9)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

After discussing the other three physical activities in the same way, the text continues: Nevertheless, Nanda, because they break the continuity of suffering in one or the other of the physical activities, some other, new suffering arises; and this they take to be pleasure.

This part is about the previous section, it explains the reasons.

[72A, 18.01 (手抄稿 第九冊 p261L11)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Nanda, when this contaminated feeling of pleasure arises, it is only suffering that is arising; when it ends, it is only this nature of suffering that ends. When it arises yet again, it is only compositional activity that arises; when it ends, it is only compositional activity that ends.

For all the phenomena in this world, when it arises, it is suffering. When it ends, it is suffering. That is why we should strive to find the method of "cessation," so we can eliminate everything. That's when we will obtain the happiness of peace.

[72A, 18.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p262L2)]

[p291, English LR Vol 1]

Also, as Aryadeva's *Four Hundred Stanzas* says:⁵⁰²

English LR v.1 p292

**Pleasure, when it increases,
Is seen to change into pain;
Pain, when it increases,
Does not likewise change into pleasure.**

It first explains the principles. Then it immediately substantiates it with the scriptures. After referencing the scriptures as proof, a master is cited to further elucidate this. What did the master say in the commentary? He said, much like what we misconceive, it feels that as if the pleasure is increasing but it will, definitely, and eventually change into pain. However for pain, when it increases, it will not change into pleasure. Why? The reason is that pain has suffering as its nature. Its characteristic is suffering. The longer you are in pain, the more suffering you have. But pleasure is not the same. That is why when its duration lengthens, I am sorry, ah, pain will come again! Therefore, whether it is the scriptures or the commentaries, they all say the same. And then the masters extracted the principles from the scriptures and commentaries to help us understand the vital key points clearly. Now that we are here, we have come to understand: Ah! Indeed, for pleasure is the most difficult to understand and hard to let go, it is after all not real! It is [actually] pain! So if even pleasures are pain, what else is there to be attached to? What about conditionality? Even though you do not feel anything at the moment, but as the nature of the suffering of conditionality continues to propel forward, it will end up in pain again. In conclusion, everything in this world brings about suffering.

[72A, 20.11 (手抄稿 第九冊 p262L12)]

Hence what is the root cause to suffering? It is none other than the five aggregates of the body and mind. This is what we should truly recognize. Hence it tells us that as long as the heavy burden of five aggregates remains, then this is what we should truly develop disenchantment for. Now we are busy taking care of this body, we want to dress it up, give it nutrition, protect it...we have completely gone down the wrong path. These concepts of yours are wrong views. Your actions are defiled karma. You will successfully condition yourself to these non-virtuous latent propensities. At a later time, without you being aware, this thing will come back to haunt you. It has you bound in a dead knot. You are forever trapped inside. Yet you think you are looking for happiness. But the more you look, the more suffering you will find! So then he has told us the special characteristics of suffering. These are called the general sufferings. Next,

[72A, 21.27 (手抄稿 第九冊 p263L5)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

**2" Reflection on specific sufferings
Of the six kinds of specific sufferings,**

All the sentient beings of the three realms reside in a few different levels. We would call these the six realms. The realms of the deities, the asuras and the humans are the three happy

realms. Then there are the realms of the hell-beings, the hungry ghosts and the animals. Now let us take a look, if we examine this with a different angle, what is the content? Ah, they are all but suffering!

[72A, 21.58 (手抄稿 第九冊 p263L9)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

I have already explained above the sufferings of the three miserable realms.

As explained earlier in the path that is shared with small capacities, it has already described the sufferings of the three miserable realms. Ah, the sufferings is so severe that we could not even withstand any of that at all! So what about being humans? It is a happy realm, it should be [better]! But in the end,

[72A, 22.17 (手抄稿 第九冊 p263L12)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

(a) The suffering of human beings

From what has been explained above, you should understand that the suffering of human beings consists of the pain of hunger and thirst, unpleasant sensations of heat and cold, and

the suffering of searching for sustenance⁵⁰³ and becoming fatigued.

