

An Exposition of The Ādittapariyāya Sutta



by
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© Latest Edition September 2021

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Association for Insight Meditation

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Introduction

The Ādittapariyāya Sutta is found in volume four of the Saṃyuttanikāya. A translation of the entire Saṃyuttanikāya by Bhikkhu Bodhi is available from Wisdom Books. Bhikkhu Bodhi says that it was the third discourse taught by the Buddha, but he overlooks the [Hemavata Sutta](#) taught to Hemavata and Sātāgiri on the night of the first discourse. The [Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta](#) was the third discourse, taught to the first five disciples who were already Stream-winners. After this they all became Arahants.

According to the account in the Saṃyuttanikāya, the Buddha taught the Ādittapariyāya Sutta at [Gayāsisa](#) to one thousand fire-worshipping ascetics.

The detailed account in the Vinaya Mahāvagga relates that after the Anattalakkhaṇa Sutta there were now six Arahants in the world (the Buddha and his five disciples). While still at Bārāṇasi, the Buddha was approached by [Yasa](#), a wealthy young householder, who became a Stream-winner on listening to the Buddha's teaching. Yasa's father came looking for him, and Yasa became an Arahant while listening to the Buddha teach his father. Having no interest in household life, Yasa became a bhikkhu. His father, who was the first to take refuge in the Triple Gem ([Tapussa and Bhallika](#) earlier took refuge only in the Buddha and the Dhamma), invited the Buddha for alms with Yasa as his attendant. Then the Buddha taught Yasa's mother and his former wife, and they both became Stream-winners and took refuge, becoming the first female disciples to take refuge in the Triple Gem.

Four close friends of Yasa, [Vimala](#), [Subāhu](#), [Punṇaji](#), and [Gavampati](#), hearing of his going-forth, also approached the Buddha, gained Arahantship and become bhikkhus. Then there were eleven Arahants in the world. Fifty more friends of Yasa, hearing the good news, also requested ordination and became Arahants.

Then the Buddha sent the sixty Arahants, each in a different direction, to teach the Dhamma with the famous

words “Go forth, monks, travel for the welfare and happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, welfare, and happiness of gods and men.¹ He said that he would go to Senānigama at Uruvelā to teach the Dhamma.

To save the trouble of the monks and candidates for ordination travelling back and forth, the Buddha authorised the Arahants to grant the going-forth and ordination by means of undertaking the three refuges.

In a certain forest grove on the way to Uruvelā the Buddha met thirty young men (**Bhaddavāggyiā**) who were enjoying a picnic in a forest grove with their wives and a women hired for the occasion for one of their number who was a bachelor. She had run off with some property, and the men were searching for her. The Buddha advised them that it would be better to search for their self (*atta*), and taught them the Dhamma. They gained Stream-winning and requested ordination.

The Buddha then proceeded in stages to Uruvelā, where lived three Kassapa brothers, who were fire-worshipping ascetics (Jaṭila). Uruvelā Kassapa was the leader of five hundred, Nadi Kassapa was the leader of three hundred, and Gayā Kassapa was the leader of two hundred. The Buddha won the confidence of **Uruvelā Kassapa** by performing many miracles. The three Kassapa brothers and their one thousand disciples all requested ordination, and stayed at Gayā with the Blessed One.

Since they were fire-worshippers, the Buddha decided to teach them a discourse about fire, explaining how the six senses were on fire and burning with greed, hatred, and delusion.

Apart from the graduated discourses on generosity, morality, the way to heaven, and the Four Noble Truths that the Buddha taught to Yasa, his relatives and friends, and to the group of thirty young men, this discourse was thus the fourth discourse given by the Buddha, after the Dhammacakkappa-vattana, Hemavata, and Anattalakkhaṇa Suttas.

¹ Caratha, bhikkhave, cārikaṃ bahujanahitāya bahujanasukhāya lokānukampāya atthāya hitāya sukhāya devamanussānaṃ.

The Ādittapariyāya Sutta

The Fire Sermon

“Sabbam, bhikkhave, ādittam. Kiñca, bhikkhave, sabbam ādittam? Cakkhu ādittam, rūpā ādittā, cakkhuvīññānam ādittam, cakkhusamphasso āditto, yamidaṃ cakkhusamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitam sukham vā dukkham vā adukkhamasukham vā tampi ādittam. Kena ādittam? Rāgagginā dosagginā mohagginā ādittam, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittanti vadāmi.”