There! This is what every one of us can relate to! Ah! We would have "**hunger and thirst,**" "**heat and cold,**" and "**suffering of searching for sustenance.**" Suffering of searching for sustenance usually refers to the external environment. But actually, this is how it is in the mind as well. We are afflicted all the time, without exception . It is because of this problem, this trouble that we are led by the nose. What is more, we seek in order to gain this misconceived happiness, and we are afraid of losing it once we gained it. After we lose it, we desperately seek for it again. Humans are indeed flawed!

[72A, 23.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p264L4)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

It is also birth, old age, illness, death, and so on-the seven that I have already explained before.⁵⁰⁴

This has been explained earlier.

[72A, 23.09 (手抄稿 第九冊 p264L6)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

Furthermore, you should understand human suffering according to the following two citations. Vasubandhu's *Discussion of the Requisite Collections (Sambhara-parikatha)* says:⁵⁰⁵

**It is apparent that humans also have
All the sufferings of the miserable
realms— Tormented by pain, they
are like hell-beings;
Deprived, they are like those in the Lord of Death's world
[the hungry ghosts].**

**Humans also have the suffering of animals [230]
In that the powerful use force
To hurt and oppress the weak—
These sufferings are just like a river.**

Even though the human realm is a happy realm, but I am sorry, the sufferings in the three miserable realms exist in our human realm as well. We humans also have all sorts of torments of the body and mind, much like being in hell. The characteristic of hell is that you are constantly tormented by these, coldness and heat. So then "**Deprived, they are like those in the Lord of Death's world.**" What about [sufferings of] the hungry ghosts? This refers to the realm of the ghosts. The realm of the ghosts is governed by the Lord of Death. This refers to the state of being deprived, so deprived that one is deprived of everything. What about (sufferings of) the animals? They are ridden on, frightened, hurt, much like how the weak is oppressed by the

powerful. They are oppressed and are hurt. This kind of suffering will go on incessantly like a waterfall. It is terrible!

[72A, 24.22 (手抄稿 第九冊 p264L13)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

**Some suffer from poverty;
For others, suffering arises from discontent.
The suffering of yearning is unbearable.
All of them quarrel and can be killed.**

Some sufferings would arise from poverty. Others still feel discontent even though they may have resources or wealth. To be contented is really difficult! We observe that for many powerful and wealthy, the more powerful and wealthy they are, the busier they are. Why? Discontented! If you give an account of what we humans need, it is actually very simple! What we human really need are three meals a day. Actually two meals are plenty. Then we need a shelter at night. Why do you need so much money? Yet there are mundane world people who after obtaining a million would like to have ten millions. After making ten millions, they would like hundred millions. After making hundred millions, they would like to make a trillion. Once wealthy, he would want status. Ah, no limit to that! The first emperor of the Qin dynasty annexed six other countries and he still wanted to live forever. Just like

that. There are no exceptions in this mundane world. It is just like that, just like that. Therefore, even though poverty is not good, it is still not okay when you are not in poverty either! So then if you are seeking after things, all lines of work in government office, agriculture, industry and commerce, come with all sorts of problem. And then, because of these things, you scheme, hurt or even kill others. All of them developed from this. The truth to this mundane world is that whether happy or miserable realms, they are all the same!

[72A, 25.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p265L9)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

The *Four Hundred Stanzas*:⁵⁰⁶

**For the privileged, pain
is mental;
For common people, it is
physical.
Day after day both types
of pain
Afflict this world.**

For those who are inferior, they suffer physically. This is natural for the poor. Those who are privileged, they suffer mentally. Speaking of the mental suffering, I just remembered this person

who has already passed away. He was the chairman of some big company. One day, he was joking with several of his old friends. "Ah!" He heaved a deep sigh. So someone said, "For someone like you, what else are you not satisfied with?" He then said, "Ah! When I look at what I have to do, I am worse off than my driver." Oh! If I can be the big boss, to choose between these two, of course I would want to be the big boss. The boss just has to sit there comfortably. The chauffeur has to drive. If the boss tells him to go east, he has to go east. If the boss tells him to go west, he has to go west. It would seem the big boss is much more comfortable! Yet, what did the big boss say? He said, "For the chauffeur, I just have to tell him to go east and he will go east. If I ask him to go west and he will go west. He is at ease and relaxed. But I have to be thinking of this and that. Ah! When do I have to pay this cheque? I have to go to a party this Saturday. I have to play golf with this other person. I need to invite these people for an event. I need to socialise with some government officials. I have to socialize with that person. These take away even my time to sleep." The chauffeur can park the car and go home to sleep after he sent the boss to the destination. That is absolutely true! You can think about this, is that not right? Ah, it is so ludicrous!

[72A, 27.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p266L8)]

But what are all of us, the mundane world people, busy at all day long? We are busy seeking after this. That is why it is called being ludicrous. The mundane world is truly ludicrous! We should think about this, right? The more I think about this now, the more I think this is a correct assessment. You were lay people before, me too. Now we have all become renunciates. When we used to be lay people, the clothes we wore, for the white-collars, we had to be pretty particular [about our attires]! When we went out, we had to be presentable. At first it was when I was studying, then I went to work, I had to wear suit and tie. After becoming ordained, I went to my master and picked out a few pieces of old clothing. I washed and wore them. [They are so worn that] Even the robbers or thieves would not want them. Wherever I go, if I want to sit, I just sit. I just have to pat myself clean of the dust after sitting. It is that simple! If it gets dirty, so what if it is a little dirty? If it gets too dirty, I just wash it. If it has a hole, I just sew it up. That is it. I wear this during the day. I wear this at night as well. When I want to sleep, I will just cover myself with a blanket. There is no need to change into pajama, or to something else. There has to be an outfit for the day, an outfit for going out at night. I have to attend this today and... ah! I do not have to worry about any of these at all. It is that comfortable. But yet, people are just so ludicrous.

[72A, 28.50 (手抄稿 第九冊 p267L3)]

Therefore, the reason for my saying this is that you do not necessarily have to relate to this in particular, but that we should apply this principle to everywhere else, apply it everywhere else. This will allow us to have a deep understanding - what is truly the most important [lesson] in this? It is that our misconceptions have created this thing here. And we continue to accord with it. That is truly miserable! We are then afflicted by both types of pain "**day after day.**"! We are busy at these things all day long. This is on [sufferings] of human.

[72A, 29.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p267L7)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

(b) The suffering of the demigods

Demigods, they are what we call demons. The realm of the Asura is where the demons are. This is the realm of the Asura.

[72A, 29.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p267L9)]

[p292, English LR Vol 1]

The Friendly Letter:⁵⁰⁷

Also, the demigods, by their very nature, experience great mental suffering

English LR v.1 p293

**Because of their hatred of the splendor of the deities.
Though they are intelligent, they do not see the truth
Because of the mental obscurations characteristic of this realm of rebirth.**

[72B, 00.03 (手抄稿 第九冊 p269L3)]

For the realm of the asuras, another name for that is called, "demigods." The greatest suffering of the demigods is mental suffering. They suffered the most in their mind. Why? By their nature, this type of beings has great hostility. Their merits can be compared to the deities. However their hostility is too great. That's how it is. Even though they have the great enjoyments much like the deities, but they have "**the mental obscurations characteristic of this realm of rebirth.**" It is for that realm, the characteristic of the asuras is their great hatred. So even though they are intelligent, but the beings in this realm cannot "**see the truth**" - which is to truly see the teachings of the noble beings. So once you get into this realm, you only commit wrongdoing. Ah! That is very terrible! Not only will there be no opportunity to be liberated...but we won't talk

about this for now. Over here, we will specifically talk about the suffering of this realm.

[72B, 01.02 (手抄稿 第九冊 p270L1)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

In other words, they are tortured by their unbearable envy of the deities' wealth.