“The all, monks, is burning. What, monks, is the all that is burning? The eye is burning, sights are burning, eye-consciousness is burning, eye-contact is burning, and the pleasant, painful, or neutral feelings that arise dependent on eye-contact, those too are burning. With what are they burning? They are burning with the fire of passion, the fire of ill-will, and the fire of delusion; I declare that they are burning with the fire of birth, aging, death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair.”

“Sotaṃ ādittam ... Mano āditto, dhammā ādittā, ... Rāgagginā dosagginā mohagginā ādittam, jātiyā jarāya maraṇena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi ādittanti vadāmi.”

“The ear is burning ... the mind is burning, mental-objects are burning ... I declare that they are burning with the fires of birth, aging, death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair.”

“Evaṃ passam, bhikkhave, sutavā ariyasāvako cakkhusmimpi nibbindati, rūpesupi nibbindati, cakkhuvīññāṇepi nibbindati, cakkhusamphassepi nibbindati, yamidaṃ cakkhusamphassapaccayā uppajjati vedayitam sukham vā dukkham vā adukkhamasukham vā,

tasmimpi nibbindati. Sotasmimpi nibbindati, saddesupi nibbindati ... nibbindaṃ virajjati, virāgā vimuccati, vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti nāṇaṃ hoti. Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyāti pajānāti”ti.

“Seeing thus, monks, the learned noble disciple is disenchanted with the eye, with sights, eye-consciousness, eye-contact, pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feelings that arise dependent on eye-contact. He is disenchanted with sounds ... disenchanted with odours, disenchanted with tastes, disenchanted with touches, disenchanted with mental objects. Being disenchanted, he is dispassionate, being dispassionate he is liberated, and the knowledge arises that he is liberated. Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what should be done has been done, and he knows that there will be no more of this (birth, aging, etc.)”

“Imasmiṅca pana veyyākaraṇasmiṃ bhaññamāne tassa bhikkhusahassassa anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimuccimsu.”

“While this discourse was being taught, the minds of those one thousand bhikkhus were liberated from all corruptions without any remainder.”

Explanation of the Discourse

Even without the elisions used above for the sake of brevity, this discourse is quite short and straightforward. The six sense bases are on fire with passion, ill-will, and delusion. These mental defilements lead to suffering. If one understands them clearly, one becomes disenchanted towards all objects of the six senses, which leads to liberation and nibbāna.

The one thousand fire-worshipping ascetics led by the three Kassapa brothers, gained Arahantship very quickly.

They had excellent perfections. They needed a detailed explanation of the Dhamma and not just a brief hint, but they did not need to practice meditation for even a short period to gain the final goal. They were individuals who could understand the Dhamma with just an exposition (*vipañcitaññū*).

Nowadays, it is thought that such individuals no longer exist. If anyone can become even a Stream-winner with the above brief explanation I would be amazed, let alone if they could gain Arahantship merely by reading it and cogitating deeply for a while.

It is difficult to see how the six senses are on fire with passion, ill-will, and delusion; to see how they are burning with birth, aging, death, grief, lamentation, pain, and sorrow. Ordinary people with no experience in serious meditation practice enjoy sensual pleasures of all kinds, and do not regard them as suffering or burdensome at all. They will happily queue for hours, pay significant sums of money, and endure crowds in the hot sun, or wind and rain, to do what they like such as to watch Tennis at Wimbledon, visit the Chelsea Flower Show, tour Windsor Castle, or whatever. However, perhaps you may understand with the help of a simile. If an iron bar is heated in a furnace for the entire day, then plunged into a bucket of cold water, it will hiss violently, and bubbles of steam will explode. However, if a red-hot iron bar is taken out of a furnace and plunged into a fire, there won't be much reaction, if any.

For the ordinary person who is immersed for the entire day, the entire week, or the entire life in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures, the mind is always hot. It may cool down somewhat at times, and heat up ferociously at other times, but it never becomes cold. The fire is always hot like glowing charcoal.

However, if an ordinary person renounces sensual pleasures for a week or a month, and engages in full-time meditation practice while observing the eight precepts, the temperature of the hot mind will gradually reduce. If they gain some concentration and detachment from sensual

thoughts, when they leave the retreat and return to ordinary lay-life, they will be acutely aware of how passionate and irritable the mind can become with the slightest stimulation.