Because of their great hatred and strong jealousy, they cannot bear to see how others are doing well. In their mind, they need to be the stronger ones. Ah, so when they see others better than him, they find it unbearable. But there are others who are just better than him. The deities are all unspeakably beautiful. Even though the asuras have great merits, but every one of them is ugly. Ah, it is very interesting! And then, the Indra's wife is the daughter of an asura. She looks...the female asuras are beautiful. But they would marry the deities. Ah! Just like that. There are all kinds of things that don't go their way. And for the heavenly fruits that the Indra eats, the roots of the fruit tree are grown in the palace of the asuras. The roots are grown inside there. But the fruits that grow will fall in the garden of the Indra. Ah, this is really unbearable! This is truly unbearable. By their nature, they have great hatred, and they have strong jealousy. This is why they fight with the deities all the times. Therefore,

[72B, 02.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p270L9)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

Because of this, they fight with the deities

And once they fight?

[72B, 02.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p270L11)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

and endure many sufferings, such as having their bodies cut and split apart. They are intelligent, but they have mental obscurations, fruitions of past karma, which make it impossible for them to see the truth from within their situation.

Even though they are intelligent, but due to the fruitions of past karma, for the demigod realm that they achieved, there is this mental obscuration. So they will not be able to see the truth, will not be able to see the truth.

[72B, 02.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p271L1)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

The *Mindfulness of the Excellent Teaching* states that they are animals, but the *Levels of Yogic Deeds* places them in the realm of the deities.

There is a sutra which states that they are animals. The reason it is classified as the animal realm - for their foolishness. But the *Levels of Yogic Deeds* says that they are in the realm of the deities. Since some people will categorize this realm as part of the deities, this will result in a total of five realms. Some people feel that this realm should be a separate one, so this will result in a total of six realms. This type of people appears in the human realm as well. Actually, this type of people are those who cultivate merits in the human realm. They would accumulate lots of merits, but still have hostility. There are times when they would give, I have seen this myself, when others make a donation, upon seeing this donation, "What is so great about that. If he can donate a thousand, I can donate ten thousand!" Just like that. If someone else builds a big temple, builds something great - [then this type of person would say,] "I can build a bigger one than him!" I am sorry, after you've built it, if you have not created a great nonvirtuous karma, then you will perhaps go to the realm of the asuras. If you have created a great nonvirtuous karma, there's no need to talk about it. Therefore this is something that we must pay attention to! This is the case even if you have created meritorious karma! As long as your intention was not pure, then you will suffer in misery

when the time comes. This is the case in the human realm as well. Just now, we described how happy the chauffeur is. After he is done driving, he can just go home. He doesn't have to worry about anything else. The boss lying on his pillow often can't get to sleep, so he needs to take the sleeping pill. After taking the sleeping pill, he will still get a headache the next day. So this is something not worthwhile! This is the case even for the upper realms, needless to say for the others! Finally, let us take a look at the deities.

[72B, 04.10 (手抄稿 第九冊 p271L13)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

(c) Reflection on the suffering of the deities

This is explained with regard to (1) the deities of the desire realm and (2) the deities of the form and formless realms.

(i) The deities of the desire realm

The sufferings of the desire realm deities are considered in three parts:

- 1. The sufferings of dying and falling**
- 2. The sufferings of anxiety**
- 3. The sufferings of being cut, gashed, killed, and banished**

There are two types of deities, one is the desire realm deities, and the other one is the higher ones - the form, and the

formless realms. For the desire realm deities, there are three types of sufferings.

[72B, 04.22 (手抄稿 第九冊 p272L1)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

(a') The sufferings of dying and falling

For the desire realm deities, when they are born, everything is great. But when they fall, it is unspeakably suffering.

[72B, 04.31 (手抄稿 第九冊 p272L3)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

(1') The suffering of dying

The *Friendly Letter*:⁵⁰⁸

Although the deities have great pleasure in heaven, The suffering of dying there is even greater than that.

The wise who understand this cease to create Attachments for the perishable heavens. [231]

It is very pleasurable in the heaven. But when the deity dies, ah, that is great suffering, great suffering! It's just like us now, if you don't have anything, since you don't have anything, it doesn't matter. But once you have money, ah, what will you be afraid of? Losing it. Therefore for all those who have status, we can take a look at them. Especially for those people in the politics, the struggle between them is fierce. When he climbs up to the highest position, he is afraid of falling. How did he do it and why? He desperately advanced by sacrificing others for his own benefits. Since he sacrificed others for his own benefits, of course he is not willing to let others take advantage of him. This is very obvious. Similarly, even though it's nice to be on the high position, but the suffering of falling, it is extremely miserable. For those who are accustomed to enjoy life, this is what we would normally say for those who have been accustomed to the wealthy life and high status, all of a sudden you become fearful [because you lose everything], ah! To be lack of food and clothing, and to be at the mercy of other people, this suffering is unbearable! After you understand this, ah! Those who are truly wise will never crave. Not to mention how fast time passes, just as mentioned in the section of impermanence. You must always remember this!

[72B, 05.58 (手抄稿 第九冊 p272L14)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

Deities derive pleasure from indulging their sensual desires, yet greater than this is the tremendous suffering they experience while dying, when they become aware of the five signs of death,

This means that when you are indulging in your pleasures, the time passes before you even realize. But when you are about to die, there are five signs of decay. When the "**five signs of death**" manifest, there is tremendous suffering in your mind!

[72B, 06.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p273L3)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

about which the same text says:⁵⁰⁹

Their bodies turn an unattractive color,

Whatever that used to be attractive is now changed.

[72B, 06.25 (手抄稿 第九冊 p273L5)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

Their cushions become uncomfortable,

The place that you normally sit, the cushion for the king, the cushion for the deity, you are unable to sit on it comfortably.

**Their flower garlands wilt, and their clothing smells;
An unaccustomed sweat breaks out over their bodies.**

[72B, 06.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p273L8)]

The flower garlands on your body will wilt. Your clothing will be dirty. Your body will sweat. These five things did not appear before. At the moment of death, ah! They will appear. Therefore,

[72B, 06.45 (手抄稿 第九冊 p273L10)]

[p293, English LR Vol 1]

**The five signs that signal the deities in heaven,
Foretelling their death and departure therefrom,**

[English LR v.1 p294](#)

**Are similar to the signs
That foretell death for humans on earth.**

This is describing the deities of the desire realm. There are five signs of death for the deities of the desire realm. "**The deities in heaven**" are the deities from the desire realm. Just like the humans on earth, ah, there are signs that would appear, just like when we are sick. That's how it is for them. When we humans fall sick, we may not necessarily die. We can be healed. But when the five signs of decay appear for the deities, they are about to die. They will die for sure. That is really horrendous! So this is on "**the suffering of dying.**"
Secondly,

[72B, 07.30 (手抄稿 第九冊 p274L3)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

(2') The suffering of falling to lower realms

After they die, it is terrible. They will still have to fall to lower realms!

[72B, 07.34 (手抄稿 第九冊 p274L5)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

The *Friendly Letter*:⁵¹⁰

**They must take leave of the divine worlds.
If their merit has run out,
Then, powerless, they will become
Animals, hungry ghosts, or denizens of hell.**

After one dies in the heavens, if there are no more merits left, he will have no power to control, no power to control but to follow according to his karma. That's when one will fall to become an animal. In the earlier chapter on taking refuge, there was a deity who had the five signs of death. The deities have supernatural powers. They can foresee where they would go after death. As he looked, he was about to fall to lower realms. Ah! In general, the chances of one going to the upper realms is very, very slim. Most of the beings, most of the beings will fall to lower realms. This comparison is not 99% versus 1%. This has been mentioned very clearly in the scriptures. It is the quantity of earth on a toenail in proportion to the whole earth in the world. It is that frightening! Hence, there is nothing good about the heavens!

[72B, 08.36 (手抄稿 第九冊 p274L12)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

(b') The suffering of anxiety

Deities with vast stores of merit gain the most desirable objects. Upon seeing them, deities of lesser merit become anxious and experience great anguish and pain on this account.