However, mental purity won't last long unless they gained deep insight or continue to meditate daily at home. After a few weeks back at work and at home with their family, the mind soon heats up again. The problem is that fuel and oxygen are always being added to the fire, so it flares up just like before. To cut off defilements at the root is difficult. Only the Noble Ones have done that. If lust and anger are entirely removed by the third path, a lay person will be naturally inclined to take ordination. Only unavoidable family commitments would prevent them from going forth as a monk or nun, or as a homeless white-robed lay person (*anagārika*).

Nevertheless, do not dismiss meditation practice as fruitless just because the results are subtle and elusive. If you keep meditating regularly, and attend retreats as often as possible, the mind will definitely become cooler and more equanimous. If you understand the method correctly, you will understand how to cultivate mindfulness throughout the entire day, even while working, travelling, shopping, and doing other chores. It requires a fundamental change of attitude and constant reminders by reading Dhamma books, listening to discourses, or attending meditation classes. If you are determined to succeed, you will willingly give up most of the social activities such as parties, watching films or sports, listening to music, and talking about material goods, politics, *etc.* These activities hold no attraction for a diligent meditator.

The ordinary Buddhist, who occasionally listens to talks given by learned monks or reads some books, will not be able to understand how the mind is on fire. To someone who has not been trained in the right Satipaṭṭhāna method, meditation is boring or difficult. If they practice for half an hour or so on full-moon days, they fall asleep, or the mind wanders here and there, and only very superficial concentration is gained.

How Hot is the Fire?

“You can’t have the knowledge of reality,
on conditional materiality and mentality.
When will you be able to extinguish the fire
that’s very dangerous, ferocious, and dire?”

The above verse is taken from [A Manual of Profound Meaning](#) by the late Venerable Ledi Sayādaw. The fire of craving for and attachment to sensual pleasures is extremely ferocious and dire. One only has to read the daily news to see how terribly living beings suffer for the sake of sensual pleasures, but we learn to ignore these stories if they do not affect us directly. It is the nature of ignorance (*avijjā*), to not see suffering. It is not the same as the lack of knowledge such as not knowing how to read or speak a foreign language, or not knowing where Aleppo is, or who Kiran Bedi is. Everyone of a mature age knows about aging, disease, death, grief, lamentation, sorrow, pain, and despair. Everyone has experienced both physical and mental pain frequently, but it is only natural to forget about that, and to focus instead on pleasure and enjoyment. If we could remove the veil of delusion that conceals the truth of suffering from our hearts, then we would quickly abandon sensual pleasures and realise nibbāna. However, the ordinary person does not even realise that the six senses are constantly burning the mind with the causes of suffering.

Human passions are not easy to measure, but it is obvious that some people fly into a rage more easily than others. The Arahants and the Non-returners are completely devoid of passion and anger, so they will never become angry, whatever the provocation may be. Stream-winners would never become so angry that they could kill any living being — not even if bitten by a snake or scorpion. An ordinary pious Buddhist like [King Ajātasattu](#) was capable of rage. When the naked ascetics (Nigaṅṭhā), who hired thugs to murder Mahā-Moggallāna, were caught and brought to justice, he had them buried up to

their necks, and ordered their heads to be ploughed off. Again, when he heard of **Upaka Maṇḍikāputta** having spoken rather impolitely to the Buddha, he at once flew into a rage.

Before anyone can kill or injure another, or utter harsh words, the mind has to be inflamed with anger. How does that happen? We have to feel insulted or threatened in some way by what others are doing or saying. Contact first occurs in the eye-door or the ear-door, but it is only when it impinges on the mind-door that we become fearful or angry. That process is conditioned by habit and accumulated past kamma.

The important point to note is that a well-trained mind can learn to overcome instinctive responses. Nobody can make us angry or fearful unless we allow them to. Anger and fear (fight and flight responses) are both manifestations of ill-will (*dosa*). To overcome them, practise loving-kindness meditation (*mettā bhāvanā*), or recollect the virtues of the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*). Developing loving-kindness is like pouring cold water on the flames of anger. Someone who doesn't practise loving-kindness easily becomes fearful or angry, as a bone-dry forest easily catches fire, whereas someone who habitually cultivates loving-kindness seldom becomes angry, and their anger does not last long, like a fire in a well-watered rain-forest.