There is another kind, this kind [of suffering] is being afraid. There are deities with vast stores of merit. When they appear, upon seeing them, deities with lesser merit will become anxious, will become anxious. If the deities with the greater merit become hostile, wow! The lesser ones will be bullied. This is how it is in our mundane world as well. It is actually the same wherever you go, much like how the bigger fish will swallow the smaller fish. This is the case in the heavens as well. Even though it is not the case where he has swallowed you, but the suffering that you will encounter, this sort of thing is evident everywhere. Hence it is the same case in the heavens. This is even more severe there. The higher up you go, the sufferings from being gobbled up or oppressed will feel even worse. And then,

[72B, 09.47 (手抄稿 第九冊 p275L7)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

(c') The sufferings of being cut, gashed, killed, and banished

When deities fight with demigods, they undergo the pain of having their limbs and minor extremities cut off, having their bodies split apart, and being killed. When their heads are cut off, they die, but their other limbs regenerate after being cut off or gashed, and they survive.

And then, either you are hurt, or you are killed. The demigods often fight with the deities. After the battles, if they're hurt, then there is the suffering from the cuts at that time. Afterwards, the body will regenerate. This is still OK. But if the head is cut off, I am sorry, one's life will end. Oh, this head is very important. So then,

[72B, 10.39 (手抄稿 第九冊 p275L13)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

As regards banishment, when there is a battle, the more powerful deities expel the weaker deities from their homes.

This is why there is fear. For those more powerful, when they become angry, they will expel the weaker ones from their homes. If one is happily enjoying himself, when he gets thrown out, of course he would feel miserable!

[72B, 11.08 (手抄稿 第九冊 p276L2)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

Moreover, as Vasubandhu's *Discussion of the Requisite Collections* says:⁵¹¹

**Deities who indulge in sensual pleasures
Are not happy in
mind-
They are burned by
an inner fire
Sparked by the infection of sensual desire.**

**How can there be happiness
For those whose minds are distracted?
Since their minds are not under
control [232]**

**And undistracted even for a
moment,
They are by nature disturbed and agitated.
They will never be
calm-
Like a fire that has
wood for fuel
And that rages, whipped by the wind.**

So the treatise tells us, the desire realm deities have sensual desires. Actually, they do not have real happiness, do not have real happiness. Why? It is because they still have attachments. Since they have attachments, they are burned by

the inner fire of attachments, so their mind dwells constantly in afflictions. So if the mind is disturbed and afflicted, one will absolutely not have calm and happiness. When one is in this state of mind, one cannot be under control for even one moment. What must you have to have control of your mind? You must be able to handle yourself. That's how you do it. The happiness that we have in general, they actually come about from us shifting along with the external sensory objects. Ah, when you see something attractive, your mind will follow it, will follow it. You are led by the nose by it. How can you say this is happiness? This is the condition that you are in! So this kind of state is called disturbed. The nature of it is called "**agitated.**" Agitated means convoluted, not being calm. This is like a fire that has wood for fuel. It is certainly raging in the agitated wind. Raging, that means blazing. It is the inevitable state that we're in before we obtain calm.

[72B, 12.54 (手抄稿 第九冊 p276L14)]

[p294, English LR Vol 1]

And also:

**They are like invalids, not long recovered
From an illness, who eat improperly and get sick again.**

Having just recovered from illness, you eat improperly again. I am sorry, this sickness will come back. That's how it is

for the happiness in the heavens! Through giving and all sorts of training while one is in the mundane world, he is reborn in the heaven. But once he is reborn in the heaven, the desire is very great. So once it comes again, one cannot accumulate merits and attachments will increase. One will fall again to the miserable realms. This is the case for the desire realm.

[72B, 13.29 (手抄稿 第九冊 p277L4)]

English LR v.1 p295

(ii) The deities of the form and formless realms

The deities of the highest realms—the form and the formless—though they escape these sufferings, nevertheless die in possession of afflictions and obscurations. Because they have no control over their future dwelling place,

When you go higher, it is relatively better. It is unlike the desire realm heaven, these deities have escaped the sufferings. But the afflictions remain. Since the root to this miserable cyclic existence still remains for them, this obscuration has not been eliminated. Therefore in regards to cyclic existence, they cannot decide for themselves what will happen- no control. I cannot say "I don't want to die" and make that happen. When one has to die, he can do nothing about that.

[72B, 14.13 (手抄稿 第九冊 p277L9)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

even they suffer on account of dysfunctional tendencies.

One is still among afflictions. Just as said in this commentary:

[72B, 14.19 (手抄稿 第九冊 p277L11)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

Moreover, as the *Discussion of the Requisite Collections* says:⁵¹²

**Those in the form or formless realms
Are beyond the suffering of pain and the suffering of
change.**

Yes, the suffering of pain is gone.

[72B, 14.23 (手抄稿 第九冊 p277L13)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

**By nature they have the bliss of
meditative concentration;**

They remain motionless for an eon.

But even this is most assuredly not liberation;

He has the bliss of meditative concentration. His bliss of meditative concentration could go on for a long time. The length of the time will depend on the level of his meditative concentration. The highest heaven is the heaven that is beyond active consciousness or unconsciousness. One can remain there for 80,000 great eons. But I am sorry, after that, he will still have to fall. Udraka Ramaputra is a classic example of that. He cultivated for the heaven that is beyond active consciousness or unconsciousness, and he succeeded. But after he died, he fell to become an animal. Look at that! Ah, it is so difficult to cultivate meditative concentration. But after he had successfully done so, he still fell. This is the case even for one who has ascended to the highest heaven that is beyond active consciousness or unconsciousness, so there is no need to say... I won't go into that.

[72B, 15.15 (手抄稿 第九冊 p278L5)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

After they have counted on it, they will again fall.

Though it may seem as though they have transcended

The turbulence of the miserable realms,

Yet, like birds soaring in the sky,

**They cannot stay forever,
though they try—**

**Like an arrow shot with the
strength of a child, They will fall
back down in the end.**

One will certainly fall in the end. Therefore, at the time it may seem as though they have transcended because they don't have the suffering of pain. [It would seem as though] they have transcended the great sufferings of the miserable realms. But I am sorry. The nature of the suffering of conditionality remains and therefore things will not stay the same forever. This is much like the birds soaring in the sky. Even though they will temporarily fly, but I'm sorry, they will have to stop after flying for some time. This is also like an arrow that is shot. Once the force wanes as it goes toward the sky, it will fall back down. In the very end, the final destination of it is such that one will still have to fall at the end.

[72B, 16.06 (手抄稿 第九冊 p278L12)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

**Just as butter lamps that burn for a long time
Are in fact perishing in
every moment, They are
afflicted by the changes of**

The suffering of conditionality.

This is much like a butter lamp. Though it is lit now, but at all times, there will never be a moment that it is not gradually, gradually, gradually disappearing. In the end, one will still be afflicted by the sufferings. The miserable realms are filled with sufferings. But the happy realms will end up being the same.

[72B, 16.33 (手抄稿 第九冊 p279L1)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

Reflect in this way on the general and specific sufferings of the five or six types of beings. Then, when you have become disgusted with cyclic existence, you will wonder about its causes.

So, after we went through the earlier parts, it doesn't matter if you have reflected on the general or the specific [sufferings]. This means, from any angle and at any state, your analysis and reflection [of cyclic existence] will lead to no other conclusion than suffering - there is only suffering! After you understand this, what will happen? You will become disgusted. This is why even though now we would always feel, "Ah, I am seeking for happiness!" Wrong! Wrong! Wrong! You can't find happiness. The nature of the mundane world is just that. This is something we must know. So, what we should do now is that

we must carefully scrutinize this principle. What are we busy for now? If we are not happy with what's going on around us, we would say, "It's not good here. I need to go somewhere else! That other place can bring me happiness!" Wrong. It is entirely wrong. The mundane world people would think this way. But Buddhism is unlike that. But aren't we looking for happiness? Yes. What is the difference then? The way the mundane world people look for happiness is much like treating the head when there is a headache and treating the foot when there is a foot ache. That's all there is. But in Buddhism, yes, you are looking for happiness. So, when you come to me, I can tell you, I can give you happiness, here it is - the nature of happiness is this and your understanding is fundamentally wrong. You must make a shift on that.