Mild forms of ill-will and racial prejudice that are rooted in ignorance and fear of the unknown are easily stirred up by the vitriolic, hot-air of hate-preachers. The foolish majority have very little knowledge of religion, and even less experience in mental development. They are like dry sticks or smouldering charcoal, which catch fire or flare up with a gust of wind. As the fire of anger grows in someone afflicted by ill-will, it becomes hotter and more dangerous, spreading to everyone who has close contact with them. Eventually, even those far removed from the original conflict, who are normally kind and peaceful people, become embroiled in disputes stirred up by the haters. If deprived of a ready supply of oxygen, a fire will continue to burn for quite some time. It also needs to be cooled

with water to extinguish it. Therefore, to counter the adverse effects of the hateful and bigoted comments that are so common in the media, it is also vital to study the Buddha's compassionate and tolerant teachings, and make them known to all.

In Buddhist countries nowadays, there are some Buddhist monks who preach hatred and intolerance, and the moderate monks are reluctant to confront them as they will then become targets for their wrath. If the moderate and peaceful monks remain silent, the radical, hot-headed monks will gain the upper-hand because the vast majority of Buddhists are not well versed in the Buddha's teachings.

The Eye is Burning

One who is blind from birth is unaffected by visual objects. They are not in the least attracted to beautiful things, or repelled by ugly sights. However, any sighted person is sure to be affected by sights. That is why monks and meditators are taught to restrain the eye, and advised to behave like a blind person. Though one cannot avoid seeing objects altogether, as one cannot walk around with the eyes closed, if one sees an object with the eye, one should guard the eye not to focus on particular details that might arouse lust or aversion.

The Buddha said that the eye is burning because of its insatiable appetite for sights. People will spend vast sums of money to acquire fine art, beautiful orchids, fashionable clothes and jewellery, or to go sight-seeing to exotic locations. They will queue to see shows and exhibits, for no reason other than to see beautiful or fascinating sights. Having seen what they desire to see, they buy postcards and souvenirs, take photographs and videos in order to see the same things again later. How tragic! What a waste of human effort and resources. If seeing something could bring mental peace and relief it might be worth all of that planning and expense, but it only fuels the fire of craving for more of the same. If one eventually tires of seeing museums and art galleries, or flower shows and gardens

— whatever it is that piques one's interest — then one usually takes an interest in something else, perhaps in photography!

Sights are Burning

The Buddha said that one thing takes hold of a man's mind more than any other — the sight of a woman. Similarly, there is one thing that takes hold of a woman's mind more than any other — the sight of a man. It does not matter how well-educated, religious, or civilised you are, this fact is part of our DNA. It is driven by evolution. Those who are visually attractive to others of the opposite sex are more likely to pass on their genes to the next generation.

The fashion and cosmetics industries, entertainments, advertising, and every other retail business uses this natural attraction between the sexes to increase sales. Not only that, but product design, packaging, and even the staff hired to sell it have to be attractive. So sights are on fire with desire.

Eye-consciousness and Eye-contact are Burning

If there is no contact between the eye and the sight, then eye-consciousness will not arise. Advertisers use all kinds of psychological tricks to attract the buyer's attention. Some advertisements are so subtle and devious that the viewers don't even realise that they are being caught in a trap. Businesses pay large sums for product placement in films and TV shows, and promoters stage events to get the attention of the media.

If you have enough money, it is hard to enter a store to buy just a few items and not come out with something else that you had no intention of buying before you saw it.

Feelings That Arise Dependent on Contact Are Burning

If not for the feelings that arise dependent on contact, the fire would not burn at all. If we were completely indifferent to a sight, or were completely neutral about it, desire or aversion would not develop and become strong. One might see a

hundred people of the opposite sex every day, but if one had no pleasant feeling on seeing them, desire would not arise. However, if someone catches your eye and smiles, exchanging eye-contact, then desire arises. If you see something unpleasant you might feel revulsion, giving rise to aversion or fear. "Why don't they keep this place clean?" or "That dog may bite?"

The Ear and Sounds Are Burning

The eyes can be averted not to look at things. You could keep your attention on a good book, or you can close your eyes and meditate to stop feeding the fire for a while. However, sounds are harder to exclude. Earplugs are uncomfortable to wear, and headphones that play music merely replace unwanted noise with sounds that you like. Either way, the ear is burning, and sounds are burning with desire and aversion.