[72B, 18.07 (手抄稿 第九冊 p279L12)]

Hence for us who are learning Buddhism, we must understand this. We shouldn't say, "Ah, this place is not up to my standards. That place is not up to my standards!" So, then you want to go somewhere else, and you look for another place! No. You can escape your environment but you can't escape yourself. What are you? There, your body and mind consist of the five aggregates and the afflictions. What we need to truly be liberated from are the afflictions. Therefore, you must understand afflictions. Once you solve that, your problem

is solved. That is because affliction is the cause of suffering. Therefore, **"Then, when you have become disgusted with cyclic existence, you will wonder about its causes."** Since all of cyclic existence is nothing but suffering, there is no place to escape, there is no place that can give you peace and happiness. So, you need to find the cause of it. If you can't find the cause of it, then there is nothing you can do anyway! So fine, as long as there is one more day left, we can just enjoy ourselves as soon as we open our eyes [in the morning]. Then you can just do anything you want, bad things are...as long as you are happy. Eh, but now you know there is a cause behind this, and you can take care of it! So then after you understand the sufferings, your next step is to find the cause of the suffering.

[72B, 19.15 (手抄稿 第九冊 p280L5)]

[p295, English LR Vol 1]

What causes cyclic existence?

The next step of our analysis is that since the cyclic existence has nothing but suffering, what is the cause of that? Further, it is because we feel the pains of the suffering that we look for its cause. This is when we will find it, ah! That's what it is. So, what is this called? The truth of origin. Hence for us now, from understanding suffering we seek to be freed from

suffering. And we have found the reason for suffering to be the truth of origin. Origin, what is it? It is to "bring about and issue [the effect]." It is because of this that a miserable effect will be issued. In other words, this is the cause of suffering. As long as you can remove the cause of suffering, the suffering will disappear. Therefore, since we are all busy to get rid of suffering, this is what we should truly look for. This is it. This is the point in learning Buddhism. That is why everyone should pay attention to this. When we learn Buddhism, you must conscientiously get a grasp of this. The earlier parts would frequently explain and categorize things for no other reason than this - when you encounter something, you should not just go train as soon as you encounter teachings. If you just go ahead and train as soon as you come across something, it won't be complete. And perhaps you have not gotten to the root. You may think you got it. But there are all kinds of loopholes. Because there are all kinds of loopholes, suffering will remain despite your great efforts. This is because you have not found the root, have not found the root.

[72B, 20.55 (手抄稿 第九冊 p281L1)]

For instance, let's say that, ah, there is water in our room . So you mop it dry. However, you didn't find where the leak was, where the water came from. You will be desperately mopping. But after mopping for a long time, it will get wet

again. After you mop it dry, it will come back. It will only get worse and worse. As a result, you are consumed and tired from all that work. But you will still have this dirty water in your room. Is there any use to that? That's how it is with cultivation too. You must be able to find the root cause and temporarily not deal with the other things. You must stop the leak first. After you fix the leak and there is no more water coming, then you can slowly clean up the dirty water inside. Okay, problem solved!

[72B, 21.32 (手抄稿 第九冊 p281L6)]

Therefore when we cultivate, at this point, especially for this - you must bring this concept to mind again and again. Don't say, "Ah, I am going to cultivate now!" Others will tell you how to cultivate? If you are doing Zen meditation, some will tell you do recite the Buddha's name, and others will tell you....no matter what teaching method you are engaged in, oh, [people will say] the mantra teaching is good, as long as you practice, it will work. So you just follow along. In fact, you have not found the real fundamental problem, however, have you achieved anything? It would appear that you may have achieved something. Of course, it's much like moping the floor. If you just mop it, the floor will be dry. But once you take the mop away and turn around to look, it [i.e. the water] will come back. What use is that? Therefore too many practitioners

these days are doing exactly that. Not only do they not understand, they will even try to help others. The more they help, the worse the situation! This place is telling us, oh, the situation is like this. What is the root to this? From this we begin the topic on the truth of origin. This is to be found.