The music industry is a huge business. Singers and musicians strive hard to create the next big hit that will encourage everyone to download it onto their music players. Of course, they do this not out of compassion for the listeners, but to make money and gain fame, in the hope of living a superstar's life style. Nowadays, millions of young hopefuls strive to win talent shows, or to get discovered on YouTube, driven by the desire to enjoy sensual pleasures, and in so doing they strive hard to make music that is pleasing to others. Not only the sounds, but also the lyrics are designed to pull at the heart-strings, and light the fire of desire in the minds of the listeners.

The Nose and Odours are Burning

Perfumes, body lotions, shampoos, and so forth are also designed to please the nose. Deodorants, mouth washes, and air-fresheners are produced to mask the natural bad odours of human beings. Again, it's almost impossible to block your nose to avoid smelling odours. Crowded places, cigarette smoke, traffic fumes, rotting garbage, *etc.*, are a constant irritant to those with a sensitive nose. The pleasant aroma of

brewing coffee entices customers to buy something that they do not need at all. Water is free, and no one *needs* to drink coffee to stay healthy, but because the nose is burning with desire, it is hard to resist buying coffee on the way to and from work. It is illogical, but feelings dependent on odours work on a deep psychological level, so logic and reason cannot compete with coffee, or whatever is your particular peccadillo.

The Tongue and Tastes Are Burning

Once you have been led into the coffee shop by your nose, you are trapped there by your tongue. On tasting this or that flavour with the tongue, pleasant feelings arise and stimulate you to eat your favourite foods. The need to eat to sustain life has little to do with it. When the mind is burning with craving, some more calories are going to be fed into the furnace, whether they are needed or not.

The Body and Touches Are Burning

The sense of touch pervades the entire body. Contact with tactile objects that induce pleasant and unpleasant feelings comes from all directions. Not only external objects, but internal contacts cause aches and pains, or pleasurable feelings.

If you have ever tried to sit completely still for an hour or longer while meditating, you will know that the body soon starts to produce sensations of stiffness, itching, and pain from within or simply from contact with whatever you're sitting on. Changes in climate also stimulate sensations, and biting insects add to the mix. Even a fallen hair can produce unbearable tickling sensations that you have to alleviate.

Ordinarily, people keep adjusting their posture to avoid unpleasant sensations. Even while lying on a soft bed, they cannot lie still for long, but continually turn and fidget unless they are in deep sleep. If you want to see how much the body is burning due to tactile objects, just try lying completely still, without moving a muscle, for an hour or two.

Body-builders, athletes, and keep-fit enthusiasts do all kinds of exercises to develop their strength and fitness. During and after such exercise they endure many unpleasant physical sensations of pain and discomfort such as taking ice-baths. Both professional and amateur athletes drive themselves to the point of exhaustion, and some actually die due to over-exertion while training or participating in their chosen sport. They would not do this if there was no reward for their efforts. The pleasant sensations derived from a healthy body, or the delight of the mental impressions made by praise and applause are the pay-back for all the hard work and physical pain of training.

Then there are the perks of being physically fit and attractive to members of the opposite sex. The Buddha said that nothing takes hold of the mind of a man more than the touch of a woman, and nothing takes hold of the mind of a woman more than the touch of a man. Sexual pleasures are a very powerful driving force built into our DNA through evolution that motivate so much activity and ambition. Competition for sexual partners is a major cause of disputes, fights, murders, and suicides. That is how the body and touches are burning. With what are they burning? They are burning with passion, ill-will, and delusion.

The Mind and Mental Objects Are Burning

Of all the six senses, the mind door is the most pervasive and influential. Sights, sounds, odours, tastes, and touches only last for a moment, but the mental impressions derived from them persist and magnify them without limit. As we grow up, we develop an extensive world view from our experiences in life. This picture is recorded in our memories, and replayed endlessly in our thoughts and fantasies.

The elderly typically reminisce about the events that they encountered during their youth. Young people dream about their future. Everyone has an extensive mental picture of their own world, which they have built up over many years, and

continue to inhabit on a daily basis. This mental picture may be very different to the reality of their life, but because the fantasy is so much more attractive than humdrum reality, it is maintained long after the reality has decayed and disappeared. In some cases, the separation between fantasy and reality is so great that the person is regarded as mentally deranged and cannot function properly in the so-called real world. However, with the help of exercises in mindfulness, which are designed to focus attention on realities occurring in the present, they may recover some semblance of normality.

An average person enjoys reading novels or watching films and plays, becoming absorbed in them for a few hours, knowing that they are not real or even true stories, but while absorbed in them they experience real emotions, shedding tears of joy and sorrow due to empathy for the characters created by the author with the help of the actors, directors, and special effects technicians. Even cartoon films, or CGI films, which everyone can clearly see are unreal, affect the emotions of the audience in a powerful way. Although it is a complete fabrication, it is able to keep the mind burning with desire, ill-will, and delusion for hours, and even for days and weeks afterwards.

Seeing and hearing alone could do nothing if not for the fabrication done by the mind. It is obvious how important this is if you consider how a particular story or film is of no interest to one person, much loved by another, or positively revolting to a third. The reasons lie in the different conditioning of each viewer's mind. A fire cannot burn without fuel and oxygen, and the mind cannot burn without craving and ignorance.

The Buddha taught in the [Mālukyaputta Sutta](#):¹

“What do you think, Mālukyaputta? There are certain mind objects that you have never thought of before, which you do not think of now, and do not hope to think of in the future. Could such object arouse desire, lust, or affection in you?”

¹ S.iv.71, A.ii.238

“Having thought of a mind object, one loses mindfulness. Getting involved in the attraction of it, one feels the onset of desire that tries to imbibe it.”

“A multitude of passions such as covetousness and rage, springing from ideas, torments one who takes a firm hold of it, with the result that his mind becomes burdened with vexation. Therefore, nibbāna remains remote from one who would rather carry the burden of suffering than practise meditation.”

Extinguishing the Fire

However, this fire, which is dangerous, ferocious, and dire, can be extinguished if one knows the right method, and if one becomes aware of just how dangerous it is. Ordinary people, who have little knowledge of the Buddha’s teaching, and even less practical experience in meditation would rather carry the burden of suffering, even though their minds are vexed and tormented by passionate desires. For them, serious meditation practice seems more onerous than working hard all day in a vain attempt to satisfy desire.

“Passion remains undeveloped in him who recollects with mindfulness the idea he has known. Thus freed from lust, he refuses to imbibe it.”

“On thinking of a mind object, a meditator just knows it and just feels that he knows it, without conceptualising it. With this, suffering ceases. One who practises in this way is said to be near to nibbāna.”

The method to extinguish the fire of passion will work if applied relentlessly just at the mind door, but it will be much better if one guards all six senses, stopping at seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, or touching, before the mind gets attracted or repelled by the sense object. That is why the Buddha taught Mālukyaputta in the beginning of the discourse:—

“Mālukyaputta! As phenomena are seen, heard, thought of, or known, just let them be as they are seen, heard, thought of, or known at that moment. When you see, you just see it; when you hear, you just hear it; when you think, you just think it; and when you know, you just know it.”

This monk, *Mālukyaputta*, was apparently eighty years of age when he came to the Buddha for instruction, and he requested a teaching in brief, as he would not be able to follow a long and detailed discourse. Unlike the Kassapa brothers and their 1,000 disciples, Mālukyaputta did not become an Arahant immediately on hearing this discourse. He retired into the forest, and meditated as instructed for some time and then gained Arahantship. Thus he was an individual of the trainable (*neyya*) type. Apparently, during his youth he had not heeded the teachings very well, and only as death approached did he become earnest in his desire to gain liberation.

Those were very auspicious times when a living Buddha was teaching the true Dhamma. Nowadays, the true Dhamma is harder to find, and all fall into the trainable category or the category of those who can only grasp the meaning of the words at best (*padaparama*). Reading books (and writing them) does not suffice to extinguish the fire, which is dangerous, ferocious, and dire. If you have read this far, and understood what has been said, that is excellent. Now you must retire to the forest, or to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, and diligently practice Satipaṭṭhāna meditation to cultivate mindfulness throughout the entire day, without a break, without missing any sense-object that comes into the scope of your awareness.

Just sit and walk, do not talk. Be mindful of the feelings that arise on seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and thinking without conceptualising it and without getting attracted to it or taking a firm hold of it so that your mind is not burdened with vexation. Then you will be getting closer to nibbāna by gaining insight into the danger of the fire.